



IP INCLUSIVE

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP



Jonathan's Voice

Speaking out for mental health

Procrastination Frustration

Facilitated by Penelope Aspinall

Jonathan's Voice

www.jonathansvoice.org.uk

Registered Charity 1180424

Self-care during digital delivery



If anything raises any distressing issues for you, please take care of yourself during and after in whichever way suits you best.

Introduction to Jonathan's Voice



Jonathan was a patent attorney in Bristol. On the outside, life appeared to be going well. But a month after his 35th birthday he tragically took his own life on 30th October 2017. An “out of the blue” suicide. Sadly, he had been masking his mental health struggles very, very well.

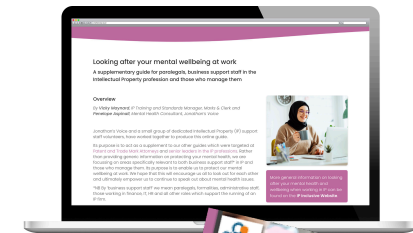
Shortly after this tragic event his family founded Jonathan's Voice, now a registered charity, to promote better mental health in the workplace.

What do we do?



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- Because of our history we have a particular focus on the staff working in intellectual property sector and associated professions.
- We work alongside professional institutions, individual firms and CIPA, CITMA and IP Inclusive to help develop mentally healthy workplaces where all may thrive.
- We provide workshops, webinars and resources. As a charity, we can offer these free at the point of delivery.
- We also fund vital research into better understanding of male suicide and preventative steps.



All available to download
free of charge from
www.jonathansvoice.org.uk



What we are covering

- Procrastination and the stress response
- The internal drivers that lead us to put off doing important tasks
- What are the positive and negative consequences of procrastinating?
- How to try and break the cycle

It would be useful to have a pen and paper to jot things down on.

What is procrastination? Why do we do it?



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- Procrastination is a common part of human behavior and is not the same as 'laziness'
- It means that for no obviously valid reason, we delay or do not complete a task or goal we are committed to and instead do nothing or something of lesser importance in spite of potential negative consequences
- It can occur in many different areas of one's life



What else?

- Procrastination activities are the things we do as a diversion from or substitute for the key task or goal - pleasurable or lower priority activities eg tidying your desk, socialising, daydreaming, distractions
- To avoid guilt we often generate excuses to help us feel justified eg because of some set of circumstances we are better off leaving the task to another time

Think about



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- What do you procrastinate over?
- Is there anything at the moment you know you are avoiding or putting off?
- What are your typical displacement activities?

Watch this video



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https://www.ted.com/talks/ted_ed_why_you_procrastinate_even_when_it_feels_bad?language=en

Procrastination as a response to threat



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When the thought of the task ahead evokes negative feelings such as:

- Shame
- Aversion
- Guilt
- Fear
- Inadequacy
- Feeling overwhelmed by it

We perceive it as a threat which may activate the stress response ie fight, flight or freeze

Avoiding the task is one way of protecting yourself from these bad feelings



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Where it doesn't work is that

- The task doesn't go away
- It just seems to become bigger
- And more urgent
- Evoking even more bad feelings
- Leading to more procrastinating

And thus creating a vicious circle

What else going on?

Unhelpful beliefs, rules or assumptions



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For example:

- Depleted energy – I'm too tired right now
- This isn't the right time/I don't have enough time etc
- Perfectionism – it's got to be brilliant
- I might fail - I can't bear failure or disappointment or not being good enough
- Low self-confidence – I don't think I can do it
- Imposter syndrome – I don't want to get found out
- Avoidance of discomfort/pleasure seeking
- Rebelliousness – not wanting to be told what to do¹²

Positive benefits of procrastinating



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- Avoid bad feelings
- Relief from discomfort
- Pleasure from procrastination activities
- Momentary good feeling for having stuck to one's rules and assumptions

Although temporary, these are all pay-offs that keep procrastination going.

Often they are totally unconscious



Negative consequences

- Create more discomfort
- Increase self-criticism, shame and guilt
- Preserve unhelpful rules and assumptions
- Tasks pile up
- External consequences – loss or punishment

These can all keep procrastination going in a horrible cycle of bad feeling and avoidance

The importance of self-compassion

- Change critical and negative language you use when talking to yourself into something more gentle and accepting.
- Speak to, encourage and comfort yourself the way you would someone you care about
- Acknowledge this may be a time of suffering; that suffering is part of life, that you are not alone
- Touch can help



www.self-compassion.org

Think about a task or job you are procrastinating over



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What are the consequences?

