



Affirmations have the incredible ability to enhance health and change the way we think and feel.

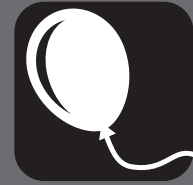
1. With your black marker, quickly draw a large silhouette of a person on your paper.
2. With your green marker, draw and label all parts of the human body that can be positively impacted by authentic affirmations. Then list the health benefits next to each body part. (Example: Draw a smile and next to it write person feels happier.)
3. Draw and list as many health benefits as a result of affirmations you can think of next to the silhouette, using words and graphics.
4. The group who identifies the most items on the paper wins! Hurry... you only have a few minutes. If there are duplicate answers within your group, neither will count.

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Effects of Affirmations on Our Bodies

“Your brain is your greatest resource—use it by design to help you achieve health, happiness, and success!”⁹

—Arlene R. Taylor PhD

- Self-affirmation improves problem-solving performance in stressed individuals⁹
- Increased feelings of love, empathy and connection
- Ability to manage the source of stress
- Increases life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower distress
- Reduces risk of death from cardiovascular disease¹⁰
- Better coping skills¹⁰
- Feelings of connection and wanting to spend time in social situations¹¹
- Boosts performance in academics¹²
- Healthy heart¹⁰
- Better relationships¹³
- Kindness
- More peace
- Feeling loved
- More relaxed
- Thoughts improved
- Not overwhelmed
- Feeling accomplished
- Feeling worthwhile
- Feeling joy
- Confidence
- Gives hope
- Empathy



Signs and Symptoms of Affirmations

“A positive attitude causes a chain reaction of positive thoughts, events and outcomes. It is a catalyst and it sparks extraordinary results.”¹⁴

–Wade Boggs

Behavioral Symptoms

Connections with others
Increased openness to change behaviors
Decrease of defensive biases⁹
Happier
More confident¹¹
Optimistic
Clear thoughts
More encouraged

Physical Symptoms

Higher energy
Decreased racing heart rate¹⁶
Oxytocin released¹²
Less Nausea
Less stomach cramping

Emotional Symptoms

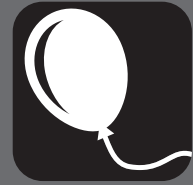
Less suicidal thoughts¹⁰
Greater relaxation
Increased self-control¹⁴
Less depression¹⁰
Greater sense of belonging
Higher self-esteem
Regulating stressful emotion¹⁰

Social Symptoms

Recognition and bonding
Formation of trust between people¹⁴
Increased feeling of love and empathy¹⁵

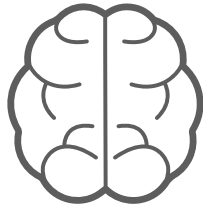
Cognitive Symptoms

Problem-focused coping strategies
Lowered problems with mental health
Less anxious¹⁰
Less stressed
Less worrying
Seeing positivity in world
Stability¹⁴
More processing



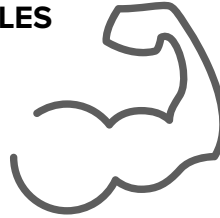
Possible Effects of Affirmations on the Human Body

BRAIN



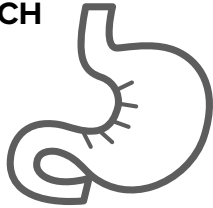
Oxytocin released, more processing, clearer thinking¹²

