

# Self-Discipline

## Defined

*“the ability to control yourself and to make yourself work hard or behave in a particular way without needing anyone else to tell you what to do.”*

*“correction or regulation of oneself for the sake of improvement.”*

*“the ability to make yourself do things when you should, even if you do not want to do them.”*

*“the capacity to restrain our impulses, resist temptation – do what’s right and good for us in the long run, not what we want to do right now.”*

*The Greek philosopher Plato was once asked, "What man is most fit to govern a town?"*

*Plato's reply: "He that can well govern himself."*

## Why it is important?

- It reduces anxiety and increases the sense of confidence and security.
- It enables you to achieve long-term goals.
- Increases your freedom and choice (agency).
- Helps you deal with inner conflicts.
- The alternative (i.e. a lack of self-discipline) is being enslaved by your urges, emotions, desires, habits, addictions or obsessions. This creates insecurity and anxiety because you feel that you are not in charge of your life and can be self-destructive.

## Stamford marshmallow experiment (Mischel at al, 1972)



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX\\_oy9614HQ&ab\\_channel=IgniterMedia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QX_oy9614HQ&ab_channel=IgniterMedia)

Behavioural change demands self-discipline and self-control. We tend to use the terms interchangeably, but there's a subtle difference.

- **Self-discipline** is about leaning into resistance. Taking action in spite of how you feel.
- **Self-control** is refraining from immediate gratification.

Consider the following questions:

How much self-discipline do you have? In what areas of your life are you most self disciplined?

How much self-control do you have? When is your self-control strongest and when is it weakest?

## Signs of self-sabotage:

- Procrastination / not trying.
- Looking for ways it will go wrong / focusing on what isn't working / blaming others.
- Getting close to a goal then quitting.
- Using excuses, you know aren't entirely true.
- Masking emotions by numbing yourself.
- Using comparison to others as an excuse.
- Refusing to seek help.
- Prioritising what is comfortable rather than what is important.
- Not keeping your word to yourself.

# Stop making excuses

An excuse is a reason that is given in an attempt to justify something that: you did that you should not have done; or you did not do that you should have done. An excuse can be valid or invalid. An excuse may be accepted or rejected.

List all your excuses for why you have not, or cannot, accomplish a particular goal.

Then go through each one and find ways to get around or solve each one. There is always a way, but as long as those excuses sit in your head without being addressed, they remain obstacles.



Excuses block our progress.

To overcome your excuses, you must first admit that you're making them in the first place.

Ask yourself:

- What excuses do I tend to make?
- What am I settling for?
- Why am I making these excuses?
- How do these excuses prevent me from moving forward?
- How do they hinder my ability to get what I want?

*Watch your thoughts; they become words.*

*Watch your words; they become actions.*

*Watch your actions; they become habits.*

*Watch your habits; they become character.*

*Watch your character; for it becomes your destiny!*

Think of something that you are good at doing

- How did you first learn to do it?
- What made you keep doing it even though it was hard?
- What helped you get better at it?
- Once you started to get good at it, what made you want to get even better?

# SELF-DISCIPLINE

IS THE ABILITY TO MAKE YOURSELF DO WHAT YOU SHOULD DO, WHEN YOU SHOULD DO IT, WHETHER YOU FEEL LIKE IT OR NOT.

## 5 Simple Ways to Practice SELF-DISCIPLINE:

1. Get out of bed when your alarm goes off.
2. Make your bed every morning.
3. Move your body for at least 10 minutes every day.
4. Move your mind (journal, meditate, pray).
5. Do one thing you don't feel like doing .

*Mel*  
ROBBINS

“

WE DON'T HAVE TO BE

**SMARTER**

— THAN —

**THE REST;**  
WE HAVE TO BE MORE

**DISCIPLINED**

— THAN —

**THE REST.**

”

WARREN BUFFETT

