

# Procrastination and Organization

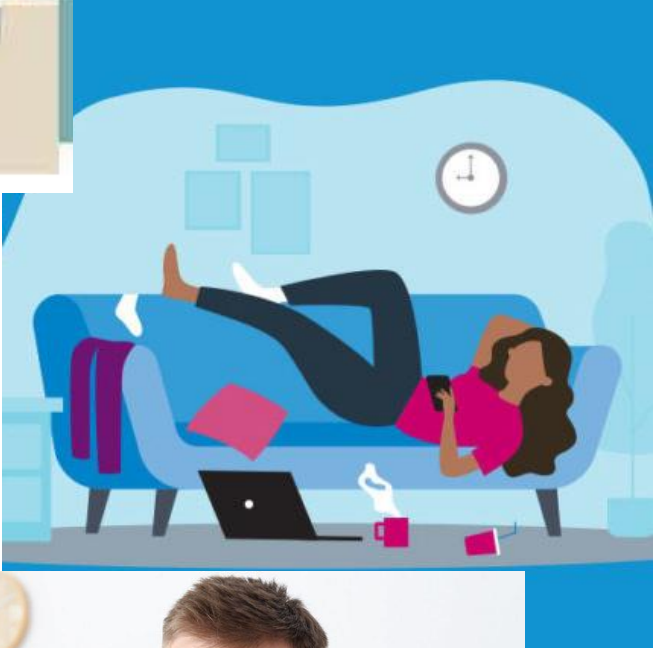
Dr. Tamantha Golden, MPA, M.Ed, NCC, NCSC  
La Plata High Professional School Counselor  
Charles County Public Schools

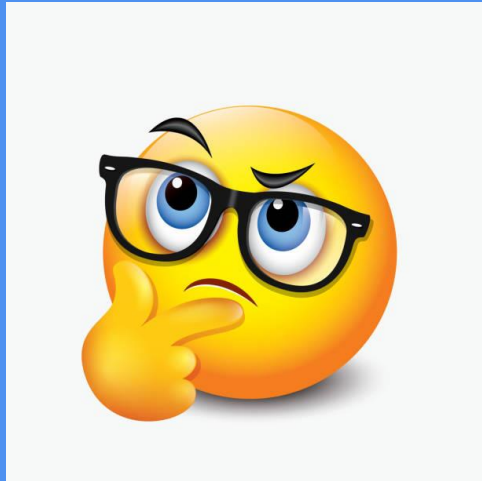


# Objective

The workshop will provide practical tips, techniques and strategies for getting organized and taking control of usage of time. (i.e., Executive Functioning skills)

# What are some terms you normally hear or use to describe procrastinators?





Think about times that you haven't completed something in life (small or major) and the emotions you felt from not accomplishing the goal.





