

How to Align Your Conscious and Unconscious Mind

Aligning your conscious and unconscious mind is at the core of effective, healthy communication. These two tools will have you quickly and easily creating a new way of thinking to transform your life and relationships.

Tool #1: Create a Conscious Goal Movie

Have you ever cried at a movie? Ever gotten angry or scared by a character in a movie? Well, how's it possible to cry for someone you've never met or be terrified even though you've never run through a graveyard from a chainsaw-wielding madman? It's because you get into a feeling state and it becomes real to your brain. Your brain doesn't know the difference between actually doing something or getting into what's called "state" thinking about something.

We want to use that to your advantage to align your conscious and unconscious minds.

So, think of a thought you want to have in your unconscious about a relationship you're looking to improve. Some examples could be:

- Our success as a couple is inevitable.
- Big changes can absolutely happen in a short amount of time.
- I love feeling heard and understood by my sister.
- I'm so happy and relieved that my son and I communicate so well.
- My past doesn't equal my future. What I'm doing now equals my future.
- With consistent (not perfect) effort, I can do anything I set my mind to.

Set aside five minutes a day for one week (really set a timer for this). During this time, you're going to think of your goal and play it like a movie in your head as if it's already achieved. Add as much detail as possible. You need to put yourself into a feeling state, not just a thinking state. Create a picture in your head of what it looks like when you're connecting with your son, feeling understood by your sister, or laughing with your partner. What are you doing and saying together? What are you seeing, smelling and hearing?

When the timer goes off, you should feel a more positive feeling. These feeling states get embedded in your unconscious and will have you feeling more aligned in those relationships.

Tool #2: Act Like the Person You Want to Be

In one of my favorite books, *Strangers to Ourselves: Discovering the Adaptive Unconscious* by Timothy Wilson, he says that if you want to align your conscious and unconscious mind, a great place to start is to deliberately act like the person you want to be.

To do that, you need to change your behavior. As Wilson eloquently puts it:

“Act your way into a new way of being.”

I loved reading this so much because, as a recovering heroin addict, it's something I learned in the 12 steps of Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous. We have a couple of slogans like, “Fake it until you make it” and “Bring the body and the mind will follow.”



When you're trying to stop drinking or drugging, trust me, you don't really want to. Your brain is, literally, hijacked and you're driven by all kinds of physical and mental motivations – most of which are happening without any conscious awareness. And most of them are telling you to continue drinking and drugging!

So, in the beginning, you're just going through the motions – doing the new things but they feel uncomfortable and fake. This is the “fake it” part. Over time, things start to change, and you start to align your conscious and unconscious minds and this is the “make it” part!

There are basically two ways that having new actions and behaviors leads to shifting your unconscious mind so it's more aligned with your conscious.

First, when you start behaving differently your brain gets to unconsciously infer that you're a new person. Your brain now has new information, new data to incorporate so it starts to reconstruct its knowledge of you. Identity formation is all about your beliefs. Your beliefs are just thoughts you've had over and over. If your actions are different consistently, then your thoughts start to shift. “I'm the kind of person that” is your new mantra. “I'm the kind of person who jogs daily.” “I'm the kind of person who does nice things for my partner.” These create a new self-concept – new beliefs.

Second, the more you practice a new behavior, the more automatic it becomes. Without a doubt, research has shown over and over that changing your behavior often precedes changes in attitudes, thoughts and feelings. Changing your daily behavior to match what you consciously want, is a great way to bring about change in your unconscious mind.

Even small changes in your behavior are beneficial. Again, these small changes can definitely lead to small changes in your self-concept. And small changes in how you think about yourself will make the next change easier. And that's how all this grows. When you have consistent practice of new tools, thoughts, intentions and feelings, you'll train your unconscious mind to think what you want!

Think of any small change you can make, whether you “believe” it yet or not, and make that new action a priority. It could be:

- Putting away the dishes every day first thing in the morning so your partner has one less thing to do. While you put them away, think of how you're doing an act of service for someone you love.
- You could text your dad one thing you appreciate about him every day.
- During a meditation, you could picture a safe, comfortable place and picture yourself inviting your sibling to sit with you and connect lovingly.
- You could do one conscious and random act of kindness daily for your boss.
- You could have a six-second kiss every day with your partner.
- You could commit to a weekly mani-pedi if you're trying to focus on self-care improvements.
- You could set a positive intention daily before you walk into your house or into a meeting at work.
- You could get up and lovingly greet your partner at the door, every time they come home.
- You could walk up the stairs at work instead of taking the elevator.