MUSCLES



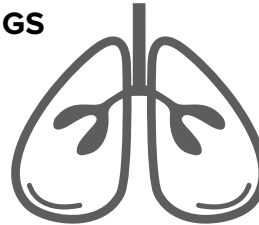
Less tension, calm, relaxed

STOMACH



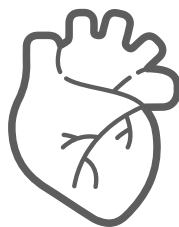
Less stomach cramping, less nausea

LUNGS



Decreased risk of coughs

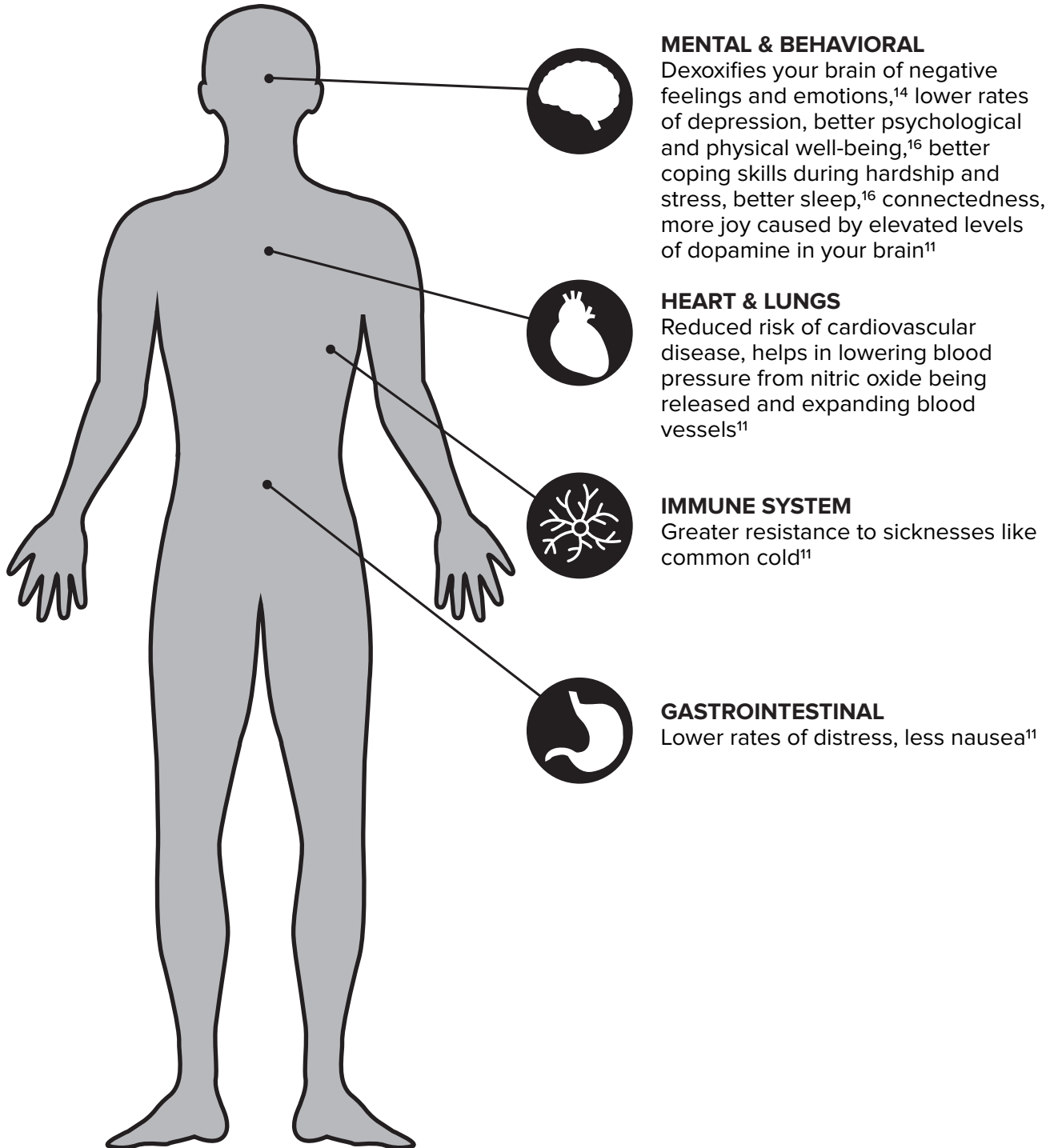
HEART



Increased feelings of love and empathy, connection, helps in lowering blood pressure, reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, protects against harmful effects of stress on problem-solving¹⁰

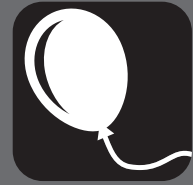


How Affirmations Affect Human Body Systems



For more information about Dignity Revolution, visit DignityPledge.com.

