



DRIVE

developing will power

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for picking up a copy of this ebook Developing Will Power.

Do you really understand what will power is and how it influences your life?

The definition of 'Will Power' is *the strength of will to carry out one's decisions, wishes, or plans.*

While this may sound simple enough using your will power can be extremely difficult. How many times have you gotten up in the morning determined to exercise or get that room cleaned out, only to end the day without doing it? Lots of times I guess!

You are not alone thousands of people struggle with will power each and every day. This ebook will help you discover ways that you can strengthen your will power so it is a force to be reckoned with.

Recently a team from Stanford conducted research about will power and discovered that your actual determination is affected by your personal beliefs about will power.

"If you think of will power as something that's biologically limited, you're more likely to be tired when you perform a difficult task," said Veronika Job, the paper's lead author. "But if you think of will power as something that is not easily depleted, you can go on and on."

Thanks again for reading and enjoy.

WHAT IS WILL POWER?

We defined the dictionary meaning of will power as carrying out your desires, wishes and plans. So why is this not an easy task? Is it because you are lazy or that your desire just isn't strong enough, maybe your priorities aren't in order? There are so many excuses that you can come up with as to why you didn't do what you said you would.

When this happens most of the time you are only hurting or depriving yourself. If you had gotten up and exercised you would have probably felt more energized for the remainder of the day. Instead you went around feeling sluggish and lacking energy.

Is this how you really want to spend every day? Walking around in almost a zombie like state, not really caring about where you life is headed?

Look at developing a stronger will power as forming a brand new habit. When you start a new habit it takes approximately 3 weeks until it is formed in your brain. At the 3 week mark you begin to do the action automatically, without thinking about the why or where.

One important thing to remember is that it does require effort to maintain a strong will power. Just like any muscle in your body your will power can get tired and that's fine. The problem begins when you can't even get your will power to kick in at all!

Let's look at some more definitions of will power:

- Having the ability to control unnecessary impulses
- Following through once you have made a decision
- Refusing to indulge in bad habits
- Overcoming your inner resistance
- Overcoming laziness

- Brings you success

And Self-Discipline and Self-Control:

- Both of these work right alongside will power
- Having the ability to overcome difficulties both physical and mental
- Developing your inner strength
- Making the right choices
- Controlling your inner impulses

All of these definitions include becoming aware of what you are doing both physically and mentally. Everyone has at some point said or done something which you later regret.

Developing your will power will help you overcome obstacles and will allow you to make the correct decision. You will be less likely to make quick choices or actions that could have devastating consequences.

How to Develop Will Power

The easiest way to start developing a stronger will power is by getting more sleep. When you are deprived of sleep it is so easy to give in to any type of temptation. All adults should get seven to eight hours of sleep per night. Young children require ten to twelve hours and teenagers nine.

Your next step is to avoid drinking alcohol before going to bed. First off, alcohol can affect the quality of your sleep and it affects your glucose level. The amount of glucose in your body seems to have a direct impact on your level of will power.

The Connection between Glucose and Your Will Power

There is a huge ongoing discussion in regards to glucose and your self-control

and will power. In 2007 research was published which indicated that people with lower glucose levels had less will power.

In this study it showed that people who had less will power and self-control had low glucose levels in their body. The study also showed that participants who drank a sugary drink were able to concentrate better and they had the will power to finish a task. Since 2007 subsequent tests have been conducted which repeat these findings.

More recently other studies have shown that people who gargle a sugary drink, without consuming it, have increased will power. This research suggests that the glucose drink works due to certain receptors in your mouth. Messages are sent to your brain that see this drink as a reward and prompts you to keep going with the task.

All of this research is not totally conclusive at this point, but it is interesting to note that the pleasure of drinking a glucose drink can stimulate your brain into finishing a task. This is something that you may want to keep in mind.

Resisting Temptation

The above research takes us to another interesting fact about will power. The minute you are directed to use your self-control to exert will power your brain immediately goes into overdrive. You start to view the task as boring and see it as something that you don't want to do.

