



EPISODE 11:
HOW TO STOP
PROCRASTINATING

Full Episode Transcript

WITH YOUR HOST LAUREN CASH

Hey, wonderful listeners. Quick note, before you dive into today's episode, I just wanted to let you know that I had had my mic unplugged for the entire episode for Episode 11. I am so sorry about that and I apologize that it will be harder to listen to than normal, but you can still hear it and I know you're going to get the amazing message that you need from this episode. And in order to not be completely perfectionistic in my business and to continue being effective, it didn't make sense for me to completely re-record it, so thanks for your patience. Thanks for sticking with me. My podcast producer, Pavel, definitely wanted me to re-record, and I told him I'm not going to. But I told him I would record this for you instead, so please disregard sound quality on this episode, and I hope you have an amazing week. Now, let's get to the show.

YOU ARE LISTENING TO THE EFFECTIVE ENTREPRENEUR PODCAST, EPISODE 11: HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING.

Hey there, happy Monday. How was your weekend? Did you make it amazing? I sure hope so. I still was able to get by the pool this weekend. I know all of you in cold, snowy places are super mad about that, but I was, and it was amazing. It was lovely, except for, there was a very obnoxiously loud person at the pool and I was rolling my eyes about it the whole time, but that's okay.

I also am an early riser. Any early risers out there? I have developed a no alarm clock life which is incredible. I thought I had to be retired in order to live a no alarm clock life and I was totally wrong about that. "Giving up the alarm clock" has been one of the best habits I've created for myself if you call it a habit, this year. I would highly recommend it to anyone who is thinking that they want to retire early so that they don't have to have an alarm clock. Those of you who have animals or small humans that wake you up in the morning, I would also recommend that you start thinking about that differently. What if you just totally loved that? And you just got to bed earlier. Most of the problems that we have with getting up in the morning have to do with what's happening the night before, so I'm going to do a little bit more of a training on this no alarm clock lifestyle on Instagram.

So if you're not following me, make sure you go on over there. Let's connect. I'm always sharing all sorts of wonderful things over there and I love chatting with you and sharing behind-the-scenes things in my stories all of the time. You just need to go to [vivereco](https://www.vivereco.com), so [vivereco](https://www.vivereco.com), so it's just [@vivereco](https://www.instagram.com/vivereco) on Instagram, and we'll put that link in the show notes too. All of the show notes are at [vivere.co](https://www.vivereco.com), so that's v-i-v-e-r-e-c-o and then forward slash whatever the episode number is, so this one is [vivere.co/11](https://www.vivere.co/11).

Alright, so let's get into today's topic. I know you all are dying to hear this one because a lot of my fans, I guess, you're fans, my people out there listening, are what you would refer to as procrastinators. And you're always asking me how to stop procrastinating and you have this whole story around being a "procrastinator." So today we're going to dive in to talk about what we've introed in Episode 10, with Victoria, our guest on Episode 10, and we're going to talk more deeply about just the procrastination piece this week. So I'm going to teach you, one what procrastination really is, number two why you are not a procrastinator, and number three how to stop procrastinating. Are you ready? Let's go.

To procrastinate, according to our friends at Merriam-Webster, is either, there was one definition, that is to put something off intentionally and habitually. The second one is to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done. I find these definitions incredibly interesting because I bet you have a negative connotation when you think about procrastinating and being what you refer to as a procrastinator. You probably have this whole story about how terrible it is, how you shouldn't be doing it, how it's what's holding you back in your business. If you just weren't a procrastinator, you'd have the revenue and profit and impact that you want. But I want to invite you to think about this in a whole new way today.

I want you to first notice in both of those definitions, the word intentionally. So in both definitions, there's an intentionality in the not doing, in that moment. We are intentionally choosing not to do something. A lot of times when I hear my clients talk about procrastinating, it's almost as if it's happening without their buy-in, like it's just happening to them. I want you to start to notice if you're thinking and telling the story in that way and take it back. You always are choosing, in a moment, to not do one thing and to do something else. It's always your choice, whether you realize it or not. You are the one doing. You're doing because of what you're thinking and feeling in that moment. If you're not doing something that you had planned on doing, the way you planned on doing it, in that specific moment, that technically is "procrastination".

