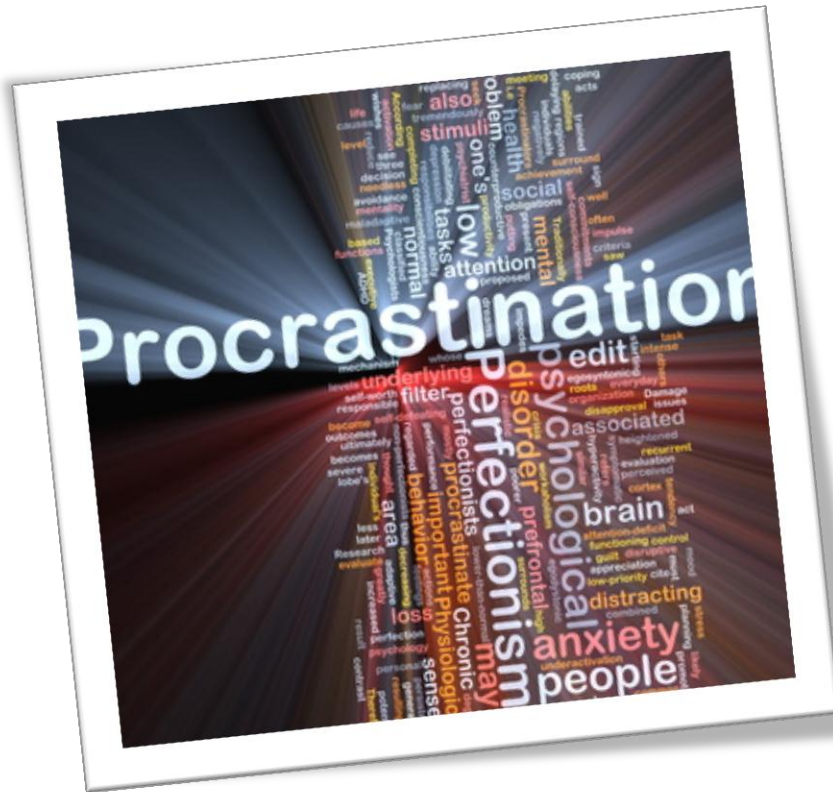


Write Now!

On Procrastination



The Author Series from Praeclarus Press



If you were to survey authors about their writing challenges, most would place procrastination at or near the top of the list. Since writing is a lonely process and a lot of hard work, it's amazing all the things that we will do to avoid getting started. We get a drink, go to the bathroom, check our e-mail. We sharpen all our pencils, clean out our desk drawer, or decide to catch up on those journals stacking up on our desks. We run an urgent errand, make a call or order

something online. Any of this ringing a bell?

Procrastination can be a problem throughout the writing process. When we don't have time, we often long for "time to write." Yet when we do have time, all of the sudden, there are 20 other things to do. Even experienced authors, with lots of publications to their credit, can be black-belt procrastinators. Case in point, I recently started working on my 20th book: Nancy Mohrbacher and I are writing the revised edition of *Breastfeeding Made Simple*. There have been a lot of new discoveries since we wrote that book in 2004-2005, and I've been looking forward to revising the book. But when I came right down to it, I had a really hard time starting. In fact, I knew that I could not start until I had organized my kitchen cupboards. They now look great!

Eventually, even black-belt procrastinators have to get to work. Otherwise, we can't really call ourselves writers. So here are a few tricks I've learned that seem to help.

- **Give yourself a time limit.** Get a timer and set it for 15 minutes. That's as long as you need to work. Somehow, when it's that small amount, it seems less intimidating and easier to get going.
- **Use procrastination.** I find that it helps to have several projects going at once. If one is tough, I can change to another. Just be careful that you don't use this strategy so much that you miss your deadlines.

- **Make your work easy to do.** Do whatever you can to make your work easy. Have what you need at hand. Work in a pleasant place. Jot yourself a note when you finish for the day so you can shorten your warm up time.
- **Use bribes.** Give yourself a treat when you finish something. It doesn't need to be something big, expensive or fattening. Just make it something you enjoy, like 30 minutes to read a fun book or walk outside. Treats can be tremendously motivating. Use them to your advantage. Besides, you've earned it!

In summary, if you find yourself procrastinating about your writing, realize that you are in very good company. The secret is to not let it completely stop you. Use whatever strategy that you find helpful, and give yourself a pat on the back to dodging this common obstacle.

Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, Ph.D., IBCLC, FAPA is owner and Editor-in-Chief of Praeclarus Press. For more information, go to www.PraeclarusPress.com.

