

# How to Have Presence

In acting, modeling, and even business, presence (also commonly referred to as 'it') is an important part of getting people interested in you. In some spiritual circles, presence and spirit are one and the same. Meditation, contemplation,...

Part 1 of 4:

## Channeling Your Presence

1.



**Be confident.** It is virtually impossible to have presence and have that "it" factor when you're riddled with insecurity. Instead of engaging in the moment and grabbing it by its horns, you'll be busy huddling in the corner waiting for the jury to get their harsh judgment over with. No article can give you a mathematical formula for confidence, but it can tell you how awesome you are and that you definitely have things to be confident about.

1. It's important -- at least in the topic of having presence -- to think of confidence as quiet. No hard-hitting bravado or hubris is appropriate here. There's no room for displays of power or boastfulness. Presence is natural and just *is*. Your confidence needn't be a show; it should just be something that's a part of you. Think of confidence as in the same category as your height or hair color. People notice. You don't say anything about it, but people notice. *That's* how it should be.

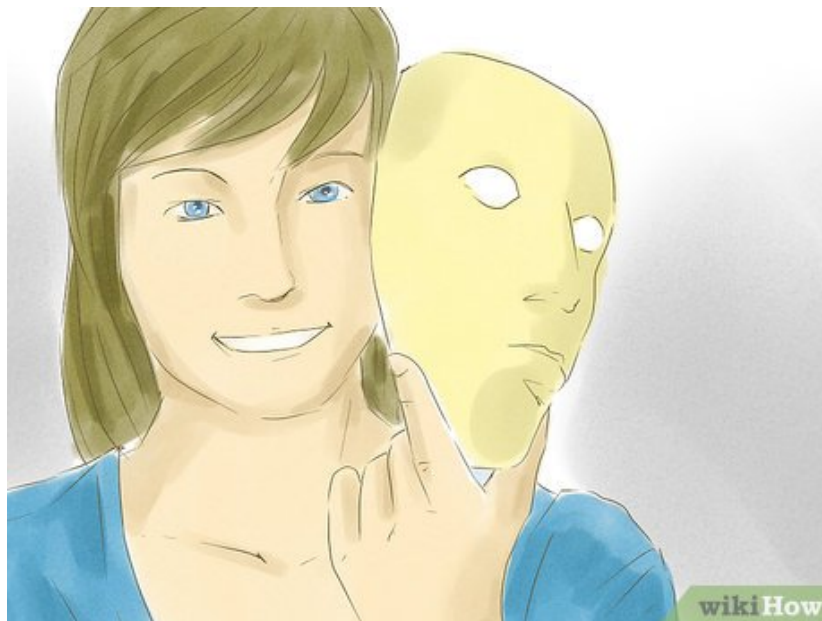
2.



**Get comfortable.** Let's say Beyoncé joins you in line for the women's restroom (or Jay-Z if you're a male, but then there's probably not a line). You would love to have a conversation with her and to snap a quick photo, but you really have to pee. How present and engaged will you be with her? Not very. So whatever situation you're in (Beyoncé or not), get comfortable. It'll be the only way you can give it your all.

1. That means adjust the temperature, go to the bathroom, and, for your sake, wear comfortable pants. If you feel something in your teeth or are constantly fighting an uphill battle against a wedgie, you won't be exuding presence. Do whatever you can to un-preoccupy your mind.

3.



**Be yourself.** There is a certain genuineness about presence. After all, if you're fake, it's not you who's in the room. It's some image you're trying to show the world. Most people can detect this, whether they're aware of it or not. So act natural. Be yourself. What good is it doing you pretending to be something else?

1. People who aren't comfortable with themselves are always caught up in some image-maintaining. They feel like they have to be seen wearing the right things, saying the right things, doing the right

things, and all in the right places with the right people. They have no view of themselves because the only thing that matters to them is the opinions of others. These people don't have presence -- presence isn't something anyone else can give you!

4.



**Don't worry about how you come off.** Really, we've spent the past four paragraphs saying just this. If the people you're with don't like you, how long are you really gonna be around them anyway? You're not. So if you are just *you* (which is the only person you'll be around for the rest of, oh, you know, *forever*), and you're not caught up worrying about your image, the better parts of you can shine.

1. Think of this impression management as a layer of dust over whatever it is that makes up you. Instead of seeing who you are, people see this dust. The dust isn't bad, the dust isn't good, it's just dust. It's easily wiped away. And while it doesn't turn other people off, it hides what makes you memorable. It hides what makes you awesome.

5.



