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Generous donations from friends like you allow us to make Unity literature available to those most in need of spiritual encouragement. You may give at unity.org/donatenow.

When Unity was founded more than 130 years ago, it was not to establish a church or to convert anyone to a new belief system. Instead, founders Charles and Myrtle Fillmore wanted to share what they were learning about spiritual principles in the hope they could supplement and enhance others’ understanding.

To disseminate their discoveries, they started a magazine, then another. Soon they were publishing books, then innumerable pamphlets, and eventually Unity created booklets like this one.

Our intention with this booklet is exactly the same as the Fillmores’—to share with you the tools we have discovered and are using on our own spiritual journeys, hoping they will serve you too.

Tools are not exactly the same as teachings. Teachings are ideas, and tools put them into action. Here we have assembled down-to-earth, how-to steps you can practice in daily life to become more aware of your oneness with God, to awaken to your spiritual essence, and to nourish your soul.

We hope this booklet will help you create spiritual practices that will serve you in new ways or expand those you already have. Change them, tweak them, and make them your own, and no doubt you will think of others. Practicing the presence is the most effective way you can integrate your spiritual being into your human experience.

Your Friends in Unity
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WHAT IS AN AFFIRMATION?
An affirmation is a declaration of spiritual Truth, supporting us in the same way an anchor holds a boat steady in its position on the water. An affirmation is a claim on Truth, our demand on Truth to establish itself in mind and heart.

Affirmations are often partnered with denials (described in the following section) as a practice of first clearing away or releasing a false belief and then affirming a statement of our divine nature. Together they are a valuable and rewarding tool.

EXAMPLES OF AFFIRMATIONS
If you’re in bed with the flu, you can affirm:

- Divine life is my true state of being.
- Every cell in my body is thrumming with divine life.

HOW AFFIRMATIONS WORK
An effective affirmation is not wishful or magical thinking, and—this is important—it is not a prediction of how things will turn out. Rather, it is a statement of what is true here and now.

Affirmations remind us of the spiritual principles behind life’s events, like the sun shining behind the clouds.

An example might be about money. We don’t affirm we’ll be rich someday. Instead, we affirm what is true now and always.

- The key to prosperity lies within me.
- I claim and affirm there is plenty of time and money, plenty of possibilities for me to thrive.
- I open my mind in abundance. I open my heart in appreciation.
- I cultivate a plenty consciousness.

Affirmations state the truth of the good that is always ours.

—Rev. Linda Martella-Whitsett
I was going through a difficult transition in my life. I had no self-esteem and minimal self-confidence, accompanied by a severe lack of self-worth. I was in search of an anchor. I found myself in a Unity church, where my spiritual journey began 39 years ago.

The first class I took was based on H. Emilie Cady's book from 1903, *Lessons in Truth*, considered to be a Unity foundational course.

The early lessons emphasized the need to lift our thinking to a higher level and explained the simple concept of affirmations and denials. Denials encourage us to turn away from negative thinking. Affirmative statements replace our negative thoughts and beliefs with Truth.

I began to use denials and affirmations in my daily life. Cady wrote that denials have an erosive or dissolving tendency. I definitely needed to dissolve the negative image I had of myself. Affirmations build up strength, courage, and power—just what I needed to rebuild my life.

I developed a mental file of short, easy-to-remember statements of Truth that I could draw on whenever I reverted to negative thinking that did not honor and support my innate divinity. The ability to change my thinking released me from the grip of despair.

I have collected many affirmations throughout the years. One I invoke regularly is in the area of relationships. I learned it from Rev. Tom Thorpe, one of my early instructors:

*Let divine love and wisdom speak through me.*

I use it most often in difficult conversations before responding to the other person.

I also gathered many of my go-to affirmations in those early years from the work of longtime Unity minister Dr. Catherine Ponder. I found them particularly helpful in the area of prosperity.

*God is my Source.* It's a simple but profound statement of Truth about myself and the infinite abundance of the universe.

