RAYMOND JAMES PRESENTS

WORTHWHILE

Fall 2026

A publication of thoughtful insight dedicated to the life well planned.

"I'll get to it later"

The science behind procrastination **p14**

RAYMOND JAMES

Letter from the editor

Choices, over time

Growing up, many of us were told to make good choices. Be kind. Work hard. Think before you act. It sounded simple at the time.

Then life adds the fine print. Choices start involving family, money, health, values and timing. But the basic idea still holds: What we choose today can shape what happens later.

We've gathered a mix of stories about choices both practical and personal. A **new savings option for children** looks at what an early financial start could mean for the next generation. **Accessory dwelling units** show how families are finding new ways to live close, offer support and preserve independence without sharing the same walls.

Some choices are shaped by forces outside our own households. Larger economic conditions influence how people plan, spend and prepare for the future. The **economy** can feel strong for some families and strained for others, a divide that affects household decisions and long-term planning in very real ways.

And it wouldn't be WorthWhile without our cover story, which takes a more personal look at something most of us have wrestled with at one time or another. **Procrastination**. We looked into why "later" can be so tempting, how delay can affect health, work and well-being and what strategies may help people get started.

There's more inside, including a reminder that one good choice can be as simple as heading out for a crisp autumn **walk**. Grab a coat, find a comfortable spot when you return, and enjoy this issue of WorthWhile.

Happy reading.

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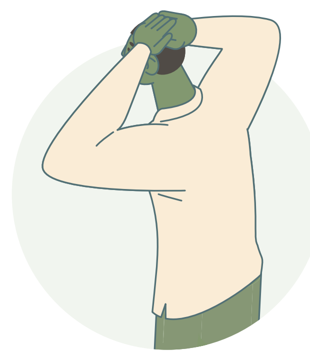

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SECURING THE FUTURE OF ENERGY

A MORE DIVERSIFIED ENERGY SYSTEM COULD STRENGTHEN RESILIENCE

Energy security has moved back into focus as recent years have shown how quickly supply shocks can affect households, businesses and communities. Geopolitical conflict, natural disasters and operational failures can all show up in everyday life through higher energy prices, higher costs for the goods and services that depend on energy, and even energy outages and shortages. Building an energy system that remains reliable when specific sources are interrupted could help mitigate those risks.

DIVERSIFICATION MATTERS

Fossil fuels have long served as the primary source of global energy. They can be transported and used with relative ease, and the underlying infrastructure is well developed. But there are frequent reminders that geopolitical and operational risks are unavoidable.

That's where diversification comes in.

A key dimension of energy security is avoiding too much reliance on any one source, each of which has advantages and drawbacks. Some work better in certain geographies than others. Some countries have an abundance of oil and gas resources, while others have plentiful rivers for hydropower or land for solar farms – and it's possible to have some of each. There is no single recipe that applies across the board; rather, a broad-based energy supply mix can help protect from disruptions.

IMPROVED RESILIENCE THROUGH SUSTAINABILITY

Among the reasons renewable energy is the world's fastest-growing energy category is that it helps reduce the supply, transportation and geopolitical vulnerabilities of the current fossil fuel-based system. Once developed, wind and solar farms don't face the same fuel supply risks as natural gas or coal power plants. When fossil fuel supply is disrupted, whether for deliberate or accidental reasons, power generation may slow or come to a halt.

Distributed energy can add another layer of resilience. Rooftop solar systems, especially when combined with battery storage, can help keep homes and businesses up and running during grid outages. Electric vehicles can also support energy security by reducing exposure to oil price shocks. These technologies are improving as innovation continues and costs are coming down. The caveat is that far-reaching changes to energy infrastructure can take years, if not decades, to plan, finance and build.

NO SINGLE ENERGY SOURCE IS PERFECT

Renewable sources can help mitigate supply risk over weeks or months, but challenges remain when it comes to managing the electricity they produce from day to day. Because no renewable source is entirely stable around the clock – for example, solar farms cannot generate power at night – storage plays a key role in supporting a reliable electric grid. As batteries become more commonplace, it's also important to develop secure supply chains for critical minerals used to produce them, such as lithium, nickel and cobalt.

Reliability also depends on the grid itself. As electricity demand rises, driven in part by the data center boom, another key priority is upgrading grid infrastructure: how power moves from point A to point B. This includes developing better connections between regional grids, which can help balance temporary supply shortfalls in specific regions.

STRIKING THE RIGHT BALANCE

No energy system is completely reliable or risk-free. The goal is to take advantage of a broad mix of generation, storage and transmission technologies to withstand periods of stress. It's not about transforming energy markets overnight, but about strengthening what already works while adding more flexibility for the future.

Diversification enhances resilience. The more ways power can be generated, stored and delivered, the less vulnerable the system becomes when one part is strained.

OIL IMPORT DEPENDENCE, 2024

Source: Energy Institute, Raymond James research

Investments in the energy sector involve additional risks and are not suitable for all investors.

Worth a Look

A compendium of fresh looks and new ideas

Make light of it

When a story relies on a familiar cliché – an evil twin or surprise fortune – the audience may see it as an unforgivable literary sin. A dramatist may soften the ire by calling attention to the absurdity; to "hang a lampshade on it." The 5260 lampshade by Swedish design house Svenskt Tenn in iconic Josef Frank linen prints could be that lampshade. Lively and interesting, the hand-sewn light cover elevates any room or theater in which it appears. Diffuse your way to svensktenn.com.

H_2Oh!

The former chairman looked past the rim of his rocks glass toward the Fina ice bucket at the corner of his bar. Leather and stainless steel, with antique appointments, its transitional design suggested an age when technological progress made ice feel like a casual sign of middle-class prosperity. Struck by the idea, he smiled. There might be a way back in from the cold. Chill yourself out at kathykuohome.com.

Perfetto!

In Italy, *il sole, il mare e la terra* have conspired to nurture artistry in paint, in marble, in music, in verse and in protein, carbohydrates and fat. The hand-painted ceramic casserole by the potters at Verdolini, in the northern town of Nove, coalesces this abundance of art in a serving dish composed in the vibrant majolica style, a centuries-old discipline honoring the beauty of the natural world. Serve it up at abask.com.

Cast iron lasts, Ron

A culture of disposability will say that entropy is a one-way treadmill. The steward knows this but understands why one must run against it. The 5.5-quart cast iron Dutch oven by Smithey, sourced and poured in the US, reflects a philosophy of durability. From its polished interior to its stainless handle, every piece is built to last for lifetimes if given a little care (and less than you'd think). Feed families and futures at smithey.com.

The power of showing up

Older adults are adding life to their years – not just years to their lives – by adding meaningful movement to their routines

On June 9, 2025, surrounded by friends, family and doctors in her home in British Columbia, 84-year-old Suzannah Wish lay quietly on a yoga mat, waiting for her cue.

