WILLPOWER

REDISCOVERING THE GREATEST HUMAN STRENGTH

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INTRODUCTION

However you define success—a happy family, good friends, a satisfying career, robust health, financial security, the freedom to pursue your passions—it tends to be accompanied by a couple of qualities. When psychologists isolate the personal qualities that predict "positive outcomes" in life, they consistently find two traits: intelligence and self-control. So far researchers still haven't learned how to permanently increase intelligence. But they have discovered, or at least rediscovered, how to improve self-control.

Hence this book. We think that research into willpower and self-control is psychology's best hope for contributing to human welfare. Willpower lets us change ourselves and our society in small and large ways. As Charles Darwin wrote in *The Descent of Man,* "The highest possible stage in moral culture is when we recognize that we ought to control our thoughts." The Victorian notion of willpower would later fall out of favor, with some twentieth-century psychologists and philosophers doubting it even existed. Baumeister himself started out as something of a skeptic. But then he observed willpower in the laboratory: how it gives people the strength to persevere, how they lose self-control as their willpower is depleted, how this mental energy is fueled by the glucose in the body's bloodstream. He and his collaborators discovered that willpower, like a muscle, becomes fatigued from overuse but can also be strengthened over the long term through exercise. Since Baumeister's experiments first demonstrated

the existence of willpower, it has become one of the most intensively studied topics in social science (and those experiments now rank among the most-cited research in psychology). He and colleagues around the world have found that improving willpower is the surest way to a better life.

They've come to realize that most major problems, personal and social, center on failure of self-control: compulsive spending and borrowing, impulsive violence, underachievement in school, procrastination at work, alcohol and drug abuse, unhealthy diet, lack of exercise, chronic anxiety, explosive anger. Poor self-control correlates with just about every kind of individual trauma: losing friends, being fired, getting divorced, winding up in prison. It can cost you the U.S. Open, as Serena Williams's tantrum in 2009 demonstrated; it can destroy your career, as adulterous politicians keep discovering. It contributed to the epidemic of risky loans and investments that devastated the financial system, and to the shaky prospects for so many people who failed (along with their political leaders) to set aside enough money for their old age.

Ask people to name their greatest personal strengths, and they'll often credit themselves with honesty, kindness, humor, creativity, bravery, and other virtues—even modesty. But not self-control. It came in dead last among the virtues being studied by researchers who have surveyed more than one million people around the world. Of the two dozen "character strengths" listed in the researchers' questionnaire, self-control was the one that people were least likely to recognize in themselves. Conversely, when people were asked about their failings, a lack of self-control was at the top of the list.

People feel overwhelmed because there are more temptations than ever. Your body may have dutifully reported to work on time, but your mind can escape at any instant through the click of a mouse or a phone. You can put off any job by checking e-mail or Facebook, surfing gossip sites, or playing a video game. A typical computer user checks out more than three dozen Web sites a day. You can do enough

damage in a ten-minute online shopping spree to wreck your budget for the rest of the year. Temptations never cease. We often think of willpower as an extraordinary force to be summoned to deal with emergencies, but that's not what Baumeister and his colleagues found when they recently monitored a group of more than two hundred men and women in central Germany. These Germans wore beepers that went off at random intervals seven times a day, prompting them to report whether they were currently experiencing some sort of desire or had recently felt such a desire. The painstaking study, led by Wilhelm Hofmann, collected more than ten thousand momentary reports from morning until midnight.

Desire turned out to be the norm, not the exception. About half the time, people were feeling some desire at the moment their beepers went off, and another quarter said a desire had just been felt in the past few minutes. Many of these desires were ones they were trying to resist. The researchers concluded that people spend about a quarter of their waking hours resisting desires—at least four hours per day. Put another way, if you tapped four people at any random moment of the day, one of them would be using willpower to resist a desire. And that doesn't even include all the instances in which willpower is exercised, because people use it for other things, too, such as making decisions.

The most commonly resisted desire in the beeper study was the urge to eat, followed by the urge to sleep, and then by the urge for leisure, like taking a break from work by doing a puzzle or game instead of writing a memo. Sexual urges were next on the list of most-resisted desires, a little ahead of urges for other kinds of interactions, like checking e-mail and social-networking sites, surfing the Web, listening to music, or watching television. To ward off temptation, people reported using various strategies. The most popular was to look for a distraction or to undertake a new activity, although sometimes they tried suppressing it directly or simply toughing their way through it. Their success was decidedly mixed. They were pretty

good at avoiding sleep, sex, and the urge to spend money, but not so good at resisting the lure of television or the Web, or the general temptation to relax instead of work. On average, when they tried to resist a desire with willpower, they succeeded about half the time.

