

How to Embrace Procrastination & Use it to Your Advantage

It's not a vice, it's a notification system

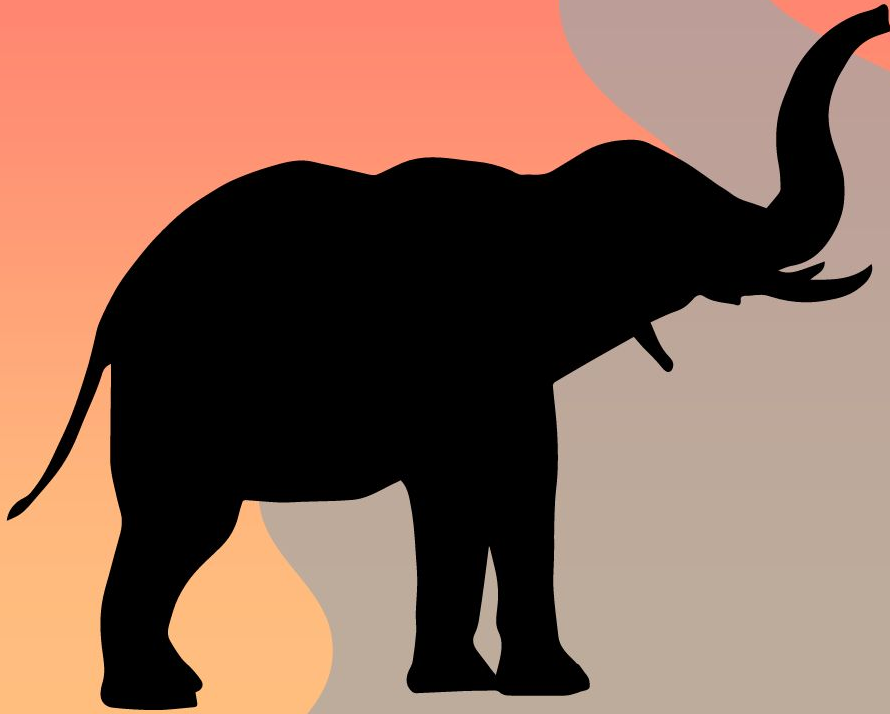
GoGoDone✓

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Share the Journey Mentimeter Question

