

Lesia Kolomiets

Vinnitsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University,
PhD of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Psychology and Social
Work (Ukraine) kolomiets_lesia_77@ukr.net
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1309-5761>

Galyna Shulga

Vinnitsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University,
PhD of Pedagogical Sciences, Associate Professor of the Department of Psychology and Social
Work (Ukraine) shulgag25@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3402-1494>

Iuliia Lebed

Communal Higher Education Institution «Vinnitsia Humanities Pedagogical College», Candidate
of Philological Sciences (Ukraine)
iulialebed7@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8325-3462>

Viktor Kharchuk

Vinnitsia Mykhailo Kotsiubynskyi State Pedagogical University,
Master of Science in Speciality 053 Psychology (Ukraine)
vintristan73@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-4895-9170>

DETERMINATION AND CORRECTION OF PROCRASTINATION IN ADULTS

У статті розкрито результати теоретичного аналізу й емпіричного дослідження прокрастинації та її чинників у осіб дорослого віку. Констатовано, що у наукових дослідженнях вітчизняних і зарубіжних учених проблема прокрастинації особистості посідає досить важливе місце. Це спонукається необхідністю пояснення особливостей функціонування особистості в різних, зокрема нестабільних, умовах життєдіяльності. Прокрастинація осіб дорослого віку характеризує відтермінування дій попри усвідомлення ймовірності появи досить негативних наслідків. Прокрастинація спричинює появу негативних емоційних станів, зміни в системі мотивації, самоставлення й саморегуляції осіб у віці дорослості. На основі аналізу результатів емпіричного дослідження з'ясовано, що значній частці осіб дорослого віку притаманна схильність не вчасно виконувати заплановані справи, приймати потрібні рішення для початку діяльності, готовність відкладати початок роботи до дедлайнів, не вміння встановлювати першочерговість і терміновість поточних завдань. Прокрастинація більше характерна особам і віці середньої дорослості; жінки цього періоду мають більш виражену схильність до прокрастинації ніж чоловіки. У якості чинників прокрастинації осіб дорослого віку були виділені й досліджувалися ситуаційна і особистісна тривожність, мотивація досягнення, самооцінка, самоефективність і перфекціонізм. Завдяки кореляційному аналізу виявлено залежність рівня прокрастинації осіб дорослого віку від досліджених чинників ($p \leq 0,01$, $p \leq 0,05$). Констатуємо, що прокрастинація в осіб дорослого віку підвищується за вираженої особистісної і ситуативної тривожності, проявів перфекціонізму, зниження мотивації досягнення в бік уникнення невдач. Прокрастинація більшою мірою притаманна особам у віці дорослості зі зниженою самоефективністю й неадекватною самооцінкою. Обґрунтовано систему корекції чинників прокрастинації осіб дорослого віку на основі інтеграції елементів психологічної просвіти, проведення тренінгових і корекційних вправ (міні-лекції, презентації, мозкові штурми, групові дискусії, ігрова діяльність, проєктивні й арт-терапевтичні техніки тощо). Визначено доречність побудови системи корекції на принципах комплексності, послідовності, системності, врахування індивідуальних потреб й особливостей осіб у віці дорослості.

Ключові слова: прокрастинація, чинники прокрастинації, особливості й чинники прокрастинації в дорослому віці, система корекції.

The article presents the findings of empirical and theoretical research on adult procrastination and its contributing elements. It is said that the issue of personal procrastination holds a significant position in scientific research conducted by both domestic and international scientists. The desire to explain the characteristics of an individual's functioning in a variety of, especially unstable, life circumstances is what drives this. Adult procrastination is defined as delaying actions even when one is aware that there may be unfavourable outcomes. Adults who procrastinate are more likely to experience unpleasant emotional states, as well as changes in their motivation system, self-attitude, and self-regulation. According to the analysis of the empirical study's findings, a sizable percentage of adults have a propensity to put off starting activities in order to finish planned tasks on time, are willing to wait until deadlines to begin work, and struggle to establish priorities and urgency for ongoing tasks. People in their middle adult years are more likely to postpone; women in this stage of life are more likely than men to do so. Adult procrastination has been linked to a number of elements, including situational and personal anxiety, achievement motivation, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and perfectionism. According to correlation analysis, the characteristics under study had an impact on adults' procrastination levels ($p < 0.01$, $p \leq 0.05$). We conclude that persons who exhibit symptoms of perfectionism, significant situational and psychological anxiety, and a decline in achievement desire to avoid failures are more likely to procrastinate. Adults with low self-esteem and low self-efficacy are more likely to procrastinate. The integration of psychological education, training, and correction exercises (mini-lectures, presentations, brainstorming, group discussions, game activities, projective and art-therapeutic techniques, etc.) forms the basis of the system for correcting the factors that contribute to adult procrastination. It is decided whether it is reasonable to base a correctional system on the concepts of complexity, consistency, and systematicity while accounting for the unique requirements and traits of adults.

