

Atomic Habits could be the breakthrough you need, offering a structured, effective strategy for creating profound positive habits to enrich your spiritual growth. Today is the first talk in this series, *Atomic Habits for Spiritual Evolution*. During this five-week series, "Atomic Habits for Spiritual Evolution," we will explore how the principles from James Clear's bestselling book, "Atomic Habits," can be applied to our spiritual lives. He defines an "Atomic Habit" as a small, manageable habit that is incredibly small and powerful, much like an atom. The idea is that these tiny habits are the building blocks of remarkable results. They are part of a more extensive system of habits, and when focused systematically, these small changes can lead to profound outcomes. In this context, the term "atomic" also suggests the fundamental component of larger systems, emphasizing that these habits are both small enough to be manageable and powerful enough to make a significant impact over time.

My goal for this talk is to encourage you to use **Affirmations** as Atomic Habits to help you be more mindful and present every moment of the day. Affirmations are a powerful tool for shaping one's spiritual identity and beliefs. By repeatedly affirming positive, empowering statements, individuals can rewire their subconscious minds and align their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with their highest spiritual aspirations. Regularly practicing affirmations, we use repetition to profoundly influence our thoughts, feelings, and spiritual identity. Over time, this habit becomes a powerful ritual that strengthens our connection to the divine and fosters personal transformation. One reason affirmations are so powerful is because they naturally tap into what James Clear calls the Habit Loop.

James Clear suggested a four-step process he calls the Four-Step Habit Loop. At the heart of habit formation lies the Habit Loop - a simple yet powerful framework that describes how habits are created and sustained. Because I want to encourage you to use affirmations as an Atomic Habit, it seems natural to use an affirmation as an example of understanding the habit loop because affirmations tap into the fundamental components that drive habit formation. The habit loop breaks down the automatic nature of habits into three components: **The Craving** (desire), **The Cue** (trigger), **The Response** (action), and **The Reward** (benefit). This understanding is vital to changing old habits or forming new ones. To create an effective affirmation, we want to determine what we desire. We might wish to be more peaceful, prosperous, loving, forgiving, confident, etc.

The following steps will explain the **Four-Step Habit Loop**:

The first step: **Craving**

For this example, let us say we want to be more confident. **Craving**: The craving is the desire to boost confidence or self-esteem. This craving motivates the habit because we look forward to the positive emotional shift of being more confident. We crave or desire to be confident. So, we are ready to create a new habit of being confident. To make our habit successful, we can tie our desired habit to an existing habit or routine. We want to create a Cue or a trigger for our affirmation process.

The Second step: **The Cue**.

The cue is a trigger for your affirmation practice. It is essential to link the trigger to another habit or routine. Let us say the cue is your morning coffee routine. Every morning, you sit at your table and drink coffee. Drinking coffee is **The Cue** that will trigger your affirmation habit.

The Third step: **The Response**.

The response here is the action you take in response to your craving. In this case, it would be reciting a specific, empowering affirmation. An effective affirmation for this scenario could be, *"I am confident, capable, and strong. I welcome all challenges as opportunities to grow."*

Note: It is essential to feel like you want to feel when the affirmation helps you create what you desire. This time let us take a big breath and feel what it feels like to be confident, capable, and strong before stating the affirmation. Repeat the affirmation. The more you say the affirmation, the more confident, capable, and strong you will feel.

The Fourth step: **The Reward.**

The reward is the immediate feeling of increased self-confidence and empowerment. It is the feeling and belief that you feel ready to face the day with a positive and assertive mindset. This rewarding feeling reinforces the habit loop, making it more likely that you will repeat the behavior every time you encounter the cue.

You may encounter some challenges when you create a new habit. These might include Thinking you may not have time to practice new spiritual habits. You may face resistance to breaking old habits. You may experience a lack of motivation and patience. You may experience distractions.

If you encounter these challenges or others, start with a short, manageable practice that fits easily into your daily routine. Prioritize your schedule, treat your spiritual habits as essential appointments, and fit them into your daily routine.

The Two-Minute Daily Affirmation Habit

Embarking on a spiritual journey requires intention, focus, and discipline. To aid you on this path, I am excited to introduce the Two-Minute Daily Affirmation Habit, a simple yet powerful practice designed to enhance your spiritual and emotional well-being. You will receive a handout with a carefully selected Daily Word affirmation and a short, positive article. These affirmations and readings are from this week's Daily Word.

Suggested Daily Practice

Coordinate it with a daily habit or routine. (Pause) Take a moment to pick a time and event to which your affirmation habit can be tied. I suggest in the morning.

Choose a consistent habit or a routine you do every day. It could be first thing in the morning while drinking coffee, during your lunch break, or before bed. The key is consistency.

Read and Reflect: on the Daily Word article or some other inspirational reading. Spend the next minute reading the accompanying positive article. Allow the messages to permeate your thoughts and stir your spirit.

Personalize Your Practice: While the provided affirmation and article are powerful, incorporating personal affirmations that speak directly to your aspirations and challenges can enhance the impact. Feel free to add or modify with affirmations that resonate deeply with you.

Consistency Matters: Engaging in this practice at the same time each day establishes a routine that your mind and body begin to anticipate and crave. This regularity enhances the habit's formation and ensures that it becomes a stable, rewarding part of your daily life.

The Power of Two Minutes: It may seem surprising, but just two minutes dedicated to this practice can profoundly influence your day and, over time, your life. These moments of affirmation and positive reflection set the tone for the rest of your day, empower you to handle challenges more effectively, and align you more closely with your spiritual goals.

As we wrap up today's discussion on the transformative power of small habits, through deliberate affirmations, let us remember that every incredible journey begins with a single step. We plant seeds of growth and renewal in our lives by committing to even the smallest of positive changes, like the Two-Minute Daily Affirmation Habit. Over time, these seeds can grow into strong, vibrant manifestations of our most profound spiritual and personal aspirations. So, I encourage you to embrace the simplicity and potency of these practices, trusting that each small habit you cultivate is a steppingstone towards a more fulfilled and purposeful life. Let us carry forward the spirit of intention and transformation, knowing that every moment is an opportunity for change and progress.

Affirmation: *Today, I choose habits that empower me.*