

April 15th - are your readers' or viewers' taxes completed? WHY do we procrastinate and WHAT can we do about it?

What are the most common reasons people procrastinate on their taxes?

The main reason is simply that it's simply not a fun task - whether you are getting money back or not! But there are definitely some underlying psychological issues that may be plaguing you and keeping you from getting your taxes done.

These include:

- **Facing your financial reality** - this is when you truly can't deny what type of financial shape you're in and you have to face it.
- **Underlying resentment towards the government** - some people may resent paying taxes to a government they may not approve of. They lose sight of their legal obligation and make it about personal political views.
- **Fear** - there is a lot of basic fear surrounding filing taxes. You may owe more than you think, you may not be getting back what you had hoped, or you may file incorrectly and get audited. There are a variety of factors that could contribute to this feeling - and contribute to the desire to put it off.
- **Disappointment** - you know you aren't where you had hoped to be this year; you didn't save, invest or make what you had planned.
- **Revealing "missteps" to your spouse** - If there is anything you haven't told your spouse about your financial issues, now is when it's likely to come out. Money issues often cause strife with couples and knowing it's inevitable can make one put off this nasty task.
- **Revisiting difficult emotional circumstances** - tax time is when one must again face difficult things that may have happened over the course of the year - deaths of loved ones, divorces or other emotionally difficult circumstances that affect finances. It's natural to want to avoid this.

What Steps People Can Take to Overcome Procrastination:

- First of all, realize you ARE procrastinating and that everyone does it.
- Recognize that the results of your tax return won't change whether you do it now or later, but you certainly avoid a lot of stress if you do it sooner
- Admit that you may not be able to do it yourself - if you're pressed for time or just hate the task, consider hiring a professional. You'll feel a huge sense of relief when it's done.
- If you're afraid about owing money, it's better to find out sooner rather than later so you can make a plan. If you can't pay what you owe, there are several ways the government is willing to work with you - but not if it's too late.

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- Admit to someone else you are procrastinating! This is a great way to make yourself accountable - tell someone else and ask them to help push you along.
- Do a little at a time. You'd be surprised what 15 minutes a day can do to help you make headway
- Look at tax filing as a way to start over. File last year's return, be done with it and start fresh. Look forward to making changes this year that will make next year's filing not as difficult.