At the word "go," Suzannah hoisted herself into a perfect plank, which she proceeded to hold for a full seven minutes, plus two seconds – breaking the Guinness World Record for oldest woman to perform an abdominal plank.

Seven minutes is a long time for anyone to hold a plank; the average gym-goer generally peters out after one or two.

Suzannah Wish is an outlier, to be sure. But she – like many older adults – is helping redefine what it means to age well. And while this story centers on older adults, its most practical advice – start where you are, find something you enjoy and keep showing up – travels well across decades.

Improve your "healthspan"

Life expectancies have significantly increased over the last few decades, but the conversation today is less about "lifespan" and more about "healthspan," or how long you live in good health. While that idea is especially relevant for older adults, the habits that support it matter well before retirement age.

Exercise, inevitably, enters the chat.

The health benefits of physical activity are well-documented, but pertinent, so let's recap: In the short term, research shows exercise can improve sleep and cognition and reduce blood pressure and anxiety. Long-term, active adults see a reduced risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, bone loss and many cancers.

For older adults specifically, certain types of exercise can help improve balance, which prevents falls and extends independence. But the benefits go beyond physical. Exercise is also a great way to socialize and build community, friendships and confidence.

The takeaway at any age

Move in ways you enjoy, start at a manageable pace and prioritize consistency over intensity. Whether you're in your 40s, 50s or beyond, the goal is the same: choose something sustainable, build gradually and keep going.

Find your fit

People in their 60s, 70s and beyond are showing up in ways that would have seemed unusual a generation ago: joining recreational sports leagues, signing up for 5Ks, or lifting weights at the local YMCA.

Older adulthood is no longer framed as a time to slow down, but as an opportunity to stay engaged – physically and socially. For many, it's as much about connection and routine as it is about fitness.

Importantly, there's no single blueprint. Some are competing in masters-level tournaments while others are finding their groove in walking groups or tai chi classes. Programs like Silver Sneakers have made it easier to access guided classes and supportive environments, lowering the barrier to getting started.

And if you're managing a disability or chronic illness, movement isn't off the table – it's often part of the solution. With the right modifications, physical activity can help improve mobility and support independence.

How much is enough?

For adults 65 and older:

- **150+ minutes** of moderate activity or **75+ minutes** of vigorous activity per week
- **2+ days per week** of strength or resistance training
- Additional activities to improve balance, such as standing on one foot

Measuring intensity

On a 10-point scale, moderate-intensity exercise is about a 5 or 6: your heart rate rises, you're breathing harder, but you can still have a conversation.

High-intensity exercise is about a 7 or 8: you can say only a few words before needing to catch your breath.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Play it safe

If you're new to exercising – or just starting back up after a long break – it's important to start slow. It's a good idea to check in with your health care provider first, especially if you're managing a chronic condition. And if it's feasible for you, booking a few sessions with a professional trainer can go a long way toward building confidence.

Don't head straight for the barbell rack if you're new to strength training. Resistance bands and body-weight exercises can help you build muscle gradually without putting unnecessary strain on joints. Walking, swimming and other low-impact activities can also deliver meaningful benefits.

Equally important is learning to listen to your body. Some soreness is normal when starting a new activity, but sharp or persistent pain is not. Choosing an exercise that aligns with your current fitness level and increasing intensity as you go helps make movement sustainable over time.

And while the workout itself is important, the surrounding habits matter just as much. Warming up, cooling down, staying hydrated and giving your muscles time to recover can not only prevent injury, but help ensure you get as much out of your exercise as you put in.

Ready, set, go!

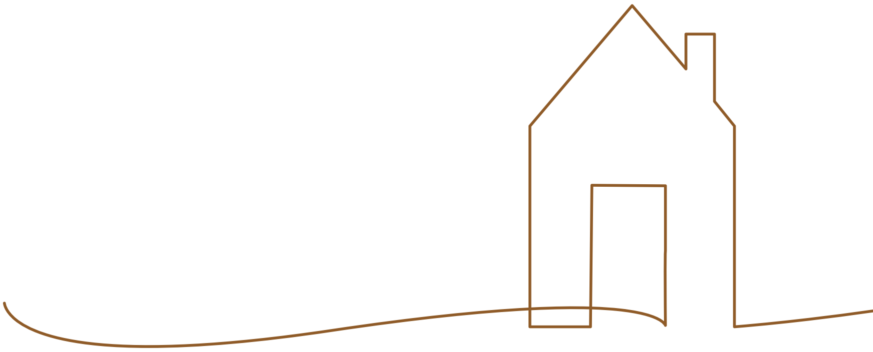
Even if you've never been particularly active, that's okay. It's never too late to start.

Consistency – not intensity – is the key. A short walk most days will take you further than an ambitious workout plan you abandon within a week. Perfection isn't the goal; what matters is showing up, because some movement, however small, is better than none.

And try to keep in mind: It's about living confidently and having fun. If you dread the gym, skip it. If walking feels monotonous, try listening to a podcast or audiobook. If you struggle with motivation, join a group class. The best exercise is the one you'll keep doing.

So, find something you enjoy, whether it's pickleball or Pilates. But let's be honest: It probably won't involve planking. And you certainly don't need to break any fitness records to reap the benefits.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Guinness World Records



TOGETHER BY DESIGN

Multigenerational living doesn't mean sharing walls – accessory dwelling units are rewriting what "living together" means

A modern family compound is taking shape. An adult couple and young children live in the main house, the grandparents in the backyard cottage, and a college-aged niece in a suite above the garage. It's multigenerational living without everyone under one roof.

There's no crowding, except by choice for a Sunday dinner or game night. What this arrangement offers is something many families want more of: privacy alongside proximity, help with child-care or aging parents, stronger family bonds and a practical way to begin spreading housing wealth within the family. Known as accessory dwelling units (ADUs), these properties place multiple residences on a single lot, and their appeal is growing.

FORCES AT PLAY

The single-family home lot is no longer serving households as it once did. Homeowners are aging in place longer, children often need more financial support into adulthood and many people want to stay close to their family members without giving up privacy and autonomy. Addressing these changing needs is part of what makes ADUs so compelling.

Often framed as a housing-supply fix, ADUs also offer a way to reorganize daily life. Grandparents can step in for emergency school pickups. Adult children can stay nearby while they establish themselves. Aging parents can remain independent without isolation. More than that, the model works because it offers both connection and relief: relatives can be present for one another without collapsing into a single household. It creates flexibility and support while still preserving dignity.

WEALTH SHIFT

Sharing a home lot is also an opportunity to spread housing wealth ahead of an inheritance. Instead of waiting for property to pass on at the end of life, families can use land they already own to create new space and new equity in real time.

A lot that once served one household can now support an aging parent, an adult child, a caregiver or, eventually, a tenant. The property remains the same core asset, but it begins serving multiple households and life stages at once. Appreciation, lower housing costs and shared investment can start earlier, giving younger relatives a head start. Over time, the ADU can evolve with the changing needs of its residents, whether that means housing a caregiver or generating rental income.

