

Exploring Leadership

COMMUNICATION: CONFIDENCE & PRESENCE

People with powerful presence exude confidence. They “command the room” even if they don’t say anything. Studies show that people who stand like Wonder Woman or Superman for two minutes before they begin a task have better self-confidence, less stress, higher pain thresholds, and are more likely to take risks and do well in high-stress situations like job interviews or public speaking. Power poses are expansive stances in which your body takes up more space, and by using them, your body can trick your mind into being more confident when the pressure is on.

CONVERSATION STARTER:

Without moving, observe your posture and the position of your body from head to toe. How do you feel in this posture? How would you describe your personal Presence at this moment?

Note: You do not have to do the power pose publicly or during the situation that causes you stress. You can do it privately before the situation. (But today, we’re doin’ ‘em in public!)
(See Appendix for well-known power poses.)

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Learn and practice power poses to improve confidence

WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Copies/Descriptions of the Power Poses hand out
- A space big enough to designate as a “runway” on which the participants can strut their stuff
- A way to play [this song](#) (or one like it) really loud.

EXPLORATION ACTIVITY:

Separate participants into groups and give each group a description and/or picture of one power pose.

- With your group, you will be part of a “fashion show” in which you walk the “runway” and “strike a pose” -- specifically the power pose your group was given.
- If there are variations on the pose, each group member should strike a different one and/or face a different direction, so the entire audience can see all the poses from every angle.
- You will only have about 1 minute of “runway time,” so plan who will do what, where and when.
- “Let’s get ready to rumble!” (Start the song.)
- Let each group display their poses on the “runway.”
- All participants can then try out all the poses to find a favorite that they can use to pump up their confidence before their next high-stress situation.

FACILITATOR TIP:

- If you can, show the participants pictures of the poses.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- Which power pose do you like best? Why?
- Why do you think simply expanding your body and taking up more space with a power pose improves confidence and presence?

APPLICATION DISCUSSION:

- What real-life situations can you use a power pose to help you gain confidence and presence?
- Do you know anyone who (purposely or not) uses a power pose to build confidence?



CONCLUSION:

This is a fun, easy activity that can pay big dividends throughout your life. Power poses are scientifically proven to have beneficial effects on one's presence and confidence. Using power poses can also help people around you perceive you to be confident in what you are saying and doing. So the next time you are nervous about something you have to do, be a superhero: go into a private room and hold that power pose for a couple minutes. When you come out, you'll be ready to save the world.



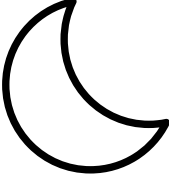


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REFERENCES

- TED: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_NYrWqUR40
- Power Poses: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EHB03268N0>
- "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nendMLrpl-s>



APPENDIX A: POWER POSES

 <p>The Body Builder Stand with shoulders back, biceps flexed, fists curled to ears; switch to a position with shoulders forward, fists curled to center of waist.</p>	<p>The Superhero Stand with shoulders back, hands on your hips, and your feet shoulder-width apart, look straight ahead.</p> 	 <p>To the Moon Hold one hand under your chin, elbow cocked diagonally down behind you while extending the other diagonally upward in the other direction; look and point both index fingers the same direction; alternate arms.</p>
<p>Victory Pose Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and stretch your arms out into a V, as if you just crossed the finish line at a race.</p> 	 <p>The CEO Stand at the head of a table with your feet spread wide. Lean forward and place your hands on the table, keeping your chest pointing forward and your head held high.</p>	<p>The Warrior Step and bend the forward knee in a lunge while the rear leg stays back straight on the diagonal; hold arms out at shoulder-height, parallel to legs' look forward.</p> 