



Guides You Through

Check Your Thoughts! Your Life Depends on It!

**30-Day Meditation Challenge
to Cultivating a New Mind**



Welcome Letter from Dianne Sotomey

Hello and welcome to the 30-Day Check Your Thoughts! Your Life Depends on It! meditation challenge to cultivating a new mind.

*"The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts."
Marcus Aurelius.*

What you say to yourself is incredibly important. Therefore, you must start by changing your thoughts to change any aspect of your being.

Anyone you know who is living a successful and meaningful life most likely has quality thoughts in place that are creating and sustaining their levels of success. But, on the other hand, anyone you know who is not experiencing the success and meaning of life they want has yet to commit to cultivating the necessary quality thoughts to create their desired results.

When you understand that your thoughts create your life, you realise that no skill is necessary to master other than controlling your thoughts. Therefore, I cannot stress enough the importance of identifying, implementing, and maintaining the thoughts needed to create the results you want in your life while learning how to let go of any negative thought patterns that hold you back from achieving your true potential, regardless of whether you know of it, your life has been and will continue to be, created by your thoughts. If you don't manage them, they will control you.

The 30-day Check Your Thoughts! Your Life Depends on It! challenge is meant to bring attention to any negative thought processes that keep you stuck or hold you back from moving forward in life in a powerful and meaningful way. I have designed this carefully researched **THINK** meditation practice to bring awareness to your thoughts in a way that enables you to become familiar with them and operationalise them to make a change in your life.

Although many experts tell us that it usually takes around 21 days for a new habit to form, it is my belief that we must do it for a bit longer to maintain this new positive thought pattern in the long run. So that's what I have dedicated the last week to.

Thirty days is a long enough time to create something new as part of your daily routine and short enough to approach it in bite-sized chunks without feeling overwhelmed.

Bringing awareness to your thoughts is comprised of many small, good choices, and those daily choices help you gain more clarity so you can go after what you want. However, with commitment and perseverance, I know how much change and growth await you on the other side. Just remember, you have nothing to lose but everything to gain.

Love,
Dianne



Step-by-Step Guide To Check Your Thoughts! Your Life Depends On It! 30-Day Challenge.

Meditating allows you to transcend your analytical mind, enabling access to the unconscious parts of you. This is very important as it is within the subconscious where habits and behaviours detrimental to you are lodged, which you may desire to transform.

With each baby step you take towards changing some aspect of your life, remember that you are shedding the habit of old unwanted thoughts to cultivate a new healthy mind for your new future.

At first, this might feel awkward but know that this is normal as your body is not used to this. It is simply doing all it can to avoid the new change. This period is temporary during the first few weeks and will not be your whole experience throughout the 30 days to come, as long as you don't give up.

Each week there will be a few questions for you to answer. I suggest you keep a journal to record the answers to the questions. Then, go over them before each meditation practice. Your answers to the questions will serve as a guide to help you gain insight into which states of mind you operate from.

Your Environment

Choose a regular place that is comfortable and free from distractions for your meditative practice. The goal here is that, eventually, it will be associated with a place where change and new possibilities happen.

Your posture

Sit upright with your back and shoulders against the chair or on a mat with your legs crossed for those who can. Before you start, make sure to eliminate any body distractions by using the loo, ensuring no hunger pangs or feelings of thirst, and wearing loose clothing.

Choose the best time to meditate.

Research on the brain has shown more access to the subconscious mind just after you wake up and before you go to bed at night. These are the best times to meditate when your brain is more susceptible to change. Set aside 10 – 15 minutes, and the time will lengthen as you go through each step. Remember to take a few minutes before each meditation session to review any answers or writing you have done in connection with the steps you are about to practice.

In the beginning, your analytical mind will get in the way. It will get you to think of random thoughts such as emails to respond to, phone calls to make, and what to cook; it will distract you with different things that are on your mind, and so on. Just know that this is normal. So, take a breath, and remember these are all familiar associations that have nothing to do with the new mind you're setting out to create. If this happens, gently bring yourself back to the present moment. As you persist, you recondition your body to match your new thoughts and mind; eventually, it will give in.



