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Why do people procrastinate?*Saratov State Medical University n.a. V.I. Razumovsky, Department of Foreign Languages***Abstract**

This article is concerned with the question of unhealthy postponement of things. Psychologists name this process procrastination. The authors of the article state the main criteria of this phenomenon, give a classification proposed by some scientist and discourse on the question of treatment of procrastination in modern life.

Keywords: procrastination, postponement, deadline, self-blame, psychological problem

In the modern world, we often face such a problem as lack of time for completing tasks in different areas of life, communicating with other people or incorporating ideas planned in advance. Undoubtedly, for being highly efficient one needs to use such a precious resource as time rationally. However, many people cannot use it properly and suffer from a habit called «postponement». Some people delude themselves and find excuses in order not to face difficulties. Instead of making their plans come true, they postpone them and waste time on things that require no mental or physical power. Many psychologists and philosophers call such condition *procrastination*. In consequence, plans may come true at the last minute or they remain undone.

For the first time the term «procrastination» was used by P. Ringenbakh in 1977. Nowadays this phenomenon is becoming widespread. Procrastination has many reasons and results. Many people know a famous phrase of B. Franklin: «Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today». In the article «The concept of productive procrastination is a myth», the author says that meta analyses of the research have shown that procrastination can be tied to low self-control, poor performance, and small manifestations of well-being. Procrastinators often struggle with feelings of guilt, stress, self-blame and their relationship with people can be strained, especially if procrastination is chronic.

Procrastination always involves negative consequences. P. Steel says in his article «The Nature of Procrastination: A Meta-Analytic and Theoretical Review of Quintessential Self-Regulatory Failure» that postponement of affairs is always followed by negative experiences. It often happens that the person, having faced harmful influence of procrastination once, will experience this feeling in future situations again. This phenomenon of postponement of plans turns into a habit. P. Steel also states that procrastination means that one prefers some task or plan to the other in spite of the need to complete the first one.

Procrastinators are typically flexible people, they tolerate stress well and know how to improvise in complicated situations. Deadline force them to work at peak efficiency and make decisions that they would usually put off. At deadline moments, procrastinators have the highest working capacity. They typically favor instant gratification and everything else is a problem of «tomorrow». In most cases, work is executed in a poor way.

Chu A.H.C., Choi suggests classification of procrastinators. He divides them into active and passive ones. The first type of people postpones the tasks performance in spite of various warning, and the second one postpones things intentionally, because it makes him or her work comfortably in stress conditions. T. Pychyl, a psychology professor and director of the Procrastination Research Group at Carleton University, states that the researchers who promote «active procrastination» or deliberate delay of work say it can lead to higher performance of their plans and tasks, and improves health.

So, is there a treatment for procrastination and should it be treated at all? To date, psychologists have no single answer on this question. However, it is necessary to find out whether this habit is a consequence of a more severe psychological problem – depression or anxiety. Slight procrastination is typical for many people, and in order to get rid of it, one should simply stop being lazy or stop doing things absolutely perfectly. In case of hard cases of procrastination, one should remember that it can keep developing and might lead to permanent sense of guilt.

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