The practice of Self-Reg draws a fundamental distinction between self-regulation and self-control.

Origins

The roots of the distinction between self-regulation and self-control are remarkably ancient, tracing all the way back to Hippocrates and Plato.

At the beginning of the 20th century, both theories gave birth to a science. Hippocratic methods evolved into physiology, while “willpower”-based methods influenced modern day Behaviourism.

Physiology looks at neurobiological systems that maintain a balance between energy expenditure and restoration.

Self-regulation capitalizes on recent advances in the science of stress management.

Behaviourism, on the other hand, looks for ways to contain the surface effects of an imbalance.

Self-control looks at age-old methods of punishment and reward to manage behaviour.

Methods

Both self-regulation and self-control seek to achieve “effortful control”, or the ability to voluntarily manage attention and inhibit or activate behaviours in response to external stimuli.

Self-Reg seeks to reduce the effort required to reach effortful control.

Self-control encourages battling “weaknesses” to exercise effortful control.

Focus

Self-regulation looks at the social dimension.

Self-control focuses solely on the individual.

Self-regulation makes self-control possible, not the other way around.