

First Love by John Clare

I ne'er was struck before that hour
With love so sudden and so sweet,

Her face it bloomed like a sweet
flower
And stole my heart away complete.

My face turned pale as deadly pale,
My legs refused to walk away,

And when she looked, what could I
fail?
My life and all seemed turned to clay.

And then my blood rushed to my face
And took my eyesight quite away,

The trees and bushes round the place
Seemed midnight at noonday.

I could not see a single thing,
Words from my eyes did start—

They spoke as chords do from the
string,
And blood burnt round my heart.

Are flowers the winter's choice?
Is love's bed always snow?

She seemed to hear my silent voice,
Not love's appeals to know.

I never saw so sweet a face
As that I stood before.

My heart has left its dwelling-place
And can return no more.

Willand Shelter Notification Alerts

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peer-led, peer-driven organization

February 2024 Newsletter



I am *doing*
the best that *I can*.
I do *not* need to be
perfect.

A graphic with a light purple background and a white oval in the center. Inside the oval, the text is written in a mix of black and purple fonts, with some words in italics.

How to Use Positive Affirmations

There are many ways to use positive affirmations to accomplish your goals. While some folks prefer to repeat a statement aloud, others may favor writing out or recording their affirmations.

Especially when you're building up a practice, talking to yourself in the mirror may feel uncomfortable and possibly discourage you from continuing. Find what works for you and give yourself permission to try something different if it isn't working.

This could mean:

- a sticky note attached to your mirror or your computer screen
- a notecard taped to your car's dashboard
- a voice memo on your phone that you listen to whenever you want
- writing the same positive statement, a set number of times
- repeating your affirmations aloud in the mirror, shower, or car

You may also want to consider combining a self-affirmation practice with other self-help techniques or strategies, such as goal-setting, visualization, or positive thinking.

Do affirmations work?

[Negative thoughts](#) get in our way and prevent us from going on that date, asking for that promotion, advocating for ourselves, holding our boundaries, asking for help, being vulnerable. They make us feel small and scared and timid.

Positive affirmations can be an effective tool in overcoming these thoughts and promoting positive mental health and overall well-being.



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Valentine's Day Movies

1. Love Story
2. The Notebook
3. Romeo and Juliet
4. Beauty and the Beast
5. It Happened One Night
6. Casablanca
7. Titanic
8. My Big Fat Greek Wedding
9. When Harry Met Sally
10. An Affair to Remember
11. Pretty Woman
12. Gone with the Wind
13. Sleepless in Seattle
14. La La Land
15. Love, Actually
16. Ghost
17. Cinderella
18. Valentine's Day
19. 500 Days of Summer
20. Notting Hill



DIY Project

I am SO excited about today's DIY because after a bit of trial and error, the idea that was in my head actually worked! And I only finished one bag of candy while experimenting, so I'll call that a craft win. If you're throwing a party for Valentine's Day or just want to add a little love and whimsy to your coffee table throughout the year, I hope that you'll give these DIY Conversation Heart Coasters a try!



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Black History Month

Black History Month, also known as African-American History Month, is celebrated annually during the month of February. It celebrates the African diaspora (people descending from Indigenous Africans living outside Africa).

African-American History is American History. It began in America in August 1619 when a ship carrying 20 enslaved people arrived in Point Comfort, Virginia. Those people were sold to colonists.

In 1861, disputes over slavery between the Northern and Southern states led to the American Civil War (aka The War Between the States) in which 178,000 African Americans served on the Union side.

During the war, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery in the United States, except as punishment for a crime. This amendment later brought about a system of injustice in the United States, where African-Americans, Indigenous, People of Color, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders were disproportionately incarcerated and forced into unpaid labor ('slavery by another name').

When the Civil War ended, the Reconstruction Era began in which Blacks were granted equal rights with Whites. African-Americans were elected to office, gained economic power, etc.

After Lincoln's death, President Andrew Johnson did not stop White opposition to Black advancements. This led to a system of racial segregation known as Jim Crow laws (racial segregation in all public facilities and on transportation) in Southern states (e.g., Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia) that were formerly part of the Confederacy during the Civil War (and some others).



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Here's how:

Materials:

Wooden Hearts
Paint
Brush
Stickers
Sealant

If you're looking for coasters large enough for big mugs, you'll want to get bigger hearts. The size used were (3.5") were perfect for champagne glasses.

