



# Strengthening Ourselves with Affirmations

## My Progress

- What steps have you taken toward your goals this week?
- How were you able to achieve the steps?
- If not, what got in your way? How will you overcome that barrier?

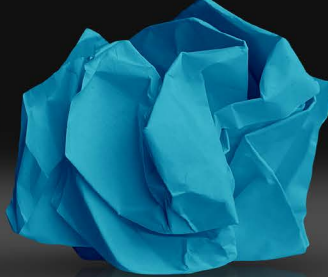
## Let's Discuss

- When you are feeling down or stressed, what do you notice about how you talk to yourself about yourself?
- Is there an automatic thought that runs through your head?
- What happens to how you feel about yourself and how you react when you hear this familiar automatic thought?
- How does this thought affect your situation and symptoms?

## Daniella's Story

"For a while now, but especially after I lost my job and struggled to feed my kids, I have had this negative thought running in my head, *"I am worthless. I can't do anything right."* I have heard my family say that about me and it hurts but I have come to believe it, especially when I am depressed. I think one reason I drink so much is to shut that automatic thought off or escape from it for a bit. Being able to see the bigger picture of my life and changing how I talk to myself, about myself, has helped me feel more capable and confident. My new thought is much kinder and supportive. Instead of being so hard on myself, I say, *"Daniella, you are a strong person and you are a conscientious Mom and hard worker."*

— Daniella, retail worker with depression and alcohol use disorder.



## Good to Know

- **Our life experiences** can alter how we think about ourselves. Chronic stress, stressful events and judgements made by others about us, can make us question our self worth and our ability to cope effectively and can become a barrier to our well-being, healing and growth.
- While it's completely normal to have negative and unhelpful thoughts sometimes, if we aren't aware of them, able to challenge them, or **balance them out with kinder, more positive thoughts**, we can come to doubt ourselves and our self worth.
- **Affirmations** when spoken to ourselves **have the power to change** the way we think and act in our lives in a positive way.
- **Positive affirmations work!** There is plenty of research that's shown affirmations can reduce stress, help build you up, improve your confidence, boost (foster) better problem-solving and help increase our well-being.
- When you are going through a difficult situation, **positive affirmations can help you get through it.**



Short Meeting  
Guide Video  
Tutorial

Old Automatic Thought	New Affirmation
I am lazy.	I work hard and deserve to rest.
I am selfish.	I notice and care about others.
I am a loser.	I am resilient, strong and brave.
I fail at everything I try.	I give myself room to grow.
I make bad choices.	I have the power to make the right choices for myself.
I am weak willed.	I am of strong mind, body, and spirit.
I'll never succeed.	My efforts and hard work will pay off.
I am so ashamed of myself.	No one but me decides how I feel.
Things will never get better.	This is just one moment in time. -or- Each day, I am growing stronger.

## Let's Create a Positive Affirmation

**Positive affirmations are self-chosen statements** you can say aloud to yourself or in your head. Affirmations have the power to motivate you to act on certain things, help you to concentrate on achieving what matters to you, and give you the power to change your negative thinking patterns and replace them with positive thinking patterns.

Positive self-talk can help you regain or increase your self-confidence and see yourself in a more positive light by replacing negative thoughts that make you doubt yourself.

An essential part of creating positive affirmations is not to deny your reality. Affirmations are meant to acknowledge and honor what you are experiencing and how difficult it is, and help you get through the tough time.

- To create your positive affirmation,** select a quality, strength or choice you've made and notice the positive aspects of that. If you struggle finding something positive, take a moment to explore your strengths and what matters to you with your worker.
- Affirmations are typically short, encouraging statements.** Create a short sentence using words that are powerful and meaningful to you. Refine it until it feels right.
- Positive affirmations work best when they're about a specific issue** or concern you are dealing with, i.e., "I am a responsible and reliable employee" vs. "I am a good person."
- Repeat your affirmation.** Say it aloud or in your head several times a day, such as when you are brushing your teeth, preparing a meal, driving to work, and getting ready for bed. Tip: Hearing things outloud can be more effective than just saying them in your head.
- Positive affirmations** may not come naturally to you, especially if you are not used to saying them or thinking

about yourself in a positive way. When you first start repeating your affirmation, it may feel silly to say kind words to yourself, but no matter how you feel at first, keep going. Be patient and give affirmations time to start feeling normal.

- You can also write them down and make sure they're always visible.** Put them on your bathroom mirror, refrigerator, or keep it on your phone, for example.

My Old Automatic Thought	My New Positive Affirmation

- Let's practice saying the new affirmation.** Give it a try with your worker and talk about how it feels, what might get in the way, and, if you want or need to, reword it until it feels right for you, that's OK. Feel free to use the examples above for inspiration or to get started.

### Next Steps

- What did you find helpful about our meeting today?
- What would you like to do for your next step toward your goal(s)?
- Practice creating and saying an affirmation.
- I'd like to do something else \_\_\_\_\_.