

Living the Truth I Know

My Thoughts & Words Have Power

Wisdom Story		“Feathers” a Jewish Folk Tale
Key Issue		We sometimes forget that our thoughts influence our experiences.
Living the Truth		Our thinking determines how we will experience the events of our lives. What we BELIEVE we will see, is what we see.
Unity Principle		#3: I create my experiences by what I choose to think and what I feel and believe.

Adult Review & Enrichment

Thoughts to Contemplate

- We can't always control what happens to us, but we can control what we think and say about our experiences.
- Using affirmations does not change God. It changes you and your attitude toward God.
- “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”
~Albert Einstein
- “You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.” ~ Marcus Aurelius
- “God’s greatest gift to man is the power of thought, through which he can incorporate into his consciousness the mind of God.” ~ Charles Fillmore
- “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God.” ~ Romans 12:2
- “The greatest gift of God is life itself, and we stir up this life by affirming life, by refusing to let ourselves fall into negative, defeating attitudes of mind or routines of living.”
~ Herbert Hunt

Tools of Affirmative Prayer: Denials & Affirmations

- Denials & Affirmations are a tool we use that helps us shift our focus from positive to negative thoughts and words.

Denials:

- “Denial usually comes first. It sweeps out the debris and makes room for the new tenant that is brought into the mind by the affirmation. It would not be wise to eliminate the old thoughts unless you knew that there are higher and better ones to take their place.” (Prosperity, 178)
- “We deny anything that is not true of spirit even though it may seem to be true from an earthly point of view.” (Your Hope of Glory, 36)
- “A denial does not declare that the negative appearance does not exist; it declares that the negative appearance is powerless over us.” (Handbook of Positive Prayer, 22)

Affirmations

- “An affirmation is a positive and orderly statement of Truth. By affirmation we claim and appropriate that which is ours.” (Keep a True Lent, 142)
- “Each affirmation helps to build up a substantial, firm, unwavering state of mind, because it establishes Truth in consciousness.” (Keep a True Lent, 143)
- “An affirmation is a statement of Truth; not a statement of the outer facts. It is a statement of the Truth within the situation.” (A New Way of Thinking, 125, 126)

Example:

Situation: You are doubting your abilities to be financially abundant...

- Denial comes first, stated once: “The appearance of financial lack is just an appearance, it has no power over me.
- Affirmation comes next, stated as many times as needed until you finally convince yourself that it is true and your faith grows enough so that you really believe it. “I am creative and capable and supported by Spirit in all ways. I recognize the prosperity and abundance that are mine. I have enough.”

Affirmations may not feel true in the moment, but the idea is to say it enough so that you know it is true and this is what you focus your attention on and see it actively happening in your life.

Centering & Coming Together

Beginning by engaging in some centering time helps to build connections and to create a prayerful and sacred environment. Encourage each member of the family to contribute and to take turns leading the different activities.

Set Up Your Sacred Space

Encourage each member of the family to contribute to creating the space. Items to consider:

- Colorful scarf or cloth on which to place the items
- Electric Candle
- Crystals/Stones – nature items
- Prayer cards
- Items that have a special meaning to an individual
- Electric Tealight

Light the Candle

As you turn on or light the candle, invite all to focus on the flame and know that the Christ presence within, is always alive in us.

- Prayer the ***Prayer for Protection***
 - *The Light of God surrounds us*
 - *The Love of God enfolds us*
 - *The Power of God protects us*
 - *The Presence of God watches over us*
 - *Where we are, God is!*

Check In

- Each person chooses a tealight and then shares their name, an I AM statement, such as, *I am Diane and I am powerful*, and turns on their tealight. For each person, the group then repeats the name and affirmation in order to give a blessing, “*Diane, you are powerful.*” Go around the circle until all are affirmed.
- Next invite each person to share 3 of their favorite things. (*Color, movie, sport, bug, animal, song, planet, game, etc...*)

Sacred Breath

- This is the time when we use a breathing exercise to de-stress and to move our attention into the present moment. Choices include:
 - Smile, Take a Breath & Relax
 - Tighten all muscles, breath in, hold, and release

Celebration Leader

- Invite people to think of one or two things they would like to celebrate. As each person shares, make a joyful noise. *This activity invites us to look for the good even in very small and simple ways.*

Adapted from: *My Prayer Filled Life, Tales of Wonder & Imagination* by Diane Venzera
Spirit's Light Foundation, an Alternative Unity Ministry

Share the Story

Story is used to create a common experience. The story reflects an issue that the participants might be experiencing and invites us to consider that we are not alone in what we are thinking, believing, and/or experiencing.

