



August Character Trait

Self-Control

Verse of the Month

Proverbs 25:28 (NLT)

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

Self-Control: The ability to control oneself, in particular one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.

Synonyms: Willpower, self-discipline, self-mastery, self-regulation, delayed gratification and patience



Self-control is a skill we learn as we grow. As children we learned to wait our turn and wait for a reward. As teens we learn to do homework, clean up after ourselves, go to bed on time, etc. We need someone to guide us and help us learn self-control, but once we have mastered a skill, we no longer need someone else to monitor those things. Once I know my teen will do their homework without reminders, I no longer have to monitor that. This is often a difficult truth for teens to recognize, that if they control their own actions, someone else doesn't have to.

The teens we work with have trust issues which lead to a lack of self-control in some areas. A scarcity mindset also can look like a lack of self-control. If I don't trust that there will be food on the table tomorrow, I will eat everything I can today. Or, if I believe that I will be punished no matter what I do, why should I bother obeying the rules? We need to be aware of these thought patterns to help our teens understand why they do what they do.

Self-control is like a muscle. The more we practice, the stronger that muscle gets. Practicing going to bed on time strengthens our ability to show self-restraint in other areas as well. Look for and point out ways your teen is showing self-control in their lives. This will encourage them to continue to strengthen that self-control muscle.



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Resources

<https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl>

The marshmallow test study and results.

<https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl2>

This article has some good insights to develop self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit
is love, joy, peace, patience,
kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, and
self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23

A quote on a dark, textured background that looks like wood or stone. The text is in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Self-control is solely
a matter of
thought-control!**

Mentor Activities

- ☐ Meditation improves self-control. Do some meditation exercises with your teen.
 - ☐ [**https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl3**](https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl3)
Watch this video and then discuss “The Three Questions” and the answers he got.
 - ☐ [**https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl4**](https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl4)
Read through these poems and talk about one that resonates with you.
 - ☐ Create a “wish list” with your teen of something they want enough to save money for, then help them come up with strategies they can use to work for and save that money.
 - ☐ [**https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl5**](https://bit.ly/AugSelfControl5)
Scroll through and watch some of the videos on this page. Discuss how the choices people made impacted themselves and others.
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