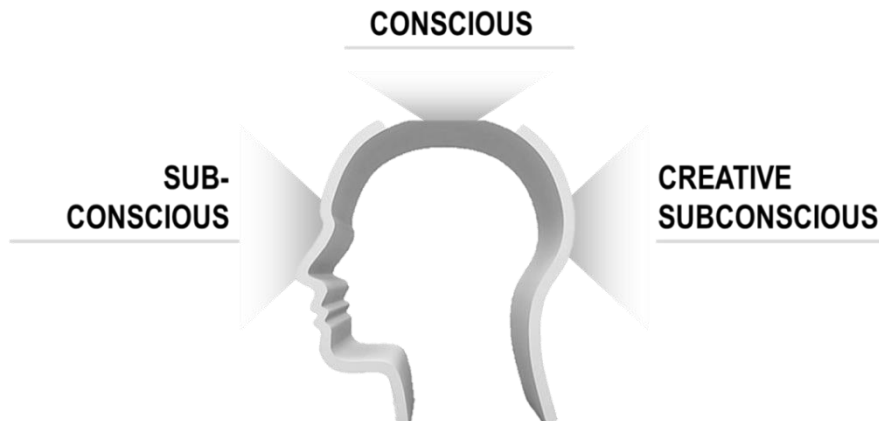


# AFFIRMATION GUIDE

## Ed Rapp's Personal Notes from The Pacific Institute

The Pacific Institute (TPI) was an amazing experience. From my perspective, it could be summed up as; if you can **see it** (visualize), **repeat it** (affirmations), you can **be it**. It is all about creating your future versus just letting your future evolve. Incredibly, we spent two and a half days with the TPI founder, Lou Tice, and he worked from one simple overhead slide summarized below.



The mind's inner-play between these three functions is what keeps you as you are, or when you apply the principles taught by TPI, creates positive change. All meaningful and lasting change starts first on the inside.

### THE CONSCIOUS PERFORMS FOUR FUNCTIONS

1. Forms your perception of things
2. Conducts an association – asking yourself have I seen, smelled, tasted anything like this before
3. Conducts an evaluation – judging the probabilities that may occur in the future based on past experience
4. Makes decisions – should I do something or not

All of these functions occur at the conscious level of your mind. Habits start at the conscious level but over time, through repetition, you relegate this over to the subconscious and no longer have to think about it (you don't think about the fact that you brush your teeth with your right hand).

### THE SUBCONSCIOUS STORES INFORMATION AND EMOTION.

It is your self-image; the truth as you know it. It handles everything that is automatic. It is why you don't have to think about certain things you do. It is what keeps you the way you are. Left un-stimulated, it self regulates you to your vision of who you are. It does no more than it is required to do.

Left untrained, your subconscious just becomes an accumulation of the inputs you have received throughout life (from your parents, teachers, friends, etc.).

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### YOUR ATTITUDES ARE DEVELOPED – YOU ARE NOT BORN WITH THEM.

Thoughts accumulate to form your attitude. In the beginning, it is balanced; however, as time passes, it leans to the positive or negative depending on the balance of inputs received (and accepted) from the outside. We behave and react not in accordance with the truth, but in accordance to the truth as we believe it to be (as stored in our subconscious). Your self-image is shaped by self-talk (affirmations) and daily performance reality. Human beings on average pass through their accomplishments too quickly, too lightly, to have it affect their image in a positive way. If you change the way you think, you can change the way you act (Banister and the four-minute mile, Fosbery jumping 7 feet, etc.)

### CREATIVE SUBCONSCIOUS

The creative subconscious only kicks in when you have a conflict or tension; when your perception of your reality is different from that which is stored in your subconscious (cognitive dissonance). It only does what it is asked to do (ask the kids to wash the dishes, and they only washed the dishes, leaving the pots and pans). The creative subconscious will work hard to resolve this conflict as your mind works to self regulate your life back to your belief level. It is similar to the way a thermostat works – it allows deviations within a range, but once you get outside of the range, it self regulates you back within the range; however, we regulate by anxiety or tension.

