

Child Mind, Subconscious Mind Or The Layperson's Guide to Programming Your Subconscious

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Many people will tell you that your subconscious mind is like a computer- you can program it by repeating certain words and it will do exactly what you want it to do.

That is great as far as it goes, but the analogy is not quite correct. The subconscious mind is more like a very precocious 7 year old child, and treating it as such will get you farther, faster than the old computer method. To explain why, let me show you the computer method first.

A computer takes in data and does exactly what it is told. The subconscious computer model says that your subconscious works in exactly the same way, except that it has so many different programs running that they sometimes conflict. With this model, what you must do is keep saying the things you want to program it with over and over again until those programs are stronger than the old tapes you want to lose. There are specific words that work better than others, and certain types of phrasing is better.

This is all correct. The best ways to program the subconscious are to use present tense, positive language, and if you learn about NLP (Nero-Linguistic Programming) or some of the other specific methods they will explain more about what words and phrases to use.

All of those methods will tell you similar things. One of those is that the subconscious doesn't understand negatives. I had a very hard time with this until one of my friends explained it this way: The subconscious doesn't really work in words, it works in pictures. So if you say, "Don't think of the Pink Elephant in the living room," what happens? You immediately get a picture of a pink elephant in your living room, stepping on your coffee table and eating the roses you just bought.

That is fine as far as it goes, but there is a little piece missing. I know that if you tell a child, (or an adult for that matter,) "I don't think you're so great. You're not somebody special. You'll never be a great person." That child does not hear, "I think you're so great. You're somebody special. You'll be a great person." So why doesn't that work?

The missing part here is that the subconscious does work in pictures, AND it also hears emotion. A dog or cat may not understand every word you say, but they also get clues from your body language and your tone of voice. If you are loving up on your pet and crooning lovingly, "You are the ugliest pet in the whole wide world, you know that?" what your pet understands is the tone of voice and your gentle hands, not the actual words you use.

Your subconscious understands both, to some degree. That is why I suggest you think of it as a very clever 7 year old. It doesn't necessarily catch every word, because it does think in images.

Yet if you think about your memories, you can remember things in different ways. You remember smells, tone of voice, colors, feelings, textures, backgrounds, all sorts of things. This is the way your subconscious works.

This is why the gurus say that when you set a goal you should think about how it will feel to achieve it, what you will be wearing, where you will be, what you will hear, ect. The more vivid you can make the image for your subconscious, the more likely it will be to take on that programming and work to get you what you want.

That is also why it sometimes seems difficult to re-program that same subconscious. Just reading new affirmations twice a day doesn't counteract the 15,000 (yes, fifteen thousand) words per minute that is our personal self-talk. You have "tapes" or thoughts running through your mind at 15,000 words/images per minute, repeating the things your subconscious has been programmed to think about.

Trying to change these by reading affirmations twice a day is like using car brakes to stop a fully loaded locomotive. You can do it, but it takes a long time, and you can only do it if you turn the locomotive off first. If you have a battle between your conscious will and your subconscious programming, the subconscious will win every time.

So how do you change your thinking? How do you change this roaring locomotive? First, you don't try to stop it. There is no way to quiet your mind completely, although meditation and/or prayer can help a great deal. You can however change the train's direction, and that is what we really want to accomplish, anyway, right?

Those affirmations are an important part of that. Carefully chosen words that begin the reprogramming. But make it more than words. When you say them, mean them. Feel them. Tell yourself you are good, and say it with all your heart.

Affirmations need to be in the present tense. If you say, "I will be a millionaire," your subconscious hears that as something that might happen in the future, and it doesn't really pay attention. If you say, "I want to be a millionaire" then you will WANT to be one all your life. If you want to get your subconscious mind on the same page with your true desires, then the best affirmation might be, "I am a millionaire." This tells your subconscious mind exactly what state you believe you should be in, and it will do its best to create that reality.

This won't work if you feel like you are lying to yourself, because every time you say, "I am a millionaire" your inner voice will say, "No, you're not. You are poor, you have always been poor, and you will always be poor." Some people can see and believe in a future that isn't here yet well enough to say, "I am a millionaire" with a straight face, and it works. If one of your affirmations is, "I am a millionaire" and you can't mean it because you aren't one yet, you can say, "I am becoming a millionaire, and will be one by ____." This still gives the subconscious a clear directive without feeling like you are lying.

So how do you talk to your precocious 7 year old subconscious? Do you yell at her? Do you give him confusing (and confused) commands? Do you let them play negative tapes all day long?

Just for this week, pretend you are up for the parent of the subconscious child award, and think about what you want your inner mind listening to, and what you want it saying to and about you. If you catch yourself complaining, or saying things always go wrong, stop yourself and tell yourself that things go right for you much more often than the times they don't. What you tell yourself to do, you do. So what are you telling yourself these days?

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