Positive

Negative

How do these keep you procrastinating?

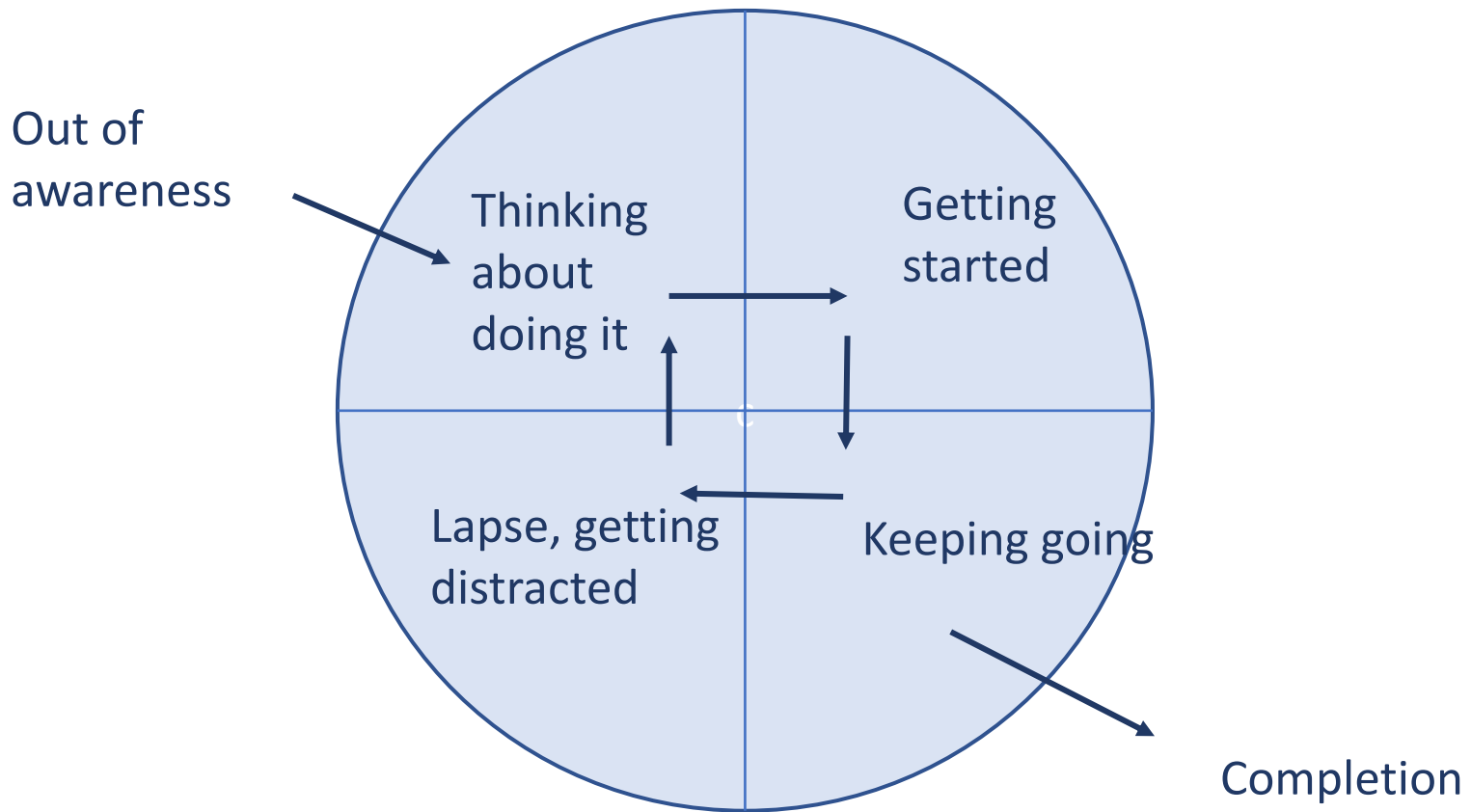
How do these keep you procrastinating?

