





## Self-Care for the MIND: Developing Positive Affirmations

Affirmations are carefully crafted thoughts and emotions that are internalized into your self-concept. The first two steps identify our affirmations; the next steps help plant these affirmations in our mind.

**Step 1:** Identify some of your unrealistic hurtful self-expectations related to parents, students, colleagues, and/or the profession. These are akin to negative forms of self-talk and when exposed, often indicate it is impossible to meet the standards we set for ourselves. These often contain words such as always, never, must, should, no one. List some of your primary hurtful self-expectations in column one of the blank table. (See examples in the completed table on the next page.)

**Step 2:** Take each hurtful self-expectation and change it into an alternative belief that feels right to you. These affirmations should be stated in the positive, be succinct yet specific, stated as if it already exists, and be only about you. (See the completed table for examples.)

 Step 1: Examples of Unrealistic Hurtful Self-expectations	Step 2: Examples of Positive Self-affirmations 

 <b>Examples of Unrealistic Hurtful Self-expectations</b>	<b>Examples of Positive Self-affirmations</b> 
<p>No matter how well I teach, it will never be good enough.</p>	<p>I am good enough today as the person I am. While I will strive to do better in my work and life, I try to accept who I am today.</p>
<p>Nobody cares how hard I work, how much I care about my students.</p>	<p>I am a caring, empathetic, person who is deserving of self-compassion.</p>
<p>I have to be successful with all my students all the time. I must be an outstanding teacher, better than other teachers I know.</p>	<p>I am doing the best I know how to do, given the person I am today and the situation I am dealing with. When I know a better way and can do it, I will.</p>
<p>I can't feel good about myself unless I am completely successful in alleviating students' problems.</p>	<p>I accept myself as I am – knowing, that as I do, I feel more secure and confident within myself and with others.</p>

**Step 3:** Follow one of these recommendations to help your affirmations take root as part of your self-concept:

- Select one affirmation a week for the next month. Or, select one affirmation that is really important to you and that you would like to focus on. Write it down and place it somewhere you will see it multiple times throughout the day.
- Tell someone your affirmation. We are more likely to meet our goals and act on our intentions when we share them with others.
- If you are a practitioner of meditation, choose one affirmation and focus on it with increasing clarity and intention while practicing a breathing or meditation technique. Continue repeating the affirmation to yourself while visualizing what it will be like and feel like when the affirmation has become real.