

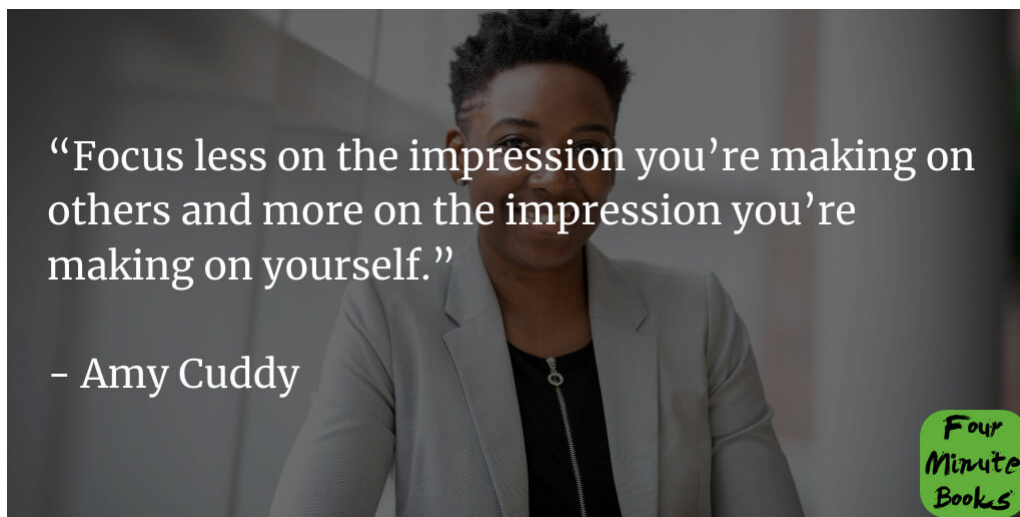
Presence Summary



1-Sentence-Summary: *Presence* is a life-changing guide to growing your self-confidence that shows how posture, mindset, and body language all expand your feeling of empowerment and your communication skills.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Imagine you've just got your first job out of college. You're excited yet nervous as you get to work the first day. It's not easy but you ask a lot of questions, start improving, and begin feeling better about it.

Then you get to the first weekly team meeting. As you hear your coworkers talking about their projects you shrink with fear and powerlessness as you realize that you have no idea what they're talking about. Or what you're doing.

This happened to me just a few days into my first real job after college. Although it was terrifying, it wasn't the first time I'd felt so helpless, inferior, and behind.

Whether it's at a new job or while giving a presentation, you can recall moments of doubt like this one in your own experience. And you may even feel this way every day even now. But you don't have to.

In her new book *Presence: Bringing Your Boldest Self to Your Biggest Challenges* Amy Cuddy will teach you all about how to stay confident even when you don't feel like it.

Here are just 3 of the many empowering lessons from this book:

1. If you want more courage and the ability to handle stress better, find and write about your top core value.
2. Beat feelings of powerlessness by remembering past wins and other positive events.
3. Your posture is evidence of how you feel about yourself, and by improving it, even right now, you will become more self-confident.

Let's dive right in and discover how to become more confident!

Lesson 1: Find your top core value and write about it if you want to handle stress better and become more courageous.

You know that playing to your strengths will make you more confident but how do you do it? While some self-help books will tell you to use affirmations, they don't always work. Unless you utilize the power of your core values.

To get started, follow the pattern one Stanford psychologist used for a study on strengthening core values. First, write out everything that's important to you. You might include ideals like spirituality, diligence, or love.

Once that's done narrow down just one that you feel is your core value. **Then, write an essay about it, including why it's important to you.**

Although simple, this technique has the power to make you more confident and better at handling stress.

And multiple studies confirm the potential this exercise has to improve your courage. One had a group of participants write about core values while a control group wrote about general subjects.

Once the essays were finished, researchers put participants into stressful situations to see how they reacted. Those who had written about random topics had an increase in stress hormones, while those who wrote about core values had none.

Writing about your core values will give you a major confidence boost. Consistently utilizing their power isn't so easy though, but we're going to learn about that in our next lesson!

Lesson 2: Reminding yourself of past wins is a great way to beat powerlessness.

Do you feel like there are some aspects of your life that are out of your control? The author once got a message from a woman named Cassidy who was really struggling with these feelings.

Cassidy had been a great track and field athlete throughout school, but once college was over, that part of her life was gone, and her confidence had gone with it. Sometimes all it takes is just feeling helpless to make you actually powerless.

Breaking the cycle takes an understanding of two systems that govern this aspect of your life.

The approach system makes you want to try new things and be adventurous. It's alive and well in outgoing people who are good at taking advantage of professional and social opportunities.

The inhibition system does the opposite and keeps you cautious. This might help you stay safe, but sometimes it gets out of control and makes you feel helpless as you focus on times when you were powerless.

If you're feeling stuck ruminating on something you can't control, all you need to do is remember a time when a win made you feel empowered. This will activate the approach system and help you find out how to improve your situation.

It's especially helpful if the event is related to your core values.

Just the other week I was feeling down and utilized this. I began listening to some empowering music that helped me remember all the times in my life that I've worked hard to beat the odds and reach my greatest goals. I quickly felt much better as I realized that I am in more control than I think!

Lesson 3: If you want to become more self-confident, improve your posture.

Would you believe me if I told you that you can improve your feeling of empowerment right now just by moving your body? You might doubt me but try it out by sitting more confidently and you'll notice the difference immediately.

This is what Cuddy noticed in her lectures at Harvard Business School, where she tells her students that their participation and posture will affect their grades.

She's learned by observing those who exhibit poor posture that it reflects and reinforces their low self-esteem and that it determines their performance in class.

Those with the worst grades in her class are always the students with poor posture, such as sitting on the edges of the room, putting their heads down, and not sitting straight.

This led Cuddy to perform research to determine how much the way people carry themselves affects the activation of the approach system. She had one group of participants practice power poses, while the others were asked to mimic examples of poor posture.

Of the two groups, 33% of those who had performed a power pose showed signs of an elevated approach system, while only 8% of those with poor posture did.

So if you want to feel confident, remember that acting confident in how you sit or stand will work to activate the parts of your brain that make you more courageous!

Presence Review

Whoa, what an empowering book! I wasn't sure what to expect of Presence at first, but now I'm excited to practice these tips to become more confident. This isn't your average advice on courage and between the actionable tips it gives and the science to back up why they work, this book will change your life!

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Who would I recommend the Presence summary to?

The 16-year-old that wants to do great things but thinks they're too shy and can't change that, the 37-year-old office worker who'd like to stand up for themselves better so they can get a raise, and anyone that wants to learn how to become more confident.