

# PARTNER

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Canadian Association for Christians in Student Development

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## Virtual “Houses” Pilot Project Seeks to Build Student Community

RICHARD MEDERNACH

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How do you engage and support students on a largely commuter campus? It is a challenge that many colleges and universities face in Canada. It becomes an even more interesting task when you take into consideration all the aspects of a federated college relationship. St. Thomas More College (STM) is a Catholic liberal arts college that is federated with the University of Saskatchewan in such a way that all STM students are, at the same time, University of Saskatchewan College of Arts & Science students. The students will get U of S degrees and take a mix of STM and U of S classes in their program. STM Students can access some support services from STM and others from the U of S. Confused yet? Don't worry; just know that it works quite well for students.

Of particular importance to the mission and vision of St. Thomas More College, is the development of student community. We believe our students get the best education when they are engaged in the life of the college in a way that is meaningful to them. This engagement could

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## Trends in Residence Life: Residence as Recruitment Tool, Luxury Living, and/ or Educational Hotbed?

KAREN CORNIES AND ALICIA KRUSSELBRINK

Community development is linked to a thriving residence program. Findings that residence students increase their commitment to community life (O'Keefe, 2000), that academic achievement is positively correlated with living in residence (LaNasa et al. 2006), that social opportunities exist in residence that do not exist elsewhere (LaNasa et al. 2006), and that challenges of living off-campus are more difficult than those living on-campus (Johnson, 2009), indicate the benefits of living in residence. What are students looking for in on-campus housing and what can we expect for the future? The Association of College and University Housing Officers International launched the "21st Century Project" as an attempt to project what the residence of the future will look like. Here are some identified trends in residence living that affect community development:

**Sustainability:** Perhaps the most popular trend in residence today, students want the function and appearance of green buildings. There is growing integration of residence curriculum on sustainability and challenging students to form groups to problem-solve environmental issues. Examples of popular green residence initiatives include dual flush valves, water saving faucets/ shower heads, composting projects, certified wood, occupancy sensors, terrazzo floor, carpet tiles, green roof, and LEED certification.

**Technological Expectations:** Students come with laptops, printers, gaming systems, TVs, MP3 devices, cell phones, etc. and expect the residence to provide the services that will enable them to maintain these devices. Residences are increasing connectivity.

**Student Population Shifts:** Increased diversification,  
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Canadian Association for Christians in Student Development

# CACSD

# President's Word

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WALLY RUDE

As I write this note, I am 48 hours away from taking my summer vacation with my family in Belize. Our first week will be with a home stay program in a small village in southern Belize. Our second week is on a beach, on an island, and a stone's throw away from the coral reef. We trust that this cultural exchange will encourage and challenge us to live, in the words of Parker Palmer, 'undivided lives' where what we do, what we say and who we are is aligned.

For this particular report, I thought updating the reader on the 'state of affairs' of CACSD from my perspective would be helpful, particularly for those who were unable to attend the conference. Firstly, the national conference at Crandall University in Moncton was very successful and engaging. The professional exchange of information was coupled with a warm relational environment where participants were able to connect with colleagues in meaningful ways. Membership participation in workshops was excellent and the plenary sessions challenged us all. Secondly, CACSD is on a solid financial and membership footing and holding our own in challenging times for post-secondary institutions. Thirdly, the membership at the AGM ratified constitutional recommendations regarding a CHEC partnership and regional representative meetings. Moving forward CACSD will work collaboratively with CHEC to pursue research and integrated conferences in a manner that strengthens our association while maintaining our autonomy. We will also invest in regional meetings where networking and professional development are emphasized. Fourthly, our publication efforts continue to improve under the leadership of Micah. Fifthly, we are sad that we are not going to CBC in Abbotsford next year, but excited about the possibilities of attending The King's University College in Edmonton for the annual conference. Sixthly, the entire executive has committed to serve for at least another year, and I thank Micah, Nancy, Marlin and Grant for their excellent work.

The strength of our organization is only as strong as membership engagement. Thank you for your participation and I encourage you to continue contributing. Perhaps you can submit an article to The Partner, or host a regional meeting, or prepare a workshop at the conference next year, or consider serving on the executive in the future. May the summer provide opportunities for rest and renewal as you prepare for another year of leadership and service.

