



Positive Thinking

Affirmations

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Wouldn't it be great if we could write our own script, direct our feelings and actions and focus energy on the things and people who are most important to us? Well, you can!

By using positive affirmations, short phrases that reinforce our worth and capabilities, it is possible to free ourselves from relying on the validation and approval of others. Researchers from Stanford University have found that positive affirmations can indeed make lasting changes to the way we see ourselves in several areas of our lives (Cohen & Sherman, 2014).

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Quiz: Psychology 101 Part 2

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The Idea Behind Affirmations

Positive affirmations are a key part of taking responsibility for our actions and feelings. In creating affirmations that are personal to us, we are taking a step away from the past and the voices of critics that we may have internalized.

Affirmations help us to move towards a future that we feel in control of and hopeful for. When practiced daily, there is simply less headspace for negative thoughts. Although it may feel odd at first, practice turns affirmations into habits of thought, which can evolve into automatic positive thinking. You can train yourself to re-set core beliefs and become a positive thinker for the rest of your life.

Creating Personal Positive Affirmations

Affirmations are simple statements repeated to ourselves to change a thought about something. You can create your own unique affirmations, using a few building blocks. Start with the phrase "I can".

Then add things you have done in the past, because if you've done it before, the chances are you can do it again. Think creatively, here.

Some Examples

- Help my neighbor
- Listen to a friend when they need to talk
- Keep someone's confidences
- Reliably meet deadlines
- Cook a nutritious meal from scratch
- Save money for things I really want
- Wait patiently for friends and family
- Stay calm while others may lose their temper
- Solve problems effectively
- Ask for help when I need it
- Find the funny side
- Pass my exams

Descriptive Adjectives

Another way to create affirmations is to use the adjectives you've already identified about yourself. For example:

- I am strong
- I am intelligent
- I am determined
- I am resourceful
- I am creative

Current Events

You can also make affirmations about statements relevant to things currently happening in your life:

- I am content with myself
- I am responsible for myself and accountable for my actions
- I accept what has happened and am at peace
- I have prepared for these exams and deserve success

Look to the Future

Note that when you are making affirmations, try to always frame your intentions positively. Instead of saying, "I struggled with this difficulty before and won't let it stop me now", say, "I have conquered this before and can do it again."

Keep Your Affirmations Close

Write down your affirmations and keep them in places where you will see them every day. Copy them to an index card and stick them on your fridge, in your wallet, on your dressing room mirror or desktop. The more you see them and repeat them, the more you reinforce them. Every week, add a new affirmation to your list.

[Louise Hay](#) ^[1] has created a beautiful series of affirmations that you may want to borrow and

plant in visible areas around places you frequent. She wrote about the mind-body connection before it exploded in mainstream media and you may find her insights valuable.

Key Points

- Affirmations can help us think more positively
- Affirmations are very powerful ways of improving our outlook and self-esteem
- We can create our own affirmations using adjectives and statements
- Affirmations work best when repeated regularly throughout the day

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