**Check your temper.** If presence were easily define-able, part of the definition would be an innate sense of calmness. Someone with presence, charisma, and that ineffable "it" factor is never seen storming about, making waves, or punishing others arbitrarily. Generally anger is a resort and someone with presence just doesn't need to waste time on it. They're too calm and collected to need to put up a fuss.



**Put your phone away.** Seriously. Have you ever gone out to a restaurant and noticed that one couple that's sitting by the window, where the guy is on his phone playing Candy Crush and the girl is taking selfies or pictures of the food that was once on her half-eaten plate? If you want people to notice you, hiding behind a light-up screen isn't the way to go about doing it. So get in the moment. Put your phone away (not just down) and give the people around you your undivided attention.

1. So here's a little science being dropped: so much of how people think and feel about you is really how you make them feel about *themselves*. If you pay attention to them, they're going to feel important, and they're going to like you and think you're a great listener. Flirt with someone and they like you because you make them feel attractive. So when you put your phone down, you're showing them you're there. With them and only them. That you care and that they matter. Boom. You're present. And what's a word that sounds ridiculously like present? Hmm.

7.



**Take a deep breath.** Okay, let's say you're walking into a big, important meeting. You want to be the one who people can look to, the natural leader for the next assigned project, the one people come to with questions -- and not the other way around. But you're a little nervous and you know you're a little nervous. Instead of walking in and throwing up the white flag, take a deep breath. Maybe smooth your hair a bit, adjust your seams, slow your movements, and *then* walk in. You got this. Why would anyone think otherwise?

1. No, you're right, presence is not a show. It's not something you lose when you're harried and rushed. But if you're nervous, if you're running around like a chicken with your head cut off, people can see that. You might still be super confident and have your act together, but you'll appear too frazzled for that intangible aura of leadership to come through.

Score  
0 / 0

### Part 1 Quiz

Why is being confident important to presence?

It lets you engage with the moment around you.

Correct! When you're second guessing yourself, you're more likely to hide in a corner and avoid talking to new people, getting to know them, and engaging the world around you. Not only is hiding in a corner the opposite of presence, but the essence of presence is being yourself, being confident in who you are, and sharing that with others. Read on for another quiz question.

People are impressed when you're confident.

Not exactly. You don't want to be so blatantly bold that people notice, because then they might think you're full of yourself. Instead, your confidence should be something steady and unchanging, like the bedrock of who you are. Try another answer...

It's not, humility is more important than confidence.

Not quite. Humility is very important, but confidence is too! Blend the two: being confident and boastful will not contribute to a positive presence. Instead, cultivate a quiet confidence that allows you to interact with others and engage with the world to the full of your ability. Click on another answer to find the right one...

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Part 2 of 4:

## Looking the Part



**Show body language that's engaged.** Let's take Steve Jobs. A really powerful guy. Eloquent, charming, rich as hell. Now imagine him at a meeting where he's slumped over, ignoring everyone, and just playing on his iPhone, face adorned with a slight scowl. Not exactly a guy you'd peg for having presence, huh? So even if you are the one in the room with the most presence, you gotta show it. So spread out. The room is yours.

1. Feel free to spread out her legs. People who are more confident are more comfortable taking up a bit more room. Put your arms on the table. Lean forward a bit, into the person who's talking to show you're engaged. Nod when it's clear they're trying to get a not-so-crystal point across. Look them in the eye. Be there in mind, spirit, and body.

2.



**Walk tall.** If you've never thought about your walk before, it's time to start. In fact, it's time to experiment! Your mind takes cues from your body, so you may even *feel* the confidence ooze through you when you walk more confidently. Go on, try it!

1. Walk back and forth across the room with your head held a bit above 90 degrees and your shoulders back. Walk at a moderate pace. How's it feel?
2. Now walk back and forth across the room with your head down and your shoulders hunched over a bit. Walk slowly. At the end of your walk, hold that position. How do things feel different?

3.



**Make eye contact.** A huge part in engaging with people, in showing them that you're listening because women hate being ignored and to show that you don't care, is eye contact. Plenty of nice guys don't get the girl because they can't look at her, plenty of salesmen don't make the sale because their sideways glances give them away, and plenty of people don't seem confident and put together because they're too afraid to make that connection. People see you regardless of whether or not you're looking at them, so why not look

back?

1. For the record, there's a huge difference between eye contact and staring. A good rule of thumb is to look at the person (and do blink!) while they're making a point. If you're responding, switch it up a little, or if the conversation is breezy or they're gesturing, give your eyeballs some literal wiggle room.



4.

**Dress the part.** Okay, so when it comes to presence, clothes don't make the man. That being said, having the right wardrobe is the first filter people put you through when they're taking you in. So while clothes won't give you presence, they'll get you through the door, where the presence is sitting in a bowl by the window.

