



# SELF-CONTROL

## October's Key to Character

### Definitions

**Elementary:** Self-control is the ability to use self-discipline to manage your emotions and feelings or reactions.

**Secondary:** Self-control is restraint exercised over impulses, emotions or desires.

### Related Words

aplomb	balance	constraint	discretion
resolute	reticence	repression	self-government

### What Self-Control Looks Like!

- Making good choices
- setting priorities
- thinking of others
- saying the right thing in an emergency
- staying on a budget



### Are You a Self-manager? Use this checklist to find out!

Do you:

- Do things for reasons other than getting approval?
- Understand cause and effect?
- Accept consequences of bad choices (don't blame others)?
- Know how to make good decisions?
- Define a problem as an opportunity?
- Refuse to bend to peer pressure?
- Take the initiative; and not wait until you are asked to do something?
- Resolve conflict without aggression?
- Seek a win win solution to problem?
- Make decisions based on what you think is fair even if your friends disagree?
- Set goals and work toward accomplishing them?

If so, you are on your way to great self-control!

Source: Ideas from the Parent Institute—C 2009

### Setting Goals

People who have self-control are goal setters! There are basically two types of goals: short term goals that you wish to accomplish very soon and long-range goals that you wish to accomplish over a period of time. Think of a task or objective that you would like to accomplish in the next week. Write a goal that would enable you to accomplish this task. Now think of one thing that you would like to accomplish in the next five to ten years. Write a specific goal that would help you make that dream a reality. You are well on your way to becoming a self-controlled person. Keep making goals and doing your best to accomplish them.



*"No man is fit to command another who cannot command himself."*

*William Penn*



## Sunshine State Standards

### PreK-2

HE.A.1.1 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.

HE.B.1.1 - The students knows health-enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.

HE.B.3.1 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal communication skills that enhance health.

### Grades 3-5

HE.B.1.2 - The students knows health-enhancing behaviors.

HE.B.3.2 - The students analyzes the influence of culture, media, technology and other factors on health.

### Grades 6-9

HE.A.1.3 - The student comprehends concepts related to health promotion.

HE.A.2.3 - The student knows how to access valid health information and health-promoting products and services.

HE.B.3.3 - The student knows how to use effective interpersonal skills that enhance health.

### Grades 9-12

HE.B.1.4 - The student knows health enhancing behaviors and how to reduce health risks.

HE.B.2.4 - The student analyzes the influence of culture, media technology, and other factors on health.

HE.B.3.4 - The student knows how to use effective communication skills that enhance health.

## Websites



Great articles to put in parent newsletters can be found at

<http://www.schoolfamily.com>.

A great opportunity to nominate your school for a "The School Rules the Bully" award can be found at <http://www.bullypolice.org>.

Free samples and activities can be found at:

<http://www.goodcharacter.com>.



## Spotlight on Schools

Kids at Sandhill Elementary get a double dose of character education training in P.E. and have fun while they learn. Due to the initiative of their P.E. Coach, Mark Krause, they focus on a different character trait each week and earn a necklace (dog tag) to which they can add feet charms for being active and showing good character. Funded by P.E. fundraisers and a grant from Fitness Finders, the program is a fun way to integrate character education.

## Something to Think About - Impulsive Behavior:

So you don't think that watching impure movies affects behavior? A recent study found that kids whose parents don't let them watch R-rated movies are five times less likely to try cigarettes or alcohol than youngsters who are allowed to watch whatever they want. Over 5,000 students ranging from age 9 to 15 were asked about the types of restrictions their parents placed on their movie viewing. Researchers discovered that 31% of students said their parents placed no restrictions on their movie viewing habits, with 53% reporting that they were allowed to watch R-rated movies once in a while and 15% never allowed.

So how did their viewing habits affect their behavior? The survey also found that for every five R-rated movies the kids saw from a list of 50 popular titles, they were 1.6 times more likely to have tried smoking and 1.8 times more likely to have tried alcohol. In all, 17.5% had tried smoking and 23.4% had tried drinking alcohol. (Study by Madeline Dalton and Dr. James Sargent, of the pediatrics Department at Dartmouth Medical College, consolidated from "Kids' Bad Habits Blamed on Movies" by Julia Sommerfield, MSN, 3/23/01).