Regards,

Wally

## CACSD Executive



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# Editor's Note

MICAH VAN DIJK

## 2012, The Year of Rest

Sometimes I have an idea and I don't know if I should tell anybody because the idea is just plain weird. I had an idea in the middle of running what felt like the thousandth student event this year. What would happen if a university campus decided to have a year of "rest"?

I can just hear you trying to conceptualize what a year of "rest" would look like on a college/university campus and I'm sure what your imagining looks weird. What events would have to be canned, which events would stay, who would decide what was restful and what is considered too much noise for that year?

Before I explain why I think this could be a benefit, let me acknowledge the pressures against such a movement. For one, what does an activity coordinator do during a year of rest? Nothing? For another, how do you welcome students to your community without the non-stop events and fun that usually go with the first three weeks of school? Will these lucky/unlucky students feel cheated that they decided to come to your institution the year these loud events were canned? Are there events that are needed to create revenue? Will people get bored and choose another school? Despite these questions about revenue, student-satisfaction and retention, let's take a look at what students, staff, and faculty could learn through this experiment.

I think our communities would learn more about their identity and purpose, the value of time, and the skills to prioritize and say "no" to non-essential commitments. How many times have we heard the excuse that someone is too "busy" to complete a necessary task or assignment?

It pained me to see a group of students fundraise for an activity that was not affiliated with Redeemer. The goal was a large amount of money and the students valiantly started hosting event after event. When events were not as successful as hoped, more events were immediately planned and this became the cycle. In the end, the students exhausted themselves. They didn't take the time to slow down, evaluate, and strategize. Because this event was outside the realm of Redeemer, our department could only advise them to run fewer strategic fundraisers. The students' cyclical efforts reminded me of when I used to landscape during the summers and I'd often have to wrestle a 400lb root ball of a large tree into a hole. I'd sometimes get tunnel vision and try and muscle the tree into the place. This technique usually didn't work and frustrated me. My boss' response was always, "Slow

down, work smarter, not harder." After taking a breath and surveying the situation, we usually could get the tree standing relatively straight with a few well placed twists and turns.

I probably haven't convinced you to approach your president championing the idea of cutting all non-essential events for the next academic year but hopefully I've moved the idea out of the "weird" realm and into the realm of possibility. Two years ago, Redeemer experimented with a Technology Awareness Week that included a voluntary fast from any form of technology (email, facebook, texting) that students/staff/faculty were finding cumbersome. There was some anxiety before the fast began but relief and new perspective after it was complete. Could the feelings be the same for an event-free week or year?

Let me end with an example I've seen with my own eyes but it still baffles me. A friend of mine is a sound-technician and I was standing beside him during a folk concert where the singer was being drowned out by the talking audience. He smiled at me and told me to watch this and then he turned the volume down! I couldn't understand because intuitively you would think turning up the volume would help the audience listen. However, as soon as the audience sensed that the singers volume had gone down, they quieted their talking and even stopped talking. The end result was that the audience actually could hear and began to listen to the music. I learned that if my friend had turned up the volume to overpower the talkers, people would just adapt and talk louder. Before you know it, the volume is at 120db and people are yelling into each other's ears.

Could this be applied to activities and events? Do students benefit from more (louder) events or would there be a bigger benefit from less (softer) activities? It's just a weird idea I'm wrestling with but it's an idea I can't seem to shake. I'd love to hear your thoughts so take time out of your busy schedule and send me an email [mvandijk@redeemer.ca](mailto:mvandijk@redeemer.ca). Hopefully, I won't be too busy to read it.

Micah van Dijk is the Activities and Orientation Coordinator at Redeemer University College and the editor of the PARTNER.

## Do you have an idea for a PARTNER article?

Events | Academic Support | Health | Orientation  
Residence Life | Discipline | Spiritual Life | Holistic Learning

### YOUR ARTICLE

Winter Submissions due by December 15, 2011. Contact Micah at [MVANDIJK@REDEEMER.CA](mailto:MVANDIJK@REDEEMER.CA)

# Trends in Residence Life

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mental health issues and conflict.

**Meal Plan Changes:** Local, fair trade food and kitchens where food can be prepared by the students are increasingly in demand. There is more diversity in dietary needs.

