

Help! I Can't Get Things Done Unless I Care About Them

How to Avoid Doing the Things You Don't Care about
A Stupid Story About Procrastination

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Michael: Hey Alice, how's it going?

Alice: It's good.

M: Have you been meditating?

Alice: Yeah, but I have some problems with it.

Michael: Like what?

Alice: Well, I'm trying to be productive in my life. You know, the usual stuff. Like, I can't focus on things, I can't get stuff done, I can't clear my mind.

Michael: Whoa, let's just look at one of those at a time.

Alice: OK, I keep procrastinating.

Michael: Yeah, me too.

Alice: Huh? I thought you were good at meditation.

Michael: So what? Why do you think meditation will solve procrastination?

Alice: Uh, I don't know. I thought that's the kind of thing it's good for. Everyone seems to talk about it that way. I think I even saw it on the cover of a magazine.

Michael: Don't believe everything you read. Seriously, I don't know how to "solve" procrastination. As far as I'm concerned, it's a bullshit problem. Procrastination is when you are having trouble to do something that you don't really care all that much about doing.

Alice: But...I do care about it. I have a lot of work to get done, and I can't get myself to do it. I need to do this work. It's important to me. If I don't work, I won't make money and my family will starve and I'll be out on the street and a and a and a and a

Michael: Whoa, let's just look at one thing at a time. You're spinning quite a tale here.

Alice: But, isn't that what will happen?

Michael: I have no idea what will happen. But, you're telling quite a story about what will happen.

Alice: How do you know it's just a story?

Michael: I'm not saying it's JUST a story. I'm saying it's a story. Your mind is telling a story about what will happen.

Alice: Hm, OK. I guess that's true. But so what? Are you saying I shouldn't take it seriously?

Michael: I'm not sure. But , you should see that it's a story. A minute ago, you were having trouble seeing even that.

Alice: What good would that do me?

Michael: I'm not sure. But, wouldn't you agree that it's a closer approximation to "reality", than the idea that this stuff WILL happen? YWouldn't you agree that you are more in the present moment, and less in your head, when you see that "my biggest problem is procrastination " is a STORY?

Alice: Yeah, but so what?

Michael: I don't know so what. I have no fucking clue. What, do you think I'm trying to convince you of something? What's going on with you?

Alice: I don't really understand. How does this help with my procrastination problem?

Michael: I have no idea. I already told you I have no idea how to help with your procrastination problem. WHY do you keep look at me for a solution to that problem? How am I the procrastination expert suddenly? I already told you that I suck at getting things done, especially when I don't really care about them.

Alice: OK, so you're the meditation expert, right? What does this have to do with meditation?

Michael: You tell me.

Alice: I have no idea.

Michael: OK.

Alice: Huh?

Michael: Huh?

Alice: Why would I meditate if it's not going to help me with anything?

Michael: What are you talking about? You seem to be thinking I am going to convince you to meditate. I can't do that. Why are you even interested in meditation, anyway?

Alice: To make me more productive. To help with my procrastination. Isn't it going to do those things?

Michael: I have no idea. Is it?