A 50 percent failure rate sounds discouraging, and it may well be pretty bad by historical standards. We have no way of knowing how much our ancestors exercised self-control in the days before beepers and experimental psychologists, but it seems likely that they were under less strain. During the Middle Ages, most people were peasants who put in long, dull days in the fields, frequently accompanied by prodigious amounts of ale. They weren't angling for promotions at work or trying to climb the social ladder, so there wasn't a premium on diligence (or a great need for sobriety). Their villages didn't offer many obvious temptations beyond alcohol, sex, or plain old sloth. Virtue was generally enforced by a desire to avoid public disgrace rather than by any zeal to achieve human perfection. In the medieval Catholic Church, salvation depended more on being part of the group and keeping up with the standard rituals than on heroic acts of willpower.

But as farmers moved into industrial cities during the nineteenth century, they were no longer constrained by village churches and social pressures and universal beliefs. The Protestant Reformation had made religion more individualistic, and the Enlightenment had weakened faith in any kind of dogma. Victorians saw themselves as living in a time of transition as the moral certainties and rigid institutions of medieval Europe died away. A popular topic of debate was whether morality could survive without religion. Many Victorians came to doubt religious principles on theoretical grounds, but they kept pretending to be faithful believers because they considered it their public duty to preserve morality. Today it's easy to mock their hypocrisy and prudery, like the little skirts they put on table legs—no bare ankles! Mustn't excite anyone! If you read their earnest sermons on

God and duty, or their battier theories on sex, you can understand why people of that era turned for relief to Oscar Wilde's philosophy: "I can resist everything except temptation." But considering all the new temptations available, it was hardly neurotic to be searching for new sources of strength. As Victorians fretted over moral decay and the social pathologies concentrated in cities, they looked for something more tangible than divine grace, some internal strength that could protect even an atheist.

They began using the term *willpower* because of the folk notion that some kind of force was involved—some inner equivalent to the steam powering the Industrial Revolution. People sought to increase their store of it by following the exhortations of the Englishman Samuel Smiles in *Self-Help,* one of the most popular books of the nineteenth century on both sides of the Atlantic. "Genius is patience," he reminded readers, explaining the success of everyone from Isaac Newton to Stonewall Jackson as the result of "self-denial" and "untiring perseverance." Another Victorian-era guru, the American minister Frank Channing Haddock, published an international bestseller titled simply *The Power of Will.* He tried to sound scientific by calling it "an energy which is susceptible of increase in quantity and of development in quality," but he had no idea—much less any evidence—of what it might be. A similar notion occurred to someone with better credentials, Sigmund Freud, who theorized that the self depended on mental activities involving the transfer of energy.

But Freud's energy model of the self was generally ignored by subsequent researchers. It wasn't until recently, in Baumeister's laboratory, that scientists began systematically looking for this source of energy. Until then, for most of the past century, psychologists and educators and the rest of the chattering classes kept finding one reason or another to believe it didn't exist.

The Decline of the Will

Whether you survey the annals of academe or the self-help books at the airport, it's clear that the nineteenth-century concept of "character building" has been out of fashion for quite a while. The fascination with willpower ebbed in the twentieth century partly in reaction to the Victorians' excesses, and partly due to economic changes and the world wars. The prolonged bloodshed of World War I seemed a consequence of too many stubborn gentlemen following their "duty" to senseless deaths. Intellectuals preached a more relaxed view of life in America and much of Western Europe—but not, unfortunately, in Germany, where they developed a "psychology of will" to guide their country during its bleak recovery from the war. That theme would be embraced by the Nazis, whose rally in 1934 was featured in Leni Riefenstahl's infamous propaganda film, *The Triumph of the Will.* The Nazi concept of mass obedience to a sociopath was hardly the Victorian concept of personal moral strength, but the distinction was lost. If the Nazis represented the triumph of the will . . . well, when it comes to bad PR, there's nothing quite like a personal endorsement from Adolf Hitler.

