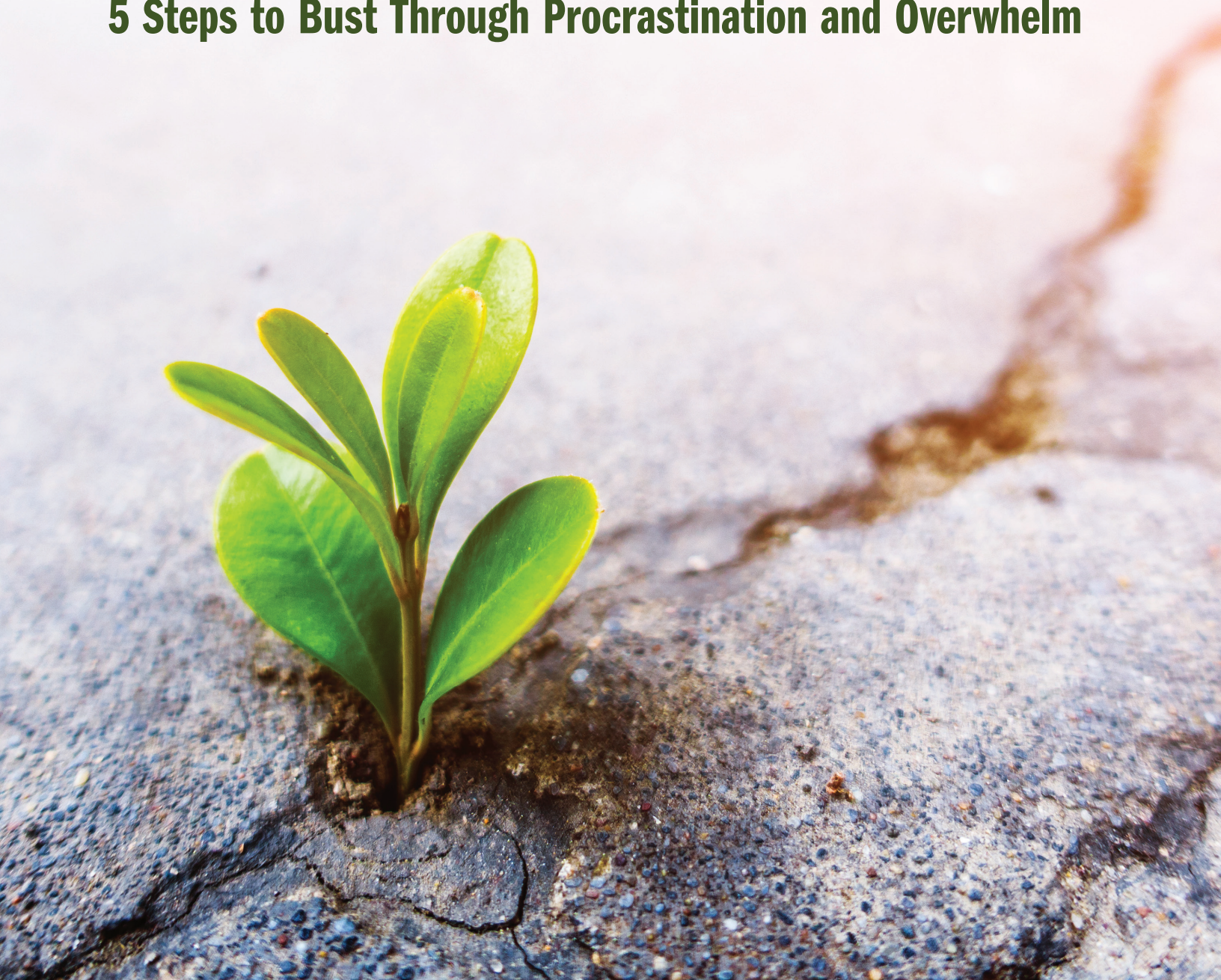


# I Know What to Do, I'm Just Not Doing It

**5 Steps to Bust Through Procrastination and Overwhelm**



**by Sarah Reiff-Hekking, Ph.D**

Time Matters Expert, Productivity Coach and Psychologist

**True Focus**  
...Because Time Matters



**You know what you need to do.**

Problem is, you just aren't doing it!

Until Now.

This will only take a few minutes so don't put it off.

You got this, let's go!

*-Sarah*

Want to skip ahead and get customized support just for you? Click the link below to schedule a no-cost Time Matters Success Strategy Session! [truefocuscoaching.com/strategy-session-inquiry](https://truefocuscoaching.com/strategy-session-inquiry)

## What is procrastination?

Procrastination is the act of delaying something that we know we can do. **Not all delaying is procrastination.** Sometimes it makes really good sense to delay doing things and it is often the best way to manage our activities so we get the right things done at the right time. For instance, right now I am delaying making a phone call to a friend because I am writing this e-book which is an important work activity. I'll call my friend after work.