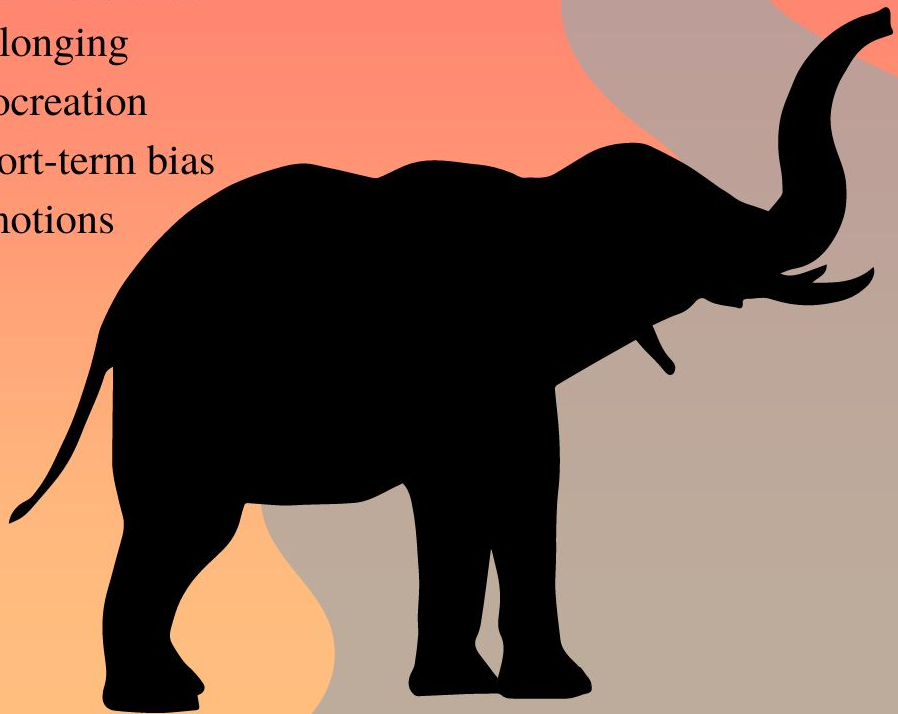


**Who is *really*
in charge?**



Survive

- Air/Food/Water
- Belonging
- Procreation
- Short-term bias
- Emotions



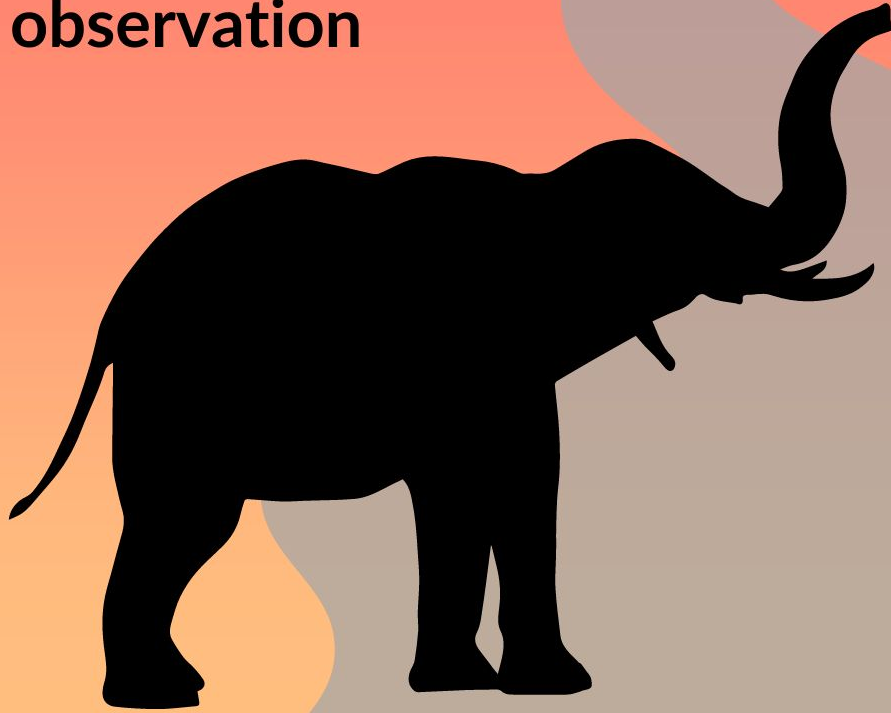
Thrive

- Attractiveness
- Status
- Relationships
- Long-term bias
- Thoughts



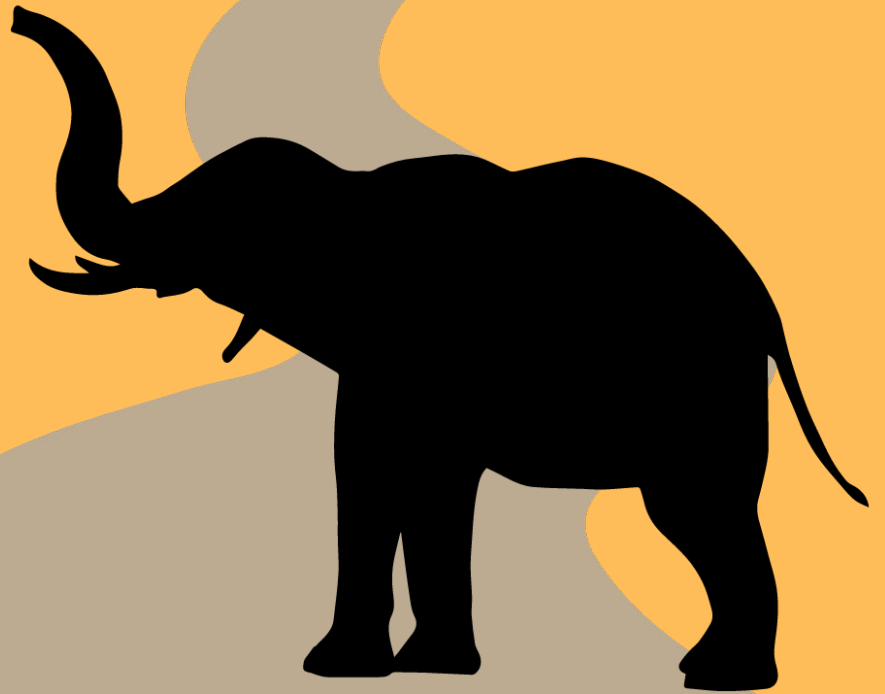
**Learns by repeated
experience &
observation**

