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## **WHY DO WE PROCRASTINATE: A SCIENTIFIC POINT OF VIEW AND WAYS TO COMBAT IT**

Procrastination is the tendency to postpone tasks despite being aware of potential negative consequences. It affects productivity, increases stress, and can lead to missed opportunities. This phenomenon is widely studied in psychology and neuroscience, as it involves both conscious decision-making and automatic

emotional responses. Understanding why procrastination occurs and how to manage it effectively can significantly improve work efficiency and overall well-being.

From a scientific perspective, procrastination is linked to the interaction between different brain regions. The prefrontal cortex, responsible for rational thinking, planning, and self-control, plays a crucial role in task execution. However, it often competes with the limbic system, which drives emotions and immediate gratification. When the limbic system dominates, a person is more likely to choose activities that provide instant pleasure rather than those requiring effort for a delayed reward. This explains why people often prefer watching videos or browsing social media instead of working on important but demanding tasks.

The brain's dopamine system also influences procrastination. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and motivation. Engaging in easy, enjoyable activities releases dopamine, reinforcing the habit of avoiding challenging work. Additionally, temporal discounting – the tendency to undervalue distant rewards – makes long-term benefits seem less appealing. For example, studying for an exam weeks in advance feels unnecessary because the reward of good grades is too far in the future. As a result, the brain prioritizes short-term comfort over long-term success.

Psychological factors further contribute to procrastination. Fear of failure can prevent a person from starting a task, as they may worry about poor results or judgment from others. Perfectionism leads to avoidance when an individual sets unrealistically high standards and feels incapable of meeting them. A lack of intrinsic motivation makes tasks seem uninteresting, especially when no immediate benefit exists. Emotional states such as stress, anxiety, or fatigue also play a role. When overwhelmed, the brain seeks relief through distractions rather than tackling the source of stress.

There are several effective strategies for overcoming procrastination. Breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed and makes starting easier. The Pomodoro Technique, which involves working in focused intervals (typically 25 minutes) followed by short breaks, helps maintain concentration and prevents mental exhaustion. The two-minute rule suggests that if a task takes less than two minutes to complete, it should be done immediately to prevent the accumulation of minor unfinished tasks. Visualizing the positive outcomes of completing a task can increase motivation by shifting focus from the effort required to the benefits gained. Optimizing the work environment by removing distractions and maintaining an organized workspace enhances focus and reduces the likelihood of task avoidance. Establishing reward systems, such as allowing leisure activities only

after completing a set amount of work, reinforces productive behaviour and gradually builds discipline.

In conclusion, procrastination is a complex issue influenced by brain function, psychological factors, and external conditions. It is not merely a sign of laziness but a conflict between rational decision-making and emotional impulses. By understanding the underlying causes and implementing structured strategies, individuals can reduce procrastination, improve time management, and develop long-term self-discipline.