



BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Reading & Worksheet

Okay so we've covered a lot of ground in just the past 4 weeks! A whole bunch of amazing stuff has happened - and right now we're going to bring it all together - that's right - we're going to apply all this stuff to the real world of music. What I'm going to show you is how you can use everything you've learned so far on the day of the gig. I'm also going to add a few new things here that are also going to boost your poise and presence on stage.

On The Day Of The Gig

- **The Time Exercise**
- **Visualization**
- **'Love' Walking**

So, first off, on the day of the gig, even within an hour of the gig, you'll want to do the **Time Exercise**. Find 20 - 30 minutes and do it. Doesn't matter where. Receive all of the benefits of this exercise.

Then, do a **Visualization**. You can also do this before the Time Exercise if that's how things happen to work out. You can also do this a few days before the gig. But if so, also do this in your car after you've parked it outside the venue.

But what you want to do is visualize yourself on stage, ideally on the very stage on which you will be playing, and connecting with your audience. Look into their eyes. See each person's innocent, dreaming self. Know that this is the one and only time you will ever get to play for those people. It will never be the same again. Feel the feeling of your best moment as you see yourself playing your set. See and feel the people in the audience respond. Reach out to them. See them reaching back out to you. Elevate your emotion. Get into it. You need to see it and feel the connection while doing your thing on that stage in your mind.

All day long you'll want to be looking people in the eye as you pass them and sending them positive messages such as "You are beautiful" and "You are powerful". See their unlimited potential. See the energy of their spirit, it doesn't matter what expression they've got on their face. Let it open up something in you...

Simply look at them and imagine, you can see more of who they are. Look past their mask. Peel back the illusion to the reality, try and feel it, ever if it's for one second. The one second shifts you. Simply be present to every person who's in front of you and see and feel their more spiritual nature. Something really powerful and magical seems to open. You begin to generate an energy force around you that people feel.

Once you get to the venue, here are a few more things you can do.

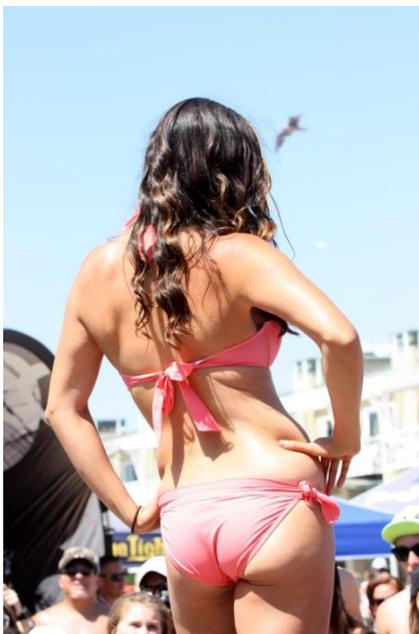


1. Strike A Power Pose

Striking a power pose is an easy way to get your body to help you be more assertive, more confident, more optimistic, and more willing to take risks on stage. Instead of feeling stressed and sort of shut down, you'll feel like you're going to win – and have a lot more presence!

In her 2012 TED talk, social psychologist Amy Cuddy showed the world how “power posing” — standing in a posture of confidence, even when you don't feel confident — can increase testosterone and reduce cortisol levels in the brain. Testosterone is the dominance hormone and cortisol is the stress hormone¹.

If you pose powerfully before you get up on stage, you will perform better and you will feel more confident. At the same time, your audience will respond to your stage presence in a positive way and this will boost your confidence even further.



For a power pose to be effective, you need to adopt the right posture for at least two minutes.

To get started, notice your body as you wait for show time. Instead of sitting at a table making yourself small by crossing your legs or arms, wrapping your ankles, touching your neck, or hunching over, what you want to do is make yourself big and stretch yourself out, take up space, expand, and basically open up with your body.

¹Amy Cuddy: Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are. TEDGlobal 2012.
http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are



Get into one of these 3 power poses for at least 2 minutes before your show:

1. Stretch out your arms in a V above your head with your chin slightly lifted as if you just won a race or finished singing We Are The Champions. You will be surprised at first how this is to actually do for a full two minutes. But if you can find your way to the bathroom of the venue sometime in the 15 minutes before your set and do this pose for two full minutes, you will feel more ready for your show than ever before.
2. Stand with your feet apart, chest forward, butt out, with your hands on your hips. You can also lift your chin slightly for this one. You can do this while watching another band, or you can just pretend you are inspecting the speakers, or the artwork, or the bottles of booze behind the bar. This post is just as effective as Pose #1 (above), and you may find it easier to do for a full two minutes.

Always power pose when sitting & waiting to go on:

3. When sitting, put your feet up on a chair and lean back as if you own the place, totally at ease, hanging loose. If you don't want to put your feet up, you can just keep your knees open instead. Your arms should also be open and hanging to either side or just resting on the arms of the chair. You can also clasp your hands behind your head if you like and have your elbows open. But whatever you do, do not fold or cross your arms in front of you or cover your face or neck with your hands.

Adopt these powerful body poses every time before getting up on stage.

