

PRODUCTIVE, SUCCESSFUL YOU!

END PROCRASTINATION BY CONQUERING PERFECTIONISM & ANXIETY

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Dr. Yip is a nationally recognized OCD and anxiety expert. She developed the Family Systems Based Strategic CBT, and has successfully treated severe OCD and anxiety disorders for over a decade. She frequently publishes articles, speaks internationally, and has been featured in various media venues.

In 2008, she established the Renewed Freedom Center in Los Angeles to help those suffering from OCD and anxiety disorders by providing the most advanced treatment available. She is Board Certified in Cognitive & Behavioral Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP), and is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the USC Keck School of Medicine. She is the author of *“Productive, Successful You: End Procrastination by Making Anxiety Work for You Rather Than Against You”* which was recently published in Dec 2013.

3 BASIC TYPES OF PROCRASTINATORS

- **Perfectionistic Procrastinator**
 - ✓ Excessively high standards.
 - ✓ Unrealistic expectations.
- **Perplexed Procrastinator**
 - ✓ Overwhelmed and crippled by vague, lengthy tasks/goals.
 - ✓ Falsely perceives ordinary tasks as mountainous missions.
- **Overworked Procrastinator**
 - ✓ Overextends schedule
 - ✓ Tries to fit unrealistic amounts of tasks into a day.



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HIGH STANDARDS VS. PERFECTIONISM

High Standards

- Strive for excellence.
- Motivate you to reach your goals.
- High levels of productivity.
- Flexible thinking.
- Mistakes = Opportunity for learning.
- Satisfaction when tasks are achieved.
- Intrinsically driven.

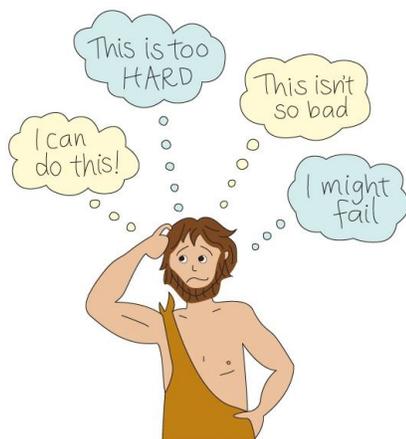
Perfectionism

- Set unrealistic standards that are unachievable or met with great difficulty.
- Fear of imperfection leads to intense anxiety & avoidance.
- High levels of procrastination.
- Rigid beliefs.
- Mistakes = Failure.
- Disappointment when tasks are not perfect.
- Extrinsically driven.



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WHAT MOTIVATES YOU?



"Whether you think that you can,
or that you can't, you are usually right!"
—Henry Ford

- Motivation is key to any productive effort.
- Motivation is dependent on morale – your belief in yourself to achieve established goals.



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FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO MOTIVATION VS. PROCRASTINATION

- Indirect Contributor = Fight-or-Flight Arousal
- Direct Contributor = Cognitive Distortions
- Anxiety → Procrastination
- Motivation → Productivity



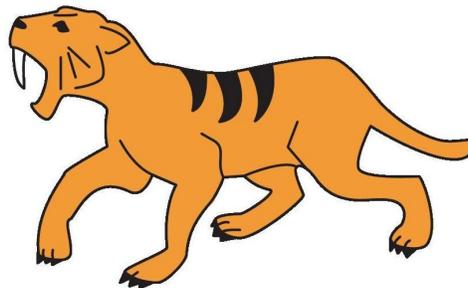
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HOW IS FIGHT-OR-FLIGHT AROUSAL RELATED TO ANXIETY OR MOTIVATION?