**Educational Role of Residences (Curricular and Co-curricular)** "Total education" has brought a blurring of boundaries between curricular and co-curricular in residence. A "main street" approach is growing in popularity with more student services (i.e. tutoring, counselling) in residence buildings. While in some ways this is new, it is similar to older models of faculty and students living and learning together. Some institutions have introduced a co-curricular transcript to document accomplishments in residence (and other places). Some educate residency groups in problem solving, communication, and counselling strengths. Some mix years of students in an effort to be consistent with the "main street" model. "Living - learning" residences that house students with similar courses together (ex. French majors encouraged to speak French and eat French food) have been modeled as a way of accomplishing the educational mission.

**Outsourcing Residence Construction:** Private contractors who manage and maintain residences independent of the college or university are increasing in number. Recently a number of public colleges and universities announced projects of this nature, however Christian colleges and universities are more cautious about using this approach. Outsourcing pieces of residence programming is also occurring more frequently- be it food services, laundry services, or maintenance contracts.

**Space Requirements:** More attention given to privacy, single bedrooms and more space per student. Flexibility demands have led to solutions like flexible walls and furniture. An increased understanding of healthy living spaces has led to improvements in air quality, an increase in natural light, less toxic materials, more ergonomically-sound furnishings, and other healthy-living options.

**Luxury Dorms:** In reaction to an increase in students choosing off campus housing, universities lure students back with larger, high end apartment style suites with top-of-the-line accessories. Fitness rooms, cafes, social spaces, air conditioning, entertainment areas, performing arts studios, recreation centres, and hot tubs that are constructed with high-end materials and accessories are also more common.

**Conclusion:**

For most trends listed, cautionary voices express reservations. The need for discernment in residence programming is great. Be it an increase in mental health concerns, fear of the future, pressure on academic success or other issues, building community on campus can be challenging. However, learning is a social activity and with a sense of belonging and connection, students will be better able to thrive in total education.

Karen Cornies is the Dean of Students at Redeemer University College.

Alicia Krusselbrink is the Residence Director at Emmanuel Bible College

## Resources Used:

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# Member Spotlight

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## Menno Simons College



Menno Simons College Facts:

Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba

Year of first semester of MSC: 1989

Current Enrollment in MSC programs: 1300 FCE (FCE is Full Course Equivalent)

Student Life Staff: 2

Tuition Cost per year: Approximately \$3500



Who is MSC? MSC is a college that offers the International Development Studies and Conflict Resolution Studies programs for University of Winnipeg students and is the downtown campus of Canadian Mennonite University. We are a small college with the resources of two larger universities!

Who attends MSC? All MSC students are University of Winnipeg students. This includes full-time, part-time, transfer students, mature students or professionals wanting to enhance their skill set.

What are the academic options with MSC?

3 or 4 yr BA, IDS Major

4 yr BA, IDS Honours

3 or 4 yr BA, CRS Major

\* or take our courses as electives! Our students come from various fields of interest. For example: Human Resources, Social Work, Criminal Justice, Education, History, Anthropology, Law Enforcement, Indigenous Studies, Human Rights, Women's and Gender Studies, Psychology, and others!

[www.mscollege.ca](http://www.mscollege.ca)

## CACSD Member's Profile

# Monica Derksen

Position: Student Services Coordinator

Education: B.Comm. (Hons)

Years working in Student Life: 1

Years as a CACSD Member: 1

What do you love most about working in Student Development?

The energy and passion of our students to make a difference in the world. I love providing resources and skills in order to help students achieve their goals.

What is the most challenging part of your work?

Student apathy and fatigue. It is hard to watch students fall short of their potential. Oh...and the complications of working "in-between" two universities!

What do you think Canadian student development professionals must focus on as we move into the future?

Providing high quality, affordable extra-curricular opportunities for students. I feel

Monica Derksen is a CACSD member and the Student Services Coordinator at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg Manitoba.



# Member Spotlight

PARTNER

## Steinbach College

### CACSD Member's Profile

## Jessy Neufeld

Position: Dean of Women/Chapel Coordinator  
Education: Bachelor of Arts in Peer Counselling, Steinbach Bible College  
Year's working in Student Life: 7 (2 at SBC)  
Year's as a CACSD Member: 2

What do you love most about working in Christian Student Development?

I enjoy being a part of what God is doing in the lives of young people! Mentoring, training, and pouring myself into student leaders who in turn pour themselves out into the lives around them is one of the ways connecting happens here. It's a blessing to be able to be a part of a greater work of God in the lives of these students as they grow and mature into young men and women of God, training for church ministries!

What do you find the most challenging in the work you do?

