

"A splendid way
to avoid one's work."
— BEN SCHOTT, author of
Schott's Original Miscellany

THE ART *of* PROCRASTINATION

A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE
DAWDLING, LOLLYGAGGING
AND POSTPONING*

** or getting things done by putting them off*

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Resumo de The Art of Procrastination: A Guide to Effective Dawdling, Lollygagging and Postponing

This is not a book for Bill Gates. Or Hillary Clinton, or Steven Spielberg. Clearly they have no trouble getting stuff done. For the great majority of us, though, what a comfort to discover that we're not wastrels and slackers, but doers.

. . . in our own way. It may sound counterintuitive, but according to philosopher John Perry, you can accomplish a lot by putting things off. He calls it structured procrastination: "In 1995, while not working on some project I should have been working on, I began to feel rotten about myself.

But then I noticed something. On the whole, I had a reputation as a person who got a lot done and made a reasonable contribution. . . . A paradox.

Rather than getting to work on my important projects, I began to think about this conundrum. I realized that I was what I call a structured procrastinator: a person who gets a lot done by not doing other things."Celebrating a nearly universal character flaw, "The Art of Procrastination" is a wise, charming, compulsively readable book really, a tongue-in-cheek argument of ideas.

Perry offers ingenious strategies, like the defensive to-do list (1. Learn Chinese . . .) and task triage. He discusses the double-edged relationship between the computer and procrastination on the one hand, it allows the procrastinator to fire off a letter or paper at the last possible minute; on the other, it's a dangerous time suck (Perry counters this by never surfing until he's already hungry for lunch).

Or what may be procrastination's greatest gift: the chance to accomplish surprising, wonderful things by not sticking to a rigid schedule. For example, Perry wrote this book by avoiding the work he was supposed to be doing grading papers and evaluating dissertation ideas.

How lucky for us."

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