1. Paint your hearts a solid color, ideally a light shade of pink or white. Let dry fully.
2. Add your phrases with stickers! Run your fingernail over the top of them to make sure all of the edges are secure.
3. Paint again with the top color (this will be the final color of your heart). You just want to be sure the two colors contrast enough so you can read the words. Let dry and then remove the stickers.
4. Seal! You can also take this time to add felt to the bottoms of the heart if you'd like that extra detail.

Instead of coasters, you could glue on a broach pin on the back and wear.



Everyone has negative thoughts in some way, shape, or form. And we can challenge them. Affirmations are one way of helping to bring yourself back to center and empower you to make choices that work for you rather than coming from fear.

Benefits of using affirmations

Try thinking of positive affirmations as your internal "hype-person," or that someone who helps you feel strong, brave, excited, or confident.

You're already doing affirmations every time you say, 'you got this' or 'I can do it.' This practice is more about harnessing that so that you're using [affirmations] to their fullest potential.

There are many benefits associated with using affirmations, including:

- boost confidence and self-esteem
- control negative feelings
- reduce stress
- improve overall well-being
- promote openness to new behaviors
- increase productivity
- provide motivation
- overcome challenges
- change unwanted habits

Rules for positive affirmations

You can create or use any positive affirmations that resonate with you. But try to keep these tips in mind:

- **keep them short.** "I am Light" may work better than, "I am light in the Universe and illuminate everything around me."
- **say them as a fact, not a possibility.** Consider, "I am prosperous" rather than, "I can make money."
- **avoid using negatives.** Try, "I am successful" instead of, "I don't fail," or "I am unique," instead of, "I am not defined by the opinions of others."
- **use present tense.** "I am healthy" may be more effective than, "I will heal" or "I am healing."
- **be persistent.** Try to work with 3 to 5 positive affirmations at a time for a couple of weeks before switching to new ones.

How to create your own affirmations

General positive affirmations can be useful, but adding a personal touch might resonate more with you.

You want it to pack a punch. It should make you feel something when you read, say, or think it.

- Identify areas of improvement and establish goals for each.
- Turn these goals into statements — those are your positive affirmations. In other words, say it like it's already a fact.
- Keep it real and focus on attainable goals.
- Don't worry about how they'll become true.



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Valentine's Day Facts

A Roman fertility festival was the holiday's precursor. It may be difficult to believe given how innocuous the holiday is nowadays, but the roots of Valentine's Day stem from a bloody pagan fertility festival dating back to 6th century B.C. Every year, between February 13 and 15, Romans celebrated Lupercalia by sacrificing animals and slapping women with their hides, which was believed to make them more fertile.

There was more than one St. Valentine History tells us that Pope Gelasius I outlawed Lupercalia at the end of the 5th century and instituted St. Valentine's Day on February 14. But who was the holiday's patron saint? Most sources point to one of two men the same name: a third-century Roman priest who defied (and was martyred by) Claudius II Gothicus, or another priest of the same time period but who hailed from a town about 60 miles away in what is modern-day Terni, Italy (he was also martyred by Claudius II). To further muddy the waters, some contend these two Valentines were the same person.



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- Identify your own frequent negative thoughts and rewrite them as positive statements.
- Don't overthink it and keep your statements simple.

5 positive affirmations for depression

- "I am loved and supported by the Universe."
- "I forgive myself."
- "Today I take another step toward positive change."
- "I am Love and I am Light. All is well."
- "I deserve love and happiness."

5 positive affirmations for anxiety relief

- "I am dealing with this the best way I can and that is enough."
- "I let go and I'm at peace."
- "I am safe, I am strong, I am well."
- "I see the positive in every situation."
- "I'm ready and capable to handle everything."

5 positive affirmations for well-being

- "I find joy in everything I do."
- "My body is healthy and my mind is at peace."
- "Opportunities come my way easily and effortlessly."
- "I enjoy loving and respectful relationships."

"I am confident and I am enough."



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Jim Crow laws were upheld by the US Supreme Court in 1896 in the Plessy v. Ferguson Decision. The "separate but equal" legal doctrine remained in effect until 1954. Facilities for African-Americans were inferior, underfunded or non-existent. Jim Crow laws "institutionalized economic, educational, political and social disadvantages and second-class citizenship for most African-Americans living in the United States."

