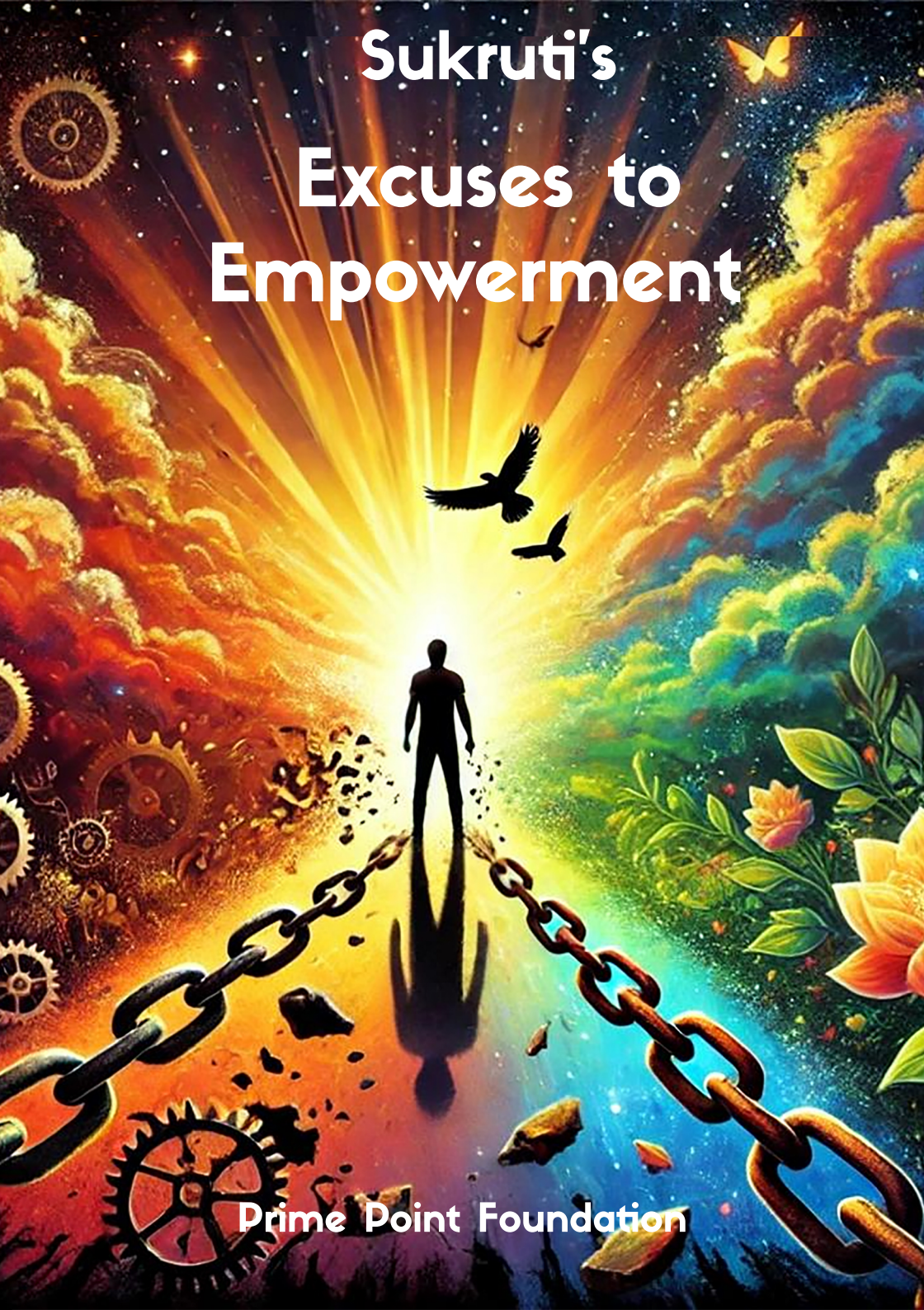


Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment



Prime Point Foundation



"Don't take rest after your first victory because if you fail in the second, more lips are waiting to say that your first victory was just luck."

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

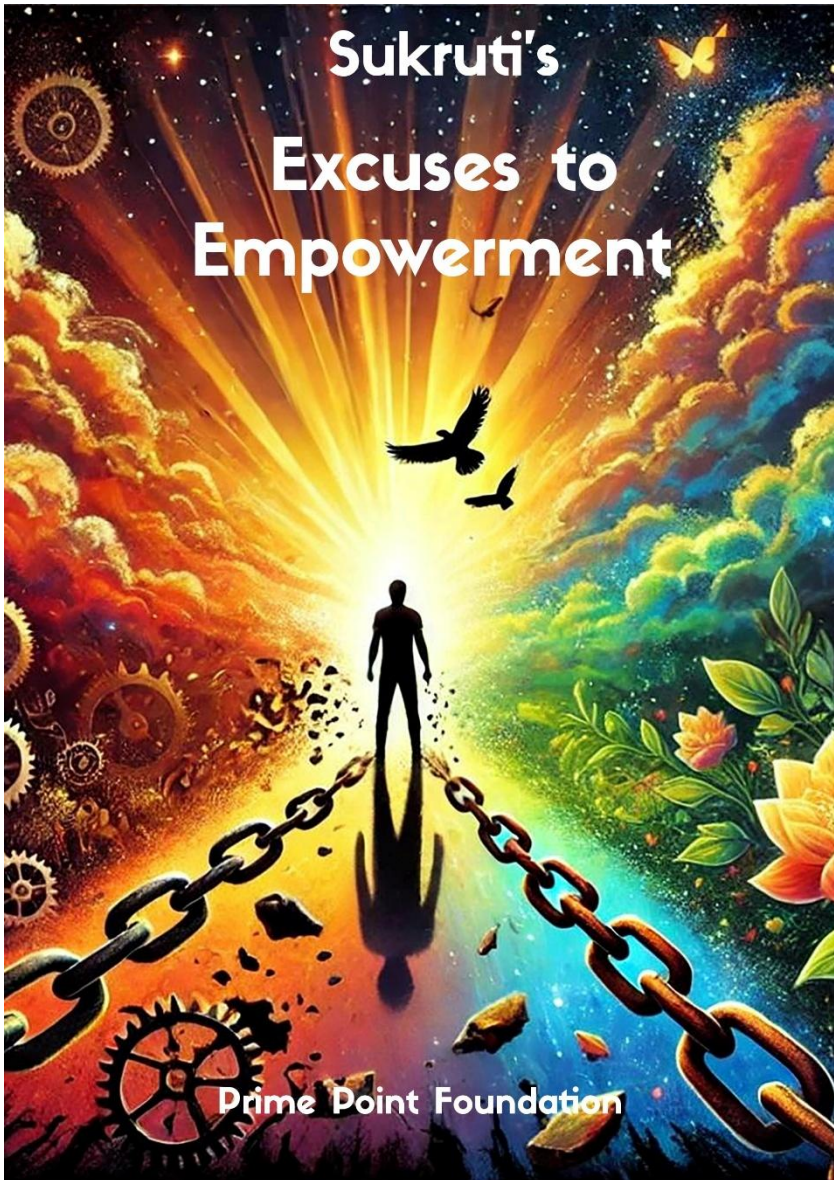


அச்சமில்லை அச்சமில்லை
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இச்சகத்து னோரெலாம் எதிர்த்து நின்ற
போதினும்,

அச்சமில்லை அச்சமில்லை
அச்சமென்பதில்லையே

No fear, no fear, there is no such thing as fear
Even when the entire world stands against me,
No fear, no fear, there is no such thing as fear
- Mahakavi Bharatiyar (written in 1906)



Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

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Introduction

**"काल करे सो आज कर, आज करे सो अब।
पल में परलय होयगी, बहुरि करेगा कब॥"**

Saint Kabir Das

Transliteration:

**"Kaal kare so aaj kar, aaj kare so ab.
Pal mein pralaya hoyegi, bahuri karega kab."**

Translation:

**What you have to do tomorrow, do it today;
what you have to do today, do it now.
Time is fleeting, and disaster may strike in a
moment—when will you do it then?**

Message:

Kabir urges us to take immediate action and not put things off. Procrastination can cost us valuable opportunities, as time waits for no one. The couplet is a timeless reminder to seize the present moment and accomplish tasks without delay.

Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

About the Author

Sukruti is a dynamic communication professional with a rich and diverse background spanning multiple industries, including education, telecom, technology, solar, and



healthcare. As the Co-Founder of Bamboo Ventures, she champions startups led by young parents, providing them with the tools to thrive. For over a decade, Sukruti has been dedicated to empowering the next generation of leaders, creating opportunities that spark innovation and growth.

Currently, Sukruti serves as the Global Head of Partnerships for ShakthiSat, the groundbreaking all-women-led lunar space mission, which unites 108 countries in a historic endeavour. She is also the Associate Editor of **PreSense**, India's longest-running voluntary eMagazine.

A proven leader, Sukruti has organized over 80 national and international events, produced world-record-breaking programs, and achieved extraordinary media engagement. Her work in forging global partnerships and driving impactful marketing strategies is well-recognized, notably during her tenure as Global Manager of the C4F Awards at the World Communication Forum.

Sukruti is the Founder of the Global Digital Journalists Forum (GDJF), an initiative inspiring young minds to embrace ethical and impactful storytelling. A true multi-talent, she has also debuted as the second heroine in a popular Telugu film, showcasing her versatility and creative spirit.

With an MBA in Public Relations, Marketing, and Applied Communication and ongoing studies in law and digital business, Sukruti's academic pursuits complement her professional success. She has received numerous accolades, including the prestigious "Young Visionary" award, from Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) for her contributions to technology and education and is celebrated as one of India's top women technologists. Sukruti's unwavering commitment to innovation, leadership, and education makes her an inspiring force for change in every field she touches.

From the Author's Desk

Success is a dream we all share, yet so often, we sabotage ourselves with excuses, self-doubt, and later regret over missed opportunities. I know this all too well—I lived in that cycle for years.

The turning point in my life came with the passing of my beloved grandfather, Dr. Isola Rajagopal. His loss shook me to the core, forcing me to confront the procrastination and self-imposed limitations that had held me back for far too long.

For as long as I can remember, I dreamt of writing. I had the resources, encouragement, and guidance to make it happen, especially from my mentor, Shri Prime Point Srinivasan, or "Prime Pa," as I affectionately call him. He believed in me even when I didn't believe in myself. With humour, he crowned me the "Procrastination Queen," a title I laughed off, blind to the truth it symbolised.

Prime Pa offered me countless opportunities, but I dodged them with excuses: "I'm too busy," "It's not the right time," "I'm not ready." His gentle nudges, even his teasing suggestion to write an "Exhaustive Excuse Manual," didn't penetrate my resistance.

When my daughter Krisha was born, his encouragement persisted. "Just carve out one hour a day," he urged. Overwhelmed by the demands of motherhood in a foreign country, I felt his persistence was insensitive. His words—calling me "lazy"—stung deeply. I pulled away, convinced he didn't understand.

But time brings clarity. Now, I see his words for what they were: a wake-up call. He knew that inaction leads to regret, a painful truth I only understood after my grandfather's passing. Looking back, I realised how many opportunities I had let slip through my fingers, opportunities that could have profoundly shaped my life.

This book is my redemption and my gift to you—a guide to breaking free from excuses and stepping boldly into the life you're meant to lead. It's a testament to the transformative power of self-awareness, decisive action, and the belief that it's never too late to rewrite your story.

Motherhood became my greatest teacher. It demands resilience, showing up every single day, even when you feel you can't. From small victories, like asking for help to take a bathroom break, to navigating the chaos, I discovered strength I never knew I had. And I know you can find it too.

The journey to write this book wasn't easy. At that time, I was serving as Head of Global Partnerships for the historic all-female-led space mission, *ShakthiSat*. This monumental mission required me to collaborate with Ambassadors from 108 countries, bridging efforts across technical experts, media professionals, and policymakers. Amidst this overwhelming workload, I stayed grounded, channeling my energy into completing this book—a testament to resilience, purpose, and rising above excuses.

To every young mother balancing the impossible, this book is for you. To anyone struggling with self-doubt, procrastination, or fear, this book is for you. Together,

we'll explore the steps to shed excuses, embrace empowerment, and step into your fullest potential.

Excuses to Empowerment draws from my personal journey, enriched by research, interviews, subject matter experts, and my training as an NLP practitioner. It is both a reflection and a roadmap, designed to inspire you to seize the opportunities life presents and transform your excuses into stepping stones to success.

Let's rise together, break free from the past, and create the empowered future we deserve.

With gratitude,

Sukruti

Foreword From Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam For The First Edition PreSense100

Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam
Former President of India



10, Rajaji Marg
New Delhi-110011

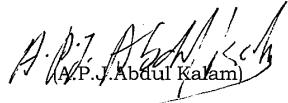
FOREWORD

I am very happy to know that the PreSense monthly ezine published by Prime Point Foundation is bringing out a book based on some of the unique articles, interviews and events published in its editions so far since from March 2006. The 100 issues of the publication have gone through an eventful journey, focusing on knowledge capture and important knowledge dissemination. I recollect my direct association with PreSense in July 2008, when I launched the cartoon character, 'Prince', created exclusively for PreSense.