# Psychological Distress

Shame

Guilt

Regret/Remorse

Irresponsible

Liability

Dishonoring/  
Disgraceful

Condemnation

Defeated

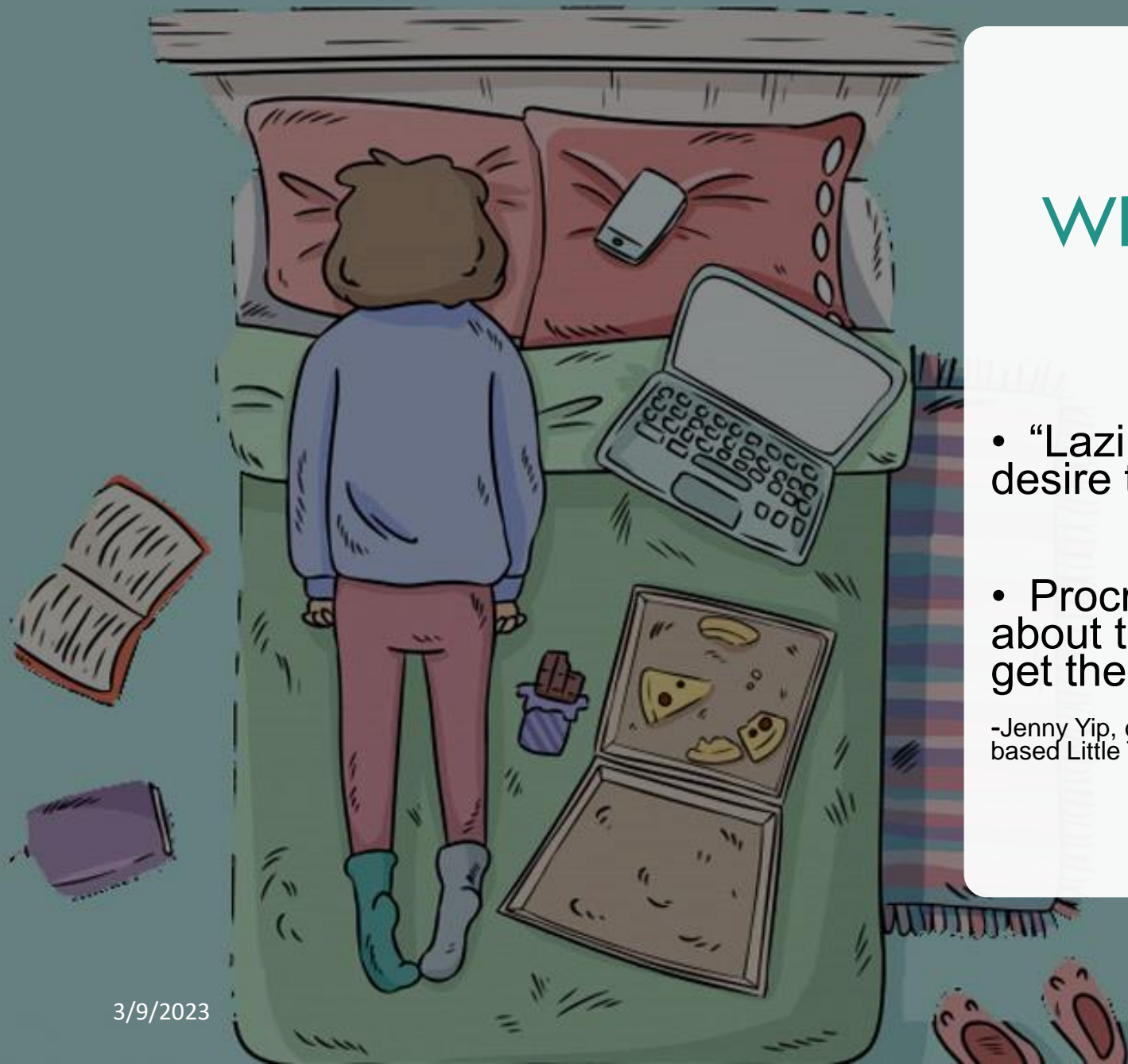
Frustrated

Confused

Rumination

**Culmination of “Not worth trying”**





## What procrastination is not....

- “Laziness is like, ‘I have absolutely no desire to even think about this.’”
- Procrastination is, ‘It troubles me to think about this. And therefore, it’s hard for me to get the job done.’ That’s a big difference.”

-Jenny Yip, clinical psychologist and executive director of the Los Angeles-based Little Thinkers Center

# What is procrastination?

Derived from the Latin verb *procrastinare* — to put off until tomorrow.

Greek word *akrasia* — doing something against our better judgment.

Procrastination is an emotion regulation problem, not a time management problem



# Characteristics of Procrastination

## Coping mechanism

Procrastination isn't a unique character flaw or a mysterious curse on your ability to manage time, but a way of coping with **challenging emotions** and negative moods induced by certain tasks — **boredom, anxiety, insecurity, frustration, resentment, self-doubt and beyond.**

## Managing Emotions

Procrastination is about being more focused on “the immediate urgency of **managing negative moods**” than getting on with the task.





But why do I  
keep doing it?

