

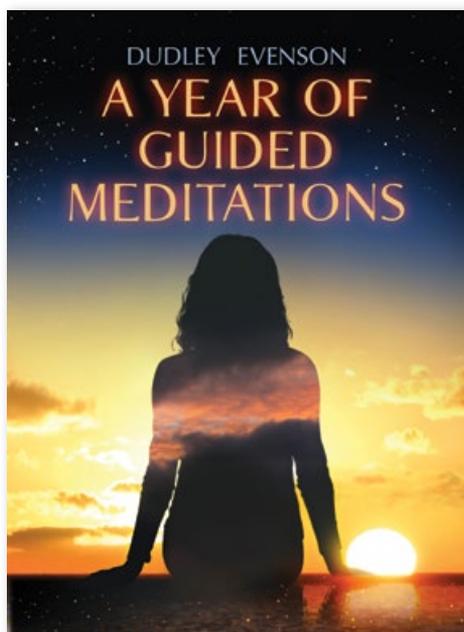
A YEAR OF GUIDED MEDITATIONS – The Process

By Dudley Evenson



On a recent interview about my new book, *A Year of Guided Meditations*, I was asked how the 52 weekly affirmations had come about. The interviewer wondered if I had ‘channeled’ them. I said, I don’t call it channeling except in the sense that each one of us is, or can be, a channel of the divine. But channeled or not, for some reason I did decide to create a program of weekly affirmations to be offered for a whole year. I realized that if we want to change our lives, then we need to dedicate a good length of time to reprogramming our negative inner dialogue. I wanted to provide a tool to help people shift their consciousness by offering a new and positive principle based on practical wisdom to deeply focus on each week for an entire year.

The book came about as I considered the values and principles that my husband Dean Evenson and I have lived by for over half a century. We attribute our long and loving relationship and our successful music business to understanding how the universe works and putting that awareness into action. I wanted to present the ideas in a form that could be shared with others who are looking to live the life of their highest dreams and so I wrote them down as 52 separate principles to affirm. Each affirmation is complimented with my contemplative photography and additional background information. The book is designed so people can begin their year any time and focus on a new affirmation every week. Or they can open the book randomly and focus on the affirmation they turn to, like drawing a soul card. In addition to the longer affirmation for each week, there is a short phrase that can be memorized and repeated often.



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Watch Your Language!

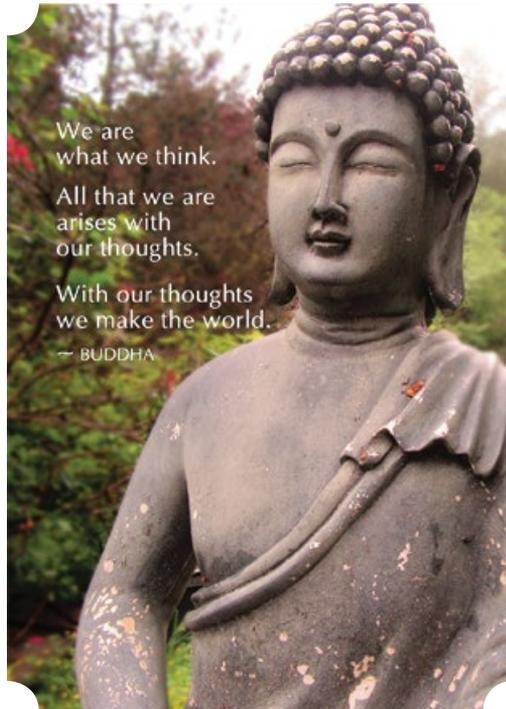
We are constantly affirming things even though those ideas may not be helpful to our actualizing our best possible life. We are often actually affirming the negative aspect of what we don’t want and thus we become victims of our own negative thinking. It is essential that we identify this negative self-programming and replace it with positive affirmations that can move us in the direction of manifesting what we really want. A first step is listening to your inner dialog. What are you telling yourself on a regular basis? Is it something you really believe and want or just a habit and concept someone told you about yourself? If it is not in support of your highest ideals, then change it!