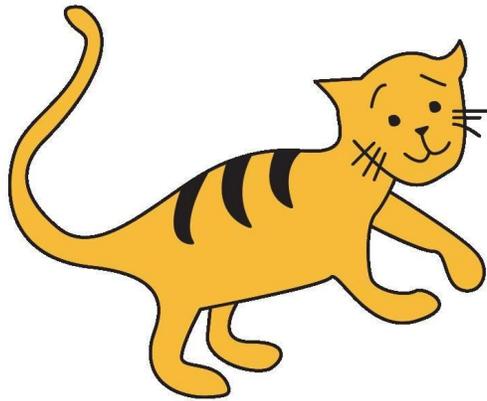
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FIGHT-OR-FLIGHT RESPONSE



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CUTE CUDDLY KITTY



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"How the fight-or-flight sensations are perceived
is all up to you."
-Dr. Yip



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TWO COMPONENTS OF ANXIETY

- Objective Physical Sensations
 - ✓ Heart palpitations
 - ✓ Heavy breathing
 - ✓ Headache
 - ✓ Nausea
 - ✓ Sweating

- Subjective Experience & Emotions
 - ✓ Nervousness
 - ✓ Fear
 - ✓ Worries
 - ✓ Apprehension
 - ✓ Distress



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NORMAL VS. UNHEALTHY LEVELS OF ANXIETY



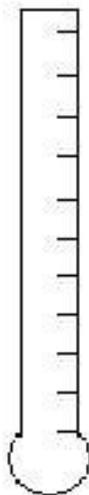
- Real threat vs. False alarm
- Fear vs. Excitement

"It's not events, but our opinions about them,
which cause us suffering."
-Epictetus



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PRODUCTIVITY - PROCRASTINATION THERMOMETER



- 10 Overextension, straining energy, breaking point, procrastination
- 9 Distraught, distressing energy, overwhelmed, procrastination
- 8 Threatening, excessive energy, maximum productivity, cramming
- 7 Alarm, superior energy, high productivity
- 6 Warning, intense energy, enhanced productivity
- 5 Alert, moderate energy, modest productivity
- 4 Caution, mild energy, minimal productivity
- 3 Aware, diminutive energy, negligible productivity
- 2 Relaxed, complacent, no productivity
- 1 Bored, underwhelmed, no productivity, procrastination
- 0 Dead, no reflex

