



# My Weirdly Life-Changing Month Using Affirmation Apps

\*Thinks positive thoughts\*





Design by Mia Feitel



by RACHEL KHONA Sep 23, 2016

**D**o you ever find the negative self-talk eating away at you like a termite chowing down on wood? No, just me? Okay, fine. Call me insecure, fearful, full of guilt issues, or just plain human, but I can't seem to get rid of the overly critical voice inside my head.

No matter how many times I try to shut them up with wine or Ambien (just kidding), they don't let up. And, unfortunately, whatever Jim Carrey did in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* is not an option.

But, I've been told there *\*is\** one thing that supposedly works, cheesy as it sounds: affirmations. The idea is that actively saying positive things to yourself can change the way you think. By constantly repeating them, you slowly begin to override your inner critic/Daria.

Now as my life guru is Oprah, I am very familiar with affirmations. There's only one problem—I feel ridiculous saying them to myself. When I finally muster up enough will to sit around saying positive phrases out loud, I feel like a loser, and moreover, they don't stick. Then I realize I've wasted 10 minutes of my life talking to myself like a sad Bridget Jones only to feel absolutely nothing. And, like a penis, if you can't feel it, what's the point?

---

#### MORE FROM MARIE CLAIRE



#### 5 Apps Every Super Healthy Woman Uses



#### The Best New Apps To Try This Month



# "IF SEAMLESS CAN COME TO THE RESCUE WHEN YOU'RE TOO BUSY WITH NETFLIX TO COOK, AND UBER CAN HELP WHEN YOU'RE TOO DRUNK TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET HOME, THEN SURELY AFFIRMATION APPS COULD HELP ME"



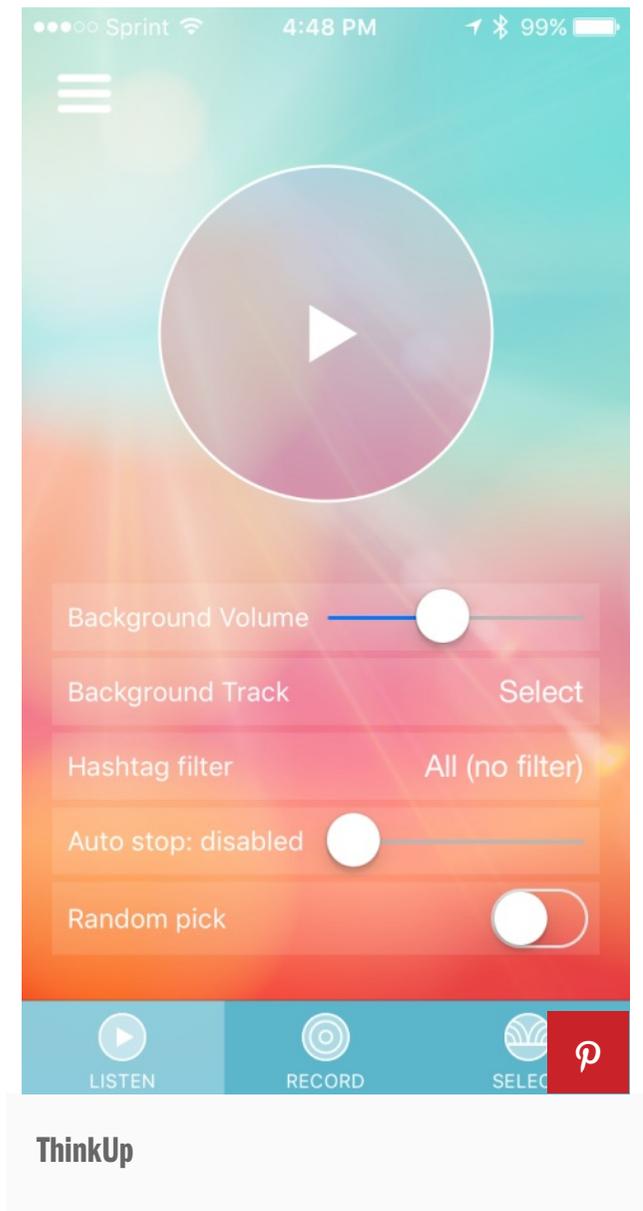
Enter: affirmation \*apps\*. They're like the lazy girl's version of the real thing—in essence, they do the affirming for you. You no longer have to convince yourself any of it's true because they are *telling* you it is. Goodbye heavy lifting!

