Pick Social Influences that are Positive

You can cultivate self-control by studying those who have it.

You’re more likely to lose weight if your friends are losing too. Want to quit smoking? You’ll have a better chance if you associate with quitters. And you’ll be a better worker if you admire a person with a great work ethic.

A new study by the University of Georgia shows that even thinking about someone with good self-control makes others more likely to have it. This was the first study to show that self-control is contagious in social or work groups.

The effect was so powerful that just seeing the name of someone with good or bad self-control flashed on a screen changed the behavior of volunteers.

By exhibiting self-control yourself, you can help people around you. If you stick to an exercise program, your self-control could help others develop the habit. Your example could urge someone to stick with their health, financial or career goals, say the psychologists.

But the opposite is true as well. Those with poor self-control influence others negatively. Because people mimic the behavior of others, their examples could result in the spread of characteristics such as smoking, drug use and obesity through their social networks.

As always, the decisions about what you will or will not do are up to you. You can’t blame your overweight pal if you take a second piece of cake.

Fortunately, you don’t have to change all of your social or work contacts in order to take advantage of the new findings. Thinking about someone with good self-control, whether it be a friend or a person in history, will inspire you to develop the same trait.

Who will influence you in a positive way?
How to Comfort a Bereaved Person

When you have a friend or co-worker who has lost a loved one, you might be at a loss about what you should do. Here is some advice from grief counselors.

- The classic "I'm sorry for your loss" works in all cases and may provide an opening for the bereaved to tell you how they feel.
- Allow them to talk about their grief. Listen without interrupting.
- Don’t say you understand their pain or give examples in your own life. Don’t tell them they are lucky for some reason or that they will soon feel better. Don’t give advice on how they should proceed with their lives.
- Understand the five stages of grief: denial (this can’t be happening), anger (how could he leave me), bargaining (trying to cope with the loss), depression (this stage lasts the longest and must be dealt with carefully) and acceptance.
- It’s not unusual for a person who is grieving to be moody. Understand that it’s probably not your fault.
- Don’t ask what you can do. If you can do something, such as make food, do it. If you want to do something such as help clean or organize, ask what time you can help. If you see something that needs done, offer to do it.
- Be natural, but do not joke as you might under other circumstances.
- Include them.

July is National Parks & Recreation Month - Camping Enthusiasts Find Fun in Great Outdoors

Some call it camping, others call it a tent revival. Either way, couples and families are finding new ways to enjoy the great outdoors.

Dad might love to stay in the wilds and go fishing. Kids might like it too because they can ride in the boat, hike in the woods and stay in a fancy tent (family tent sales grew by 17 percent in 2009 and backpacking grew by 18.5 percent).

Different ways of camping bring comforts that could shock yesteryear’s outdoor buffs, but they could be more fun for all.

Campgrounds can be like a small town where everyone is friendly and there’s lots of camaraderie. Some people book the same spot each year so they can be with other annual campers and enjoy their company again.

It’s fun to rent an RV for a stay at a favorite campground. People from all walks of life are doing it, not just Grandma and Grandpa. You’ll find every kind of camping vehicle in a facility from tiny campers to huge trailers.

In either case, people still spend most of their time outdoors, seated on lawn chairs, going for walks or taking part in campground activities.

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Employees and benefit-eligible family members can call Cascade 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Call Cascade Centers to speak to a counselor on the phone, schedule an in-person appointment, or get the resources you need.

For more information, please call us at 800-433-2320.