



SAINT JOSEPH CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
STRIVE Mini-Lesson
SELF-CONTROL

Objectives:

- Students will become aware of the meaning of delayed gratification and self-control.
- Students will reflect on their level of self-control in a variety of areas.
- Students will hear strategies on improving their self-control.

Procedure:

1. Read the information below.

In 1972, Stanford University psychologists conducted a test on 4 & 5 year-olds.

The kids were offered a marshmallow and told that if they could wait 15 minutes and not eat that one, they would get a second marshmallow. The test conductor then left the child alone with the marshmallow.

The study found that roughly two thirds of kids chose to eat the marshmallow rather than wait.

Years later, researchers followed-up with the kids that were part of the test to determine if their ability to delay gratification at a young age was a predictor of future success.

Follow-up studies showed that kids who could control their impulses to eat the treat right away were more successful as teenagers and demonstrated more confidence.

Holding off on what we perceive to be more fun and easier in order to do what we know we should do, is difficult.

The difficulty with delayed gratification is that our current society is conditioned for now, faster, easier and fun.

Delaying gratification is an essential skill in a successful life. The ability to get done what should be done is key in reaching our goals.

It requires self-control or self-discipline

Galatians 5: 22-23

God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle and self-controlled.

2. Students are next asked to reflect on their self-control by mentally responding to each of the questions below on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 = “not at all” and 5 = “all the time”.
 1. Do you shower/bathe every day?
 2. Do you get up at the same time every morning? Including weekends?
 3. Do you have any addictions (caffeine, nicotine, sugar, etc.) you'd like to break but haven't?
 4. Are you able to ignore your cell when you need to?
 5. Is your room neat and well organized?
 6. How much time do you waste in a typical day? On a weekend?
 7. If you make a promise to someone, what's the percentage chance you'll keep it?
 8. If you make a promise to yourself, what's the percentage chance you'll keep it?
 9. Could you fast for one day?
 10. How often do you exercise?
 11. How many hours of focused work do you complete in a typical workday?
 12. Do you have clear, written goals? Do you have written plans to achieve them?
 13. How much TV do you currently watch? Could you give up TV for 30 days?
 14. How do you look right now? What does your appearance say about your level of discipline (clothes, grooming, etc)?
 15. Do you primarily select foods to eat based on health considerations or on taste/satiety?
 16. Can you tell me what you'll be doing tomorrow? Next weekend?

17. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your overall level of self-discipline?

18. What more could you accomplish if you could answer that last question with a 9 or 10?

3. Share the information regarding Self-control as per the attachment.



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Self-control is like a muscle, it has to be trained in order to become stronger. We all have a different starting point and in some areas of life we are stronger than in other areas.

Areas of self-discipline include:

1. Sleep
2. Nutrition
3. Exercise
4. Work Habits
5. Communication
6. Etc...



2 Peter 1:5-7

Do your best to improve your faith. You can do this by adding goodness, understanding, self-control, patience, devotion to God, concern for others and love.

To improve your self-control, try the following:

1. Focus on “why” you should complete the task rather than the “means” of the task.

For example if the task were to do your homework, you should focus on getting a good mark, accomplishing your goal, pleasing your parents/teacher, etc. You should **NOT** focus on shutting of your phone, stopping the gaming, turning off the TV.

2. Stay close to what promotes your goals.

Create a vision board or collage with photos and words that describe your dreams and then display in a prominent place.

Write affirmations (“I am” statements that include how you wish to be) and read them at least twice daily.

Schedule a workout with a friend at the gym.

Read, watch and listen to anything that promotes your goals.

3. Keep away from temptations—both physically and mentally

- give your phone to your parents for one hour so it does not distract you,
- only take a limited amount of money with you to curtail spending
- only have healthy foods at home to avoid the temptation to go astray.

4. Sometimes bribery really does work – promise yourself a small reward.

5. Even punishment works – give yourself a penalty for not completing the task – though following through with it is sometimes difficult...

6. Set rules because they provide structure and prepare us for encounters with temptation.

If I get distracted by TV after school then I will wait to watch TV until after I finish my homework.

Your days are your life in miniature. As you live your hours, so you create your years. As you live your days, so you craft your life. The words you speak, the thoughts you think, the food you eat and the actions you take are defining your destiny – shaping who you are becoming and what your life will stand for.

Robin Sharma

Choose your actions wisely.

Exert self-control to build an extraordinary life.