

Heather Newman  
THERAPEUTIC MASSAGE

## AFFIRMATIONS & MANTRAS

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Every time you are tempted to react in the same old way, ask if you want to be a prisoner of the past or a pioneer of the future.

— **Deepak Chopra, The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success**





# What is an Affirmation



An affirmation is a **positive, present-tense statement** that is consciously repeated to influence thoughts, emotions, and behaviours. Affirmations are designed to reprogram the subconscious mind, **replacing limiting beliefs with empowering ones.**

Affirmations can be used for self-growth, emotional healing, confidence-building, and overall well-being.

For example:

- ❖ "I am worthy of love."
- ❖ "My body is healing and strong."
- ❖ "I trust myself and my intuition."



# What is a Mantra?

A **mantra** is a **word, phrase, or sound that is repeated**, either silently or aloud, to focus the mind, cultivate inner peace, and shift energy. Traditionally used in meditation and spiritual practices, mantras help quiet mental chatter, enhance mindfulness, and deepen self-awareness.

Unlike affirmations, which are typically full sentences with a specific meaning, **mantras can be a single word (e.g., "peace") or sacred sounds (e.g., "Om").** They work by anchoring the mind in the present and creating a calming, rhythmic pattern of thought.

For example:

- ॐ "So Hum" (I am that—connecting with the universe)
- ॐ "Om Shanti" (Universal peace and tranquility)





# Do they work?

**The short answer is 'YES'.** Imagine standing at the entrance of two paths in a snow-covered landscape. **One path is well-trodden, smooth, and easy to walk, it represents your old thought patterns,** the familiar ways your mind has been conditioned to think. This path may no longer serve you, yet it feels effortless because it has been reinforced over time.

**Now, you decide to take a new path, one covered in deep, untouched snow.** Each step is difficult at first, requiring effort to clear the way. **This path represents the new beliefs and mindset you are creating through affirmations and mantras.** It feels uncomfortable and challenging because it isn't yet familiar.

But as you keep walking, repeating your affirmations, returning to your mantras, and **consciously choosing new thoughts**—you gradually carve a clearer trail. The more you use this new path, the easier it becomes to walk. Meanwhile, the old path, now untouched, begins to fade as fresh snow falls over it. Eventually, it disappears altogether.

**This is the power of consistency.** By intentionally practicing affirmations and mantras, you rewire your brain, replacing outdated beliefs with empowering ones. What once felt difficult becomes second nature, and over time, your new path becomes the only path.



# The Benefits of

I want to take a deeper dive into **what actually happens in our brains** when we use affirmations and mantras. If you're anything like me, with a strong cognitive side, you might be curious about **HOW** using these tools **actually helps to change our brain.**

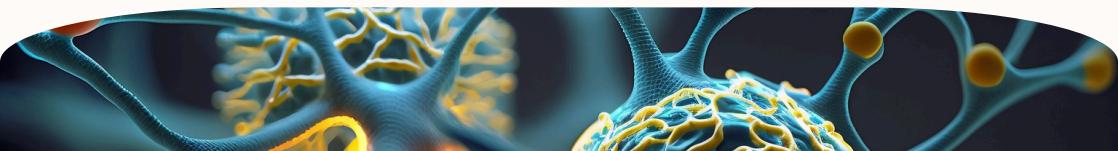
When I began my journey in this area, I needed to understand the science behind all these things that initially I thought sounded so 'woo woo'.

**Louise Hay** introduced me to the power of affirmations, opening my eyes to the deep connection between mind, body, and healing. Her self-healing approach taught me to reframe my thoughts with kindness and intention, helping me navigate my own journey of growth and transformation. **Her work was a turning point for me, showing me that true healing starts from within.**

# Neuroplasticity

Affirmations and mantras work like **carving a new path through fresh snow**—challenging at first, but easier with consistency. When you have a limiting thought about yourself, that replays over and over in your mind, that thought will strengthen. If you think it, you will feel it and that could lead you to behaviour that reinforces that limiting thought – **Thoughts create feelings create behaviour – It's a cycle!**

When we consistently repeat **positive thoughts**, those particular neural pathways will strengthen, making optimism and resilience more automatic over time. **Louise Hay** believed affirmations replace negative subconscious patterns with self-empowering beliefs. Similarly, repeating mantras shifts mental focus, creating peace, clarity, and alignment. Over time, limiting thoughts will disappear – this transformation happens through a process called **synaptic pruning**, the brain's way of clearing out old, unused neural connections to make space for stronger, more frequently used ones. **Just like a path covered in fresh snow eventually disappears when no one walks it, the brain "prunes away" negative thought patterns that are no longer reinforced.** By consistently choosing new, positive thoughts through affirmations and mantras, you reshape your brain, making these empowering beliefs your new default state.