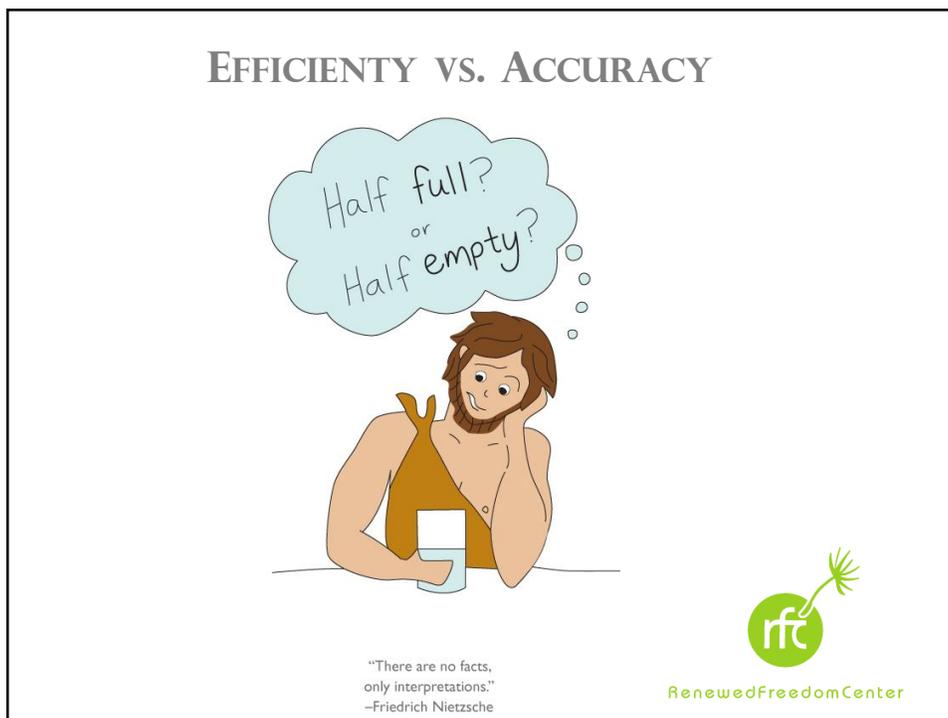
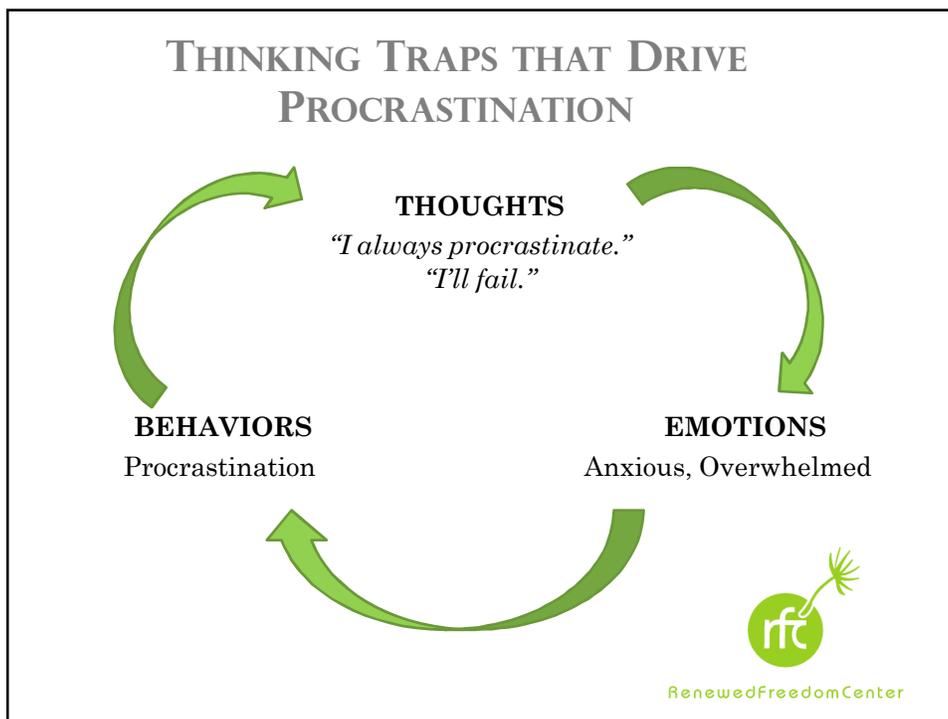


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HOW ARE COGNITIVE DISTORTIONS RELATED TO ANXIETY OR MOTIVATION?



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THINKING TRAPS

- **All or Nothing Thinking:** You view things as a false alternative of either one extreme or another.
 - *"Anything less of perfection is a failure"*
- **Overgeneralization:** You take isolated cases and use them as evidence to make wide inferences.
 - *"Many people procrastinate and still do well, so it doesn't really matter that I do it."*
- **Jumping to Conclusions:** (a) Mind reading - you assume the intention of others without evidence of what they're thinking. (b) Fortune telling - you arbitrarily forecast future occurrences.
 - *"Everyone will think I'm not good enough if I don't get straight As."*
- **Reverse Mind Reading:** You expect others to know what you are thinking without first providing relevant information.
 - *"I don't know why my parents make me play the violin. They should know how much I really hate practicing when I already have so much to do."*
- **Catastrophizing:** You automatically think the worst case scenario.
 - *"I won't get into an ivy league college if I don't answer these questions 100% accurately."*



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THINKING TRAPS (CONT)