The decline of will didn't seem like such a bad thing, and after the war there were other forces weakening it. As technology made goods cheaper and suburbanites richer, stimulating consumer demand became vital to the economy, and a sophisticated new advertising industry urged everyone to buy now. Sociologists identified a new generation of "other-directed" people who were guided by their neighbors' opinions rather than by strong inner moral convictions. The stern self-help books of the Victorian era came to be seen as naïvely self-centered. The new bestsellers were cheery works like Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking*. Carnegie spent eight pages instructing readers how to smile. The right smile would

make people feel good about you, he explained, and if they believed in you, success was assured. Peale and other authors came up with an even easier method.

"The basic factor in psychology is the realizable wish," Peale wrote. "The man who assumes success tends already to have success." Napoleon Hill sold millions of copies of *Think and Grow Rich* by telling readers to decide how much money they wanted, write the figure down on a piece of paper, and then "believe yourself already in possession of the money." These gurus' books would go on selling for the rest of the century, and the feel-good philosophy would be distilled to a rhyming slogan: "Believe it, achieve it."

The shift in people's characters was noticed by a psychoanalyst named Allen Wheelis, who in the late 1950s revealed what he considered a dirty little secret of his profession: Freudian therapies no longer worked the way they were supposed to. In his landmark book, *The Quest for Identity,* Wheelis described a change in character structure since Freud's day. The Victorian middle-class citizens who formed the bulk of Freud's patients had intensely strong wills, making it difficult for therapists to break through their ironclad defenses and their sense of what was right and wrong. Freud's therapies had concentrated on ways to break through and let them see why they were neurotic and miserable, because once those people achieved insight, they could change rather easily. By midcentury, though, people's character armor was different. Wheelis and his colleagues found that people achieved insight more quickly than in Freud's day, but then the therapy often stalled and failed. Lacking the sturdy character of the Victorians, people didn't have the strength to follow up on the insight and change their lives. Wheelis used Freudian terms in discussing the decline of the superego in Western society, but he was essentially talking about a weakening of willpower—and all this was *before* the baby boomers came of age in the 1960s with a countercultural mantra of "If it feels good, do it."

Popular culture kept celebrating self-indulgence for the "Me

Generation" of the 1970s, and there were new arguments against willpower from social scientists, whose numbers and influence soared during the late twentieth century. Most social scientists look for causes of misbehavior outside the individual: poverty, relative deprivation, oppression, or other failures of the environment or the economic and political systems. Searching for external factors is often more comfortable for everyone, particularly for the many academics who worry that they risk the politically incorrect sin of "blaming the victim" by suggesting that people's problems might arise from causes inside themselves. Social problems can also seem easier than character defects to fix, at least to the social scientists proposing new policies and programs to deal with them.

The very notion that people can consciously control themselves has traditionally been viewed suspiciously by psychologists. Freudians claimed that much of adult human behavior was the result of unconscious forces and processes. B. F. Skinner had little respect for the value of consciousness and other mental processes, except as needed to process reinforcement contingencies. In *Beyond Freedom and Dignity,* he argued that to understand human nature we must get beyond the outmoded values in the book's title. While many of Skinner's specific theories were discarded, aspects of his approach have found new life among psychologists convinced that the conscious mind is subservient to the unconscious. The will came to seem so unimportant that it wasn't even measured or mentioned in modern personality theories. Some neuroscientists claim to have disproved its existence. Many philosophers refuse to use the term. If they want to debate this classical philosophical question of freedom of the will, they prefer to speak of freedom of action, not of will, because they doubt there is any such thing as will. Some refer disdainfully to "the so-called will." Recently, some scholars have even begun to argue that the legal system must be revamped to eliminate outdated notions of free will and responsibility.

Baumeister shared the general skepticism toward willpower when he started his career as a social psychologist in the 1970s at Princeton. His colleagues were then focusing not on self-control but on self-esteem, and Baumeister became an early leader of this research, which showed that people with more confidence in their ability and their self-worth tended to be happier and more successful. So why not help everyone else succeed by finding ways to boost their confidence? It seemed a reasonable enough goal to psychologists as well as the masses, who bought pop versions of self-esteem and "empowerment" in best-sellers like *I'm OK—You're OK* and *Awaken the Giant Within*. But the eventual results were disappointing, both inside and outside the laboratory. While international surveys showed that U.S. eighth-grade math students had exceptionally high confidence in their own abilities, on tests they scored far below Koreans, Japanese, and other students with less self-esteem.