1. It's not about wearing brand names. It's not about suits and dresses. It's mostly about being put together and well-groomed. If you've showered, shaved, put on some deodorant, and dressed in decent clothes with the light on, you should be okay.

Score

0 / 0

Part 2 Quiz

How should you sit at a table for a business meeting?

Slouched and looking at your phone to show you're more important than the meeting.

Definitely not! Presence is about engaging with others and showing interest in what's happening around you. Slouching and paying attention to your phone makes people not want to be around you. Even if you have presence in other situations, the lack of respect and politeness you demonstrate by slouching would remove your presence in this situation. Try again...

Sitting straight with your hands on your lap.

Not quite. Remember that people with presence are confident and comfortable. Feel free to spread out a bit. Put your arms on the table or lean forward to show engagement with the meeting. There's a better option out there!

Leaning forward and nodding at the person who's talking.

Yes! When you're talking to other people, focus on being engaged with what they're saying. React to their words by nodding, and lean forward to show interest. Being present is also about being engaged in the people around you, and there's no better way to show engagement than with body language! Read on for another quiz question.

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Part 3 of 4:

## Showing You Have "It"

1.



**Be present.** If you've read the first two sections, you probably already have an idea of how to do this. It means putting your phone down, engaging with your body language, having showered in the recent past, and just grounding yourself in the moment. It's called "presence" for a reason. You can't have presence if you don't show up!

1. Connect to the moment. Think of it as your moment. If you're on stage, the stage is yours, this moment is yours, and this character is you. There's nothing to worry about. You're there in mind, body, and spirit. There's no panel of judges, there's no fight with your boyfriend, there's no football game on TV, there's just now where you are.

2.



**Never let 'em see you sweat.** Don't give them the satisfaction. A person with presence is always cool, calm, and collected. When everyone else is pulling their hair out with stress, you're the one getting things done with a smile on your face. You do this stuff in your sleep. You eat this stuff for breakfast. No biggie. Nothing can shake you.

1. This goes double if your presence is onstage or in front of a camera. Any nervousness, any agitation will be seen or captured. You've probably seen an actor who couldn't seem to commit to an action or behavior because they were too busy overthinking it, worrying what was correct. When you start sweating, you've already lost confidence in you, and others will shortly follow suit.

3.



**Don't soften your words.** This is a problem for most of us, especially women. We're taught to say, "I think maybe this will help the problem," instead of, "Here's the solution." We qualify our words and say "I'm sorry" as a casual starter to any sentence. Don't bother! While these things can be tactful at times, they can also be unnecessary at others. If you're looking to show you're confident in you, you want to

abandon the lingual niceties.

1. If your boss were to say, "You know, I was thinking that perhaps we should go in a different direction. I know it'll be a huge inconvenience and I'm so sorry, but I really think this is a good idea, don't you?", how would you interpret that? Now if they were to say, "Guys. Listen up. We gotta go in a different direction. It's gonna be work, but it'll be worth it. Whaddaya say?" How would you interpret *that*? Bingo.

4.



**Don't be afraid of silence.** You know that awkward first date where the conversation kinda hits a lull and both parties scramble to find something interesting to say to kill the awkward silence? Don't. Don't worry about it. You want 'em hanging on your every word -- if you're talking the entire time, they're gonna be hanging on the edge of their seats so they're closer to the door. So choose your words. They're more powerful that way.

5.



**Speak clearly.** Every word out of your mouth should be audible. Don't let your sentences trail off like... See how terrible that is?! You believe in your words, so there's no need to hide them. Speak clearly so you can be heard. Otherwise why bother talking?

1. Let's take that same example: "Guys. Listen up. We gotta go in a different direction. It's gonna be work, but it'll be worth it. Whaddaya say?" Good! That's good stuff. Now imagine it like this, "Uhh, hey, guys. Listen up. We, like gotta go in a different, um, direction. Yeah. Uhh, it's gonna be, you know, work and stuff, but it'll be worth it." That's a big fat no. Don't hem and haw! You're confident in your point, so spit it out!

Score  
0 / 0

### Part 3 Quiz

How can you make a statement with presence?

"I think this might be a good idea, what do you think?"

Nope! Someone with presence is confident and in control. Remove "I think" and "might" from your vocabulary. However, keep in mind that people with presence can still ask for advice! If you want advice or feedback from another person, add a question to the end of your statement, instead of making your whole statement into a question. Guess again!

"From now on, we're going to adopt this new policy, and here's why..."

