

WHAT DO YOU STAND
— TO LOSE IF YOU HAVE —
NO SELF-DISCIPLINE?



Let's get one thing clear. The word "discipline" is not exactly popular nowadays. In fact, a lot of people treat it like the D word. People think that discipline is either old fashioned or simply inapplicable to our modern age.

It's easy to think of discipline as something quaint. Kind of like a relic from the time of our grandparents. They needed self discipline, but it's very easy for us to think that we are exempt from it.

It's understandable why a lot of people are under this impression because we live in a world that worships convenience. If you don't believe me, try ordering a pizza. If you live in a major metropolitan area in the United States, the standard delivery time is 15 minutes.

If your local pizzeria can not deliver the goods within that time, your pizza is absolutely free. When you go on the internet, when you buy anything from Amazon, you are bombarded with all sorts of free shipping or 2 day delivery offers.

It goes with the territory. It seems that the more we live our lives, the more we are trained to expect instant gratification. We want the good stuff that life has to offer and we want it now. In fact, a lot of people want it yesterday.

That's how impatient we have become. If you still don't believe me, when was the last time you read anything thoroughly on the internet? My bet would be a long time ago. Chances are when you see any kind of news item on your Facebook timeline, you're probably just scrolling down the page.

You scroll scroll scroll and scroll some more. When you see some sort of keyword or image or video that you like, that's when you stop. Once you get a good idea of what the article is talking about, then you go on to the next item and then the next item after that.

You are hardly alone. The more we use the internet and the more we interact with people online, our attention span becomes shorter and shorter. It all boils down to convenience. But here's the problem. Until and unless you develop self-discipline, your chances of getting the best things in life are going to diminish.

In fact, depending on your situation, it may be a near impossibility. Self-discipline is that important. When you're self-disciplined, you focus on the big picture. You find it in you to do the hard and necessary stuff now so you can get bigger rewards in the future.

This is not sexy. Far from it. A lot of people think that this is some sort of drudgery. This is punishment. This is some unpleasant chore that they would rather avoid. And who can really blame them? When you are working on something necessary, the reward may be so far off that it might as well be invisible.

Eventually, you start thinking to yourself, "What am I doing? I could be out there having fun with my friends. I could be doing more pleasurable things. I can be lazy because hey, let's face it, laziness pays off immediately. Hard work pays off a long time from now."

Do you see the disconnect? Do you see why a lot of people would rather not choose self-discipline?

1

LACK OF SELF-DISCIPLINE HAS SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Is there something that you did in the past that constantly makes you feel guilty and remorseful until today? Is there an event from your past you wish, above everything else, to change? Of course, none of us have access to a time machine so the facts are the facts. Things happened in the past that many of us are not all that happy with.

However, you take it to a whole other level. You're just extremely guilty about it. You feel that it basically defines who you are, where you're going, what you're capable of, and somehow some way poisons you're relationships in the here and now. In fact, if you're suffering from this, guilty thoughts about the past make up a significant percentage of your daily thoughts.

2

YOU PROBABLY WILL DIE EARLY

Despite how tempting it is to just drop self-discipline and just go with your feelings and pick and activity that is so much more pleasurable and easy, lack of self-discipline can cause serious problems.

In fact, the vast majority of people fail to live up to their fullest potential primarily because of lack of self-discipline. Now, if you were to ask them individually, they probably will give you a million and 1 reasons why they are living their lives far below their expectations.

Maybe they'll blame other people. Maybe they'll say that they just had bad childhoods. Maybe some would owe up to bad decisions. But very few would say that it was their lack of self-discipline that is the ultimate cost.

Just how bad will it get for you if you have no self-discipline? What if you just think that self-discipline is such a low priority that you don't bother to develop it. well, it has serious consequences. I don't mean to be dramatic. But I'm just going to lay out what you stand to lose if you neglect practicing self-discipline on a day to day basis.

3

YOU LEAD A LIFE OF REGRET

One of the most powerful American movies ever made is *On the Water Front* starring Marlon Brando. One of Brando's iconic lines from that movie was "I could've been a contender." One of the worst things that you can do with your life is to constantly think back and imagine what could've been.