# Subject Level Lesson Plans

## *Language Arts:*

- 1. Analyze characters in a story related to their level of self-control.**
- 2. Keep a daily journal describing difficulty to exhibit self-control and positive efforts that work.**

## *Art*

- 1. Create a comic strip that shows the humorous side of a lack of self-control.**
- 2. Design a bumper sticker to remind people how important self-control is when driving.**

## *Math*

- 1. Discuss an out-of-control budget. Discuss how self-control relates to our finances and living standards.**
- 2. Keep a log of the number and types of incidents of peer pressure that occur in a given 24 hour period. Discuss how peer pressure can cause someone to lose self-control. The class could compile a master list (and chart the frequency) of the many different ways peer pressure can tempt individuals, then compute the probability that peer pressure will occur.**

## *Physical Education:*

- 1. View a video clip of an Olympic athlete's performance. Discuss the self-control required to obtain that skill.**
- 2. Discuss how maintaining a healthy mind, body and spirit requires self-control. Direct students to make a goal for a specific amount of physical activity needed for health, and create a log showing one week's physical activity. Discuss the amount of self-control needed to accomplish the goal.**

## *Science*

- 1. Discuss putting off gratification for long term goals. How does self-control relate to smoking and drinking?**
- 2. Create posters that encourage students to be self-controlled using refusal skills to drugs or other dangers that create an unhealthy lifestyle.**

## *Social Science*

- 1. Create a diorama depicting a favorite historical figure or moment in history when someone you admire acted with self-control.**
- 2. Research a man or woman who used an unusual measure of self-control in a difficult situation. Dress up like that person and tell their story to the class.**

## **Yelling At Trees**

"In the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific some villagers practice a unique form of logging. If a tree is too large to be felled with an ax, the natives cut it down yelling at it (can't lay my hands on the article but I really did read it). Woodsmen with special powers creep up on a tree just at dawn and suddenly scream at it at the top of their lungs. They continue this for thirty days. The tree dies and falls over. The theory is that the hollering kills the spirit of the tree. According to the villagers, it always works.

Ah, those poor naive innocents. Such quaintly charming habits of the jungle. Screaming at trees, indeed; how primitive. Too bad they don't have the advantages of modern technology and the scientific mind.

Me? I yell at my wife, and yell at the telephone and lawn mower, and yell at the TV and the newspaper and my children. I've been known to shake my fist and yell at the sky at times. The man next door yells at his car a lot, and this summer I heard him yell at a stepladder for most of an afternoon. We modern, urban, educated folks yell at traffic and umpires and bills and banks and machines—especially machines. Machines and relatives get most of the yelling.

Don't know what good it does. Machines and things just sit there. Even kicking doesn't always help. As for people, well, the Solomon Islanders may have a point. Yelling at living things does tend to kill the spirit in them. Sticks and stones may break our bones, but words will break our hearts..." ~ Robert Fulghum

### *The Boy and the Gumballs*

A boy put his hand into a pitcher full of gumballs. He grasped as many as he could possibly hold, but he could not pull out his hand. The neck of the pitcher would not give way to his fist. Unwilling to lose his gumballs, and yet unable to withdraw his hand, he burst into tears and bitterly sobbed in disappointment.

A man standing nearby said to him, "Be satisfied with half a handful and you will easily draw out your hand."

Moral: Do not attempt too much at once, or, too much greed will not bring success. Source: Bedtime.com

### *Hercules and the Wagoneer*

A delivery man was driving a wagon along a country lane, when the wheels sank down deep into a rut.

The old driver, dazed and confused, stood looking at the wagon. He did nothing but utter loud cries to Hercules to come and help him.

Hercules, it is said, appeared and thus addressed him: "Put your shoulders to the wheels, my man. Try with all your might to move the wagon back onto the road. Never pray to me for help, until you have done your best to help yourself, or depend upon it; you will henceforth pray in vain."

Moral: Self-help is the best help. ~Aesop

## EASIER QUOTATIONS

**Better safe than sorry. ~Author unknown**

**Anyone who angers you, conquers you. ~ Sister Kenny's Mother**

**It is wiser to choose what you say than to say what you choose. ~ Author unknown**

**No man can think clearly when his fists are clenched. ~Author unknown**

**Swallowing angry words is much better than having to eat them. ~Grit**

**Even a woodpecker owes his success to the fact that he uses his head. ~Author unknown**

**Nature gave us one tongue and two ears so we could hear twice as much as we speak. ~Epicetus**

**He who throws dirt, loses ground. ~Author unknown**

**There is no fruit which is not bitter before it is ripe. ~Publilius Syrus**

**To enjoy freedom we have to control ourselves. ~Virginia Woolf**

## Was Self-Control Demonstrated?

There have been some high profile cases in the news where a celebrity lost his temper, and lost control — of himself. Texas Rangers' star pitcher Kenny Rogers displayed an extreme lack of self-control when he shoved two cameramen on the field on June 30, 2005. "I think it demonstrated an appalling lack of control. The team doing poorly is no excuse for assaulting a guy who's just doing his job." (Quoted from MSNBC article <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/8423953>)