- **Magnification or Minimization:** You make things out to be much bigger than they truly are, or unnecessarily diminish their significance.
 - *"If I don't get this presentation just perfect, I'll be the laughingstock of my group."*
- **Mental Filter:** You completely dwell on the negative and ignore any positive.
 - *"Now that I have a B, none of my As matter, because my GPA is ruined."*
- **Discounting the Positives:** You disregard or trivialize the positive elements about yourself, such as your efforts, attributes, qualities, or achievements.
 - *"I didn't really deserve this award. My teacher was just being nice."*
- **Exceptional Rule Justification:** You make judgments that only apply to specific cases, and do not really believe it at other times, for other circumstances, or with other people.
 - *"It's okay for other people to get Bs and Cs, but I would be a failure if I didn't get straight As."*
- **Irrelevant Connection:** You link two hypotheses that are unrelated.
 - *"It's okay to procrastinate a little on this paper for now, because I am too distracted with emails at the moment."*



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THINKING TRAPS (CONT)

- **Emotional Reasoning:** You rationalize based on how you feel rather than objective reality.
 - *I'm feeling too tired to work on this project, so it's best that I put it off until I feel more energetic to produce amazing results."*
- **Labeling:** You assign negative descriptors rather than describing specific behaviors.
 - *"I still haven't started my project; I'm a failure."*
- **Personalization and Blame:** You hold yourself or other people personally responsible for things that aren't entirely within anyone's control.
 - *"Because Sheila distracted me, I haven't finished any of my work."*
- **"Should" Statements:** You criticize yourself, others, inanimate objects, or uncontrollable situations with "shoulds" or "shouldn'ts."
 - *"I should be perfect."*



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IDENTIFY PERFECTIONISM & PROCRASTINATION

THOUGHTS:

- Do I often have doubts about my ability to meet my standards?
- Do I tell myself that I'll fail or make mistakes?

EMOTIONS (Red Flags):

- Do I often feel frustrated, anxious, overwhelmed, angry, disappointed, or depressed while trying to meet my standards?

BEHAVIORS:

- Do I have trouble meeting my own standards or take exceptionally long to complete tasks?
- Do my standards get in the way of my productivity, deadlines, or task completion?
- Do I often procrastinate or give up easily?



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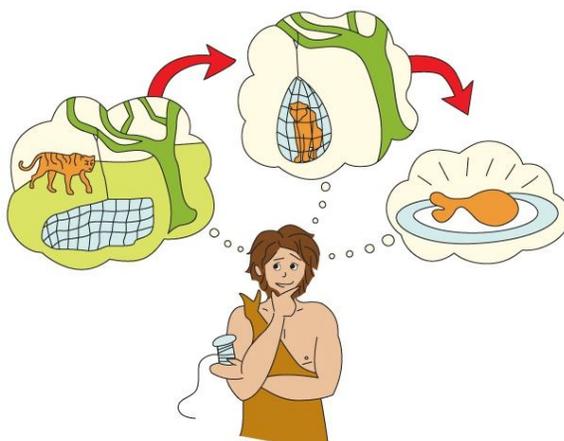
CHALLENGE THOUGHT TRAPS

- Automatic Thoughts:
 - ✓ Use negative emotions to identify thinking traps.
- Thought Accuracy:
 - ✓ *Is there evidence supporting this thought/belief?*
- Perspective Taking:
 - ✓ *How would other people respond to this thought/belief?*
- Alternative Thought:
 - ✓ *What is a more realistic thought/belief to this situation?*
- Acceptance & Tolerance:
 - ✓ Practice flexible thinking in the grey.