You keep asking yourself "What if I did this? I should've done that. I knew I would've done this if something else happened. I could have been something else."

Sounds familiar? Well, you're not exactly alone. A lot of people report a life of regret. They start out young with a whole world in front of them. There's so many doors of opportunities. There's so many different ways they could've gone with their life. But here they are.

Obviously, for them to feel regret or remorse at this point in their lives means they're not all that happy with how things turned out. They spend an inordinate amount of their time as well as their emotional energy on thinking about what could've, should've or would have happened if things only turned out a different way.

Is that the kind of life you want for yourself? Well, the problem is if you have little self-discipline, there's a high chance you will live a life of regret. You will be thinking to yourself "What if I stuck with the hard but necessary goals in front of me? What if I just stuck with it instead of just dropping everything and going for something that's easier or a lot more fun?"

The worst part to all of this is that it's so lonely. You feel that the only person that's going through this is you. That's not true because if people are completely honest with themselves and really say what's in their heart, there's a lot of regret. It's very common.

4

YOU SUFFER FROM CRAPPY RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are supposed to be mutually nurturing. They're also mutually challenging and enables people to grow up and mature. The problem is if we don't have any self-discipline as far as our relationships go, they can easily become dead and sterile places.

Instead of pushing you to become the best person you could be so you can help other people as well as be respected by others, your relationships basically become emotional parking spaces. You tell the people in your life "I'm with you only up to this certain point. You and I have this mutual agreement that there's this big area in our relationship that is no mans land."

It's as if there is an 800 pound elephant in the room and both you and your partner refuse to see it. That's the kind of relationship you're in. You're always walking on eggshells trying to avoid offending the other person because you don't want to push that other person out of your life.

Why would you want to do that? Because you don't want to be lonely. It's sad. It's an early death if you think about it. It's as if there's no real emotional spark in your relationship. You're just hanging on to each other because you're afraid that there's nobody else. Is that the kind of relationship you want to be in?

Lack of self-discipline leads to these types of relationships because you focus on what you need first. You don't engage each other. You don't take the necessary risks that push the relationship to the next level.

So what happens? It stagnates. Before you know it, it slowly starts to die until you're left with an emotional husk. The worst part? It's both your fault.

5

YOU SUFFER FROM A LACK OF CONTROL OVER YOUR LIFE

Wouldn't it be great if you're the kind of person who makes things happen? Wouldn't it be awesome for you to call the shots in all the major areas in your life? But who are we kidding here? If you're like most people, you're basically just trying to hang on. At your job, you're basically just trying to do the minimum so your boss does not fire you.

In your relationships, you're just trying to go through the motions so you can have some sort of emotional safe space with the person you call your partner. With your body, you're basically just trying to keep your general shape. But you're not really trying to be as fit or as healthy as you could be.

In other words, you're just trying to hang on. You're desperately trying to stay in the middle. Interestingly enough, the more you do this, the more frustrated you become because it seems that the middle shifts far too often and far more quickly than you would like.

So life is a struggle. It's not a struggle in the sense that you can't put food on the table or you're basically having a tough time paying the rent month after month. But it is a struggle to keep up because at the end of the day, you feel like you're not calling the shots in your life.

You don't get this sense of control. It's as if every credit card bills statement is what pushes you to action instead of the other way around. You feel like you live in a world that you didn't create and that you're living life that is not on your own terms.

To a certain extent, you feel like a stranger in your own life. Instead of making things happen, you often find yourself as the guy that constantly asks himself and everyone else "What happened?"

Interestingly enough, when you look at your life, this lack of control wasn't there. When you were young, and I'm talking about high school here, you have your life ahead of you. There's so many different doors that you could walk through. There's so many different paths.

It's very easy to feel that you have all the control in the world because you can make decisions. But now, after several decades, you feel that your best years are behind you and here you are. Living a life that you did not choose. You feel that you have absolutely no control.

Well, that's an illusion. You still have control today. As long as you are breathing, you still have control. Why? You can still choose. You can choose to think differently. You can choose to interpret your life differently and guess what? This change of thought patterns changes your emotional states, which changes how you decide things.