An area of challenge in the work of student development is the amount of life (time, energy, patience, prayer, reliance on God etc.) that is being poured into another, specifically those who come from challenging situations. At the same time, my heart hurts for these individuals. I have learned much in walking alongside them at whatever point of their journey that they're in at the time and being able to speak of hope in their lives!

What do you think Christian Canadian Student Development must focus on moving into the future?

As time moves on, culture changes as well. I think we as Student Development need to be aware of our 'changing times' and how they affect the lives of our young adults today, and the way we communicate with them. Some issues are becoming more prevalent than what they may have been in the past. Though some needs of students may change, there are many that stay the same, such as the need for acceptance and love. Keep affirming, mentoring, and building into the lives of others, preparing them for life in the future!



Steinbach College Facts:

Location: Steinbach, Manitoba

Year of first semester of MSC: 1936

Degrees offered: 3 or 4 year Bachelor of Arts in Christian Studies with the following focus areas:

Bible/Theology, Children's Ministry, Global Mission, Peer Counselling, Pastoral Ministry, Worship Arts, Youth Ministry

Mission Statement: SBC is an evangelical Anabaptist college equipping servant leaders for Church ministries.

Current Enrollment: 108 FTE

Students in Residence: 70

Resident to Commuter student ratio: 2/3 in residence 1/3 commuter

# of International Students: 2-4

Residence style: The college residences have room for approximately 80 students. Rooms are big and spacious. Each residence includes a lounge and washrooms shared by all members in the residence.

Residence requirements: All full-time first year single students under the age of 21 not planning to live at home are required to live in residence.

Food Plan: Includes all 3 meals Sunday to Friday with brunch and supper served on Saturdays.

Student Life Staff: 3 Deans (Dean of Student Development, Dean of Men, Dean of Women) + 13 Care Group Leaders (RAs)

Tuition Cost per year: \$6400

Food and Housing Cost per year: \$4680

[www.sbcollege.ca](http://www.sbcollege.ca)



Jessy Neufeld is a CACSD member and the Dean of Women at Steinbach College. She is the one NOT in a graduation gown.

# Virtual “Houses” Pilot Project Seeks to Build Student Community

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be through community service learning, extra-curricular clubs and activities, campus ministry, or research and employment opportunities.

St. Thomas More College has many students coming from small rural communities – with graduating classes of less than a dozen people in some cases – so the transition to university learning and life in the city can be overwhelming for some students. But even our students from larger urban high schools can struggle with the transition. In keeping with the tradition of

pastoral care set out by the Basilian Fathers who founded our college, STM works hard to build a welcoming atmosphere and a supportive community to help ease this transition. This pastoral care (academic, social, and spiritual support) is the right thing for us to do ethically, but it also improves retention rates and builds loyalty so that our students eventually become active alumni and all the other things that Deans and Registrars like to hear.

STM has about 1800 full and part-time students currently registered. The vast majority of our students do not live in residence. They mainly come to campus for classes but then go off to their jobs or back home to study. Sound familiar? These factors make it challenging to engage students in the life of the college, and to provide the necessary academic, social, and spiritual support that we believe is necessary components to a holistic undergraduate education.

With the help of the SASA Program Grant and a new strategic plan at STM, we are piloting a virtual houses program. Our houses are web-based student communities through which our students are provided support. They are named after three past presidents of the college, all of whom were members of the Congregation of St. Basil.

(We thought about using Gryffindor, Hufflepuff, and Ravenclaw – most of our students are from the Harry Potter generation after all – but we decided to honour our own history and avoid potential lawsuits.)

The concept of student “houses” without any connection to actual living space isn’t that much of a stretch because many primary and secondary schools in Saskatchewan use “house leagues” for intramural sports and spirit building activities. We’re just adding web technology to that mix. The challenge is to engage students in these virtual houses when they all live separately, have varied course schedules, and have competing demands for their time.

Each of our houses currently consists of just over 100 first-year students. Each house is fully furnished with a faculty mentor, academic advisor, campus minister (chaplain), and a paid student Peer House Leader. Each house has a PAWS Group page which is similar to a group on Facebook with email, chat, message board, shared documents, photos, and links. Through the group webpage housemates can communicate with each other and with support staff. We considered using Facebook groups but there are significant privacy issues. Also, we couldn’t automatically assign stu-

dents to a house if they were based on Facebook. Students would have to opt in to the Facebook groups, and we wanted all of our students assigned to houses.

