

## Conference Workbook

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**Disclaimer:**

- The content provided in this presentation is for informational purposes only.
- It is not intended to substitute professional medical advice, diagnoses, or treatment.
- Always seek advice from a qualified healthcare provider.
- The concepts covered are not intended to be exhaustive and represent one of many approaches to understanding and addressing issues with procrastination.

**Procrastination:**

Is intentionally and voluntarily putting off a task with the knowledge of potential negative impacts.

**SOURCE:** Steel, P. (2007). The nature of procrastination. *Psychological Bulletin*, 133(1), 65-94.

What are your procrastination patterns?

**Procrastination Patterns:**

- Putting off tasks that are **disliked or boring**
- Avoiding tasks that are **stressful**
- Delaying tasks that you've **failed** in the past
- Starting different tasks or activities as a **distraction** or **avoidance**
- Assuming **willpower** will be enough to overcome procrastination

**Positive Self-Talk Supports:**

- ✓ Following instructions
- ✓ Asking curious questions
- ✓ Calming emotions
- ✓ Breaking down steps
- ✓ Problem-solving
- ✓ Self-compassion



**Negative Self-Talk Sabotages:**

- ✘ Following instructions
- ✘ Asking curious questions
- ✘ Calming emotions
- ✘ Breaking down steps
- ✘ Problem-solving
- ✘ Self-compassion
- ✘ Everything!

→ It is also what Anxiety Canada more commonly calls automatic negative thoughts or "ANTS".

**SOURCE:** Ruth Netzer Turgeman & Yehuda Pollak (2023). *Using the temporal motivation theory to explain the relation between ADHD and procrastination*. Australian Psychologist, DOI: [10.1080/00050067.2023.2218540](https://doi.org/10.1080/00050067.2023.2218540)

**The ADHD Downward Spiral:**

An example of a typical scenario →

A problem task generates negative thoughts, which create negative emotions. The person falls into the spiral. The longer this goes on, the more difficult it becomes to gain an informed perspective, and the ability to find solutions diminishes.

**The Goldilocks Principle:**

The Goldilocks Principle of motivation says that if a task is too easy or too difficult there will be low motivation. The Goldilocks zone is the “sweet spot” where motivation happens.

**SOURCE:** James Clear. (2018). *Atomic Habits*. Penguin Random House, New York.

**A Brain Gap:**

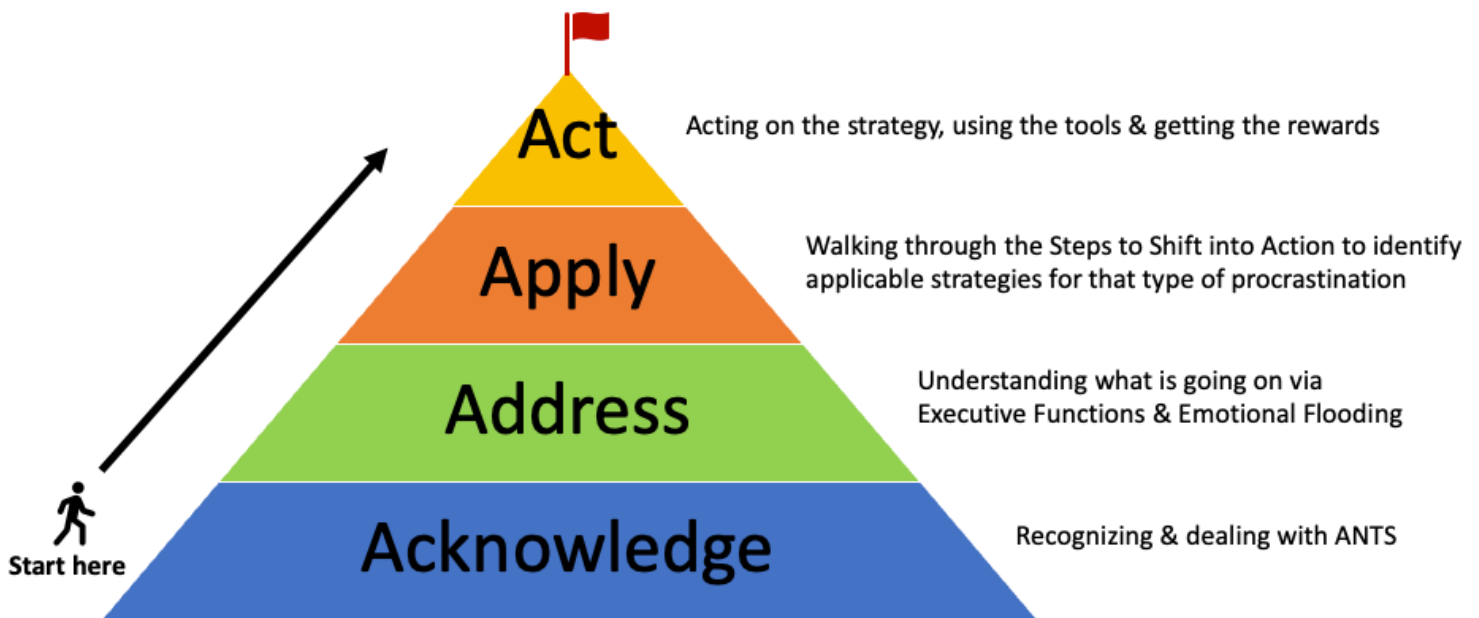
- The brain is looking for something it needs.
- This could be related to executive function difficulties.
- Might not be a voluntary delay and therefore not procrastination.
- This is an important distinction.