Keywords: procrastination, factors of procrastination, features and factors of procrastination in adulthood, correction system.

Introduction. In the conditions of modern instability, the study of the issues of optimal and effective management of a person's own life activities becomes particularly relevant. This applies to various areas—professional fulfilment, family relationships, raising children, attitude to one's own mental health, etc. In fact, this is a component of a broader view of the parameters of subjective well-being, life satisfaction, and assessment of life success by an adult. However, due to the action of various factors in a situation of life uncertainty, the ability of adults to maintain the desired efficiency decreases, which affects the degree of positivity of functioning.

In this context, the phenomenon of procrastination, or "procrastination syndrome," is actively being studied. In adulthood, procrastination is characterised by a tendency to suspend the start of tasks and actions, causing the experience of various negative emotional states, complicating goal setting and planning for the future, as well as the implementation of tasks in the present.

Procrastination in modern scientific sources is traditionally explained as a negative phenomenon for life and personality development. Key signs of procrastination indicate the tendency of adults to delay the completion of specific tasks. The increase in procrastination is likely due to personal experiences about poor-quality task performance, potential failure, the appearance of certain sanctions, and anxiety about the need to publicly demonstrate one's own incompetence. In addition, in conditions of rapid socio-economic and socio-political transformations, the demands on adults are growing rapidly, as a result of which they have to choose priority areas of life for self-realisation. Accordingly, in other areas that are currently less of a priority, under the influence of a situation of uncertainty, they have to use the strategy of "postponing for tomorrow," or they do not fully manage to perform tasks qualitatively. In some places, the tendency to an external locus of control and the tendency to shift responsibility to other significant persons, etc., prevail.

Thus, due to the action of various objective and subjective reasons, an adult with procrastination identifies the current life situation as problematic, may experience feelings of guilt, but continues to act stereotypically within the framework of procrastination patterns.

Theoretical foundations of research. Aspects of the problem of personal procrastination are reflected in the studies of domestic and foreign scientists. The concept of "procrastination" in various sources is identified as a phenomenon, a personality trait, a specific phenomenon, a situational

characteristic, a tendency, a form of behavior, a tendency, a habit, which indicates the absence of a single approach to its categorization and characteristics. Despite this, in most studies, the key features of procrastination are irrationality, delay in the implementation of intentions, and emotional discomfort. In particular, K. Ley interprets procrastination as a voluntary intention and irrational postponement of planned actions, even despite the fact that the individual is aware of the negative meaning of such an act [9, c. 64]. A similar opinion is expressed by P. Steele, who also emphasises the presence in a procrastinating individual of intentions to voluntarily and consciously postpone the execution of tasks without a good reason (or their completion even if part of the work has already been done), regardless of the understanding of the negative consequences. P. Steele argued that procrastination correlates with impulsivity, lack of self-control, decreased self-esteem and self-efficacy, motivation, perception of time perspective, and understanding of the "subjective utility of action" [16].

D. Ferrari called procrastination a functional delay in actions or avoidance of action and empirically proved that the personality traits associated with procrastination are low, inadequate self-esteem, lack of self-confidence and self-efficacy, loss of energy, manifestations of apathy, signs of depression, etc. [4., c. 73]. In addition, J. Ferrari, D. Tice, and S. Walters consider laziness to be the cause of procrastination, its determinant, along with the fear of failure.

In the publications of N. Milgram, procrastination is explained as a manifestation of procrastination behaviour, in which the demonstrated tendency to postpone, avoid, or postpone things is a special personal reaction in response to increased anxiety due to fear of unpredictable consequences. [12]. In addition, I. Janis and L. Mann categorise procrastination as an ineffective coping strategy, the manifestations of which are noticeable in a situation of confrontation over difficult work, regarding which there are pessimistic guidelines in terms of the possibility of achieving success. B. Burka and M. Yuen tend to explain procrastination as a kind of strategy for protecting the individual from low self-esteem.

