

The “I Am” & “I Have” Self-Hypnosis

The Power of Positive Thinking

As you’ve probably recognized from your own life, healing the body doesn’t necessarily happen if the mind is unhealthy or full of doubt. This body-mind connection can exert a powerful influence over almost any aspect of your life, from helping destroy deadly tumors to helping resolve a conflict at work that makes you feel ill at ease. Worrying and doubting are easy. Creating change requires courage from you, both to let go of your skepticism and to take steps toward wellness and wholeness.

The first step to learning any type of healing is adopting a positive outlook. You can achieve an optimistic attitude by using your mind to direct your thoughts.

You can use strong verbal messages and visual images to direct your mind. These symbols penetrate your unconscious mind to become embedded in your brain and create new pathways of thought and action. They provide your mind with new avenues for insight and opportunity. They express an openness to receiving all the exciting changes that your mind has to offer. But how do you find the right words and images for you?

Creating Positive Phrases

Once you can picture the changes you want to create, strengthen this image with inner words. Attaching words to your goals will help you more clearly establish them, as well as replace negative self-talk that could otherwise get in the way.

When you begin to work with your own personal phrases, keep the following in mind:

- State your phrases positively. (“I am full of health,” not “I am no longer sick.”)
- State your phrases in the present, as though you already have what you want. (“I have access to my own healing power,” not “I will have”)
- Make your phrases simple and to the point. A one-sentence statement is usually best. (“I am strong and healthy.”)
- Make your phrases exciting. You want your subconscious and conscious minds to grab hold of it and want it. (“I am powerful and full of energy. I get stronger every day.”)
- The phrase should be about you, not others. (“I am healing and accepting of prayer,” not “I want people to pray for me.”)

- Make your phrase something that is achievable. Avoid sabotaging yourself with a goal that seems unachievable. Choose a first step toward a long-range goal. For example, if your goal is to work out for three hours every day so that you look like Arnold Schwarzenegger by the end of two months, you might be sabotaging yourself. Try choosing more plausible time frames and a physique that is believable to you.
- Your phrase should simply be a statement of what you want to create. It should not include the process by which you think you'll get there. This important. If your goal is to be healthy and full of energy, state that.

After you have a clear phrase, let the universe figure out the miracles that need to happen in order to bring your goal about. Don't get caught up in the how it will happen part. Your task is to follow the nudges from your intuition; they will indicate the actions and steps you should take.

Creative Visualization

If you've ever spent an hour watching network TV (and who hasn't?), you know the power of visual images-- and you know that advertisers know it, too. So why not create your own internal advertising? Sell yourself on the idea of your own potential by painting a picture of it in your mind.

When you visualize, you form a mental image of what you want to create in your life. You can use positive mental images of your self and your life to create a better self-image and to improve your personal experiences. For example, if you want to lose weight you can hold an image in your mind's eye of how you want to look. Fill in all the little details of your experience. You can use your ability to visualize or conjure up the images and feelings of yourself as anything you want to accomplish.

Creative visualization is the umbrella term for the ability to imagine your desired future. When it is focused in a way that helps the mind and body work together to create healing or achieve any desire, it is called guided imagery. Much attention has been paid to guided imagery as a form of healing, or at least slowing, serious illness, because it was originally developed for that purpose.

Guided Imagery: The Mind as Healer

"Our emotions and words let the body know what we expect of it, and by visualizing certain changes, we can help the body bring them about," says best-selling author Bernie Siegel in his book *Love, Medicine, and Miracles* (Harperperennial Library, 1990). This idea is the basic concept behind guided imagery, which enables you to improve your health, and your life, by imagining it in more positive terms.

Research shows that, performed properly, guided imagery can help lower blood pressure: reduce anxiety, depression, and physical pain: bolster the immune system: ease nausea during chemotherapy: lower allergic responses: and speed recovery from cuts, burns, fractures, and surgery. It also improves performance in sports and even certain types of mental activities.

When guided imagery is most effective, it encourages you to imagine with all of your senses. In addition to using images and thoughts, guided imagery involves imagining how things sound, feel, taste, and smell. Because sensory input is how the mind and imagination tend to take in information, guided imagery can go straight to the unconscious mind, bypassing all those words that can get in the way of direct communication between mind and body.

Another reason why guided imagery seems to be so effective at helping the body is because it involves the emotions. In fact, guided imagery seems to work best when using images that strongly affect the emotions. Similar to how images and other sensory input bypasses reason and travels directly to the unconscious mind, emotions also go directly to the unconscious mind. In addition, emotions carry a history with them that interacts with the body's systems. For example, if you imagine spending a happy, sunny day with someone you love, your body also re-experiences the same joyful, relaxed, and ecstatic physical responses.

Because emotions are so personal, everybody uses somewhat different ways of accessing effective images during the process. Some people prefer to follow imagery that someone else has created, whereas others create their own images. Either way, the important thing is to relax and let the imagination do the work. Of course, the more you practice, the easier it gets and the more effective it becomes.

Guided imagery works on the principal that images are events to the body. Sensory images are the language of the body, which it understands automatically and doesn't question. Belleruth Naparstek, author of *Staying Well with Guided Imagery* (Warner, 1994), explains that the first operating principle of imagery is, "Our bodies don't discriminate between sensory images in the mind and what we call reality." Although images don't impact the body with the same intensity as real events, they create the same basic sense of experience. This sense, though perhaps a bit weaker than real experience, is nevertheless felt throughout the body.

When most effective, guided imagery occurs in an altered mental state similar to directed daydreaming, meditation, or self-hypnosis. The person gradually enters a state in which he pictures and experiences imagery that helps to heal or motivate him. A cancer patient might picture fighter jets shooting down harmful cancer cells, whereas an athlete might imagine a powerful puma giving him or her grace, speed, and strength. A person undergoing physical therapy might envision ideal childhood moments of running freely and then picture himself walking independently in the future.

This healing technique underscores the importance of imagination and creativity in accessing our higher minds. It also reaffirms an essential point: you can use your mind to help and improve your body and your life.

So spend at least five to ten minutes, twice a day to doing this creative process. Find a spot where you will be free from distraction to relax and sit. Say your phrase in your mind, or out loud if you prefer, as if it has already happened and feel the good feelings from having it. Be grateful for already receiving it. Having an attitude of gratitude. Focus on what you want and what you don't want will fall away.

Remember, you are the master of your life and the universe is answering your every command.