Tip 1: Instead of blaming yourself for procrastinating, try talking to yourself compassionately
Guilt and blaming ourselves for procrastinating is a key part that keeps the procrastination cycle going. Instead, try validating your feelings and talking to yourself like you would talk to a friend (i.e., “It’s ok to feel stressed. You have done assignments like this before. Start by doing one small task.”)

Tip 2: Try writing a “crappy rough draft”
Our fear of starting an assignment and getting it wrong often leads us to avoid the assignment. To get started on an assignment, keep the stakes low by writing a “crappy rough draft.” You might even try “stream of consciousness writing” where you write whatever comes up for you in the moment. For example, you might type, “I don’t know what I’m going to write this paper about, but the introduction will go here, and I guess I’m interested in writing about the neuroscience of procrastination…” Remember, it is much easier to edit than to write something perfectly the first time.

Tip 3: Don’t wait for motivation
Motivation is just a feeling and feelings are a bit like the weather – they are unpredictable and come and go. Would you wait for a sunny day to leave your room in order to go to class? No, you strap on your rain boots, grab your umbrella, and get moving. It may not be fun walking in the rain, but once we start walking, we realize that getting a little wet isn’t so bad. Similarly, once you start studying (even when you don’t feel like it), you often start to feel motivated as you get the ball rolling.
Tip 4: Schedule time to procrastinate

Try reframing your negative thoughts about procrastination by viewing it as self-care time. Try to schedule short, time-limited breaks where you allow yourself to engage in a procrastination activity. Doing this 1) reduces the guilt that perpetuates the cycle of procrastination and, 2) gives your mind a break from studying.

During your breaks, check in with yourself to see what you need at that moment. Are you feeling anxious and stressed about an assignment? Try doing something relaxing during your break such as deep breathing, taking a short walk outside, or calling a trusted friend. If you’re feeling unmotivated, bored, or tired, try splashing cold water on your face, doing a few jumping jacks, or taking a brisk walk.