As this is the first year of the pilot program, we decided to include only our first-year students. This narrows the focus while we work with the students to determine what role these houses should play, and how they can best serve student needs. Next year we will have first and second year students in each house and so forth as the years go on.

The goals of the house program are to: (1) provide easy access to reliable sources of information about successful transition to university, (2) provide easy access to, and familiarize students with support staff, and (3) to engage students in the life of the college. Our honourable goals notwithstanding, some students, as you know, won’t seek help until a crisis is upon them. We may not be able to completely eliminate that challenge, but at least our students have access to a reliable upper year student, a faculty member, and staff to guide them through the steps to deal with the problem.

Our house activities began last term with our new student orientation that took place before classes started. Students were able, for the first time, to meet some of their housemates and their peer house leaders face-to-face. We had about 60% participation in orientation, which is higher than normal for us. As a house, the new students toured campus, found classrooms, and received typical orientation programming. The houses were offered a number of additional opportunities to meet in person throughout the term at study sessions, coffee talks, and social events, but it was on an ad hoc basis.

One of the challenges we face is that students receive so many emails from the university, academic departments, instructors, classmates, friends, etc, that a message from their house leader can easily be lost in the clutter. When we offered incentives such as, “the first five people to respond to this message will receive a free clipboard and pen” etc, there was a noticeable increase in responses to our messages. We offered these incentives more frequently at the beginning of the year to get students used to reading house emails.

For the winter term, we will offer more essay writing help, study sessions, and the usual academic support programs. We will also be issuing a challenge to our houses to see which one can raise the most money for a local community based agency through a good old fashioned penny race. Each house will collect spare change over a two-week period and the house that collects the most, by weight, will be the year’s fundraising champion and will receive a pizza party or additional money for their social fund.

Although we are only half a year into this project, we have already learned from experience. One change we will make for next year is to set up regular tutorial times starting the first week of classes. Each house will have free weekly or bi-weekly tutorials led by the Peer House Leaders

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# Virtual “Houses” Pilot Project Seeks to Build Student Community

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where students can learn from each other and build community. Having a regular scheduled meeting time, our students tell us, will make them more likely to attend. We are also planning on getting house branded clothing so that students can show off their colours around the college. Also for next year, we will hire at least two Peer House Leaders for each house to distribute the workload.

We will continue to collect data and dialogue with our students about what the houses should be and could do. Through surveys and focus groups we will examine the usefulness and desire of including Facebook, Twitter, and text messaging technology into the houses. For fun and to identify the success in achieving our goals for the houses, we have an online quiz planned for the houses. At the end of the year we will invite students to identify pictures of their Peer House Leader, support staff, and faculty mentor to see if online engagement is translating to interpersonal engagement. The quiz will also include a feedback mechanism so that students can tell us what worked and what they would like to see from their houses.

The virtual houses are no magic bullet, to be sure, but they have potential to be a cost efficient and effective way to provide transition support and to engage students in our college community. As the next two years pass, we will continue to collect data and tweak the program to test its long term compatibility with our desired outcomes. At the end of this experiment, when more data is available, we will consider presenting the results at a future CACUSS Conference or in a follow up article. In the meantime, we are happy to discuss our house program with any who might be interested.

Richard Medernach, Coordinator of Student Services at St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan.  
rmedernach@stmcollege.ca

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# Conference Review

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MICAH VAN DIJK

Arriving by train, planes, and automobiles, twenty-two student development professionals from eleven Christian higher education institutions gathered at Crandall University for the annual CACSD conference.

Many participants had never been to the maritimes before and the hosts made sure the welcome was warm and uniquely maritime. Most attendees arrived on Monday and the conference unofficially began in the residence enjoying pizza and wings. It didn't take long before conversations jumped to stories of the past year in student development and the swapping of ideas for the next year.

The conference officially began on Tuesday morning with greetings from the presidents of Crandall and the CACSD as well as a short devotional looking at the theme of Refresh, Renew, Revive. During his plenary talk, Rev. Chet MacPhail, a self-identified islander (PEI) explored the idea of having people who can walk along-side student development professionals as they are walking alongside students through difficult situations. His talk infused energy and inspiration into those listening and set us up for a great day. Workshops and round-tables followed that looked at Fixed vs Growth Mindsets, Facebook, procrastination, student life structures, and a time to share unique ideas from our campuses. After supper, the group spent a refreshing time at Parlee Beach which included a stop at the world's largest lobster and an authentic east-coast Tim Horton's.