Here's a perfect example of this in action. A study was performed by Timothy A. Pychl, a professor at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. He took a group of volunteers and placed them where they could watch a movie and eat cookies. One group was told not to eat the cookies or to laugh at the movie, while no restrictions were placed on the second group at all.

This was their conclusion:

"Was that those who had to exert more will power in the first task "exhausted their self-regulatory strength, at least temporarily, and therefore are unable to muster the self-regulation needed for the second task."

I am sure you can relate to this in more than one way, and that you have seen how quickly you can lose your will power the minute you are told not to do something.

Now let's start looking at how you can improve your will power and develop strong self-control.

WILL POWER EXERCISES

You will find that it can be extremely helpful to start meditating each morning. This doesn't have to be for very long, even five minutes a day will help. Meditation is beneficial because it forces you to become aware of your situation. Knowing what you are about to do helps you have the self-control to take the correct action.

Meditation also helps by getting you to practice deep breathing techniques which in turn will help your self-control.

Visualization is another tool that you can use as an exercise. If you want to develop your will power to fit into that skinny pair of jeans, then start visualizing how you will look in those jeans. All this takes is a few minutes each day. Visualization is also great when you are feeling tempted to eat that cookie, or have that slice of cake. Instead of giving in start visualizing how you will look.

When it comes to exercises any type of exercise that helps you develop control will be useful. What might be more helpful as an 'exercise' is to be aware of your surroundings and take a different action than what you would normally do.

Here are a couple of examples:

1. You have had a long day at work and are tired and sitting on the bus on your way home. A lady gets onto the bus with a broken arm. Do you get up and offer her your seat, or not bother because you are feeling so tired? Force yourself to get up and give her your seat.
2. How many times do you leave the dishes in the sink overnight? Make a point of taking action and get into the routine of doing the dishes before sitting down to watch TV. Within 3 weeks you won't think twice about eating and doing the dishes right away.
3. At work do you always take the elevator instead of the stairs, even though you know that you need the exercise? Tomorrow start by taking the stairs up to your office.

This can be applied to any aspect of your life. If you are attempting to learn a new language or skill, you want to make a point of tackling it every day. By doing this you will find that the learning process becomes easier.

Improving your memory and your concentration can also help you develop your will power. Always remind yourself of your goals when a task gets hard and you find your will power draining. As well it is perfectly acceptable to make mistakes. Research has found that when you take mistakes in stride, and forgive yourself for making them, your will power stays strong.

Take a good look at the mistake you made, forgive yourself, but make mental notes on how you can improve upon this in the future.

At work if you find yourself becoming bored or distracted with a task seek out your co-workers. If you can complete this task surrounded by people you enjoy working with, the task will no longer be boring to you.

The same principles apply to learning a new skill. When it becomes hard remind yourself that this is part of the learning process. In time the skill will become easier to you.

Stress is another thing that can really deplete you of your will power. If you are feeling stressed out then you want to look for ways to relax. Why not try meditation or yoga to help with stress?

"Will Power gives you the energy and endurance to deal with challenges, the ability to persevere in the face of setbacks, and the strength to tolerate conflict or stress that might otherwise make us run away from goals or projects we care about," says Kelly McGonigal , a Stanford psychologist and author of The Will Power Instinct (Avery, 2011).

Breaking those Habits

Who doesn't have habits that they want to break? You, no doubt, at some time or other may have wanted to lose a few pounds, give up smoking or just wanted to become more assertive.

Breaking any habit involves using your will power and your self- discipline and self-control. These skills are important and can make a huge difference when it comes to personal growth.

If you have these skills you are often viewed as a pro-active person, those that are lacking are viewed as being lazy. Let's take a look at some examples:

- Have you wanted to go for a walk after dinner but gotten lazy and haven't bothered?
- As much as you want to lose weight you keep allowing yourself to have treats?
- How often do you start something new and then given up quickly?

Everyone has done the above at some time or other. On the good side it is possible to learn how to develop and improve your skills to overcome this. Your purpose is to strengthen your mind and not to make your life more difficult.