**Delaying becomes procrastination when it causes problems for you and you feel like you don't know how to control it.** It often becomes an automatic response to a particular type of activity. For instance, you might always delay updating your bookkeeping until just before the tax filing deadline even though this is an activity that can be done weekly throughout the year.



## What does overwhelm have to do with it?

**Overwhelm is that place where you freeze or avoid.** You may feel it in the pit of your stomach or you can't think clearly or make decisions. Overwhelm causes you to end up doing meaningless activities like surfing the web for no reason. It's important to notice when you are overwhelmed because it causes procrastination. You've probably experienced a moment where the phone is ringing, you have a new listing to start, you need to prospect, you really need to get back to a client and instead you find yourself checking social media!

## Why do procrastination and overwhelm matter?

**Procrastination and overwhelm matter because they keep you in a perpetual state of feeling bad.** You get overwhelmed, procrastinate, and then feel even more overwhelmed. This creates a negative emotional spiral where you set yourself up for feeling bad all the time.

This cycle is what prevents you from actually taking that vacation you've been dreaming of or even that good night's sleep that you desperately need. Not only does this keep you in a constant state of stress and exhaustion but it also causes you to stop trusting yourself since rarely do you do what you planned to do. Projects keep slipping onto next week's To Do list, making you feel even more hopeless. And the cycle continues...

## How do we solve the problem?

In my work with time-challenged realtors, entrepreneurs, and professionals, I've found that there are 5 steps that help to bust through procrastination and overwhelm.

## STEP 1

# Recognize what is overwhelming you



**Recognize what overwhelms you or causes you to avoid doing what you want to do. If you can do that, you are on your way to beating procrastination.**



**TIP:** Look over your to-do list from the last week and see what you keep *NOT* doing — that is a big hint about what is overwhelming you or what you are avoiding. Once you figure out what's overwhelming you, you can then ask: what's the feeling that comes up for me when I go to do that activity?

## Action Steps:

What makes you feel overwhelmed?

---

---

What stays on your To Do list week after week?

---

---

How do you feel when you see "that thing you don't do" on your to do list every week?

---

---

We're all unique, so you need to learn what overwhelm, procrastination, avoidance, or freezing feels like for you. There's an emotional aspect to managing our time and it's a bit different for each of us. Discover what it is for you, what it feels like, and when it happens.

Recognizing what's overwhelming you is important because this is where the procrastination begins — most people don't notice it in the moment — But if you can, you have a much better chance of changing your procrastination habit!

## STEP 2

# Calm the Negative Self-Talk



**Negative self-talk is all of that stuff going on in your head that doesn't serve you.**

You probably have high standards for yourself and that's great, but beating yourself up for not being perfect won't help you.

### **Negative self-talk sounds like this:**

- "There is no way I am going to get this done."
- "I can't do this."
- "This is hopeless."
- "I'm stupid."
- "I'll never have time to get this done."



**TIP:** Recognize the things you say to yourself that you would never say to someone you love (or even a stranger!)

### **Action Steps:**

Create an inner discussion that is consistent with productivity. Positive self-talk often starts with the words "I can..."

For example, you might take the negative self-statement "There is no way I am going to get this done" and turn it into a positive statement such as:

- "I can take one step at a time."
- "I can get one piece of this done right now."
- "If I focus for a few minutes, I can move it forward."

The key here is to address the negative talk in YOUR mind and create a positive statement that turns it around and supports productivity.

## STEP 3

# Set Up Your Routine & Your Environment to Support Productivity



## Routine and Environment are connected.

**ROUTINE:** Routines are automated habits that allow us to easily and quickly get things done without thinking too much. The goal here is to start to set up a flexible routine that aligns your time with your intentions. Routines become automatic once they are practiced. Too often we have routines that make it easy to stay overwhelmed and unproductive!

To improve your productivity create automatic routines so the important stuff just gets handled. For instance, if you are procrastinating on prospecting for new clients, you might set up a routine where you track new prospects' information in one place as they come in each day and three times each week you set aside a half hour to make phone calls to those prospects on your list. Practicing and keeping the routines going is the tricky part! It's where most of my clients need help.



**TIP:** To improve your productivity look for the times that it is too easy to get distracted or avoid doing what you really want to do.

Now let's unleash the power of your environment.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Our physical environment predicts most of our behavior... something like up to 80%. This is why positive self-talk is only ONE piece of the puzzle.

If you think this number sounds high, imagine this scenario. You walk into your kitchen after a long exhausting day and you are starving. The only thing in sight is a plate of your favorite cookies on the counter... Odds are you are going to eat those cookies... Right?



**TIP:** Notice where your environment messes with your plans.

To set up your environment to support healthy eating, you could make sure that there are healthy snacks and meals available where you eat AND that there is no junk food nearby.