“Feathers,” a Jewish Folk Tale

This story is an exploration of the what happens as we allow our thoughts to be expressed in words. Once our words are released, there is no taking them back. This story invites us to think of the consequences before we speak.

Story Focus

Our thoughts and words have power. We are called to be mindful of what we focus on and put energy into.

Share the Story

A woman repeated a story (gossip) about a neighbor. Within a few days everyone in the community knew the story. The person she talked about heard what had been said about her and she was very sad. Later, the woman who had spread the story learned that it was not true. She was very sorry and went to a wise rabbi and asked what she could do to repair the damage.

After giving this some thought, the rabbi said to her, “Go home, get one of your feather pillows, and bring it back to me.” Surprised by the rabbi’s response, the woman followed his advice and went home to get a feather pillow and brought it to the rabbi.

“Now,” said the rabbi, “open the pillow and pull out all the feathers.” Confused, the woman did what she was told to do.

After a few minutes, the rabbi said, “Now, I want you to find every one of the feathers and put them back into the pillow.”

“That’s impossible,” said the woman, almost in tears. “The window is open and the wind has scattered them all over the room and blown many feathers outside. I can’t possibly find them all.”

“Yes,” said the rabbi. “And that is what happens when you gossip or tell a story about someone else. Once you talk about someone, the words fly from one person’s mouth to another, just like these feathers flew in the wind. Once you say them, you can never take them back.”

Discuss the Story

The discussion questions can be used to provoke thought and to allow the participants time to grapple with their own questions and to seek their own answers

- What was the woman accused of?
- How did she respond to the accusation?
- What was the rabbi afraid would happen again?
- What task did he give her to do?
- What happened to the feathers?
- What did the woman discover?
- What happens to our words as soon as we speak them?
- Thinking about what is happening in the world around us:
 - What thoughts and words add to negativity and fear?
 - What thoughts and words can express care and healing?
- What power do you have to control your words?
- How can you use your words for good?

Activities

The activities are used to give the participants the opportunity to explore the lesson's teachings through art, science, and/or games.

What Thoughts & Words Do I Let Loose?

An exploration of the power of our words

Supplies

- Bubbles

Action

- One person holds the bubbles and the rest scatter around the room.
- The person with the bubbles, blows as many as he/she can as fast as he/she can.
- Invite the rest of the group to try to catch the bubbles and return them to the bottle.
- After a few minutes, talk to the group about what this was like.
 - How many bubbles could they catch?
 - How many bubbles could they return to the bottle?
 - How many bubbles flew away and scatter their energy everywhere?
 - How are the bubbles like the words we send out, both positive and negative?
 - Give what is happening in the world around us, what affect might our words have on others?
- Invite the group to think of positive healing words to share with the world and use the bubbles to send them out.

Denials & Affirmations

Denials and affirmations help to train our mind and change our thinking and beliefs.

Supplies:

- Copy of a world map, see *end of lesson*
- Markers
- Magazines and/or Photos of inspirational places
- Construction paper
- Scissors
- Glue

