

POSTNOTES

NEWS AND INFORMATION

VOL 9 NUMBER 5

SAFETY SENSE

A GREENER HOUSE

“Green” may seem like a relatively new term for describing ideas that are environmentally sensitive, but the concept is timeless – particularly when it applies to the home. Here are 10 simple ways to live a “greener” life in your home.

- 1. Lower the thermostat.** Turning it down by a degree or two can reduce heating bills by 4 percent or more.
- 2. Use ceiling fans in winter.** Changing the direction of the blade to counterclockwise pushes hot air down and helps keep rooms warm.
- 3. Look for appliances with Energy Star ratings.** Compared to a refrigerator built in 1990, a new Energy Star model saves enough electricity to light an average home for more than 4 1/2 months.
- 4. Fix drips.** One drop per second from a leaky faucet can waste as much as 10 gallons of water each week.
- 5. Install low-flow shower heads, faucets and toilets.** Low-flow faucets reduce water consumption and heating by as much as 50 percent. Low-flow toilets could save Americans 2.1 trillion gallons of water and \$11.3 million daily.
- 6. Choose green flooring** made from renewable resources like bamboo.
- 7. Look for furnishings** that are made from biodegradable or recyclable materials, so when they wear out, they don't create waste.
- 8. Check local guidelines for disposing of paint cans** and other toxic and hazardous materials. Recycle packing and shipping materials.



MOTIVATION

YOU ARE WHAT YOU SAY YOU ARE

We all do it even if we are embarrassed to admit it; we all talk to ourselves. But what you might not know is that what you say is literally sealing your fate. I always cringe when I hear someone say, “Nothing good ever happens to me” or “I don't have the right connections to get ahead.” While these may sound like normal expressions of frustration, they are far more powerful than you can ever imagine!

It has long been recognized that the human mind does not differentiate between fact and fiction, but merely receives whatever it hears as truth. If negative things were said about you during your childhood, and you have continued to say the same things about yourself as an adult, your mind now firmly believes them to be true and you are probably acting accordingly.

Am I stuck with my beliefs or can they be changed?

The 20th century novelist William James says, “Human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.” Attitudes are simply habits of thought. You can definitely change your thoughts; and once you change your thoughts, everything else in your life will have to respond.

The most powerful tool ever discovered for changing your thoughts, beliefs, and ultimately your actions, is a tool called affirmations. An affirmation is a fancy word for self-talk or self-suggestion. It's basically talking to yourself. And since we've already agreed each of us does that, why not make the type of self-talk you use work in your favor.

How do affirmations work?

Affirmations are positive statements used repetitively to alter your attitudes, self-confidence, and behavior patterns. In time as you constantly repeat positive statements about yourself, your subconscious mind accepts them as truth, which changes your beliefs, which changes your habits and actions. In other words, new fresh input will eventually override previous negative conditioning.

Steps for developing successful affirmations are:

1. Decide what you want to become, what you want to do, and what you want to have. Be very specific!
2. Use the first person pronoun “I” in your statement, never “we.”
3. State your affirmation in a positive way.
4. Use the present tense.
5. Make your affirmations fun. Enjoy your affirmations; be creative!
6. Write down your affirmations. Writing crystallizes thought and thought motivates action.

You can create an affirmation for every area of your life: personal development, job promotion, family relationships, and spiritual growth. Affirmations are aided by pictures of your goals, such as posting a floor plan of your dream house on a bulletin board; by number combinations, such as I make 10 calls a day, 6 become appointments, and 3 become sales; and by actions such as listening to motivational tapes, practicing a piece of music over and over, or using a daily “to-do” list.

Affirmations are used by all self-motivated, successful people. They possess an inner drive for achievement that keeps them striving toward their goals and are not dependent on outside circumstances or others to make their life work.

Self-motivation is a learned skill; if you don't presently have it, you can acquire it by using positive affirmations. They are incredibly powerful. If you are patient and consistent, you can literally change your destiny. You are what you say!