In that sense, the arrangement is not only flexible, it's also a more intentional way to extend support and pass on

wealth within the household. How that value takes shape, however, depends on how the space is designed and used.

BUILDING IN PRACTICE

When people think of ADUs, they often envision a picture-perfect backyard cottage. But the category is broader than that. It can include basement apartments, prefabricated units, garage conversions, pool houses and FROGs (finished rooms over garages). Budget, property constraints, and the role the space is meant to serve all determine which type of expansion makes the most sense.

Some additions are seamless and architecturally refined. Others are more improvised. But the function remains the same: a separate, dignified space that keeps everyone close. It's creating a living arrangement that feels financially sound, emotionally sustainable and well-designed to work for everyone involved.

The biggest obstacle is often zoning, but that's beginning to shift as states and municipalities loosen restrictions. As housing becomes more expensive and communities search for gentler ways to add density, ADUs have become more appealing to policymakers. But approval is only part of the challenge. The deeper question is whether the arrangement can work long-term financially, emotionally and practically for everyone involved.

A MEANS OF CONTINUITY

The larger shift goes beyond ADUs themselves. Lots that were once designed for one nuclear household are increasingly being used as flexible family properties that can create financial value while also offering continuity, care and practical support at different stages of life. That's the appeal of the modern family compound: a place that adapts as a household needs change.

For different seasons

ADUs can flex with changing family needs, offering space for support, independence or income.

CLOSE, STILL INDEPENDENT

After her mother passed away, her 74-year-old father didn't want to live alone. He moved into the backyard cottage, where he joins them for dinners on occasion, never misses his grandson's baseball games.

STARTING OUT

After college, his son landed an entry-level job with a commute into the city. The basement apartment, with its separate entrance, gave him independence while allowing him to save money to build a life of his own.

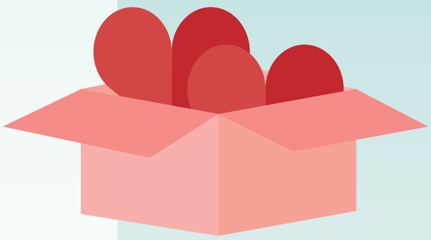
CLOSE TO COLLEGE

Just outside a college town, the FROG has served as a convenient home base during college. First, her daughter lived there, later her nephew. Now, the space provides rental income in retirement.

A PLACE TO LAND

When her brother went through a difficult divorce, the prefabricated ADU on her property gave him a place to land. It offered privacy, stability and a comfortable place to have his kids on weekends, with support just across the yard.

Sources: US Census, Reader's Digest



Where purpose meets planning

How a formal giving plan can bring clarity, structure and long-term impact to your philanthropy

Philanthropy is personal. It's shaped by the people, places and issues that move you, the way you give and the impact you hope to make. There's no single formula for meaningful giving, which is why the most effective strategy is one that reflects both your broader financial picture and your personal values.

For many people, giving begins organically: a donation here or volunteering there can grow into consistent support for organizations they care about. But when the desire shifts from being generous to creating a lasting impact, establishing a thoughtful plan can help bring focus, consistency and purpose to each gift.

Think of your formal giving plan as a guide for deciding where to give, how much to give and how those choices support the philanthropic impact you want to make. Well-planned philanthropic activity is intentional, connected and consistent, and can help you align your generous efforts with the charitable legacy you want to leave.

Building your giving plan

This is the opportunity to reflect on your passions, values and beliefs and consider the legacy your philanthropic efforts could form. A proactive approach to giving enables you to maximize your positive impact on the initiatives you want to advance. Use this chance to inspire future generations in your family to follow your charitable mission as well.

A comprehensive, executable giving plan helps you move from reactive donations to a potentially more tax-efficient and effective form of philanthropy. You'll outline your own annual budget and calendar, taking into account what works for your finances. A plan should go beyond financial structure and include giving priorities and impact goals.

A structured plan doesn't have to limit flexibility, however. Accounting for potential spontaneous giving needs and revisiting your plan annually to evolve it as needed keep the plan relevant to changing priorities and tax guidelines.

Approaches to consider

If you're looking to elevate your philanthropy, it's worth considering charitable giving approaches that can maximize the impact of your gifts while creating potential tax efficiencies. These aren't required for a formal plan, but they can add flexibility and help you give more deliberately.

Donor advised funds (DAFs) allow you to be both deliberate and responsive by building a reserve for future giving. You can claim a tax deduction in the year you contribute to your DAF, but you're not required to donate those funds within the same year. You can invest the initial contribution and make grants over time, as you see fit, potentially increasing the impact of your giving.

Another option is donating appreciated securities directly to a charitable organization. Many nonprofits accept stock gifts, which can make your giving more efficient. This approach may allow you to avoid capital gains taxes that you would otherwise owe if you sold the investment then donated the cash proceeds. Ultimately, it can translate into a more substantial gift to charity.

Tax changes and other considerations

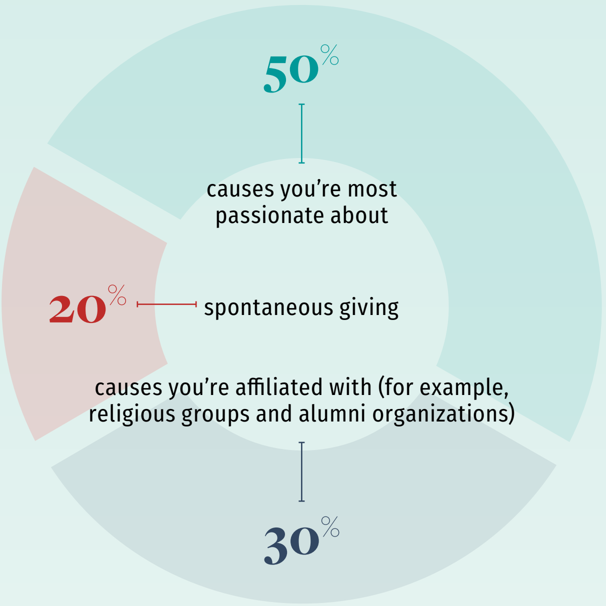
This year may be a good time to develop or re-evaluate your philanthropic plan, especially if you itemize deductions or expect to make larger gifts. Tax changes in 2026 may affect your timing and structure behind charitable giving. For donors in the top tax bracket, the tax benefit of charitable deductions is now capped at 35%, reducing the value of deductions compared with prior law.

Additionally, itemizers face a 0.5% adjusted gross income (AGI) floor, where only the portion of your annual charitable giving that exceeds 0.5% of your AGI is deductible. However, qualified charitable distributions from IRAs can bypass that floor up to $111,000 per person for gifts made to an operating charity, because the gift is excluded from income.