**Learns by integrating
novel information,
imagination, creativity**





Smooth the
path
&
Soothe the
elephant



Smooth the path

Create an **intentional environment** that makes your goal the path of least resistance.

Don't Go it Alone

1. Accountability Buddy
2. Coach
3. Mentor or Role Model
4. Course/Group
5. Get Your Family Behind You!

Change Your Physical Environment

1. Tidy Up
2. Visual Cues
3. Add/Remove Objects
4. Remove Distractions (phone)
5. Change Social Circle

Change Your Tech Environment

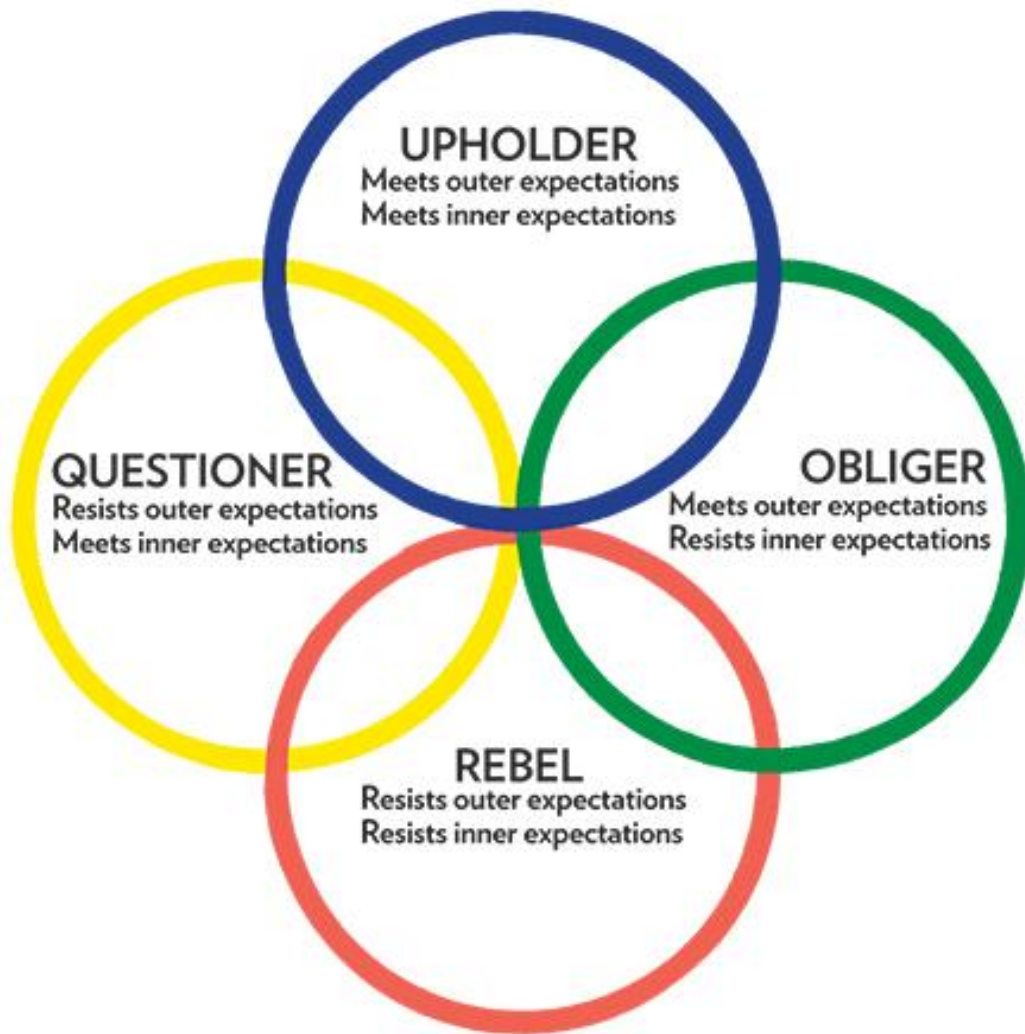
1. Close Email/Inbox Pause
2. Close or Minimize Tabs
3. Disconnect Internet
4. Shared Document with Buddy
5. Virtual Coworking