I see PreSense continuing in its journey under the mentorship of Prime Point Srinivasan, maintaining its status as a must-read ezine, in the fast moving and evolving world of communication, knowledge and connectivity.

I congratulate the Editorial Team of PreSense for bringing out the 100th Edition as a Collector's Digest.

28th May 2015


A.P.J. Abdul Kalam




Prime Point Foundation and its Initiatives

Prime Point Foundation, a Non-Profit Trust and NGO, was founded in December 1999 by Shri K Srinivasan (popularly known as Prime Point Srinivasan), a former Senior Banker, digital Journalist, and Communication Professional, to promote leadership and communication skills among the youth. The foundation is associated with many eminent persons.

In the past 25 years, the Foundation has organised several seminars, workshops, training and interactive sessions, both offline and online, on various subjects of national interest. The Foundation manages various online discussion groups and podcasts on communication, and digital journalism.

The Foundation has formed 5 initiatives to create awareness in various domains. All these initiatives are managed independently by passionate experts. They are non-commercial and focussed on youth.

PreSense: The eMagazine PreSense was started in March 2006 on the suggestion of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam to promote positive journalism. Till Nov 2024, the **PR  SENSE** Foundation has published 213 editions. This is a digital-only magazine. Digests containing select articles, up to 150 editions of the eMagazine, have so far been published. Dr Abdul Kalam has written the foreword for the Digest

of articles up to 100 editions. PreSense publishes the cartoon character Prince, which was launched by Dr Abdul Kalam in 2008. PreSense has published a Digest of select articles published up to 175 editions in 8 volumes.

India Book of Records has recognised PreSense for publishing maximum number of digital only eMagazine since 2006 through voluntary efforts. .

Sansad Ratna Awards: This is a flagship initiative started in 2010 to honour top performing Parliamentarians every year, based on various performance parameters, and selected by a Jury Committee of eminent Parliamentarians. Dr Abdul Kalam himself inaugurated the first edition of the Awards event in May 2010. Till 2024, the Foundation has conducted 14 editions and presented 125 Awards. IIT Madras was the supporting Partner up to the 9th Edition. 10th Edition was held at Raj Bhavan, Tamil Nadu. 11, 12, 13 and 14th Editions were held at New Delhi.



India Book of Records (IBR) has recognised Sansad Ratna Awards for maximum number of Parliamentary Awards (86) given and maximum number of award events (12) by the civil society based on the performance in consecutive years.

Next Gen Political Leaders (NGPL) is an off-shoot of Sansad Ratna Awards. This is a registered NGO operating since 2018. NGPL has organised several workshops online and offline, for young political leaders and aspirants. Ministers, parliamentarians, legislators and retired constitutional authorities have participated and shared their views. NGPL will shortly be instituting Awards for young promising politicians.



Education Loan Task Force (ELTF) was started in 2010 to create awareness about education loans, among students and parents. More than 30,000 queries have been responded to, through email, and more than 5000 serious complaints have been taken up with the top management of the banks concerned, for redressal. Many policy issues have been taken up by Sansad Ratna Awardee MPs, in the Parliament for solution. ELTF does not facilitate loans.



Digital Journalists Association of India (DiJAI):



DiJAI is an independent NGO founded in 2017 to raise public and journalist awareness of digital journalism and its implications. DiJAI conducts several online and offline workshops and seminars with panels of domain experts.

Publisher's Note

At Prime Point Foundation, we have always believed in the power of young voices and the importance of empowering them to share their wisdom with the world. As part of our ongoing efforts to inspire and guide the next generation, we encourage young authors to write books that not only reflect their personal experiences but also provide practical insights that others can benefit from.

It is with great pleasure that we present the book "From Excuses to Empowerment" by Sukruti Narayanan. Sukruti, a communication expert currently residing in Australia, has written this book based on her own life experiences, including the missed opportunities due to procrastination, as well as valuable insights gained from her interactions with others. Her personal journey and reflections serve as an inspiring reminder to overcome procrastination and turn every opportunity into a stepping stone for empowerment.

We are confident that this book will serve as a powerful tool for readers who seek to transform their mindset and take decisive action to shape their future. Sukruti's authentic and practical approach will resonate with anyone looking to break free from the cycle of excuses and take charge of their lives.

On behalf of Prime Point Foundation, I wish you an enriching reading experience.

Prime Point Srinivasan

நெடுநீர் மறவி மடிதுயில் நான்கும்
கெடுநீரார் காமக் கலன்.

- Thirukkural 605

Translation:

**Procrastination, forgetfulness, idleness, and
sleep, these four things, form the vessel
which is desired by those destined to
destruction.**

Excuses to Empowerment

Katha Upanishad (1.3.14)

Sanskrit Verse:

"उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत।

क्षुरस्य धारा निशिता दुरत्यया दुर्गं पथस्तत् कवयो वदन्ति॥"

Translation:

"Arise! Awake! Approach the great teachers and learn from them. The path is sharp like a razor's edge, difficult to tread and hard to cross—so say the wise."

But, I'll Start Tomorrow: Understanding the Roots of Procrastination and Valuing Time



The phrase "I'll start tomorrow" is all too familiar for those battling procrastination.

For years, this has been my go-to excuse. My enthusiasm often felt like a fragile bubble, bursting the moment action was required. Instead of taking steps

forward, I found myself endlessly replaying the task in my mind—leaving me drained and exhausted before I even began.

Procrastination, often misunderstood as laziness, is instead a complex psychological phenomenon tied to emotional discomfort, fear, self-doubt and much more than all this. Procrastination undermines personal growth, reduces productivity, and can lead to regret from missed opportunities. And the worst part is, I convince myself over it and the horrible feeling fades away.

I would like to explore with you the roots of procrastination, emphasizing the value of time and offering actionable steps to combat the habit of delaying essential tasks.

The Psychological Roots of Procrastination

Procrastination is frequently a coping mechanism for dealing with uncomfortable feelings. According to Dr. Tim Pynchyl, a leading researcher on procrastination, "Procrastination is not a time-management problem; it's an emotion-management problem." I totally agree with this! I might have time to binge-watch a show for straight 3 hours, but I don't find time to read an article that will take less than 5 minutes. In doing my research, I found some common psychological drivers behind procrastination:

Fear of Failure

Fear of failure is one of the most pervasive psychological factors driving procrastination. When people anticipate that their efforts might not lead to the desired success, they often avoid starting a task to escape the anxiety associated with potential failure. This fear stems from a perfectionist mindset, where individuals set unrealistically high standards and feel paralyzed by the thought of not meeting them.

The standards I set for myself is so high and totally unrequired that I just fail even at the start of doing something.

Psychologists Burka and Yuen, in *Procrastination: Why You Do It, What To Do About It*, note that procrastinators sometimes equate their worth with success and avoid tasks as a defense against potential failure. While this is not entirely true in my case as I love to handle only complex and problematic projects and situations, I get stuck at the high standards I set for myself.

By postponing the task, I temporarily avoid confronting the possibility of inadequacy, even though this ultimately leads to stress as deadlines loom.

Perfectionism

Related to fear of failure, perfectionism involves setting overly high standards that are difficult, if not impossible, to achieve. Here I come, to analyse the complicated problems I have chosen to solve!

Perfectionists often delay starting or completing tasks because they feel their efforts might not meet these high standards. They might engage in endless revisions, worry about minor flaws, or feel discouraged by the thought that their work will be judged. This “all-or-nothing” approach to tasks can lead to avoidance and delay. Perfectionism fuels procrastination by creating a cycle where people put off tasks to avoid feeling incapable of achieving perfection, thus reinforcing the habit of delay. I just realised this was my biggest problem only while doing my research for this book. So looks like I am not lazy after all, and I know what I need to work on!

Lack of Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific situations or accomplish a task. When individuals doubt their capability to complete a task successfully, they may put it off due to low self-confidence. People with low self-efficacy often feel that their efforts won't make a meaningful impact, so they delay starting tasks altogether.

For instance, someone who doubts their public speaking skills may procrastinate on preparing for a presentation, convinced they won't be able to deliver it effectively. This factor is particularly common in individuals who have experienced repeated setbacks, as these experiences reinforce the belief that their efforts are futile.

Studies, such as those conducted by H.C. Klassen et al., have shown a strong link between low self-efficacy and procrastination in students.

Writing articles has been such a nightmare for me because even before starting, I know I will fail. On knowing what the outcome is even before planning the task, only amplifies the outcome – both positive and negative!

Instant Gratification and Impulsivity

Procrastination is often driven by a preference for immediate pleasure over delayed rewards, a tendency known as the “instant gratification bias.” Humans are naturally inclined to choose activities that offer immediate satisfaction, especially when a task appears boring or difficult.

This tendency is well-documented in Piers Steel's *The Procrastination Equation*, which explains that people's preference for instant gratification makes procrastination an appealing escape from hard work.

For example, instead of working on a long-term project, an individual might choose to scroll through social media, which provides instant pleasure. This tendency is closely related to impulsivity, where people struggle to resist distractions or impulses that lead to short-term rewards.

The availability of endless digital distractions has amplified this tendency, making it easier than ever to avoid unpleasant tasks.

Task Aversiveness

Tasks that are perceived as unpleasant, boring, or stressful are often put off due to task aversiveness. When people find a task inherently unenjoyable, they are more likely to delay it, hoping that their aversion will lessen over time or that they'll be in a "better mood" later.

For instance, I have been delaying tasks like filing tax returns, cleaning my home, and many more simple things because I associate these activities with discomfort or tedium. Task aversiveness is fueled by the anticipation of negative emotions, making avoidance a tempting option in the short term, even though it compounds stress over time.

Decision Paralysis

Some individuals procrastinate because they struggle to make decisions, a phenomenon known as decision paralysis. This factor is common among those who overanalyze or feel overwhelmed by choices, leading them to delay actions rather than risk making a wrong decision.

Decision paralysis often occurs in tasks that require planning or involve many steps, such as launching a business or starting a major project which luckily, I find to be very motivating as it is complex and challenging.

By postponing a decision, people avoid the discomfort of committing to a choice, but this avoidance ultimately leads to inaction and missed opportunities.

Low Motivation and Purpose

When a task lacks intrinsic motivation or personal relevance, it becomes easier to delay. People are less likely to procrastinate on activities that they find meaningful or fulfilling. However, when a task feels unimportant or disconnected from their goals, they are more likely to avoid it.

This is why finding the “Why” of doing things makes a huge difference! Once you know your purpose, you never need external motivation. The purpose will start driving you from within and it is surprising how you never feel tired, lazy, lack of time or any other reason to. Not do something.

For instance, an employee might delay working on a report if they see it as a tedious requirement rather than an opportunity to advance their career. Without a clear sense of purpose or motivation, it's challenging to muster the energy to tackle tasks, making procrastination a default response.

Temporal Discounting

Temporal discounting is a cognitive bias where people devalue rewards that are further in the future in favor of immediate, smaller rewards. When the benefits of completing a task seem distant, it's easier to delay

action. This factor explains why students might procrastinate on assignments that aren't due for weeks or why individuals postpone savings for retirement. The long-term reward feels abstract and less appealing compared to short-term pleasures, which results in a tendency to defer tasks.

Mood Regulation and Emotional Avoidance

Procrastination can be a way of managing negative emotions such as anxiety, frustration, or self-doubt. When people associate a task with unpleasant feelings, they may avoid it to maintain their current mood. For example, someone who feels anxious about an impending deadline might engage in distractions to escape the stress temporarily. This form of "emotion-focused coping" is counterproductive, as it only provides short-term relief, exacerbating anxiety and guilt over time as the task remains incomplete.

By the end of the day, the very purpose of getting distracted is defeated as one has to face the implication of inaction and still complete the pending task. My turning point was, When I realised there is no way to escape from what I need to do. I had to wait until my daughter was born to realise I can't pawn off my responsibilities 😊

Poor Time Management and Planning Skills

Finally, procrastination is often linked to a lack of time management skills. People who struggle with planning, organizing, or breaking down tasks into manageable

steps are more likely to feel overwhelmed and delay starting. Poor time management can make tasks appear larger and more intimidating than they are, leading to avoidance. Enhancing time management skills can mitigate this factor, enabling individuals to approach tasks more systematically and feel more in control.

My mentor Shri K Srinivasan whom I call as Prime pa, always says "It is the meticulous planning that counts. The results will just flow automatically by the grace of Lord Krishna!" It has taken 13 years for me to understand the depth of this message.

In a nutshell

Procrastination is a multifaceted behaviour shaped by various psychological factors, from fear of failure to impulsivity to perfectionism to poor time management. Recognizing and understanding these underlying factors is the first step in developing strategies to manage procrastination. By addressing the root causes, individuals can work toward building healthier habits and achieving their goals without the burden of constant delay.

