



Do Self Affirmations Work?

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Do positive self-affirmations actually work? The short answer is 'No' – unless you have a few years to spare and a heavy-duty supply of perseverance. The problem is that self-affirmation is directed at the conscious mind and, unfortunately, your conscious mind has absolutely nothing to do with the way you behave, how you react to people and in situations, how you view the world or, most importantly, the view that you take of yourself. However, as I said, if you throw enough mud at your conscious mind, sooner or later – actually, definitely later – some of that mud will eventually stick and make some sort of positive impression on your subconscious mind. However, you'd have to stick at it religiously and, even then, you'd be facing an uphill battle because your subconscious mind simply won't believe what it's being told if it's view of reality is contrary. Why? Your subconscious mind dictates your beliefs, behaviours and reactions and actually creates your very own version of reality. Self-affirmation is like try to having a snowball fight in hell's fiery furnace!!

However, if you really do want to change your life, some aspect of your life, or change yourself, how you view yourself or some unpalatable behaviour or bad habit, it's your subconscious mind that you need to impress. It holds all the keys, has its hand on all the levers and its feet on all the pedals that either get your life moving in the fast lane or, more normally, grind to a complete and juddering halt.

In order to impress your subconscious mind, you're going to have to become like a little child all over again – not childish but childlike. When you were a child you paid full attention to the reality of the moment, using all of your five senses – that is how you took onboard your current set of beliefs about the world and who you think you are. As an adult, you pay little or no attention to reality – your subconscious mind kinda makes your reality up for you as it goes along! – with all the normal consequences. You've got to come back to your senses, to relearn how to pay more attention to what is before your very eyes, rather than pay attention to the subconscious baggage that's weighing you down.

The normal subconscious is buried in the past. The key to your future is to be found in the present. After all, the present moment is the only place and time where life is actually lived. As such, you have to re-learn how to pay attention to what is actually going on, not what your subconscious mind, looking through its dirty lens of past events, thinks is going on. This re-learning process involves

training yourself how to pay attention to what you see, feel, hear, smell and taste. In practice, what does this entail? First of all, your training has to be done in peace and quiet – you need to make space for yourself where you will not be disturbed for at least ten minutes. For a start, it is easiest to start by working one sense at a time – remember, your normal adult mind is not wired to do what you're going to do so it will react and rebel. You will find your mind wandering and thinking useless thoughts like 'this is silly' or 'this is abnormal' – that's the whole point of course – you want to be abnormally happy and successful.

So, sitting upright, close your eyes and just listen – picking out each sound as you hear it. Next time you sit down you might focus on what you're feeling in your body – and so on. The most challenging of all is to sit still with your eyes open and simply notice what you see – the mind is most likely to wander when your eyes are open. Remember, the point of all this is not to feel calm or relaxed, it is not to slow down but to actually speed your life up – get it running on that fast track. These suggestions are simply for training purposes so that you can become mentally fit, mentally alert, ready to change your own life on your terms.

If you train yourself to focus – because that's what these suggestions are all about – you will become more focused in your daily life. You will become less prone to stress and worry, you will become more alert to the opportunities of the moment, you will become more likely to take the kind of action that you wouldn't have considered possible before – you will take control of your own mind and, in doing so, begin to change your life for the better. In other words, having trained, you will be equipped and ready to perform in a way that will lead you onwards and upwards to the life that you really want.