My Procrastination Map

Putting things off is usually about a feeling, not about being lazy.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 What I am putting off

List the tasks, how long they have waited and what makes them feel bad to start

Task	Waiting how long	What makes it feel bad (boring, unclear, too big, hard, pointless?)
e.g. tax forms		

2 My procrastination loop

Fill in each box for one task. Notice where the quick relief comes from

The task I face

The feeling it brings up

What I do instead (quick relief)

What it costs me later

3 The stories I tell myself

Write what I say to put it off, then a fair reality check

What I tell myself	A fair reality check
e.g. "I will feel more like it tomorrow"	

4 Costs and gains

What waiting costs me, and what starting would give me

What waiting costs me e.g. stress, late fees, sleep, trust	What starting would give me e.g. relief, time back, pride

The task I will start first, and why this one: _____

A small reward I will give myself after I start: _____

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My Get Started Plan

I do not have to feel ready. I only have to start small.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Tiny first steps

Shrink each task to a first step I could do in 10 minutes or less

Task	First step, 10 minutes or less	When and where
e.g. tax forms		

2 My if-then plans

Link the first step to a cue, and plan for the urge to drift off

If it is (time, place) _____, then I will _____

If I notice the urge to check my phone or switch tasks, then I will _____

If I miss my start time, then I will _____

3 My start log

Log each start. Rate dread before and how I feel after, 0 to 10

Day	Planned start	Actual start	Minutes worked	Dread before	Feeling after	What helped

4 Forgive, then restart

Guilt keeps the task feeling bad. A fair, kind line makes it easier to go back

What I will say to myself after a delay: _____

What I learned from the last delay: _____

For therapists and clients

1. Procrastination is a pattern, not a diagnosis and not a character flaw. The target is the avoid and relief loop.
2. Start before you feel like it. Motivation often follows action. Compare dread before with how you feel after.
3. Expect slips. Restart at the next planned time rather than waiting for a fresh week or a perfect day.
4. Therapists: chronic delay can travel with depression, anxiety, ADHD or perfectionism. Check for them too.

In the US, call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) any time, day or night.

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