If you feel you can relate to at least one of the many points mentioned, I am very sure this book is for you!

The Cost of "I'll Start Tomorrow"

When procrastination becomes a habit, it exacts a significant toll on both personal and professional lives. Time is one of our most valuable resources; once lost, it

cannot be regained. Stephen Covey, in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, emphasizes the importance of prioritizing time based on importance rather than urgency. By delaying tasks, procrastinators waste precious time that could otherwise be devoted to meaningful achievements and personal growth.

I personally felt the pinch of the below 3 points which has taken a toll on my health – both physical and mental well being. Not only that, I went into the loop of not trusting myself and dismissing all the appreciation that people gave me for the very fact that I believed I did not deserve it due to my procrastination behaviour! Though it is true that I give excuses, It is also true I work very harder than anyone else when I near the deadline. This actually created a lot of burnout in me which took longer to recuperate than expected.

1. **Lost Opportunities:** Procrastination often leads to missed chances and wasted potential. A project delayed today might mean a promotion missed tomorrow. The cost of delaying is real and impactful, affecting everything from career advancement to personal development.
2. **Increased Stress and Anxiety:** The more one procrastinates, the heavier tasks weigh on the mind. This accumulated stress can become overwhelming as deadlines approach, leading to a cycle of anxiety and further avoidance.

- 3. Reduced Productivity and Quality of Work:** When tasks are completed at the last minute, the quality often suffers. Procrastination leads to rushed work, which can result in poorer outcomes, missed details, and an overall decrease in the standard of performance.

The Value of Time: A Finite Resource

As philosopher William James observed, "The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it." Valuing time is about recognizing its fleeting nature and making deliberate choices about how we spend it. In Covey's time-management matrix, he categorizes activities into four quadrants based on urgency and importance. By prioritizing tasks that are important but not urgent, we can focus on actions that contribute to long-term goals and self-improvement, rather than just responding to immediate needs.

I would like to share few tasks for you to work along with every reading. Please don't procrastinate 😊

Action Worksheet: Breaking the Procrastination Cycle

Task 1: Identify Your Procrastination Triggers

Write down situations where you often say, "I'll start tomorrow." Reflect on these scenarios and consider the following:

- What emotions are associated with each scenario?

Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

- Is there a specific fear (e.g., fear of failure or any one of the 10 mentioned reasons) tied to each task?
- Are you avoiding discomfort or uncertainty?

Situation	Emotions	Fears	Actionable Change
Example: Delaying a report	Anxiety	Fear of failure	Break down the report into small tasks

Task 2: Value Your Time

Estimate the time you have for each day and how you typically spend it. Identify how much time is spent on meaningful tasks versus distractions.

- Daily time: _____
- Time on meaningful work: _____
- Time lost to distractions: _____

Reflect on how you can replace some “lost time” with productive, goal-oriented activities.

Task 3: Set Small Daily Goals

Break it into manageable parts rather than tackling a big task all at once. For each day, set three small goals contributing to your larger objective. (Don't get over-ambitious and set yourself up for failure). Doing one thing every day is very powerful, and imagine doing 3 things consistently! The power of the compounding effect is unimaginable 😊

- Goal 1: _____
- Goal 2: _____
- Goal 3: _____

Practical Techniques to Overcome Procrastination

1. **The 5-Minute Rule:** Commit to working on a task for just five minutes. Often, starting is the hardest part, and once you begin, you're likely to continue working.
2. **Accountability Partners:** Share your goals with a friend or colleague who can hold you accountable. The added responsibility of reporting back can motivate you to follow through. (Don't avoid your accountability partner just because you couldn't complete a task! Always remember, our life is a "Work in Progress" (WIP).
3. **Reward System:** Reward yourself for completing tasks. Breaks, small treats, or enjoyable activities can be tied to finishing work, creating positive reinforcement for completing goals.
4. **Visual Reminders and Checklists:** Use sticky notes or a whiteboard to keep track of tasks. Physically seeing your goals can act as a motivational reminder.

Quotes and Examples to Inspire Action

"You may delay, but time will not." – Benjamin Franklin.

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing." – Walt Disney

"Nothing is so fatiguing as the eternal hanging on of an uncompleted task." – William James

I am sharing 2 real life examples here on how people put an end to their procrastination and created a legacy.

1. Victor Hugo and "The Hunchback of Notre-Dame"

Scenario: French novelist Victor Hugo was notorious for procrastinating. Faced with a tight deadline imposed by his publisher to complete The Hunchback of Notre-Dame, he found himself delaying the writing process.

Action Taken: To combat his procrastination, Hugo devised a unique strategy: he locked away all his clothes except for a large shawl. Without appropriate attire to go outside, he eliminated distractions and forced himself to stay indoors and focus on writing.

Outcome: This drastic measure broke his procrastination cycle, enabling him to complete the novel ahead of schedule. The book became a classic of French literature, demonstrating how overcoming procrastination can lead to remarkable achievements.

2. Brian Tracy's "Eat That Frog" Technique

Scenario: Recognizing that many professionals procrastinate on important tasks, Brian Tracy sought a practical solution.

Action Taken: He introduced the "Eat That Frog" concept—tackling the most challenging task first thing in the day to build momentum and reduce procrastination.

Outcome: His approach has helped countless individuals improve productivity and overcome procrastination, becoming a staple in time-management training.

The power is in our hands to decide and chisel the way we want our lives to be! Its an one-time life and let's live well 😊

Worksheet: Reflection and Action Plan

To solidify your reading and learning, use this worksheet as a guide:

1. Reflect on a Recent Procrastination Event

- What task did you delay?
- What emotions or fears contributed to the delay?
- How did delaying affect the outcome or add to stress?
- What action did you take post the stress?

2. Write a Letter to Your Future Self

- Describe how overcoming procrastination today will benefit your future. Include motivations, anticipated challenges, and the rewards of acting now.

It is best to keep journaling your actions so you get mindful and aware of the unconscious pattern created. Awareness is the golden key of solution to any problem!

I am elaborating more on excuses and the comfort zone it creates. See you in the next chapter 😊

The Art of Justifying Delay: How Excuses Become Our Comfort Zone and how to "Excuse Detox".



"I'll get to it tomorrow" or "I'm too tired right now"—these are the common excuses I gave myself which are easy to make but hard to break free from. The habit of justifying delay is pervasive, yet subtle, as it provides a comfortable escape from challenges, responsibilities, and even self-doubt. Excuses allow temporary relief from

discomfort, providing us with a psychological “comfort zone” that prevents immediate action and delays progress. In this chapter, we’ll uncover the subtle art of delay, examining the reasons why we cling to excuses, how they impact our growth, and what can be done to transform the habit of excuse-making into purposeful action.

Understanding the Psychological Comfort of Excuses

Excuses are not just arbitrary reasons to avoid tasks; they are deeply ingrained mechanisms tied to emotional regulation and self-perception. Dr. Tim Pychyl, an expert in procrastination analysis, explains that procrastination is “an emotion-focused coping strategy,” and excuses serve as a tool to manage those negative emotions associated with challenging tasks. They provide a shield from accountability and create a “comfort zone” that feels safe but is ultimately restrictive.

Psychologists describe excuses as “self-handicapping strategies,” where people unconsciously create barriers that prevent them from fully committing to a task.

Excuses often serve as a temporary solution to:

Escape Discomfort: When faced with a difficult or ambiguous task, excuses allow us to avoid the discomfort of starting something challenging. Excuses give us an instant feeling of relief. When we tell ourselves, “I’ll handle it later,” we temporarily relieve the stress associated with the task.

Avoid Accountability: By delaying action, we don't have to face the potential outcomes (positive or negative), thus postponing accountability thus avoiding the risk of criticism or failure. This self-preserving behavior is often rooted in a fear of being exposed as inadequate or unprepared. This protection is particularly strong for people with imposter syndrome, who may delay tasks to avoid the possibility of revealing their insecurities.

Preserve Self-Worth: Excuses protect self-image, especially when we fear failure. They create a buffer, so if the task doesn't turn out well, we can point to external factors rather than personal shortcomings. According to psychologist Dr. Ellen Hendriksen, "The human brain likes routine because it gives us a sense of predictability and control." Excuses maintain the status quo, preserving our comfort zone and reinforcing our existing identity. Change, which might challenge this identity, is often avoided because it can threaten our sense of self.

In essence, excuses create a safety net that allows us to avoid the immediate, often uncomfortable demands of tasks while maintaining a sense of psychological security. This comfort zone is powerful but ultimately stifling, and limiting our potential for growth and achievement.

While the excuses seem like giving a way out of stress, the reality is :

1. Missed Opportunities

Excuses prevent people from seizing opportunities that could lead to growth, advancement, and fulfillment. A person who repeatedly delays learning new skills may miss out on career advancements or creative achievements.

2. Stagnation and Lack of Growth

When excuses become a habit, growth stagnates. Avoiding new experiences and challenges results in a limited skill set, reduced resilience, and a diminished sense of accomplishment.

3. Damaged Relationships and Reputation

Constantly making excuses can erode trust and reliability. In professional and personal settings, individuals who frequently avoid responsibility risk damaging their relationships and reputations, as others may perceive them as unreliable.

4. Loss of Self-Respect

Each time an excuse is used, it reinforces a lack of accountability. Over time, this erodes self-respect, as individuals come to view themselves as incapable or unwilling to face challenges.

Day-to-day examples of how excuses work for us

Professional Context: The Missed Promotion

Consider an employee who regularly delays pursuing new responsibilities or skill development. They might justify this delay by claiming they are “too busy” with

their current workload. In reality, the fear of failure or the discomfort of stepping out of their comfort zone may be the real reason behind the hesitation. Over time, this pattern of delay can result in missed promotions or career growth opportunities.

Health and Fitness: Postponing Wellness Goals

Another example is the common delay in pursuing health goals. A person might consistently say, "I'll start work out next month" or "I'll eat healthier when things settle down." This excuse may stem from the fear of discomfort, the discipline required, or previous failures. The cost of delaying, however, is often significant, affecting physical health and overall well-being.

Personal Development: The Deferred Passion Project

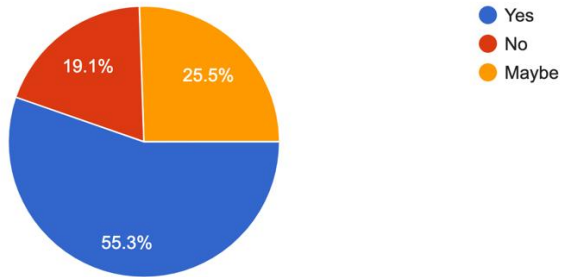
Many people have dreams they put off for "someday"—whether it's writing a book as in my case, starting a business, or learning a new skill. They may justify the delay with excuses like "I don't have time right now" or "I'll start once I'm ready." These justifications prevent them from taking the first steps toward their goals, leading to regret later in life.

Out of a survey conducted with 650 samples from across the globe and various age brackets, the following was the turnout response :

Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

Have you ever missed an Opportunity due to Procrastination?

47 responses



Real-Life Examples of Overcoming Excuses

1. **Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson’s Transformation**

Early in his career, Dwayne Johnson faced repeated failures and financial struggles. Instead of making excuses, he chose to take responsibility, pushing himself beyond his comfort zone. His journey from being broke to becoming one of the highest-paid actors exemplifies the power of perseverance over excuses.

2. **Richard Branson and the Fear of Failure**

Branson, known for his adventurous spirit, admits he faced doubts when starting ventures like Virgin Atlantic. However, instead of allowing fear to become an excuse, he embraced risks, learning from failures. Branson’s career highlights the importance of viewing challenges as opportunities rather than obstacles.

3. **Sara Blakely's Journey to Creating Spanx**

Sara Blakely, founder of Spanx, started her business with minimal experience and funding. Rather than using these as excuses, she focused on her vision, tirelessly working through obstacles. Her story serves as a reminder that the absence of excuses can lead to unprecedented success.

I found few Quotes that personally helped me Overcome Excuses and Take Action

1. **"He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else."** – Benjamin Franklin.

Franklin's quote reinforces the idea that excuses hinder achievement, reminding us of the importance of accountability.

2. **"Excuses are the nails used to build a house of failure."** – Jim Rohn.

Rohn's insight emphasizes that excuses form the foundation of inaction and lost potential.

3. **"The more reasons you have for achieving your goal, the more determined you will become."** – Brian Tracy.

Tracy's quote highlights that finding motivation can counteract excuses, shifting focus from delay to action.

I would like to share 5 key strategies that helps in "Excuse Detox"

Transforming Excuses into Purposeful Action:

1. Identify Emotional Triggers Behind Excuses

Excuses often emerge from specific emotional triggers, such as anxiety, fear, or overwhelm. By identifying and understanding these triggers, individuals can begin to dismantle the need for excuses. Journaling about feelings before, during, and after making excuses can help uncover patterns and reveal the root causes.