Meanwhile, in the 1980s, a few researchers started getting interested in self-regulation, the term that psychologists use for self-control. The resurrection of self-control wasn't led by theorists, who were still convinced that willpower was a quaint Victorian myth. But when other psychologists went into the laboratory or the field, they kept happening on something that looked an awful lot like it.

The Comeback of the Will

In psychology, brilliant theories are cheap. People like to think of the field advancing thanks to some thinker's startling new insight, but that's not how it usually works. Coming up with ideas isn't the hard part. Everyone has a pet theory for why we do what we do, which is why psychologists get sick of hearing their discoveries dismissed with "Oh, my grandmother knew *that*." Progress generally comes not from theories but from someone finding a clever way to *test* a theory,

as Walter Mischel did. He and his colleagues weren't theorizing about self-regulation—in fact, they didn't even discuss their results in terms of self-control or willpower until many years later.

They were studying how a child learns to resist immediate gratification, and they found a creative new way to observe the process in four-year-old children. They would bring the children one at a time into a room, show them a marshmallow, and offer them a deal before leaving them alone in the room. The children could eat the marshmallow whenever they wanted to, but if they held off until the experimenter returned, they would get a second marshmallow to eat along with it. Some children gobbled the marshmallow right away; others tried resisting but couldn't hold out; some managed to wait out the whole fifteen minutes for the bigger reward. The ones who succeeded tended to do so by distracting themselves, which seemed an interesting enough finding at the time of the experiments, in the 1960s.

Much later, though, Mischel discovered something else thanks to a stroke of good fortune. His own daughters happened to attend the same school, on the Stanford University campus, where the marshmallow experiments took place. Long after he finished the experiments and moved on to other topics, Mischel kept hearing from his daughters about their classmates. He noticed that the children who had failed to wait for the extra marshmallow seemed to get in more trouble than the others, both in and out of school. To see if there was a pattern, Mischel and his colleagues tracked down hundreds of veterans of the experiments. They found that the ones who had shown the most willpower at age four went on to get better grades and test scores. The children who had managed to hold out the entire fifteen minutes went on to score 210 points higher on the SAT than the ones who had caved after the first half minute. The children with willpower grew up to become more popular with their peers and their teachers. They earned higher salaries. They had a lower body-mass index, suggesting that they were less prone to gain weight as middle

age encroached. They were less likely to report having had problems with drug abuse.

These were stunning results, because it's quite rare for anything measured in early childhood to predict anything in adulthood at a statistically significant level. Indeed, this disconnect was one of the death blows against the Freudian psychoanalytic approach to psychology, which emphasized early childhood experiences as the foundation of adult personality. Surveying this literature in the 1990s, Martin Seligman concluded that there was hardly any convincing proof that episodes in early childhood have a causal impact on the adult personality, with the possible exceptions of severe trauma or malnutrition. The very few significant correlations he noted between childhood and adult measures could be explained as mostly reflecting genetic (inborn) tendencies, such as having a generally sunny or grumpy disposition. The willpower to resist a marshmallow may well have had a genetic component, too, but it also seemed amenable to nurture, producing that rare childhood advantage that could pay dividends throughout life. These dividends looked even more remarkable once the overall benefits of self-control were assessed, which Baumeister did in *Losing Control,* a scholarly book he wrote in 1994 with his wife, Dianne Tice, a fellow professor at Case Western Reserve University, and Todd Heatherton, a professor at Harvard.

"Self-regulation failure is the major social pathology of our time," they concluded, pointing to the accumulating evidence of its contribution to high divorce rates, domestic violence, crime, and a host of other problems. The book stimulated more experiments and studies, including the development of a scale for measuring self-control on personality tests. When researchers compared students' grades with nearly three dozen personality traits, self-control turned out to be the *only* trait that predicted a college student's grade-point average better than chance. Self-control also proved to be a better predictor of college grades than the student's IQ or SAT score. Although raw

intelligence was obviously an advantage, the study showed that self-control was more important because it helped the students show up more reliably for classes, start their homework earlier, and spend more time working and less time watching television.