If Seamless can come to the rescue when you're too busy with Netflix to cook, and Uber can help when you're too drunk to figure out how to get home, then surely affirmation apps could help me.

My plan: I downloaded [ThinkUp](#), [#lovepioneer](#) by Jennifer Kass, [Louise Hay Affirmation Meditations](#), and I signed up for [Shine Text](#). ThinkUp allows you to record affirmations in your own voice, set it to music, and listen to at your leisure. So kinda a half-way point between OG affirmations and the hack kind. Love Pioneer is a series of "flash cards" with words of wisdom like "energy speaks louder than words" or "trust the timing of your life." The user "flips" the card over for a more in-depth explanation and a focus meditation. Louise Hay offers up positive affirmations in her soft, soothing voice set over brainwave-friendly music. And Shine Text sends you a daily motivational message right to your phone, complete with GIFs and photos.



7 Must-Have Workout Apps



My routine was as follows:

- Listen to ThinkUp immediately upon waking (or tackling a new recipe. Nothing like a little motivation when trying to beat Emeril Lagasse at his own game.)
- Sometime during the day, do a meditation from #lovepioneer
- Read the message from Shine Text
- Listen to Louise Hay before going to bed

So what did I learn in a month of doing this? How to whip up a mean bolognese thanks to Emeril. Oh, and a lot about positive thinking. Here's what I figured out.

## I Needed to Stop Feeling So Guilty

Can I get an "amen" on this one? If there is a woman alive who doesn't feel guilty about \*something,\* I'd love to meet her. When it came to work, I

often felt guilty if I took a break—even when I worked hard enough or long enough to deserve one. When it came to spending money on "frivolous" things like manicures and pedicures, I would feel guilty every single time I ponied up

ate something unhealthy like french fries, I would mentally prepare myself for a week of salads and an extra intense workout.

ADVERTISEMENT - CONTINUE READING BELOW

A few days into my experiment, something dawned on me. I heard my inner voice say (I call her Joan because she reminds me of Joan Jett): "If you're going to beat yourself up about it, don't eat those fries/paint those nails/take a break. And if you're going to do it, you better enjoy it and shut the eff up." Turns out my inner self didn't care to mince words. Side note: Could my inner voice be my role model?

**"TURNS OUT MY INNER SELF DIDN'T CARE TO MINCE WORDS."**



A week later when I was out with friends for a birthday dinner, we ordered three different desserts one rivaling the next in decadence and sugar content. I heard my inner voice remind me "if you eat these desserts, you better not whine about the carbs later. Because I don't want to hear it." I realized I had

become like that friend who constantly dates the loser and then complains about it. Taking a broader view, I realized how self-defeating and insecure my behavior was. I split half of an absurdly decadent flourless chocolate cake and relished every minute of it. No beating myself up or worrying about the sugar content. And I haven't looked back, indulging in the occasional unhealthy treat without fear that the world would come crashing down.

## **"Goddamn It Rachel, Stop Abandoning Yourself." —Me**

Like many women, I suffer from the need to be "nice" like cats have the need to spit hair balls all over the place. Don't get me wrong, I've never been one to hold back if someone is behaving rudely—litterbugs I'm looking at you—but most of the time I will swallow my own needs just so I can avoid hurting someone else's feelings.

Case in point, I was trying out a new yoga studio and had the misfortune of signing up for a class run by a man wearing a gold lame bodysuit who insisted on playing Madonna very loudly the entire time. Call me a traditionalist, but the class wasn't exactly my vibe. Nonetheless, I stayed because it was ultimately a decent physical workout, but as for quieting my mind...well that just wasn't going to happen.

