

Writing Well-Formed Affirmations

or

The Best Outcome with the Least Resistance

"The life of the man is determined by his thought"

- Marc Aurèle

"Supervise especially your thoughts, because it is they which determine your life"

- Old Testament

Affirmations, prayers, hypnotic suggestions... these are all names for achieving goals and changing limiting beliefs. Affirmations can have a major impact on the quality of your life, but why is it that some people achieve their goals and some do not? We tend to continually have “recordings” going on in our minds. Recordings created in childhood. Recordings created by family, friends and ourselves. When people we trust tell us the same message over and over, our unconscious mind, like a faithful servant, tries to enact what it is told. We try our hardest to change “bad recordings” and behaviors into “good” ones by using affirmations, but too often, people use affirmations that are too long, awkward or difficult to remember. They say the affirmations once or twice a day and then forget about it. In the end your affirmations have no power. After a while you wonder what happened and say the affirmations didn't work.

Doctors and scientists now firmly believe that 75% of all sickness and disease starts in the mind. Imagine what would happen if we utilized our mind to it's fullest potential? We would stop getting sick and live healthier, more productive lives. Researchers have proven that people who have a healthy and positive attitude live better lives. Why? Because they know how to use the power of their mind. Unfortunately, the majority of people don't take advantage of the power of their own mind. Instead, they get their mind to work against them - creating things they don't want. As the say goes:

"Do the same thing, get the same result."

INITIAL CREATION OF YOUR AFFIRMATION

To develop an effective affirmation, prayer, suggestion, or goal, what do you do first? Well... first, write down what you want. Don't worry about how it sounds or perfecting the wording. What is the problem? What would you like to do or be? Write it down now and you'll refine it later.

Questions to Ask Yourself

- What is the problem?
Structure the question so it is precise and speaks to one issue, not two or three.
- What do you want?
- How will you know when you have what you want? What will the evidence be?
Be fairly concrete. Statements like "I'll feel better" or "I'll just know" are too vague.
- Can you do it? Can you initiate and maintain this process?
- When, where and with whom do you want this?

Preserving the Positive Aspects and Preventing the Homeostatic Pull

The homeostatic pull is the tendency for us to go back to what is known. We are comfortable by what is familiar and known, even when it is detrimental to us. In creating affirmations, we also have to take into account how we benefit from keeping the undesirable behavior.

Here are some questions to ask yourself as you develop your well-formed affirmation:

- If you get what you want, will you lose something you have now?
Sometimes people will stay in difficult situation rather than give up the prospect (right) to complain. The complaining - feeling sorry for themselves - is a secondary gain.
- How do you benefit by what you do (the way you are) now?
- How will this new desired state change your life?
- What negative will happen? What positive will happen?
- How will you feel when you achieve this?
- What will your life look like when it occurs?

REFINING YOUR AFFIRMATION

At this point, you might have a goal that is a paragraph or two that takes into account all of these different aspects. Perfect! Now it is time to refine your goal to be most effective.

Keep It Simple and Specific

We are a society of needs and wants. The grass always seems greener on the other side of the fence, so we tend to want everything we don't have. That's understandable, but when developing a well-formed affirmation it is important to keep it short and to the point. Keep your affirmations to a few words. At most, a well-formed goal can be a sentence or two. Your unconscious mind is very similar to a child. A child can only process so much information before their attention is lost. Simple and specific affirmations are easier to memorize and simpler to process by the unconscious mind.

Be Positive

Commonly, people's goals sound like the following: "I am going to try to lose weight", "I want to stop being tired all the time", or "I don't want any more headaches." What's wrong? Each of these statements are stated in the negative! How many people want to be a "loser" or a "quitter"?

"Stop", "headache", "tired"... These are all negative words that create negative images. Your unconscious cannot distinguish between positive and negative. It just acts on what you give it. Let's explore that...

