

CREATING & PRACTICING AFFIRMATIONS



Affirmations are statements about ourselves that highlight our strengths, qualities and possibilities. Reciting affirmations helps in creating and promoting change. Affirmations promote hope and possibility.

How do Affirmations Work?

Our minds are powerful. Our thoughts impact our emotions and actions. The more positive thoughts we have, the more opportunities to feel good. Some mental health experts like psychiatrist Dr. Walter E. Jacobson believe that repeating the same messages to ourselves again and again, make those messages eventually enter into the subconscious mind, making it possible to start to believe them and act accordingly. In other words, affirmations help us reprogram how we view ourselves or a situation, which in turn impact how we feel and act. For instance, if someone believes “I can achieve,” that person may act with confidence.

How to Write Affirmations?

Start by identifying your qualities and strengths. Pull out of piece of paper and jot down a list of 5 to 10 things of qualities you are proud. If we have been raised to be humble, recognizing our strengths and qualities may feel like bragging.

If you find yourself struggling to come up with your strengths, sometimes it is helpful to think about times from the past where you have achieved something or met a goal and write out your quality or skill associated with that achievement or is also helpful to think about how other people may view us, or what others may say about us.

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Affirmations are written in first person, in present tense and highlighting a positive aspect of self. Begin your affirmations with the “I” or “I am....” Now using your list of strengths, write out affirmations using those strengths.

For example:

- ❖ I am lovable
- ❖ I am determined
- ❖ I can overcome adversity
- ❖ I am unique
- ❖ I am capable
- ❖ I am resourceful

You can even combine two affirmations:

- ❖ I am resourceful and I can overcome adversity

When to use Affirmations?

Effective use of affirmations includes consistency and repetition. With every habit we set out to practice, it becomes easier if we have a consistent time to dedicate to the task, such as in the morning and repeating affirmations throughout the day, but especially repeating during times we feel anxious, nervous, stressed, or experience an emotion that feels intense. What’s important about affirmations is that we pay attention to the words we recite and the emotions and feelings that come up when we repeat the affirmations.