

LEARNING SELF-DISCIPLINE AS A KEY TO BECOME A GOOD STUDENT

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Навчитися бути само-спрямованим означає нести відповідальність за сам процес навчання, вміти робити самоаналіз, самооцінку поряд з активною участю в цьому процесі. Відтак запровадити та підтримати програму навчання цілеспрямованості та само-дисципліни для студентів вищих навчальних закладів є край необхідним та важливим.

Автори статті вважають, що для досягнення студентами високого рівня під час навчання та високого професійного рівня в подальшому само-дисципліна та сила волі є ключами до успіху. Жодна з навичок не відіграє таку важливу роль для успішного досягнення своєї мети як само-дисципліна та самоконтроль.

Ключові слова: самодисципліна, самоконтроль, перфекціонізм, сила волі, наполегливість, само спрямованість.

Learning to be self-directed involves taking responsibility for the objectives of learning, self-monitoring, self-assessing as well as taking an active role in the very learning process. Thus, it is really essential to implement and support a self-directed learning programme for students of higher educational establishments.

The overall objective of this article is to show that self-discipline is very important in achieving certain goals and aims in various spheres of our life, especially for obtaining good results while studying.

The issue of student self-discipline has been raised in the works of the following scientists: O.Bondarchuk [1], L.Bondarchuk [1], L.Vygotsky [2], N.Zimnyaya [4], Y.Kabanova-Meller [5], Y.Karandashev [6], V.Lochnutsya [7], R.Nemov [8], I.Podlasy [9], K.Amundson [10], R.Kerr [16], J.MacArthur [18], P.McCormack [19] and others. It has been also mentioned in the State National Programme «Education» (Ukraine of the XXI century) [3].

The problem researchers state, that «self-discipline» refers to the training that one gives oneself to accomplish a certain task or to adopt a particular pattern of behaviour, even though one would really rather be doing something else. For example, denying oneself of an extravagant pleasure in order to accomplish a more demanding charitable deed. Thus, self-discipline is the assertion of willpower over more base desires, and is usually understood to be a synonym of «self control». Self-discipline is to some extent a substitute for motivation, when one uses reason to determine a best course of action that opposes one's desires. Virtuous behaviour is when one's motivations are aligned with one's reasoned aims: to do what you know is best and to do it genuinely gladly. Continent behaviour, on the other hand, is when one does what one knows is best, but must do it by opposing one's motivations. Moving from continent to virtuous behaviour requires training and some self discipline [14].

The authors of the article believe that if students are willing to reach heights in their studies and future professional life afterwards, self-discipline and strong willpower are the keys to success. Perhaps no other skill is so much important as the development of self-discipline or self-control. Thus, we state that this research work is very actual and topical.

Mastering of self-discipline is the key to success and it can be learned. With this key you can accomplish anything! Without it, nothing worthwhile or lasting can be achieved. In order to learn self-discipline you need to first know the characteristics of self-disciplined achievers.

Analysis of theoretical recourses has provided several dominant characteristics that identify a self-disciplined achiever. These models of behaviour have made it possible for high achievers to reach unbelievable goals in all areas of their life [20].

– The first is a strong sense of purpose. These achievers know what their purpose in life is and will do everything to reach their goals. Here's a little exercise that students can perform to find out the purpose in their life. They pretend that they have been granted three wishes. They have to make these wishes personal. This is something

they want for themselves (not world peace, for example). This part of the exercise demands more time to think as well as hard thinking because there are only three of them. Now, out of those three wishes, each student is to decide, what is the one he/she wants the most? That is the overall life purpose.

– The next characteristic of a self-disciplined achiever is that he/she has a mentor or someone they wish to emulate. All top athletes talk about someone they watched and adapted his/her style and made it even better. The most renowned people in the world had a mentor. General Patton studied Hannibal. We all have people that we learned from, perhaps a parent or teacher. The top achievers have learned from someone they wish to emulate. Anthony Robbins [17] says that one of the great success strategies is to model what works. So, students to become self-disciplined, need to look at someone who is successful and model what works!

– Another characteristic of self-disciplined achievers is that they visualize. They have seen their goal fulfilled, they know what it feels like, where they were, how they lived; they experienced it (tried it on) in their minds. The French have a word that we is very familiar with, *dejavu*, meaning it has been seen before. The self-disciplined achiever has already visualized attaining his/her goal.