As with any writer, I took what I know and believe and wrote it down. Once I decided on the principles I wanted to include, the words came out easily and smoothly. The first project the affirmations were used in was my album *Meditation Moment* of spoken word guided meditations with music and nature sounds. That was followed by a video course on DailyOM called *A Year of Guided Meditations* which eventually became a DVD of the same name with nature imagery. This book is actually the fourth manifestation of sharing the principles. Soon we hope to offer a card deck and another year long course involving live Zoom calls as well as author events.

Dean and I both came from Christian backgrounds but in time, we opened up to a wider world of understanding. In the late '60s we discovered yoga and meditation and were exposed to spiritual writings from the East such as Yogananda's *Autobiography of a Yogi* and many others. We studied Buddhism and learned from Indian gurus and Tibetan lamas. Native American elders inspired us with their Earth wisdom. We read ancient spiritual texts from all the religions and we discovered that beyond the cultural and historical stories, the same universal principles and teachings permeated all religions. What Jesus taught when he said "What you sow you shall reap" is reflected in the Buddhist concept of cause and effect and the Hindu understanding of Karma. What you send out comes back. The seeds you plant in the spring will become your harvest in the fall. What goes around, comes around.

Years later we worked with Arnold Patent, one of the early new thought authors and workshop presenters. Through his study of *A Course of Miracles* he developed a collection of 'Universal Principles' which were in essence the foundational laws of how the universe works. Just as the physical world operates on principles of physics, so too our inner spiritual world has principles that govern it. In the early '70s, Dean and I had already discovered the two maxims 'Go with the flow' and 'Create your own reality'. For some, there was a contradiction in these sayings leading to a confusion of principles but for Dean and myself, we found them both to be true and have lived our lives to the fullest using them. As we learned to control our mental processes, we realized we were able to create the kind of life we wanted.

GO WITH THE FLOW.
Here's how it works as we understand it. We can't control everything in the world around us so sometimes things happen that we don't like and can't avoid (i.e., suffering, pain, sickness, loss, death). We can, however, choose how we respond to these things and navigate with less stress than



if we mightily resisted them. So, when we are able to flow through a challenge, or move out of the way and let it flow around us (as in Tai Chi), we complete the karmic learning and move on.

CREATE YOUR OWN REALITY.
Now here's the other side of the story. In this aspect, we have our values, intentions, visions,

and goals regarding how we want our lives to unfold, and we are constantly aiming in that direction. We make choices at every crossroad which move us toward our dreams and our goals. Things will continue to come up and we can still go with the flow to get through those challenges, but as we remain steadfast on the path, our lives improve.

*(Excerpted from our first book *Quieting the Monkey Mind: How to Meditate with Music*)*

We all want an end to suffering and a better life. The Buddha speaks about the cause of suffering as attachment and also explains that the way to let go of attachment and overcome suffering is by following the Eightfold Path. It is interesting to note that the first step on that path is called 'Right Perception'. When we can accept a situation with clarity and understanding without being attached to the outcome, we can move on.

One of the principles we learned is 'What you focus on expands.' This is similar to the 'Law of Attraction' but for many, that principle is misunderstood. We believe the success in our lives and our relationship is not because we visualized a soul mate, a mansion and a Mercedes, but because we lived by our values and principles and had high intention to use our gifts and talents to be of service in the world. As we have lived by the principles and navigated the challenges of life without attachment to outcome, but always aiming in the highest direction, things have worked out even better than we could have imagined. Life is a process and requires patience, focus and understanding. My hope is that the affirmations will be used to help people live their best possible life.

FOCUS

"I realize that what I focus on expands. I therefore choose to focus on what is good and beautiful in my world. I focus with gratitude on what I have in life rather than what might be lacking. In the process of accepting, many blessings come my way... Taking action is a form of focus that leads to manifestation. What I apply my attention to increases..."