

Affirmations

Affirmations are a powerful psychological tool that we can use to help us to overcome habitual inner dialogue that inhibits or limits us.

For example, approaching an interview, you may find that a gremlin voice in your head starts to tell you, repeatedly: *"I'm no good at interviews. This will be a disaster."*

Rationally, you may know this not to be true (or not wholly true...), but nevertheless, the persistent inner voice can be very debilitating, and can cause you anxiety that then sabotages your preparation and delivery.

Affirmations target this inner dialogue directly, by replacing the habitual negative message with a habitual positive one. (There's a lot of clever stuff about neurology that underpins this.)

How to use affirmations

- 1 Identify a future situation that causes you to feel weak in the stomach (eg a forthcoming interview) or a recurrent and habitual negative thought that inhibits your performance.
- 2 Identify any negative inner dialogue that you are using to sustain that feeling (eg *"I'm no good at interviews."*)
- 3 Write out the strongest positive statement, contradicting your negative inner voice, which you can believe to be true (eg *"When well prepared, I can be quite confident in an interview."*)
- 4 Repeat the affirmation to yourself, 3 times in a row, several times a day over the days leading up to the event. If you notice your old habitual self criticism cutting in, laugh at it and interrupt it with the affirmation (Eg if you notice that you are beginning to think *"I'm no good at interviews,"* interrupt with: *"Good try... however, when well prepared, I can be quite confident in an interview."*)
- 5 Repeat the affirmation immediately before the event or in times of need, as appropriate.