– The self-disciplined achiever has a strong belief in self. They KNOW they can achieve their goals and nothing will stop them from doing it. It is possible, no matter what happens in their life or how long it takes.

– Next characteristic is patience. The self-disciplined achiever has patience that it will happen. They know that they must keep going after their goal. They know that all people can walk 1000 miles – it merely takes one step at a time. You cannot do it if you are sitting down or turning around. So self-disciplined achiever are patient, because they know the end result will be a success.

– Following is perseverance. They will not give up. They do not believe that they have failures, but simply inconveniences. They know that if they keep going in the right direction, they will arrive at their destination.

– Another characteristic of self-disciplined achievers is that they plan. They map out how they are going to get where they are going to. They perform the activities that will get them where they want to go and plan how long it takes to accomplish their goals.

– The self-disciplined achiever is always learning. They learn from their own experiences as well as from the experiences of others. They always adapt to the market place, learn new technologies, and grow (develop) in knowledge. They always hone their skills to make their job easier and make sure, that they reach their goals.

– The last, but not least, characteristic of a self-disciplined achiever is that they love what they do. There is very little distinction between work and play. They enjoy their work and derive great pleasure from what they do.

Possible ways to learn self-discipline is to study the characteristics and adapt them to activities. A person should be honest with oneself and work on the ones that he/she is weak in and in no time at all they will become a habit. There is no lasting success without self-discipline. But, once a person becomes familiar with the characteristics of a self-disciplined high achiever, he/she will be able to adapt his/her own life to include these positive values.

The problem researchers [15] propose particular steps that are to be followed to increase the personal power:

– Welcome the responsibility. A person should admit that sitting around doing nothing, will lead to nothing.

– Allow oneself to feel the resistance. So, e.g. a student who needs to study, but doesn't feel like it, can say to oneself something like: «I don't feel like studying. I feel like pursuing some pleasure instead. But rather than running away, I allow myself to feel the resistance and I admit that I need to study. I also need to develop self-dis-

cipline. And doing something, that what we don't like to do, develops self-discipline. So, I welcome this opportunity to kill two birds with one stone (study for my exam and develop self-discipline)».

– Take few deep breaths, relax and let the tension to go of. The person should start with pausing and visualization of the action as if it has been already completed. The next step is to study in mind the image of the completed project for a few moments. This step prepares both conscious and subconscious mind for an action.

– Action. After doing so, a person will feel a sense of relief as if free from the stress that comes from ignoring an important task. Then comes the feeling of pleasure of accomplishment. Finally, a person discovers, that the task was easier to do than he/she had first imagined.

– Relish the relief and please the experience. A person should remember it, savour it, and focus on it, for it will become the source of motivation.

– Those who haven't yet developed the habit of self-discipline avoid tasks because they focus on the effort that needs to be made. In their minds, effort is synonymous to discomfort. A person should change what he/she focuses on. When facing a new task, one should focus on the relief and pleasure he/she will be experiencing. Also it is necessary to focus on the memory of how the imagination tricks a person, always blowing things out of proportion. The task will become easier to do than it seemed before.

– Start with small things, launch the personal Self-Discipline Development Programme. By doing this a person will cope with two things: complete tasks and develop self-discipline. Of the two, developing self-discipline is more important. For once a person has mastered the self-discipline, he/she will be able to do everything. So, it is important to be successful. Therefore, when starting out, one should not work on the most urgent task, but choose the easiest one first and work the way up, e.g. a person, working out in a gym for the first time, beginning with lifting 100 lb. weights, will probably feel overwhelmed and quickly give up. But if he/she starts with 10 lb. weights, the workouts will be easy to do and this successes will motivate a person to move on to bigger challenges.

– Be gentle but firm with oneself. A person should act firmly and stop running away. First of all it demands facing the task, accepting it, and accomplishing it. Scientists propose: to finish the started; to follow through on every project; to focus on one task at a time; not to scatter the attention; to be gentle in the sense that not to do all the tasks immediately as long as person starts doing some; not to expect to go from zero to a hundred in one second; to work up to it; to start slowly, but gradually pick up the pace as a person develops the skills.

