I AM WORTHY Facilitator's Guide

Older Elementary – Middle School

#7 | I Am Capable of Self-Control

Lesson Overview

This lesson (35–45 minutes) teaches children that they are responsible for their own actions and are capable of self-control. Students will learn how their bodies, feelings, and thoughts work together, and how self-control happens in the moment between thinking and responding. Through interactive activities and real-life scenarios, students will practice slowing down, thinking clearly, and choosing wise responses.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- Understand what self-control means.
- Recognize that they are responsible for controlling themselves, not others.
- Identify how body, feelings, and thoughts influence behavior.
- Practice pausing and choosing a wise response in challenging situations.
- Build confidence that they are capable of self-control.

Supplies Needed

- Two cards: "self" and "control"
- Remote control car
- Card labeled "body"
- Card labeled "feeling" (with heart drawn around it)
- Picture of a brain
- Journals (if using)
- Paper bag with scenario cards

Introduction Activity: Charades (5–7 minutes)

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Lead Teacher

Say:

> “Today we are learning two powerful words: self and control.”

Charades — “Self”

Invite a student to act out “self” without talking. Allow students to guess.

Ask:

> “Who is ‘self’?”

Allow students to respond.

Say:

> “It’s YOU!”
>
> “Not the person on your right.” (Have students turn right and say hello.)
>
> “Not the person on your left.” (Have students turn left and say hello.)

Students repeat:

“ME! SELF!”

Charades — “Control”

Invite another student to act out “control” without talking. Allow students to guess.

Activity 2: What Is Control? (5–7 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Use the remote-control car.

Ask:

- Why is it called a remote-control car?
- Who controls it?

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Then:

- Who controls YOU?

Explain:

- You are responsible for controlling yourself.
- You are capable of controlling yourself.
- You are NOT responsible for controlling others.

Table Leaders

Invite students to:

- Look left: “I am not responsible for controlling you.”
- Look right: “You are responsible for controlling yourself.”

Ask:

- Is self-control easy? (Thumbs up/down)
- Why can self-control be hard?
    - Wanting your way
    - Thinking you’re right
    - Not wanting to wait
    - Feeling more important

Activity 3: How Self-Control Works (8–10 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Explain:

1. Body (hold up “body” card)

- We receive information through our bodies.
- Ask: What do your eyes/ears/hands do?

2. Feelings (hold up heart card)

- When something happens, we feel something .
- Ask: What are some feelings? (happy, sad, angry, frustrated, excited, scared)

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3. Brain (show brain image)

- Your brain thinks about what's happening.

4. Response

- Your thoughts and feelings can influence how your body responds.

Activity 4: Interactive Example (5–6 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

> "Imagine after today, we're all going to Disney World for a week!"

Ask:

- How did your body receive that?
- What did you feel?
- What did you think?
- How did your body respond?

Key Teaching Moment

Say:

> *"Self-control happens after your thoughts and before your response."*

Reinforce:

- It's okay to feel your feelings.
- It's okay to have thoughts.
- **Ask:**
  - "What am I feeling?"
  - "Do my thoughts match what is real and true?"
  - "What would be a wise response?"
- **Then <u>choose</u> a response**

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Activity 5: Practice Scenarios (10–12 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Explain that self-control can be especially challenging when emotions are strong or when we feel pressure to respond quickly.

Say:

> "Self-control doesn't mean you won't have strong feelings. It means you can pause, think, and choose how you respond."

Pull one scenario from the bag at a time.

Scenario Cards:

- Someone says something about you in a group chat that makes you angry.
- A friend pressures you to do something you know isn't a wise choice.
- You see a social media post that makes you feel left out or jealous.
- Someone embarrasses you in front of other students.
- You receive a message that makes you angry, and you want to respond immediately.

For each scenario, ask:

1. "What might you feel?"
2. "What might you think?"
3. "Do those thoughts match what is real and true?"
4. "How could you show self-control?"
5. "What would a wise response look like?"

Allow students to discuss each scenario and practice a wise response together.

Remind students:

"Self-control happens in that moment between what you think and how you respond. You may not be able to control what someone else says or does, but you can pause, think, and choose your response."

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Journal Reflection (3–5 minutes)

Lead Teacher

Say:

> “Take a few quiet minutes to think about what you learned today.”

Journal Prompt:

> “What is one situation where I could practice pausing, thinking, and choosing a wise response?”

Middle School Prompt:

> “What situation or emotion makes self-control hardest for me, and what could help me pause before I respond?”

Closing & Affirmation (3–5 minutes)

Table Leaders

Review:

- You are not responsible for controlling others.
- You ARE responsible for controlling yourself.
- You ARE capable of self-control.

Affirmation (repeat together):

“I am capable of self-control. I can pause, think, and choose wisely.

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Self-Control Scenario Cards - Middle School

Someone says something about you in a group chat that makes you angry.	A friend pressures you to do something you know isn't a wise choice.
You see a social media post that makes you feel left out or jealous.	Someone embarrasses you in front of other students.
You receive a message that makes you angry, and you want to respond immediately.	A friend leaves you out of plans, and you find out about it afterward.