

## 8. Practical Steps to Increase Your Confidence & Social Power

[https://youtu.be/IG\\_UqkIzlQ0](https://youtu.be/IG_UqkIzlQ0)

This is lesson is more practical.

It provides steps, mindsets, and exercises to:

1. Increase your emotional intelligence
2. Increase your social confidence and power

These approaches and exercises have worked wonders for me and for the people I coached.

# Emotional Intelligence

Trevor Bradberry, author of [Emotional Intelligence 2.0](#) divides EI into two categories: personal competence and social competence.

Personal competence includes:

- **self-awareness** (understanding yourself)
- **self-management** (controlling yourself)

Social competences are what we would normally refer to as “social skills”, including:

- **social-awareness** (understanding social dynamics)
- **social-management** (influencing social dynamics)

I add a fifth dimension:

## Mindsets

Mindsets are ingrained mental programs that we run automatically and that we are often not aware of.

They include values and beliefs as well but run deeper at the level with which we process information.

The bonus ebook “Ultimate Power” tackles mindsets.

### **They’re all connected**

When you increase one element of EI, you increase all the others as well, and when you change mindsets you are allowing yourself to improve and grow in all categories of life.

For example, if you learn to see and understand social dynamics (social awareness), you also learn how people are feeling (empathy side of social-awareness), and you learn more about yourself as well (self-awareness).

And if you learn to control yourself better (self-management), you also increase your social power and you improve your social management.

## **How to Increase EI**

This course by itself is a tremendous boost to your emotional intelligence.

Further tools I recommend:

### **1. Keep A Journal**

For years I kept a journal of all social events I attend.

I write down all noteworthy exchanges, paying special attention to “difficult” situations and to what I did poorly, what I did well and what I could have done better.

Action without reflecting on the outcome is not only much less effective, but it might also reinforce bad habits, so I highly recommend this exercise.

As you start taking notes and reflecting on your social interactions, pay special attention to the patterns and power-dynamics that you have seen in this module.

P.S.: I know most of you are not going to make a journal. In that case, it's still of great help if you at least reflect on the interactions you have had.

## 2. Observe, Observe, Observe

Drop the phone.

Every time you're about to take the phone, ask yourself "what can I learn from this interaction" and "what can I guess by observing people's body language".

Particularly, observe:

### **How People Behave With Different People**

We are all wearing *many* masks, depending on who we interact with. Notice how you and others interact differently with people and you will learn loads about them.

Are they obsequious or rebellious with authority figures?

Do they mistreat underlings?

Are they slimy and needy in the presence of attractive individuals?

### **Ask yourself why**

Try to guess the motivations behind people's words and actions.

Why angry or defensive?

Why so nice?

Was your boss' wife really under the weather to attend the company party or has it something to do with his new "assistant"?

Be aware that we are often wrong with our assumptions.

But the point is not to be right, it's to develop your intuition. The more you guess, the more patterns you'll see and the more reliable you'll become.

### **Look For Intentional Marks**

Rich people wearing cheap watches, poor people buying expensive clothes... They're all advertising their personality.

You just need to interpret those ads.

### **Listen to What People Say.. And Don't Say**

Words are cheap, and what we don't say often matters more than what we say.

Why are people letting jokes, criticisms, and teases pass without replying?

Are they unable to, are they really able never to take things personally (super powerful) or do they feel so superior that they don't even feel the need for replying?

### **Observe Their Emotional Outbursts**

When people are angry, scared or agitated, that's when they are most likely to drop the mask.

A colleague of mine for example came out fuming from the meeting with our boss.

My boss had told her I was “more senior”, to which she added, “I don’t care, you can be head of sales”.

But the way she behaved, of course, communicated the opposite. Her emotional outburst confirmed she was very ambitious and extremely partial to the internal pecking order.

### **Minimize your emotional involvement**

If you get too emotionally involved you become a part of the play.

Remain in the stands to watch the play as a spectator instead. As Dan Rust says in [Workplace Poker](#):

*You can’t get inside someone else’s head until you get out of your own*

And avoid labeling people too early.

When you call someone “jerk”, “fake” or “nice”, you are getting too emotionally involved and you decrease your ability to really understand that person.

### **Develop a baseline**

Once you have observed someone long enough, you develop a baseline for their behavior.

You will use their baseline to register changes and deviations, which will often tell you what you need to pay attention to.

## **3. Test & Experiment**

Say something off color on purpose sometimes, just to see how people react.

When you feel like saying something but you're afraid because it sounds "risky", say it anyway.  
You will learn from jokes that land badly even more than from jokes that make everyone laugh.  
But you must pay attention to the reactions!