Just a couple of weeks earlier, Russell Crowe, the lead actor in the movie Cinderella Man, lost his temper and his self-control when he could not make an international telephone call from his hotel, and threw a telephone at the hotel clerk. He was charged with assault and criminal possession of a weapon.

Some people think these situations are funny, but in reality they are terrible. They are small examples of what can occur when someone is not trained to react appropriately in any situation they find themselves in.

Kenny Rogers, Russell Crowe, and others like them can be helped! The truth is that every situation like this is preventable. No matter how angry a person gets, that anger can be controlled. By training our minds ahead of time, we can all respond appropriately to situations that could otherwise escalate out of control. There is a Peaceful Solution to all of these situations.

Source: Character Education News Article—Self-Control; [peacefulsolutions.comsolution@charactereducationnews.com](mailto:peacefulsolutions.comsolution@charactereducationnews.com)

# Parent Power

## Build Your Family's Self Control

Once children reach elementary school, tantrums should be few and far between, but some kids (and even adults) still need to work on self-control. No one in the family should "lose it" regularly. Here are some ways you can help at each age:

- **Six- to nine-year-olds** understand that behavior is a choice. They also know that behavior has consequences. If your child is worried that he'll have an outburst, suggest that he imagine a stop sign, or simply walk away and relax.
- **Ten- to twelve-year-olds** realize that feelings have causes. It can help if your child stops to consider, "Why am I so upset? Is this situation as bad as it seems?" Explain that, often, the answer is no. Advise your child to think before acting.

As your child gets older, weigh the pros and cons of decisions together. Hold him responsible when he loses control. Compliment him when he doesn't! Meanwhile, set a good example. When you lose your temper, apologize and change for the better. If your child has frequent, lengthy tantrums (lasting more than 10 minutes), talk with a professional. *Copyright © 2009 Parent Institute*

When your child reaches the middle school years, he should have a better grasp of his emotions. When he loses control, have him break down the situation into what bothers him and why it bothers him. From age 10 to 12, your child will need time to consider his choices before reacting. If the situation happens at home, time alone in his bedroom will bring some clarity.

Once your child hits junior high and high school, he should be able to control his actions. A gentle reminder about consequences for inappropriate actions never hurts. Evaluating the problem before offering a response will result in a positive outcome. If your child resorts to slamming doors, blaring music or yelling, revoking a privilege sends a strong message.

## FCAT Writing Prompts

Think about the following topics and choose the appropriate writing form to respond. Indicate the amount of self-control needed in each situation (paragraph, letter, goal statement, descriptive, persuasive, etc.) and what the person should do in this situation.

- Anger is only one letter away from danger.
- Your cousin asked you to cheat on a test.
- Your doctor informed you that your weight was causing health problems and you must lose 20 pounds.
- You stayed up too late last night watching T.V. and are too tired to get out of bed to go to school.
- Your piano teacher wants to enter you into a state competition. It is a great opportunity, but will require a great deal of practice to properly prepare.