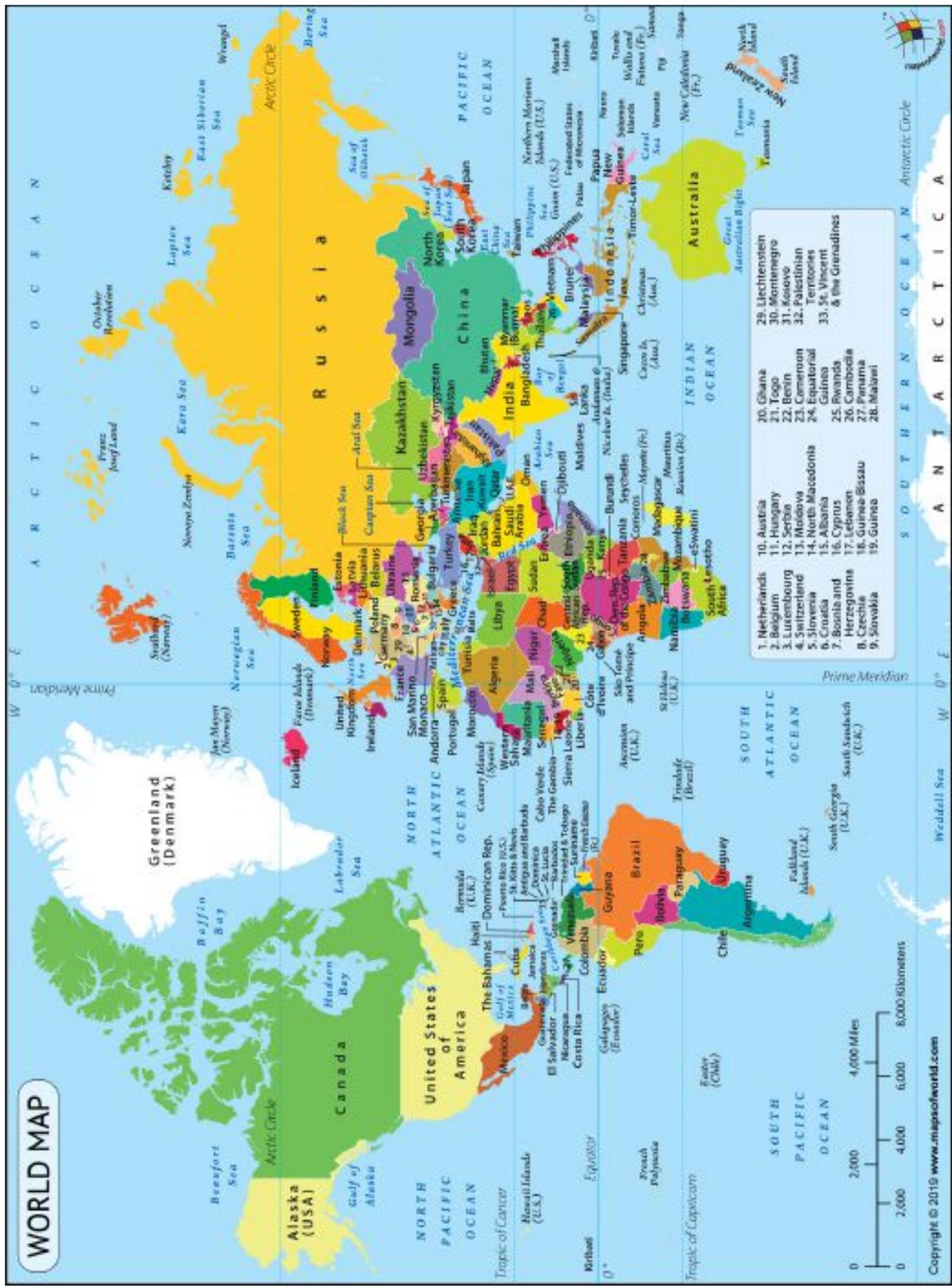
Action #1

- Talk about what a denial is and what we mean by an affirmation.
 - **Denial** – helps clear out negative thoughts and prepares our mind to create something positive. It is not about denying that an event is happening, but rather it is denying the power that anything other than Truth has any power over us.
 - **Affirmation** – is a positive statement of Truth set in the present tense and when connected to the words, I Am, it carries great power. We want to use only the feelings, thoughts, characteristics and conditions with which we want to be identified. Affirmations are not about changing anyone or anything else. They are used to help us create new thoughts and ways of being in the world.
- Look at the world map.
- Think about a fear or condition that is affecting the world. Create a denial about the fear or condition, not denying that the event is happening but that it has any power over us. For example: *Thoughts of fear and anxiety have no power over me.*
- Write the denial at the center top of the map.
- Then, create some positive, present tense statements that can replace the negative thought and help us to focus on positive, power statements. For example: *I am a calm presence.*
- Write the affirmations on the map.
- Use the map as a reminder that we can always change our thoughts and change our focus. Often, moving into more positive thinking will inspire us to come up with some creative solutions.

Action #2

- Using the magazines, images, scissors, glue and construction paper, create a collage of inspirational, positive images.
- Select images of things you love, that make you feel good and help you maintain a positive attitude.
- If you want, add affirmative statements.
- Use your collage as a reminder of what makes you happy and use the world map during your prayer time by repeating the affirmations.

WORLD MAP



1. Netherlands
2. Belgium
3. Luxembourg
4. Switzerland
5. Slovenia
6. Croatia
7. Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. Czechia
9. Slovakia
10. Austria
11. Hungary
12. Serbia
13. Moldova
14. North Macedonia
15. Albania
16. Cyprus
17. Lebanon
18. Guinea-Bissau
19. Guinea
20. Ghana
21. Togo
22. Benin
23. Cameroon
24. Equatorial Guinea
25. Rwanda
26. Cambodia
27. Panama
28. Malawi
29. Liechtenstein
30. Montenegro
31. Kosovo
32. Palestinian Territories
33. St. Vincent & the Grenadines