That's how I learned for example that poking fun at the political correctness of our society was not well appreciated by most people.  
And I cut that out.

The basic idea behind experimenting along the fringes of what's "OK" or "not OK" is that to learn where the boundaries lie, sometimes you have to cross them.

Best of all if you record testing and experimenting on your journal.

## **Mental Side of Social Power**

Here are some steps that have helped me increase my inner confidence:

### **1. Meditate**

I recommend meditations in two different ways:

#### **Empty mind**

Focusing on your breathing or thinking of nothing, which will improve your ability to become less reactive and, when needed, more focused.

#### **Power meditation**

When you're in a calmer state, reflect on your worst and most embarrassing moments.

As you do it, notice your heart rate is still slow.

It's not that painful after all, right?

Then change your memory a bit in a way that you can smile at it. Not so serious after all, eh?

This exercise will "thicken" your social skin, so to speak.

Thanks to this exercise when I think today of my most embarrassing moments, I really feel little -if anything at all-.

### **Develop life walk away power: reflect on mortality**

Reflect on your mortality.

If you can stomach it, see yourself in the casket, with the people around mourning.

And people around *not* mourning. That's the reality of life: some couldn't care less about your death. And that's OK: you don't need their mourning.

There might be kids around too, and some of them will even be excited at the chance of touching a corpse.

"It's so cold" a kid will tell some other kid.

That's part of the crazy dance of life, and that's also OK.

The idea is to fully realize that we are all transient here.

Once you accept that, you will gain stronger leverage in everything you do.

Accepting mortality enables a better life.

## 2. Own Your Shortcomings

I'm not talking about "vulnerability" and "showing" your vulnerable side.

I'm talking about YOU owning your shortcoming to yourself.

This is basically vulnerability but *to* yourself and *with* yourself first and foremost.

The same goes for physical shortcomings.

[Look at Nicolas Sarkozy](#), a perfect example of a man who hasn't owned his shortcoming.

**Unaddressed shortcomings are your Achilles' heel:** until you make peace with them, people and external events will always have the power of touching your buttons and getting under your skin.

A great way to be aware of your shortcoming is to think of what hurts you the most in a critique. Is it height, weight, a physical imperfection, a failure... ?

Where there is a hurt, there is an insecurity.

Own who you are, defects and all, and your personality will loom larger than life.

## 3. Learn Not To Take Things Personally

George J. Thompson, author of [Verbal Judo](#), says that if you learn not to take things personally, then you won't even need the rest of his book.

That much is true.



Ray Dalio talks about “looking at oneself from the above, as if you were looking at a machine”.

Learning to look at things more dispassionately is a great attitude to increase your social power.

The moment Michael Corleone showed he could make decisions without getting too emotionally attached was also the moment he became The Godfather:

<https://youtu.be/0qvpcfYFHcw>

Here is a great example of not taking things personally: the banker dealing with a rude and aggressive Tony Montana in Scarface:

<https://youtu.be/3EqnPWV9xk8>

The banker gets verbally assaulted and doesn't bat an eye. He insists on his point and leaves with the deal he wanted. That's power right there.

**Note:** being less emotional does not mean you show less emotions: there can be lots of power in showing emotions when the time is right. This means that you *analyze* events with an emotionless mind.

## 4. Know What You Stand For

When you know what you stand for is a bit like knowing by heart what you're about to say.

But on steroids.

You will never need to rehearse again and you can be yourself in any situation.

## 4.1. Stand Up For What You Stand For

I like Jordan Peterson as an example of knowing what you stand for.

Whether you agree with him or not, he guy is remarkable when it comes in projecting inner confidence and competence.

Whichever show, interview or hot debate he is in, he is always calm and comfortable.

That's in good part because he knows himself inside out: what he believes in, what's true and what's not true and what his message for the world is.

And he is passionate about communicating it to the world, which he views as his mission:

<https://youtu.be/Cf2nqmQlfxc>

Please not his mistake at minute 8:51.

That's the most telling about Peterson' personal power.

Most people would have stuttered at that mistake which sounded dangerously close to "fuck".

Those are the people who are more concerned about how they come across than about their mission and message.

But Peterson goes on without skipping a beat because he is not so worried about how he comes across. He prioritizes his mission and his message.

## 4.2. Unfilter Yourself

The moment you feel free to say what you think, you shed the need to filter yourself and police your own words.

That makes you more confident and self-assured.  
And it frees mental resources that you can use to be more focused  
and more present in the moment.