Tax considerations can help shape the timing and structure of a gift, but personal values should remain at the center of the plan. A formal giving plan is ultimately about clarity: create a strategy that lets you reflect on what matters most and make intentional choices that align with your beliefs and financial goals.

A portfolio approach

Once you've determined your annual giving budget and you're ready to choose charities, it can be overwhelming to determine who should get what. Coming up with an allocation strategy, similar to an investment portfolio, will help you share the funds in a way that matches your values. Here's an example:



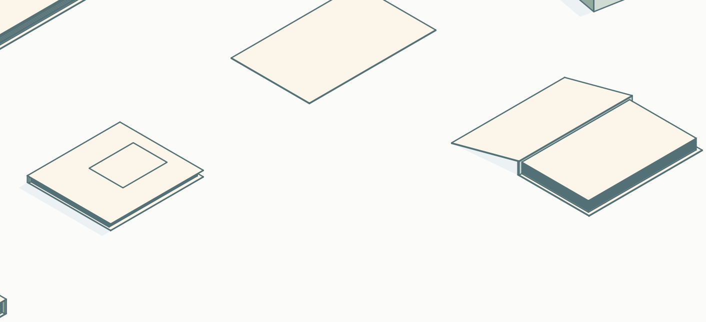
Raymond James does not provide tax advice. Please discuss these matters with your tax professional. Further information on donor advised funds is available from your financial advisor.

If not now, when?

The hardest part is getting started

If "later" escapes your lips as beautifully as a sonnet, if "tomorrow" glimmers beyond the horizon like a city of gold, and if "not now" invigorates like a dew-draped glass of sweet tea on a Houston summer day, you may be a little bit of a procrastinator.

You'd be in good company. Everyone is at least an occasional put-offer. For about one in five, however, it's serial, and tends to diminish life outcomes along axes of health, wealth and happiness. To them, it's not news that procrastination is harmful and hard to shake, no matter the number of bookshelves they've stuffed with guides on getting things done – pages pristine, covers dusty, spines unlimbered.



But you don't need to have a problem with procrastination for procrastination to become a problem.

Does this person sound familiar? He's a hard charger at the office and a DIY MVP at home but puts off scheduling a medical visit until the thing on his arm grows limbs and dials the doctor itself.

A 2024 study of older adults and preventative health care showed a relationship between procrastination and delayed health screenings that could catch serious conditions early.

Here's someone you may know from work. She's inventive and eagerly dives into hard problems but has never filled out the weekly TPS report on time, no matter how often her manager lectures.

In a process-driven business environment, a seemingly minor clerical issue could be the bad apple spoiling an entire performance review.

It's common to write off procrastinators as lazy or bad with managing time, but psychology research suggests that procrastination is not necessarily a matter of virtue but a symptom of emotions.

As Fuschia Sirois, a psychologist and author of books on procrastination, told the American Psychological Association's podcast, Speaking of Psychology:

"Emotions are at the core of procrastination. And this comes from a lot of the research that suggests that the type of tasks that we procrastinate on are ones that we don't enjoy. They're ones that we find unpleasant, aversive and that can range the full spectrum from just simply boring to gut wrenching, nerve wracking and anxiety provoking.

"So anywhere along that spectrum of a task that makes us feel that – these negative emotions in one form or another – those are the tasks that we're more likely to procrastinate on."

Someone's particular penchant for procrastination can also be sticky, suggesting a hereditary component – whether via nature or nurture.

An 18-year longitudinal study published by German researchers in 2026 showed that participants tended to procrastinate less as they got older but held their position relative to peers. That is, an ebbing tide lowered all boats, but procrastinators on the high side tended to remain there compared to people of the same age group.

At the individual level, life experiences could usher in bigger changes to procrastination habits. As a person became more conscientiousness or less neurotic, they tended to procrastinate less. The study, which focused on college students, showed that the transition to the workforce was a particularly strong inflection point. Those who entered the workforce soon after graduating tended to reduce procrastination while those who delayed saw their tendencies increase.

What can we take from this? Procrastination may be part of your wiring, but structure and strategy can help. First though, you need to figure out what it is you're running from.

Helpful habits for even non-habitual procrastinators

If procrastinating is just an occasional problem, simple productivity strategies can help keep you on track.

- Use lists – priority lists, checklists, brain dumps – and set deadlines.
- Create an environment conducive to focus.
- If a new task emerges, move it to the top or set it aside. You can't do both at once.
- Try sprints: twenty-five minutes of intense work followed by a five-minute break.
- Write down a plan of attack but avoid planning to perfection.
- "Eat the frog first." Do the most objectionable task first to get it over with.

Why are you procrastinating?

"Because it needs to be perfect."

THE PERFECTIONIST

For some, procrastination can serve as armor for their ego. If you don't do a thing, you can't fail at it, you can't let yourself down and you can't let others down.

"Positive perfectionism" motivates some people into action (though it brings its own issues), while negative perfectionism can lead to procrastination and spiral into depression, eroding self-worth and depleting willpower. Both can hinge on binary thinking: that a thing is either perfect or a failure, and that outcomes of tasks are indicative of one's essential worth.

Ironically, in a work environment, people who struggle with procrastination from perfectionist tendencies may find themselves given only the most challenging tasks due to their brilliant outcomes. This can exacerbate the problem.

Perfectionism can have deep roots in negative experiences, but chipping away at the perfect-or-failure binary can help people improve their relationship with their talents.

Dealing with it

- Reframe tasks as opportunities to learn, a first step in a revision process or work that can be "good enough."
- When you hit a bump in your task, throw down a slapdash bridge to get you to the next piece. Grind it flat later.
- Learn to recognize when and why you have negative perceptions of yourself and others. You may find it easier to recognize your own inherent worth when you recognize it in others.

"Because it always works out."

THE WIZ

Standing at home plate, an oh-two count, Casey thought he knew the score. Strike out and he slumps back to the dugout. Knock it into Lake Winthrop and the shockwave launches him from Mudville and into history. We love a story about a Wiz, harried by tsk-tsking types, but whose mastery is revealed dramatically at the end. "No sweat," the Wiz says with a wink. Unfortunately for Casey, a cruel creature was waiting on deck: an omnipotent narrator with a moral lesson.

Like perfectionists, procrastination via arrogance may be motivated by shaky self-worth. They either pull off the magic trick at the eleventh hour, or they fall into their ego-protecting excuse: "I didn't fail the task because I couldn't do it, I just didn't give myself enough time."

When the Wiz fails, the fall can come hard. And if the fall never comes, it's possible they've only undertaken tasks they knew were below their talents, causing them to plateau early.

Dealing with it

- Reverse the trick. An early finish is even more commendable.
- Pursue real challenges. If you're not uncomfortable, you're not growing.
- Explore why you're afraid that people will see you put in effort.

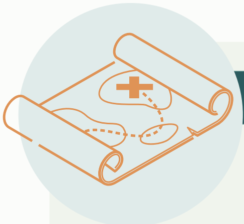
"Because there's no good way to start."

