

Self-Discipline

The Gift You Give Yourself - by Sgt. Steve

“Be tolerant with others and strict with yourself.”

- MARCUS AURELIUS

Of all the virtues, temperance (self-discipline) can sometimes be the hardest to master. I think controlling ourselves is the most difficult thing to do, and if you are anything like me, once you get a good routine going or develop the discipline to stick to something, you are very careful to not let your new good habit slip.

One stumbling block to self-discipline is that we often forget that it is **self**-discipline, "self" being the keyword, not "everybody-else" discipline. Your discipline and self-control should always be about you and who you are as a person. Sometimes there is a tendency to maintain a sort of *conditional-discipline*. A state where we are only willing to be disciplined as long as certain conditions are met.

THE "CONDITIONAL DISCIPLINE" TRAP

- ✖ I'll watch what I say and do so long as the other guy doesn't push me too far.
- ✖ I'll work out so long as I'm seeing results.
- ✖ I'll eat healthy as long as nobody eats anything good in front of me.
- ✖ I'll be upstanding and honest as long as my bosses also play by the rules.
- ✖ I'll be kind and generous as long as I'm appreciated.

Don't be like this. Don't fall for the conditional discipline trap. There will always be someone willing to take the easy way out. There will always be people around who don't adhere to high moral standards. There will always be people willing to say and do disgraceful things. None of that has anything to do with your own personal virtue of self-discipline.

Nobody's words or behavior can or should make you abandon that.

Discipline is something that benefits you greatly; if you stick to it, it will deliver many good things to your life. Discipline is a gift that you give to yourself. You cannot give discipline to anyone else, and your discipline cannot be taken away from you.

“No man is free who is not master of himself.”

- Epictetus