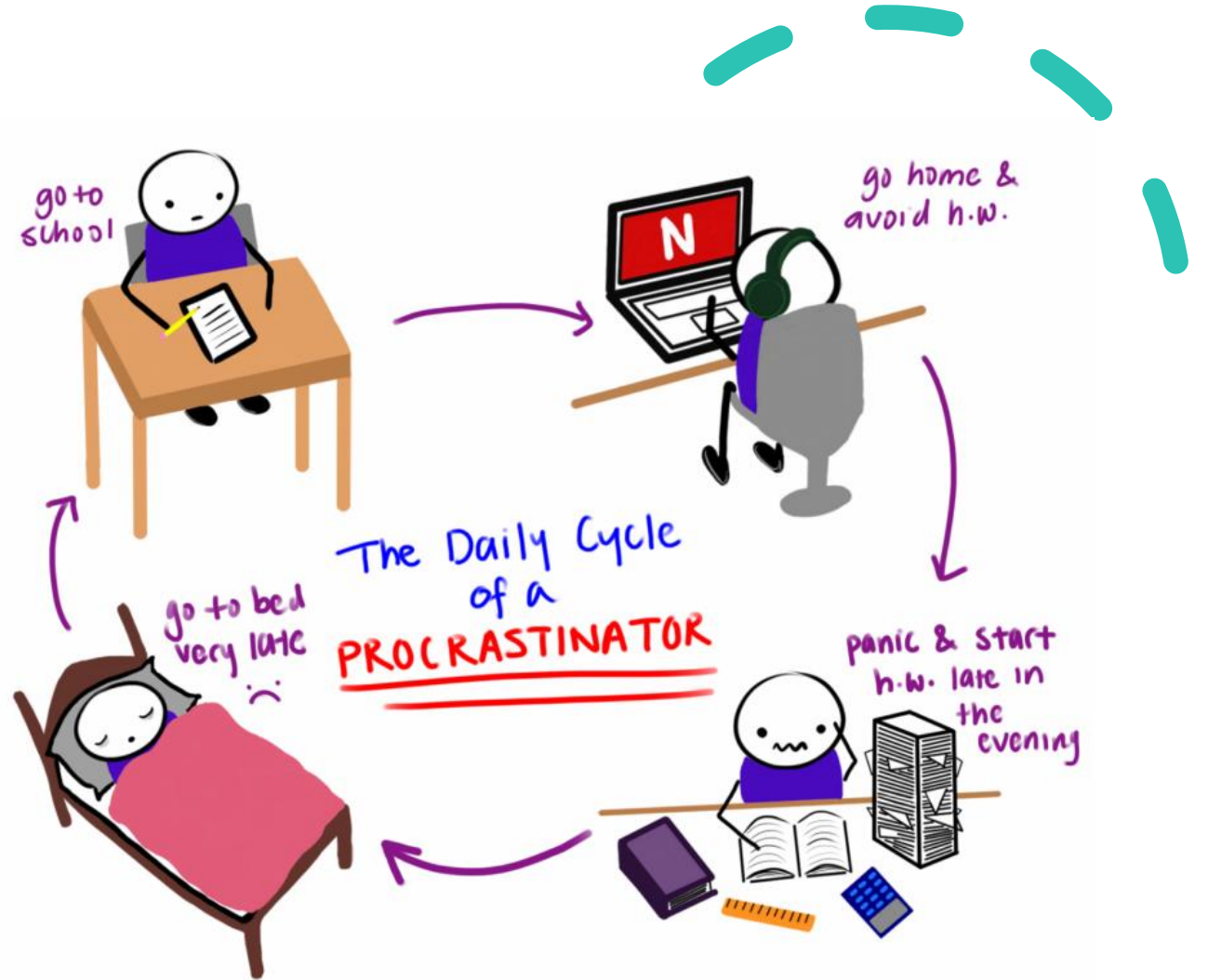


You've been rewarded for  
procrastinating!

So, you tend to do it again.

It becomes a cycle, one that easily  
becomes a chronic habit.

“People engage in this irrational cycle of chronic procrastination because of an inability to manage negative moods around a task.”  
Dr. Fuschia Sirois,  
professor of psychology  
at the University of  
Sheffield.





*present bias*



our hard-wired tendency to  
prioritize short-term needs  
ahead of long-term ones.

# Procrastination is deeply existential

We choose and hold the control  
“To do, or not to do”

## Body Snatchers

Dr. Hershfield’s research has shown that, on a neural level, we perceive our “future selves” more like strangers than as parts of ourselves. When we procrastinate, parts of our brain actually thinks that the tasks we’re putting off — and the accompanying negative feelings that await us on the other side — are somebody else’s problem.

## “Amygdala Hijack”

- Unable to make thoughtful, future-oriented decisions in the midst of stress.
- Our brains are still wired to be more concerned with removing the threat in the present.
- Procrastination is about emotions, not productivity.

## Internal Solutions

Self-forgiveness promotes productivity. Self-compassion supports motivation and personal growth. In turn, you enhance self-worth which fosters positive emotions like optimism, wisdom, curiosity and personal initiative.

# Psychological Types

(why someone might procrastinate)

1

## Perfectionist

You're overly concerned with not meeting high expectations; you work so hard you never finish (or, sometimes, never start).

2

## Dreamer

You're great at planning and scheming but frustrated by the practical reality of sitting down to do hard work.

3

## Worrier

"What ifs" get in the way. You avoid making decisions, resist change, and are fearful about the unfamiliar.

4

## Crisis-Maker

You enjoy the last-minute adrenaline rush and tell yourself you work best under pressure.