Towards the end of the class, the teacher announced that we were to get into a circle for the dance party. A \*glitter\* dance party. My first thought was, obviously, *WTF*. My second thought was, *Damn, the West has really hijacked yoga*. Every single fiber of my being wanted to flee this hot mess. But instead I stood there waiting to discover some way to melt into the floor. I was afraid to leave early for fear that it would be rude, the teacher's feelings would be hurt, or even that the girls the front desk would be offended. As I watched the teacher prance around the circle making people go to the middle to dance, I felt nervously like I was watching some sort of animal sacrifice. He proceeded to run around the circle sprinkling everyone with glitter confetti, and that's when I realized something very important: I HATED this ridiculous class. I was an adult, I paid for it, and I could do whatever I damn well please.

I gathered my things and left, breathing a sigh of relief as I brushed off the



confetti. Unfortunately, it continued to cling to me and show up in random places like my waistband or inside my tank top. It was like a metaphor for life: Don't stand up for yourself and the toxic energy seeps in and spreads all over you like a disease. I vowed to never abandon myself again.

## Treat Yo Self 2016

I am a Type-A workaholic. Luckily, I love what I do (writing and running a stationary/gift business) and I work for myself so it's not like I'm at some hideous office until 10 p.m. analyzing spreadsheets. But I often don't know when to stop or give myself a much-needed break. Doing something like watching a movie or getting a quickie massage can feel pointless and like a waste of time.

However, after a couple weeks of working with the apps, I found it much easier to let myself relax. I decided to get a share at the Jersey shore, giving myself five weekends of nothing but sun, sand, water, and utter chill. It's something the old me would have analyzed for months wondering if I should spend that much time doing absolutely nothing. The new me decided in 10 minutes. It turned out to be one of the best decisions I had made in a long time. Crazy thing: Turns out relaxing can make you calmer, happier, and less anxious—WHO KNEW? (Answer: *Everyone*, but knowing is different than \*doing\*.)

The more I let myself go, the easier it was to indulge again. After a particularly trying work day—complete with missing packages and other such drama—I suddenly felt the strong urge to go to the spa for the day. It was completely senseless. I had *just* spent the weekend lying around reading and drinking margaritas. Why did I find the need to relax even more? After much debating back and forth about the absurdity of it all, I couldn't take it anymore. *Screw it!* I declared in my head. *I am going to Spa Castle!*

# "I BEGAN TO WONDER IF THE APPS WERE GETTING TO MY HEAD. MAYBE I WAS FEELING MYSELF A LITTLE TOO MUCH."



I began to wonder if the apps were getting to my head. Maybe I was feeling myself a little too much. What if I was turning into Paris Hilton? After all, who spends the weekend at the beach and then comes back feeling like they need to relax a little more? I shuddered. But I still went to Spa Castle.

## "Let It Go." —'Frozen,' But Also Me

Once at Spa Castle, I decided to opt for the full Korean spa experience and get a body scrub. But there was a catch: It was in the women-only naked area. In other words, I would need to strip down and suck it up.

Normally I would never go anywhere that required me to fully shed my clothes in public, as I prefer to keep my bits and pieces covered. The old me would have been terrified of being so exposed. Literally I've had multiple dreams about being naked in public and woken up in a panic. As many [dream dictionaries](#) will tell you, dreams about being naked in public have to do with feeling insecure, vulnerable, and ashamed of something.

Jennifer Kass



In real life (or IRL as the kids say), I have often struggled with being so open about the things I write and then being embarrassed that I wrote about them. As though suddenly my parents will read something I wrote and disown me. It's an absolute absurdity and undoubtedly a relic of growing up in a conservative family. So many people I looked up to (Amy Schumer, Aziz Ansari, Nicki Minaj, Ilana Glazer, Abbi Jacobson) embody the very parts of my personality that I struggled with: sexual frankness and bold opinions. Clearly I'm drawn to certain traits; I realized it was insane that I wasn't embracing them. The dream may have just been a metaphor but at the spa it all felt very real. I decided it was time to kick this fear to the curb and just do it.

Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would get scrubbed down in my birthday suit by an older Asian lady wearing black lingerie and a shower cap. And that I would actually enjoy it. I felt free and uninhibited and—dare I say it—a little more Beyoncé in terms of my confidence. Also my skin felt like a velvet pillow.

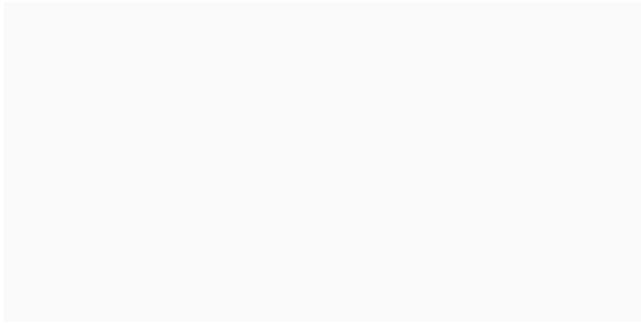
## Conclusion

The apps work. Or at least some of them do. When I went away on vacation for five days and didn't use the apps at all, I noticed a marked difference. While I didn't rush to immediate Dark Thought Territory, I did feel a dip in my mood.

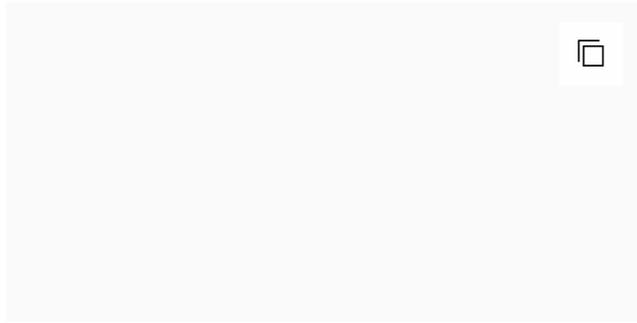
I found the Louise Hay app to be like every other guided meditation I've ever listened to on YouTube—boring. I found myself disassociating from it. Shine Text has the best of intentions but it reminded me too much of a chirpy yoga teacher who has all of five minutes of life experience and insists on imparting sage advice all through Savasana when you just want her to be quiet. Love Pioneer was unique, mature, and insightful in its knowledge. Like Oprah. See how we came full circle? No, just me? Okay, whatever.

A week post-experiment, I was at a normal yoga class doing sun salutations when I suddenly felt an overwhelming surge of self-love. Like the way Kanye West probably feels every day. It was amazing.

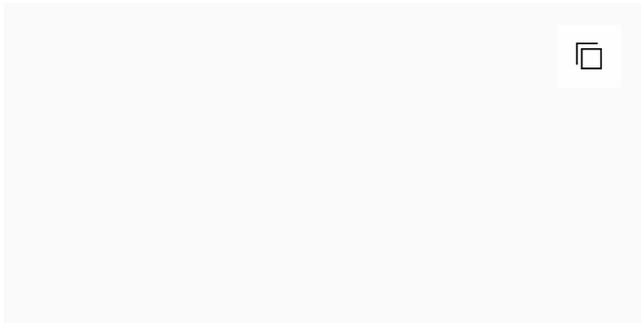
**Follow [Marie Claire on Facebook](#) for the latest celeb news, beauty tips, fascinating reads, livestream video, and more.**



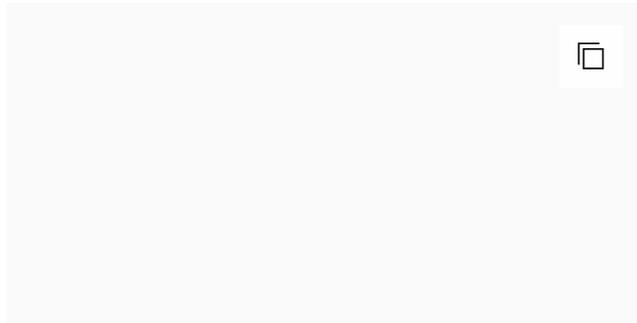
**THE 8 BEST PHOTO APPS TO UP YOUR INSTA-GAME**



