Procrastination, the act of delaying urgent or important tasks until their due date is close, is often seen as a character flaw or weakness. But that is typically not true. **Procrastination is actually a coping technique used to deal with anxiety and doubts about our self-worth.** It is a method of avoidance. We use procrastination to avoid completing a task that we are afraid we won’t be able to finish according to the standard set for us by ourselves or the person who assigned us the task.

**Most people, including non-survivors,** will deal with some procrastination in their lives. However, survivors are particularly susceptible to it because we have a **higher level of anxiety and a lower level of self-worth.** And then some of us throw into that mix the self-imposed expectation that everything we do must be done perfectly. Those three factors, significantly increased by our childhood abuse, converge together to make procrastination a challenge for most survivors.

Procrastination is also not always a negative thing. **Sometimes postponing a task is healthy,** even excellent self-care. Procrastination becomes an unhealthy coping technique when it interferes with our ability to do our jobs, manage our homes, care for ourselves and parent our children.

**To reduce procrastination in your life implement these tips and strategies:**

- Work on **increasing your self-worth** so that you need to implement procrastination as a coping technique less often.

- Work to **decrease your expectation** that you will perform all tasks perfectly. This too will decrease your need to use procrastination as a coping technique.

- **Break tasks down into small parts** and start with those you think are easiest and the most likely that you will perform well. This will create **positive momentum** in the project.

- Partner with safe people who will provide you with both accountability and positive reinforcement.

**Pro-tip:** Keep track of those tasks you DO complete, rather than only a running list of things you need to do, such as drawing a line down the center of the page and labeling one column “To Do” and the other column “Done”

**Important:** A lack of motivation to undertake necessary tasks can be a symptom of depression. If you experience a lack of motivation, along with low mood please consult your physician. If you are already diagnosed with depression, let your physician know if you experience a marked decrease in motivation.