THE ELEPHANT SWALLOWER

People who favor clear, efficient, linear processes may get intimidated into procrastination when they face tasks with a lot of novelty or uncertainty. They may fear that if they don't make the most logical step, one after the other, the result will be a pile of mush – or that it'll take more time than "it should." This may come from fear of failure, which can be crippling if left untreated.

Dealing with it

- Make lists of subtasks and order them by time, fastest first. Completing a quick task can get the ball rolling. If you get lost in the estimating, or subtask defining, do it arbitrarily – it's a scaffold, not a monument.
- Put off concerns about efficiency. Reframe the task not as a whole or as a series of discrete subtasks but as a single progression. Everything you do moves you closer to the end.
- Set timers. Schedule breaks. Attach small rewards to milestones.



"Because I get distracted."

THE SIDEQUESTER

Leonardo da Vinci was hounded by procrastination his entire life, writing in his diary at one point, "It is easier to resist at the beginning than at the end," and elsewhere, "Tell me if I ever did a thing."

His genius was well known, but he earned a reputation as unreliable, struggled with completing commissions and often had to earn a living doing work far below his talents. While he is regarded as the very model of a Renaissance Man, the influence of his work struggled to transcend the piles of disorganized, half-finished projects where it lay hidden.

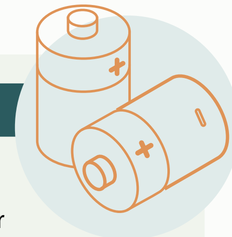
There is evidence to suggest Leonardo suffered from Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, as he was prone to intensely focusing on tasks up until a disruption or distraction sent him on a flying tangent. It could then take him years to return to the original task.

Diagnosable or not, Leonardo's struggles resonate five hundred years later as we find ourselves inundated by distractions. For 21st-century procrastinators, various stratagems to cut out the noise may help them get started.

Dealing with it

- Remove distractions, like your phone, from your workspace. If you catch a snag, work through it, take a walk or do a pushup, but don't reach for your comfort distraction.
- Think about whether you've chosen what it is you're doing at the moment. Streaming apps make it easy to just keep watching the next episode. Is that what you wanted to do with your day?
- Prepare yourself to work: Use the bathroom, get a glass of water, pick some background music, straighten out your clothes – preempt annoyances.

> "I love deadlines. I love the whooshing noise they make as they go by."
>
> – **DOUGLAS ADAMS**



"Because I'm exhausted."

THE CONTEMPORARY

One theory of self-control and willpower suggests that they are driven by limited resources. If we are always withdrawing and never depositing, they'll be depleted and send a person into a spiral. That's burnout.

Are you getting enough sleep? Are you getting enough quiet time? Are you eating healthy meals? Are you getting exercise?

Busy happens. If it's wearing you down to the point that procrastination becomes a problem, it may be time to reprioritize and reschedule, putting more focus on what you need to meet your expectations.

Dealing with it

- Write down your schedule and look at it holistically. If it looks unfulfilling, make the tough decision to change it.
- Lawn service, travel agent, laundry pickup, au pair – money is a resource meant to serve your life goals. Outsourcing can be part of that strategy.
- Do you have untreated health issues? Persistent fatigue is a common symptom of many illnesses.

"Because I'm just going to fail."

THE ...

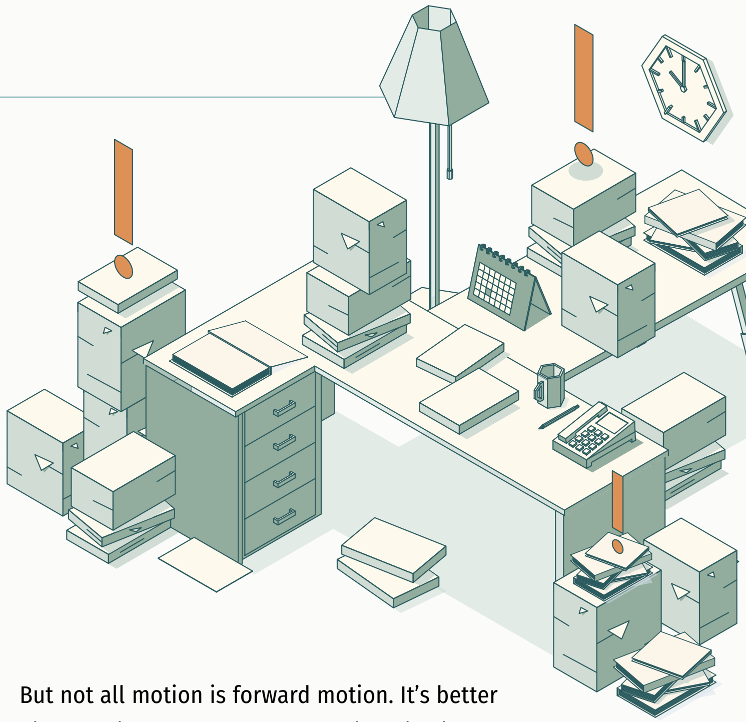
"Depression, anxiety or chronic stress can make even simple tasks feel impossible and lead to procrastination," said Becky Tilahun, a Cleveland Clinic clinical psychologist.

If you can't seem to break out of cycles of procrastination and worsening self-worth, it is probably time to get professional guidance.

Dealing with it

- Speak to a professional.

Is it even procrastination?



We live in an action-oriented society. If you don't have a side gig, are you even trying? If you aren't traveling every weekend for extracurriculars, are you really giving your child every advantage?

We may be overhustling and too structured. After decades of declines in schools, in 2013, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a policy statement about the necessity of recess in children's lives:

"Recess is a necessary break in the day for optimizing a child's social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. In essence, recess should be considered a child's personal time, and it should not be withheld for academic or punitive reasons."

Maybe adults need the same consideration. The rat race, the treadmill, the ladder, the Joneses – give 'em everything and they'll demand a little more. And we know that stepping away from a task and letting the mind wander can activate the important concept-generating parts of your brain. We can sometimes be too quick to label this as "procrastination."

But not all motion is forward motion. It's better to sit and think about a task before jumping in headlong. It's better to make sure you've got everything you need to complete it to satisfaction. And sometimes it's better to figure out that something on your list isn't worth doing.

Sometimes things really can wait until later.

AGING IN PLACE

The easiest plan to put off

Seeing how our parents age can be powerfully influential on our own goals. After witnessing their parents struggle in institutional residential facilities, it's common today for people making retirement plans to place a high priority on independence. "Aging in place" has become a common phrase to describe both the goal and its strategies.

As it turns out, people are better at setting the goal than they are at following through with the strategies.

As we age, significant hindrances to independence can come suddenly. A debilitating fall is not something that can be scheduled. Small household maintenance problems can snowball into something serious that undermines independence, and not necessarily on a person's terms.