In workplaces, managers scoring high in self-control were rated more favorably by their subordinates as well as by their peers. People with good self-control seemed exceptionally good at forming and maintaining secure, satisfying attachments to other people. They were shown to be better at empathizing with others and considering things from other people's perspectives. They were more stable emotionally and less prone to anxiety, depression, paranoia, psychoticism, obsessive-compulsive behavior, eating disorders, drinking problems, and other maladies. They got angry less often, and when they did get angry, they were less likely to get aggressive, either verbally or physically. Meanwhile, people with poor self-control were likelier to hit their partners and to commit a variety of other crimes—again and again, as demonstrated by June Tangney, who worked with Baumeister to develop the self-control scale on personality tests. When she tested prisoners and then tracked them for years after their release, she found that the ones with low self-control were most likely to commit more crimes and return to prison.

The strongest evidence yet was published in 2010. In a painstaking long-term study, much larger and more thorough than anything done previously, an international team of researchers tracked one thousand children in New Zealand from birth until the age of thirty-two. Each child's self-control was rated in a variety of ways (through observations by researchers as well as in reports of problems from parents, teachers, and the children themselves). This produced an especially reliable measure of children's self-control, and the researchers were able to check it against an extraordinarily wide array of outcomes through adolescence and into adulthood. The children with high self-control grew up into adults who had better physical health, including lower rates of obesity, fewer sexually transmitted diseases,

and even healthier teeth. (Apparently, good self-control includes brushing and flossing.) Self-control was irrelevant to adult depression, but its lack made people more prone to alcohol and drug problems. The children with poor self-control tended to wind up poorer financially. They worked in relatively low-paying jobs, had little money in the bank, and were less likely to own a home or have money set aside for retirement. They also grew up to have more children being raised in single-parent households, presumably because they had a harder time adapting to the discipline required for a long-term relationship. The children with good self-control were much more likely to wind up in a stable marriage and raise children in a two-parent home. Last, but certainly not least, the children with poor self-control were more likely to end up in prison. Among those with the lowest levels of self-control, more than 40 percent had a criminal conviction by the age of thirty-two, compared with just 12 percent of the people who had been toward the high end of the self-control distribution in their youth.

Not surprisingly, some of these differences were correlated with intelligence and social class and race—but all these results remained significant even when those factors were taken into account. In a follow-up study, the same researchers looked at brothers and sisters from the same families so that they could compare children who grew up in similar homes. Again, over and over, the sibling with the lower self-control during childhood fared worse during adulthood. They ended up sicker, poorer, and were more likely to spend time in prison. The results couldn't be clearer: Self-control is a vital strength and key to success in life.

Evolution and Etiquette

As psychologists were identifying the benefits of self-control, anthropologists and neuroscientists were trying to understand how it

evolved. The human brain is distinguished by large and elaborate frontal lobes, giving us what was long assumed to be the crucial evolutionary advantage: the intelligence to solve problems in the environment. After all, a brainier animal could presumably survive and reproduce better than a dumb one. But big brains also require lots of energy. The adult human brain makes up 2 percent of the body but consumes more than 20 percent of its energy. Extra gray matter is useful only if it enables an animal to get enough extra calories to power it, and scientists didn't understand how the brain was paying for itself. What, exactly, made ever-larger brains with their powerful frontal lobes spread through the gene pool?

One early explanation for the large brain involved bananas and other calorie-rich fruits. Animals that graze on grass don't need to do a lot of thinking about where to find their next meal. But a tree that had perfectly ripe bananas a week ago may be picked clean today or may have only unappealing, squishy brown fruits left. A banana eater needs a bigger brain to remember where the ripe stuff is, and the brain could be powered by all the calories in the bananas, so the "fruit-seeking brain theory" made lots of sense—but only in theory. The anthropologist Robin Dunbar found no support for it when he surveyed the brains and diets of different animals. Brain size did not correlate with the type of food. Dunbar eventually concluded that the large brain did not evolve to deal with the physical environment, but rather with something even more crucial to survival: social life. Animals with bigger brains had larger and more complex social networks. That suggested a new way to understand Homo sapiens. Humans are the primates who have the largest frontal lobes because we have the largest social groups, and that's apparently why we have the most need for self-control. We tend to think of willpower as a force for personal betterment—adhering to a diet, getting work done on time, going out to jog, quitting smoking—but that's probably not the primary reason it evolved so fully in our ancestors. Primates are social beings who have to control themselves in order to get along

with the rest of the group. They depend on one another for the food they need to survive. When the food is shared, often it's the biggest and strongest male who gets first choice in what to eat, with the others waiting their turn according to status. For animals to survive in such a group without getting beaten up, they must restrain their urge to eat immediately. Chimpanzees and monkeys couldn't get through meals peacefully if they had squirrel-sized brains. They might expend more calories in fighting than they'd consume at the meal.