Wednesday began with an extended workshop on restorative justice as a disciplinary model for colleges and universities. Eric McIntosh from King's outlined the history, vision, and practical steps needed to complete a restorative justice discipline case. Many members were intrigued by this model and questions about restorative justice were asked throughout the rest of the conference. A variety of excursions occurred in the afternoon including a hike, golf, and shopping. Wednesday evening people relaxed by watching "The Social Network" (chosen because of the workshop on the influence of facebook in culture currently) or by enjoying live music at a maritime pub in Moncton.

Thursday morning began with Taize devotional time led by Tim Grace and Karen Cornies which set the spirit and tone well for an excellent finish to the conference. Immediately following the devotional, they also led a workshop on monasticism and the campus life.

The final workshop before the Annual General Meeting (AGM) looked at leadership development through adventure experiences. Wally Rude from Ambrose walked through

his experience of taking students on a multi-day trek into the mountains and the results seen as a result of this experience. And finally the AGM closed out the conference.

You may be wondering why mealtimes were not mentioned. This is because I believe the excellent food at the conference is worthy of it's own paragraph. We knew we were in for a treat when the first lunch was a sea-food chowder in a bread bowl. It was home-made bread of course. The cook pampered us with delicious wraps, chicken and ribs, filling breakfasts, and more. I'd sign up for the meal plan even if I didn't attend Crandall.

The conference at Crandall was a great success and builds momentum into the 2011-2012 year. Also at the conference, the CACSD executive revealed that Edmonton and The King's University College would be the host site for the national conference tentatively scheduled for May 28-30, 2012. This location and date has been strategically chosen to leave room for collaboration with the Christian Higher Education Canada (CHEC) conference occurring at the same time. See you in Edmonton!



Members enjoy a delicious Hawaiian feast.



Pastor Chet McPhail delivers an inspiring address.



Members gain a photo opportunity with a fisherman and large lobster.



The six styles of procrastination have been adapted from the book, *It's About Time*, by Dr. Linda Sapadin (with Jack Marguire.) While I have added some of my own thoughts, what follows is essentially an exercise in editing the concepts in their book. This book has been very helpful in my work with students who struggle with procrastination at Redeemer. If you would like to explore the material further, or actually do a test that will reveal your procrastination style(s), please obtain a copy of this inexpensive Penguin paperback - it sells for \$13.51 on amazon.ca.

## Perfectionist Worrier

### Definition:

Perfectionists will seldom appear to be procrastinating because they're busy fine tuning that one project so that it meets their ideal standard. They put so much time into one assignment that they neglect the many others waiting for attention. Being ruled by unrealistic standards, they lose perspective and then poorly manage other work that must be done to succeed.

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

1. Focus on the realistic rather than "all or nothing" thinking. When you think about performing a task, resist the impulse to think of the best possible way that the task could be performed. Instead, think of several ways it could be done, and then choose one that's most realistic, given the time and resources you have. Recognize your limits. Perfectionist procrastinators tend to think in extremes. It takes maturity to avoid black-and-white thinking by saying something like, "I could do a better job on this paper, but I've got other assignments and up-coming exams for which I need to prepare."
2. Practice self-acceptance rather than self-condemnation. Make a conscious effort to be kinder to yourself. At least 70% of our internal self-talk is negative. Too much self-criticism can be paralyzing. If you bully yourself, you'll create inner resistance--i.e. procrastination.
3. Give yourself a time limit for completing a task. Develop a time budget for each task. Proportion time and energy to the pay-off by cutting percentages in half to plan the number of hours to invest. For example, if a final exam is worth 30%, give yourself 15 hours. Use about 1/3 of this time (5hrs) to summarize your lecture and text material; then use the remaining 10 hours to study.
4. Reward yourself for your achievements. There's always something more to do, so perfectionist procrastinators have a difficult time enjoying their accomplishments. A reward given to reinforce work done creates positive associations and sets a good climate for more accomplishments.
5. Learn to Value simply "being" instead of "doing". Too much emphasis on accomplishments creates a "functional identity" - who we are is tied directly to what we do. Not only is this stressful, it also creates false self. When possible, let go of work and know that God loves you for who you are.



### Definition:

Worrier Procrastinators (WPs) tend to be apprehensive by nature and have a sharply defined comfort zone. They are more alert to the risks of a new venture and blind to the potential benefits. WPs are indecisive and tentative regarding commitments. They hold back or withdraw if things don't go smoothly. Once they start a project, they tend to drag it out, because to move too quickly triggers their fear of change and of the unknown. They prefer to go on experiencing that which is familiar.

