

How Your Persistent Procrastination Causes Pain

You may call me “your royal highness,” because I am the queen of someday. I am the princess of procrastination. After all, why do today what can be put off until tomorrow? Or next week?

- Someday, I will call my friend.
- Someday, I will have that difficult conversation I’m avoiding.
- Someday, I will clean out the cabinets, put the photos in an album and organize my inbox.
- Someday, I will save money to go on that trip.
- Someday, I will pray and read my Bible more.
- Someday, I will write a book, audition for a play, paint the painting.
- Someday, I will serve on that committee or give to that ministry.
- Someday, I will feed hungry children, visit the lonely, fight for the oppressed and volunteer for that cause.

Tomorrow, next week, or someday is *definitely* when all those things will happen.

Someday is seductive. Someday allows me to hold on to the vision I have of myself, the kind of person who I’ve always wanted to be, the person I’ve always known I am, and the person who embodies the values I say I have.

I am courageous and adventurous, well-traveled and well read, generous and thoughtful, organized and efficient, respected and successful.

Or at least I will be ... someday.

Someday keeps my dreams alive.

Someday is rich with promise and possibility but does not require immediate attention. Someday allows one more episode of Netflix, another half-hour of Facebook surfing, or another season of prayer for discernment and clarity. Someday is comfortable and safe.

Someday lets me off the hook.

Someday isn't all bad. When my children were babies, we had no money, and I was barely getting through the day, I worshiped at the altar of someday. Someday kept me sane. Someday, they will sleep through the night. Someday, they will both be potty-trained. Someday, they will feed themselves and teach themselves and drive themselves. Someday, I will go to the bathroom by myself. Someday, I will have five minutes alone. And, in these cases, thank God, someday did eventually arrive. But what if someday never comes? What if someday turns into "if only" or "what if"? What if someday is really just fear? I recently heard a speaker I admire say, "Someday is a myth." When I heard those words, I felt sucker-punched by the betrayal. But what about all my lovely someday dreams? Turns out, we are not guaranteed someday. Since I entered my 50s, the ambiguity of someday is beginning to feel a little more like giving up and selling out. Although I know dreaming of perfection is unrealistic, settling for someday is not the answer either. Someday is getting in the way of me finding my brave.

As I think about being brave, I want to be intentional about being truly engaged in the world—a person of action, not just someday words. I want to live life all-in. I want to stop wasting time on activities that don't reflect my heart. I want to spend my hours in ways that reflect the things I say I believe. I want to avoid cynicism and sideline criticism because they distract me from my goals and give me an excuse to stay stuck in inaction. I want to continue to make progress in my ongoing battle with procrastination, give myself grace and ask for forgiveness when I slip into old habits. I want to love my people with everything I have to give, even if my tender heart gets broken. I want to pour myself out in service to others and expect nothing in return except the joy of living in the kingdom. I want to be bold enough to believe my story and my art matter because they are part of the bigger story God is telling. I want to love God with all my heart, soul, mind and spirit, and love my neighbor as myself. I want to be the change I wish to see in the world.

What if we decided to change "someday" to "now or never"?

Would you join me in banning the word "someday" from our vocabulary? Or seriously evaluating how we are using it?

I've begun to consider these questions when I find myself

tempted to use the word “someday”:

- If that someday thing was only available now or never, which would I choose?
- Is it really something I want to do or something I think I *ought* to do?
- If it is important to me now, why wait until someday to make it happen?
- If it isn't possible now, what steps could I take now to move closer to making it a reality soon?
- What is getting in the way? What obstacles, habits, excuses, rationalization or denial do I need to kick to the curb?

Is there something you say is important to you living in the distant cloud of someday? What is keeping you from working toward it and making it a reality now? {eoa}

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