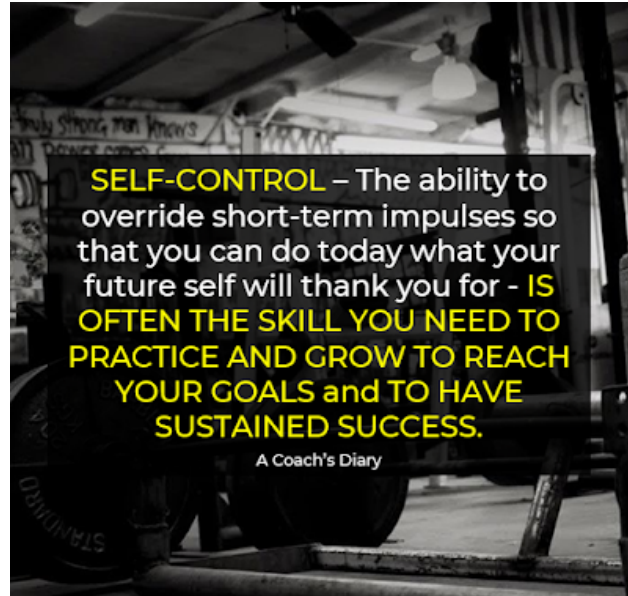


WEEK 12 | THE BATTLE FOR SELF-CONTROL

For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline (2nd Timothy 1:7)



Have you ever wondered why some athletes get better from game to game or season to season, why some athletes stay the same, and why some get worse?

A big reason for growth and development, or a lack of growth and development, is purposeful and deliberate practice.

I tell my athletes the race to greatness is a race to 10,000 hours. Author Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book called [*Outliers*](#), and in it, he shared how research has shown that it takes 10 years, or 10,000 hours, of deliberate practice to really master something.

Andres Ericsson is the world's expert on world experts. He studies what experts do to make them special. He says that deliberate practice has 4 key ingredients:

- 1 - Specific practice and goal
- 2 - Focus (100% Focus on the task)
- 3 - Feedback (Information-rich information on how to get better)
- 4 - Refinement (Constant learning and improvement)

You can run every day for a year and never get faster if you don't have a specific goal, if you aren't focused, if you don't get feedback, and if you don't make any adjustments.

The 10,000-hour rule requires love and passion for something, and it requires self-control.

Ericsson said, *"Get outside your comfort zone but do it in a focused way, with clear goals, a plan for reaching those goals, and a way to monitor your progress. Oh, and figure out a way to maintain your motivation."*

Self-control is the ability to override short-term impulses so that you can do today what your future self will thank you for. It is often the skill that you need to practice and grow to reach your goals and to have sustained success.

Research shows that having self-control can make you [happier, healthier, and more successful](#).

If we want to have real love, joy, peace, and success, we have to have self-control, and we have to be aligned with God's purpose for our life. We get that alignment by reading the Bible regularly and through prayer. When we aren't in alignment with God and His word, it's like we are in a constant Tug-of-War.

There are many barriers to self-control. Some include:

- 1 - Greed
- 2 - Envy
- 3 - Anger
- 4 - Comparison
- 5 - Fear
- 6 - Anxiety

Those barriers are why fighting for self-control is a battle, but we are told to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, and to put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:10-11).

The story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness showed that even Jesus faced temptations and can serve as a template or model for how to maintain your self-control.

In Matthew 4, Jesus was led up to the wilderness by the Spirit where he was tempted by the devil. After fasting for 40 days and 40 nights, Jesus became hungry and the devil said, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread. Jesus said back, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took Jesus to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He

will command his angels concerning you,' and, 'On their hands, they will bear you up lest you strike your foot against a stone.'"

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

The devil then took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory in an attempt to tempt him for the 3rd time. The devil said to Jesus, "All these I will give you if you will fall down and worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and he only shall you serve."

Then the devil left him, and angels came ministered to Him.

Jesus used the word of God as His sword in his battle for self-control against the devil and temptation. He said that we live on the word of God and not food alone, we do not test God, and we only worship and serve the one true God.

He then told the devil to leave! He told temptation, distractions, and barriers to his self-control to leave.

We can do the same. Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full (John 10:10)." We too have the ability to fight the devil and any temptation that keeps us from having self-control is we read and know the Bible. The Bible is our ultimate weapon in the battle for self-control.

Through faith in God, belief in Jesus, and self-control, we can do anything.

THIS WEEK

1 – What is one time where you practiced self-control and you saw success from it?

2 – When do you feel like you have the most self-control?

3 – When do you feel like you don't have a lot of self-control?

4 – What is a quote or Bible verse that you can use when you are struggling with your self-control?

6 BIBLE VERSES ABOUT SELF-CONTROL

1 - For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.

- 2nd Timothy 1:7

2 - A person without self-control is like a city with broken-down walls.

- Proverbs 25:8

3 - For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.

- 2 Peter 1: 5-8

4 - No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

- 1 Corinthians 10:3

5 - My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

- James 1:19-20

6 - But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

- 2nd Corinthians 12:9