You don't have to undertake serious spiritual study to use this technique. Affirmations can be gleaned from anywhere. For example, I like the recent book title *You Are Enough* (HarperOne, 2020) by Panache Desai, and it translates easily into a personal affirmation: *I am enough*.

Short, simple, to the point, and above all, *true*!

This is not simply positive thinking. Our ability to vocalize is vital to our use of affirmations. We must speak them as often as we can because words bring thoughts into existence. Through repetition, and aloud whenever possible, we internalize our affirmations and make them our own.
WHAT IS A DENIAL?
Eliminating thoughts and beliefs we have come to regard as false, limiting, or negative. True denial releases the energy expended in holding on to nonproductive ideas.

Denials are often partnered with affirmations. First, we clear away or release a false belief, then we affirm an important truth.

EXAMPLES OF DENIALS
These are denials about money:

- I release the idea that there is not enough, that I could run out of time or money.
- I am not subject to the mass consciousness of fear and insecurity with every turn of the market.
- False notions of lack and limitation have no hold on me.
- My value is not defined by my present net worth.

UNDERSTANDING DENIALS
Spiritual denial is not the same as the psychological term that means “refusing to face reality.” We never suggest denying the facts or glossing over feelings.

This spiritual form of denial—a term coined more than a century ago—means “to release or renounce.” It is disidentifying with and eliminating thoughts and beliefs we have come to regard as false, limiting, or negative.

In this sense, we can deny:

- Any belief about the permanence of our circumstance or the length of time it is taking to resolve
- Negative interpretations of the circumstance, such as making it mean that something is broken, wrong, or missing in our lives
- Identification with the condition, such as naming it my disease, or making the condition a bigger part of our lives than it actually is
- Beliefs about what I have been told and what everyone knows about a condition, such as claiming seasonal allergies because everyone has them
- Self-punishing beliefs about God and about human nature

—Rev. Linda Martella-Whitsett
Thoughts have the power to shape our experience of life. I made this amazing discovery in my late twenties when I began attending a Unity church. A part of me had intuitively known the power of positive thinking, yet hearing it articulated felt empowering in a completely new way.

I joyfully claimed my good in affirmations but remained a little unclear about denials. They felt awkward, but affirmations alone didn’t feel like a complete process.

Then I read the story in Mark 9 in which a father brings his son to Jesus for healing. In the text, “Jesus said to him … ‘All things can be done for the one who believes.’ Immediately the father of the child cried out, ‘I believe; help my unbelief!’”

What a moment of clarity this father had! I can easily state positive beliefs, but it can be difficult to discern the layers of unbelief accumulated throughout years of listening to limiting messages from family, the media, social peers, and even religion. Limitation and doubt arise when I give power to temporary conditions in my health, circumstance, or relationships. To clear the clutter of unbelief, I must first identify the thought and then withdraw the power of attention and focus from it. That is a denial.

Often my unbelief stems from doubt about the fullness of my divinity and access to my divine powers. I use two practices to “help my unbelief” and reveal the limited thought that is ready to be released.

First, I sit in the Silence and speak out loud the affirmation I am using. I ask Spirit, “What unbelief remains?” The buried doubt may pop up then or later as I wash dishes or shower or drive to work. I usually feel a moment of aha as the thought vibrates within me, letting me see what has been in my way.

Another practice is to write the affirmation I’m using on a clean piece of paper. Then I allow my mind to wander as I write every thought I have that is unlike my affirmation. As I write freely, one thought will again resonate as the unbelief that has been blocking my good.

Once I identify my unbelief, I craft a statement to deny it power, followed by a statement of Truth, like this: Thoughts that I am less than enough have no power to diminish the Truth of my being. I am divine wisdom, love, and life in expression.

Every time unbelief returns to my conscious thought, I deny it power. I speak the denial with the same persistent faith I hold when speaking the affirmation to claim my good. Once I stop feeding unbelief with my attention, it begins to fade. Denial opens the way, and affirmation brings my good into manifestation.