Don't leave the stage feeling like, "Oh, I didn't give it all I've got." Leave the stage feeling like:

"I really feel like I gave them something real and showed them who I am."

You can do this. Just try it, experiment with it – see what happens.



2. Breathe out longer than you breathe in

When you breathe out longer than you breathe in your parasympathetic nervous system starts to kick in². Your thoughts stop racing, your pulse returns to normal, and you start to feel more confident. Your body and mind have to start calming down – they have no choice.

1. First off, just notice how you're breathing.
2. Then, start to breathe *in* through your nose and *out* through your mouth.
3. Count to 4 on the inhale and 8 on the exhale, and maybe add a little pause in between. Be sure to count at the same speed on the exhale as on the inhale. Pretty soon you will find yourself needing to count more slowly. To lengthen the exhale, purse your lips to control the flow of breath out.
4. Just keep breathing this way for a minute or two and you're good to go.

Do this every time just before getting up on stage and your subconscious mind will learn that it's okay to relax when you go to perform.

And your fight or flight response will eventually fade away for good.

Now you can do everything you planned on stage just like you envisioned it.

Go for it!





3. Visualize a loving image

Quick reminders of being loved and cared for reduce the brain's anxious response to threatening situations almost instantly³. Instead of being stressed out, you can be calm, confident, and ready to go on stage.

All you have to do is glimpse an image of someone loving and/or being loved. The image only has to last a fraction of a second to be effective - all you need is a snapshot in your mind.

The images don't have to be of people you know, it can be of an older person gently cradling a child, or a couple smiling into one another's eyes, or any other image that signifies for you love, caring for and being cared for. You can imagine your parents or your own children laughing and cuddling just before you go up on stage. Or even you caring for and playing with your dog or cat.

Notice the smile in their eyes, the warmth of physical contact, complete acceptance, peace, the wonderful, almost physical sense of goodwill, the smile of love and connection and caring.

You can take an actual picture around with you, or you can just use your imagination. It works either way. You can briefly visualize this even with your eyes open. No one will know what you are doing.

In no time you will find yourself relaxed and at ease, and willing to open yourself up to the audience.



³Journal of Social, Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, 2014.
Cited in: Roger Elliott: A 2-Step Rapid Relaxation Technique. Audio Insight 58, November 2014. Hypnosis Downloads.com



So there are (at least) six ways you can prepare for your show so that you will have greater presence and more easily connect with your audience.

There's the **Time Exercise** which will connect you to the greater good and bring you into the present moment, and the **Visualization Exercise** which will set your intention to connect with the audience. And then there's '**Love**' **Walking** which will empower you and open you up by affirming your own unlimited potential and worthiness by seeing it in others.

And, just before you get on stage, there's the **Power Pose**, where you get your hormones working for you so you feel more confident and outgoing, the **Breathing Exercise**, where you relax your body by activating your parasympathetic nervous system and the **quick visualization** of an image of caring and being cared for which causes you to relax in a different way – it makes you feel safe and it opens you up.

Because at the end of the day, when you show up on stage powerfully, confidently, being present, and with the intention of giving something to your audience, people are going to be naturally attracted to you.

And there's another thing I want to share with you. You know how the day of a gig, especially if it's a new show or a new venue, and you're going to be trying some new things on stage - maybe some audience participation, or callouts, or storytelling or changing costume, or playing a new instrument, or using the stage in a new way, or asking people to buy your merch... you're going to be stretching yourself.

It's going to make you nervous. On the day of the gig you're going to think: "I'm not sure I can do this. Maybe I should back out of this or that." But you've practiced it. You've planned to do it. You know it works with your show.

Somehow you need to find your way to the calm center and let your body just do it. And there's something I heard once from Deepak Chopra that helps me with this. It's a description of Karma Yoga... "**Pursuing excellence, surrendering the results to the unknown.**"

That's where you want to be... unattached to the outcome. You're going to get up there and pursue excellence, and just surrender the results to the unknown.

Another way to think of this is what Michael Neil calls "playing with the House's money." Basically, imagine that you're hired by a casino to play and have fun, so that other people have fun too... no matter whether you make millions or lose it all, you hand in your chips at the end of the night and get paid your fee all the same. You're playing with the House's money. And you're going to do your best because it's more fun that way.

And these ideas really fit into what I call Willingness To Learn. Every experience is a learning experience. Having experiences is the fastest way to learn. So, are you going to fail - or better put, are all your ideas going to work and are you going to pull them off flawlessly every time? Well, probably not. Are you going to have setbacks? Are things not going to happen just like you want them to right away? Are there more things you need to learn along the way? Is there always more to learn? Well Yes!

And it's how you react to the big learning experiences that's going to decide how fast you incorporate the learning and how fast you get where you're going. Will you be disappointed and scarred for life, mired in doubt? Or secure in who you are, no matter what happens, rolling with the punches and willing to grow? Willing to have the next experience and grow from there...?

Make Karma Yoga your way of life. **Pursue excellence, surrendering the results to the unknown.** Remember this on the day of the gig.



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