Introduction

Before we begin, I want you to first and foremost think about which thoughts you want to change. For example, you may wish to change thoughts of anger, resentment, sadness, overwhelm, fear, anxiety, etc. Whatever it may be, think about it and decide on it. Then, each day, think about how your life would feel if it weren't controlled by these thoughts and the emotions accompanying them.

Once you decide on what it is that you want to change, for the next 30 days, use my **THINK** meditation practice daily (morning and evening) to:

(T) Track your thoughts and bring awareness to your body.

(H) Honour and respect each thought you identify without trying to repress them, and see each thought as a messenger with information.

(I) Intention- Set your intention about how you wish to engage and respond to your unwanted thoughts. Allow yourself to experience positive and negative thought processes, as each expresses your innate wholeness. For example, saying 'yes' to opposing thoughts simultaneously changes how you feel about yourself and stops looking to others for approval as you discover them within yourself. Then familiarise yourself with how both make you feel in your body.

(N) Nurture your desire to cultivate a new mind by reflecting on the quality of the thoughts you plant, which will influence how you feel and behave in the long run.

(K) Kindness and compassion are integral to this practice by not passing any judgement when your unwanted thoughts appear. Instead, affirm yourself with being the best version you know how to be in that moment.

Week 1

(T) Track how you feel in your body and bring awareness to it regarding its sensations, different body parts, and how you experience your body occupying space around you. By paying close attention to your body, you can enter a sensing/feeling mode that shuts down your analytical mind. As you move through each body part, become aware of the sensations you feel and the space that each occupies. Then notice how your entire body occupies space in the room that you're sitting in. By practising this exercise for about 20 mins each day, your body produces consistent signals to different brain parts, making them interact in ways that may not have been possible. It also shifts your body from a stressful and survival state to a more regulated one.

Week 2

(H) Honour whatever thoughts and feelings that you identify. Stay curious about them and see each emotion accompanying them as messengers informing you of something you need to change.

Assign names to each of your thoughts, allowing you to gain control over them. As you identify your thoughts, your awareness will strengthen, enabling you to override the automatic and self-limiting patterns in your brain and the negative emotions that often accompany them, which you may have come to see as a fundamental part of your identity.

Ask yourself the following questions every day this week and write the answers in your journal.

What unwanted feelings am I believing? The answer may be deeply familiar: It may be that you're going to get it wrong, you're not enough, you'll let others down, you're a failure etc.

What is one thing I want to change about myself?

How am I as a person?

How is the person I show up as in the world different from the person I am inside?

What familiar feeling do I experience each day?

What are the parts of myself I hide from others?



Decide on a familiar unwanted thought or feeling you no longer want to emotionally "feed". It could be guilt, shame, sadness, anger and so on. Mine was guilt; each time I felt guilty, I felt insecure, and when I'm insecure, I feel overwhelmed. And when I'm overwhelmed, I feel anxious. So, although yours might not be the same, it's important to note that these negative thoughts and feelings keep you in a survival state, dysregulating you and keeping you stuck.

Notice how it feels in your body and become aware of the physical signs such as tightness, deflation, jitters, irritation, etc. Notice what happens physiologically and try and stay with it. Then, determine how these feelings influence your thinking in those moments. For example, one of my feelings was anger, and when I asked myself what my attitude was like when I was angry, I became aware of how controlling and overwhelmed I could be.

Acknowledge and own up to who you are and your past unhealthy habits. Do write it down. Doing this frees up healthy energy for meditation to cultivate a new mind.

It is essential to be mindful of your thinking and feelings to reconcile the difference between your perceived image and your true self. This allows you to understand the mental state that drives or fuels these emotions, influencing how you operate in life. This repetitive pattern of thoughts and associated feelings can develop into an unconscious addiction when unchecked.

Week 3

Intention (I) Your intention is about stating what you intend to accomplish through your actions. It's a commitment to what you want the journey to be about as you go after planting new thoughts and what you want out of life.

So, for this week, whilst in meditation:

Declare the unwanted thought and emotions that you wish to change.

Surrender it to a higher power, which some call God, Divine Intelligence, Infinite Wisdom, etc. Choose the name that feels right to you. Once you surrender, you must release any attempts to control what happens. In other words, let go of what you think you know, including how to solve or handle this problem.