2. Adopt a "Pre-Commitment" Strategy

Pre-commitment involves creating structures that hold you accountable before excuses even arise. For instance, publicly setting a goal or scheduling a meeting to discuss a project with a colleague makes it harder to back out. This approach limits the opportunity for excuses by creating an expectation of follow-through.

3. Visualize the Consequences of Delay

A technique known as "fear-setting," popularized by Tim Ferriss, encourages individuals to visualize the consequences of delay. By considering the potential negative outcomes of delay, people can create a sense of urgency that combats the comfort of excuses.

4. Break Down Tasks and Set Micro-Goals

Large tasks can be intimidating and create excuses to delay. By breaking tasks into smaller, manageable parts, individuals reduce the psychological barriers to starting. For example, instead of committing to writing an entire report, set a micro-goal to draft the first paragraph or outline key points.

5. Reframe Negative Self-Talk

Negative self-talk reinforces excuses and the habit of delay. Replace thoughts like "I'm not ready" or "I don't have enough time" with affirmations such as "I can start with what I have now" or "Taking one step forward is better than standing still." Reframing builds a positive narrative that diminishes the appeal of excuses.

6. Hold Yourself Accountable

Set goals and deadlines, and hold yourself accountable. You can also enlist an accountability partner—a friend, colleague, or mentor—who can encourage you and provide honest feedback on your progress.

Worksheet: Recognizing and Overcoming Excuses

Task 1: Track Your Excuses

For one week, track the excuses you make for not completing tasks or taking action. Be honest with yourself, and try to record each excuse as it happens.

Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

Day	Task Delayed	Excuse Used	Underlying Emotion (e.g., Fear, Anxiety, Boredom)
Example: Monday	Cleaning	"I'm too tired"	Overwhelm

Task 2 : Start observing how the excuse has impacted progress.

Excuse	Underlying Reason	Impact on Progress
Example: "I don't have time."	Avoidance of challenging tasks	Missed learning opportunities

Task 3: Break Down Your Comfort Zone

Reflect on three tasks you typically delay. Identify the comfort zone associated with each task and ways to step outside it.

Task	Comfort Zone	Action to Step Out
Example: Starting a report	Waiting until I feel "ready"	Write one paragraph, regardless of quality

Task 4: Visualize Outcomes of Action vs. Delay

Choose one goal you've been delaying. Visualize and write down the best and worst outcomes if you take action vs. delay further.

- **Goal:** _____
- **Positive Outcome (If Acted On):** _____
- **Negative Outcome (If Delayed):** _____

Task 5: Create an Accountability Plan

1. Choose one goal for the week that you've been delaying.
2. Write down daily action steps to achieve it.
3. Find an accountability partner and check in with them regularly.

Goal	Daily Action Steps	Accountability Partner
Example: Complete an online course	Watch one module each day, take notes	[Partner's Name]

The Cost of Lost Opportunities: Regret and What Could Have Been



Missed chances—whether they are personal, professional, or educational—leave a mark that can influence our future actions and mindset. Lost opportunities are not just about things we didn't do; they are lessons, turning points, and motivators that shape who we become. Let us explore the real costs associated with missed opportunities, the factors that contribute to

lost chances, and actionable steps to prevent future regrets.

Understanding the True Cost of Missed Opportunities

Opportunities often represent potential paths for growth, success, and fulfillment. When we fail to act on them, the impact extends beyond the immediate loss. Few key aspects of the cost associated with lost opportunities are emotional toll and regret, missed learning and growth, delayed progress, financial impact, loss of reputation and credibility.

A few key Real-World Examples of Missed Opportunities are:

1. Blockbuster and Netflix

In the early 2000s, Blockbuster had the chance to purchase Netflix for \$50 million. Believing that the streaming model wouldn't succeed, Blockbuster declined. The result was the rapid decline of Blockbuster, while Netflix became a global entertainment giant. This example underscores the cost of underestimating innovation and ignoring trends.

2. Kodak and the Digital Camera Revolution

Kodak, a leader in film photography, developed one of the first digital cameras but chose not to pursue it, fearing it would harm its film business. This decision cost Kodak its market dominance as competitors

embraced digital photography, eventually leading Kodak to bankruptcy.

3. **Missed Career Advancements Due to Delay**

In a professional context, delaying applications for promotions or new roles can lead to missed career advancements. Many individuals hesitate due to self-doubt or fear of rejection, only to find that someone else has taken the position. Such missed opportunities can delay career progress and reduce long-term earnings.

Quotes on Lost Opportunities and Regret

1. **"In the end, we only regret the chances we didn't take."** – Lewis Carroll

Carroll's words highlight that actions left undone are often the ones we regret most, emphasizing the importance of seizing every chance.

2. **"Opportunities are like sunrises. If you wait too long, you miss them."** – William Arthur Ward

This quote reminds us of the fleeting nature of opportunities and the need to act promptly before chances slip away.

3. **"The cost of inaction is far greater than the cost of a mistake."** – Meg Whitman

Whitman's insight encourages readers to act, suggesting that mistakes are preferable to missed opportunities.

We often miss opportunities due to fear of failure, sticking to our comfort zone and routine, lack of self-

belief, decision paralysis, external influences and societal pressure.

How to Prevent Future Regret and Embrace Opportunities

1. Develop a Growth Mindset

A growth mindset, as popularized by psychologist Carol Dweck, encourages individuals to view challenges as opportunities for development. This mindset fosters resilience and reduces the fear of failure, making it easier to embrace opportunities without hesitation.

2. Practice Reflection and Self-Assessment

Regular self-reflection helps identify past patterns of inaction and procrastination. By understanding why previous opportunities were missed, individuals can develop a proactive approach to future possibilities. Setting time for monthly or weekly reflections can help maintain self-awareness and readiness for action.

3. Focus on Small Wins to Build Momentum

Rather than waiting for "perfect" opportunities, start with small, manageable ones. These small wins build confidence and create momentum, making it easier to take on larger opportunities over time. Psychologists call this the "success spiral," where each success builds on the previous one.

4. Create a Personal Opportunity Checklist

An opportunity checklist provides a structured way to evaluate choices quickly. For each opportunity, assess its potential impact, alignment with personal values, and relevance to long-term goals. By making this evaluation a habit, individuals can reduce decision paralysis and act faster.

5. Surround Yourself with Positive Influences

A supportive network can inspire and encourage action. Surrounding oneself with proactive, ambitious individuals fosters an environment where opportunities are valued and pursued rather than feared or ignored.

Worksheet: Moving from Regret to Action

Task 1: Reflect on Past Missed Opportunities

1. Identify two opportunities you regret not taking.
2. Describe why you missed them and what factors contributed to your decision.
3. Reflect on what you learned from these experiences and how they can inform future actions.

Missed Opportunity	Reason for Delay	Lesson Learned	Future Approach
Example: Applying for a leadership role	Self-doubt	Importance of confidence	Prepare and apply despite fear

Task 2: Evaluate New Opportunities

For each new opportunity, use the questions below to help decide on action:

1. How does this opportunity align with my personal and professional goals?
2. What is the potential upside and downside of taking this opportunity?
3. What steps can I take to prepare and minimize risks?

Opportunity	Goal Alignment	Upside	Downside	Action Plan
Example: Speaking at a conference	Aligns with career growth	Increases visibility	May feel anxious	Practice and prepare thoroughly

Learning from Failures and Letting Go of Perfectionism: Embracing Growth Over Flawlessness



Failure and imperfection are integral parts of human experience and growth, yet they are often viewed as weaknesses or shortcomings. Perfectionism—the pursuit of flawlessness—stifles creativity, resilience, and self-acceptance. This chapter explores the relationship between learning from failure and overcoming

perfectionism, and it offers actionable insights on shifting from a fear of mistakes to a mindset of growth and adaptability.

Understanding Perfectionism and Its Consequences

Perfectionism, while often seen as a drive for excellence, can lead to emotional and mental strain. Dr. Brené Brown, a renowned researcher on vulnerability, explains that "Perfectionism is a self-destructive and addictive belief system that fuels this primary thought: If I look perfect, live perfect, and do everything perfectly, I can avoid or minimize the painful feelings of shame, judgment, and blame." However, striving for perfection is unrealistic and leaves individuals fearful of making mistakes, stifling creativity and growth.

Perfection can be broadly classified into three types:

Self-Oriented Perfectionism: This type focuses on setting excessively high standards for oneself. Individuals with self-oriented perfectionism often experience guilt, anxiety, and fear of failure when they cannot meet their own standards.

Other-Oriented Perfectionism: This type involves setting unrealistic standards for others, leading to frustration and dissatisfaction in relationships and teamwork.

Socially Prescribed Perfectionism: Social pressures and expectations drive this form of perfectionism,

causing individuals to seek approval and validation from external sources. This often leads to burnout and stress, as they feel the constant need to prove themselves to others.

The Value of Failure as a Learning Tool

While perfectionism frames failure as a threat, a growth mindset reframes it as a valuable tool for learning. Learning from failure is about viewing mistakes as steps toward progress rather than setbacks. When I embraced failures, I was able to associate failure with positive incidents rather than any anxiety creator. Failure made me realise different strengths like:

1. Resilience Building

Failures offer opportunities to build resilience—the ability to bounce back from challenges. Psychologist Angela Duckworth's research on grit shows that resilience is crucial for long-term success, as it encourages individuals to keep moving forward despite setbacks.

2. Self-Awareness and Improvement

Failure encourages self-reflection, helping individuals identify areas for improvement. This honest self-assessment allows for continuous growth and personal development.

3. Innovation and Experimentation

By letting go of the fear of failure, people are more willing to experiment and innovate. Silicon Valley, for

example, embraces the motto "Fail fast, fail forward" to encourage rapid learning and adaptation.

4. Increased Confidence

As individuals learn to handle failure, their confidence grows. They realize that they can face challenges without losing their self-worth, fostering a stronger sense of self-assurance.

Real-Life Examples of Learning from Failure

1. Elon Musk and SpaceX

Elon Musk's initial SpaceX rocket launches were riddled with failures. Rather than striving for a flawless first launch, Musk focused on learning from mistakes and improving incrementally. This mindset led to groundbreaking successes like reusable rockets and SpaceX's leadership in private space exploration.

2. Sheryl Sandberg and Writing "Lean In"

Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg initially hesitated to write her bestselling book *Lean In*, fearing it wouldn't be perfect. Eventually, she realized that sharing her authentic experiences and insights was more important than creating an impeccable manuscript. Her book became a global phenomenon, empowering millions of women.

3. Walt Disney and Early Animation

Walt Disney's first animation business failed, and he lost rights to one of his original characters. Despite these setbacks, Disney didn't aim for perfection in his next venture—he focused on telling compelling

stories. This approach led to the creation of *Mickey Mouse* and the global success of Disney.

Quotes on Embracing Failure and Letting Go of Perfectionism

1. **"Perfection is the enemy of progress."** – Winston Churchill
Churchill's words highlight that striving for perfection often prevents meaningful progress. Accepting imperfection enables growth.
2. **"Failure is simply the opportunity to begin again, this time more intelligently."** – Henry Ford
Ford's quote reframes failure as a chance to improve and learn, encouraging a growth-oriented approach.
3. **"There is no innovation and creativity without failure. Period."** – Brené Brown
Brown emphasizes that creativity and growth are impossible without the willingness to make mistakes, reinforcing the need to embrace imperfection.

Strategies for Letting Go of Perfectionism and Embracing Growth

1. **Practice Self-Compassion**
Self-compassion, as promoted by Dr. Kristin Neff, involves treating oneself with kindness during times of failure or challenge. By showing understanding toward one's imperfections, individuals can reduce

self-criticism and build resilience. Practicing self-compassion helps perfectionists reframe mistakes as natural aspects of the learning process.

2. **Shift from Fixed to Growth Mindset**

Dr. Carol Dweck's work on mindset shows that individuals with a growth mindset view intelligence and abilities as malleable. Embracing a growth mindset means recognizing that talents can be developed through dedication, which fosters resilience and reduces the fear of failure.

3. **Set Realistic Goals with Flexibility**

Instead of setting rigid, high-stakes goals, perfectionists can benefit from setting realistic goals that allow for flexibility. This strategy involves breaking down larger goals into smaller, achievable milestones, creating a sense of progress without overwhelming expectations.

4. **Practice Exposure to Failure**

A counter-intuitive yet effective way to let go of perfectionism is to deliberately embrace small "failures" as a learning exercise. This practice, known as "failure inoculation," helps individuals gradually reduce their fear of making mistakes. For example, a perfectionist could try taking on a creative project without expecting perfect results, focusing on the process rather than the outcome.

5. Reframe Mistakes as Data for Growth

Rather than viewing mistakes as personal shortcomings, reframing them as data points helps perfectionists see errors as part of an iterative learning process. Each mistake provides feedback, guiding future improvements and contributing to long-term growth.