Of course, that is not always easy.  
Especially if your views are controversial or not mainstream. But once  
you do it, it's a great liberation.

Tom Bylieu is a great example.  
He makes it a point to always be honest.  
I paraphrase him:

***Tom Bylieu:** If someone hit me in the head at night and asked me random  
questions, I would reply the same that I say in front of the camera*

<https://youtu.be/7kq6huWu1JI>

As Tim Grover said in [Relentless](#):

*To get what you really want, you must first be who you really are*

## **5. Remove The Shields To Own Your Dark Side**

Look around.

Almost everyone you see is subconsciously-programmed to look as  
good as possible and hide his dark side as much as possible.

The game we all play is to *appear* “good”, nicer and, in general,  
motivated by higher ideals.  
And to hide our darkest feelings of revenge, resentment, and hatred.

However, deep down, we are also all wired to admire and respect those who call themselves out of that game and show themselves for who they really are.

Why so?

Because it's a display of dominance, power, and inner confidence.

Why so?

Because the reason we hide our darkest urges is that we're afraid of being ostracized. And that's an admission of need.

And we do so we do it to stay in people's graces and gain their approval.

And that's submissive behavior by definition.

## **Example of Removing Shields**

Some time ago I met two ex-colleagues of mine from a sinking company where we hated management.

One of us, let's call him Tardy, had just quit, so he had all the latest news of the slow-mo crash and burn.

The other colleague approached Tardy the usual way most people approach it: pretending they weren't so curious and pretending they weren't glad the company was doing poorly.

Something like this:

*Shielded Friend: Oh, you left, how come*

What's bad with that?

Everything,

People who hide their real feelings, especially when those feelings are easy to guess, look sneaky and weak.

And people who try to schmooze and sneak their way into juicy information are exactly the people you *don't* want to share information with.

Here what I said to remove the shields from our conversation:

***Unshielded Me:** Mate, what are you talking about.*

*I'm so happy Tardy finally left, he is obviously too good for that nuthouse.*

*I'm wondering why the hell took him so long to realize it actually.*

*(looking at Tardy) So buddy, give us the low-lights of what's happened there recently, I'm sure you must have a lot of juicy news*

The atmosphere immediately changed.

Now it was three guys free to really share their thoughts, experiences and honest feelings.

Here is an example of Trump removing his shields of social acceptability:

[https://youtu.be/NP7Lixcc\\_jQ](https://youtu.be/NP7Lixcc_jQ)

If Trump had ranted while pretending he wasn't happy for Rosy's failure, he would have looked sneaky and weak.

By removing all shields instead he "only" looks angry -and maybe overly aggressive and too vindictive, but *not* sneaky and weak-.

Trump there went quite overboard, but you use the same concept and turn into a half-joke in which you just admit the truth.

I do it often, [see an example here](#).

I tell the winner "you beat me" because we both evaluated that night and I did want to win. Most people would have pretended they thought nothing of it, but the fact I was open about it is an example of "powerful vulnerability".

People love it, notice how loudly the crowd laughs.

**Warning:**

Before voicing them, make sure that your feelings of anger, frustration, and revenge are at least somewhat justified. If they're not, you might be better off hiding them completely (and working on yourself).

*You can't be socially powerful if all you do is hiding behind a social shield*  
*The Power Moves*

**Real Life Check:**

This is not a blank check to wallow in the basest drives of human nature.

Quite the opposite.

It's an invitation to take stock of yourself and to accept that we all have some dark and selfish drives.

However, you also want to limit those basest feelings and channel them into positive, constructive endeavors. Because if all you do is living in anger, revenge, and hatred, then you are missing not only on social power but on life quality.

The ideal is to make yourself into a person that has a natural optimal balance of pro-social drives (70-80%) and a smaller dark side (20-30%) which you can channel into constructive endeavors. With that balance, you really don't need to filter yourself anymore.

## **6. Know The *Real* Risks: Avoid Amygdala Hijacking**

We mentioned this already and we'll dig deeper in the lesson of "threats of physical violence".

But it's important so let's review it:

PhD Albert J. Bernstein, author of "[Emotional Vampires](#)", says that vampires exploit the fact that the fear of negative consequences is usually greater than the consequences themselves.

That is so true.

And this is exactly how the most dominant individuals can take advantage of others: because **we all have an inborn tendency to be more scared and submissive than we really need to be.**

We see a big guy, a powerful-looking boss in a suit or just about anyone who acts authoritative and knowledgeable, and we unconsciously think he can harm us and we should give him space, right of way and act submissive... Or else.

But most of the times there is no "else" really.