– Expect to be tempted to avoid the tasks. A person mind might come up with rationalizations and excuses for putting off till 'tomorrow' what can be done today. A person should remain aware of his/her feelings and learn to think before the action performing; should use the reasons (rational mind), not emotions; should guide the actions; should do what is good FOR him/her instead of what FEELS good.

– Once a person learned how to quickly act on all the tasks, responsibilities, and challenges, he/she will be willing to remain fit, always ready to act. Then it is recommended to keep in shape by deliberately going out of one's way to do things a person doesn't want to do, even if they are unimportant. The truth is, nothing is unimportant, for if doing something trivial helps maintaining the self-discipline,

it is no longer trivial. It is just like working out in a gym. After all, the workout a person chooses to do is unimportant; it is only the result (physical fitness) that is important. The same is true for the mental fitness. One should look for opportunities during the day to 'work out'.

– Once a person can keep the level of self-discipline, he/she will be ready to move on to the next level by stretching oneself. So a person deliberately seeks out difficult and complex challenges that only dared to dream about in the past. Now that he/she has mastered self-control, he/she is ready to make those dreams come true. At this point, a person is no longer paralyzed by the task-avoidance. Each done task frees up more time to work on the next project. The path of endless growth has now started.

Students to become self-disciplined have to change their philosophy – life is not something that happens to them, but they are something that happens to life. So it is worth to give up the blame game and take responsibility for the own life by mastering the art of self-discipline.

Self-discipline is about small things paving the way for very big things. That is, if one can work hard to have self-discipline in one, small area, one can create self-discipline almost effortlessly in other areas. The most famous study about this phenomenon is from R.Baumeister, S.Berglas [11; 12], who have found that students who walked with a book on their head to fix their posture ended up eating better, studying harder, and sleeping more. Without even noticing they were making those changes.

The key to self-discipline is finding an easy re-entry point. We used to tell ourselves that if we would just get back on our daily workout schedule, the rest of our self-disciplined life would fall back into place. This is true. But it's too hard. When everything has fallen apart for us in the self-discipline arena it usually looks like this: we are eating poorly, behind in answering emails, and we're biting our nails. Then we start hiding from people because we feel too discombobulated to connect.

One needs to give up perfectionism in order to get anywhere. Perfection is the enemy of self-discipline. If the aim is perfection, a person will never get oneself to do what he/she needs to do. No one is perfect, and if a person tells himself/herself, that he/she needs to be perfect, then everything is too hard to start. Things should be done immediately, as they pass in front of a person.

Self-discipline is mental, but only because it's about believing in oneself. Take, for example, the person who stops going to the gym for a month. A person who thinks of oneself as someone who goes to the gym is more likely to start going again than someone who thinks of oneself as a non-gym type. And this is true in a more broad sense: If you think of yourself as someone with high self-discipline then when you are not having self-discipline, you expect to start having it again, and you do. Also, self-discipline is like a muscle so you need to practice to get stronger with it, and part of practicing is talking with yourself about who you are: a person who has self-control.

Conclusions. Learning to be self-directed involves taking responsibility for the objectives of learning, self-monitoring, self-assessing, and taking an active role in learning. Thus, it is really essential to implement and support a self-directed learning programme for students of higher educational establishments.

Giordano Bruno said [13]: «A stone is not carved by a drop's falling twice, but by many times», so does not a human become wise by reading two books, but by many books.

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Научиться быть целенаправленным значит нести ответственность за сам процесс учебы, уметь делать самоанализ, самооценку наряду с активным участием в этом процессе. Поэтому воплощение и поддержка программы науки целенаправленности и самодисциплины для студентов высших учебных заведений необходимы и важны.

Авторы данного исследования считают, что для достижения студентами высокого уровня во время учебы и высокого профессионального уровня в дальнейшем самодисциплина и сила воли это ключи к успеху. Ни одна из привычек не играет такой важной роли для успешного достижения своей цели, как самодисциплина и самоконтроль.

Ключевые слова: самодисциплина, самоконтроль, перфекционизм, сила воли, настойчивость, целенаправленность.

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Key words: self-discipline, self-control, perfectionism, willpower, perseverance, self-directed.