In turn, A. Ellis and V. Knaus indicate that procrastination is an emotional disorder caused by an irrational style of thinking. Such irrational beliefs should be considered as a kind of internal system of personal coordinates with too high, dogmatic requirements for one's own behaviour in the form of obligations ("you have to," "must," "must"), as well as unrealistic, involuntary, generalised assumptions that can be proven or, conversely, refuted. Therefore, procrastination is considered a consequence of unsatisfactory living conditions that prevent the individual from performing any activity [14, p. 66-67].

The theoretical basis of our research is also the works of Ukrainian scientists on the problem under study. Researchers T. Koltunovich and O. Polishchuk emphasise that procrastination is procedurally characterised by a typical voluntary delay by an individual of starting a specific activity or performing significant tasks. This can lead to the appearance of uncomfortable feelings, the actualisation of anxiety, manifestations of stress reactions, and the appearance of tension in relationships with others [8, p. 214]. In addition, these scientists name psychophysiological (temperament properties), emotional (manifestations of anxiety, fear, emotional exhaustion), as well as motivational, behavioural, temporal, etc., factors of procrastination.

In scientific publications of M. Dvornyk, it was proved the relationship of procrastination with a high level of personal anxiety. Such a relationship triggers the behaviour of avoiding action, postponing its execution for later. This can serve for the individual as a manifestation of a kind of compensatory mechanism of psychological defence. In this case, procrastination acts for the individual as an immature mechanism of overcoming anxiety, an unconstructive coping mechanism, which leads to avoiding the problem and not solving it [3, p. 34].

The unconstructiveness of procrastination is also explained by E. Tatarinov. According to the scientist, procrastination is an irrational behaviour of a person, in which there is a constant repeated postponement of relevant matters for later with the awareness of the likelihood of negative consequences. Such irrational behaviour of a person is accompanied by negative emotional experiences with a reluctance to repeat them [17, p.303].

Y. Rudomanenko, in turn, identifies several key signs of procrastination, namely: the presence of the very fact of postponing (postponing, deferring, delaying) the start of an activity, or its failure to perform at all; the manifestation of a tendency to postpone matters for which specific terms (or deadlines) are defined; the presence in the individual of previous negative experience, reservations, attitudes, predictions about his own failure in a new attempt at activity; manifestations of negative emotional experiences in the case of postponing a matter, etc. [15, p. 216].

V. Luhova explains procrastination as a person's constant and voluntary postponement of important matters (actions, tasks), which is accompanied by the appearance of a feeling of discomfort and negative

emotional experiences. As the researcher testifies, procrastination leads to states of exhaustion and anxiety, stress and overwork, the development of intrapersonal conflict, and deterioration of interaction with the environment, etc. [10]. V. Luhova identified the following as the key signs of personality procrastination: awareness of postponing tasks; the appearance of psychological discomfort due to postponing tasks; irrationality of motivation for activities that replace procrastinating activities; negative consequences of postponing tasks. V. Luhova mentioned internal (motivation, emotional-volitional sphere, locus of control, anxiety, perfectionism, value orientations) and external (deadlines and deadlines for completing tasks, high preoccupation with others, deferral of rewards, deferral of consequences) factors among the factors of procrastination.

We note that in modern conditions, procrastination is confidently embedded in the reality of the mental world and the life activities of adults and is closely related to their personal characteristics, motivational sphere, regulatory potential, coping strategies, perfectionism, anxiety, etc.

The purpose of the article. The aim of the article is to characterize the psychological determinants of procrastination in adults and to substantiate the system of their correction.

Methods. In the process of empirical research of adults (n=84), the following diagnostic tools were used: to study the level of procrastination – "General Procrastination Scale" (GPS) by K. Leigh [5, p. 30-31]; to study the factors of procrastination, namely; the level and characteristics of anxiety – "Personal and Situational Anxiety Scale" by C. Spielberger [11, p. 25-28]; level and features of achievement motivation – "Methodology of studying motivation for achieving success - avoiding failures" [6, p. 146-147]; features of self-esteem – "Methodology of research on general self-esteem" (G. Kazantseva) [1, p. 53]; level of self-efficacy – "Self-efficacy Scale" by R. Schwarzer, M. Jerusalem [6, p. 142-143]; features of perfectionism – "The Perfectionism Scale" by V. Schaufeli. [5, p. 30-31]. Mathematical and statistical analysis of the research results was carried out using the SPSS Statistics program.

