

# The Ultimate Goal is Self-Mastery

What's standing in the way of you reaching the level of success you desire, enjoying a great relationship, or seeing your abs for the first time? Is the problem that you don't know enough? No. Is there too much competition? Not even close. **The only obstacle is a lack of mastery over yourself.** Don't believe it?

You will.

Are you in great shape? Do you only eat healthy foods? Why not? Is it because you're confused about which foods are healthy and which are not? Are you confused about whether it's better to exercise by running down the block or by sitting on the couch?

Hardly.

You know enough to make significant changes in your life. Knowledge isn't the challenge. The challenge is managing yourself and your behaviors.

Haven't had a date in a year? Are you confused about how to get a date? The key to getting dates is to ask people out. How many people have you asked out in the last week? How many new people have you spoken to in the last week?

Are you able to say the things that need to be said? Are you able to be silent when you know you should? Can you make yourself go to the gym or eat an apple instead of a piece of apple pie?

**Mastering yourself is the only goal you need to achieve. From that, you can achieve all your other goals!**

**Use these strategies to become the master of yourself:**

1. **Make a list of the things you should do each day, but aren't.** This list might include things like exercising, playing the piano for 20 minutes, drinking eight glasses of water, paying your bills, flossing, and making social connections.
2. **Make a list of the things you do each day, but shouldn't.** Maybe you stay up too late, watch too much TV, waste time playing video games, smoke, and show up late to work. Think about all the things you do that sacrifice your health, career, finances, social life, and happiness.

3. **Begin by addressing one item from each list. Slowly eliminate one of the negative items and add one of the positive items.** Habits are challenging to change, but you've developed habits without even trying. Imagine what you can accomplish intentionally.
4. **Have a long-term focus.** Negative behaviors have short-term rewards. Eating ice cream or watching TV are rewarding immediately. They can be harmful in the long-term, but they pay off right now.
  - **Adopt a long-term focus** and consider the long-term implications of your behavior before you indulge in it. What will it cost you down the road if you don't change?
5. **Realize that your body is the enemy.** Why does a person eat a bag of potato chips instead of an orange? He imagines himself eating chips. Then he imagines eating an orange. Then he chooses the one that feels better. But your body is deceiving you. It's only concerned with safety and reproduction.
  - It cares little for your longevity or your long-term prospects. Humans seek pleasure, just like any other animal. The advantage humans have over animals is the ability to make decisions and not follow instinct. The disadvantage humans have is the ability to create pleasurable foods and activities that are detrimental to long-term success and survival.

Self-mastery is the key. **If you can master yourself, everything else becomes easy.** It's easy to get ahead at work. It's easy to be healthy. It's easy to save money and maintain relationships. Can you master yourself? Key your attention on the long-term impact of behaviors and avoid short-term pleasures that lead to long-term challenges.