

## **Week 2/Video 4: Unhelpful Behaviors**

Unhelpful thinking patterns can reinforce or trigger other depression symptoms. Just as our thought patterns can reinforce depressed mood, our behavior patterns can also keep us stuck in depression.

Take procrastination for example. Some people procrastinate by watching TV or going on the internet when faced with a task like homework or taking out the trash. We procrastinate and then berate ourselves for the procrastination. We may be thinking, "I am so stupid. Why didn't I do this sooner?" We may feel irritable and hopeless and ultimately we have contributed to the downward spiral of depression. So why do we do this unhelpful behavior when we know it ultimately makes us feel worse?

Initially, procrastination is pleasurable, as it provides relief from having to gather the energy and motivation to complete the task. So people keep procrastinating even though they know it's not helpful in the long run. With time, procrastination becomes a habit that we do without thinking. I would like to clarify that sometimes ADHDers use the word procrastination to discuss difficulties with task initiation, and that is different than the procrastination we are discussing here, though the experience of difficulty with task initiation can lead to depressive symptoms.

On **page 19** of your workbook, there is a list of unhelpful behavior patterns that keep people stuck. Take time to review the list and check off/circle/highlight the things that you do. Use your critical thinking skills and identify any behaviors not on this list that you think perpetuate a depressed mood and add them. Take your time with this activity before moving on to the next video.