Cycle of change

adapted from Prochaska and Di Clemente's Cycle of Change



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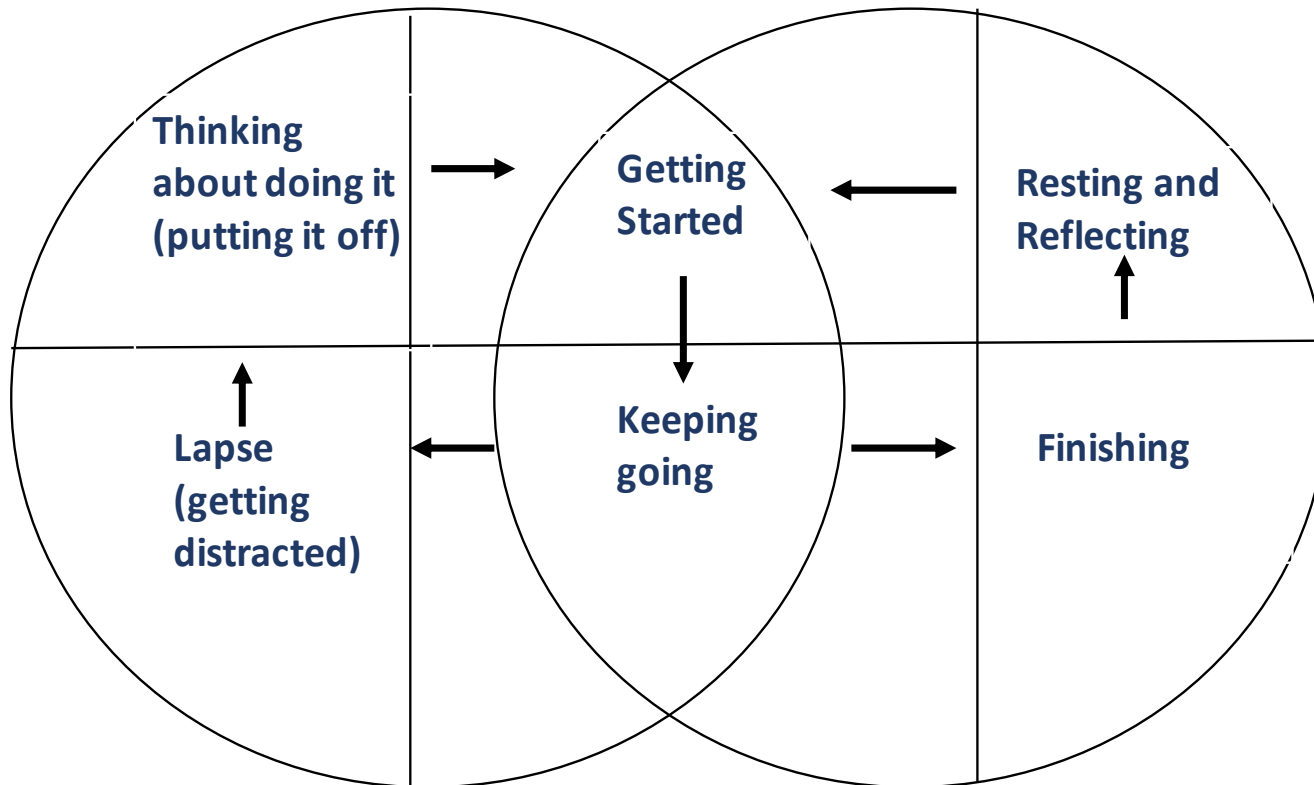


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Breaking the cycle

- Where do you get stuck?
Thinking about it, getting started or keeping going?
- What makes you lapse?
- How does that make you feel?
- How do you get going again?

Action plan



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Think about a task – be specific and identify a time frame

On a scale of 1 – 10 where are you with it now?

1 = not started ... 10 = completed

What is your next step towards completion?

Remember be realistic and specific

What skills, strengths and resources do you have to help you achieve this goal?

Action plan



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Think about times in the past when you achieved a similar goal – how did you do it then?

How did achieving it make you feel?

What might stop you getting on with it?

What can you do about this?

What will be your reward – in the short term and in the long term

Now go and do it ...
but remember to be kind
to yourself and get help if
you need it



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Where to get help if you are struggling with your mental health



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- Your GP or practice nurse, especially if you have physical symptoms that need checking out; ***in a crisis 999 or go to A & E***
- Your line manager, supervisor or colleague
- Human Resources
- Mental Health First Aider or Mental Health Champion
- Employee Assistance Programme, if you have one
- Hub of hope <https://hubofhope.co.uk/>
- For student members of CIPA, there's also the Informals' MHFAer support line via informalswelfare@gmail.com
(see <https://yellowsheet.wordpress.com/access-to-mental-health-first-aiders-and-support-helplines/>).
- LawCare <https://www.lawcare.org.uk/> **0800 279 6888**
- Samaritans <https://www.samaritans.org/> **116 123**
- Calmzone <https://www.thecalmzone.net/> **0800 585858**

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Thank you for
listening

Any questions?