

# positive affirmations 17

## for you to know

People send mental messages to themselves all throughout the day. These messages are called “affirmations” because they affirm and reinforce ideas. Sending yourself negative affirmations will increase your anxiety level. Sending yourself positive affirmations will help you to feel more peaceful.

Joshua’s daily anxiety level was pretty high, even when nothing especially stressful was going on. He didn’t understand how his friends could be so carefree when there were so many things he felt anxious about. His counselor suggested that Joshua work on changing his affirmations. Instead of telling himself things that raised his anxiety, he could tell himself things that helped him feel more peaceful. First, Joshua had to identify his current affirmations. Here are some of the messages he noticed that were constantly running through his head:

- “I’ve got so much homework; I’ll never get it all done.”
- “Everyone is so much more confident than me; I’m so insecure.”
- “I don’t have good enough grades; I’ll never get into a good college.”
- “Those kids are laughing; they must be laughing at the way I look.”

Joshua didn’t realize how often he played these affirmations in his head until he started paying attention to them. He also noticed that whenever he heard one of them, he felt a pang of anxiety. He talked with his counselor about his wish to change

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his affirmations from negative to positive. Together, they decided on the following changes:

- “I can get my homework done because I use my time wisely.”
- “I have a lot to be confident about! I’m a kind person, a good friend, and a great soccer player.”
- “My grades are definitely good enough to get me into college; I know there will be a good match for me.
- “People laugh about a million different things. It doesn’t have to be about me.”

Joshua practiced these new, positive affirmations and found himself feeling happier and less anxious. He continued to monitor his self-messages on a regular basis and made a conscious effort to change them from negative to positive.



# more to do

Look at your first list of affirmations. Tell how long you have been sending yourself these messages and where you think you first got these ideas.

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Describe how these messages affect your anxiety level.

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Describe how each of the rewritten positive messages affects your anxiety level.

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Changing affirmations doesn't happen overnight. Many of them may have been with you since you were very young and will take a while to change. Sometimes people feel a little anxious about changing their affirmations. Describe any concerns you have and tell why.

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If you never changed your negative affirmations, how do you think they would continue to affect your anxiety level?

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