5

## Defier

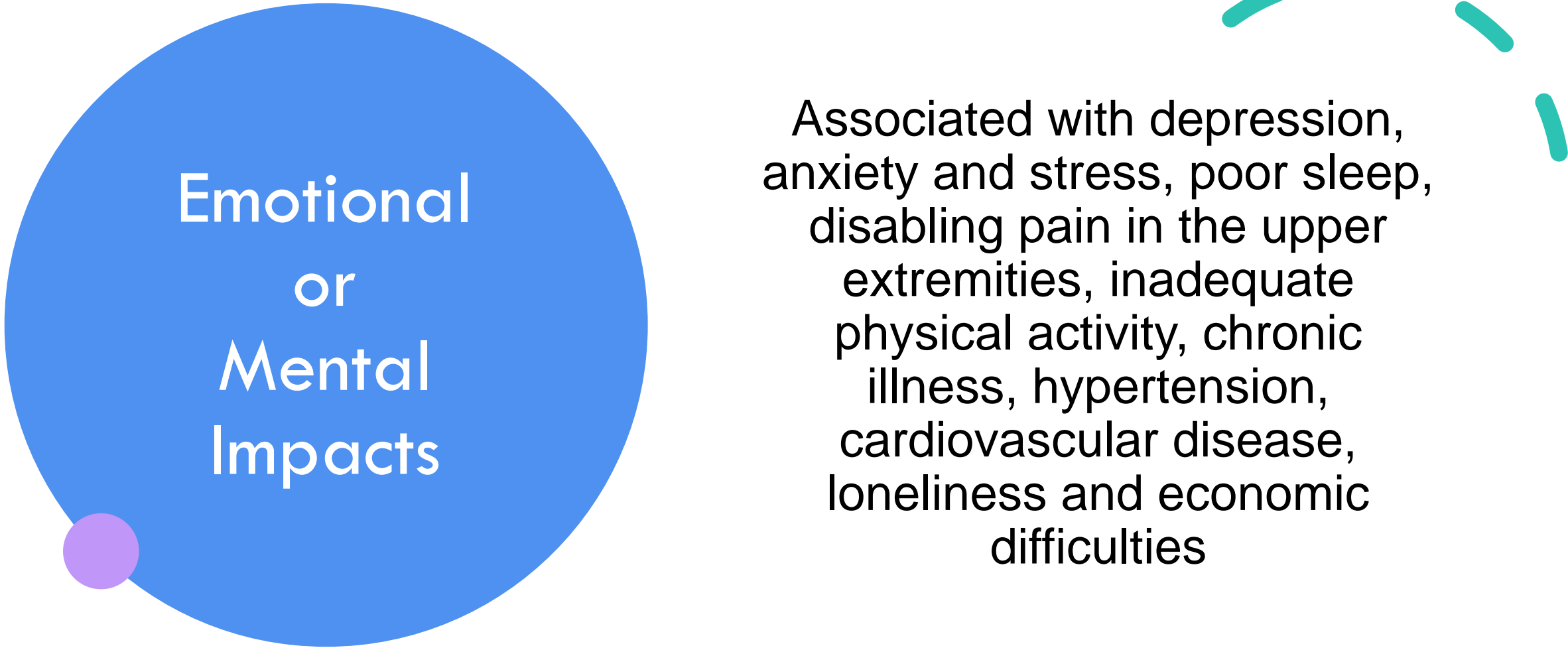
You rebel against external deadlines and expectations. You might be overt about this, or you might exhibit a more passive-aggressive kind of defiance.

6

## Pleaser


There's too much on your plate because you can't say no or set appropriate boundaries.





## Emotional or Mental Impacts

Associated with depression, anxiety and stress, poor sleep, disabling pain in the upper extremities, inadequate physical activity, chronic illness, hypertension, cardiovascular disease, loneliness and economic difficulties



