

PRESENCE: Bringing Your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges

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INTRODUCTION

Based on Amy Cuddy's viral TED Talk (70M+ views), "Presence" reveals how we can harness the body-mind connection to bring our boldest selves to life's biggest challenges.

CORE THESIS

- **Presence** = being attuned to and expressing your true thoughts, feelings, values, and potential
- Stems from **believing in yourself**—your real, honest abilities
- Achieved through **small self-nudges** and body language tweaks
- A **moment-to-moment phenomenon**—not a permanent trait

WHAT IS PRESENCE?

- **"Confidence without arrogance"** — genuine, grounded self-assurance
- **Synchrony** — harmony between verbal and nonverbal communication
- Expressing your **authentic best self** under pressure
- Leaving interactions **without regret**, knowing you gave your best

THE SCIENCE OF POWER POSING

Adopting expansive postures for **2 minutes** before high-stakes situations:

- ↑ **Testosterone** — the "dominance hormone"
- ↓ **Cortisol** — the "stress hormone"
- Enhances confidence, risk tolerance, and performance

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MIN. POSING

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TESTOSTERONE

↓C

CORTISOL

BODY-MIND CONNECTION

- **Embodied cognition:** Our bodies influence our minds
- Victory expressions are **universal**—even blind athletes raise arms in V
- Leaders show **lower stress** and higher sense of control
- Posture signals can **override verbal status cues**

HIGH-POWER VS. LOW-POWER POSES

✓ HIGH-POWER

Arms raised in "V" shape • Hands on hips (Wonder Woman) • Feet apart • Open chest • Chin elevated

✗ LOW-POWER

Arms crossed • Hunched shoulders • Legs crossed • Closed posture • Making yourself smaller

KEY RESEARCH & STUDIES

- **VC Pitch Study:** Confidence & enthusiasm—not credentials—predicted funding
- **Job Interview Study:** Power-posers rated as more hireable
- **Harvard Leadership Study:** Leaders had lower cortisol than general population
- **Dual-Hormone Hypothesis:** Optimal = high testosterone + low cortisol

PRACTICAL TECHNIQUES

- **Power Pose:** 2 min. in expansive posture before challenges
- **Self-Affirmation:** Reflect on core values before high-stakes moments
- **Focus on Process:** Express authentic self, not outcomes
- **Fake It Till You Become It:** Small changes lead to lasting confidence

APPLICATIONS

- **Job Interviews:** Power pose before entering
- **Public Speaking:** Adopt open postures while presenting
- **Negotiations:** Use expansive gestures to feel powerful
- **Overcoming Impostor Syndrome:** Trust your authentic self

"Presence is not about faking it. It's about believing in and revealing the abilities you truly have."

— Amy Cuddy

FINAL TAKEAWAYS

- Your **body shapes your mind** — use posture as a tool
- Presence is **achievable by anyone** through incremental changes
- Stop managing impressions — **focus on authenticity**
- Leave every challenge **without regret**, having shown your best self