Worksheet: Embracing Imperfection and Learning from Failures

Task 1: Reflect on Past Failures

1. Identify three recent failures or mistakes.
2. For each one, reflect on what you learned and how it contributed to your growth.

Failure or Mistake	What I Learned	How It Contributed to My Growth
Example: Missed a deadline	Improved time management skills	Became more organized with planning

Task 2: Set “Good Enough” Goals

Perfectionists often set unattainably high standards. To practice embracing imperfection, set three “good enough” goals this week—goals you can complete without striving for flawlessness.

Goal	Good Enough Outcome	Reflection on the Outcome
Example: Write a blog post	Publish without over-editing	Focused on content, not perfection

Task 3: Reframe Mistakes

1. Choose one recent mistake.
2. Write down the negative thoughts you associate with this mistake.
3. Reframe each thought with a growth-oriented perspective.

Mistake	Negative Thought	Growth-Oriented Reframe
Example: Forgot a meeting	"I'm irresponsible"	"I can improve by setting reminders"

Overcoming Self-Doubt: Building Confidence to Act Now



Self-doubt is a persistent and often paralyzing force that prevents people from achieving their potential. Rooted in fear and insecurity, self-doubt undermines confidence,

causing individuals to hesitate or avoid taking action. However, overcoming self-doubt is possible through intentional practices and mindset shifts. Let us explore how to address and overcome self-doubt, cultivate self-belief, and build the confidence needed to seize opportunities without hesitation.

The Origins of Self-Doubt

Self-doubt often emerges from past experiences, internalized criticism, or unrealistic expectations. Psychologists explain that self-doubt is linked to the "inner critic," a negative internal voice that criticizes and undermines our self-worth. This voice can stem from early life experiences, comparisons with others, or cultural and societal pressures.

1. Comparison Culture and Social Media

Social media has intensified self-doubt by presenting curated highlights of others' lives. Constant comparisons to the achievements and appearances of others create a feeling of inadequacy, fueling self-doubt.

2. Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome is a psychological phenomenon where individuals doubt their abilities and feel like frauds despite evidence of success. Research by Dr. Pauline Clance and Dr. Suzanne Imes, who coined the term, shows that imposter syndrome is especially prevalent among high-achievers who believe their success is due to luck rather than skill.

3. Fear of Failure and Fear of Judgment

Self-doubt often arises from a fear of failing or being judged. The worry of making mistakes or receiving

criticism discourages people from stepping out of their comfort zones, reinforcing self-doubt and reducing resilience.

4. **Negative Self-Talk and Limiting Beliefs**

Negative self-talk, often subconscious, reinforces self-doubt. Thoughts like "I'm not good enough" or "I'll never succeed" create a self-fulfilling prophecy, holding individuals back from pursuing their goals.

The Consequences of Self-Doubt

Self-doubt has far-reaching effects on personal and professional life. The hesitation it causes can lead to missed opportunities, lower self-esteem, and a cycle of inaction.

1. **Stifled Ambition**

Self-doubt limits ambition by preventing individuals from aiming high. The fear of not being capable enough often leads to settling for less, avoiding challenges, and underachieving relative to one's potential.

2. **Reduced Creativity and Innovation**

Creativity thrives in an environment of confidence and risk-taking. When self-doubt is present, individuals are less likely to experiment, explore new ideas, or take creative risks, resulting in limited innovation.

3. **Increased Anxiety and Stress**

Constant self-doubt creates an underlying stress that can contribute to anxiety. This stress impacts mental and physical health, as the individual continuously feels pressured to prove themselves or avoid failure.

4. **Loss of Joy and Fulfillment**

Self-doubt can prevent people from engaging fully in life, robbing them of joy and satisfaction. The constant worry over perceived inadequacies makes it hard to appreciate achievements, leading to a sense of emptiness and unfulfillment.

Real-Life Examples of Overcoming Self-Doubt

1. **Sylvester Stallone and the Making of *Rocky***

Before *Rocky*, Stallone faced numerous rejections as an actor and writer. Self-doubt could have easily deterred him, but he persevered, believing in his screenplay. His determination led to *Rocky* becoming an iconic film, proving that belief in one's vision can overcome doubt and lead to monumental success.

2. **Maya Angelou's Battle with Self-Doubt**

Despite her achievements, Maya Angelou admitted to feeling self-doubt, saying, "I have written 11 books, but each time I think, 'Uh-oh, they're going to find out now. I've run a game on everybody, and they're going to find me out.'" Angelou's success shows that even celebrated figures experience self-doubt but choose to keep moving forward.

Quotes on Overcoming Self-Doubt

1. **"Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will."** – Suzy Kassem
Kassem's quote emphasizes that self-doubt is often more damaging than actual failure, as it prevents people from trying in the first place.
2. **"Believe you can, and you're halfway there."** – Theodore Roosevelt
Roosevelt's words underscore the power of self-belief in achieving goals, highlighting that confidence is key to success.
3. **"Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right."** – Henry Ford
Ford's quote reminds us that mindset shapes outcomes, encouraging a shift from doubt to belief in one's abilities.

Strategies to Overcome Self-Doubt and Build Confidence

1. **Challenge and Reframe Negative Thoughts**
Identify negative thoughts and replace them with positive affirmations. For example, instead of thinking, "I'm not capable," try reframing it to, "I'm learning and growing." Practicing positive self-talk reinforces confidence and diminishes the influence of self-doubt.
2. **Set Small, Achievable Goals**
Setting realistic, incremental goals helps build confidence gradually. Each small success reinforces self-belief, creating a success loop. Dr. Albert

Bandura, known for his work on self-efficacy, explains that achieving small goals fosters a sense of competence, counteracting self-doubt.

3. Visualize Success and Practice Affirmations

Visualization and affirmations can positively impact confidence. Spend time imagining successful outcomes and repeating affirmations like "I am capable" or "I am enough." These practices reinforce self-belief by helping the mind accept positive outcomes as achievable.

4. Seek Support from a Mentor or Positive Influences

Surrounding oneself with supportive, positive people can counter self-doubt. A mentor can offer guidance, encouragement, and constructive feedback. Learning from someone who has overcome similar challenges provides a roadmap for tackling self-doubt.

5. Celebrate Progress, Not Just Outcomes

Self-doubt often arises when individuals focus solely on final outcomes. Instead, focus on progress and effort. Celebrating each step forward, regardless of the result, builds resilience and reduces the need for external validation.

Worksheet: Overcoming Self-Doubt and Building Confidence

Task 1: Identify and Reframe Negative Thoughts

1. Write down three common negative thoughts that reinforce your self-doubt.

2. Reframe each one with a positive or neutral thought.

Negative Thought	Reframed Positive Thought
Example: "I'm not qualified for this role."	"I can learn and grow into this role."

Task 2: Set Confidence-Boosting Goals

List three small goals you can accomplish this week to build confidence.

Goal	Action Steps	Completion Date
Example: Present a new idea in a meeting	Prepare notes, practice, speak up	[Insert Date]

Task 3: Visualization Exercise

1. Find a quiet space and close your eyes.
2. Visualize yourself successfully completing a task you've been avoiding due to self-doubt.
3. Write down how this visualization made you feel and any insights you gained.

Task	Visualization Outcome	Insight
Example: Giving a presentation	Felt more confident and prepared	Realized I need to practice more often

Setting Intentions, Not Just Goals: Creating a Roadmap to Action



We often set specific outcomes in the form of measurable milestones and strive to achieve them. However, while goals provide direction, they do not always encompass the *why* or deeper purpose behind the actions required to achieve them. Intentions, on the other hand, are broader and more value-driven, focusing on the present

moment and guiding principles. Setting intentions is about aligning goals with a purposeful mindset, creating a journey that's not only outcome-focused but also meaningful. This chapter delves into the difference between goals and intentions, the power of setting intentions, and practical strategies for creating a life rooted in intentionality.

The Key Difference Between Goals and Intentions

1. Goals as Destinations

Goals adopt the SMART principle and are specific, measurable, and time-bound. They serve as milestones that help individuals stay focused on achieving a particular outcome. For instance, a goal might be to "increase sales by 20% in the next quarter." Goals have a clear endpoint, which provides a sense of accomplishment once achieved but may also limit the scope of growth if they're too rigid.

2. Intentions as Guiding Principles

Unlike goals, intentions are not confined to a single result. They represent the underlying values and purpose behind actions. An intention might be to "approach each workday with mindfulness and focus." Intentions foster a mindset that influences daily choices, regardless of specific outcomes, and encourage consistent growth and presence in the moment.

Why Both Are Necessary for Growth

Goals without intentions can become mechanical and demotivating, especially when challenges arise. Intentions provide the inner motivation and purpose to pursue goals with enthusiasm and resilience. Together, they create a holistic approach, where intentions fuel the journey and goals mark significant milestones.

The Power of Setting Intentions

Intentions help individuals stay grounded in their values, leading to a more fulfilling and balanced life. When actions are intention-driven, they reflect a commitment to personal values and a willingness to grow.

1. Intentions Foster Resilience

Setting intentions encourages people to remain committed even when goals seem difficult to reach. For example, if someone's goal is to become healthier, setting an intention like "nurturing my body with care" provides a positive, sustainable foundation that supports consistent action.

2. Intentions Encourage Mindfulness

Intentions bring awareness to each moment, fostering mindfulness. By focusing on how they want to feel and act in the present, individuals develop greater self-awareness and make choices aligned with their authentic selves.

3. **Intentions Promote Inner Fulfillment**

Goals focus on external achievements, but intentions foster internal satisfaction. By staying connected to their intentions, individuals find joy in the process rather than just the result, reducing stress and enhancing well-being.

4. **Intentions Help Navigate Uncertainty**

When life presents unexpected challenges, intentions provide a compass. For instance, a professional setback may derail a goal temporarily, but the intention to "continue learning and growing" keeps the individual focused on their purpose, regardless of setbacks.

Real-Life Examples of Intention-Driven Success

Mahatma Gandhi's Intentions of Peace and Nonviolence

- **Intentions:** Mahatma Gandhi's life was deeply rooted in the principles of peace, nonviolence (*ahimsa*), and truth (*satya*). His intention was to achieve India's independence through nonviolent resistance and to inspire harmony among people of different religions and communities.
- **Outcome:** His leadership in the Indian independence movement galvanized millions to join peaceful protests like the Salt March and the Quit India Movement. Gandhi's approach influenced global leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela, and he became a universal symbol of

nonviolent resistance, leaving a legacy that continues to inspire movements for justice and freedom worldwide.

Wangari Maathai's Intentions for Environmental Sustainability

- **Intentions:** Wangari Maathai's commitment to environmental conservation and women's empowerment in Africa drove her Green Belt Movement.
- **Outcome:** Her efforts planted over 30 million trees, combating deforestation and earning her the Nobel Peace Prize.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Intentions of Equality and Justice

- **Intentions:** Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned a world where racial equality and justice prevailed. His deep commitment to civil rights was anchored in the principle of nonviolence.
- **Outcome:** His leadership in the Civil Rights Movement led to historic reforms like the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, shaping a more equitable America.

Quotes on the Power of Intentions

1. **"Our intention creates our reality."** – Wayne Dyer.
This quote by Dyer highlights the transformative power of intentions in shaping one's life experience.

2. **"When you have clarity of intention, the universe conspires with you to make it happen."** – Fabienne Fredrickson.

Fredrickson's insight underscores that a clear intention aligns actions with purpose, increasing the likelihood of achieving meaningful outcomes.

3. **"Success is a journey, not a destination. The doing is often more important than the outcome."** – Arthur Ashe.

Ashe's words emphasize the value of intentions in guiding each step, rather than solely focusing on the endpoint.

Strategies for Setting and Living by Intentions

While we may have big dreams, the path we choose to achieve it is very important. If it does not resonate with who we are, we may end up sabotaging our own efforts. We need to do few things first to set our intentions:

1. **Clarify Core Values and Beliefs**

Begin by identifying the values that are most important to you, as they form the foundation of your intentions. Reflect on questions like, "What do I want to bring to the world?" or "How do I want to impact those around me?" Defining core values helps align intentions with a deeper sense of self.

2. **Set Intentions Daily**

Rather than setting intentions once, make them a part of your daily routine. Each morning, take a

moment to reflect on how you want to approach the day. For instance, set an intention such as "approach today with kindness and patience." This daily practice reinforces intentionality and keeps values at the forefront.

3. **Visualize Your Desired Outcomes**

Visualization enhances commitment to intentions. Imagine how you want to feel or what you want to accomplish with a given intention. For example, visualize yourself handling stressful situations calmly if your intention is to "stay grounded and composed."

4. **Practice Mindfulness to Stay Aligned with Intentions**

Mindfulness fosters awareness, allowing individuals to notice when they stray from their intentions. Throughout the day, pause and ask, "Am I acting in line with my intentions?" This self-check keeps actions aligned with purpose.

5. **Use Affirmations to Reinforce Intentions**

Positive affirmations like "I am mindful and present in each task" or "I embrace patience and persistence" help internalize intentions. Repeating affirmations cultivates a mindset that supports intentions.

