

Survive or Thrive Webinar

Strategies for Developing Self-Control

Strategy	Description	Example
Situation Selection	Choosing to be in places or with people that facilitate self-control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studying in the library rather than at home to avoid distraction Engage in after school activity instead of hanging out
Situation Modification	Changing the physical or social situation to either strengthen desired impulses or attenuate less desirable impulses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting cell phone out of reach or out of site Playing enjoyable music while studying
Attentional Deployment	Selectively attending to certain aspects of the situation that minimize temptations or strengthen focus on long-term goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focusing on what the teacher is saying rather looking at phone Orienting to a point in the room to calm emotions
Cognitive Change	Appraising the situation in a way that makes temptation less appealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framing mistakes as learning opportunities rather than failure
Response Modulation	Changing the response to impulses after the impulse has occurred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taking a deep breath Go for a run instead of drinking
Self-Talk	Literally talking to oneself to remind oneself of the desired behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Just finish this last homework assignment. You are almost done.”
Growth Mindset	Believing that certain attributes (like intelligence or self-control) can be improved	n/a
Mental Contrasting	Specifying a desired goal, and planning for how to take action when specific obstacles arise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a back-up plan for leaving a party if the driver is drinking
Physical Exercise	Aerobic exercise increases blood flow to the brain	n/a
Mindfulness	Placing full attention on the present moment without judgment	n/a

Source: Duckworth AL, Gendler TS, Gross JJ (2014). Self-Control in School-Age Children. *Educational Psychologist*. 49(3): 199-217.