This means that aging-in-place plans need to be put into motion before the moment when they are needed things like grab bars in showers, kitchen modifications or ramps for elevated doorways. It also means people should have a Plan B if household adaptation falls short of their needs.

This is an uncomfortable conversation, particularly for a generation disillusioned with the state of elder care when their own parents were going through it, but it's better to select a retirement home before one is selected for you. Further, desirable communities tend to have waitlists and deadlines.

Unfortunately, this isn't an issue typically solved by a single professional, which makes it easier to put off, but it's something anyone planning for retirement or already in retirement should put on their to-do list.

GET STARTED

- Discuss your aging-in-place goals with your doctor. Primary care providers may not have the time or expertise to address these issues, so ask for a referral.
- Make it clear to your financial advisor what your goals are. In addition to helping with the money side, they may have information about long-term care insurance and other strategies.
- Seek out advice from your state or locality's elder services department.
- Have candid conversations with your children. They're going to be interested in your well-being, so excluding them from your plans just leaves them a step behind.

Sources: Cleveland Clinic; American Psychological Association; Preventive Medicine; Brain, a Journal of Neurology; PsyPost; International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health; The New York Times; An Autobiography, Anthony Trollope; The Salmon of Doubt, Douglas Adams

the quiet influence of color

Color does more than catch the eye – it shapes perception, emotion and choice

The open highway is a blur of restaurant signs, so many of them red, from the logos to the decor inside. That choice is rarely random. Color creates an instant perception, but it can also provoke a physical response, and red has long been used to stir appetite.

Brands recognize that color strategy is not about simply choosing colors that shout loudest; it's about choosing ones that feel like the right fit for their personality, their products and the people those products are made for.

Still, color associations are not fixed rules. Context, audience and execution matter just as much. Colors don't speak in absolutes. Ultimately, color choice succeeds when it makes a brand feel recognizable, relevant and easy for consumers to choose.

The signals colors send

Colors are often associated with broad emotional cues that shape our first impressions. Over time, these associations have become familiar shortcuts, helping brands communicate at a glance. The chart below highlights some of the most familiar color associations that brands use to signal to their target audience:

	White	Red	Purple	Blue	Green	Black
Emotional cues	Clarity, simplicity, purpose	Energy, urgency, appetite	Luxury, creativity, originality	Trust, calm, reliability	Health, balance, progress	Sophistication, power, control
What it signals	Frames a brand as focused and transparent, allowing a product to speak for itself.	Emphasizes the drive for action and impulse.	Positions a brand as premium or imaginative – distinctive or elevated.	Projects long-term dependability and competence.	Communicates responsibility, growth and sustainability.	Signals authority, confidence, exclusivity status appeal.
Common uses	Tech, health care, modern lifestyle	Fast food, clearance sales, entertainment	Beauty, luxury goods, creative industries	Finance, tech, health care	Finance, organic products, eco brands	Luxury fashion, automotive, high-end tech

Color can increase brand recognition by up to **80%**.

Color may account for up to **90%** of the information shaping that initial impression.

What if I don't like that color?

You might hate neon green, but when a color fits the product and the context, your personal taste often matters less than you might think. In a brand application, color has rhetorical power.

There may be no universally preferred color, but there is a limit. The most effective brands use color and color combinations intentionally, creating enough interest to engage consumers without leaving them underwhelmed by simplicity or overwhelmed by complexity.

Sources: University of Southern California, Journal of Marketing & Social Research

Baby's first investment vehicle

Trump Accounts get the financial ball rolling early. Here's how they work.

If you want to share your passion for rules and tax-advantaged retirement accounts with your children – and set them on a path toward retirement savings early – you're going to want to know this:

Trump Accounts, retirement savings vehicles designed for children, were created under the 2025 One Big, Beautiful Bill Act and could be funded starting July 4, 2026. They are similar in many ways to an IRA, but since children generally don't earn salaries, these accounts come with some novel funding options and tax rules. The result is a long-term investment account that can grow throughout childhood, at which point it becomes subject to traditional IRA rules.

Additionally, a child born between January 1, 2025, and December 31, 2028, may be eligible to receive a $1,000 contribution to their account courtesy of the federal government, as long as they are a US citizen and have a Social Security number.

Getting started

A guardian, parent, adult sibling or grandparent, in that order of authority, has to open the account and each young saver can have only one account. The individual opening the account must file IRS Form 4547 or download the app at trumpaccounts.gov and complete the application.

What's this about rules?

1. Trump Accounts are generally limited to $5,000 in annual contributions, though some contributions don't count against that cap. More on that below.
2. No distributions are allowed from the account before January 1 of the year the account owner reaches age 18, except in case of death, or to withdraw contributions that exceeded the $5,000 limit.
3. Accounts can be funded with a mix of pre- and after-tax contributions, the ratio of which figures into taxes owed at withdrawal.
4. On January 1 of the year the account owner turns 18, contributions can no longer be made to the account, and it becomes, effectively, an IRA by another name. At that point, it can be rolled into an IRA (Roth or traditional) – though that might get messy.

5. Investments must be made in low-fee, passively managed mutual funds or ETFs that track market indexes that comprise at least 90% US companies. Sector- or industry-specific funds are not allowed, but ones that track indices of specific market cap sizes are OK.

Phew.

Regarding the caveat on No. 4: Trump Accounts and IRAs track "basis" differently. Basis is the initial value of an asset used when calculating taxes later. In this way, mixing a Trump Account with an IRA is like mixing oil and water. The complexity of this accounting may be encouragement enough to keep one's Trump Account and IRA separate. You may want to consult a tax professional.

For now, the best thing to know is whether contributions are considered pre-tax or after-tax, since it'll help you get a sense of how much tax will be owed when distributions are made.

Pre-tax contributions

Pre-tax contributions can grow over time, but when the account owner withdraws, federal income taxes will be owed on earnings. This category comprises:

- The $1,000 federal contribution
- Up to $2,500 in contributions from a child's or parent's employer
- Contributions from tax-exempt organizations

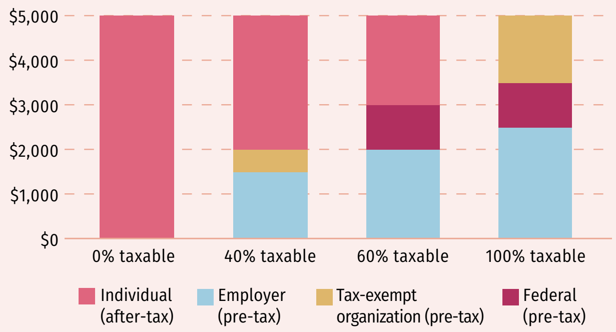
After-tax contributions

Contributions made by anyone who doesn't fit into the above categories are considered after-tax contributions – whether from a family member, friend or even the child. Since the IRS has already gotten its pound of flesh, the account owner can withdraw gains derived from after-tax contributions without owing federal income taxes on them.