Correct! This statement is confident without being rude. The person who made this statement is standing their ground, presenting the facts, and then following up with support for their choice. Read on for another quiz question.

"This might not be the best course of action, but it's the best one I can think of."

Definitely not! If you're not sure what the best course of action is, spend some more time thinking it through before presenting it. Then, when you present it, present it with confidence and integrity. If someone comes up with a better idea, incorporate their idea into your own. Try another answer...

"I'm really sorry if this inconveniences you, but could you change the last slide on your presentation?"

Not necessarily. Even if you have to ask someone to change something, don't apologize. Instead, be understanding of any extra time or support that they might need, and provide encouragement! Choose another answer!

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Part 4 of 4:

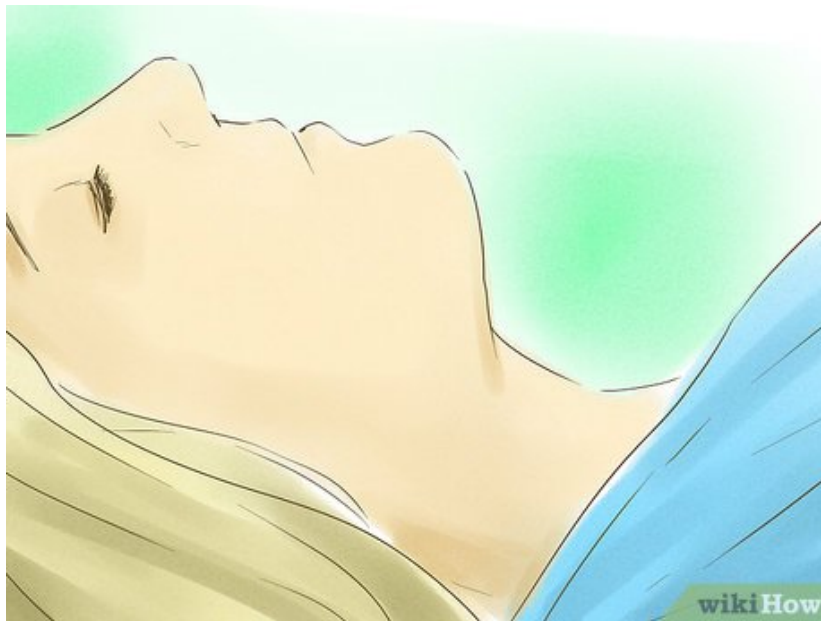
## Getting Centered

1.



**Get comfortable.** You may lie on your back on the floor or otherwise place yourself in a comfortable position. Make sure that nothing will distract you (unplug your phone, close your door, ask people not to disturb you, etc.).

2.



**Close your eyes and pay attention to your breath.** Allow your breath to fall in and out of you, unobstructed. Notice any place where your breath begins to catch. Allow your breath to touch that place until it opens and relaxes.

1. Be sure not to judge your observations. Allow yourself to be in the state you are in. Also know that your state is flexible and can change.

3.



**Move your attention to your facial muscles.** Start from the top of your head and move your way down. Are you lifting your brow? Are you holding your eyes closed too tightly? Are you flaring your nostrils? Are you curling your lips in? Are you pulling your mouth into a frown? Are you pulling your mouth into a smile? Is your jaw relaxed? Is your neck relaxed?

4.



**Concentrate on any tension in your face and take a deep breath in.** Imagine that you are delivering all of the oxygen from your breath straight to the point on your face that is tense.

1. Continue until your entire face and neck are relaxed. You should feel your sinuses open up and your circulation become better (you may feel more warmth or tingling in your skin). Your expression may feel very different. Do not judge yourself, just notice what you notice.

5.



**Take the time to do this throughout your entire body.** Allow each point of tension to be filled with your breath. Allow these places to open and relax. Pay close attention to the state of your body as this tells you a lot about how you move through the world.

