

Success Principle # 1: Creating a Positive Mindset

'As you think, so shall you become.'

Bruce Lee; 1940–1973, Chinese-American Actor, Director, Author, Martial Artist

According to scientists, your mind processes about 60,000 thoughts a day and 95% of these thoughts are what you thought about yesterday. Since your mind controls everything you do, it makes sense that your thoughts have a massive impact on your actions.

It is also true that your mind acts like a magnet (often referred to as the Universal Law of Attraction), attracting to you more of what you are thinking about. This means you really can 'think' yourself into success or failure!

Creating a positive mindset is therefore the first step in creating long-term success in any area of your life, including your health, fitness and weight loss.

Self-awareness

In order to create a positive mindset, you first need to become aware of your thoughts. With 60,000 thoughts a day roaming through your mind, the trick is to make sure that your thoughts remain positive.

By staying 'tuned' into your thoughts throughout the day, you can catch yourself out if you start to think negative or limiting thoughts. At that point, simply acknowledge what you are thinking and change it to a more positive or empowering thought.

For example, perhaps you are looking in the mirror and your 'internal dialogue' starts to go something like this:

'I have put on so much weight. I look and feel terrible. I will never lose this weight. I am such a failure' – negative thought.

'Ok, I know I have put on weight but I am doing something about it and I will succeed' – acknowledge the negative thought and let it go.

'I am really happy that I have chosen to change to a healthier lifestyle' – positive thought.

Positive self-talk

Changing your thoughts from negative to positive can have a dramatic impact on your life, your confidence and your self-esteem. Many people who first start thinking positive thoughts about themselves find it difficult and uncomfortable as they have become so accustomed to thinking of themselves and/or the world through negative thoughts.

Another great exercise to help you change your thought patterns is to give yourself positive self talk or self praise. Again, this may feel strange or uncomfortable when you first start, but I urge you to stick with it as it will have a profound impact on your life.

To do this exercise make sure you are by yourself and somewhere private. Then, look in a full-length mirror and give yourself five compliments, repeating each compliment five times. If you find it difficult to look in the mirror while you are doing this exercise, then start without a mirror until you get more comfortable. Similarly, if you find it difficult to think of five things to compliment yourself on, then start with the most you can think of and work your way up.

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Some examples of positive self talk include:

- I love that I am a very loving and generous wife/husband/friend
- I love that I have a wonderful smile
- I love that I am always happy
- I love that I have lots of energy
- I love that I am open and honest
- I love my body
- I love who I am.

Positive affirmations

Positive affirmations are short positive statements that are designed to help you change a negative belief or feeling into a positive belief or feeling by 'reprogramming' your thought patterns. They can also assist you in attracting more of what you need (via the Universal Law of Attraction mentioned earlier) and bring positive and permanent changes to your life.

Positive affirmations will help you stay focused on your goals whilst becoming more conscious about your choice of words when talking with other people, and also to yourself via your internal dialogue. The more you practice using positive words and sentences, the more natural it will become.

You can use positive affirmations in any area of your life, but for the purpose of this exercise I am giving you some examples on how to create positive affirmations for your health, fitness and weight loss:

- I am the perfect weight for my body
- I enjoy exercising and it re-energises me
- I make healthy food choices that nourish my body
- I am happy with my body and I love the changes I have made
- Every day I feel stronger, sexier and more alive.

For positive affirmations to work they need to be in the present tense: 'I am' rather than 'I will be', or 'I make' rather than 'I will make'. When you first start creating your positive affirmations, find the things about your health, fitness, weight or other areas of your life that you feel negative or unhappy about right now, and write down how you would like it to be or feel in the present tense.

If you currently have no energy and eat bad food, you would say, 'I feel energetic and make healthy food choices that nourish my body'. Although this is not how you feel right now, by saying your positive affirmation positively and with conviction, your brain will recognise that there is a gap between what you are saying and what you are feeling or doing and will look for ways to close that gap. This may sound a little strange, but positive affirmations really do work.

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I recommend you to find five positive affirmations and repeat each one five times every morning and every evening for each area of your life that you want to work on. If you want to increase the power of the affirmations, here are a few tips:

- **Mirror exercise** – positive affirmations can be done in the same way as the positive self talk exercise: in the mirror. Look yourself firmly in the eyes and say your affirmations aloud.
- **Written exercise** – write down each of your affirmations 10 times every day before you say them aloud; this helps really keep them at the forefront of your mind.
- **Singing exercise** – the way you say your affirmations can also make your affirmations more powerful; you can sing your affirmations aloud or start off by just saying them out loud with passion and conviction.

Changing your old negative habits into new positive habits

Science has proven that it only takes between 21 and 30 days to create a new habit, so be patient with the above exercises and commit to making these a part of your daily routine for at least 30 days. I promise you that they are well worth your time investment and the rewards will be great. After all, your success is only limited by your thoughts and your imagination.

While practicing any of the above exercises, if your inner dialogue starts to drift into a negative thought process and you find it difficult to switch to a positive thought, try changing the voice of your inner dialogue to Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck or someone you find really funny; it will be much harder to take your negative thoughts seriously!

Another trick to help you if you are feeling a little negative is to change your physiology by standing up straight, smiling or laughing (even if you don't feel like it), and tilting your head so you are looking slightly upwards. It is much more difficult to feel negative in this position than if you were to look down, frown and slouch over. Try both positions right now and see for yourself how your physiology can impact on the way you think and feel.