In 1954, segregation of public schools was declared unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court in the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education. In some states, it took many years to implement this decision. In many US states, racial segregation still exists—especially in relation to public schools.

In 1964, the US Supreme Court ruled against Jim Crow laws in Heart of Atlanta Motel, Inc. v. United States.

The remaining Jim Crow laws were overturned by Acts of Congress: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and The Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Unfortunately, recent US Supreme Court decisions have reversed some sections of the Voting Rights Act where former Confederate states were monitored for voting inequities and inequalities. The US Congress needs to act to clarify their voting-rights legislation.



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House Rules

Treat all other members, staff, guests and volunteers with dignity and respect—including, but not limited to, these rules:

- ∞ We expect members who use our facilities to participate in our peer community;
- ∞ For safety reasons, backpacks are allowed in lockers or out front only;
- ∞ Lockers must be emptied daily by 5 pm;
- ∞ Respect members' physical space;
- ∞ Respect members' belongings as well as Infinity Peer Support's;
- ∞ Belongings left unattended are the individual's responsibility—not the staff's;
- ∞ Stay in kitchen while cooking (unplug cooktop when done);
- ∞ Clean up after yourself;
- ∞ Members may rest their heads on their arms, in an upright position, if tired, per staff discretion;
- ∞ Staff will check on members who are resting for their safety and wellness;
- ∞ Speak with respect (no yelling, no screaming, no swearing, no personal threats, no "shock talk");
- ∞ Disruptive behavior is not allowed on the premises;
- ∞ Use rear exit for emergencies or trash removal only;
- ∞ Smoke/vape outside out back in designated smoking area;
- ∞ Exchanging/giving prescription medications is not allowed;
- ∞ Illegal drug use or alcohol use is not allowed on the premises*;
- ∞ Sexual comments and gestures are not allowed;
- ∞ Possession of weapons (objects intended to cause bodily harm) in or around the premises* is not allowed; and

* Premises include the Infinity Peer Support building, grounds and van.



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All aspects of American History have been touched by more than 400 years of slavery:

- Capitalism and labor relations (e.g., minimal access to capital, wealth gap, minimum wage stagnation, piecework, etc.);
- Economic (in)equality (e.g., disinvestment in Black communities, destruction of Black Wall Street, redlining, etc.);
- Medical (mal)practice (e.g., Tuskegee Syphilis Study, myths about physical racial differences believed by modern White doctors, etc.);
- Political (dis)empowerment (e.g., Reconstruction to Jim Crow laws, Voting Rights Act of 1964 to state-sponsored exclusion of eligible Black voters in recent years, etc.);
- Infrastructure (e.g., putting highways through Black neighborhoods, locating public transit outside Black communities, labeling Black neighborhoods as "blighted" so local governments could use eminent domain to seize private property at low prices, etc.);
- Justice inequities (e.g., disproportionate number of Blacks incarcerated in the "school-to-prison" pipeline; given more serious charges than Whites for the same crime; given long prison sentences, etc.); and
- Historic triangular trade routes, (e.g., enslaved people from Africa; sugar from the West Indies and Brazil; money and manufacturers from Europe).

We often talk about trauma and complex trauma in the mental health community. Music (e.g., Jazz, Rhythm & Blues, Rock, Rap) and the arts are ways Black people cope with generational trauma.

Over the last 400 years, Black people have contributed to many improvements in these United States:

- The Civil Rights Movement held local, state and the federal government accountable to the rights promised in the Bill of Rights and the U.S. Constitution.
- Black Lives Matter and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People are working to redress the economic inequities of the past by closing the wealth cap; raising the minimum wage; increasing Black access to capital;
- Wealthy Black individuals are not waiting for local, state and the federal government to act. They are using their capital and connections to invest in Black-owned organizations to create new Black Wall Streets;
- Black citizens are participating in their local governments to eliminate the history of redlining;
- Modern medical schools are finally dispelling the myths about physical racial differences;
- Political organizations like Fair Fight, Black Lives Matter and other affiliated groups are empowering Blacks to register to vote in numbers too large to ignore;
- The Biden-Harris administration is trying to sponsor infrastructure that knits Black neighborhoods together and connects public transit between communities;



