

AFFIRMATIONS

An affirmation is a positive statement you say to yourself over and over to help you become more of who you want to be and achieve what you want in life. You can create affirmations about anything you want to improve about yourself or your situation. You can also use affirmations to change negative messages you hold about yourself. If you think you can't, you won't. Similarly, if you say, "I can do it!" you will.

There are many reasons why people develop negative beliefs about themselves and others. Some of your negative or limiting thoughts may come from the type of images you saw or the stories you heard when you were growing up. Some may be things that you were told about yourself as a child. Some may come from stereotypes of attractive or successful people that don't match the way you look or feel. Sometimes, biases or omissions in the history you learned in school can shape the way you look at your role in the world.

When you hear a negative message in your mind such as, "I'll never succeed!" or "Why am I such an idiot?" pause, and ask yourself where that message came from. Is that your thought, or are they the words of your mother, grandfather, or first grade teacher? Understanding where these thoughts started can help you change your negative thinking.

When you first begin to confront your negative beliefs, it may sound strange or awkward to say an affirmation because you do not yet believe it. For instance, if you have always had trouble with math and you believe that you'll never be able to learn it, it may sound false or odd to say: "I enjoy learning math" or "I am capable of learning math." But by replacing the negative thought with a positive, you make it possible to do anything. And the more often you repeat your affirmations, the more likely they are to become true for you.

It is impossible to change past events and people that planted negative thoughts or beliefs in your mind. The important thing to remember is that you have the power *now* to create positive inner messages for yourself.

TIPS

1. Choose a limiting thought or belief that you really want to change.
2. Create a short, simple statement using ALL positive words and the present tense to express what you would rather believe about yourself.
3. Remember to use an affirmation that sounds authentic to you. What sounds right for one person may sound unrealistic to someone else.
4. Write your affirmation on a card to put on the refrigerator, use it as a bookmark, or keep it anywhere you will see it and remember to say it.
5. Practice saying your affirmation as often as you can - out loud in front of a mirror, or before falling asleep and when you first wake up.
6. Focus on just a few affirmations at a time until you notice changes in those areas of your life.
7. Be persistent and have patience.
8. Share your affirmation only with people who will support your success.
9. Create an image or symbol in your mind to give power to your words.
10. Use affirmations to improve all aspects of your life: mental, emotional, physical, financial, social, etc.
11. Be aware of changes in how you feel about yourself. Recognize and reward yourself for your results.

CREATING YOUR OWN AFFIRMATION

1. Write down a negative thought or belief you have about yourself.

Example: I can't do anything right.

Your negative message:

2. What problems does this negative thought create in your life?

Example: I avoid trying hard or taking a risk because I know I'm going to fail.

Your problems created:

3. Write a short positive statement to replace the negative one. Write it as if you *already* believe it about yourself, in the present tense. (Tip: start with "I am..." Avoid: "I will try.")

Example: I am successful at many things.

Your affirmation:

4. Note any resistance or negative thoughts that pop up as you say your affirmation.

Example: This feels stupid, I really do mess up all the time.

Your resistance:

5. Adjust your affirmation, if necessary, to fit you better and sound more realistic.

Example: I choose to believe that I can be successful. I do many things well.

Your final affirmation:

6. (Optional) Draw a symbol or picture that will help you focus on your affirmation.