Create Motivating Consequences

1. Competition/Group Challenge
2. Tracking/Streaks
3. Rewards at Milestones
4. Delivery Deadline
5. Ask for Feedback

Smooth the path

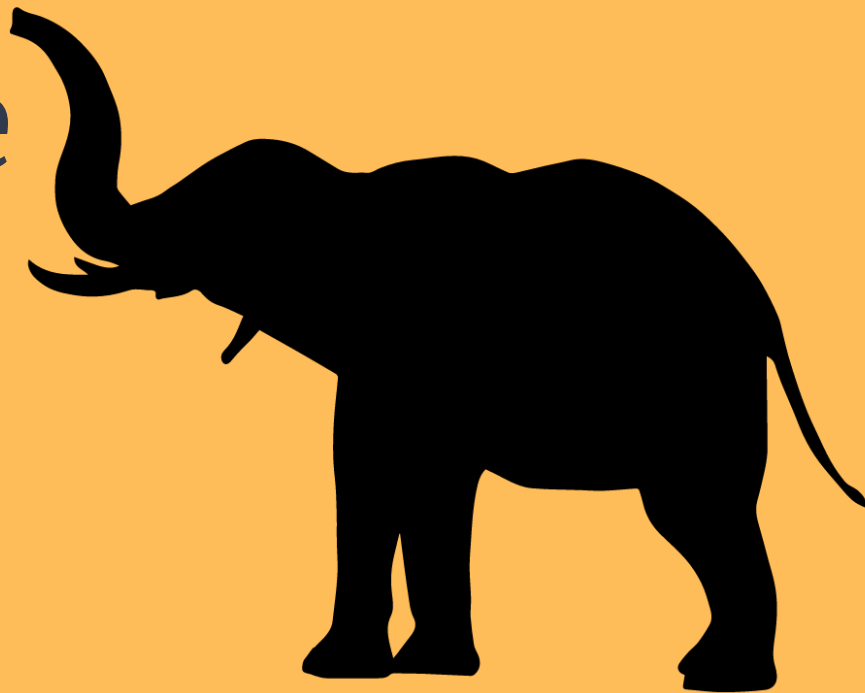
Involving other people is
a superpower for most of
us.



It's not you, it's your tactics.

<https://quiz.gretchenrubin.com/>

Soothe the
elephant



What's your procrastination style?

Avoidant – won't do

1. **Noble procrastination (other projects/tasks)**
2. **Doing the 80 instead of the 20 (Pareto Principle)**
3. **Serving others first**
4. **Time management/prioritization issues**
5. **Zoning out - screens, food/drink, etc**

Obsessive – won't finish

1. **Extra drafts**
2. **Endless edits**
3. **Research**
4. **Adding MORE**
5. **Changing direction/pivoting**
6. **Too many “who it's for”**
7. **Too many “what it's for”**

Share the Journey Mentimeter Question



When I picture myself
starting to do the work I
feel:

I don't want to do this
work because:

When I picture myself
shipping this work I feel:

I'm not ready to ship this
work because:

Avoidant and obsessive behaviors are signals that the elephant is grumpy.

But WHY is the elephant grumpy?

The key is in the emotions it's sending us.

Procrastination

Emotion #1:

Fear

Fear = What if...(insert worst case scenario 😨)

Shame:

- What if they laugh at me?
- Who am I to think what I have to offer is worthwhile?

