



Academic Success Center
UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Developing Self Discipline

Presenter's name and title

Self-Discipline, Self-Regulation, or Willpower?

- ✓ How do you define self-discipline?
- ✓ Self-regulation?
- ✓ Willpower?

How much willpower do you *currently* have?

- ✓ **College often tests our willpower**
 - ✓ Assumes/requires a high degree of self-discipline
 - ✓ Students enter with varied experience and skill
- ✓ **Willpower Self-Assessment Exercise**

“Self-control is a vital strength and key to success in life”

“Self-control...was the only trait that predicted a student’s grade–point average in college”

~ Baumeister & Tierney

Why is this important?
What does the research say?

“Self-discipline predicted academic performance (and which students would improve) more robustly than did IQ”

“Self-discipline has a bigger effect on academic performance than does intellectual talent”

~ Duhigg

What do we know about willpower?

- ✓ **Limited resource**
- ✓ **Willpower does not remain constant day to day**
- ✓ **Improving willpower in one area can “spillover” into others**

“As people strengthened their willpower muscles in one part of their lives...that strength spilled over into (others)...Once willpower became stronger, it touched everything.” ~Duhigg

Habits: A Mixed Blessing

“Sometimes it looks like people with great self control aren’t working hard – but that’s because they’ve made it automatic. Their willpower occurs without them having to think about it.”
~Duckworth

- ✓ Positive or negative habits
- ✓ “Keystone” habits

Keystone Habits

Sufficient Sleep

Physical Exercise

Healthy Diet

Stress Management

Study?

Stages of Self-Regulation

1. Chaos

2. Stability

3. Flexibility

4. Mastery

**** Be Prepared For Possible Regression ****

Increasing Academic Willpower

- ✓ **Can increase through conscious strategies**
- ✓ **Awareness is the first step**
 - ✓ **Observable behavior**
 - ✓ **Thoughts**
 - ✓ **Feelings/emotions**

Self-Awareness Exercise

List 3 of each - *behaviors, thoughts, and feelings* that interfere with your academic success?

Examples:

Behavior - *I play video games too much.*

Thought - *Before a test I panic and think I am going to go blank on all the information.*

Feeling (emotion) - *I have always been afraid of taking math classes.*

Strengthening Academic Willpower

- ✓ **Ownership**
- ✓ **Self-Esteem**
- ✓ **Intent**
- ✓ **Initiation**
- ✓ **Self-Talk**
- ✓ **Mindset**

Mindsets

FIXED Mindset	vs.	GROWTH Mindset
Skills are Born; you <u>CAN</u> <u>NOT</u> Learn & Grow	BELIEFS	Skills are Built; you <u>CAN</u> Learn & Grow
Performance Outcome of NOT Looking Bad	FOCUS	The Process of Getting Better

4 Characteristics of Growth:

1. Efforts
2. Challenges
3. Mistakes
4. Feedback

Train Ugly - Growth Mindset

Summary – What are you going to do differently now?

- ✓ **Willpower = key role in academic success**
- ✓ **Improving willpower in one area leads to overall improvement**
- ✓ **Positive habits reduce demands on willpower**
- ✓ **Keystone habits - Sleep, Exercise, Diet, Stress Management, Study**
- ✓ **Self-regulation can be improved**
 - ✓ **Chaos, Stability, Flexibility, Mastery**
- ✓ **Behaviors, thoughts, and feelings can interfere with success**
- ✓ **Academic willpower can be strengthened**
 - ✓ **Ownership, Self-Esteem, Intent, Initiation, Self-Talk, Mindset**

A Challenge...



Thomas Frank, College Info Geek -

<https://collegeinfo geek.com/cold-shower-1-exercise-building-self-discipline/>