

## Developing Self-Discipline

*Once I accept responsibility for choosing and creating the life I want, the next step is taking purposeful actions that will turn my desires into reality. I am taking all of the actions necessary to achieve my goals and dreams*

### Chapter 4: Mastering Self-Management

Successful Students...	Struggling Students...
<b>act on purpose</b> , choosing deeds that move them on course to their goals and dreams.	<b>wait passively or wander from one unpurposeful activity to another.</b>
<b>employ self-management tools</b> , regularly planning and carrying out purposeful actions.	<b>live disorganized, unplanned lives</b> , constantly responding to whims of the moment.
<b>develop self-discipline</b> , showing commitment, focus, and persistence in pursuing their goals and dreams.	<b>quit or change course when their actions don't lead to immediate success.</b>

### Developing Self-Discipline:

In a word, success takes discipline - the willingness to do whatever has to be done, whether you feel like it or not, until you reach your goals and dreams. Every January, athletic clubs are filled with people who made New Year's resolutions to get in shape. You know what happens. A month later, the crowds are gone, reminding us that getting and staying in shape takes commitment, focus, and persistence.

Our actions reveal whether we have the self-discipline to stay on course on the face of tempting alternatives. Most students want to be successful, but wanting and doing are worlds apart. Partying with friends is easier than going to class... day after day. Talking on the phone is easier than reading a challenging textbook... hour after hour. Watching television is easier than doing research at the library... night after night.

Many people choose instant gratification. Few choose the far off rewards of persistent and purposeful actions. Many began the journey to their dreams; few finish. Yet all we need to do is put one foot in front of another... again and again and again and again. A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, but many more must follow.

Self-discipline has three essential ingredients: commitment, focus, and persistence. In this activity you explore how to strengthen your commitment.

## [32 day commitment Activity]

### 32-Day Commitment (I)

- Purpose:** Motivate students to consistently improve their exam performance and strive towards a standard of excellence in all areas of study.
- Materials:** Test analysis activity and 32-day commitment form
- Total Time** 10 minutes for initial explanation. Time varies after that depending on the number of times the assignment is collected.
- Semester timing:** Perform this activity after the second or third exam, but before there are less than 32 days left in the semester.
- Procedure:** Introduce students to the idea that insanity is doing the same thing over & over again & expecting different results. Explain to students that changing an action/behavior can help them be more successful. Explain step one on 32-day commitment form (see 32-day commitment form) & give students time to fill in the blanks. After students complete step 1, explain step 2 (see 32-day commitment form).
- Assessment:** Either collect the 32-day commitment form at the end of the 32 days, periodically, or both. Collect the reflection questions and tracking sheet at the end of the 32-days.
- Sources:** Course Packet for Human Development 10, Dr. K. Daniel-DiGregorio as adapted by  
9Laura Hinckley
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The 32-Day Commitment gives you an opportunity to:

- ...make one **SMALL** change that will make a **BIG** impact on your progress toward your goals.
- ...experience a small success **EVERY DAY**.
- ...remember that we **ALWAYS** have a choice.

**Step 1:** Review your exam analysis sheets from the last exam and record the following information below.

**1. What are two things you will do next time to prevent careless errors?**

a.

b.

**2. List two steps you will take to remedy being unprepared.**

a.

b.

**Step 2:** Choose one of the above choices. Write down the ONE choice you have committed to making every day on the worksheet "Being Persistent: A 32-Day Commitment," which follows the "32-Suggestions for 32-Day Commitments."

- Next to "Day 1," write today's date.
- Record the action you took to complete the commitment and check that you've completed the action.
- Repeat daily.
- Note: If you prefer, you can track your progress in your planner or on a separate sheet of paper. Choose an approach that will work for you.

What if I miss a day?

- Chances are, you will. The solution is simple: begin again with a new worksheet. Because the assignment is completed when you've completed 32 days in a row, you need to begin again at Day 1.

**I believe that the one daily action that will make the biggest difference in my ability to reach my goals is (write your 32-day commitment here):** \_\_\_\_\_

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## The 32 Day Commitment

If I miss a day, I will begin a new 32-day Commitment until I complete 32 days in a row.

Day	Date	Action Taken	Completed
1			<input type="checkbox"/>
2			<input type="checkbox"/>
3			<input type="checkbox"/>
4			<input type="checkbox"/>
5			<input type="checkbox"/>
6			<input type="checkbox"/>
7			<input type="checkbox"/>
8			<input type="checkbox"/>
9			<input type="checkbox"/>
10			<input type="checkbox"/>
11			<input type="checkbox"/>
12			<input type="checkbox"/>
13			<input type="checkbox"/>
14			<input type="checkbox"/>
15			<input type="checkbox"/>
16			<input type="checkbox"/>
17			<input type="checkbox"/>
18			<input type="checkbox"/>
19			<input type="checkbox"/>
20			<input type="checkbox"/>
21			<input type="checkbox"/>
22			<input type="checkbox"/>
23			<input type="checkbox"/>
24			<input type="checkbox"/>
25			<input type="checkbox"/>
26			<input type="checkbox"/>
27			<input type="checkbox"/>
28			<input type="checkbox"/>
29			<input type="checkbox"/>
30			<input type="checkbox"/>
31			<input type="checkbox"/>
32			<input type="checkbox"/>

**You did it! Remember to answer reflection questions on the next page and submit with checklist for full credit.**

**Step 3:** Answer the following questions below after completing the 32 day commitment and submit the completed assignment.

1. Why did you choose the commitment that you did?

2. What difference did it make in your experiences, outcomes or progress toward your goals?

3. What strategy will you use to continue to experience the benefits of the 32-Day Commitment? Many students begin another 32-Day Commitment - either the same one or a different one - after they complete this assignment.