# Reducing Stress & Anxiety

As we have already discussed, repeating positive thoughts actively rewires the brain by **strengthening the new positive neural pathways**. *Louise Hay* emphasised that *self-loving affirmations ease emotional pain and create inner peace*. When we repeat positive thoughts about ourselves, we are **reinforcing these as beliefs**. We begin, over time, to believe them. **We think them, therefore we feel them, creating new empowering beliefs about ourselves.** Remember that negative thoughts create negative feelings like anxiety, which raises cortisol levels around our bodies.

Similarly, **mantras help guide the mind into a meditative state** by activating the parasympathetic nervous system, the body's natural relaxation response. The **rhythmic repetition of sound or words has a calming effect**, soothing the nervous system and lowering stress hormones like cortisol.

Over time, **this practice will shift your baseline from stress to serenity, reducing cortisol levels**.



# Strengthening Emotional Resilience



As our brain begins to reshape because we are repeating our positive thoughts, which is lowering emotional pain and/or anxiety, we are simultaneously building our emotional resilience.

When we repeatedly focus on positive thoughts/mantras which strengthen our neural pathways in the **prefrontal cortex**, the part of the brain responsible for **emotional regulation and decision-making; the rational part of our brain**.

Over time, this helps override fear-based responses from the amygdala, making it **easier to stay calm under pressure**. **Louise Hay** teaches that affirmations are a way to replace self-criticism with self-compassion, reinforcing feelings of self-worth.

Over time, these practices train your brain to **recover from setbacks more quickly, strengthening emotional resilience**.

# 4

## Enhancing Focus & Mindfulness

When we get caught in a cycle of negative thoughts, our minds can feel hijacked by unkind self-talk, sending us into a downward spiral that not only drains our focus and clarity, but can pull us into the past, or propel us into the future.

Repeatedly choosing positive present tense thoughts **activates the prefrontal cortex**, the brain's centre for concentration and cognitive control, making it **easier to stay present**

**Louise Hay** encouraged affirmations as a way to ground oneself in self-love, **preventing the mind from being hijacked by negativity**, which can otherwise trigger stress responses.

Mantras help shift the brain into a calmer, more focused state by providing a **steady, rhythmic focus** that naturally encourages relaxation and mindfulness. When you repeat a mantra, it helps quiet mental chatter. Over time, these practices help the brain to **remain present, clear, and focused**, even in an overstimulating world.



# Supporting Physical & Emotional Healing

**Louise Hay** believed affirmations shift emotional energy, **easing tension that can contribute to illness**. In a very similar way, Mantras vibrations **stimulate the vagus nerve, enhancing relaxation and cellular repair**. Basically, humming can calm you down - this is why a lot of people may hum or whistle when feeling nervous.

If you consider that all feelings are energy, and if we are consumed by negative thoughts creating negative feelings, then that is a lot of 'unpleasant energy trapped in our bodies. This trapped energy can lead to inflammation and illness.

As we have already covered, consistent positive thinking **lowers cortisol, which as we know causes inflammation**. Through consistent practice, these techniques support the body's natural ability to restore itself.





# Bringing it all together

**Affirmations and mantras create a ripple effect—each benefit strengthening the next.**

By **repeating them, you start rewiring your brain (1)**, making positive thoughts more natural.

This **builds emotional resilience (3)**, helping you **handle stress (2)** and feel calmer.

As stress fades, your body relaxes, **making it easier to focus and stay present (4)**.

This **sense of balance supports healing (5)**, as a calm mind helps the body restore itself.

Over time, this practice **shifts your mindset, strengthens inner peace, and becomes a natural part of your life.**



# AFFIRMATIONS

I trust myself and my decisions.

I am safe to be fully myself.

I move through life with clarity and calm.

I release what no longer serves me.

My nervous system is allowed to rest.

I am grounded, present, and steady.



# AFFIRMATIONS

I am grounded, present, and steady.

I honour my boundaries without guilt.

I choose peace over pressure.

I am capable of handling what comes.

My body knows how to return to balance.

I deserve rest without earning it.



# AFFIRMATIONS

I speak my truth with confidence and ease.

I let go of urgency and move at my own pace.

I am resilient, calm, and clear-minded.

I trust the timing of my life.

I allow ease into my day.

I am connected to my body and its wisdom.



# AFFIRMATIONS

I am not responsible for others' emotions.

I choose what feels aligned for me.

I am enough exactly as I am.

I am safe.

I am loved.

I am always enough.



# MANTRAS

I am safe in my body, in my choices, and in my life.

I trust myself and the path I am on, I'm exactly where I am meant to be.

I speak to myself with kindness, respect and love.

Good things are allowed to come to me with ease.

I release what no longer serves me and welcome what supports me.

This too shall pass.

I trust the process.

Everything is always working out for me.

I love who I am becoming.

There is always enough, and I am opening to receiving what I deserve.

# RESOURCES

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**“You can heal your life”**

-Louise Hay

**“Buddha’s Brain: The Practical Neuroscience of Happiness, Love, and Wisdom”**

-Rick Hanson, Ph.D with Richard Mendius MD.

**“The Seven Spiritual Laws of Yoga”**

-Deepak Chopra

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