MURPHY BI-WEEKLY WRITING TIP

Getting Started: The 5 Minute Rule

https://murphywc.commons.gc.cuny.edu/bi-weekly-writing-tips/

Dear Murphy Students:

Despite all the work we have, many of us still procrastinate, waiting until the last minute to even start an assignment.

Today we offer a technique, used in cognitive behavioral therapy, to start any task (and possibly lower procrastination long-term):

The 5-Minute Rule

The technique sounds "simple" –

For any task, tell yourself that you will only do *5 minutes* of that task, with no distractions, after which you can stop. Time yourself, too.

What usually happens, the hope, is that you don't stop – you spend a little more time on it and make a lot more progress than planned.

That's It?

Yes! But if you want to lower your procrastinating habits long-term, *reflect on the experience before, during and after the 5 minutes*. Procrastination often goes deeper than just "laziness" and the more you understand why you do it, the better you can address it. Below is a table with questions you can ask yourself:

Task	How did you feel about the task before you began?	How long did you actually spend on the task?	Was the five-minute rule helpful in getting started?	How did you feel after working on the task for at least five minutes?
Researching preschools for my son.	*Overwhelmed by the amount of work; anxious about making the right choice*	*Fifteen minutes*	*Yes, knowing I could quit after five minutes took some of the pressure off.*	*I felt relieved and optimistic. I got organized and identified a couple schools to call.*

*Table is taken from page 98 of Sharon Martin's The CBT Workbook for Perfectionism

Try it out! At the very least, ask yourself these questions.

Go to our blog (link at the side) to access a downloadable chart to track your tasks!

Sign Up for a One-On-One Tutoring Session

1. Visit https://murphy.mywconline.net/
2. Register for an account
3. Log in and select the "Writing Support (All Campuses)" calendar.
4. Choose any of the available white rectangles.
5. Fill out the form with your assignment info.

Jean Soto, Writing Specialist
Jean.Soto@slu.cuny.edu
(929) 265-2101

If you have questions or want to put this into practice, feel free to contact me! ☺