Sample. The study involved 84 adult males and females (age range 25 to 54 years) working in state and municipal institutions in the fields of education, trade, medicine, social protection, and law. The majority of the sample was female (53 individuals – 63,1%), and male (31 individuals – 36,9%).

Results and discussion. Based on the processing of the obtained empirical data, we can generalise the following trends regarding the features of procrastination and its factors in adults:

- the prevalence of an average level of procrastination (over 45%), which indicates a situational tendency to not quite complete planned tasks on time, the likelihood of being late with the conscious decision-making necessary for their implementation, postponing the moment of starting work until later, postponing the completion of actions, tasks, etc. (Fig. 1);

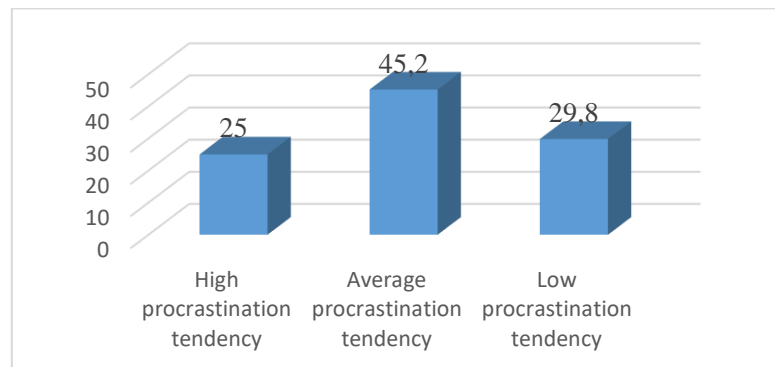


Fig. 1. Percentage values of the sample according to the "General Procrastination Scale" by K. Leigh.

- the most pronounced average level of both personal (59,5%) and situational (53,6%) anxiety; females are more anxious;

- 16,7% have a motivation to avoid failures, which may indicate an expectation of failure in their activities, a lack of perseverance, determination, initiative, organisation, a possible attempt to shift responsibility, etc;

- over 65% have an average level of self-esteem, which indicates the ability to fully adequately assess their own needs and abilities, an attempt to set realistic goals and objectives, and the ability to critically evaluate themselves;

- a higher than average level of self-efficacy prevails (58,3%), which indicates the tendency of such individuals to set realistic tasks and perform them, but in the event of failures or difficulties, their vital activity and working capacity may vary to some extent;

- 65,5% have expressed normal perfectionism, which generally indicates a harmonious desire to achieve perfection and hopes for success as a result of such efforts.

Thanks to correlation analysis (Pearson's criterion), it was found that the tendency to procrastinate in adults is to a greater extent supported by perfectionism (0,644, at $p \leq 0.01$), as well as situational (0,458, at $p \leq 0.01$) and personal anxiety (0,506, at $p \leq 0.01$). An inverse correlation was found between procrastination and motivation to achieve success/avoid failure (-0,481, at $p \leq 0.01$), self-esteem (-0,369, at $p \leq 0.05$), and self-efficacy (-0,597, at $p \leq 0.01$), which indicates the fact of increasing procrastination under conditions of decreasing the manifestations of these factors.

Analysis of the identified significant correlations shows that the tendency to procrastinate in adults becomes more pronounced with an increase in the level of perfectionism. We can say that the effort to obtain an ideal result in the performance of specific tasks and affairs affects the process of their activity. This may be due to the fact that the need to make long and significant efforts to plan and think through further work to achieve a perfect result can distract adults from the very process of performing specific actions, which will manifest itself in postponing the start and completion of the case. Excessive preoccupation with achieving the desired ideal result formats in adults increased demands on themselves, on the necessary conditions, on the necessary resources, etc. Accordingly, adults with pronounced perfectionism can potentially resort to choosing the tactic of refusing to perform a specific task, business, or activity due to the lack, in their opinion, of the best combination of circumstances to achieve the desired ideal result.

