

SELF-CONTROL/DISCIPLINE

DEFINITION: control gained by enforcing obedience

ARTICLE: (<http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2010/feb/18/the-key-to-weight-loss-is-self-control-2509/>)

In the land of the free many Americans take freedom to the extreme. Although I am happy to practice many of the freedoms America offers, there are some freedoms that do more harm than good. The more freedom we have, the less we have to exercise self-control – and that can get you in big trouble.

The Bible warns us in Proverbs “Like a city whose walls are broken down is a man who lacks self-control.” Ironically, it is our own lack of self-control that can destroy us. Although we would like to blame everybody else for our woes, eventually we must take responsibility for our own decisions.

For example, most people don’t mind working. Most people are not in debt because they don’t work hard enough. They are in debt because they don’t practice self-control. Believe me, I am one of them.

The same goes for fitness. The average person doesn’t mind working out. We have many members who will exercise two hours every day of the week. We even have boot campers who will put themselves through the hardest workouts anyone has ever endured, but they refuse to practice self-control.

Notice I said practice? I know I will be practicing self-control until the day I die. We are selfish beings who want, want, and want some more. Very few of us can workout enough to actually eat whatever we want. Most of us know we can’t buy everything we want so why is it we think we should be able to eat whatever we want anyway?

I fell for this pity party over the holidays myself. I talked myself in to deserving the extra calories. I kept treating myself to something everyday – and before you know it, my treats became bad habits. Then you feel so crummy, you keep eating crummy as if that makes any since at all. All the sudden, you are 10lbs heavier than you should be because you quit practicing self control.

How do you break the cycle? You begin “practicing” self-control again. You know what they say, “practice makes perfect”.

This means you won’t perfect it immediately so don’t expect immediate results. Practice takes time and patience.

Second, don’t feel sorry for yourself. I don’t know why we feel so deprived when we are dieting. A diet to Americans is like a feast for many others. Be proud, it takes a strong person to practice self-control. Although people won’t admit it, there are more people who will be jealous of your discipline than people who feel sorry for you when you are skipping dessert.

Lastly, often times we settle for our fatter out-of-shape bodies. We even buy bigger clothes to be more comfortable and often avoid the one place that offers the most support – the gym. Don’t adjust your lifestyle around bad habits. Instead, make necessary adjustments to start good habits and experience the freedom that comes with self-control.

- 1) How do the words “self control” and “discipline” make you feel?
- 2) What do you think of what the author says about self-control/discipline? Does self control really bring freedom?
- 3) Can you think of an example of how you exercise self-control/discipline in your life?
- 4) Who is the most self-controlled/disciplined person you know?
- 5) Why is it so difficult to be self-controlled/disciplined?

Quotes:

- “Endurance is one of the most difficult disciplines, but it is to the one who endures that the final victory comes.” –Buddha
- “It was character that got us out of bed, commitment that moved us into action, and discipline that enabled us to follow through.” –Zig Ziglar
- “Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out.” - Stephen Covey.
- “With self-discipline most anything is possible.” –Theodore Roosevelt
- “He who ignores discipline despises himself, but whoever heeds correction gains understanding.” - Proverbs 15:32
- “The happiness of a man in this life does not consist in the absence but in the mastery of his passions.” – Lord Alfred Tennyson