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

1. Practice positive self-talk. Since stress is a huge issue for the WP, it is essential to be pro-active. How you think conditions how you feel. Intervening to counter your A.N.T. (automatic negative thinking) is an essential skill. For instance, WPs often "catastrophize" a task, making it much more difficult than it actually is. Email [jkrueger@redeemer.ca](mailto:jkrueger@redeemer.ca) for an easy-to-use application of cognitive therapy.
2. When faced with something challenging, counter-balance your anxious tendency by intentionally thinking about the benefits. WPs tend to be more nervous than excited about a challenge. Try to reverse this tendency. Remind yourself why you thought this activity was a good idea in the first place. For instance, you may not naturally enjoy a course, but it's a stepping stone (requirement) to get to other courses you'll enjoy and to a career you'll love.
3. Each day, do at least one thing that you've been putting off or worrying about. Use small tasks that you find unpleasant as a means to exercise your will. By doing this, you'll feel empowered and as your confidence grows, your stress will subside.
4. Break down every large, intimidating project into an assortment of smaller, easier-to-do tasks. Big tasks quickly become overwhelming for WPs. The longer you leave unpleasant tasks, the more your resistance grows. Plan to take only one or two steps at a time. Check them off your list. Feel good about this accomplishment. Observe how taking successive steps over the coming days leads to getting the whole project done.



The six styles of procrastination have been adapted from the book, *It's About Time*, by Dr. Linda Sapadin (with Jack Marguire.) While I have added some of my own thoughts, what follows is essentially an exercise in editing the concepts in their book. This book has been very helpful in my work with students who struggle with procrastination at Redeemer. If you would like to explore the material further, or actually do a test that will reveal your procrastination style(s), please obtain a copy of this inexpensive Penguin paperback - it sells for \$13.51 on amazon.ca.

## Defier

### Definition:

The "Defier" Procrastinator may conjure images of a person being openly rebellious. Most DPs resist doing a task under the guise of compliance. They send mixed messages, giving the impression that they're willing, but then engage in passive resistance. They may say what others want to hear, but then they either don't follow through, or they do the task in an inefficient or uncaring manner. DPs resist authority and use procrastination as a means to challenge it. Sometimes their resistance is experienced as an exciting battle against boring conformity.

DPs have a self-protective attitude which keeps them focused outward on what others might be requiring of them. Ironically, because of this defensive posture, DPs are often out of touch with what would make them feel happy or what would improve their quality of life. Understandably, they find thoughtful self assessments quite threatening.

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

#### 1. Shift your concern

Rather than focus on what other people may be requiring of you or are doing to you, be concerned about what you might be doing to yourself. Think through the effect your defiance will have on your grades and your sense of well-being.

#### 2. Make Allies

If you've come to university to change and grow, learn to view profs and staff as allies who will support you in your goal.

#### 3. Choose to thoughtfully respond to a request rather than defensively react.

Take pains to "decide and do" rather than "complain and defy." The former approach puts you in charge, while the latter leaves the other person in control.

#### 4. Communicate honestly

If you believe a request is unfair, state your complaint in a calm and reasonable manner. Learn about conflict resolution and apply the principles where possible.

#### 5. Do something specific that will satisfy you because it's done your way

Express yourself in places where you have freedom— choice of topic for a paper, writing an article for the school newspaper or using your musical, artistic or leadership gifts.

## Crisis-Maker

### Definition:

The Crisis-Maker (CM) claims to work best under pressure and may even take pride in saying so. They procrastinate in order to provoke and create an adrenalin-producing personal crisis. CM's are easily bored and resist the "dullness" of doing things rationally and methodically. They have trouble focusing on the practical details of everyday life in a thoughtful, efficient and responsible manner. Instead, their attention is geared towards crisis demands. Every other bid for their time and attention registers as "not a crisis" and therefore, "not something that demands immediate action."

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

#### 1. Use thoughtful questions as self-motivators

As a CM, you're inclined to feel at the expense of thinking. You've been conditioned by feelings such as stress, excitement, amusement and comfort and they've become your chief motivators. It is important to counter dominant feelings through asking questions about a task such as:

\* How does doing this task relate to my career goals and personal freedom?