As our results have shown, for adults, the tendency to procrastinate is enhanced by a state of anxiety, which provokes the emergence of negative expectations and experiences both in relation to individual situations of activity performance and life activities in general. Due to the increase in the level of personal anxiety, confusion, concern, uncertainty, and fear; acute reactions to the actions of various situational factors; and procrastination in adults, increase. They can be noted as unwillingness or postponement to make decisions about their own actions in a specific situation; the start of the case is postponed, and there is a lot of concern about the possibility of its completion. Anxiety can increase disbelief in one's own abilities, provoke doubts about self-efficacy, and lead to a decrease in the level of aspirations, which provokes adults to consciously or subconsciously avoid situations of activity and communication that could potentially harm their self-esteem or are regarded as having a real or imagined danger of experiencing failure.

Given the results of the correlation analysis, we can also assume that adults have a tendency to increase procrastination due to a decrease in motivation to achieve success and, conversely, the emergence of expectations of a probable negative outcome of the performed activity. That is, procrastination in adults is enhanced by the motivation to avoid failure. Expectation of negative assessments and impacts, anticipation of potential disruptions in work, the presence of strict deadlines or a short time to complete the work, the novelty and complexity of tasks, etc., lead to increased personal and situational anxiety, destabilise balance, and increase neuropsychiatric instability in adults. In addition, the presence of inadequately low self-esteem does not contribute to the ability of adults to adequately assess their own capabilities and resources for effective and timely work performance. In this case, even minor errors made during performance, the resulting negative result reinforces the tendency to procrastinate in future attempts at activity as a way of compensating for the avoidance of potentially negative experiences. In addition, such an unfavourable tendency can affect the effectiveness of professional activity and lead to experiencing crisis states [7].

It is worth emphasising that procrastination is more characteristic of adults with inadequate self-esteem (mostly underestimated), which is caused by an uncritical assessment of one's own capabilities and competence and an inability to differentiate one's own strengths and weaknesses to solve specific tasks. In the case of underestimated self-esteem, procrastination in adults is reinforced by pronounced indecision, suspiciousness, excessive caution, pettiness, and individual vulnerability. They are quite orientated to the opinions of others, have an active need for social support, are external, and are ready to shift responsibility to others. In addition, in the case of inadequate underestimated self-esteem, fixation on one's own failures, self-pity, and indifference may manifest themselves.

The strengthening of the tendency to procrastinate in adults also occurs due to a decrease in confidence in one's own capabilities and self-efficacy. Among other reasons, this may be due to the

deterioration of adults' ability to self-organise at the level of goal setting, planning, selecting, and implementing an adequate program of actions for the circumstances, and self-control (especially in stressful circumstances). Because of this, negative emotions regarding attempts at activity are imprinted in the subjective experience to a greater extent, and memories of negative scenarios are imprinted. The expectation of a negative result may concern one specific activity or one's own activity in different areas of life. Characteristic signs for adults with reduced beliefs in their own self-efficacy will be the postponement of the start, execution, and timely completion of tasks and affairs. In this case, we can also speak of the manifestation of a kind of psychological defence mechanism: in order not to be even more disappointed in one's own ability to perform a specific activity, it is better to resort to postponing its start and/or completion.

Thus, the processing of the obtained data allows us to be sure that the factors of procrastination of adults should be considered perfectionism, situational and personal anxiety, motivation to achieve success/avoid failure, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. This generally confirms the conclusions obtained by Ukrainian scientists regarding the determination of procrastination in general, as well as in adulthood in particular [10; 13].

The field of our scientific interest was also the justification of the direction of the system for correcting the factors of procrastination of adults. We thought it appropriate to find out the views of scientists on what psychological strategies, methods, and approaches would be effective for correcting the strategy of adults to resort to avoiding postponing important matters, which can also be useful for preventing emotional and professional burnout, as well as maintaining mental health. So, N. Berehova and V. Pidhaniuk emphasise the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioural therapy resources in psychological work with procrastination [2, p. 12-13]. It is the techniques of cognitive-behavioural therapy, according to researchers, that can help a person focus on changing rigid and dysfunctional patterns of their own thoughts, emotional reactions, and ways of doing things. Thanks to the use of cognitive-behavioural therapy, it is also possible to correct the ability of adults to achieve certain goals, in particular, if a high degree of avoidance is noted due to the unwillingness to experience distress. Also, in working with adults, this direction of psychotherapy makes it possible to develop self-regulation skills (including emotional self-regulation), self-control, goal-setting, and success orientation. In publications by other authors, psychological training is recognised as an effective method for correcting personality procrastination.