But I don't think that's what we think about when we think about procrastinating. We think it's this really evil thing that we do against our own will. It's like, "No, procrastinating..." The only thing it is is something that we planned on doing in a future moment ahead of what this moment is right now. Then we get to that moment and we choose not to do that thing in that moment.

Now, one of these definitions has the habitually, that you do this habitually. But I'd like to argue that all humans plan to do something in a future moment than where they are in the present moment. They get to that moment and they choose not to do it, or they do it differently, or they don't do it at all. And they do this so often that we would say that that is habitual. It's not a big deal. We all do this. We are humans that live in moments. The only real time, right now, is the present moment. When I am in this moment, here, right now, saying this exact word, I'm not in an hour from now when I have a meeting with my employee and a potential company that we're using for a product.

I am thinking that that's what's going to happen in the future, but who knows? Maybe I get to that future moment and we don't do that. Maybe I get to the future moment that I'm planning on today, engaging on Instagram, and I choose not to do it in that moment because of some reason. I don't think about myself though, as a procrastinator, or that I have this habit of procrastinating, just because in a future moment, I get there and decide not to do the thing in that moment.

There's a distinction here though, that I'm going to make in a sec, between not doing against ourselves and the doing the not doing for ourselves, and I think we forget that there's this distinction. We just blanket it all as bad. It's a 100% bad if we don't do what we said we were going to do, in the moment in the future. Now, before we move on from the definitions, I want to make sure that we also note the second definition that says, to put off intentionally the doing of something that should be done. That should there, should alert you if you've ever been one of my clients, really fascinating word. Should be done according to whom and when and why and there's a lot we need to know there. "Who says that it should be done? What are we talking about? And when should it be done?"

There's nothing actually we ever have to do. We think we have to do it. We choose to do everything that we do, including pay our taxes, including take care of our children. All of these things are not shoulds. So I don't like that definition because there's nothing we ever should do. We literally don't have to do anything unless we choose to. And I bet a lot of us will choose to do many things because we don't like the negative ramifications of not doing it, i.e., not paying your taxes or not taking care of our children or whatever.

So I want you to think about maybe a new definition for procrastination or to procrastinate. It's just when you've said, and when we say said, we're meaning either out loud to somebody that you're going to do something, or to yourself, maybe it's just to yourself for your calendar. Maybe you use a time blocking system like I do, Monday Hour One, shout out, but maybe not. You've just said to yourself in either of those ways, either to yourself or to other people, or somehow said in your mind, this is a lot of my clients. "I just told myself in my mind later today, I was going to do this thing, but it was never really formal."

And then you get to that moment, that future moment, that you made that note to yourself, I'm not even going to say it's a commitment because we haven't even fully committed here. It's just this thought that "Maybe in the future, I will go do this thing," or "Maybe I put it on my calendar, but I didn't really fully commit." And then I get to that moment, in the future moment, and I choose not to do it for some reason. I don't do it in that moment. So it's something that we plan in the future, that we then get to that moment then we don't do it. That is procrastinating.

So you get to choose, intentionally, whether or not you're going to do something in a moment. And sometimes it makes a whole lot of sense to not do something you were planning on doing in a future moment because now we have new information, new info. Do we just have to blindly forget the new info and do the thing like a robot? No. So this could be for many reasons that you choose not to do the thing in the moment. You might love your reasons. You might have amazing new information, like that there's a fire in your city. This happened to me recently. I had to change my plans in the moment because there was a fire in my city and there was a potential that I was going to be evacuated, so I had to change my plans. I didn't have to, I chose to change my plans.

So there is never a reason then to beat yourself up in the next moment for not doing something in the moment you had originally planned on it. There are really three moments that are happening. There's a moment where we decide to do a something in the future. And then there's the moment when we're about to do the thing in that present moment, when we decide whether or not we're going to "procrastinate". And then there's the moment after, in which we observe the past of, did we do the thing or did we not do the thing in the previous moment? So see how there's those three cross-sections of time?