\* How will I likely feel about my self if

I get the task done in a timely and efficient manner rather than in a last-minute panic?

#### 2. Prepare yourself for emotional discomfort

You've developed a strong attachment or addiction to adrenalin as a motivator. Since school work is often boring, you've unconsciously injected excitement or stress into the work process, through procrastinating. Reverse the pattern. Intentionally choose to motivate yourself (through an act of the will) rather than the rush of feelings. Then, anticipate with each intentional step you take (towards study or writing a paper) that you are slowly reversing the addictive process. The boredom and restlessness are a kind of withdrawal symptom. Accept this as the price to be paid to grow and mature.

#### 3. Create your own motivators when doing a boring task

Since you are oriented towards excitement, try turning the task into a challenge or game you play to receive a reward. In so doing, you're learning to put pain before pleasure and delay gratification. Things that once were a distraction (TV, the internet, etc) are now used as rewards to counter procrastination.





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## Over-Doer

### Definition:

Life has become exceedingly busy for most people, especially the Over-doer Procrastinators (ODs), who lack basic skills in prioritizing, time management and self-assertion. Their procrastination becomes their indirect way of saying “no.” ODs are difficult to identify because they are always very busy doing something. The problem is that ODs tend to assume so many different roles and responsibilities that they easily get confused about priorities and get distracted from the most important tasks. Everything seems important to them! It's not just the sheer amount of work that ODs create for themselves that feels overwhelming, but also the multiple kinds of work generated from different roles and responsibilities. For instance, ODs may have responsibilities issuing from their role as a student, athlete, actor, volunteer, club leader and friend. Not surprising, ODs find it difficult to relax without feeling guilty. They are psychologically comfortable with two extremes: living full speed ahead or being completely exhausted.

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

1. Overdoing procrastination may be a self-esteem issue.

Low self-esteem may compel you to take on more than you can reasonably handle. ODs are plagued with self-doubt and are rarely satisfied—no matter how much they do. Their unconscious assumption (what their actions really “say”) is that their worth is measured by what they do, not by who they are. The challenge: learn to say “no” both to others and yourself when you've done enough.

2. Know your work rhythms and be flexible

Don't assume that you can always work at your peak level. Avoid thinking for example, “I got all that work done yesterday, so I can do that much today.” It may well be that yesterday's work drained you. Face the fact that you can't have it all—getting all your readings, studies, assignments done, have fabulous relationships and develop your special talents— at least, not all at the same time. It's a balancing act where you have to make choices each day. The important thing is not to neglect any one area for too long.

3. Evaluate your use of time through recording everything you've done in a week.

By recording the amount of time spent in each activity, you'll see the imbalances. With this new perspective you can make adjustments and clarify your priorities. Try using the Semester Map (email [jkrueger@redeemer.ca](mailto:jkrueger@redeemer.ca) for a copy) to get the big picture, and then use a daily agenda to work out details.

## Dreamer

### Definition:

The Dreamer Procrastinator (DP) puts pleasure before pain and tends to recoil from tasks that are out of their comfort zone. “That might be hard to do,” gets translated into “I can't do it.” As a defense, DPs are skilled at speaking about grandiose ideas and plans, but they often fail to work out the details to reach these goals. DPs prefer thinking to doing and, in a subtle way, start to confuse the two, believing they've accomplished something just because they've thought and talked a lot about it.

### Solutions to change how you think and act:

1. Be mindful of the difference between “feeling good” and “feeling good about yourself.”

On a short-term basis you may not feel good tackling that big assignment you have to do. But in the long run, the self-confidence and self-respect you gain from pushing ahead will give you a sense of integrity.

2. Train yourself to differentiate between dreams and goals. Dreams are usually loose knit structures or fragments of thought which lack the specific plans and details to make them

work. By contrast a goal involves specific steps over a specific period of time. There is no “some day” I'll do this feel about goals.

3. Use a written time line to plan each major project

On a piece of paper, list major tasks that need to be done to reach a goal. Next, figure out logical time-frames and sequences for doing these tasks. By outlining the specific milestones and deadlines involved in completing a project, you create a tool by which to measure progress along the way.

4. Attend to the “big” tasks daily.

Too often, ordinary tasks such as readings can be used as a means to put off getting started on a large paper. Counter your tendency to procrastinate by chipping away at unpleasant tasks so they no longer “loom large.” Break them down into manageable pieces so that you feel a sense of accomplishment as you move towards your goal.

