

# Being Effective

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

“How you start your day is how you live your day.”

- Louise Hay

A key aspect of mindfulness is the ability to take effective action, with intention and purpose. The way to achieve our goals in life is to ask ourselves if what we are doing, thinking, feeling, saying and believing is supporting our goals.

For example, when a married couple comes to me for counseling, the first thing I ask them is, “What is your intention in coming here?”

The answer to this is most often, “We want to have a happy marriage.”

I then ask them what they are doing to support that. If they tell me that they go home and argue with each other, I then ask them how this behavior is helping to support that intention.

Being effective means living intentionally. Living intentionally means living in such a way that your actions support your goals. The easiest way to do this is to set your intention each day by establishing your goals on a daily basis. The exercises below will help you to take effective action. When you can take effective action you can live an intentional life, full of purpose.

## LIVING INTENTIONALLY: DAILY AFFIRMATION

To begin living intentionally, it’s a good idea to start your day with an affirmation of intention. Here’s the one I use at the start of my day:

“Today I will make a conscious effort to live without assumption or judgment, allowing the universe to show me whatever it has in store for me today. I will endeavor to know more at the end of the day today than I knew yesterday. I will act in a compassionate and kind way whenever possible striving to do no harm to others and to help whenever I can.”

Your own affirmation can be similar, or something completely different. Practice your daily affirmation by writing a sample one below. You may wish to practice by writing several.

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## BEING EFFECTIVE: AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

At our house we practice the “attitude of gratitude.” This means we make a conscious effort to say “thank you” to each member of the family at least once per day for something. It doesn’t matter if it’s something we’ve already thanked each other for a thousand times before; each time we hear it, it brings a smile.

Another aspect of the attitude of gratitude is that it can be used to reduce negativity in our lives. Every time I catch myself making some sort of negative judgment, I immediately say two things I’m grateful for. That way I have at least twice as many positive and grateful statements in my life as negative and judgmental statements.

It’s easy to focus on the things we don’t have in life, but in doing so we often forget to be grateful for the things we do have. By making this attitude of gratitude a part of your daily practice, you become more fully aware of life in the present moment. When you are living with such awareness it becomes much easier to live intentionally.

Think of at least ten things you are grateful for in your own life, and list them below. Whenever you are feeling down and feel that your intention is starting to fade, it may help to review this list.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_

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## BEING EFFECTIVE: SETTING YOUR INTENTION

When you have said your daily affirmation and practiced the attitude of gratitude, you may set your intention for the day by completing the statements below. Make this a part of your daily routine and you will have taken the first step towards living an effective life.

Today I want to feel...

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Today I want to think...

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Today I want to experience...

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Today I want to believe that...

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My goal for today is...

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