6. **Celebrate Progress and Learn from Challenges**

Living by intentions is a journey, not a perfect path. Celebrate small successes, such as moments when you stayed true to your intentions, and reflect on challenges to refine your approach.

Worksheet: Setting and Living by Intentions

Task 1: Identify Your Core Values

1. Write down your top five core values.
2. Reflect on how these values influence your intentions.

Core Value	Influence on Intentions
Example: Integrity	Guides me to act truthfully and openly

Task 2: Set Daily Intentions

For the next week, set an intention each day that aligns with your values. Reflect on your experience each evening.

Day	Intention	Reflection
Monday	Approach each task with patience	Remained calm and focused

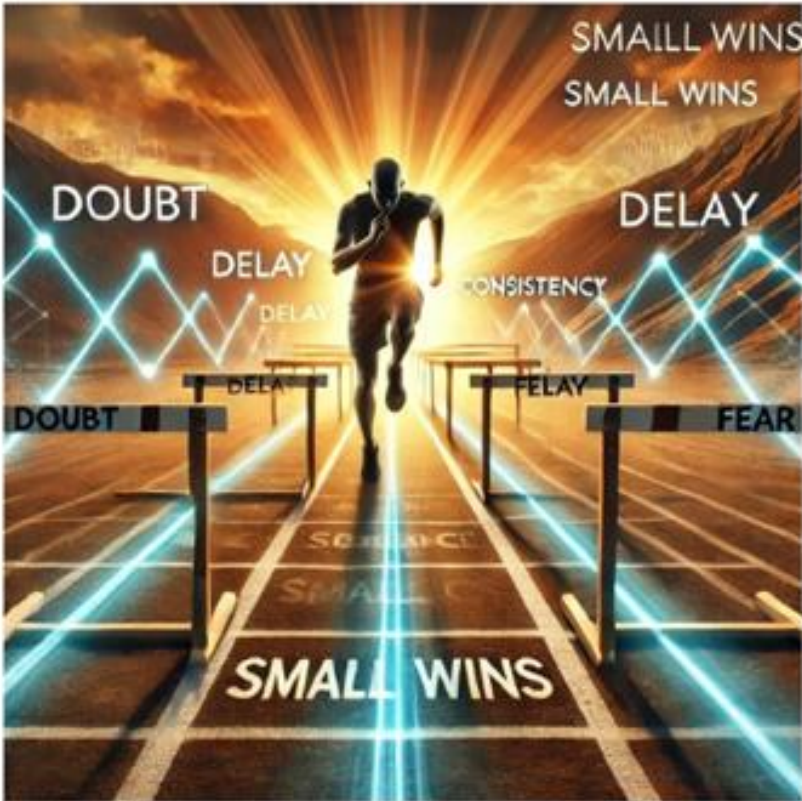
Task 3: Visualize Success with Intentions

1. Choose one intention you want to focus on.
2. Spend five minutes visualizing yourself embodying this intention.
3. Write down how this visualization made you feel and about any insights gained.

Sukruti's Excuses to Empowerment

Intention	Visualization Outcome	Insights
Example: Stay calm under pressure	Felt more in control and prepared	Realized I can handle stress better than I thought

The Power of Momentum: Small Wins to Break the Cycle of Delay



Momentum is a powerful force that drives continuous forward motion, often turning small beginnings into significant achievements. When we build momentum, we find it easier to keep going, overcome obstacles, and maintain motivation. This chapter delves into the science and psychology of momentum, offering insights into how

small wins, consistent actions, and positive reinforcement create a powerful cycle of progress.

Understanding Momentum

Momentum in physics is the product of mass and velocity; in life, it can be seen as the force that builds when you make consistent progress toward your goals. When momentum is established, even small efforts can yield big results, propelling you forward with less resistance.

1. The Science Behind Momentum

Psychologists refer to momentum as the “success spiral.” Success creates positive emotions, which then drive further action. Research by Dr. Teresa Amabile at Harvard Business School demonstrates that “progress in meaningful work” is a critical motivator. Small wins create positive reinforcement, making individuals more likely to continue their efforts.

2. The Power of Small Wins

Small wins are achievable steps that build confidence and motivation. When we achieve small milestones, dopamine—a neurotransmitter associated with pleasure and reward—is released, reinforcing positive behavior. This “dopamine effect” encourages us to pursue further achievements, leading to a self-reinforcing cycle of progress.

3. Momentum as a Counter to Resistance

Once momentum is built, it reduces resistance. Starting a task often feels difficult, but consistent actions create familiarity and reduce the brain's resistance to effort. Momentum can help bypass common barriers such as fear, doubt, and procrastination by fostering a sense of control and readiness.

Real-Life Examples of Momentum in Action

Walt Disney's Creation of Disneyland

Walt Disney faced numerous financial and creative challenges while designing Disneyland. He started with small-scale designs and prototypes, constantly refining his vision. Despite skepticism and funding hurdles, he continued building momentum by sharing his dream with collaborators and investors.

Disneyland opened in 1955, revolutionizing the entertainment industry and setting the foundation for Disney's global empire.

1. The "Kaizen" Approach in Japanese Manufacturing

Japanese companies like Toyota use "Kaizen," or continuous improvement, to enhance productivity. Kaizen focuses on making small changes that accumulate over time, building momentum and leading to significant long-term improvements. This approach illustrates how small wins can build a strong foundation for consistent growth.

2. Thomas Edison's Process of Innovation

Edison famously said, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." His work ethic was

grounded in momentum—testing ideas incrementally, learning from each result, and using small discoveries to fuel continuous progress. Edison's approach shows that each small step, even if it's a "failure," builds the knowledge and momentum necessary for success.

Quotes on the Power of Momentum

1. **"Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and day out."** – Robert Collier

Collier's quote underscores the cumulative power of consistent action in creating momentum.

2. **"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."** – Jim Ryun

Ryun highlights the transition from motivation to habit, showing that sustained momentum is the result of building consistent routines.

3. **"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit."** – Aristotle

Aristotle's words remind us that momentum and excellence are created through repeated actions, transforming small efforts into lasting habits.

Strategies for Building and Maintaining Momentum

1. **Start Small and Celebrate Each Win**

Momentum begins with small actions. By breaking down big tasks into achievable steps, you create a sense of accomplishment with each completed action. For example, if you're writing a book, set a daily word

count goal and celebrate meeting it, building positive reinforcement.

2. Create a Daily Routine

Consistency is the backbone of momentum. Establishing a daily routine helps eliminate decision fatigue and builds positive habits. Decide when and where you'll work on your goals each day, creating a "cue" for action. This structure makes it easier to maintain momentum as daily activities become habitual.

3. Visualize the Long-Term Impact

Visualization is a powerful tool for sustaining momentum. Imagine the positive outcomes of achieving your goals, and remind yourself of the purpose behind your efforts. Visualization helps reinforce commitment and strengthens your sense of direction, making it easier to stay consistent.

4. Focus on the Process, Not Just the Outcome

Enjoying the journey is key to sustaining momentum. By focusing on the actions you take each day rather than fixating solely on the end result, you'll develop resilience and a sense of fulfillment. This shift in focus helps build a positive mindset, where each step forward feels rewarding.

5. Review Progress and Adjust as Needed

Periodically assess your progress and adjust your strategy if needed. Reviewing milestones and refining your approach helps maintain momentum by ensuring that each action aligns with your larger vision. Reflecting on progress reinforces your sense

of achievement and provides a renewed sense of purpose.

Worksheet: Building Momentum with Small Wins

Task 1: Identify Small Actions Toward Your Goal

1. Write down a goal you want to achieve.
2. Break it down into small, manageable actions.

Goal	Small Actions
Example: Write a book	Write 500 words daily

Task 2: Set a Consistent Daily Routine

1. Choose a time and place to work on your goal each day.
2. Write it down and commit to it for one week.

Day	Time	Location	Completed?
Monday	7:00 AM	Home Office	[]

Task 3: Reflect on Progress and Adjust

1. At the end of the week, review your progress.
2. Adjust your actions or routines if needed to stay on track.

Reflection	Adjustments
Example: Felt energized but could increase writing time	Add 30 minutes on weekends

The Mindset Shift: From FOMO to JOMO



In today's hyper-connected world, the fear of missing out (FOMO) has become an almost universal experience. FOMO, or the anxiety that one is missing out on experiences, events, or opportunities, often drives people to overcommit, overspend, or feel dissatisfied. The antidote to FOMO is JOMO, or the Joy of Missing Out—a mindset where individuals find contentment in focusing on the present without the pressure of

comparison. Shifting from FOMO to JOMO represents a movement toward mindfulness, intentionality, and true personal fulfillment.

Understanding FOMO: Its Causes and Consequences

FOMO is driven by social comparison and the fear that others are experiencing something valuable without us. Social media exacerbates this by creating a constant stream of “highlights” from others’ lives, leading to a sense of inadequacy.

1. Social Comparison Theory

Psychologist Leon Festinger’s Social Comparison Theory suggests that people have an inherent desire to evaluate their lives in relation to others. This tendency, intensified by social media, creates a cycle of comparison where individuals evaluate their worth based on external validation.

2. The Illusion of Perfection

Social media showcases curated moments, often giving a skewed impression of perfection. This illusion fuels FOMO as people believe they’re missing out on a perfect experience. Dr. Sherry Turkle, an MIT professor and social psychologist, argues that social media’s superficiality promotes feelings of inadequacy, as people only see the polished parts of others’ lives.

3. **Fear of Exclusion and Loss of Status**

FOMO is also driven by a fear of exclusion. Humans have an innate desire to belong, and the thought of missing out on an experience that others are sharing can feel like a loss of status or connection. This fear can lead to overcommitment or prioritizing others' expectations over personal well-being.

The Cost of FOMO: Psychological and Emotional Impacts

FOMO has a significant psychological toll, leading to stress, dissatisfaction, and a diminished sense of self.

1. **Increased Anxiety and Stress**

FOMO creates a constant need to stay connected, leading to mental fatigue and stress. Studies show that social media use is linked to increased levels of anxiety and stress, as individuals feel the need to keep up with others' experiences.

2. **Reduced Self-Esteem**

The comparison culture reinforced by FOMO erodes self-esteem. Seeing others' curated highlights can lead to feelings of inadequacy and a sense of not measuring up, particularly when individuals feel their lives are less "exciting" by comparison.

Loss of Authenticity and Intentionality

FOMO often leads people to make choices based on external pressures rather than personal desires. This loss of intentionality disconnects individuals from their

authentic selves, leading to decisions that may not align with their true values or needs.

Embracing JOMO: The Benefits of the Joy of Missing Out

JOMO shifts the focus from what others are doing to personal fulfillment and present-moment joy. It encourages individuals to choose experiences based on personal values rather than external influences.

1. Increased Mindfulness and Presence

JOMO promotes mindfulness, encouraging people to focus on the present rather than what they might be missing. By being fully engaged in the current moment, individuals experience greater satisfaction and contentment.

2. Greater Emotional Freedom

Embracing JOMO frees individuals from the need for validation. With JOMO, people can make choices based on what brings them peace and fulfillment, rather than societal expectations. This freedom fosters emotional resilience and personal empowerment.

3. Improved Focus on Personal Growth

By letting go of external expectations, individuals gain more time and energy to focus on personal goals, self-care, and growth. JOMO encourages introspection, helping people invest in activities that genuinely bring value and satisfaction to their lives.

4. **Enhanced Relationships**

With JOMO, relationships become more authentic, as individuals engage with others based on genuine connection rather than FOMO-driven social obligations. This mindset fosters deeper and more meaningful interactions.

Real-Life Examples of the Shift from FOMO to JOMO

1. **Digital Minimalism: Cal Newport's Approach**

In *Digital Minimalism*, Cal Newport advocates for reducing screen time and social media use to enhance quality of life. Newport encourages readers to embrace JOMO by engaging in meaningful offline activities, cultivating a sense of peace and purpose without constant online validation.

2. **Warren Buffett's "No" Philosophy**

Warren Buffett is known for his disciplined approach to saying "no" to anything that doesn't align with his priorities. This intentional choice reflects JOMO, as he focuses on activities that provide fulfillment and value rather than chasing every opportunity.

3. **Arianna Huffington's "Thrive" Journey**

Arianna Huffington, founder of *The Huffington Post*, experienced a personal burnout that led her to embrace a more intentional life. Her book *Thrive* explores how she shifted her priorities to focus on well-being, connection, and mindfulness rather than the constant pursuit of achievement.

Quotes on the Power of JOMO

1. **"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you."** – Anne Lamott
Lamott's words underscore the importance of disconnecting to recharge and reconnect with oneself.
2. **"The ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak."** – Hans Hofmann
Hofmann's quote reminds us that JOMO helps clear out distractions, allowing us to focus on what truly matters.
3. **"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."** – Mahatma Gandhi
Gandhi's words reflect JOMO's essence, suggesting that fulfillment comes from aligning actions with one's values rather than seeking validation through external achievements.

