

The Procrastination Test

Instructions

Your answer is on a three point scale: *not me, somewhat like me, like me*. Score **zero** for not me, **one** for somewhat like me, and **two** for like me. When you finish the test, total your score.

	Not me (Score 0)	Somewhat like me (Score 1)	Like me (Score 2)
1. Procrastination comes naturally to me.			
2. I have responsibilities that I'm not doing.			
3. I have plans that stay on the drawing board.			
4. I sidestep uncomfortable priorities.			
5. I tell myself that later is the time to begin.			
6. I start things that I don't finish.			
7. I have a habit of showing up late.			
8. I delay acting to meet a deadline.			
9. I find ways to extend deadlines.			
10. I come up with excuses to explain delays.			
11. I put off hard decisions.			
12. When I'm not sure, I'll avoid the situation.			
13. I put off making a needed lifestyle change.			
14. My pessimism causes delays.			
15. My emotions affect what I do.			
16. My intimate relationship is going nowhere.			
17. I avoid what frustrates me.			
18. I get side-tracked by conflicts.			
19. My doubts and fears inhibit my actions.			
20. When I feel anxious, I'll avoid what I fear.			

Total "somewhat like me" + "like me" scores: _____.

Interpretation -- Mastering Procrastination

The procrastination test doesn't tell you whether your procrastinating is an inconvenience or a disabling habit. Rather items 1 to 10 suggest procrastination tendencies. Items 11-20 point to more specific *procrastination hotspots*. Likewise, the meaning of a total score is suggestive. In the unlikely event you score all zeros and one "two" score that area can be a bane of life worthy of addressing. If you score 30 or more, you will want to address some ways to conquer procrastination in medical school.

Items you mark as "unlike me" are areas that merit a second look. They can help you identify what you are doing that works well for you. Apply these qualities to other areas of your life. "Somewhat like me" suggests an opportunity to take actions to put yourself into the position of later answering "not like me." Items you mark as "like me" are probable *procrastination hot spots*. One hotspot is *behavior procrastination* (see item 6). Behavioral procrastination is not following through on what you started. One antidote is to isolate where procrastination starts in the behavioral cycle—do you wait to start until you think the output will be perfect? Do you lose interest along the way? Plan a strategy to get beyond this type of barrier—set short term goals or visualize the benefits of finishing. (See handout, Ending Procrastination, for ways to reduce procrastination.)