

HOW DO I STOP PROCRASTINATING? (AKO, Your Higher Self)

The Deep Dive Worksheet: Learning to Let the Alarm Ring

This worksheet goes with the blog. It has 7 short activities. Each one tells you exactly what to do, and shows you a filled-in example first, so you always know what your answer should look like.

Take your time. There are no wrong answers here.

1. THIS WEEK'S ALARM LOG

Instructions: This week, catch yourself about to hit snooze on something, big or small. As soon as you notice it, come back and log it: the task, the alarm going off, and what waiting actually cost you.

How do you usually know the alarm has gone off? (check all that apply)

- ☐ A tight feeling in my chest or stomach
- ☐ A sudden urge to clean, scroll, or "do something else first"
- ☐ One dreaded thought playing on a loop
- ☐ Getting snappy or irritable about something unrelated
- ☐ Other: _____

EXAMPLE ENTRY

The task I was avoiding: Replying to a work email that needed a real answer.

The alarm going off: "If I answer this, I might sound like I don't know what I'm doing."

How long I've been avoiding it: Four days.

What avoiding it actually cost me: A low-grade tension every time I opened my inbox for anything else.

ENTRY 1 — The task I was avoiding:

The alarm going off:

How long I've been avoiding it:

What avoiding it actually cost me:

ENTRY 2 — The task I was avoiding:

The alarm going off:

How long I've been avoiding it:

What avoiding it actually cost me:

ENTRY 3 — The task I was avoiding:

The alarm going off:

How long I've been avoiding it:

What avoiding it actually cost me:

2. SORT THE ALARM FROM THE FACT

Instructions: Pick one task you're currently avoiding. Rate how sure you actually are that the alarm is telling you the truth, then check it against the real evidence, not the feeling.

VERY SURE — SOMEWHAT SURE — NOT REALLY SURE — NO IDEA, HONESTLY

EXAMPLE

Task: Starting my portion of a group project.

The alarm: "If I start, everyone will see it's not good enough."

Circled: Somewhat sure.

Evidence for the alarm: One time a group member was harsh about my draft.

Evidence against the alarm: Three other times I started messy and nobody said a thing, we just kept improving it together.

What this tells me: The alarm is loud, but it's mostly running on one old memory, not on how this usually actually goes.

Task:

The alarm:

Circle one above, then write it here:

Evidence for the alarm:

Evidence against the alarm:

What this tells you about how accurate the alarm actually is:

3. WHERE THE SNOOZE HABIT WAS LEARNED

Instructions: The snooze reflex didn't come from nowhere. Somewhere, starting imperfectly actually did cost you something, more than once. This activity traces it back, so you can see the lesson for what it is: something you learned, not a fact about you.

EXAMPLE

Where starting badly actually cost me something: Getting corrected mid-sentence on homework before I'd even finished trying.

What I concluded from it: "It's safer to wait until I'm sure I'll get it right than to start and get it wrong in front of someone."

About how old I was: Around 8.

Where I'm still applying that lesson today: At work, where I rewrite an email five times before sending it, even for low-stakes messages.

Where starting badly actually cost you something:

What you concluded from it:

About how old you were:

Where you're still applying that lesson today:

4. NAME YOUR MOVE

Instructions: When the alarm goes off, you default to one of two moves: snoozing it completely, or forcing yourself through it under pressure at the last minute. Circle the one you reach for most.

I SNOOZE IT COMPLETELY — I FORCE IT UNDER PRESSURE

EXAMPLE

Circled: I snooze it completely.

What this move protects me from: The moment of finding out I did something wrong.

What it's actually cost me: A pile of small tasks that's grown so big it stresses me out just to look at my inbox.

One thing I might do differently if I dropped it for a day: Open just one thing on the list and do only its first step, without checking how bad it might be first.

Circle one above, then write it here:

What this move protects you from:

What it's actually cost you:

One thing you might do differently if you dropped it for a day:

5. THE PROOF-IT-WASN'T-UNBEARABLE FILE

Instructions: The alarm is convinced starting will be unbearable. This activity builds a file of proof against it: real times, big or small, when starting turned out to be smaller than the dread about it.

EXAMPLE

1.

2.

3.

Tip: keep this list somewhere you'll see it again, and add to it every time starting turns out to be smaller than the alarm promised.

6. A LETTER FROM AKO

Instructions: AKO is your Higher Self, the part of you that can tell the difference between an old alarm and the actual present moment. Think of the voice that usually sets off your snooze reflex — maybe UNGA, TATA, or LOLA — and let AKO write that voice a short letter, thanking it for trying to protect you, and telling it what's changed since it first learned to sound this alarm.

EXAMPLE

Dear __,

7. THIS WEEK'S SIXTY SECONDS

Instructions: Pick the avoided task from Activity 1 or 2. Before you touch it, decide on the smallest possible first step, something so small it feels almost silly. Predict what you think will happen. Then do just that one step, for sixty seconds, and come back and write what actually happened.

EXAMPLE

Smallest first step I'll try: Open the document and type just the title, nothing else.

I predict: I'll feel a spike of dread the second I open it and want to close it right away.

What actually happened: The dread lasted about twenty seconds, and then I kept typing for ten more minutes without meaning to.

Smallest first step I'll try this week:

I predict:

What actually happened:

Nothing here proves the alarm was pointless, or that you were wrong to protect yourself from starting badly before. It proves the alarm is old, and old alarms can be reset, sixty seconds at a time.

You got this! Nobody is coming to save you... you have to save yourself!

HAPPYISH HUMANS