*(continued on next page)*

**STEP 3**

# Set Up Your Routine & Your Environment to Support Productivity



## Action Steps:

What is one thing you procrastinate on?

---

---

What is one routine you'd like to adopt that will support being productive on the 'thing you procrastinate on'?

---

---

What is one way to change your environment to support being productive on the 'thing you procrastinate on'?

---

---



## STEP 4

# Get Support!



## We all need support and partnership to succeed.

If you are having a hard time getting started or completing something, figure out the kind of support you need and watch your productivity skyrocket. Not every activity needs the same kind of support... and finding the RIGHT kind of support for you can be tricky.



**TIP:** Think about times that you got really great help in the past. What kind of help was it?

## Action Steps:

**Find the right kind of support for YOU.** Here are a few options:

**Self-Accountability.** This works when you have an activity that is important to you and you are highly confident that you will accomplish it, once you set up time to do it. The key here is to schedule time to do the activity and give yourself credit once it is completed.

*The problem is that doesn't always work and you then end up not trusting yourself to get things done.*

**Check-in with a buddy.** If you need to set a deadline that someone else is in on to feel confident that you will complete a task, set up a time to check in with someone who can support you to move forward. Be specific about when you will meet with them to let them know what you have completed and what your next steps are.

*Caution: Make sure this is someone who can help you, lots of "accountability buddies" don't help because they can't actually give you the support you need.*

**Locked-in accountability.** We all have activities that we have a hard time getting started on. Sometimes the easiest way to get these things done is to make an appointment to do it with someone else. For instance, you might set aside a regular meeting each week to do prospecting research with a colleague or a team member and then follow that with a regular meeting where you each make calls to prospects for 30 minutes.

*The problem that happens here is that you feel that you "should" be able to move forward without that kind of support but you don't... Am I correct?*

## STEP 5

# Keep Restarting Until You Are Where You Need to Be!



**Overwhelm and other emotions related to procrastination need constant attention.**

Just like the key to finishing projects is to make sure that you keep chipping away at them and moving them forward, the key to managing procrastination and overwhelm is to keep working through these 5 steps when the emotions get in your way.

For some of us, being persistent in this way is challenging. The key is to keep coming back and moving that project forward, a process I call “restarting” or “tending” a project. Well, the same thing needs to happen with managing your overwhelm, you have to keep tending it...



**TIP:** Notice what stops you from being consistent. What do you need to keep tending to keep your overwhelm at bay?

## Action Steps:

Keep working through these 5 Steps to Bust Through Procrastination and Overwhelm, moment-by-moment, day-by-day.

I know you can do this! I’ve seen it with so many of my clients — like Tracey, who could never finish her work during the day and now has time to herself in the evening and weekends. She’s also taking care of her clients and maximizing billable hours — or Jonathan, who was stuck in reactive-panic mode working 24/7 and now focuses easily on what he does best. He delegates to his team, has built a lucrative business, and enjoys more time with his family.

You can start to bust through procrastination and overwhelm in your business and your life today. Just review the tips and action steps — You may be surprised by what you can do. You’re smart... these steps will seem easy. **The key is to really practice them consistently. That’s the hard part and where most people need help.**

# What My Clients Say...



**Nancy Peterson**

Realtor

“As a Realtor, time management is very hard. Your business can take over your life and it can be very challenging to focus on the activities that matter most (both business and personal). I realized that if I wanted to grow my business, I would have to get a much better handle on my schedule.

Since starting with Sarah, not only am I getting more done, I am also getting to the work that I could never seem to get to before. I’m also spending more quality time with my family. Sarah is an amazing teacher – she has a great curriculum but she is also able to give help on the spot when needed.”



**Jonathan Christian**

Owner, WeMakeStuffHappen.com

“Before working with Sarah I was always in reactive panic mode. I now take time off every week and traveled to Europe for a month this summer. My business is thriving and my personal life is better than ever.”



## Want some customized help?

In a conversation with me or with one of the highly-trained members of my team, you will find out what your exact best next step is to get a grip on your time and get to the next level in your life and business.

I'd like to **GIFT** you this complimentary appointment to get you on your way to a happier, more productive relationship with time and getting things done. That means this one is on me (and is No Cost to you)!

**Schedule your complimentary session today!**

**Dr. Sarah Reiff-Hekking** is a Coach and Time Matters Expert with 20 years of experience helping people create and achieve their goals. She empowers entrepreneurs and professionals to get a grip on time so they can get to the next level in their lives and businesses. She draws upon her background and experience as a coach, psychologist, speaker, trainer and researcher to create elegant out-of-the-box solutions for her clients. As a business savvy entrepreneur she grew a successful coaching practice during a down economy. Dr. Sarah offers private and group coaching services. More at [TrueFocusCoaching.com](https://www.TrueFocusCoaching.com).