but not the radishes, while the other half were told they could eat the radishes but not
the cookies. After a five-minute taste test, all of these participants (and another group
who never participated in the taste test at all) worked on a difficult set of puzzles.
Figure 5.12 shows how long participants in the three conditions persisted at this task.
It is evident that participants who resisted tempting cookies quit the task sooner than
did participants in the other two conditions. Apparently, the effort required to resist
the cookies left participants with little energy for the puzzle task.

4. Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation

Many of the problems that currently plague modern society—alcoholism, domestic
violence, drug use, drunk driving, excessive gambling, smoking, and unsafe sexual
practices—reflect, to some extent, people’s inability to control themselves. These
problems arise when people focus on the immediate, short-term benefits of a behav-
ior rather than its long-term consequences (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1994;
Trope & Fishbach, 2000). A night of partying with friends might bring immediate
delight but will create problems down the road if homework goes undone. Successful
self-regulation occurs when higher-order goals and desires (e.g., a desire to save
money and act responsibly) override or supersede lower-order impulses and desires
(a desire to own a new stereo or take a vacation).

Because forgoing immediate pleasures requires effort, our ability to do so is com-
promised by factors that deplete our psychological resources. For example, we find it
difficult to maintain proper health habits when we are under stress, tired, or sad (Tice,
Bratslavsky, & Baumeister, 2001). Self-awareness also plays a role in this process.
Building on ideas discussed by Mead (1934), Duval and Wicklund (1972) argued that
self-awareness leads people to compare their current behavior with a relevant stan-
dard. In effect, when people become aware of themselves, they ask themselves,
“Is where I am now where I want to be?” If their behavior is falling short of their
standards, they experience distress and act in ways to reduce the discrepancy. In this
manner, self-awareness usually aids self-regulation, leading people to act in more
responsible, socially appropriate ways (Carver & Scheier, 1981, 1998). For example,
in comparison with people who are not self-aware, people who are self-aware are