Paul J. Meyer

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LIFE EXPECTANCY QUIZ

PLUMBING & APPLIANCES

Guess the average years to replace the following components.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Hot water heater | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-30 |
| 2. Galvanized water pipe | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-35 |
| 3. Septic/sewer pump | <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-15 |
| 4. Well pump | <input type="checkbox"/> 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 30 |
| 5. Dishwasher | <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12-19 |
| 6. Dryer | <input type="checkbox"/> 10-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-40 | <input type="checkbox"/> 40-55 |
| 7. Garbage Disposal | <input type="checkbox"/> 0-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 12-19 |
| 8. Oven/Range | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-20 | <input type="checkbox"/> 20-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-30 |
| 9. Washing Machine | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 15-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-35 |

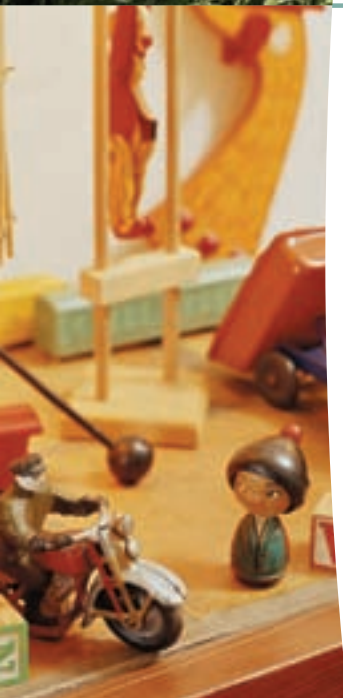
1. 20-25 2. 5-15 3. 5-10 4. 10 5. 5-12 6. 10-25 7. 5-12 8. 15-20 9. 5-15

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5 TIPS TO REMEMBER WHEN TURNING BACK THE CLOCK

Summer Vacation is over and now it's time to tend to the tasks that prepare us for the fall. Here are 5 tips to get you started.

- Be sure to replace your furnace and fridge filters.** For heating and cooling systems to operate properly the filters need to be changed frequently. If you have an automatic ice maker and cold-water dispenser, now is the time to replace the filter in your refrigerator to ensure fresh tasting ice and water.
- Keep your washer working at it's best and smelling fresh.** Odor-causing residues and mould and mildew stains have the potential to accumulate anywhere moisture is present - including your washing machine. To reduce this build up use a washer cleaning kit every time the seasons change.
- Run all gas-powered lawn equipment outside until the fuel tank is empty.** This will ensure that your lawn mower is not a fire hazard if you store it in the garage over the winter.
- Change batteries in fire detectors and review your fire escape plan.** Batteries weaken with age and must be checked regularly, while smoke alarms become less sensitive over time and should be changed every ten years.
- Have a certified chimney sweep inspect and clean the flues and check your fireplace damper.** Also remember to remove bird nests from chimney flues and outdoor electrical fixtures. A chimney with soot and creosol build-up or birds' nests can be a fire hazard.



SETTING THE STAGE

SMART CLEAN YOUR BATHTUB

Before you buy the "traditional" bathtub cleaners, consider using some of your existing household solutions.

Give it a powder.

Grab a container of powdered dish washer detergent: The same formula that makes pots sparkle will power through the toughest grime in your tub. Just sprinkle it over the empty tub and let sit for five minutes. Use a damp sponge to scrub out stubborn spots and rinse.

Clean the caulk.

Pour some rubbing alcohol into a spray bottle and spritz the caulk around the tub. The alcohol will kill mildew on contact, leaving your tub clean and germ free.

Switch to this cleaning solution.

Hydrogen peroxide. Not only will it bubble up to disinfect your tub when mixed with water, but it doesn't give off toxic fumes like traditional cleaning products.

Keep your soap dish clean.

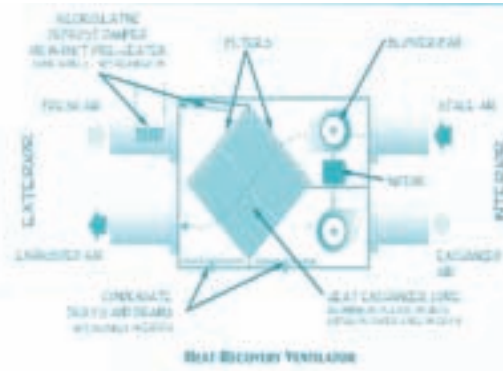
Get the gunk out from in between the ridges of your soap dish by dipping an old toothbrush in some baking soda, moistening it with some water and dusting it to "brush" away the dirt.



INSPECTION INSIGHTS

HEAT RECOVERY VENTILATOR (HRV)

A heat recovery ventilator (HRV) or an air-to-air exchanger is designed to provide fresh air into a home while exhausting an equal amount of stale air. The core (metal or plastic) transfers heat from one stream to the other – called sensible heat. During the winter months, the ventilation system should run regularly to minimize humidity levels. The incoming air is heated utilizing the heat recovered from stale air before it is exhausted. During the summer months (in a house equipped with central air conditioning), the HRV reverses the heat exchange process, removing some of the heat from the incoming air and transferring it to the outgoing stale air.