Although other primates have the mental power to exhibit some rudimentary etiquette at dinner, their self-control is still quite puny by human standards. Experts surmise that the smartest nonhuman primates can mentally project perhaps twenty minutes into the future—long enough to let the alpha male eat, but not long enough for much planning beyond dinner. (Some animals, like squirrels, instinctively bury food and retrieve it later, but these are programmed behaviors, not conscious savings plans.) In one experiment, when monkeys were fed only once a day, at noon, they never learned to save food for the future. Even though they could take as much as they wanted during the noon feeding, they would simply eat their fill, either ignoring the rest or wasting it by getting into food fights with one another. They'd wake up famished every morning because it never occurred to them to stash some of their lunch away for an evening snack or breakfast.

Humans know better thanks to the large brain that developed in our Homo ancestors two million years ago. Much of self-control operates unconsciously. At a business lunch, you don't have to consciously restrain yourself from eating meat off your boss's plate. Your unconscious brain continuously helps you avoid social disaster, and it operates in so many subtly powerful ways that some psychologists have come to view it as the real boss. This infatuation with unconscious processes stems from a fundamental mistake made by researchers who keep slicing behavior into thinner and briefer units, identifying reactions that occur too quickly for the conscious mind

to be directing. If you look at the cause of some movement in a time frame measured in milliseconds, the immediate cause will be the firing of some nerve cells that connect the brain to the muscles. There is no consciousness in that process. Nobody is aware of nerve cells firing. But the will is to be found in connecting units across time. Will involves treating the current situation as part of a general pattern. Smoking one cigarette will not jeopardize your health. Taking heroin once will not make you addicted. One piece of cake won't make you fat, and skipping one assignment won't ruin your career. But in order to stay healthy and employed, you must treat (almost) every episode as a reflection of the general need to resist these temptations. That's where conscious self-control comes in, and that's why it makes the difference between success and failure in just about every aspect of life.

Why Will Yourself to Read This?

The first step in self-control is to set a goal, so we should tell you ours for this book. We hope to combine the best of modern social science with some of the practical wisdom of the Victorians. We want to tell how willpower—or the lack thereof—has affected the lives of the great and the not-so-great. We'll explain why corporate leaders pay $20,000 a day to learn the secrets of the to-do list from a former karate instructor, and why Silicon Valley's entrepreneurs are creating digital tools to promote nineteenth-century values. We'll see how a British nanny tamed a team of howling triplets in Missouri, and how performers like Amanda Palmer, Drew Carey, Eric Clapton, and Oprah Winfrey applied willpower in their own lives. We'll look at how David Blaine fasted for forty-four days and how the explorer Henry Morton Stanley survived for years in the African wilderness. We want to tell the story of scientists' rediscovery of self-control and its implications outside the laboratory.

Once psychologists began observing the benefits of self-control,

they were faced with a new mystery: What exactly is willpower? What did it take for the self to resist a marshmallow? When Baumeister took up these questions, his understanding of the self was still pretty much in line with the then-conventional view, called the information-processing model. He and his colleagues talked about the mind as if it were a little computer. These information models of the human mind generally ignored concepts like power or energy, which were so out of fashion that researchers weren't even opposed to them anymore. Baumeister didn't expect to suddenly change his own view of the self, let alone anyone else's. But once he and his colleagues began experimenting, the old ideas didn't seem so dated.

The result, after dozens of experiments in Baumeister's lab and hundreds elsewhere, is a new understanding of willpower and of the self. We want to tell you what's been learned about human behavior, and how you can use it to change yourself for the better. Acquiring self-control isn't as magically simple as the techniques in modern self-help books, but neither does it have to be as grim as the Victorians made it out to be. Ultimately, self-control lets you relax because it removes stress and enables you to conserve willpower for the important challenges. We're confident that this book's lessons can make your life not just more productive and fulfilling but also easier and happier. And we can guarantee that you will not have to endure any sermons against bare ankles.