BEST WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR WILL POWER, SELF-CONTROL AND SELF-DISCIPLINE

The best way to overcome the feeling that you are unmotivated or lazy is to start doing things. This includes getting out of your comfort zone and performing a task that makes you feel uncomfortable.

If you are feeling shy about something take small steps to overcome it. Once you start forcing yourself to take action you will find that your inner voice starts to disappear. You will start to develop a strong inner strength which forces you to take action.

Finding your focus will enable you to strengthen your will power. One way to accomplish this is by removing as many distractions as possible. If you take a quick look around you, you will notice that many people have music playing or are chatting on the phone or sending text messages. These things can be distracting when you are trying to focus on a task.

If you are at work and feel distracted try using earphones to muffle the distractions. Other things you can do to turn off distractions include simply shutting your door, finding a quiet place to work, turning off the ringer on your phone and turning off your email as well as logging off from social sites.

By implementing these things you will find that the task gets finished quickly and you will feel less drained.

People tend to focus more on breaking a habit as opposed to building or forming a new habit. It is human nature to perceive something new as a challenge or an effort. Your mind automatically starts thinking negatively about the prospect of doing anything new.

Using this synopsis it is easy to see why learning anything new immediately becomes a challenge. If this new task is huge and outside of your comfort zone you immediately view it as a task which is unpleasant.

When it comes to forming a new habit take things slowly and set mini goals. Instead of telling yourself that you will exercise for 30 minutes get up early and just aim for 5 minutes of exercise instead.

Slowly increase the amount of time until you are at the 30 minute level. By the time you reach this milestone you will be well on your way to instilling this routine as a habit.

THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING WILL POWER

The biggest benefit you will find once your will power increases will be inner strength. You will have the ability to take action when necessary and you will be able to stay on task and follow through.

Your behavior and your reactions are determined by your level of will power and self-control. This doesn't mean that you will turn into a boring person. Instead you may find that you have more energy and drive and this transfers to those people around you.

How many times have you met with people who are either happy or sad and after spending time with them you developed the same mood? This is why it is important to always connect with people who have the same mindset as you.

Additional benefits you will notice from increasing your will power include having better concentration, and feeling in control of your own thoughts and decisions. As you develop stronger skills the stronger your inner strength will become.

This has a direct impact on your will power and self-discipline and this will improve your daily habits. In fact your entire lifestyle can drastically improve just by developing your will power.

IDENTIFYING YOUR CHOICES AND TAKING ACTION

It really is easy to make impulsive decisions and then not acknowledge that you were responsible for your actions. Young kids use this as an excuse all the time. You hear them say, "I don't know why I did it, I just did!"

This is not the attitude to have. Instead you need to force yourself to become aware of what you are thinking and what consequence each action will have.

Identifying what your choices are includes being honest with yourself. It includes defining what you would like to do or have, as opposed to what you really want.

Look at this when you want to start something new such as exercising. Why do you really want to exercise? Is it to look good or to show your children that exercise is healthy?

While both of these reasons are great which one is going to get you to take action?

The teaching your children to be healthy would be the obvious choice, because you should be teaching your children healthy habits by example. But your real reason could be because you want to fit into that tight pair of jeans! This is your real reason and the one that can force you to take action regularly.

It is a good idea to get into the habit of asking yourself what your true feelings are instead of your wants. Feelings are huge and can be a driving force which can produce wonderful results.

Refuse to be Lazy

By refusing to become a lazy person you are taking a step in the right direction in developing your will power. It is so easy to just not do something and let an

opportunity slip by. It is much harder to take decisive action but the results can be so rewarding.

Refusing to be lazy takes work and it is a habit that you will need to break. Your first step is to not let your inner voice talk you out of doing something. Instead take action no matter how small it may be.

A great example of this is when you get home from work. You need a shower but you also just want to sit down and relax. If you take the second option no doubt the shower will get put off. But if you take the shower immediately, without thinking about it, it is done and you still have plenty of time to relax afterwards.