Calculating the tax liability

Like an IRA, investment growth in the account is taxed as regular income at distribution. As for the principal, the tax load depends on the ratio of pre-tax contributions to total contributions.

As an example, if the child's parents each received a $2,500 contribution from their employers, then the child would eventually owe income tax on 100% of that money. If the parents instead deposited $5,000 in cash, the child would owe income tax on 0% of the distribution. If $1,000 came from the federal government (pre-tax), $2,000 from employers (pre-tax) and $2,000 from the parents (after-tax), the child would owe income tax on 60% of the distribution.



How can I exceed the $5,000 annual limit?

The $1,000 federal contribution and certain qualified contributions from governments or tax-exempt organizations don't count against the annual cap.

Who owns the account?

The beneficiary (being the child) is also the account owner. Even if a parent's employer contributes money to a Trump Account, the child owns every nickel of it.

When does the kid get their money?

The account owner can start withdrawing from the account at the start of the year they turn 18. However, because the account follows standard IRA rules, they would incur an off-the-top penalty of 10% for any withdrawals made prior to age 59½, unless the withdrawal meets specific exemptions.

Is it worth it to open an account?

By the numbers, it makes sense to open a Trump Account if your child qualifies for that $1,000 in federal cheddar, can receive contributions from tax-exempt organizations or if a parent can receive an employer contribution.

If not, it becomes more philosophical. It may be that having their own retirement account will help a child create healthy savings habits early – a real-world cradle-to-matriculation financial education. However, parents should understand that the child, not them, owns the account and only the child can decide how it is spent when the time comes ... whether that's a down payment on a house, a sports car or a shipping crate full of collectable stuffed animals. If that notion makes you uncomfortable, you may find another vehicle – like a 529 education account or trust fund – to be better suited to the hopes and dreams you're investing in for your child's future.

Why the economy feels strong and strained at once

Income divergence helps explain the divide

Airports are still crowded, restaurants are still full, and home improvement projects are still moving forward. Many households are still traveling, upgrading and paying for convenience, even as the cost of everyday essentials frustrates millions of Americans.

That contradiction helps explain the gap between economic strength and everyday strain.

Higher-income households that have benefited in recent years from equity market growth and rising home values have more room to spend, save and invest. Others remain squeezed by paying for the basics, like housing, groceries and health care.

Households that owned homes before the recent run-up in housing costs likely face much lower monthly expenses than recent buyers or renters. Similarly, those who already held stocks or other appreciating assets have had more time and opportunity to benefit from rising values. People without the momentum of those assets have faced the same higher prices, with fewer ways to turn economic growth into lasting financial success.

This is what has been described as a “K-shaped” economy: an economic pattern in which outcomes diverge across income groups.

What the data shows

The growing divide between income groups is changing where consumer spending comes from. A larger share is being driven by higher-income households, which means the broader economy is relying more heavily on a smaller group of consumers. If those households pull back because of stock market volatility or a broader market correction, the effects could be felt widely.

As recently as this past spring, it was estimated that the top 10% of households generate nearly 50% of all consumer spending, which translates to about one-third of the US gross domestic product.

This dynamic also has labor market implications, since many lower-income workers are employed in sectors that depend on discretionary spending from higher-income consumers.

Retirees are also helping support spending. Many with 401(k)s and IRAs have benefited from strong market returns over the past several years, especially those with significant allocations to equities. In some cases, a couple that retired in 2016 could have more money now than when they retired, even after 10 years of withdrawals.

Still, many Americans remain focused on the high cost of living. A recent Politico poll found that 56% of Americans ranked cost of living as the top issue facing the nation. While incomes have risen since the pandemic, that growth has trailed behind inflation, helping explain why many households still feel squeezed even as the broader economy looks resilient.

Together, these trends show a consumer economy moving in two directions: one group that's gaining more financial flexibility, and another that's finding it increasingly hard to keep pace.

The K-shaped economy

Higher-income households have pulled away from the pack in terms of spending power and financial resilience. They're often better able to keep spending, invest for the future and benefit from rising asset prices. Households with less purchasing power, however, tend to spend a larger share of their income on essentials and have less room to absorb higher costs.

When this disparity is charted, the resulting "K" shape is used by economists to describe the phenomenon.

One way to see this divide is through spending beyond the basics. These discretionary purchases by higher-income households can help the economy look strong, even when the rising cost of living weighs on many. Investors with an established set of assets may also benefit from asset appreciation as real estate, stocks and other investments can grow in value over time ... but it's much easier to put money into those assets and build momentum when there's money left over after everyday expenses are covered.

The forces behind the K-shaped economy may not fade quickly. Limited housing supply, higher borrowing costs and uneven ownership of stocks, homes and other assets continue to shape how different households experience the economy. Until affordability improves and more households have opportunities to build wealth, that divide may be hard to close.

A source of strength

Households with enough income and assets to benefit from economic growth often have financial momentum. They're better able to absorb higher costs, keep spending when prices rise and continue investing for the future.

That momentum is one reason the economy can look stronger on paper than it feels to households that are budgeting carefully. Higher-income households can continue to support consumer spending, even as others pull back or make trade-offs.

More and more, how the economy feels depends on which side of that divide a household is on. For those spending most of their income on necessities, the economy can feel tight. For those with room to save, invest and build on momentum, it can feel much more stable.

Sources: FactSet, Politico

THE MANY

SWITZERLANDS

Switzerland may be famous for snowcapped peaks and storybook villages, but its real magic is how quickly one world gives way to another. Travel through it for even a few days and the country begins to feel less like a single destination than several distinct cultures folded neatly into one remarkably connected place.

In a single trip, trains, boats, PostBuses and rental cars can carry you from Swiss German cities to French vineyard terraces, Italian piazzas and Romansh mountain villages. Along the way, languages shift, menus change and landscapes transform, often within the span of a single ride. That easy connectedness creates a country where every region feels distinct, yet all of it is explorable.

Zürich is the natural starting point. Switzerland's largest city introduces the Swiss German side of the country, balancing modern efficiency with old-world charm as medieval alleyways meet contemporary architecture and lakeside cafés. That balance of precision and tradition appears on the table, too, in dishes like Zürcher Geschnetzeltes – a Zürich specialty of sliced veal in a creamy white wine and mushroom sauce, traditionally served with rösti.

From Zürich, the route naturally turns toward **Lucerne**, where the country's lake-and-mountain identity comes into sharper focus. Framed by peaks and wrapped around the fjord-like Lake Lucerne, the city feels shaped as much by water as by stone. Menus lean into hearty regional specialties, from cheese-forward dishes to freshly caught fish. Boat crossings reveal steep cliffs, waterfront villages and hidden coves that are impossible to appreciate from the road, making transportation not just a way to arrive, but part of the experience.