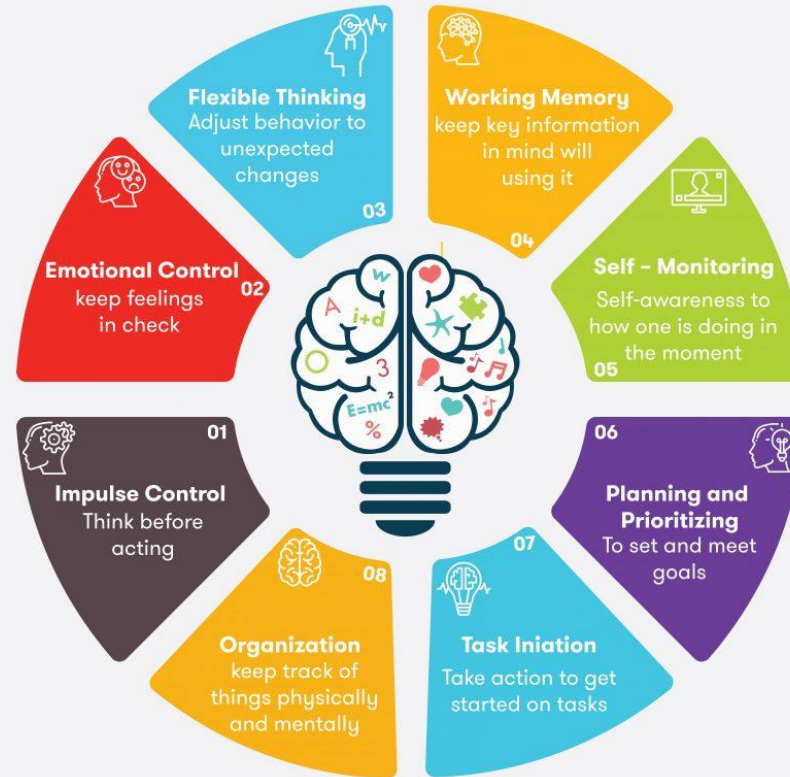
The way to get started  
is to quit talking and  
begin doing.

Walt Disney

“It’s an invisible problem that can easily be mistaken for laziness because others can only see ‘the tip of the iceberg’ and not the base that supports it.”

– Linda K., ADDvantages Learning Center

## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING



# Executive Functioning Skills:

a set of skills needed to be independent in ALL areas of life

## **Impulse Control**

Ability to think before speaking, resist temptation, think about choices and consequences of behaviors before acting.

## **Flexible Thinking**

Ability to think about different ways to solve problems, adjust to new situations, learn from mistakes, cope with routine changes, try new things, switch from task to another, and learn new things.

## **Emotional Control**

Ability to regulate emotions, choosing which emotions are appropriate in any given situation, maintaining emotions under pressure.

## **Working Memory**

Ability to follow instructions, pay attention, use relevant information while in the middle of an activity.

## **Self-Monitoring**

Ability to have self-awareness of how one is doing in the moment to make adjustments of actions/behaviors to the current situation.

## **Planning and Prioritizing**

Ability to plan daily tasks to meet short and long-term responsibilities.

## **Task Initiation**

Ability to motivate self to begin tasks by directing behaviors and actions.

## **Organization**

Gather and keep track of information and belongings.





# How to Implement Executive Functioning Skills

Be present with how your body feels at the time

**"The most important decision you make is to be in a good mood."**—Voltaire

**Ignore negative self-talk:** *I'm not smart enough to write this. Even if I am, what will people think of it? Writing is so hard. What if I do a bad job? "*

**Make temptations more inconvenient**

**Avoid Multitasking**

**Consider the next action or tasks/Use active procrastination:** decide what should be prioritized and what to put off for later

**Set Your Own Deadline**

**Get Into a Routine:** Use whiteboards to create blocks of time and schedule everything down to the minute for afterschool activities & tasks. Be flexible, as this shouldn't induce stress.