Components of a HRV/ERV:

- Insulated ducts, typically 6" (15cm) for both the incoming (fresh) and exhaust (stale) air - including thermal collars, exterior hoods, screens
- Ductwork to distribute the fresh air to various rooms and to return stale air to the unit
- Fans to circulate air throughout the home and exhaust stale air
- Heat-exchanger core, where sensible/latent heat is transferred from one air stream to the other
- Filters on both the intake and exhaust sides of the core to prevent clogging
- Defrost mechanism (or pre-heater) to prevent freezing and blocking

- Drain to remove condensation from inside the unit
- Operating controls to regulate ventilation needs

Location of HRV/ERV intake and exhaust ducts:

- At least 3' (1m) away from the corner of the house
- The intake should be located upstream from the exhaust separated by a distance of at least 6' (2m) and at least 18" (45 cm) above the ground
- The intake should be at least 6' (2 m) away from sources of air contamination
- The intake should be at least 6' (2 m) away from dryer, kitchen or bathroom vents
- Do not locate either the intake or exhaust ducts in a garage, attic or crawl space.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT FROM PILLAR TO POST® HOME INFORMATION SERIES. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HOME INSPECTOR FOR A FULL VERSION.

COMMUNICATION

BRING OUT YOUR INNER OPTIMIST

Carry a lucky charm

Psychologists say that people who have a good lucky charm – whether it's a lucky four-leaf clover or a lucky stone – actually feel more optimistic. Overtime, that object becomes a reminder of good things that have happened to us, which reminds us that good things will happen to us in the future.

Release negative energy with a pillow.

Nobody feels positive all the time. But research suggest people who vent their negative feelings have an easier time getting over life's frustrations. Punch a pillow! It'll make you feel better in a flash.

Laugh yourself happy – silently.

We've all heard the healing power of laughter. But there are some times and places where letting out a belly laugh just isn't appropriate. Luckily, imagining yourself chuckling produces the same positive effects. Just close your eyes and picture yourself giggling like a little kid. You'll be amazed just how quickly it changes your outlook.



A WINDOW TO REALITY

CLEAN SCREEN DOORS & WINDOWS



Here are some simple ways to make a screen door squeaky clean.

1. Give them a good soak.

Lay screens down in a kiddie pool filled with sudsy water and spray with a hose. Use a paintbrush or toothbrush to clean tough areas. Leave to dry in the sun.

2. Can't remove the screen?

Fill a spray bottle with two squirts of dish washing soap and warm water and give it a good shake. Mist your screen toward the outside. Let set for 10 minutes, and spray plain water through.

3. Suck up dirt.

Clip on the nozzle attachment to your vacuum, then run it from the top of the screen to the bottom. A quick swipe will suck dirt out of the tiny holes.

4. Roll it away.

All it takes to remove dirt from screen nooks is a lint roller. The sticky paper will grab stubborn particles.



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HOUSEWATCH MAINTENANCE

HEAT RECOVERY VENTILATOR (HRV) MAINTENANCE

- Disconnect the power before maintaining the unit.
- Check exterior ducts monthly to ensure they are not blocked or broken.
- Clean or replace in-unit filters twice a year (most on a HRV are removable and washable).
- Remove and clean the heat-exchanger core twice a year an HRV core may be washed; an ERV core should be vacuumed – DO NOT WASH WITH WATER.
- Clean fans twice a year and clean the inside of the cabinet.
- Flush condensate (drain) line with soapy water once a year (HRV unit ONLY).



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HOME INFORMATION SERIES

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MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES

“You are the way you are because that’s the way you want to be. If you really wanted to be any different, you would be in the process of changing right now.”

FRED SMITH

The founder of Federal Express

WHY PILLAR TO POST®?

Pillar To Post® is North America’s leading home inspection company. We are committed to quality in the service we provide to real estate professionals, home buyers and sellers. Our training, reporting and professionalism are second to none in the industry.

WE WORK WITH YOU

Our goal is to enable you to have confidence in the home buying decision and transaction process. The inspection provides an excellent opportunity to gain in-depth knowledge about the home. During the inspection, we will point out and discuss areas of concern regarding the property. We then provide a detailed, unbiased report with all this information.

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