## suggested Reading List



- ◆ **10 Minutes to Bedtime** by Rathmann, Peggy. K-4th grades. A small boy has a problem. His father is giving him the countdown to bedtime but the boy's pet hamster has other ideas. He is conducting a tour for vacationing hamsters through the boy's bedroom and bath.
- ◆ **7 Habits of Happy Kids** by Covey, Sean. K-4th grades. Do you want to be happy? Sure, everybody does. But what makes me happy may be totally different than what makes you happy. Enjoy these stories and see what ways these friends find to be happy.
- ◆ **African Elephants Up Close** by Bredeson, Carmen. K-4th grades. How do you know about elephants? Have you ever seen one up close? Well, this book will tell you lots about the African Elephant. You'll find out about its eyes, skin, feet, and about how it lives.
- ◆ **Ain't Nobody a Stranger To Me** by Grifalconi, Ann. K-4th grades. While on his way to the apple orchard with his granddaughter, the old man stops to wave and say hello to everyone. He tells the story of his escape from slavery with just a few apple seeds in his pocket. He tells of the good people who helped him along the way.
- ◆ **Alice in Blunderland** by Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. 3rd-6th grades. Alice, Lester, and their dad live in a small suburban town. Alice's and Lester's mother died when they were young. They have to cope without a mother. Dad is very lonely. This is a story of a family trying to make it through tough times without their mother.
- ◆ **The 6th Grade Nickname Game** by Korman, Gordon. 3rd-6th grades. Sixth grade friends Wiley and Jeff are so good at giving people nicknames that they stick, no matter what! Like Deer in Headlights for the principal and Snoopy for the kid who is always lurking around listening to other people's business. Wiley and Jeff's friendship is sorely tested when they have to come up with a nickname for the new girl in class, the one they are both interested in.
- ◆ **Absolutely Normal Chaos** by Creech, Sharon. 5th-8th grades. How many of you have ever kept a diary? Okay, how many of you have had to keep a journal before, something your teacher assigned you? Was it exciting or boring? Mary Lou Finney feels like-Bor-ing!
- ◆ **Across Five Aprils** by Hunt, Irene. 5th-8th grades. Young Jethro Creighton watches the beginnings of the Civil War. He has older brothers on each side of the dispute. His idol, the school teacher, engaged to his sister also joins the fight. Jethro is left to do the work formerly shared by all the brothers. Relive Jethro's aching muscles and fearful rides back from town for supplies.
- ◆ **After the First Death** by Cormier, Robert. 9th-12th grades. This is a thrilling novel about victims. The newspapers talk about hijackings and we forget sometimes that they are real individual people involved in the hijacking. Fictional book on Terrorism.
- ◆ **7 Days at the Hot Corner** by Trueman, Terry. 9th-12th grades. Baseball: what more is there in life? For Scott, very little. He has it all planned out. He'll be the hero of the championship game and the scouts will sign him right out of high school.



## Self-Control Bulletin Boards

- ◆ **"Batty About Self-Control;"** cut large letters of heading (use fall colors; trace the outline of a "bat" approximately 3" high and 5" long (cut enough for students in class on black construction paper); have students write a half page poem or rhyme or comic strip showing "Self-Control"; display papers on the bats on the bulletin board.
- ◆ **"We're NUTS About Self-Control;"** cut out large letters of heading & center on bulletin board (use fall colors); obtain three pictures of squirrels (place on left hand side of board); trace and make 15 large nuts and acorns, approximately 7" by 7" using two different shades of brown construction paper; Write each student's name on a nut or acorn (students should share the nuts); have each students list a book and author that they have read since the beginning of school under their name (if any student has not read a book, have student list a book that he/she would like to read).
- ◆ **"F A L L-i n g for Self-Control";** cut out large letters of heading & center on bulletin board (use fall colors); **"Q U O T E S";** cut out large letters and place under main heading; trace pictures of various shaped large leaves and placed on both sides of bulletin board; have students research some quotes on self-control (you can print them on large colored poster boards) and make two columns on the bulletin boards; author of quotes should be given credit for their quotes by listing the person who wrote it; post 10-15 of the best quotes.
- ◆ Decorate a bulletin board with various symbols and shapes like circles, stars, squares, triangles, etc. Use the words, "Our Class Practices Self-Control!" in the middle of the board. In each shape, write ways to show self-control and patience, including waiting our turn, not interrupting, raising our hand in class, controlling our anger, no violence, saying no to drugs, or use other positive ways to show self-control.