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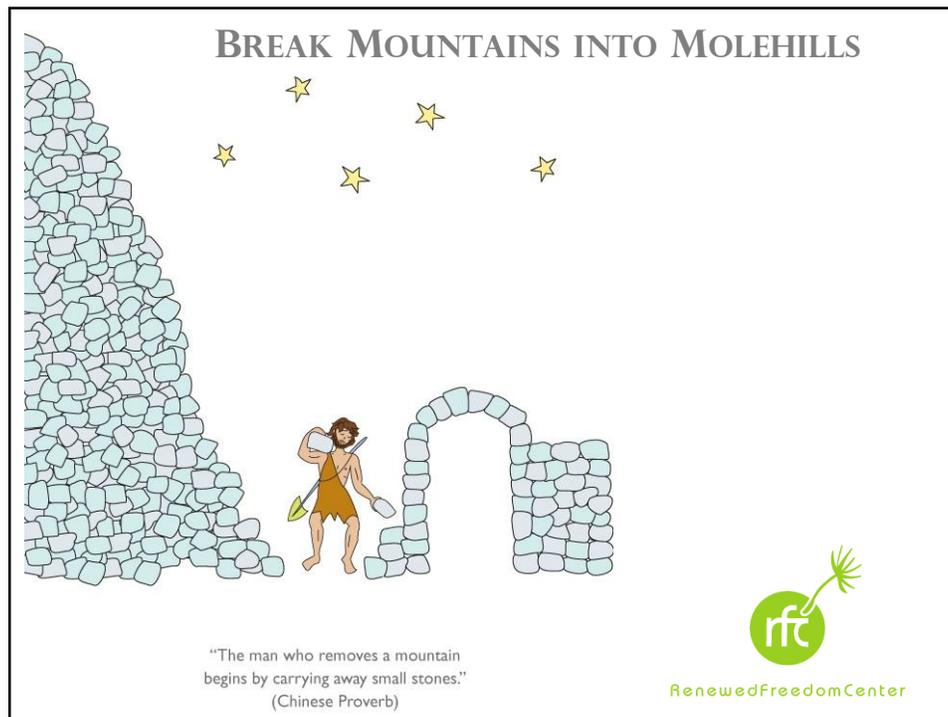
STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME ANXIETY, PERFECTIONISM, & PROCRASTINATION



"Let our advance worrying
become advance thinking and planning."
—Winston Churchill