It's our lizard brain that does the calculation for us. But our lizard brain wasn't born to maximize our well being: it was born to keep us safe and alive *only*. Even when "alive" meant "submissive", "sad" and missing on all your goals and life potential.

But we can change our automatic programming.

It will take some time and effort to make it automatic, but eventually, you'll get there.

Think of all situations in your life when you tend to act submissive. Then think of what's the worst that can happen and what are the likelihood it will happen.

The vast majority of times the "worst that can happen" means you'll go back home safely like you always do and the likelihood of the "worst" happening is something you can manage.

**Amygdala Hijacking Example: The Yelling Boss**

Imagine [a boss yelling at you](#), a relatively common occurrence that reduces most people to quivering submissive individuals.

The worst that can happen is that he fires you.

How likely is it it will fire you if you tell him you don't want to be yelled at?

Maybe 10%?

What's the worst-case scenario if that 10% happens?

That you won't find another job, nobody helps you and will end up under a bridge.

What's the likelihood you'll end up under a bridge?

Maybe 0.1%?

What are instead the chances you get another job with a better boss if things go south?

Maybe 60-70%.

And what are the chances that he will not fire you at all but simply respect you more?

Maybe 40-50%.

Where I am going here is this: chances are that your situation will improve even in the "worst" case scenario.

Yet, most people *still* act submissive.

And that's what I want *you* to stop doing.

## Practical Steps of Social Power

And these are more practical steps:

### 1. Know What You'll Say



As a beginner, if you can prepare in advance, knowing what you will say will help you be more confident, polished and powerful.

This is why the early pick-up artists used what they called “routines”, such as fully scripted dialogues to “run” with the girls they met -spare a thought for the poor girls-.

Once you get better, only prepare for interviews, speeches, panels, and highly stressful situations.

But you can keep a few key phrases or quotes to drop in specific situations.

A good quote and a witty remark always make you sound smart, intelligent and cool.

## **2. Sense Of Fashion**

People judge books by its cover.

All the times.

And there is a strong relationship between social power, the general quality of an individual, and how much he cares about personal appearances.

The biggest improvement for me came in improving the fit of the clothes.

I barely buy clothes off the rack anymore and have them done with my measures instead. Or at the very least, I take all my clothes to a tailor for fixing.

I can recommend you to consider doing the same.

## **3. Personal Beauty**

I removed this descriptive session to keep it short and sweet.  
99% of people who buy this course know the basics of personal care and beauty. If you're not sure, then it's something you should focus on.

## 4. Posture

Posture is huge.

If you're not yet working on it and need to check the basics, [please visit this post](#).

## 5. Voice

Talking about another science in and of itself: voice.

If you aren't working on your voice already, you should.  
[Check the best exercises I have found here](#).

## 6. Develop Mastery & Competence

Get good at your job or at whatever you do.

Mastery will give you more inner confidence and more respect from the people around.

Developing mastery also develops your mental strength.  
The knowledge that you can acquire mastery through effort will help you acquire a growth mindset, which gives you the confidence that you can get good at anything as long as you put in the work -also read ["how to develop a growth mindset"](#).

As a matter of fact, anything you will get good at will increase your confidence and your social power.

But prioritize work first, as that will have the deepest and most immediate impact in your life.

## **Basic Belief of Social Power**

This course shares a lot of techniques and words that you can say or do.

But mindsets and beliefs are more important than actual words.

At the very basic, this is a core belief of social power:

**I deserve fair treatment and I am worthy of respectful communication**

You are worthy of being treated fairly, honestly and respectfully.

You have the right to say no to whatever you feel is unfair or harmful. Nobody has the right to abuse you, humiliate you, disrespect you, make fun of you, one-up you, treat you with contempt or ask you to do anything you don't want to do.

From a rude waiter to a boss yelling at you to a cop pushing you around to a high school bully to a GF/BF making fun of you, nobody has the right to disrespect you.

When you believe that in your core, then you will naturally be inclined to stand up to the unavoidable assholes of this world.

Now you might not always have the power and willingness to do something about it or even to refuse complying.

And that's OK.

That has nothing to do with the core belief.

Even when you can't push back or when you must act against your will, your belief must still be there.

It's only when you lose the belief that you have the right to fair treatment that you acquire the mindset of a victim.

**Those who stop believing they deserve proper treatment become victims for life.**

But as long as you keep that belief, you have the right mental framework of a (wo)man worthy of respect.

You can also add a few more beliefs to that core, such as:

-I treat people fairly, and that's why I expect and demand the same back

-I treat people fairly unless they disrespect me without a valid reason. Then I will do my best to put those assholes back in their place