I find that a lot of my clients and probably you do as well, and I used to do this a whole lot. I get to moment number three, so that's the moment when I'm looking at the previous moment where I chose to not do a thing, AKA procrastinate, according to the definition. And then, I have a whole story about it. I have a story that I am a procrastinator because in one moment of time, I chose to not do a thing intentionally. And I have, probably, evidence for a few of those moments in my life as we all do because we're human. And now, I make a story that I'm a procrastinator. That's not useful. Just because you do something multiple times a day or multiple times a week, for a period of your life, does not mean you need to have a label for your identity around it. There's no DNA test. We don't take a DNA test and we're like, "Oh yeah, they're a procrastinator."

I mean, if we did, actually, we would all get diagnosed or designated that label because of what I was just saying about how all humans do this behavior of something in the future and decide not to do it and then move on, right? We all do this. So why would we call ourselves procrastinators and have this whole label that has this whole story that we're not good enough? That we're not going to get what we want out of life, we're not going to be good business owners, CEOs, whatever, solopreneur, YouTuber, podcaster, coach, designer, whatever you are. Why would you tell yourself the story that you are a procrastinator? It's not useful. It's not going to get you anywhere. When you think that, how do you feel? "I'm a procrastinator." Doesn't feel very good, I'm guessing. Probably have a lot of drama around it. So let maybe not think that about yourself.

And it's not like we go around... I said this to a client like two years ago. I'm like, "It's not like you go around and say, 'Hey, guess what, everyone? I'm a showerer. Pretty much every day or every other day or something to that effect. I noticed that I shower. I am such a showerer.'" We don't do that. So why are you doing this around this behavior? Why are you taking this behavior and using it against yourself? There's no reason why in a moment, that moment three, that you ever want to tell yourself that there is something wrong with you or you shouldn't have done or put off the thing that you didn't do a moment before.

I want you to notice, just start to notice how you feel when you think those thoughts to yourself. When you tell yourself that script, that beating up, how you feel, then drives your action, if you remember this from previous episodes. And then that's what creates your results. It's not that you didn't do the thing the moment prior in moment two, that we're talking about here. That's not why you don't create the business you want to create, ever. It's always because of moment three, you making that previous moment two mean that you're not going to create it. Only then, is why you don't create what you want to create in your business, in your schedule, in your life. It's the only reason.

And then don't add on a number four moment, like I used to do, where you noticed that you're beating yourself up and then you beat yourself up for beating yourself up because that's not useful either. If you start to notice you're doing the moment three beating up, that's okay, just start to infuse self-compassion there. Infuse self-compassion wherever you can start.

So I alluded earlier to, you could choose not to do something, i.e., procrastinate for reasons for yourself or against yourself. And this is really important for us to understand. So that moment two, when you're deciding to not do a thing in the moment then, it's interesting to ask yourself, "Why am I choosing not to do this thing in this moment right now?" If it's because you're making a decision out of fear or self-doubt, or confusion, or overwhelm, or anything that is then going to be against yourself, like "It's just too much, I can't handle this. I'm afraid of what people will think. I just will never make an amazing book, YouTube video," whatever it is. If it's from that place, it's probably not useful then to put the thing off. I see a lot of this putting off in my procrastinating perfectionists. We procrastinate because of the perfectionistic mentality. It's a byproduct of that.

And we talked about that with Victoria, last week, in Episode 10. So if it's for that reason, I want you to start to get super curious with yourself in moment three, instead of beating yourself up and looking at, "Why did I not do the thing? Was that useful? Was I telling myself a story that isn't even necessarily true and that I can change because of how I want to impact the world and my business? Do I want to choose to do the YouTube video, even though I'm afraid of what people are going to think of it, they're going to think it's stupid?" Whatever. "Do I choose to go to this networking event so that I can meet other people, even though I have thoughts of my social anxiety?" Whatever it is. Or, was it you chose to not do the thing in the moment because you realized, "I would rather plan for my daughter's birthday this weekend"?

