

by Jane Alexander

**C**AN you really reprogramme your life by shifting your thoughts? Plenty of us spent the Nineties chanting affirmations in the attempt to get slimmer, richer and happier. To little effect. However, a new range of CDs and tapes claims to use a fresh form of technology to help you put your life in order.

InnerTalk programmes promise to help you achieve your every desire — from gaining a relationship to losing fears and phobias; from being a better parent to enjoying a healthier bank balance.

Old-fashioned affirmations simply bombard the brain with positive statements, but the new method is more sophisticated. It works on the principle of holographic patterning — sending messages simultaneously to the right and left hemispheres of the brain.

One message is spoken normally and is gentle and encouraging in tone; the other is spoken backwards and is more authoritarian. The messages are subliminal — all you hear are nature sounds or pleasant (if somewhat bland) music.

However, not everyone is convinced. Psychologist and motivation expert Philippa Davies says: 'It is extremely unlikely that these tapes would help a person change their behaviour. When experimental psychologists have played subliminal tapes to people, there is no subsequent change in their behaviour.'

'That's not to say the subconscious mind is unimportant. Our subconscious mind holds memories which are always linked to emotions — but these memories will always be specifically individual, not something that could be addressed by a generalised subliminal tape.'

So, a genuine breakthrough or just wishful thinking? InnerTalk produces tapes to cope with over 400 different topics, so we picked out four and put them to the test.

Our testers all had an issue they wanted to address and agreed to listen to the tape or CD for at least an hour a day (you can listen while doing other things, even watching television) for four weeks. The results were astonishing.

## I want to be tidy



**CHRISTINA GODFREY, 44**, lives in Surrey. She works part-time as an estate agent and is married with two children, aged three and nine.

■ **THE PROBLEM:** I'm probably one of the untidiest people in the world. My house is always in a mess, with clothes, toys, washing, ironing, stuff everywhere. I've got clothes that date back years — I always think they might just come back into fashion. I used to live in a smaller house and I thought it would get better when we moved here, but there's just more room for the mess to spread out. My car is even worse — it's a total pit. I'm willing to try anything. It's a case of: 'Help me! Save me!'

■ **THE PROGRAMME:** Christina tested the Neat And Tidy CD. Affirmations include: I am organised. I am neat. I love order.

■ **THE VERDICT:** I've noticed an incredible difference, particularly in the car. It's so tidy, I hardly recognise it. As far as the house is concerned, it really bothers me now if it's messy. The funniest thing is that I find myself quoting chunks from the CD. My sister was eating sweets in my car and I snapped at her: 'Put the wrappers away, neat and tidy!' Then I caught myself saying to my little boy: 'Keep that book nice and tidy.' My home isn't Homes & Gardens by any means, but I feel much happier with it. Help, what has this done to me?

■ **SUCCESS RATING:** 8/10.

## I want success



**AMANDA CROSS, 41**, lives in London. She is a journalist and author.

■ **THE PROBLEM:** I always have tons of ideas but this real inability to take things to the finishing line. It's mainly lack of confidence. What's frustrating is that, ten to one, someone else does it a couple of years later and makes a fortune. I'm not broke, but financial security really eludes me. I have ideas for two very original concepts which could possibly give me the financial success I need. So I'm hoping this CD could, first, raise my self-belief and focus up a few notches, and, second, encourage the right people to materialise to take things further.

■ **THE PROGRAMME:** Amanda tried the Ultra Success Power CD. Affirmations include: I can be successful. I deserve to be rich. I attract people that help me succeed.

■ **THE VERDICT:** As far as the final result is concerned, it's not really clear. I'm far more aware of my need to be focused, and my weakness in that area is really getting on my nerves, much more than usual. But the weirdest thing is that I have virtually given up smoking without any forethought. I do feel I'm focusing more, as if my energy is going through some weird sort of transformation. I'm going to carry on listening to the CD, mainly because it's so relaxing.

■ **SUCCESS RATING:** 5/10 (though the smoking is an added bonus).

## I want to find a new man



**BERNIE MARRON, 52**, lives in Manchester and works for the BBC. She has two children from a former marriage, aged 30 and 27.

■ **THE PROBLEM:** I was married for 17 years, but I hated every minute of it. Since I got divorced in 1987, I haven't had another relationship. I think it's something about me — maybe my own negative thoughts. I suppose I've pretty much ruled out romance, though I'd love to have something that really was fantastic. I've tried 'build your self-esteem tapes' in the past, so I'm very open to this kind of thing. I'm willing to give it a go.

■ **THE PROGRAM:** Bernie tried Attracting The Right Love Relationship tape. Affirmations include: I accept love in my life. I attract my perfect mate. I deserve the best.

■ **THE VERDICT:** I haven't met anyone, but I do feel different. It's as though I'm starting to look forward to life — and that is something I haven't felt for a very long time. I've even booked myself a holiday and am really looking forward to it. Recently I was talking to someone and she said: 'You're doing something different — your eyes are really sparkling', which was lovely. The bottom line is that I feel happier in myself, and that has to be the first step, doesn't it?

■ **SUCCESS RATING:** 3/10.

## I want to control my jealousy



**LUCY BOLT, 33**, from Exeter, works as a commercial co-ordinator.

■ **THE PROBLEM:** Recently, I found out

my partner was seeing another woman. He would also talk about women he worked with, and, yes, I've been pretty jealous. I've also been upset about the relationship an ex-partner (now a friend) had with an old girlfriend. They weren't even going out, but whenever she was in town he would want to see her, and I got upset. I'd like to move on and have a new relationship, but there's a lot I need to work

through — and jealousy is part of that.

■ **THE PROGRAM:** Lucy tried the Overcoming Jealousy tape. Affirmations include: I let go what I cannot change. I have no desire to change people. I respect myself.

■ **THE VERDICT:** Despite the horrible things that were happening, I was able to be strong. I kept believing in myself and started going out more — the tape helped boost my confidence.

Then, strangely, I bumped into the love of my life from 15 years ago, who is single and living in the same city! We've got on so well, it's as if the past 15 years didn't exist. My jealousy has gone completely. I looked at my (now) ex and felt absolutely nothing at all.

■ **SUCCESS RATING:** 10/10 (and a new relationship!).