The benefit to this is that taking a shower can make you feel refreshed and energized. Afterwards you may feel like going for a walk or cooking a healthy dinner. This would be a much better choice than just grabbing something fast to eat, and sitting down in front of the television set for the rest of the evening.

Pushing Yourself to Overcome Challenges

Nothing in life is easy and you will definitely need to push yourself into action. This is the first step in not being lazy anymore! You also should be aware of not making emotional choices. Emotional decisions normally do not last that long and your desire to do the task fades quickly.

A perfect example of this is when you make a New Year's Resolution. These resolutions are emotional and are often fast decisions. They are made due to certain things you were thinking about at the time. They are often not well thought out and they are not planned decisions.

By pushing yourself you are ultimately training your will power. This training takes time and effort but also develops your concentration levels and your self-confidence and your assertiveness.

Examples are the best way to describe the sequence of pushing yourself to do something, so let's take a look at one.

You have decided that you are going to get up earlier each morning and go for a walk or get on your treadmill. Before you go to bed you set your alarm clock for 5am. The buzzer goes off and even though you may hit the snooze button, you have set another alarm for 5.05 am. This second alarm is your 'pushing' mechanism. You may have to force yourself to get out of bed. Now that you are awake you decide you might as well get up and get moving.

You feel great once you have exercised. You feel energized and ready to face the day. Capture this feeling and remember it, then use it the next day when you are deciding whether to hit snooze or get up.

Can you see that by planning ahead you can create something which will 'push' you to take action? You need to develop a habit of training yourself and in essence you are training your mind to become stronger.

COMPLETE TASKS ON TIME

You can challenge yourself to start completing tasks on time. This actually ties in with becoming less lazy and pushing yourself. Think of some small task that needs to be done around your home. It could be cleaning out a room or just organizing your desk.

Once you have decided on your task choose a time to do it and write it down. You can set a reminder on your phone or schedule it on your calendar. Then when the time comes you want to make sure that you actually do your task.

If the task is larger then you can set a time limit and work until your time is up. Why not use an alarm clock to remind you of the time? Then once that buzzer goes off stop and take a rest, and congratulate yourself on completing the task. If you are feeling energized you can continue and complete the task or schedule another time to finish it.

SETTING GOALS

An easy way to develop your will power is to start setting goals, as we mentioned above in the completing tasks on time section. By setting small goals you will not a) feel overwhelmed or b) feel that the goal is unattainable.

This leads us to setting realistic goals. This is so important and is a habit you want to get into regularly. Start off by setting small goals such as:

- Not putting sugar in your coffee for the next two days
- Deciding to put your mail away and not leave it on your kitchen counter
- To not immediately shout at your kids, instead listen to their point of view

Goals do not have to be large. What they need to be is important to you in some way. The more importance your goals have to you the more likely you are to stay on track and actually reach them.

Attaining your goals is going to take strength and energy and is directly related to developing your will power.

When you start setting goals adding a time to them can be effective. This is particularly true when it comes to exercising. Research has shown that people who exercise at the same time each day will continue exercising longer than those who have no set time for exercise.

A great example of this is if you sign up for yoga classes at a certain time. You know in advance what time and day your class is on and you simply add it into your schedule without thinking twice about it. Whether you exercise at home or at a gym schedule a time and stick to it.

Your Plan of Attack

As much as you are attempting to improve your will power, temptations are the one thing that can easily destroy your plans. This is particularly true when it comes to eating healthy and trying to lose weight.

If you have a plan of attack in place you will be equipped with tools that you can use immediately.

Let's take your food choices as an example. Every Friday at work someone brings in doughnuts and you are always tempted to have one. Instead of giving in and taking one, you want to have a plan of attack in place. It is easy to take a healthier choice to work with you, this could be whole grain muffin or a piece of fruit and yogurt.

So when it is time for your morning break you already have your snack with you. You will not be tempted to reach for that doughnut. Use the same tactics for anything you consider to be a temptation. This could be avoiding the vending machine, skipping your evening walk or reaching for a bag of chips at night.