Excommunication (social death):

- What if it becomes clear I don't belong?
- What if they never ask me back?

Death:

- I will lose all my money and end up on the street.

What if I...?

- DEFINE -

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

- PREVENT -

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

- REPAIR -

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

What might be the benefits of
an attempt or partial success?

The Cost of Inaction

(EMOTIONALLY, PHYSICALLY, FINANCIALLY, ETC.)

- 6 MONTHS -

- 1 YEAR -

- 3 YEARS -

Share the Journey Mentimeter Question



These feelings are REAL.
And they are HARD to
overcome.

Procrastination
Emotion #2:
Indecision

Indecision

Not enough data to predict the outcome.

Fear of regret if I make the wrong decision.

Tools for Tackling Small Decisions

1. Acknowledge that there is a decision to be made that you're avoiding.
2. Name what information you are missing (if you knew, it would be an easy decision).
3. List the consequences of each option and those of not deciding.
4. Acknowledge that a good decision can lead to a bad outcome.
5. Ask what can you put in place to test or walk back the decision?

Share the Journey Mentimeter Question



The Best Tool for Tackling Big Decisions:

Mastermind It!

1. Adds new information by bringing other perspectives in.
2. Creates buy-in to your situation and generates support.
3. Provides reassurance from the community (relieves fear and distributes blame).
4. Reassures the elephant that you're not alone and won't be kicked out of the tribe.

Procrastination
Emotion #3:
Overwhelm

Overwhelm

The task is too big.

The task is too vague.

A lot hinges on the outcome.

The Art of the Start

Goal Setting & Task Planning

1. List all the project tasks.
2. Organize them in an Eisenhower matrix (rank by importance/urgency)
3. List all important tasks with time estimates. If the estimate >4 hours, break it down.
4. **Multiply time estimates x3!**
5. 80/20 your list.
6. From the tasks in the “20” list, time block them in your coming week.
7. Reassess weekly.

Pro-Tip: Action Precedes Motivation

*Motivation kicks in after
~90 seconds of action.
Set a 2 min goal.*

Share the Journey Mentimeter Question



Summary

1. The influence of the Rider's willpower is limited. Pick another tactic.
2. Procrastination is a notification system - a message from the elephant that it's worried about your wellbeing. Soothe the Elephant!
3. Engineering an environment for success is the most powerful tool to get things done. Smooth the Path!
4. Understanding and learning how to work with your elephant will change your relationship with procrastination long-term. Repetition is required!

How to Embrace Procrastination & Use it to Your Advantage

It's not a vice, it's a notification system



Thank You!

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9/05/2022
17:00

#250
[talk]



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**how to embrace
procrastination**
and use it to your advantage

AgileWarsaw

Agile Warsaw

May 9, 2022





Share a task you're procrastinating.

sport

Writing an important
blog post

Reading books to
learn

Several 3D printing
projects

answering direct
messages, starting
hard complicated
tasks.

cleaning

Work, reading

Tough phone calls

Reading unpleasent
emails

Share a task you're procrastinating.

Inquiry Institute Choice
Map course

avoidant

preparing a to-do list
for the remaining tasks



What is your typical procrastination behavior?



Avoidant

scrolling social media too much :(

Cleaning the house

find another task I can do which is not important,

checking whether I can help anybody first ;-)

Do all the smaller tasks first

Checking my phone, communicators and mail

convince myself it is not urgent -- can be done later

creating a to-do list for the remaining tasks

What is your typical procrastination behavior?

cleaning up

starting the NEXT
project

Make tea, coffee, food



What's the worst that could happen if you do the task you're procrastinating?



I can be fired.

People will want me to do more and more

I will lost my face

I'll have too much time on my hands

If not much, is it laziness, not procrastination?

I would need to be very assertive to support my standpoint

Nobody notices.

I'll get crushed by criticism

I will achieve success and then what

What's the worst that could happen if you do the task you're procrastinating?

dissapointed friends



What is one negative consequence for not doing your procrastinated task?

I get criticised for running late on the task

I do not learn

It is going to keep bugging me

a lost opportunity