In the context of substantiating the system of correction of procrastination of adults and its factors, we emphasised the expediency of educational work. In this case, we are talking about raising awareness of adults about the problem of procrastination, the need to draw their attention to the presence of their own tendency to procrastinate in a situation of making a decision, performing actions, and completing specific cases or tasks. In educational work, it is also important to process information about the effects and consequences of procrastination for the life of the individual, effective ways to overcome procrastination, and its levelling of the influence of factors that increase the tendency to procrastination. Accordingly, in the structure of the correction system to achieve the tasks of psychological education, it is advisable to provide for mini-lectures, presentations, watching videos, reading, and discussing books that are thematically devoted to the problem of procrastination of the individual. We believe that the correction system should have an interactive work format. Therefore, in our opinion, it is appropriate to include in the process of implementing this system methods of group discussion, role-playing games, projective drawings, elements of psychogymnastics, techniques for forming specific skills, verbalisation, feedback, elements of play therapy, art therapy, etc. This will create an opportunity for working out in adult procrastinators the factors that enhance procrastination, namely: symptoms of situational and personal anxiety; self-regulation skills (planning, modelling, programming, evaluating the result, control and self-control, etc.); goal-setting through adequate setting of life goals and formulating specific tasks, strengthening a stable orientation to achieving them while avoiding the habit of procrastination; orientation to the motivation of avoiding failures; reduced confidence in one's own self-efficacy and uncertain belief in one's capabilities through working with rational optimistic attitudes; manifestations of destructive perfectionism, etc.

The implementation of the correction system will contribute to the achievement of important changes for procrastinating adults at different levels of mental functioning. In particular, the correction system at the cognitive level will be aimed at the following key tasks, the solution of which will allow adults to:

- understand the essence and causes of procrastination;
- integrate the information received about the essence and causes of procrastination into a holistic view of this problem;

- comprehend procrastination situations and their circumstances from their own life experience, which prompted the manifestations of procrastination, reinforced the desire to postpone things for later, postpone, or not complete the activity;

- form the basis for better self-awareness, understanding of one's own resources, strengths, and weaknesses; expand the idea of one's own potential and the inability to fully realise it due to the presence of a tendency to procrastinate;

- promote reflection on subjective experience with procrastination, understanding, and working out cognitive distortions and irrational attitudes.

At the same time, the correction system is potentially orientated towards working with the emotional sphere of adults and their behaviour. Accordingly, the tasks of the correction system in this context are defined as follows:

- to direct efforts to correct signs of personal and situational anxiety;

- to foster awareness, understanding, and acceptance of one's own emotions, needs, and desires, goals, and tasks of life;

- to practice the skills of setting goals, planning, implementing, and monitoring the program of actions, self-regulation, and time management;

- to focus on maintaining motivation to achieve success, developing self-efficacy, faith in oneself, and one's capabilities;

- to correct manifestations of ineffective tendencies to set excessively high demands on oneself and/or others;

- to form an attitude towards gradually changing the situation of procrastination, to develop perseverance skills with the intention of postponing or postponing for later, not completing actions, affairs, tasks;

- strengthen intentions and promote the integration of attempts to use the acquired skills in one's own life activities.

Accordingly, in the practical aspect, it is appropriate to direct the efforts of the correction system towards working out non-constructive/irrational personal attitudes, aspirations, motives, and methods of action that deepen procrastination, prevent adults with procrastination from feeling successful, do not encourage further self-development, and hinder self-realisation.

Conclusions. Procrastination in adults is interpreted as a conscious and desired postponement (slowing down, postponing) of actions despite understanding the likelihood of negative consequences for a specific or different area of life. Procrastination in adults is accompanied by increased anxiety, the appearance of emotional tension and discomfort, which negatively affects the success and results of activity. Procrastination in adults can lead to a decrease in vital indicators, less successful performance of professional activities, and affect their mental health, physical well-being, and subjective well-being. It was empirically revealed, and in the process of correlation analysis, it was found that procrastination in adults increases with manifestations of perfectionism, pronounced signs of personal and situational anxiety, and a decrease in motivation to achieve in the direction of avoiding failures. Adults with doubts about their self-efficacy and inadequately low self-esteem are more prone to procrastination. A well-founded system for correcting procrastination factors in adults combines elements of psychological education, training, and corrective exercises.

A perspective for further research. The prospect of further research is to study the age dynamics of procrastination; the influence of other individual and social factors on the tendency to procrastinate.

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