When within our band (or comfort zone) we operate in a free flowing way, without getting anxious. However, when we move out of the comfort zone, the first tendency is to move back within the comfort zone (comfort zones are good as a moral guide; however, they are restrictive if you are trying to create positive change). When you feel out of place your tendency is to block input, as you want to seek the familiar. This does not spur growth and development. The creative subconscious will get you back to the “way you are” or to “who you affirm to be” with the winner being the one that resides more clearly in your mind. When the creative subconscious does kick in (be it to get you back to normal or to your vision), it performs four functions.

- **Maintains sanity / reality** ... Just get up and act like the person you know you are without thinking about it. It is a check and balance system.
- **Solves and resolve conflicts** ... when the outside (your perception) doesn't match the inside (your subconscious) it works to resolve this conflict.
- **Creates energy** ... when the conflicts exists it releases energy to solve the problem, but also shuts down quickly when the problem is resolved.
- **Teleological** ... Seeing the image of the future, picture oriented. The process works like a guided heat seeking missile. Once the missile is locked on to the target, it's almost impossible for the target to get away. The subconscious literally continues to seek the identified vision or target until it is achieved.

So in principle, in order for you to grow, you have to create conflict or a problem for yourself. Any lasting and meaningful change starts on the inside and is initiated by goal setting that creates the appetite to learn. Goals are familiarizing yourself with your future and when they are vivid, your mind will naturally seek the familiar. The more vivid the goal in your mind, the more likely it will occur. Translating goals into action is activated through the discipline of self-talk. As you set goals, you do not have to know how you are going to achieve them, set it and let the creative subconscious figure it out.

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Goals are very different from a “dream.” People that have dreams in their subconscious without the affirmations and vividness that causes conflict will simply have unfulfilled dreams. To realize your dreams, you have to have it all; the dream, the vivid image and supporting affirmations.

The concepts taught by TPI are based on the way the mind works. Humans think in three dimensions (past, present, future) and through **words, pictures or images** and **emotions or feeling**. Every thought is assimilated into the neuron of the brain. Thoughts accumulate over time to become beliefs. Experiences don't need to be repeated to become a belief. They can arrive at a belief through other techniques such as visualization. Reality from your minds perspective is created through the following formula.

$$\mathbf{I} \text{ (imagination) } + \mathbf{V} \text{ (vividness) } = \mathbf{R} \text{ (reality on the subconscious level)}$$

You need to be disciplined in controlling your self-talk to be realistic and positive. It is all about functioning at your belief level, not your potential level. Creating a clear picture with emotion can enhance the vividness. There are four levels of self-talk including:

1. **Negative resignation** ... I can't; no way; that's impossible; too hard.
2. **Recognizing a problem with no intent to fix it** ... I should stop smoking; I should go on a diet.
3. **I quit, I stop, no more.**
4. **Teleological** ... Giving yourself a picture of what you are seeking. As you visualize the new, you become dissatisfied with the present.

However, you also have to understand that others will also attempt to influence your view of reality through their thoughts, words and actions. But you do have a blocking mechanism. Before something is accepted into the neuron of your brain, you must accept it as fact (i.e., give sanction to the opinion of another.) Your system also has a **reticular activating system** that functions as a filter. It keeps you sane (if you could sense all the things going on around you, you would go crazy). It is selective on what it lets through. It has the ability to lock things out (**scotomas**) that are not of value to you. It only lets information through what is significant to you.

What determines the speed of success is the vividness of the image? It is positive emotion that expands who you are. **THE FOUR STEPS OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS ARE:**

- **Discover** ... figure out what you want
- **Visualize** ... see the dream
- **Design** ... creative subconscious takes over
- **Deliver** ... realize the change

Self talk turns into action when you move to level 4 and execute it through affirmations. It is all about taking the unconscious to the conscious level to create change.