When you decide to do things differently, that's when your life changes. That's right. The world doesn't care about your intentions and motivations. But you can bet that it sits up and pays attention when you change what you do.

This lack of control over your life is an illusion. But the problem is this is an illusion that's very hard to break. Why? It has become habitual because you lack self-discipline. You have resigned yourself to coasting through life.

Whenever any kind of challenge or choice happens, you can always count on yourself to take the easy way out. Before you know it, this becomes your default response. Well, I'm sorry to report, but the big successes in life require a tremendous amount of discipline. How come?

Well, they're drudgery when they first appear. You have to keep working on them day after day, week after week, month after month. In many cases, you have to keep at it year after year. How is that sexy? How is that fun?

On the other hand, you could choose to go drinking with your friends. You can choose to work at a very low paying job that is immediately available to you. Who wants to hassle with college? Do you really need to graduate school?

Do you see how this works? But unfortunately, the more we take the easy path, the more lack of control we feel we have over our lives because they lead to certain consequences. Please understand that you had a tremendous amount of control coming in. That control never goes away even though you feel really unhappy or discontented with the results of your choices.

6

YOU GET THAT SINKING FEELING THAT YOU LIVE A MEDIOCRE LIFE

One of the worst things that can happen to a person is to one day realize that they're living a mediocre life. They're just going through the motions. They're just surviving day to day. They're either unhappy or happy.

They're neither passionate or feeling dead. The worst feeling is to feel numb. You know you're alive. But there's nothing there. You feel hollow. It's as if one day just bleeds into the next and before you know it, a whole week is gone.

If you wait long enough, a whole month is gone. You keep going. Year follows year. You look at the totality of your life and you say "Well, did I really live? I know I was a teenager that turned into an adult. I know I went to school. But did I really live? Did I really make something out of my life?"

I know this kind of seems like a theoretical question especially if you're wondering where your next meal is going to come from. But once you get that out of the way, eventually, if you have any kind of introspection or insightful element in your personality, you start thinking about these questions.

You start thinking about the kind of life you made for yourself and sadly, if you lack self-discipline, you get this sinking feeling. You get the notion that "I've lived a totally mediocre life. I'm just another face in the crowd. When they put me in that box, it's as if they didn't put my name in the box."

Of course, your relatives would put your name on the box or on your gravestone or your cremation urn. But they really didn't have to. How come? You still end up in the same place. You'll be forgotten. Why is that?

Well, you lived a mediocre life. You're person #7,395,875,234. Next number. Do you see how dehumanizing that is? It feels like all this time on this planet and the thrills, chills, spills and trials and tribulations you went through were nothing. You just wasted space.

I don't mean to sound dramatic, but if you really look at your life's purpose, this is one of the worst feelings in the world. You think to yourself "I didn't fight for anything. I didn't work hard for something. I didn't have a grand, big vision that I found so profound that I would sacrifice everything for.

It's as if you lived your life without ever having gone through the experience of actually falling in love with somebody. Real love is a roller coaster ride because it requires dying to yourself. You know that you're not really in love when you're just desiring somebody.

You're trying to get that person to complete you. That's not real love. Real love is when you're willing to give everything up for something. That's how important it is. That's how monumental that discovery is. That it basically extinguishes the old you to give birth to the new you.

I know it sounds philosophical and almost mystical. But it's that profound. Sadly, most people don't get this because of lack of self-discipline. They'd rather just coast. They'd rather put in the bare minimum just to make it to the next day.

Make no mistake about it. The big rewards of life do not necessarily have to come in green printed pieces of paper. Usually, the big things in life have nothing to do with money, fame or the respect of others.

Instead, it's locked within you. It is embodied in a question that only you can answer. "Did I really live? Did I fight for something?" Ultimately, it comes down to one key question. "Did my life really mean anything?"

Make no mistake about it. Lack of self-discipline inflicts serious damage. It's very easy to ditch. And in many cases, it's very pleasurable not to practice self-discipline. But make no mistake. Every single day you try to duck self-discipline is a day you die more and more.