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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
		
<p>5 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 The Letting Go Guided Journal 11:30 Digital/Book Coloring 12:30 Hearing Voices Network 2:00 Clean Team</p>	<p>6 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Dare to Lead 12:00 Reiki with Renee 12:00 Help with Housing Applications 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>7 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 It's Grief: The Dance of Self Discovery 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Wellness and Recovery 2:00 Clean Team</p>
<p>12 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 The Letting Go Guided Journal 11:30 Digital/Book Coloring 12:15 Hearing Voices Network 2:00 Clean Team</p>	<p>13 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:00 NH Mental Health Peer Alliance 12:00 Reiki with Renee 12:00 Help with Housing Applications 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>14 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 It's Grief: The Dance of Self Discovery 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Book Club 2:00 Clean Team</p>
<p>19 CLOSED FOR PRESIDENTS DAY</p> 	<p>20 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Dare to Lead 12:30 Trivia with Erica 12:00 Help with Housing Applications 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>21 Riddle of the day 8:30 Staff Meeting 9:45 Meditation 10:15 It's Grief: The Dance of Self Discovery 11:15 Men's Group 12:00 Community Meeting</p>
<p>26 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 The Letting Go Guided Journal 11:30 Digital/Book Coloring 12:15 Hearing Voices Network 2:00 Clean Team</p>	<p>27 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Dare to Lead 12:00 Reiki with Renee 12:00 Help with Housing Applications 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>28 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:15 It's Grief: The Dance of Self Discovery 11:15 Men's Group 1:00 Wellness and Recovery 2:00 Clean Team 5 pm Board Meeting</p>



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Thursday	Friday	
<p>1 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Ted Talks 11:30 Crocheting and Knitting Lessons 1:00 Poetry with Cubes 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>2 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Art as Recovery 11:30 Clean Team 1:00 Singing and Dancing</p>	<p>Hearing Voices Network Hearing Voices Groups are simply people with shared experiences coming together to support one another. Mondays at 12:15 pm The Letting Go Guided Journal Learn how to remove your inner blocks to happiness, about love and success. Wednesdays at 10:30 am Dare to Lead</p>
<p>8 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Ted Talks 11:30 Valentine's Craft 1:00 Cooking with Sharon 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>9 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Art as Recovery 11:30 Clean Team 1:00 Games and Puzzles</p>	<p>Leadership is not about titles, status, and wielding power. A leader is anyone who takes responsibility for recognizing the potential in people and ideas, and has the courage to develop that potential. Tuesdays 10:30 am NH Mental Health Peer Alliance Meet peers from around the state and learn about resources and programs at other peer support agencies.</p>
<p>15 Riddle of the day Newsletter Submissions Due 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Ted Talks 11:30 Crocheting and Knitting Lessons 1:00 Budgeting 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>16 CLOSED FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>Third Tuesday at 10:00 am It's Grief: The Dance of Self Discovery Examines the emotional and devastating impact of loss and trauma. The book illuminates how the brain holds the complex circuitry of grief and then provides choices to help deal with it. Wednesdays at 10:15 am Community Meeting/Educational Presentation</p>
<p>22 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Ted Talks 11:30 Making Pin Cushions 1:00 Historical Trivia 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>23 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:30 Art as Recovery 11:30 Clean Team 1:00 Games and Puzzles</p>	<p>Join us for the community meeting where we discuss what is going well and what we would like to see change. Third Wednesday at 12:00 pm Ted Talks Gather together to listen to dynamic speaker's present information on different topics of interest to members. Thursdays at 10:30 am</p>
<p>30 Riddle of the day 9:45 Meditation 10:00 Clean Team 10:30 Ted Talks 11:30 Decorating Candles 1:00 Exploring Learning Styles 7:00 NA Meeting</p>	<p>Alcoholics Anonymous Saturdays 7 pm Rochester Municipal Welfare Department Help with Housing Applications Tuesdays from 12:00 pm to 2:30 pm</p>	<p>Art as Recovery Come relax and paint with artistic freedom. Fridays at 10:30 am Board Meeting Join us for our Board meeting. All members welcome. If interested talk to Heather Walker-McConihe for zoom link. Last Wednesday of the month at 5:00 pm</p>