

On the subject of "procrastination", i.e. a sometimes even chronic postponement of tasks, exist countless analyses in relation to root research and more or less helpful tips on how to overcome them. In addition to this trendy support in order to improve our own efficiency, we catch ourselves or are made aware by others if we indulge in laziness despite the countless tasks to be done. Be it the time on the couch at home after a working day or avoiding sporty activities - despite or precisely because we have a lot to do, we seem to prefer to do nothing, apparently under external control. Since there is often a certain degree of dissatisfaction afterwards, we asked ourselves whether there was a genetically predisposed pattern behind the various forms of laziness.

### **Situation and question**

Whereas the term "procrastination" was tried to define, categorize or explain multiple times, "laziness" in general refers to a broad spectrum of terms that negatively describe a certain degree of lethargy as a vice. Since the former was also defined in a few cases as a clinical symptom, both terms must not be used as a synonym. However, both topics have in common that we individually avoid seemingly unpleasant, complex, time-consuming or energy-intensive activities, even though we have initially planned to do them. In everyday life, these can be small, irrelevant household chores, regular sports or also tax declaration. However, the problem becomes even more serious if we avoid important business activities or social contacts, so that in the worst case we suffer seriously from it.

Since all forms of laziness or procrastination have a certain degree of avoidance in common and we often cannot rationally explain our behaviour, we wanted to explore possible backgrounds. Specifically, we asked ourselves whether our genetic programming was to blame for our laziness.

### **Causal relationship**

Our basic methodology of possible interdependencies is structured according to expression, vehicle, target and overarching mission.

#### Expression

As shown in the situation analysis, a large number of people in private and business environments have a certain degree of laziness and, in some cases, a chronic postponement of tasks. We always seem to strive to avoid physical (e.g. sports, household, shopping or other physical activities) as well as psychological (e.g. finding solutions to complex private or professional issues) efforts.

#### Vehicle

The illustrated avoidance of all forms of physical or mental exertion can be implemented in various creative forms in everyday life. Basically we try (mostly unconsciously) to give ourselves the greatest possible amount of rest. In addition to total avoidance, i.e. we do not even start an apparently unpleasant activity, we often treat ourselves to long interruptions within a larger task as soon as we have reached even a small intermediate goal. This behaviour can be clearly observed in private sports activities: after we have completed the first kilometres of a longer running route, we interrupt the running unit due to the first partial success.

#### Target

At first glance, our laziness does not seem to serve any meaningful goal - on the contrary, we are annoyed after a rational reflection of our behaviour. One potential positive reason could be that our avoidance tactics prioritize individual preferences. However, if you stay on the couch at home for hours, including the blunt sprinkling from the TV, it seems like this behaviour does not stem from a conscious personal decision. Rather, our unconscious maximization of breaks seems to serve the simple purpose of minimizing our energy consumption. Specifically, we are subconsciously required to avoid seemingly senseless, (physically and mentally) energy-wasting activities.

### Mission

Although we are being advertised in the media and in a business sense that a certain efficiency is the goal to be striven for, in our opinion the minimization of human energy requirements can only be a genetically predetermined energy efficiency. From today's perspective, energy reduction in the developed industrialized countries may seem outdated due to the excess of supply options (especially the availability of food). However, our genetics could not keep up with the rapidly growing prosperity, so we are still programmed to retain energy as much as possible in order to be able to flee from external threats in the event of an emergency (i.e. attacks by larger predators such as bears or tigers).

### **Conclusion**

Even if our DNA - if at all - only adapts to our current conditions at a very slow pace, the interrelationship shown can provide us with important insights. On the one hand, we can explain from a rational perspective our senseless laziness and thus satisfy our personal dissatisfaction with ourselves. On the other hand, in the business environment, our genetic behaviour can be incorporated into modern working environments, i.e. consciously use breaks to increase overall productivity and satisfaction.