By deciding in advance how you are going to react to certain situations you can stay in control of the choices you make. If you know you are going out to a buffet dinner tell yourself ahead of time what you are going to eat.

HOW EXERCISE CAN INCREASE YOUR WILL POWER

Exercising on a regular basis can help develop your will power and your will power can help you exercise, talk about a two sided sword!

When you exercise endorphins are released into your brain which makes you feel happy. This produces a euphoric feeling which can last for hours.

When it comes to losing weight or sticking with an exercise program your will power often gets blamed for your choices, or lack of it. One way to deal with this is by setting small goals that are achievable and extremely specific. Instead of saying "I will lose 20 lb's by December", it is much better to tell yourself "I will cut out 300 calories today."

By doing something which is immediate you will be in control and you will reach your goal quickly.

Other ways to stay in control with your diet include preparing easy meals in advance. By planning what you are going to eat all week you won't have to think about your food choices. Plus your will power won't be challenged with temptations.

By developing habits you will start creating healthy meals automatically, you will get out of bed in the morning ready to exercise. No more thinking or using your will power to force you into taking the right action.

Feeling guilty is a huge element which is directly attached to your will power. It is so easy to miss a workout but then you spend the rest of the day feeling guilty about it. If this happens to you regularly why not exercise with a partner? When you know you have to meet a friend to go running, you are less likely to let them down. Your guilt conscious will be nagging at you not to miss your workout appointments.

There is a major problem with dieting today and that is that they require you to use so much of your will power. As we have already explained exerting will power

is an effort and one that can really deplete your energy sources. This is why so many diets fail!

Attempting to force yourself into eating differently is an effort and eventually your will power fails and you slip back into your old habits. End of diet. This cycle gets repeated and you find yourself falling into the yo-yo diet syndrome.

By changing your understanding of how will power works you can make any diet work for you. One of the biggest mistakes people make is to pre-program themselves with the idea of a reward. If I am good all week I can have the doughnut at work on Friday.

When you tell yourself this on Monday you are programming your mind to accept the fact that you will eat that doughnut at the end of the week.

You want to learn how to train your will power so you can avoid circumstances like that from happening. The best way to do this is to think of your will power as a muscle, spend a few minutes each day on ways to develop your will power.

This is really not that hard to do. As we mentioned earlier if you plan and set goals you can increase the strength of your will power. By planning in advance you will know what choices to make when you are faced with food or exercise temptations.

Here's a neat website that you can visit which can help you meet your goals:

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

You can actually bet on yourself that you will reach your goal by putting your own money on it. If you fail your money will be sent to a friend or to a charity of your choice!

If your main focus on developing your will power is for health reasons you will find that other areas of your life automatically improve. This will happen once you have trained your will power muscle to be strong.

WRAPPING IT ALL UP

During the course of this ebook you were given many tools that will help you develop your will power. One of the main causes of lack of will power in today's world is stress. When you are feeling stressed out learn how to deal with it. Quite often going for a walk is a great way to de-stress yourself. If your job is stressful make a point of walking during your lunch hour.

By getting out of the office and experiencing a change of scenery you can easily recharge your batteries. This way you will feel refreshed and you will be energetic enough to deal with the afternoon rush.

Always bear in mind that your will power will be the strongest first thing in the morning. This is the ideal time to do those tasks that you find the most difficult to accomplish, such as getting in your daily exercise.

Your mindset is a huge factor in your will power. If you perceive yourself as strong minded you will have an easier time dealing with challenges and tasks. Be open minded when dealing with difficult situations and remember that there is always more than one solution to any problem.

There will always be set backs in life and you need to learn how to take these in stride. Learn to be more organized, it has been shown that if you have a clean desk at work or school you are less distracted.

An important rule to follow is this: once you have finished working for the day, make a point of not thinking about work at all. This can be really difficult to achieve for many people but enjoying your free time will go a long way in increasing your will power and decreasing your stress levels.

Spend a few minutes every day from today learning how to train your will power, view it as a muscle that needs to be strengthened.

Thanks for reading and I truly hope you have enjoyed this ebook.