

BOOST YOUR WILLPOWER/SELF-REGULATION:

1. Boost your brain's ability to stay focused on long term goals as opposed to instant gratification by focusing on 1 or 2 of the following:

- **Get more sleep:** Try to get 1 more hour of sleep every night by moving up your bedtime.
- **Meditate:** Start a daily meditation practice. Try a free app to keep you on track like [Stop, Breathe and Think](#).
- **Exercise:** Add a physical exercise element to your week. Take a daily walk/run or choose the stairs this month.
- **Eat a low-glycemic or plant-based diet:** Take steps to reduce your consumption of non-plant-based foods this month and monitor your sugar intake.

2. Create self-compassion message that you can turn to when you have a willpower fail to keep you on track:

- Describe what you might be thinking or feeling at the time of your willpower fail.
- Remind yourself that slipping up is part of any change process, not an indicator of your brokenness or that there is something uniquely wrong with you.
- What might you say to a friend who had a setback? Use these words to encourage yourself to stay on track and keep pushing for your goal.

3. We are more likely to make good choices when we feel connected to our future self. Get to know your future self by:

- **Writing a letter from your future self to present self:** Write about who you are, where you are living, and what you care about.
- **Send yourself back to the future:** Imagine two future selves related to your willpower challenge: one that was successful in the goal and one that was not successful. Imagine what those future selves are thinking and feeling. What led to their current state?

4. When creating a goal that you would like to accomplish, focus on potential failures you might encounter in order to prepare yourself for the challenges ahead. Consider the following:

- What is your goal?
- What would be the most positive outcome?
- What action will I take to reach this goal?
- What is the biggest obstacle?
- When and where is this obstacle most likely to occur?
- What can I do to prevent this obstacle?
- What specific thing will I do to get back to my goal when this obstacle happens?

5. When in the middle of discomfort that often comes in a willpower challenge (think: I really, really want to eat that cookie and it feels like I will die if I don't), paying attention to and breathing through these urges can help them pass while staying on track:

- Notice the thought, craving, or feeling.
- Accept and attend to the inner experience.
- Breathe and give your brain and body a chance to pause and plan.
- Broaden your attention and look for the action that will help you achieve your goal.