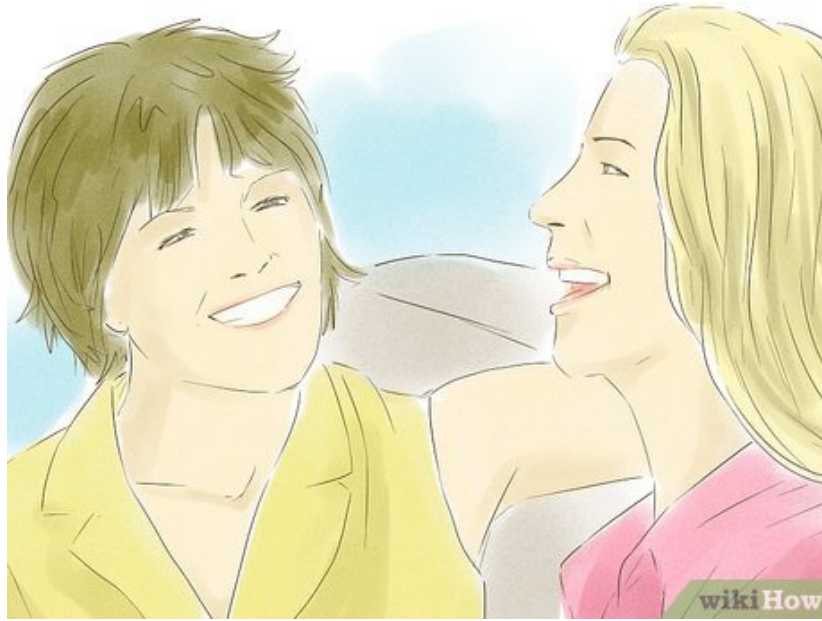
1. If at any time that you are studying your new body, you feel tensions creeping back, take another deep breath and release this tension.

6.



**After you are done, go over to a mirror and look at yourself.** You may be shocked because you look a little different. Do not do anything, just observe how you have changed.

7.



**Talk to someone you know.** They may comment that you look a little different. Your voice may sound different as well. You may seem more confident, more calm. Don't let this disturb you. If you feel the tension creeping back, take a deep, silent breath and release the tension again.

1. While you are talking to your friend or family member, allow yourself to be expressive with your face as well as your body, but don't get stuck in an expression. Always attempt to return to a natural, relaxed position.

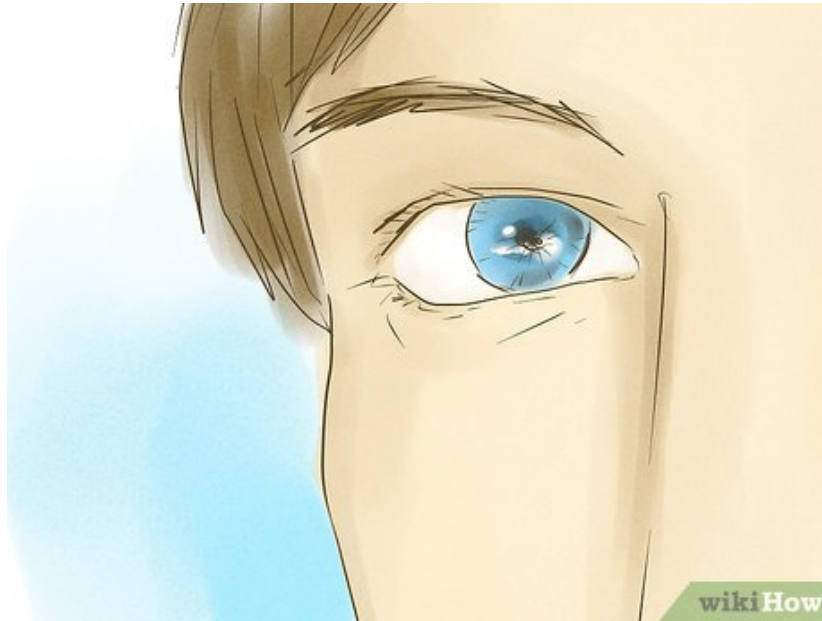
8.



**After you have mastered talking to people close to you, maintain your presence when walking around school, work, or outside.** People may comment that you look a little different. Do not be discouraged.

1. It is likely that tensions will return. Just be sure not to judge yourself. This is a process and is different for each person. Notice the tension and allow yourself to release it.

9.



**When you walk down the street, try to make prolonged eye contact with strangers.** to show alpha male mentality. force them to react in a particular way, just allow an expression to move through your body. Check in afterwards, did your smile stick? Did the tension return to your face or body? Practice this until you remain relaxed when you greet strangers.

1. In all situations, it is important to maintain your presence. If you have anxiety or fear, acknowledge it and allow yourself to move through it. Turn your focus to your breath and breathe out any tension.

Score

0 / 0

#### Part 4 Quiz

True or False: Once you release the tension in your body, you won't have to do it again.

True

Not quite. You might find tension creeping into your body again after certain actions or interactions, and that's ok! Everyone is different. If you feel tension, take a deep, silent breath, and work on releasing the tension once again. Pick another answer!

False

Correct! Everyone is different. You might have incredible success after releasing tension once, or you might find that you need to do the exercise weekly or even daily to maintain a tension-free lifestyle. Do whatever works for you, and always be patient with your learning curve! Read on for another quiz question.

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