**Set Rules for Yourself**

**Write Everything Down:** how & where to submit work, deadlines, etc.

**Use Tools to Stay Organized:** agenda, folders, binder, phone notifications, etc.

**Color Code Everything**





# Stress management

Find your triggers

Get active

Practice deep breathing

Eat a healthy diet

Meditate

Laugh more

Connect with others

Assert yourself

Try yoga

Get enough sleep

Keep a journal

Get musical and be creative

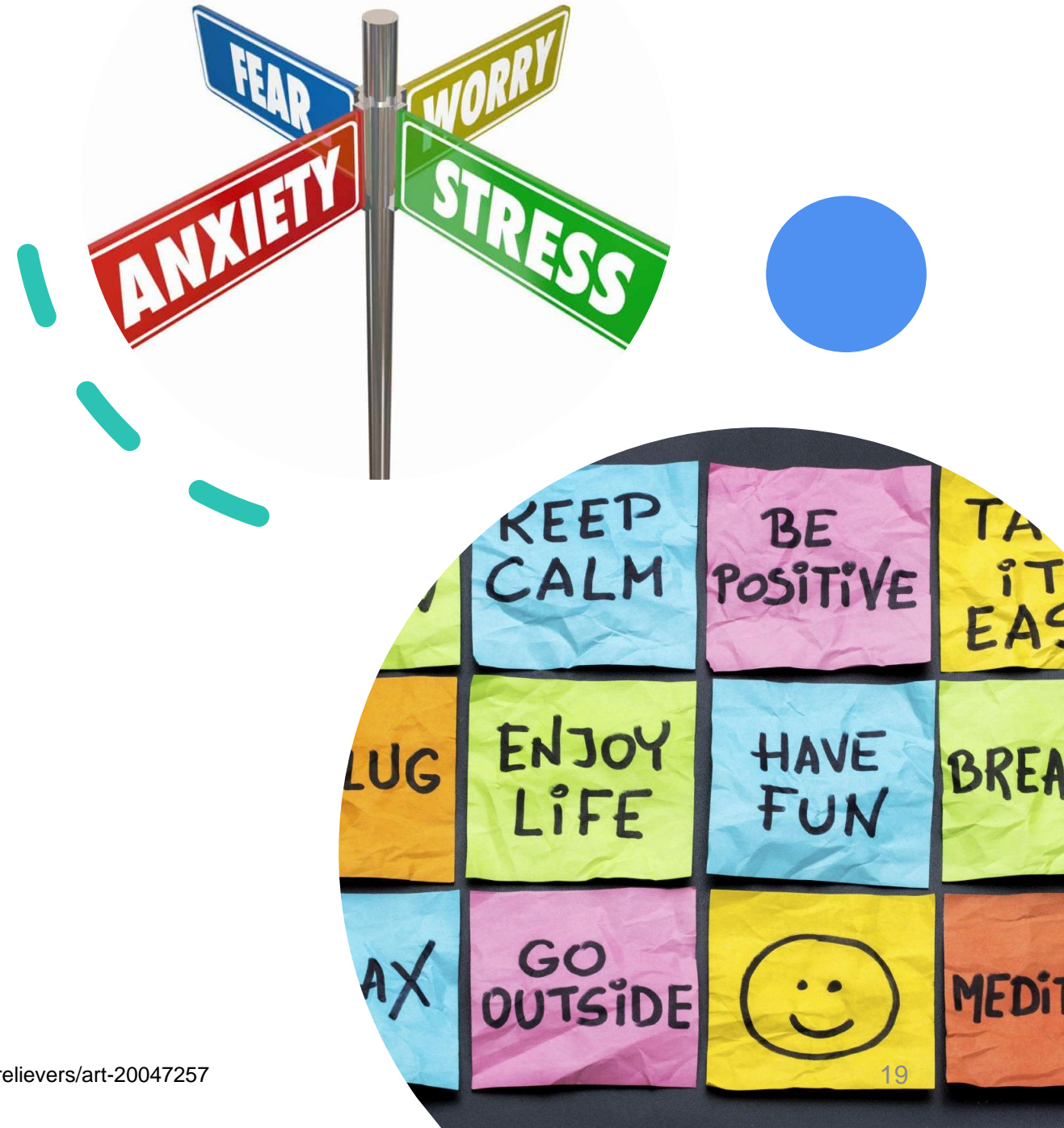
Ask for help

Take short breaks/Unplug

**Drip cold water/Ice cube on your wrists**

Seek counseling

**Avoid unhealthy habits (Manage social media time, reduce caffeine & sugar, avoid substance use, shift perspective, etc.)**





Thank you

### Procrastination

**"Laziness isn't why you procrastinate. This is"** by Kristen Rogers, CNN, 1/17/2023:

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/17/health/procrastination-types-how-to-stop-wellness/index.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/25/smarter-living/why-you-procrastinate-it-has-nothing-to-do-with-self-control.html>

[https://www.reed.edu/academic\\_support/pdfs/handouts/6%20kinds%20of%20procrastinators.pdf](https://www.reed.edu/academic_support/pdfs/handouts/6%20kinds%20of%20procrastinators.pdf)

### Organization Tips

<https://www.wma.us/about/titan-blog/post/~board/titan-blog/post/10-school-organization-tips-for-students>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/organize-focus.html>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/child-organized.html>

### Reduce Stress

<https://www.colorado.edu/law/25-quick-ways-reduce-stress>

<https://www.verywellmind.com/tips-to-reduce-stress-3145195>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relievers/art-20047257>

<https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/16-ways-relieve-stress-anxiety#3.-Minimize-phone-use-and-screen-time>