Between French-speaking lakeside Switzerland and the Italian south, **Gruyères** may be the clearest example of Switzerland's "many worlds in one" identity. Arriving by train or car, the landscape softens into rolling pastureland before the medieval hilltop village comes into view. Here, Swiss tradition is experienced through both place and flavor: an 800-year-old castle anchors the village, while nearby dairies and chocolate makers tell the story of two of the country's most recognizable foods. The result is not just a stop for cheese and chocolate, but a compact expression of history, craft and countryside.

Further west, **Montreux** and **Lausanne** bring a softer rhythm along Lake Geneva, where Switzerland begins to feel closer to the Riviera than the Alps. The region moves at the pace of vineyard walks, lakeside lunches and glasses of Chasselas, the crisp white wine closely tied to **Lavaux**. In the UNESCO-listed vineyard terraces, regional trains stop between wine villages and walking trails, making it easy to step off, wander between rows of vines and look down toward the water.

South of the Alps, the mood changes again. In **Ticino**, palm trees replace pine forests and Italian fills conversations in cafés. The region's culture feels distinctly Mediterranean, reflected in lively piazzas and outdoor dining. Menus commonly feature risotto, minestrone and other northern Italian influences that feel far removed from the alpine cuisine of the north. From there, travelers can explore **Lugano, Bellinzona** and the surrounding valleys by train, PostBus or rental car, each offering access to historic villages and stone castles.

The eastern Alps, **Graubünden** and the **Engadin Valley** reveal another layer of Switzerland: the heartland of Romansh culture. Switzerland's fourth national language remains part of daily life in villages near resorts like **St. Moritz**, while mountain traditions shape the table through air-dried Bündnerfleisch and Engadiner Nusstorte, a rich nut-filled pastry found throughout the valley. Scenic trains curve through dramatic mountain passes, and yellow PostBuses reach roads that feel carved directly into the mountainsides.

What lingers after a trip through Switzerland isn't how much the country contains, but how easily it changes. A short train ride, a boat crossing or a mountain drive can lead to a new language, a new menu and a new view. Switzerland's great appeal is that its contrasts sit so close together, and the next one is never far away. W

Sources: Switzerland Tourism, Zuerich, Britannica, focusSwiss, Vier Waldstättersee, UNESCO World Heritage Convention, Château de Gruyères, Hôtel de Gruyères

Parrot snake

Researchers thought the parrot snake – initially found in Brazil almost a decade ago – was a known species until DNA research revealed it to be new in 2025.

A WORLD STILL UNSEEN

Advances in science are revealing more of Earth's biodiversity and how much remains unknown

The Gila (pronounced HEE-lah) monster is the largest lizard in the United States, reaching nearly two feet long at maturity. Found in the deserts of the Southwest, they eat young rabbits, rats and other rodents, nesting birds, eggs, and, on occasion, other reptiles.

Because of their unusually slow metabolism, Gila monsters can go months between meals. This biology led scientists to discover a hormone-like compound in their venom that ultimately inspired the GLP-1 drugs used to treat diabetes and obesity today.

Gila monsters are protected by state law where they occur – California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona.

But for any species to be protected, scientists first need to know it exists. And as researchers are finding out, much of the natural world is still waiting to be documented.

Researchers have been cataloging life on Earth for centuries, naming around 2.5 million species so far.

Some experts believe that as much as 80% of the planet's species have yet to be documented, with even larger gaps in the oceans. Much of what remains undiscovered is small, obscure or easily overlooked: insects, fungi, plants and microscopic organisms. Future advances in DNA research could help reveal millions more, including species that look identical but are genetically distinct.

This work is accelerating as advances in scientific tools enable researchers to identify an average of 16,000 new species each year. About 15% of all known species have been discovered in just the last 15 years.

That surge is the result of scientific advances that are making it easier to detect and identify life that was once overlooked. DNA sequencing now allows researchers to distinguish between lookalike species, while artificial intelligence can help sort and classify massive datasets. Digitized museum collections and global biodiversity databases make it possible to compare specimens across continents in seconds. In some cases, "new" species are being identified not in the field, but in drawers – specimens collected decades ago are only now being recognized as something entirely different.

The result is a richer, more complex picture of life on Earth. But it's also a race. It can take years for a species to move from discovery to formal description, and some may disappear before that process is complete. These so-called "dark extinctions" leave no record at all.

Discovery, then, is more than a cataloging exercise. Naming a species is the first step toward conserving it – and sometimes, toward unlocking entirely new applications. And as the tools of science improve, we're not just finding more species; we're learning how much we've yet to see.

Electric-blue tarantula

This electric-blue tarantula, described in 2023, is the first known tarantula species identified in the Thai mangroves.

Gila monster

The venom of the Gila monster led to the development of today's GLP-1 drugs used to treat diabetes and obesity.

Sources: Mongabay, Discover Magazine, National Park Service, Science Advances

"Northern Presence" by Kyle Sims
Acrylic on board – 1997, 36" x 24"

"Kyle, you can do this if you want to," a painting instructor Kyle Sims admired once told him. When most teenagers were focused on social activities and expanding friend groups, Sims was attending painting workshops and taking those words to heart.

Sims's mother also recognized his talent early and encouraged it. "She would often take me to galleries for inspiration," he recalls. "I remember the hyper-realistic work of people like Carl Brenders really standing out." In some ways, that encouragement only confirmed what he had already sensed: a life as a professional artist was possible. And it didn't take long for instinct to become reality. By age 16, Sims was showing and selling his work.

He later attended college in Billings, Montana, an ideal setting for an artist drawn to wildlife, bears in particular. It was there that one of his teachers, Paco Young, offered advice that continues to shape his work. "Paco taught me the importance of getting outside to paint from life," Sims explains. "It trained me to see things better and is still one of the most enjoyable aspects of what I do."

After college, Sims took a "normal" job but continued painting on the side. Eventually, with several sales and a few notable introductions behind him, major galleries came calling, and he left the traditional path behind for good. "It was great because I was 24 and showing alongside my heroes," he says. "But it also made me realize how much I needed to improve."

Today, Sims' process begins with an idea, followed by simple thumbnail drawings to explore composition. He also draws from an extensive library of reference photography to find the right light, background, color palette and animal stances. Still, when it comes to improving as an artist, he credits the time he spends in nature.

For "Northern Presence," that connection to nature – along with a safe distance – came during a visit to a wildlife refuge with his family. Sims remembers the encounter well, since bears and rushing water are among his favorite subjects. As for the refuge's exact location, he can't quite recall. After all, he was only 17 at the time. The memory, however, remains vivid in the work.

To learn more, visit kylesims.com.

The Tom and Mary James/Raymond James Financial Art Collection
One of Florida's largest private art collections, The Tom and Mary James/Raymond James Financial Art Collection is housed at the Raymond James Financial headquarters in St. Petersburg, Florida. The collection includes paintings, drawings, sculptures, graphics and mixed media. A portion of the collection resides at The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art (visit thejamesmuseum.org). The museum represents the culmination of Tom and Mary's more than 50 years of collecting culturally significant pieces and is a gift to the community.