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DEVELOP THE BLUEPRINT

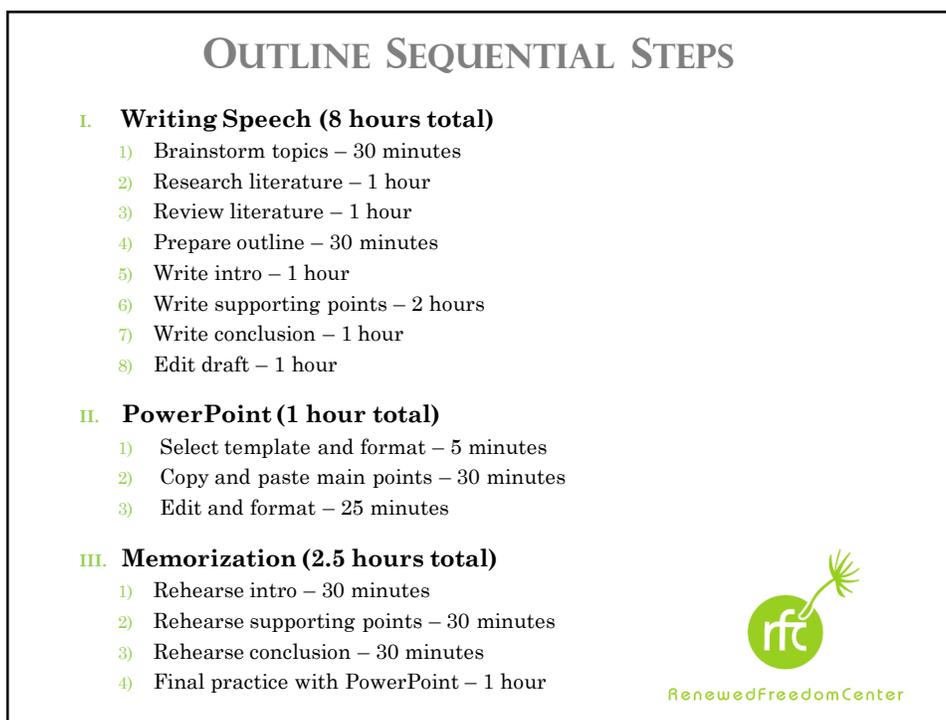
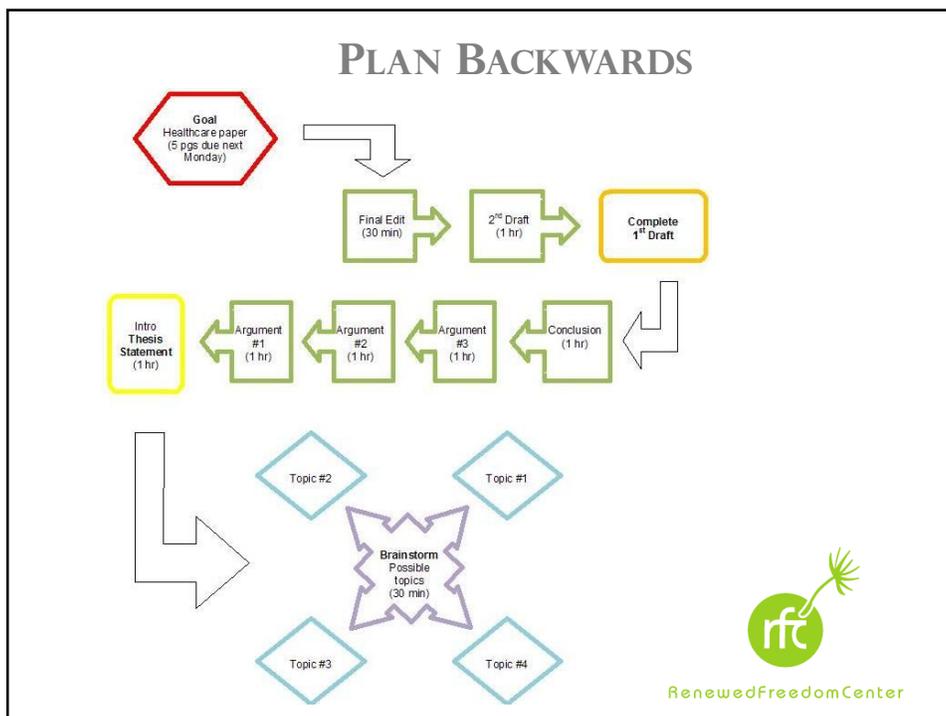
- Determine the Path
 - ✓ Ginormous mountain = Vague path
 - ✓ Small molehills = Clear goals

- Establish Achievable Tasks
 - ✓ Well-defined
 - ✓ Easily reached

- Have Plan of Attack
 - ✓ Easier problem-solving
 - ✓ Plan B for potential obstacles



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SCHEDULING FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



"He who fails to plan,
plans to fail!"
(Italian Proverb)



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ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Planner vs. To-Do List**
 - ✓ 1,440 minutes in a day
 - ✓ 168 hours in a week
- **Min → Hourly Scheduling**
- **Rescheduling Tasks**
 - ✓ ASAP
 - ✓ Smartphones
- **Unscheduled Tasks = Procrastination**



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LEARN TO GAUGE YOUR TIMEFRAME

Original Schedule

3:00 – 3:30 p.m.: Math - pages 67-69, odd numbers
3:30 – 4:15 p.m.: English - read chapters 12 & 13
4:15 – 5:00 p.m.: Science - page 109, questions 2-5
5:00 – 6:00 p.m.: Break
6:00 – 6:40 p.m.: Piano recital practice
6:40 – 7:00 p.m.: Piano free-play

Schedule Addendum 1

5:05 – 5:20 p.m.: Math - page 69, odd numbers
5:20 – 5:40 p.m.: Science - questions 4 & 5
5:40 – 6:00 p.m.: Break