Strategies to Cultivate JOMO and Overcome FOMO

1. **Establish Digital Boundaries**
Reducing social media use is essential for cultivating JOMO. Set designated times for checking social media or consider a digital detox to break the habit of constant connectivity.
2. **Practice Gratitude for the Present Moment**
Cultivating gratitude for current experiences fosters JOMO. Spend a few minutes each day reflecting on

the positive aspects of your life, focusing on what you have rather than what you might be missing.

3. Reconnect with Core Values

Reflect on what truly brings you joy and fulfillment. Aligning decisions with core values encourages intentional living, helping you resist the urge to chase experiences that don't align with your personal goals.

4. Create a Joyful "No" List

Identify activities that don't serve your well-being or contribute to your growth. This "no" list helps you practice saying no to distractions and yes to what genuinely enriches your life.

5. Engage in Offline Hobbies and Interests

Spend time on activities that are meaningful to you and don't require external validation, such as reading, painting, cooking, or gardening. These offline pursuits foster contentment and independence from external influences.

6. Surround Yourself with Like-Minded Individuals

Build relationships with people who value authenticity and mindful living. A supportive community reinforces JOMO and reduces the pressure to engage in activities driven by FOMO.

Worksheet: Embracing JOMO and Reducing FOMO

Task 1: Reflect on FOMO Triggers

1. List situations where you experience FOMO.

2. Reflect on why these situations trigger FOMO and how they impact your feelings and actions.

Situation	FOMO Trigger	Impact on Feelings and Actions
Example: Seeing friends' vacation posts	Comparison	Feel dissatisfied with my own life

Task 2: Create a JOMO-Focused Action Plan

For each FOMO trigger, create a JOMO-focused action to counter it.

FOMO Trigger	JOMO-Focused Action
Example: Missing social events	Schedule a self-care night and enjoy reading or relaxing

Task 3: Set Daily Intentions for Mindful Living

Each day, set an intention that supports JOMO. At the end of the day, reflect on how well you stayed connected to your intention.

Day	Intention	Reflection
Monday	Focus on gratitude for my own experiences	Felt more content with my daily life

This chapter guides readers through the transition from FOMO to JOMO, offering practical strategies

From Regret to Resolve: Embracing Change to Make Every Moment Count



Regret is a powerful emotion that reflects missed opportunities, unfulfilled aspirations, and choices that did not align with our true potential. However, while regret can feel overwhelming, it also offers valuable insights and lessons. Moving from regret to resolve means learning from past choices and using that wisdom

to make more intentional, empowered decisions in the future. This chapter explores how to transform regret into a source of strength, turning it into a motivational force for positive change.

Understanding Regret: Causes and Types

Regret is often triggered by actions we did or did not take, decisions made under pressure, or lost opportunities. Psychologists identify two primary types of regret:

1. Regrets of Action

Regrets of action are those based on things we did but wish we hadn't. Examples include impulsive decisions, mistakes, or actions that hurt relationships or reputations. While they may initially cause remorse, regrets of action tend to fade over time because they offer tangible lessons.

2. Regrets of Inaction

Regrets of inaction revolve around missed opportunities, paths not taken, and things left unsaid. These regrets tend to be more enduring, as they represent unfulfilled potential and create a lingering sense of "what could have been." According to Dr. Thomas Gilovich, a psychology professor at Cornell University, people tend to regret inaction more deeply and long-term because it represents unrealized possibilities.

3. Existential Regret

This type of regret arises when people feel they did not live authentically or pursue their true purpose.

Existential regret often appears later in life when individuals look back and question whether they aligned their actions with their core values and goals.

The Emotional and Psychological Impact of Regret

1. Anxiety and Self-Doubt

Regret can lead to self-doubt, making individuals second-guess their decisions and diminishing their confidence. Over time, this self-doubt can create a fear of making future choices, trapping individuals in a cycle of inaction.

2. Loss of Motivation and Self-Esteem

When people dwell on regrets, they may lose motivation, viewing themselves as incapable of success. This negative self-perception can reduce self-esteem, making it difficult to pursue meaningful goals and opportunities.

3. Resilience and Growth Potential

On the positive side, regret can build resilience and motivate personal growth. Reflecting on past choices and outcomes allows individuals to gain self-awareness, make changes, and avoid repeating the same mistakes.

The Power of Shifting from Regret to Resolve

Shifting from regret to resolve involves taking an intentional approach to growth. Rather than allowing regret to paralyze or define us, we can use it as a

catalyst for positive change. Here's how this shift empowers us:

1. Turning Regret into a Learning Experience

By analyzing past regrets objectively, individuals can identify patterns, triggers, and motivations behind their choices. This insight allows for more informed and thoughtful decisions in the future.

2. Building Confidence through Acceptance

Moving past regret requires self-acceptance and forgiveness. Accepting that mistakes are a part of life helps in building confidence and resilience, enabling individuals to pursue new opportunities without fear.

3. Fostering a Growth Mindset

Adopting a growth mindset, as advocated by Dr. Carol Dweck, encourages individuals to see challenges as learning opportunities. Rather than viewing regret as a fixed outcome, a growth mindset allows us to use it as a stepping stone toward improvement.

4. Establishing Clearer Goals and Intentions

Regret can serve as a motivator to set clearer, value-based goals. When we learn from past choices, we gain clarity on what truly matters, aligning our goals with our values to create a more meaningful life.

Real-Life Examples of Moving from Regret to Resolve

Here are some real-life examples that focus specifically on the transformation from **regret** to **resolve**, emphasizing how individuals used their feelings of regret to make significant life changes or to approach new goals with a stronger resolve.

1. Jane Fonda – Transforming Personal Regret into Activism

Jane Fonda has openly shared her regrets about certain aspects of her life, particularly her role as a mother and some of her earlier political actions. Rather than allowing regret to lead to self-doubt, she turned it into resolve, becoming an outspoken activist for gender equality, climate change, and youth empowerment. This commitment helped her make a lasting impact in various social movements, showing how regret can inspire a shift toward impactful action and personal growth. *Her autobiography and interviews describe her journey from personal regret to becoming a globally recognized activist and change-maker* (reference: **Jane Fonda, My Life So Far**).

2. Howard Schultz – Regret Over Starbucks' Early Struggles

Howard Schultz, the former CEO of Starbucks, initially regretted how he handled certain business decisions during his first tenure, including some of his approaches to expansion and branding. When he returned to Starbucks years later, he resolved to

implement a more purpose-driven strategy, emphasizing employee welfare and social responsibility. Schultz's regret over his earlier business missteps motivated him to lead Starbucks in a way that better aligned with his values, resulting in the brand's global success. *Schultz reflects on how his regrets informed his decision-making in his later years with Starbucks* (reference: **Howard Schultz, *Onward: How Starbucks Fought for Its Life without Losing Its Soul***).

3. Stephen King – Overcoming Regret to Cultivate a Lasting Legacy

Stephen King has shared how he regretted his earlier lifestyle, especially his struggles with addiction, which he feared would compromise his legacy. This regret motivated him to seek help, regain control, and focus more fully on his work. King's resolve to live a healthier life led him to produce some of his best work, enabling him to secure his place as one of the most prolific and successful authors in modern literature. *King's reflections on his life reveal how regret over his choices transformed into a determination to create meaningful work and maintain personal integrity* (reference: **Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft***).

Regina Brett – Regret Transformed into Life Lessons and Advocacy

- Journalist and author Regina Brett was diagnosed with cancer at a young age, prompting her to reflect deeply on her life. She realized she regretted not

having taken certain chances or having been more mindful of her health earlier. This regret inspired her resolve to live life fully and help others do the same. Brett's experience led her to write *God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours*, where she shares insights to help readers live intentionally and avoid regrets. *Brett's journey illustrates how personal regret can become a source of guidance for both oneself and others* (reference: **Regina Brett, *God Never Blinks: 50 Lessons for Life's Little Detours***).

These examples highlight individuals who experienced significant regrets but used them as a foundation for growth and intentional living. By converting regret into resolve, each of them created a legacy rooted in authenticity, resilience, and purpose, showing that regret can be a powerful motivator for positive change.

Quotes on Moving from Regret to Resolve

1. **"The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing."** – Henry Ford

Ford's words remind us that learning from regret transforms mistakes into valuable

2. **"Regret is the birthplace of inspiration."** – Robin Sharma

This quote reframes regret as a powerful starting point for change rather than an emotional dead end. It reminds us that the lessons we learn from missed opportunities or mistakes can ignite a fire within us to pursue a better version of ourselves. Regret can

fuel our motivation to take immediate action and create a brighter future.

3. "Regret for wasted time is more wasted time." – Mason Cooley

Dwelling on regrets only prolongs the time lost. This quote is a wake-up call to stop ruminating and start taking action to make the most of the present and future.

Human Interest Story

I am covering two interesting stories out of the 50 part series I am working on. It is quite interesting to note how people do what they do.

Our first guest is :

Damien Toohey



A seasoned legal expert with over 25 years of aviation experience as a pilot, Damien specializes in handling all aviation-related legal matters, including Show Cause Notices, CASA hearings, and AAT/Coronial Inquiries. Endorsed on aircraft such as the B747, A380, and more, he's also a Grade 1 Instructor approved for Multi-Engine and Instrument training.

As a WIRO Approved Panel Barrister and Federal Court Pro Bono Scheme advocate, Damien brings his expertise to family, commercial, compensation, personal injury, and criminal law, championing justice for those who need it most. A voice for the voiceless, he combines technical precision with compassionate advocacy.

Let's dive into the interview:

The Opportunity Itself

Suk : Can you tell me about a time when you had a significant opportunity that you missed?

Damien : The opportunity I missed was to move to Canada and become a ski instructor in my late teens but had too much debt and responsibility guilt not leaving my Mother on her own.

Suk : Looking back, what do you feel that opportunity represented for you at the time?

The opportunity would have presented a sliding doors moment.

Reasons for Missing the Opportunity

Suk : What were the main reasons you didn't seize that opportunity?
(Were there specific fears, doubts, or challenges that held you back?)

Damien : I was living the life OTHERS wanted me to

live. Meeting my perceived responsibility and not trusting my intuition.

Suk : How did timing or life circumstances play a role?

Damien : Timing made no difference. When you're not ready, you're just not ready.

Immediate Reactions and Reflections

Suk : Did you regret the decision right away, or did it take time for you to feel the impact?

Damien : My regret was immediate but not enough to change course.

4. Impact on Life Path and Choices

Suk: How did missing this opportunity impact your path afterward, both personally and professionally?

Damien : My ethos from an early age has been based on the nursing home principle. That is how would I feel laying in a nursing home, infirm and looking back on what was once possible.

That is enough to get me off the lounge every moment of my life when I know something has to be done to advance or satisfy a goal.

5. Growth and Lessons Learned

Suk : How has this shaped your approach to decision-making and future opportunities?

Damien : That initial thinking based on my "Nursing Home Principle" has given me the greatest strength and resolve to chase down any and every opportunity without restriction. Don't live your life according to other peoples' dictates.

6. Comparisons and Perspectives

Suk : What does "opportunity" mean to you now compared to before this experience?

Damien : Opportunity is anything I want to do and I know that I can. Fear is the fear of fear itself. Nothing can hold me back except limitations I impose on myself and I don't impose any.

7. Second Chances and Redemption

Suk : Have you had any similar opportunities come up since then, and did you approach them differently?

Damien : I dropped dead from a cardiac arrest at 48 years of age. God saved me and I was defibrillated and given another life. A life without physical restraint. A life filled with intuition where I eradicated any concern for what others thought of me as a person or what choices I make. I am free at last. Completely and utterly free.

Suk : Do you think people can “make up” for missed opportunities, or do you believe each opportunity is unique?

Damien : You can always make up for missed opportunities. Simply, don't miss the next one.

8. Reframing the Opportunity with Gratitude

Suk : How do you think this experience of “Missing Opportunities” has contributed positively to who you are today?

Damien : Gratitude is the essence of life. More importantly forgiveness is EVERYTHING. Forgive often and forgive everyone.

9. Advice for Others

Suk : What advice would you give to others about handling missed opportunities?

Damien : Set the goal. Plan the time. Reassess as often as you need to but just don't give up on yourself. You can do anything you want to do. You just have to want to do it. ❤️ 🙌

The next interesting story is with Solly Moeng :

Solly Moeng is a widely experienced brand reputation strategist, columnist, current affairs commentator, and part-time lecturer. An APR-certified lecturer in PR and

brand strategy, Solly Moeng has been teaching and mentoring students at the EU Business School for over three years, blending academic rigor with 25+ years of hands-on experience in brand reputation management.



Solly Moeng, founder of DonValley Reputation Managers and the Africa Brand Summit, is a destination brand expert dedicated to strengthening Africa's global identity. Through his platforms, he champions education, health,

business, and social justice to empower African brands and populations to compete on the global stage.