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**AFFIRMATIONS ARE A STATEMENT OF FACT OR STATEMENT OF BELIEF FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE.**

They should be:

- **Personal:** Affirmations are written with the word "I" in them. You can only affirm for yourself.
- **Positive:** Always describe what you want in your affirmation. Describe what you want to move forward, not what you want to move away from.
- **Present tense:** Affirmations are written as though they are happening right now.
- **Indicates Achievement:** Eliminate words such as, can, will, should and want. Include phrases like I am, I do or I have.
- **No comparison:** Comparing yourself to others is ineffective. This is a personal process and based on you.
- **Action Words:** Use terms that trigger action such as easily, quickly, thrive on, energetically and , confidently in your affirmations.
- **Emotion Words:** The more positive emotion you feel when you are picturing an accomplished goal, the faster the affirmation will work for you.
- **Accuracy:** Be specific. If your affirmation is to exercise, describe what type and when.
- **Balance:** Set goals that balances all areas of your life.
- **Realistic:** After you have set your affirmations close your eyes and visualize them. Make sure you can see yourself achieving them. You need to be able to see it, visualize it and imagine it.
- **Confidential:** Only share with those that will support.

As you realize the changes you are affirming, give yourself feedback. For example, when you remember a name state, "I am really good at remembering names". When you visualize a draw and hit it, say, that's me. When you hit a slice, say, "no, that is not like me." Reinforce the behavior you want.

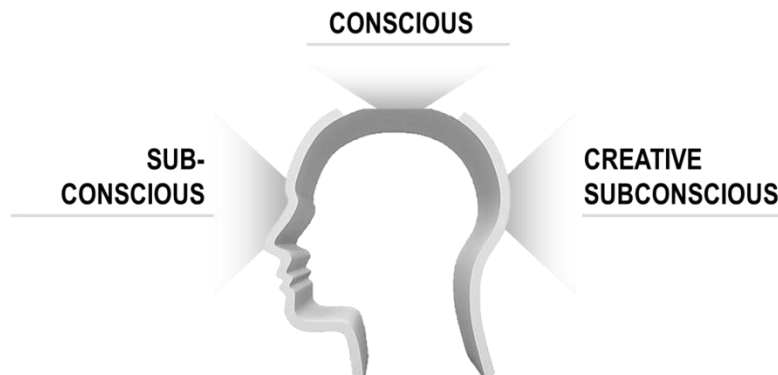
You also have to understand that it is an ongoing process as once a goal is reached; the energy from the creative subconscious shuts off. For example, teams that set goals to "reach the playoffs" typically lose early in the playoffs because their goal has been reached. You have to constantly reset your goals as you attain them. This particularly applies to people as they near retirement. If they do not set new goals, they typically die on average within 18 months.

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As I absorbed the information, it is apparent to me that the process described by TPI is a “Perpetual Positive Change Machine”. When properly applied, it could perpetually drive your self-improvement for a lifetime. This highlights the fact that creating this positive change is a lifetime adventure. In fact, studies have shown that when you no longer have goals, you die.



### MY PERCEIVED STEPS OF THE PERPETUAL POSITIVE CHANGE MACHINE (PPCM) ARE:

- You complete an assessment of your “as-is” situation and determine the areas in your life that you want to improve.
- You then create your goals (changing reality in the subconscious) by visualizing what you want to be, making the vision as clear and distinct as possible.
- You support this vision with clearly defined affirmations that stir emotions. This takes you through the “familiarization process – familiarizing yourself in your mind before you go there.” This helps you overcome the typical negative reaction that gets creative in trying to take you back to where you were.
- This creates conflict and tension between the conscious and subconscious that activates the creative subconscious to resolve the conflict.
- This creates a tug-of-war within the creative subconscious between having it taking you back to the way you have always been or taking you forward to the vision you have for yourself in the future. The winner is the one that is stored most vividly in your mind.
- As you approach your goal, you return to step #1 – reassess your situation; update your goals and the supporting affirmations. This is required, because when you reach your goals the creative subconscious shuts down.
- You then run through the PPCM once again creating additional positive change.