Since you've already observed the negative emotion that drives you -

Observe and become so familiar with the sensations you experience from your specific thoughts and actions, so much so that you can catch yourself as soon as you sense them. With ongoing practice, you can become so aware of the old thought patterns that you never allow them to manifest. The result is that you stay ahead of the old self, so you have control over it. This way, you can become familiar with the feeling that drives your unconscious thoughts and habits. Ask yourself:

What automatic emotions do I feel when I notice the unwanted thoughts named in week 2?

What are some of the limiting beliefs that go with that thought? It is important to write them down and become aware of them. Some examples of limiting beliefs may be:

I can't help the way I am

I hate my situation

I don't have what it takes ever to make a difference.

I'm not confident

I can't change

My life sucks

It's not my fault that I keep acting out

Your automatic and unconscious feelings and behaviours are performed without realising it to make yourself feel more like the person you think and believe you are, even though you may say you hate that feeling. For example, if you feel guilty daily, you might do things that make you feel even more guilty without realising it. For instance, you might act mean or aggressively, which only adds to your guilt. However, you can stop these unhealthy unconscious behaviours by learning to control these survival emotions.

Think about the unwanted emotion you identified associated with your survival thoughts from the week. How do you habitually act when you are feeling this way? Then, again, write this down in your journal.



Week 4

Nurture (N) and Kindness (K) Nurture yourself by bringing presence to your anxious, fearful, angry, and guilty thoughts and simply allowing them to be there without trying to fix or change anything.

Notice your feelings of guilt and fear.

Then, ask that disturbed, unwanted thought what it needs most now.

Pay attention to what you are sensing. Is it care and reassurance? Is it compassion and empathy? Is it something else entirely?

You may then want to send a gentle whisper inward, directly to that anxious part, for example. It's okay, my dear. You can let go! You'll be fine; you and I have been through these many times. Relax, my love. You've got this! Notice what you're sensing in your body.

You may feel more open, your shoulders drop and relax, and you may feel a softening in your heart or clarity of mind. Don't worry if you don't feel anything; that's normal, too. Just keep practising meditation.

This week is also about being kind and compassionate to yourself by not passing judgement as you work on your unwanted thoughts and feelings. Remembering why you want to change is essential because you value and care about yourself. By having compassion for yourself, you demonstrate the acceptance of your humanness, a reality we all share. The more you open your heart to this reality instead of constantly berating yourself, the more you will be able to feel kindness and compassion for yourself whenever you feel you fall short.

Weeks 1-3 have been designed to help you become aware of unhealthy thinking patterns, identifying unwanted survival thoughts and their associated emotions so they will never go unnoticed or unrecognised. Now that you've become aware of how your unwanted thoughts show up, the next step in nurturing your mind is to start familiarising yourself with how to use affirmations.

Affirmations.

Affirmations are deliberately choosing words and thoughts that will either help to change your thought patterns or help to create something new in your life. Until now, you've worked at shedding off old brain connections that no longer serve you. Now; it's time to grow new ones and create a mind that will transform you. You can use affirmations to do this. Learning any new skill, like affirmations, is making new brain connections.

As limiting thoughts and feelings come up throughout your day, observe yourself and replace the negative thoughts by repeating affirmations opposite those thoughts.

Affirmative statements transcend your present reality into your future's creation through your words in the now. So, for example, when you say, "I am very confident", you may not feel confident at that moment. However, this means you are planting seeds for the future, self-assured you. Each time you repeat this statement, you affirm the thoughts you have grown in your mind.

Make a list of affirmative statements that oppose your unwanted thoughts. Write them in your journal and express them to yourself day in and day out. For example, "My positive thoughts create positive feelings" or "Today, I choose to think positively".

At this point, ask questions that make you curious and think in different ways than you typically do. Asking yourself questions like, "How do I want to think? How do I want to act? And how do I want to feel? It fires and wires your brain in new ways.

During this final stage, you will see the benefits in your thought process by paying attention and repeating your newly learnt skills of affirmations. As an effect of this new habit of the brain, your inner mind and the outer world would seem the same. For instance, if you begin to think about the tremendous and quality future you want, your thoughts will influence your environment. In other words, what you think and feel inside of you, i.e., the perceptions of your subjective mind, will affect the world outside of you, i.e., will influence your objective world, and you will slowly begin to create the reality you desire.

Remember, after this final week, the goal is to keep practising so this meditation can become a way of life.