He's currently employed as a Whisperer to the President of ActionSA, a prominent political party in South Africa, and Director of Stakeholder Relations.

Let us dive into the interview:

The Opportunity Itself

Suk : Can you tell me about a time when you had a significant opportunity that you missed?

Solly : There probably have been several situations, but one I can recall is relatively recent, when I was invited to be part of a new team to present a "Global Sustainability Leadership Course" in partnership with UNITAR and the University of Dublin.

I managed to prepare and present the initial promotional lecture to the initial global gathering – which went very well - but because of unclear instructions about what else was needed from me and by when, for the core course material (the actual semester would only start several months later), as well as long working hours in my day job, all compounded by my juggling of other commitments, I failed to appreciate the volume of what was expected of me.

The offered compensation was also way too small for what was expected of me, so I lacked the motivation to prioritise the course preparations.

Instead of being the one to ask to be relieved of the task, I let them take the initiative of replacing me with someone else. I regret that.

Suk : Looking back, what do you feel that opportunity represented for you at the time?

Solly : Integration into UNITAR teams of experts

Reasons for Missing the Opportunity

Suk : What were the main reasons you didn't seize that opportunity?

(Were there specific fears, doubts, or challenges that held you back?)

Solly : Stated above

Suk : How did timing or life circumstances play a role?

Solly : Big time. It was end of December, just before Christmas festivities, an the submission was needed for the start of January even when the course would have started in September.

Immediate Reactions and Reflections

Suk : Did you regret the decision right away, or did it take time for you to feel the impact?

Solly : Soon after

Suk : Was there anything you told yourself to make peace with it in the moment?

Solly : Kind of

Impact on Life Path and Choices

Suk : How did missing this opportunity impact your path afterward, both personally and professionally?

Solly : Well, I've accepted it for what it is and hope it doesn't happen again. In fact, this was the first time I've had to walk mid-way away from a teaching job because of over commitment.

I need to learn to say "no, sorry, I can't. Thank you!"

Suk : Do you believe your life would be significantly different if you had seized that opportunity?

Solly : It would have added a fabulous line in my CV.

Growth and Lessons Learned

Suk : Is there advice you would give your younger self based on this experience?

Solly : Avoid over committing myself.

Comparisons and Perspectives

Suk : What does "opportunity" mean to you now compared to before this experience?

Solly : A chance to be part of something interesting.

Second Chances and Redemption

Suk : Have you had any similar opportunities come up since then, and did you approach them differently?

Solly : Not really. It happened quite recently, but it wasn't the first time.

Suk : Do you think people can "make up" for missed opportunities, or do you believe each opportunity is unique?

Solly : Some yes, others no. Most opportunities are unique.

Reframing the Opportunity with Gratitude

Suk : How do you think this experience of “Missing Opportunities” has contributed positively to who you are today?

Solly : Older and somewhat wiser, I guess.

Suk : Has it led you to focus on new opportunities, people, or passions you might have otherwise overlooked?

Solly : Kind of; now trying focus on my “going-nowhere-slowly” PhD.

Advice for Others

Suk: What advice would you give to others about handling missed opportunities?

Solly : Be honest with yourself, mind your health; say “yes” only if you know you can.

Suk : What do you believe are the keys to recognizing and embracing opportunities when they arise?

Solly : We generally know a good opportunity when it lands on the desk. It might be something linked to something one had been hoping for, for a while, or simply feel like “something-not-to-say-no-to.”

From Excuses to Empowerment: The Trailblazing Example of Dr. Srimathy Kesan



Dr. Srimathy Kesan epitomizes a life lived without procrastination, consistently leading by example in her mission to empower the next generation. As the founder of Space Kidz India, her unwavering vision has transformed space education in India, breaking barriers and making aerospace accessible to students across all demographics, especially girls and underrepresented communities. While many provide space education and STEM training, Dr. Srimathy stands alone as the first in the world to empower students to build and launch their own satellites into space.

Her journey began not in a laboratory but in the field of travel and tourism—a testament to how passion and purpose can redirect our paths. Driven by an unrelenting desire to inspire young minds, particularly in rural India, she shifted her focus to aerospace education, laying the foundation for Space Kidz India. Under her leadership, groundbreaking projects like KALAMSAT—the world's smallest satellite—and AzaadiSAT, a satellite built by 750 young girls, have redefined what Indian students can achieve on the global stage. These achievements reflect her commitment to hands-on, real-world learning that empowers students to dream big and execute with precision.

Dr. Kesan draws inspiration from her greatest motivator, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. His philosophy of turning dreams into reality and his dedication to youth empowerment continue to guide her journey. The launch of KALAMSAT, named in his honor, is a tribute to his legacy of innovation and inclusivity.

Her ambitions extend beyond current projects. She envisions an Aerospace Research University—a global hub for collaborative, hands-on learning where students from all backgrounds and nations work together to tackle the complexities of space exploration. This university will not only advance aerospace technology but foster unity, inclusion, and global cooperation—key pillars of her mission.

Through initiatives like ShakthiSAT, which unites 12,000 girls from 108 countries, Dr. Kesan exemplifies how purpose-driven leadership can inspire global change. She doesn't just dream of a future where every child feels they belong in space; she is actively building it.

Having faced the fragility of life twice, I've come to deeply understand its value. My guiding mantra is rooted in Kabir's timeless wisdom:

**“काल करे सो आज कर, आज करे सो अब।
पल में परलय होगी, बहुरि करेगा कब।”**

Translated, it means, “What you plan to do tomorrow, do it today; what you plan to do today, do it now. In a moment, life could change—when will you have the chance again?”

When you're on the journey to creating a lasting legacy, action becomes paramount. You can't wait for the perfect moment, because it may never come. Even when I'm unwell, Kabir's words remind me to push forward and complete what's before me. Life is unpredictable, and every moment is an opportunity to empower yourself and move closer to fulfilling your purpose.

Designing and launching satellites for students, both in schools and colleges, is a monumental step forward for *ShakthiSat*. This is the first time ever that such an initiative is empowering young minds globally. This mission isn't just about space exploration; it's about showing the world that no dream is too big and no action is too small to create a legacy.

Her work is a masterclass in overcoming excuses, breaking barriers, and embracing the power of action. Her legacy will undoubtedly inspire generations to reach for the stars.

Wrapping Up: From Excuses to Empowerment

The journey from procrastination and excuses to empowerment is not just a behavioral shift—it's a complete transformation of how we approach our lives, challenges, and goals. This book has taken you through the depths of why we procrastinate, why excuses feel like a comfortable refuge, and why perfectionism is a deceptive trap. But more importantly, it has shown you how to emerge from these habits as a stronger, more focused, and empowered version of yourself.

At its heart, this journey is about reclaiming control over your decisions, your time, and your mindset. It's about understanding that every excuse, every delay, and every self-doubt is a barrier to the life you want to lead. But the good news is this: barriers can be broken, and cycles can be disrupted.

This transformation isn't a one-time event—it's a continuous practice. It's about embracing progress over perfection, action over hesitation, and resolve over regret. In doing so, you'll uncover a life where procrastination no longer holds you hostage, where excuses lose their grip, and where empowerment becomes your default state of being.

Before we conclude, here are 10 actionable techniques you can implement immediately to begin living a life of action, intention, and empowerment:

Actionable Items to Empower Your Life

1. Start with a Micro-Moment of Action

Break the habit of procrastination by committing to just two minutes of focused effort on any task. This "two-minute rule" is a powerful antidote to inertia. Once you begin, momentum often takes over, and completing the task becomes easier.

How?: The next time you face a daunting task, don't think about finishing it. Just think about starting it. Whether it's writing one sentence, reading one paragraph, or organizing one file, small actions create big momentum.

2. Use the "5-Second Rule" to Beat Excuses

Mel Robbins' 5-Second Rule states that if you have an instinct to act on a goal, count backward from five (5-4-3-2-1) and physically move toward the action. This technique interrupts hesitation and pushes you to act before excuses take over.

How?: For example, when you feel the urge to skip a workout or delay a project, count backward and start moving. This simple tool rewires your brain to prioritize action over delay.

3. Time-Block Your Priorities

Instead of relying on to-do lists, assign specific tasks to specific time slots in your calendar. This method forces you to dedicate time for what truly matters and eliminates the ambiguity that leads to procrastination.

How?: Plan your day in advance, dedicating blocks of time to important tasks. Treat these blocks as unbreakable appointments with yourself.

4. Perform a Procrastination Audit

Identify the recurring tasks you delay and dig into the "why." Is it fear, boredom, or lack of clarity? Understanding the root cause of your procrastination is the first step to overcoming it.

How?: Spend 15 minutes writing down tasks you frequently procrastinate on. Then, for each task, ask yourself why you're delaying it. Create solutions based

on your findings (e.g., if clarity is an issue, break the task into smaller steps).

5. Adopt the “Done Is Better Than Perfect” Mindset

Perfectionism often paralyzes us into inaction. Embrace the idea that progress, no matter how small, is infinitely better than perfection that never materializes.

How?: Set a timer for 30 minutes and commit to completing a task to the best of your ability within that time. Once the timer is up, move on, knowing that good work is better than unfinished perfection.

6. Turn Regret into Resolutions

Regret is a powerful motivator when used wisely. Reflect on missed opportunities and let them fuel your resolve to take action in the present and future.

How?: Write down one regret you have and outline three steps you can take today to ensure it doesn't happen again. For example, if you regret not networking earlier, start by connecting with one new person this week.

7. Apply the “80/20 Rule”

The Pareto Principle states that 80% of results come from 20% of efforts. Focus on the high-impact activities that truly matter and deprioritize or delegate the rest.

How?: Review your to-do list and ask yourself: “Which of these tasks will deliver the greatest results?” Prioritize those tasks and let go of the low-impact ones.

8. Create a Personal “Excuse Jar”

Make excuses tangible by turning them into a visual reminder. Every time you catch yourself making an excuse, write it down and put it in a jar. At the end of the week, review the excuses and brainstorm actionable solutions for each.

How?: If your excuse is "I'm too tired," plan to improve your sleep routine. If it's "I don't have time," re-evaluate your time-blocking schedule.

9. Celebrate Small Wins Regularly

Acknowledging progress—even small progress—reinforces positive behavior and keeps you motivated to keep going.

How?: At the end of each day, write down three small wins you achieved. These could be as simple as completing a task on time or resisting the urge to procrastinate.

10. Create a Vision of Your Empowered Self

Visualization is a powerful tool for motivation. Envision yourself as someone who acts decisively, avoids excuses, and embraces challenges. Let this vision guide your daily actions.

How?: Spend five minutes every morning visualizing your ideal day, where you tackle tasks with confidence and without delay. This practice will align your mindset with your goals.

The Final Word: From Excuses to Action

Empowerment is a choice. It's the conscious decision to reject excuses, embrace imperfection, and take ownership of your time and decisions. The techniques and lessons in this book are not just strategies—they're tools to help you reclaim your life, your confidence, and your momentum.

Each day is a fresh opportunity to choose action over hesitation, intention over excuses, and courage over fear. Progress may not always be linear, and challenges will arise, but remember: you have the ability to adapt, learn, and grow.

So, as you turn the final page of this book, ask yourself: "What can I do today to step closer to the life I truly want?" The answer lies in action. Take the first step, no matter how small, and watch how your world begins to change.

Your journey from excuses to empowerment starts now. Make it count.

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With love and gratitude, always.

Sukruti

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About the Author



Sukruti is a dynamic communication professional with a rich and diverse background spanning multiple industries, including education, telecom, technology, solar, and healthcare. As the Co-Founder of Bamboo Ventures, she champions startups led by young parents, providing them with the tools to thrive. For over a decade, Sukruti has been dedicated to empowering the next generation of leaders, creating opportunities that spark innovation and growth.

Currently, Sukruti serves as the Global Head of Partnerships for ShakthiSat, the groundbreaking all-women-led lunar space mission, which unites 108 countries in a historic endeavour. She is also the Associate Editor of **PreSense**, India's longest-running voluntary eMagazine.

A proven leader, Sukruti has organized over 80 national and international events, produced world-record-breaking programs, and achieved extraordinary media engagement. Her work in forging global partnerships and driving impactful marketing strategies is well-recognized, notably during her tenure as Global Manager of the C4F Awards at the World Communication Forum.

Sukruti is the Founder of the Global Digital Journalists Forum (GDJF), an initiative inspiring young minds to embrace ethical and impactful storytelling. A true multi-talent, she has also debuted as the second heroine in a popular Telugu film, showcasing her versatility and creative spirit.

With an MBA in Public Relations, Marketing, and Applied Communication and ongoing studies in law and digital business, Sukruti's academic pursuits complement her professional success. She has received numerous accolades, including the prestigious "Young Visionary" award, from Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) for her contributions to technology and education and is celebrated as one of India's top women technologists. Sukruti's unwavering commitment to innovation, leadership, and education makes her an inspiring force for change in every field she touches.