Whatever you do, right this second, do NOT think of a purple elephant. Just keep any image of a great big purple elephant out of your mind... Take some time to do that now. What happened? It's highly likely that you couldn't get that purple elephant out of your thoughts. This is because the mind has to think of the "something" before it can think of "not-the-something". This is demonstrated when, after giving a child a glass of milk, you say "Don't spill the milk." What's the first thing that happens? They spill the milk! They had to first imagine spilling the milk which leads them to actually doing it.

So, in writing a well-formed affirmation, always state it using positive words. Instead of "I don't want to be poor", you can say "I am wealthy." Instead of "lose weight" try "let go of the pounds", or even better "easily let go of the pounds."

Present Tense

Keep the phrasing of your prayer in the present tense. People often use the word "will", but when you use "will have", you keep the results in the future. Phrase it such that it has already happened. Instead of "I will find a new job", say "I now have a new job." It might sound strange since you might not actually have a job right now, but your unconscious will believe it and make it happen.

Eliminate "Try"s

If you're sitting down right now, try to stand up (if you're standing up, try to sit down). Were you successful? No. Why? As a famous puppet once said, "Do or do not, there is no try." You are either standing or sitting, or perhaps you are moving (transitioning) from sitting to standing, but there was no "try". You either do it or don't do it. So, remove any "try"s from your affirmation and **YOU WILL DO IT.**

Turbo Charging Your Suggestions (Laws of Suggestions)

Now that you have refined your goal, you must put it into action.

In the late 1800's, a French pharmacist and psychotherapist, Emile Couè studied hypnotic techniques (and organized the School of Psychology Applied of Nancy) and formulated the "Laws of Suggestion". Using these laws and well-formed suggestions will get you what you want much faster than you can believe.

The Law of Concentrated Attention

"Whenever attention is concentrated on an idea over and over again, it spontaneously tends to realize itself." Repetitive radio and television commercials that cause people to buy the advertised products are typical examples of this law. In many commercials, the listener's attention is gained without knowledge through subliminal stimulations. This is even more effective than persuasion as critical faculties are reduced.

There are numerous ways to repetitively focus your attention, both consciously and unconsciously, on your goal. If you take your goal, write it on a post-it note and stick it to your mirror, you will read the goal every day. Put a copy of your goal in your pocket every day. Each time you reach into your pocket, you will remember, and reinforce, the realization of your goal. Some people even have methods of associating a specific goal with a small (sometimes called aromatherapy). Every time you smell that smell, you reinforce the realization of that goal. The goal will register consciously and unconsciously the often you see it, read it, smell it, hear it, feel it, or taste it.

The Law of Reversed Effect

As noted above, the harder one tries to do something, the less chance one has of success. Trying to recall someone's name, for instance, often can be a difficult task. Regardless of how hard he wills himself to remember the name, he cannot. It seems that, whenever the imagination and the will are utilized, the imagination supersedes the will. This is why you want to remove the "try"s from your goal.

The Law of Dominant Effect

This plays an important role in enabling suggestions to be received in a more meaningful manner. It is based on the axiom that a strong emotion tends to replace a weaker one. Attaching a strong emotion to a suggestion tends to make the suggestion more effective. Thus, when a person is having a pleasurable emotional experience but danger is imminent, the stronger emotion of danger displaces the former, which disappears instantly if the danger is pronounced.

The more you emotionally charge your affirmation, the more it will dominate your conscious and unconscious.

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Classes and seminars to learn how to create well-formed affirmations, and how to used hypnosis and other healing techniques, can be found on the web at www.kivaspirit.org, or call Dr. Gomes directly at (925) 485-9370.

Affirmation Creation Worksheet

What do you want? What is the problem?

Structure the goal/suggestion so it is exact and speaks to one issue, not two or three at once.

Why do you want it?

State this in the positive.

What evidence will you have that you've achieved it? How will you know? What will your life look like, sound like, smell like, feel like?

Make it concrete, not vague like "I'll feel better" or "I'll just know".

If you get what you want, will you lose something you have now? (How do you benefit by what you do or the way you are now?)

Your goal/affirmation:

Affirmation Perfection Checklist

- It is simple?
- Is it phrased as a positive?
- Is it phrased in the present tense?
- All "try"s have been removed?