Schedule Addendum 2

5:40 – 5:45 p.m.: Science - finish question 5
5:45 – 6:00 p.m.: Break



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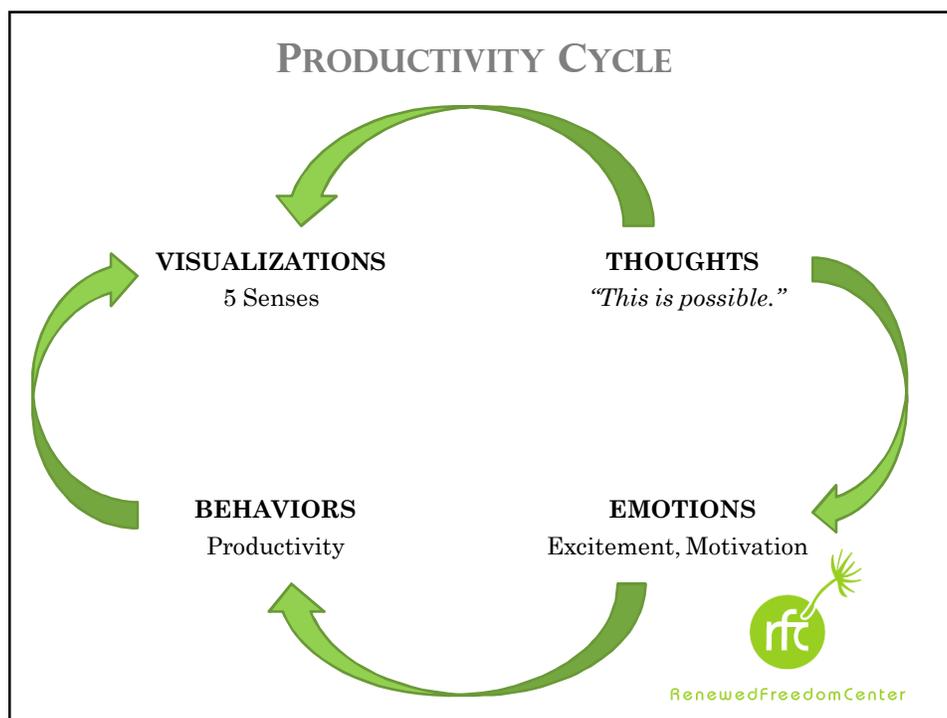
VISUALIZE SUCCESS!



“When you rehearse success in your mind,
you experience it in your life.”
—Remez Sasson



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MENTAL REHEARSAL

- 10 – 15 minutes each morning
- Utilize All 5 Senses
 - ✓ *Feel* sensation of accomplishing each goal.
- See Yourself on the Detailed Roadmap
 - ✓ Engaging in each task.
 - ✓ Completing each molehill to reach the final destination.
- Feelings of Achievement
 - ✓ Enhances an "I can" attitude.
 - ✓ Increases motivation, confidence, and drive to actually carry out each task.
- When you visualize success, it becomes more attainable simply because your mind believes it.

CHANGING PERFECTIONISTIC BEHAVIORS

- Chronic procrastination, giving up easily:
 - ✓ Break larger tasks into smaller, easily achievable tasks.
- Overly cautious and meticulous:
 - ✓ Schedule tasks w set timelines. Must move onto next task when time limit is up.
- Repeated Checking for Errors:
 - ✓ Check once through.
 - ✓ Purposeful exposure to making errors.
- Re-doing Tasks for Perfection:
 - ✓ Review once through.
 - ✓ Purposeful exposure to imperfection.
- Difficulty Making Decisions:
 - ✓ Make quick 5-sec decisions.
- Avoidance of new things to avoid mistakes:
 - ✓ Purposeful exposure to new things and making mistakes.



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PERFECTIONISM – IS IT OKAY?

Some people encourage perfectionism. How do we respond?

- Is the amount of time perfecting worth it?
- If the “need” to perfect HW takes time away from social interactions, family life, sports and other activities, or even sleep, then it needs to be re-evaluated.
- Generally, anytime it’s a “need” to feel “just right” it leans more in the direction of rigidity, which will be more problematic than simply a preference for high standards.
- “Practice Makes Habit.”



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Q & A

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