



# Pushing Pause

Science shows that by pausing, you can help shape your destiny through self-control

“OMG! Did I really send that text?”

Most people have said something that they wish they could take back. If they'd paused to think it through first, they probably would have acted differently.

Studies show that making a habit of pausing before you do something can have a big impact on your life.

## THINKING IT THROUGH: THE TEEN BRAIN CHALLENGE

In making choices, we use our limbic system and the prefrontal cortex. The *limbic system* creates and processes emotions. The *prefrontal cortex* governs logical thought. The type of choice, how we feel about it, and how prepared we are for it helps determine which brain area has the most influence.

Age also plays a role. Thinking through the outcomes of our decisions is harder for teens because the prefrontal cortex is not fully developed until around age 25, compared to the limbic system, which is. This is why teens often feel a strong drive to act impulsively—it's how their brains are structured!

Acting without considering the outcomes can lead to problems. But impulsivity itself is not all bad for teens.



It makes teens more open to new experiences and ideas. This openness helps teens become independent adults.

## TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

You can make impulsivity work for you instead of against you. Just train your brain by practicing pausing. This doesn't mean you say no to all risks and new experiences. But you won't know if the risk is worth it until you think it through.

How do you pause? You might take a deep breath, count to 10, or ask, “Is this worth it?” Different methods work for different people. Whatever works for you, keep doing it!

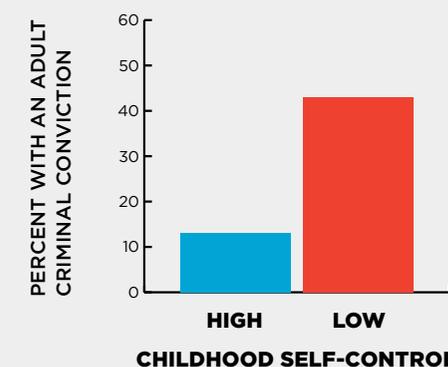
By practicing pausing, you can change your brain. Over time and with practice, pausing before reacting will become your natural response. And with this change, you are on your way to enjoying the life rewards that come with high levels of self-control.

## High Self-Control = Bankroll

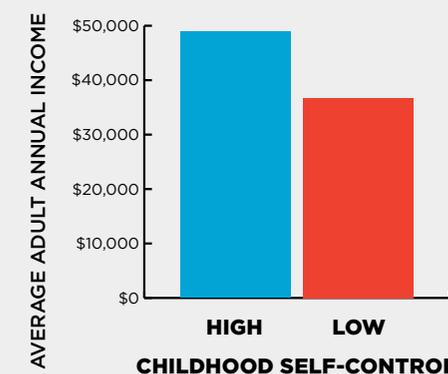
Pausing, paying attention, and not giving up are key parts of self-control. Studies have linked a person's self-control when they were younger to their success as adults. One study followed nearly 1,000 children in New Zealand for 32 years!

This research has shown that people with high self-control have better grades, stronger relationships, and greater income levels. Those with low self-control are more likely to have health problems, including drug addiction, as well as legal problems.

### CRIME: Impact of Self-Control on Adult Criminal Behavior



### WEALTH: Impact of Self-Control on Adult Income



## PAUSING PAYS OFF

In life, there are times when our level of self-control can make a big difference.

