



DAY 4

It's time to challenge a friend, sibling, or parent. It's time for an ice cube melting contest! It's pretty simple. Say "On your mark, get set, go," pop an ice cube in your mouth, and wait. When your ice cube is completely gone, raise your hand. The first person to raise their hand wins. All right. How did it go? Is your mouth numb? Did you have any kind of strategy to make it go faster?

Waiting for an ice cube to melt is actually good practice for self-control. Why? Because it forces you to wait. You can't really do or say anything. You just have to take the time to let it melt.

When you're about to lose your temper, time is the one thing that you need the most—time to stop and think. We tend to do things we regret when we don't take the time to think through what could happen.

Obviously you're not going to put an ice cube in your mouth when you start to get mad about something. But still—what if you could pause like that? What if you stopped long enough to think about the consequences that might happen? What if you took the time to pray and talk to God?

Whatever it takes to cool things down, do it. Because it's worth it. Like Solomon said, it's better to be patient. It's better to control your temper. It's better. It just is.

Stay cool this week, okay?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO KEEP YOUR COOL?

LIVE FOR GOD

SELF-CONTROL

CHOOSING TO DO WHAT YOU SHOULD EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T WANT TO

READ PROVERBS 16:32

DAY 1

Picture it. You've spent your entire morning making a domino line and you're putting the last few dominoes down, finally about to finish, finally about to see the glorious results of all your hard work. Then, your dog comes along wanting to play and knocks it all over.

What do you do when all your work is ruined? What do you do when you feel like you just wasted your entire morning? Do you feel the anger rising up inside you?

That's perfectly natural. But wait. What if you could find a way to control yourself, before you raise your voice at the dog? What if you could stop and think and realize that he was just trying to play? What if you could stop and remember that your dog is way more important to you than a bunch of dominoes?

That takes patience. That's why in Proverbs 16:32, King Solomon said:

It is better to be patient than to fight. It is better to control your temper than to take a city. (Proverbs 16:32, NIV)

Notice that Solomon isn't saying you can't feel angry. He's just saying you need to *control* your anger—not take it out on your best friend.

Other translations of this verse say that it's better to be "slow to anger." In other words, stop and think. Remember what's at stake if you lose your temper. Remember how much better it'll be if you can keep your cool.



It's better to be patient than it is to lose your temper. So why is it so hard to actually do that? Why is it so hard to turn the hose on your anger when it feels like it's about to blast off into a fiery inferno?

There are a few good techniques you could try. Like taking a deep breath, or counting to 10, or even punching a pillow.

There is one BEST strategy, though. It's the perfect way to press pause on your anger and remind yourself what's most important.

STOP AND THINK . . . AND PRAY.

That doesn't mean you have to go away by yourself and close your eyes. It could be as simple as talking to God in your mind, and saying:

"GOD, PLEASE HELP ME!"

"HELP ME NOT GET MAD RIGHT NOW."

"PLEASE GIVE ME PATIENCE."

Remember, God knows how you feel. He knows how frustrating it can be when you don't get what you want, when other people do things to annoy you or when they do something that messes you up.

God also knows that it's better to control your temper. It's not just that it's a good idea. It's actually *better*. It'll keep from potentially doing or saying something you regret.

Talk to God about the times when you're tempted to get angry. Ask Him to help you keep your cool.



DAY 3



EVERYONE HAS THINGS THAT MAKE THEM LOSE THEIR TEMPER.

For some people, it's getting left out or not being invited to something.

For others, it's being treated unfairly.

For some, it might be that others don't appreciate the work they've done.

As you get older, you've probably noticed that a lot of anger and hurt comes from the way people treat each other. It isn't as much about things. It's more because we don't feel respected or valued. When teenagers and adults get mad at each other, it's usually over something like that.

Everyone can remember a time when they were tempted to lose control—when they had to make an effort to keep their cool.

Think of an older friend, or an older sibling, or maybe your leader at church. Tell them you want to ask them a couple of questions because you're learning about self-control. Write down some notes below.

ASK THEM:

1. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT A TIME WHEN YOU FELT LIKE LOSING YOUR TEMPER, BUT YOU KEPT YOUR COOL INSTEAD?

2. WHAT HELPS YOU STAY IN CONTROL WHEN YOU FEEL LIKE THAT?

