

## Affirmations and Misconception

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Lio, our comic strip friend, has something along the right idea in consulting “*The Power of Positive Thinking*” which is a kissing cousin of what we call affirmations. Yet, in the second panel he apparently did not reach his desired goal which was snow to sled in. Why didn’t it work?



Aren’t affirmations simply thinking about a desired outcome, goal, or change over and over until it happens? Isn’t the same thing as positive thinking? That is a common misconception that has a grain of truth.

With ITP, we do create a phrase in the present tense to repeat to ourselves as often as we want. We want to literally embody that state, feel it in our body. We do this with the support of a community. And, most important, we also strategize as to how to make it happen. Using the present tense helps us feel that it is so. Community support is something we draw strength from. Strategizing is the roadmap to which we will make it happen.

So, while Lio wanted that snow for sledding, he didn’t quite have all the criteria necessary to make the affirmation happen. He didn’t have community support, nor did he strategize. What might he have done better? If he had a community to bounce his affirmation (“*I am sledding in the snow*”) off of, he might have received feedback letting him know that this might be something with little chance of happening this time of year and in this place. Maybe some members of his community could have helped him with strategizing around his desired outcome by helping him get to a place where there actually was snow he could play in. Or, maybe the community could urge patience until winter. Perhaps someone in the community could have taken him and his sled to a local place that had man-made snow.

More to the point, our core concept on affirmations are designed to affect change from the inside out. “*inside job*”, so to speak. We seek positive growth in some aspect of our being. What is our character hoping to change within to create a better version of oneself, and realize one’s full potential? When we can do that way, we are able to embody them. What might Lio have done, then, if his change was from the inside? He might have used his imagination to feel how it would be to sled down a snowy hill. He might have changed his criteria for physical movement and felt it in his being. He could have replaced his need for a physical thrill with some other type of movement. He might have even redefined what he thought of as “*sledding*”. His sense of perspective might have shifted internally.

Instead, Lio just sat on his sled hoping that his positive thought would reach fruition. Sadly, it did not. If he was a member of an ITP group, however, he might be sledding right now.