source: Ideas from <http://www.pecentral.org/BulletinBoard>

# Self Control Quotes

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<p>"If a man does his best, what else is there?" General George S. Patton</p> <p>"You can avoid reality, but you cannot avoid the consequences of avoiding reality." Ann Rand</p> <p>"Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted." Albert Einstein</p> <p>"Good People do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws." Plato</p> <p>"Seek always for the answer within. Be not influenced by those around you, by their thoughts or their words." Eileen Caddy</p>	<p>"Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." H. G. Wells</p> <p>"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal." Henry Ford</p> <p>"If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough." Mario Andretti</p> <p>"In any contest between power and patience, bet on patience." W. B. Prescott</p> <p>"You cannot control what happens to you, but you can control your attitude toward what happens to you, and in that, you will be mastering change rather than allowing it to master you." Brian Tracey</p>	<p>"Freedom is born of self-discipline. No individual, no nation, can achieve or maintain liberty without self-control. The undisciplined man (or woman) is a slave to his own weaknesses." Alan Valentine</p> <p>"Well-timed silence hath more eloquence than speech." Martin Fraquhar Tupper</p> <p>"Few things are harder to put up with than a good example." Mark Twain</p> <p>"Opportunities multiply as they are seized." Sun Tzu</p> <p>"If a person be self-controlled, truthful, wise and resolute, is there anything that can stay out of reach of such a person?" Anonymous</p>	<p>"Sometimes it is not enough to do our best; we must do what is required." Sir Winston Churchill</p> <p>"Fill the unforgiving minute with sixty seconds worth of distance run." Rudyard Kipling</p> <p>"If you conquer someone else you are strong; if you conquer yourself you are mighty." Lao-tzu</p> <p>"He who conquers himself has won a greater victory than he who conquers a city." Proverbs</p> <p>"Self-control makes you like a prince because you rule over yourself." Katherine Fowler Phillips</p>

## Teacher's Corner

### How to Teach Students Self-Control:

- ◇ Instruct the children to take a literal step backward when they feel themselves losing control. The natural desire is to make a dive forward which can be the beginning of reckless behavior. If you witness the child beginning to lose control you should calmly ask him to take a step back.
- ◇ Ask the child who is on the edge to take three deep breaths. This will give him/her more oxygen and allow him/her a moment to think prior to acting. Breathing techniques can be practiced at various times so that the action will be natural when the child needs to call upon it.
- ◇ Teach children the old fashioned method of counting to 10 to regain control. Another idea to divert their minds away from an explosive situation is to tell them to sing a silly song to themselves like "On Top of Spaghetti" or Pop Goes the Weasel." This will help relieve the tension they are feeling.
- ◇ Encourage a volatile child to channel his emotions into writing. Have him/her pour out all that he/she is feeling, no matter how negative into a 5 minute free flowing writing exercise. Chances are he/she will feel much more in control of himself/herself after venting. You do not need to read the document as you know it was written while the child was in a stressful state. Allow him/her to throw it away when he/she feels like it rather than keeping it as a reminder of his/her frustration. Parents and teachers should check out Anita Bohensky's book "Anger Management Workbook for Kids and Teens" which is available from Amazon.

## Games and Activities which Promote Self Control



Any games which foster a child's skills in listening, responding and stopping on a command will support their self control in behavior. Some fun ones include:

- ⇒ 'Stop / Go' games such as Musical Statues and Red Light, Green Light.
- ⇒ Musical games such as guessing the animal noise or where the sound is coming from; or listening and interpreting music through movement.
- ⇒ Relaxation Activities where children learn the skills of relaxing their muscles and mind.
- ⇒ Breathing exercises such as pretending to blow up a balloon (drawing a large breath and holding it, and then expelling air in short bursts). Teaching children how to draw a long deep breath helps more oxygen get to the brain.
- ⇒ Waiting games where children need to either wait their turn or wait for instructions. The key to fostering self control in behavior is to understand that children are not born with a natural ability to control their emotions. Rather, it is important to work on ways to foster self control, which will in turn support more positive behavior outcomes.

### When Teaching Self-Control One Must Start Early in the Child's Life

- a. Explain to the child what the consequences will be if they fail to control their temper-tantrum, their poor attitude, or whatever bad behavior you wish to correct. Be clear and concise in your instruction. Break it down into a simple, easy to follow plan of action.
- b. Once the plan of action is in place and is understood by both you and the child, be ready to reward good behavior. Why take the approach of only punishing the child? You will feel so much better when you think about what you want the child to do and say, and reward with praise along the way. Do not buy or give the child any material possession for doing what is expected. Simply saying, "way to go" goes miles in the path towards raising a child with self-control.
- c. When the child slips up, and they will slip up, get down on their level and review the expectations set in step A. Explain in a clear and calm voice that they must go into a time-out in their chosen time-out place. This way if the time-out goes "south" and the kid just isn't able to get it together you can send them elsewhere. The length of time should be equal to their age. Do not permit the child to come out of the time-out until they are able to control their emotions.
- d. Do not judge or react to harshly. It is important not to dwell on the minor issue that led to the time-out. It is crucial for developing self-control in a child to ask them to explain what went wrong and what they could do differently. Make sure that you use clear communication. source: [http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4782703\\_teach-kids-selfcontrol](http://www.ehow.com/how_4782703_teach-kids-selfcontrol)