Examples could include: Missing information / Missing stimulation / Missing clarity



**Procrastination is an emotional regulation problem:**

Brain Gap + Emotions = Procrastination

SOURCE: *ADHD in Adults: What the Science Says* by Russell Barkley, Kevin Murphy & Mariellen Fischer. 2008. Guilford Press.**Conquering Procrastination: How to guide yourself to action**SOURCE: Rhiannon Carter, Empower You ADHD Coaching and Nathalie Pedicelli, [Organize.Thrive.Monetize](https://www.organizemyadhd.com/), ADHD Coaching**Conquering Procrastination by ACKNOWLEDGING****Recognize & Manage "ANTS":**

- Catch yourself saying ANTS.
- Acknowledge the ANT.
- Replace or reframe "ants".
- Take a break or retreat to refocus.

SOURCE: Anxiety Canada, <https://www.anxietycanada.com/>

ANTS	Reframed
"I can't do this."	"I can't do this yet."
"I'm going to mess up again."	"I'm going to try my best."
"I'm such a slow learner."	"Learning is hard and I can do hard things."

SOURCE: Anxiety Canada, <https://www.anxietycanada.com/>

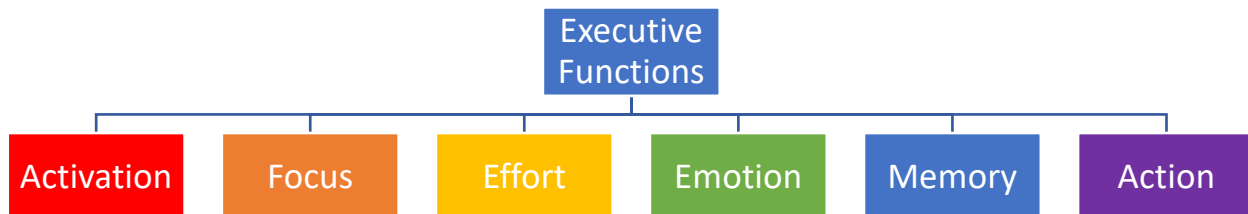
\*\* A tool to help you deal with ANTS is in Appendix 1.

### Conquering Procrastination by ADDRESSING

**Identify and direct efforts to understanding your:**

1. Executive functions
2. Emotional flooding

**Review Brown's model of executive function challenges in ADHD.**



SOURCE: Brown, Thomas E. Ph.D. <https://www.browнадhdclinic.com/the-brown-model-of-add-adhd>



**ADDRESS: Understanding Emotional Flooding**

- Ned Hallowell describes the ADHD brain as a Ferrari with bicycle brakes.
- A person with ADHD can easily get carried away with their emotions if they don't reinforce their brakes.
- Recognize the speed and power of the engine.
- Utilize strategies to "reinforce brakes".
- Learn to pause before emotions flood the brain.

**Conquering Procrastination by APPLYING: Steps to Shift into Action**

- **Step 1: Identify the TASK you're procrastinating on.**
  - E.g., the task you often put off in the planner, or the task you try to start but never do.
- **Step 2: Identify the SOURCE of procrastination.**
  - Emotions? → How do I feel about the task?
  - Brain Gap? → Do I know what to do? Do I know how to do the task?

- **Step 3: Identify the REASON using the checklist below.**

## Brain Gap:

- Stimulation
- Focus
- Clarity
- Information
- Training
- Energy

## Emotions:

- Perfectionism
- Avoidance
- Overwhelm
- Guilt
- Shame
- Worry

- **Step 4: Find the STRATEGIES that apply.**
  - Brainstorm strategies that might help with the type of procrastination in question.



Type of procrastination	Applicable Strategies	Tools Needed
E.g., Stimulation	Work with a body double	Subscription to FocusMate

\*\*Strategies Chart is in Appendix 2.

- **Step 5: Determine the REWARDS.**

The research suggests that “procrastination interventions for adults with ADHD need to take reward responses into account”.

- ✓ Short term reward: After having worked on the task.
- ✓ Long term reward: After finishing the project.