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Dignity Pledge

1. I pledge to be kind.
2. I pledge to be loving.
3. I pledge to be peaceful.
4. I pledge to be patient.
5. I pledge to be a person of goodness.
6. I pledge to bring joy everywhere.
7. I pledge to be a person of faithfulness.
8. I pledge to be a person of gentleness.
9. I pledge to have self-control.
10. I pledge to be a friend to all.



As I shared about embarrassing moments before, I failed to mention one involving Lois. You'll soon understand why I hesitated to share it.

Like many small towns, the private and public middle schools came together to form one school for high school in my hometown. As a freshman I was with a new group of guys trying to make friends, and I invited them to our family's cottage in Wisconsin. We were all having a great time together water skiing and swimming.

After the water activities, we gathered around the picnic table to play cards. All of a sudden I noticed my sister, Lois, coming towards us from the cottage. My friends had never met her before and she was doing something incredibly embarrassing. I tried to get her to stop by holding up my hand, but she couldn't see me. Her handicap has severely affected her eyesight and glasses can't correct it. So, she kept walking toward us. What embarrassed me was what she was wearing over the top of her head, nose, and mouth. It was an athletic supporter.

There I was with my new friends trying to fit in, when Lois came walking up with a jock strap stretched over her face like a mask you'd see worn in an operating room. Panic gripped me. If the jock strap wasn't bad enough, Lois said, "You guys wanna play doctor?"

I cringed and braced for my friends' reactions. They weren't sure how to react, whether to laugh or not. One of them asked, "Bob, who is this?"

I'm ashamed to tell you I didn't stand up for my sister. I struggled with my own identity and wanted to fit in so badly. "I don't know," I said. "It must be some neighbor girl my mom is taking care of."

I denied she was my own sister. I made believe I didn't know her. I didn't have enough guts to stand up against the system. I didn't have enough courage to stand up for the dignity, worth, and beauty of my own flesh and blood. I thought their approval was life to me. I'll never forget the guilt and emotional turmoil I felt by denying my relationship with my own sister!

Never again. I will never again deny Lois of the dignity she deserves. That's why I speak, and that's why I'm writing this book.

Every person has value. No one deserves to be bullied, harassed, left alone, put down, mocked or left feeling worthless. And no one deserves to feel abandoned, invisible or rejected like I rejected my sister that day.

If you're not willing to stand up against the system, would you please go tell my sister, Lois, she's not valuable or gifted? Would somebody please have enough courage to say, "Lois, I'm sorry, you don't have what it takes. Lois, you don't have a nice body, a clear complexion or nice hair. Lois, you're not very intelligent and you'll never go to college. You'll never have a boyfriend, never drive a car and you'll never own a home. Lois, you're just not valuable."

Would you say, "Lois, I hate to tell you this, but not only are you not gifted, you're not even normal. According to society's system for determining self-worth, you're nothing but luggage. Lois, if we get too much luggage, if we get too many handicapped people in society, it's going to drain us financially and become a burden. You know what happens to excess luggage, don't you? We'll simply have to eliminate some. We'll just call it mercy killing, because what kind of an identity can a retarded person have anyway?"

Sounds harsh, doesn't it? Who would ever say such a thing? I love the campaigns to get rid of the "R" word. But believe it or not, as I've traveled around the world I've actually met people who have said they would say these words to Lois. Some have joked, but others have said with complete sincerity, "I'll tell her because it's true."

It seems hard to believe anyone being so cruel, but it's more common than we'd like to admit. This kind of societal system and belief has been demonstrated in other ways throughout history. This type of societal system is unacceptable and unfair, and I fear if the system isn't reversed through a Dignity Revolution, it may continue.

Excerpt from *Dignity Revolution: Standing Up for the Value of Every Person* (Lenz 23).

For more information about Dignity Revolution, visit DignityPledge.com.

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How to Write a Positive Affirmation

1. Start with "You are..."
2. Use present tense
3. Be positive
4. Use powerful, authentic words
5. Be specific

Make affirmations for yourself and others!

