Procrastination Elimination Strategies

**Time-Telling:** Many students face barriers in estimating how long it will take to complete a task. To solve this issue, time yourself while you work on the task and compare your actual time with your estimated time.

**Reframe Deadlines Into Smaller Units of Time:** Think about the time you have to complete assignments and reframe it to make the deadline feel more pressing. A project due in 3 days (72 hrs) and a paper due in 1 month (30 days).

**Prompts/Reminder Notes:** Use physical reminder notes and place them in specific locations to remind you to complete a task (e.g. Post-it note on bathroom mirror).

**Reinforcement:** After working on a task for an extended period of time, give yourself a reward to reinforce your behavior. Example: “If I work on my reflection paper for 50 minutes, I’ll reward myself with an iced mocha”.

**The Bits-and-Pieces Approach:** Instead of completing an entire assignment at once, break it down into several parts. This makes the assignment seem less intimidating and encourages students to simply start working on it.

**The 5-Minute Plan:** Commit to working on a task for 5 minutes. Once time is up, you can determine whether you would like to continue working on the task or take a break.

**The 80% Success Rule:** Don’t expect to start and complete a task in one sitting. Set an achievable goal and plan on completing 80% of the task. Once you reach 80%, give yourself a reward and move on to completing the task.

**Social Support for Task Completion:** Partner with a peer who completes tasks on time. This can motivate you to work toward completing things on time rather than procrastinating.

**Establish a Set Time for a Routine:** Scheduling a specific time to complete a task during the day can help you to actually complete it. Doing this consistently promotes your behavior to regularly complete tasks.

**Modify the Environment:** The environment that we choose to work in can contribute to procrastinatory behavior. For instance, it would be difficult for most students to write a paper in a noisy restaurant. Instead, plan on reserving a room in Leavey library to write your paper, where it is quieter and there are fewer distractions.