It is important to note that running through the PPCM is hard work. It is not simply a matter of visualizing what you want. You have to affirm, and you have to take action to make the affirmations a reality (you can't affirm to be a single digit handicap in golf and then spend no time practicing). It is not for the faint of heart. It is for those who want to actively attack life and make the most out of it. Life should be viewed from an “ideal” state, ideal life, community, family, etc. and should be pursued with vigor.

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While I have used affirmations since 1995, the time with TPI did highlight that it was time for a tune up. Based on the successful principles associated with affirmations, those that I have articulated in the past had for the most part become a reality. I had fallen into the trap of not aggressively updating the goals and affirmations to make it an ongoing process for constructive change (this was actually highlighted by my son Jay). In addition, I have not been as vivid in my vision of the future or supporting affirmations as I needed to be. Having my trip to TPI coincide with my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday became a perfect opportunity for me to re-charge my batteries as I head for the “back nine” of life.

Based on the TPI session, I have updated my affirmations. I always finish with a statement of prayer; the Lord has created this day, let us rejoice and give praise. He will look out over my family and look out over me. I ask this through your name Lord Jesus Christ, as through you, all things are possible.

Affirmations should be visualized and vocalized every night right before you go to bed and first thing in the morning (this is when your mind more fully absorbs it).

You should ... **read** them, **picture** them and **feel** them.

It is like activating a guidance system that seeks your goals (like a heat seeking missile.) It needs frequent feedback (affirmations) to keep it moving towards the target (your goals). Also, before you fall asleep at night, state that you are going to get a great night's sleep and that you are going to feel great when you wake up in the morning.

As you decide on your affirmations always think in terms “what is the value to me” of realizing the change. Only share your goals and affirmations with those that support your needs.

### **IN PURSUING CHANGE THERE ARE TWO FORMS OF MOTIVATION; FEAR AND VALUE.**

Fear has words attached to it like “or else, I have to or I can't or else.” Value is characterized by “I want it, it is my idea.” Attack change from the value or positive side. You will come up against resistance. Creative avoidance is when you push yourself or others to do something, and they creatively find excuses why they can't (Stef, do the dishes ... no, I have homework). Your restrictive pattern is your groove or pattern. You have to overcome it.

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In closing, it is very important to enjoy the process of achieving your goals, to enjoy the trip, and as you get closer to your goal, it's very important to move the goal posts down the field. Only by doing so will the process continue.

This whole process is all about finding happiness in life. The ancient Greek had a view of happiness coming at 4 levels:

- **Level 1:** You seek immediate gratification but it doesn't last. It can be material in nature or consumable.
- **Level 2:** Competitive state - I'm happy when I'm better than you. It can cause progress to occur.
- **Level 3:** Contributive - you are happy when you are helping others to be successful.
- **Level 4:** Seeking the ultimate truth - spiritual in nature, seeking real meaning in life, real purpose.

All four levels have something to offer, and the affirmation process can be applied to all to help attain what you seek. However, true happiness comes at Level 4. History has shown that great leaders had the willingness (not need) to be admired (humbly). They do not state opinions, they state facts. One should coach, teach, parent and lead by focusing on what you want to see in the future, but speaking about it in the present tense. When they are recognized for what they have done, they give credit where credit is due and acknowledge their role with a simple thank you. Successful people can be considered a "positive deviant" with characteristics like:

- **Purposefulness** ... has something to live for
- **Always about others** ... not themselves
- **Always self-determined** ... motivation comes from inside
- **High in efficacy** ... you know you can create the change
- **Courageous** ... you have the courage to take it on

Great leaders see more in the person than the people see in themselves. This is the type of person and leader I want to be. As I pursue positive change, I will do so without fear. It is all about pursuing your vision of the future, not fearing what lies ahead.

Lou Tice finished the lecture by telling us the story of Dorothy and the Wizard of Oz ... how the scarecrow had no brain, the lion no courage and the tin man no heart. By the powers invested in Lou, he gave us a one-time affirmation and appointed us all wizards with the ability to put into practice his teachings!

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