SOURCE: Altgassen, M., Scheres, A., & Edel, M. A. (2019). Prospective memory (partially) mediates the link between ADHD symptoms and procrastination. *ADHD Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders*, 11, 59-71. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e14834>

**TOOL: Steps to Shift into Action Tool – EXAMPLE from Case Study**

- **Step 1: Identify the task you are procrastinating on.**  
*Create a PowerPoint presentation*
- **Step 2: Identify the source of the procrastination**  
Emotions? or Brain Gap? *Both*
- **Step 3: Identify the reason.**  
*Brain Gap: Training Emotions: Shame*
- **Step 4: Find the strategies that apply.**
  1. *Get training by watching several instructional videos on PowerPoint.*
  2. *Lockbox and set timer for one hour*
  3. *Affirmation on a sticky note: "It's okay, I'm learning something new."*
- **Step 5: Determine the rewards.**
  1. *For every hour of work, I get a 10-minute Pinterest break.*
  2. *Go shopping with my daughter for prom dress.*

\*\*5 Steps to Shift into Action is in Appendix 3.

SOURCE: Nathalie Pedicelli, Organize.Thrive.Monetize. ADHD Coaching and Rhiannon Carter, Empower You ADHD Coaching



### Conquering Procrastination by ACTING: Things to remember

- Procrastination management is not a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Knowing the reason for procrastination allows you to adapt the strategy to the type of procrastination and specific situation.
- What works for your friends may not work for you when you're stuck.
- Apply the strategies that work for you.
- Don't worry if you're not ready for some of them yet.
- Create visual reminders to support your memory (alarms, post-it notes, diaries).

### The Power of Tiny Gains

- ✓ Get 1% better every day for a year
- ✓ 37 times better by year-end
- ✓ A slight change in your daily habits can add up to BIG changes over time

SOURCE: James Clear. (2018). *Atomic Habits*. Penguin Random House, New York.



Resources:



<https://www.additudemag.com/>



<https://ldadhdnetwork.ca/>



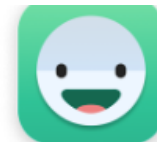
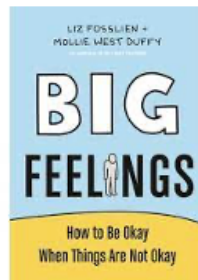
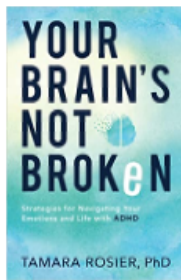
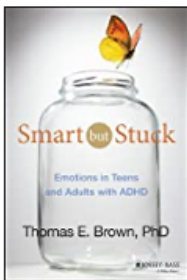
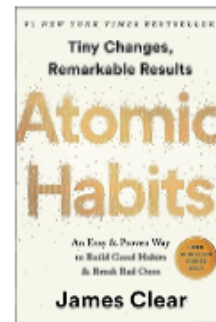
<https://caddac.ca/>



<https://www.focusmate.com/>



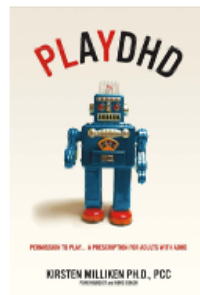
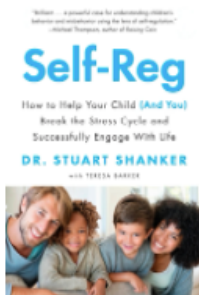
<https://www.youtube.com/c/howtoadhd>



Dailio Mood Tracking



Calm.com



Better Sleep



**APPENDIX 1: TOOL TO HELP REPLACE ANTS**

Write down your negative thoughts, i.e., your ANTS, in the left column.

After, think of a positive or neutral way to reframe that negative thought.

ANTS	REFRAME
"I am not able to do this task."	"I can learn to do this task with time."

**SOURCE:** Nathalie Pedicelli. Organize.Thrive.Monetize. ADHD Coaching & Rhiannon Carter, Empower You ADHD Coaching

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**APPENDIX 2: TOOL TO IDENTIFY STRATEGIES BY TYPE OF PROCRASTINATION**

1) In the first column, write down the types of procrastination that have been identified and that frequently affect you.

2) In the middle column, choose the strategies that seem most useful for this type of procrastination, from the brainstorming list.

3) In the last column, write down the tools you'll need for each of the strategies you've identified.

Type of procrastination	My preferred strategies	Tools I will need

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**APPENDIX 3: PROCESS TOOL – STEPS TO SHIFT INTO ACTION**

Work through steps 1 to 5.

- **Step 1:** Identify the task you are procrastinating on.

- **Step 2:** Identify the source of the procrastination.

Emotions? or Brain Gap?

- **Step 3:** Identify the reason.

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- **Step 4:** Find the strategies that apply.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- **Step 5:** Determine the rewards.

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