

Women's Community Counsellor
June 2006

Outwitting Procrastination

Hello Everyone!

I've decided that sending an e-newsletter out only 4 times a year isn't enough and I have so much I'd like to share with you that I figured I'd continue sending you the quarterly one, interspersed with a brief, monthly blog-type e-zine. I'm always reading things that I know are of interest to women, and coming up with different ideas on how to love and celebrate ourselves, and this way I can pass them on in a timely way. My hope is that these monthly e-zines will give you hope, laughter, inspiration, support, and some good ideas to help you on your path to becoming all that you dream of being.

So I've given myself a head-start for June and am sending you this e-newsletter a bit early before good ol' procrastination has a chance to sneak in there and sabotage this new plan! I'm sure you can relate!

I've been thinking a lot lately about how we, as women, sabotage and undermine our best efforts to become all that we're capable of being. I think that one of the most powerful ways that we do a number on ourselves is by procrastinating. What exactly is procrastination and how do we use it to sabotage ourselves over and over again?

Well, let's start with a definition. I just did a websearch for the word "procrastination" and found the following definitions:

"To put off doing something, especially out of habitual carelessness or laziness. To postpone or delay needlessly."

I tend to agree with the first part (i.e., putting off doing something or postponing, etc.), but disagree with the second part (i.e., out of habitual carelessness or laziness). I've worked with enough women to know that the majority of us are neither habitually careless or lazy! My Goddess... I only wish I could be more careless and lazy! Don't you? I find that most of us are so busy trying to do so much and trying to do it all so well, that if we end up putting something off, it's usually because we're so burned out from everything else we're trying to do and we can't face that 'one last thing' on our ever-expanding "TO DO" list!

I think that we end up procrastinating many things in order to actually take care of ourselves. Unfortunately, however, I often see women putting off the exact things that would be the most beneficial to them (I'm guessing that you, too, have skipped your exercise class in order to sleep in for an extra hour). How can we learn to not put off those things that give us the most peace, relaxation, and sense of accomplishment? By putting them at the TOP of our list!

Here's something that I use and share with clients with great success. Write up your regular "to do" list for the coming day and include in it one major self-care activity (yes- ONE A DAY!). Examples can be: go to the gym, get a haircut, have a bubble bath, watch a funny movie, etc.).

The possibilities are endless! Then prioritize the items, making sure that one self-care activity is one of your 'top three' priorities for the day. (I can hear you screaming, "I can't! I could never do that!") and blah, blah, blah. I'm choosing to ignore your protests and you should too. Just try it for one week and see if you don't feel a whole lot better...

Then you can try procrastinating stuff that really can wait (i.e., washing the car, reading over your insurance policies, etc.) and practise making yourself your priority! And yes, even women with children can do this successfully. In fact, kids benefit greatly by learning that mom also has a life and deserves good things (it's called "modelling behavior" and it's definitely something you want to teach your kids). Were we taught self-care growing up? Not many of us were for sure... Why not teach your kids by modelling self-care behavior? They'll thank you later!

And lastly, when you stop procrastinating, YOU; you're not being "selfish": everyone around you benefits when you're happy, healthy, and calm.

What are you going to do for yourself today?

I've gotta go- my meditation cushion is waiting!

Peace,

Esther

Esther Kane, MSW, RCC relocated to the Comox Valley over two years ago from Vancouver. She is in full-time private practise as a psychotherapist in Courtenay at the Rosewall Wellness Centre. Esther has over a decade of experience counselling women and their loved ones with a multitude of presenting problems. Her main focus is helping women to become free of barriers which keep them stuck so that they can become all that they dream of being. To book a session or to set up a free 15-minute phone consultation, call Esther at 250.338.1800. Or e-mail her at: esther@estherkane.com. You can check out her detailed website at: www.estherkane.com.