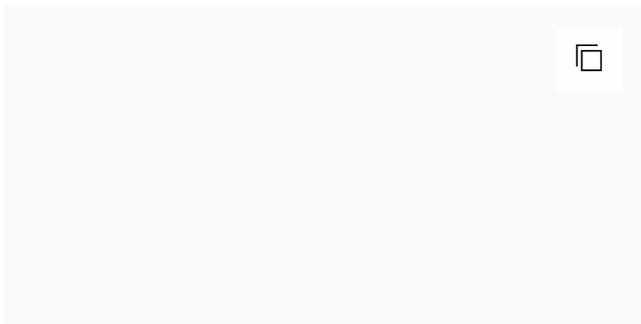
**10 PHONE APPS THAT CAN ACTUALLY MAKE YOU PRETTIER**



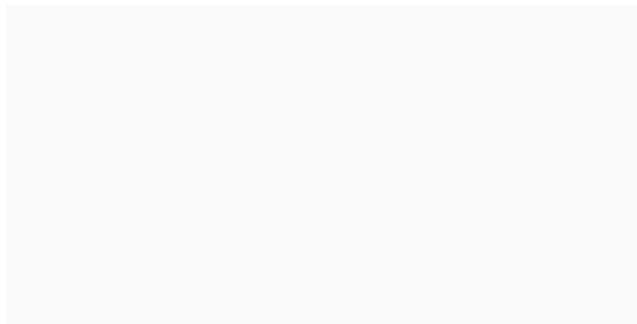
**10 AMAZING APPS THAT MAKE SHOPPING SO MUCH EASIER**



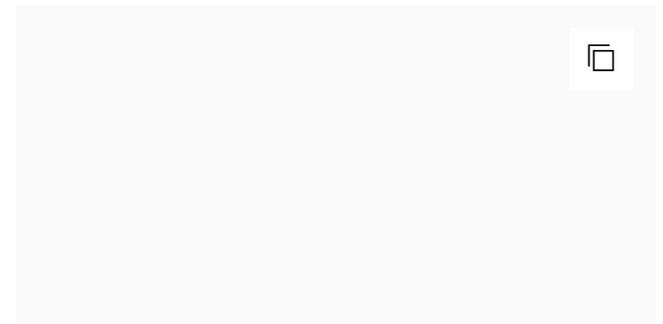
**THE 55 BEST ONLINE SHOPPING SITES TO BUY FROM**



**LIFE AFTER TINDER: 8 NEW DATING APPS YOU SHOULD TRY NEXT**



**AVATARS ARE POISED TO TAKE OVER YOUR DATING LIFE**



**YOUR MONTHLY APP ROUNDUP: WE TEST ALL THE NEW ONES SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO**

**7 THINGS ONLY PEOPLE WHO ARE SO OVER APP-DATING UNDERSTAND**

**ONE WORK DAY, ALL THE DELIVERIES: EVERYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY HAVE BROUGHT TO THE OFFICE ON DEMAND**

**CAN WOMEN FIX DATING?**

**BEST MOBILE APPS AND WEBSITES**

**CULTURE**

**THE BEST NEW APPS TO TRY THIS MONTH**

**17 LIFE-CHANGING MAKEUP HACKS EVERY WOMAN SHOULD KNOW**

**17 LIFE-CHANGING BEAUTY HACKS EVERY LAZY GIRL MUST KNOW**

**WHEN PLUCKING YOUR EYEBROWS BECOMES A LIFE-CHANGING DISORDER**

**9 LIFE-CHANGING THINGS YOU NEVER KNEW YOUR MACBOOK COULD DO**

**THIS LIFE-CHANGING HACK WILL MAKE YOUR IPHONE RUN 10X FASTER**



**MORE FROM THE BEST APPS AND WEBSITES FOR... EVERYTHING**