"And I really like my reasons. And I know for sure, I'm going to get this bookkeeping done next week. And I'm going to plan on that. I'm going to break it down so that it's really manageable and not this big, scary, to me, project of getting all the books caught up from the year and then get it done. But that doesn't mean that I'm mad at myself, for in this moment, my calendar said bookkeeping and I chose not to do it. I totally didn't plan for my daughter's birthday. And now, I know planning my calendar moving forward, I want to make sure that I have time to plan for family's birthdays, and where is that going to go in my life, and how do I want to plan for that. Now I can strategize. Since I'm not beating myself up, I can have solutions and strategize. I don't have this whole story that I'm a procrastinator at all. So then that helps me moving forward, become even more efficient and effective."

So I want you all to stop calling yourselves procrastinators, or just drop that negative connotation. Let's just all agree, we all are procrastinators. And it's a moot point. Just like we're all showerers. And be all in, that you choose what you're going to do and not do in every moment. You might even start to notice that in moment one, that I was talking about, moment one, you choose to do something in a future moment that you had no business choosing to do in that future moment. And you realize it in moment two, when you choose not to do the thing. That's a brilliant thing to do. And then you can get curious, "Why in moment one, did I over-commit myself? What was going on there? What was I thinking and feeling that I said yes to a thing that wasn't a thing that I was meant to say yes to?"

Then moment two, maybe you made up for that poor decision in moment one. You're always a 100% in control of what you do and don't do. So act like that. And don't beat yourself up for it. Take extreme ownership in full love and compassion and curiosity. If you have a negative connotation about this behavior, about not doing what you were thinking you were going to do, or you said you were going to do, then you're not going to be able to get curious and understand why you haven't been working on the bookkeeping for the year. You won't be able to solve for it. It's now covered up in the ice layer, that is your negative self-talk. We want to remove that ice layer so that we can totally understand what's going on underneath, so that if, and when it's meant to be changed, we can change it. But not with the intention of changing it to begin with.

Alright, so to summarize today's podcast. Number one, procrastination isn't what you think it is. Procrastination is simply in one moment, telling yourself in a future moment, you're going to do a thing. Then you get to that moment and you choose not to do that thing. And it could either be for or against yourself that you choose to not do that thing in that moment. Everyone procrastinates, no one needs to have the label of procrastinator, just like we don't need to be labeled showerers. And finally, you don't need to use that label. I want you to just get curious in moment one, when you're choosing to do something in a future moment, are you clean with that decision or are you doing it out of trying to prove something, or out of fear, or in a rush, or something like that? And then in moment two, when you choose to not do a thing in a moment, just make sure you like your reasons. It's not against yourself. It's for you.

And number three, start to not beat yourself up for choosing to not do something in one moment, that you already have chosen not to do it. So in moment three, it's already the past, you've already not done the thing in that moment and beating yourself up is not going to create any amazing results for you and your business. I promise you, you're going to think that it will, and it won't, every single time. So to apply this, I want you to start thinking about, "Where can I infuse self-compassion?" One question I love to ask myself is, "How does it make total sense that whatever I did in a previous moment? What was I thinking and feeling that I did that? What can I learn from that to incorporate moving forward? How can I slow all the moments down and just be onto myself in the most loving way?" And use, maybe even, some of that self-talk that Victoria modeled for us in Episode 10.

So you might be somebody who's been procrastinating your inbox. It might be full of lots of emails. I've seen people send me screenshots of five, seven figure inbox numbers, on that red badge that I no longer use. Hate that red badge, no red badges, okay? But if you're having a hard time with your inbox, I want to help you out. I created a guide called Select All, it's your guide to inbox zero. Not only getting there, but also maintaining it. Because who cares if you get there, but you don't maintain it? To get it, all you have to do is go to my website, vivere.co/email. It's also in the show notes.

And until next time, thanks so much for listening and I can't wait to talk to you next week. Bye.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "xo, L." with a period at the end.

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