

# 53 Confidence Boosting Actions You Can Take Today

*Originally published on Self Development Secrets | Rebecca Tensen | Do check out their site because "being your own hero" is critical!*



**One of the most important ingredients of a well-lived, enjoyable life is self-confidence.** Confident people get what they want the way they want it, people enjoy being around them, and they're appreciated in the workplace. They encounter the same problems as everyone else, but they routinely rise above them, taking life in stride.

This seems innate from the outside, but it's not – it is the product of a careful, intentional decision to build that confidence. And the simple truth is that everyone can learn to do it, regardless of circumstances.

We don't learn this in school. They focus on self-esteem, but they don't understand how it works, so they can't teach it to others. They focus on the participation award method of instilling self-confidence, but that doesn't produce real self-confidence, it sets their students up for a rude awakening when they encounter real life after school.

Too few parents are effective at teaching it at home, because it's widely thought to be a personality trait that's just automatic. For a few people, it seems to be, but it's most effective when it's taught or self-taught intentionally.

Real, lasting self-confidence comes from real, tangible achievements and successes. It doesn't matter how the rest of the world views these accomplishments, either – they've got to be valued by the person who did them to engender self-confidence.

It doesn't matter where you are in life, or what your circumstances are. You can start working on this part of yourself today, and you won't have to wait long to see tangible, beneficial results.

Some of this may seem trite, shopworn, or even hackneyed. That's okay. It got that way by being repeated over and over again because it works.

## **1. You Decide How Other People See You**

Most people are so focused on how other people see them that they don't have attention to spare for looking closely at others. Rather than putting the energy into carefully evaluating others, they just accept everyone's projected self-image at face value.

It's a closed feedback loop. You project confidence, other people treat you as if you're confident, and you accept that feedback and feel confident. Make this an intentional habit, and it becomes automatic very quickly.

## **2. Invent Yourself**

This is a project that you'll want to spend some time on. Never mind who you already are, spend some time deciding who you want to be. Not the outward surface traits, but the inner, innate aspects of your personality.

Do you want to be thrifty, or spend open-handedly? Would you rather be selfish or generous? Kind or cruel? Honest or dishonest? Think about all of the traits of your personality now, and decide which ones to underline, and which to change. Make a list.

This isn't a one-hour project, and spending more than an hour at a time on it will probably be annoying and frustrating. Spend some time on the list every day for 3 or 4 days, then come back to it every few weeks or months.

When you stop being able to think of things to add to the list, wait a bit longer before you revisit it again. Keep it in mind and work on checking off one or two items from the list steadily, but you don't need to add to it frequently.

It's tough to change a trait because people who know you will expect you to be what you were yesterday. It will take them some time to adjust their expectations, but they will. Be firm about the changes you make, and people will accept the changes.

Making dozens of changes at once is difficult. One or two at a time is much easier. When one of your changes has been locked in, and the people around you expect it, you can work on another change from your list.

### **3. Seeming Turns Into Being**

Yes, 'fake it until you make it' sounds trite, but it works. This doesn't mean that you should have an unrealistic view of your skills today, but you can aspire to build your skills to whatever level you want. The top person in every field had to start at the beginning, too – but they kept on learning until they were as excellent as they wanted to be.

If you're not enjoying learning a skill, try to cut that drudgery out of your life. Put your focus on skills that you enjoy learning and improving. Life is so much easier when

you're having fun living it.

#### **4. Grooming is Important**



It's not difficult, and you are worth the trouble. Trim those nails, keep yourself clean, and primp some. Make a fuss about your appearance, and you'll find yourself more confident in all situations because of it.

If you don't want to spend the money on professional grooming, invest the time in learning how to do it well yourself. It's a small luxury that not only feels good, but it makes a big difference in how people treat and respect you. It adds to self-confidence more than many people realize.

#### **5. Dress Like a Success**

This doesn't mean that you've got to follow the latest fashions if you don't want to, or spend a small fortune on your clothes. Even if you're wearing thrift-store clothes, be picky about how well they fit you, and choose colors that work well for you.

Keep your clothes clean and well-mended. Threadbare works with a few things, but not often, and only when it's intentional. If you want fashion advice, ask your best-dressed friend of the opposite gender. They won't steer you wrong if you're not competition for them.

This isn't shallowness, as some idealists will claim. It's tremendously practical. People will react to you based on your appearance, and you're one of those people.

#### **6. Happiness is a Decision That You Make**

You won't always be able to control what happens, but you are always in control of how you react to it. If you look at it, there's a bright side to everything. If nothing else, it could have been worse and wasn't. You survived. Focus on the positive and be happy about it.

If for no other reason, being happy is more fun than being unhappy is. Happy people are more fun to be around, so they get more support and positive feedback from people. This makes it easier for happy people to recover from setbacks, and easy is good.

## **7. Results Are Lousy Goals**

Setting goals is an important life skill, but predicting results doesn't always work very well. So make your goals something that you do have complete control over – the amount of effort you're going to invest. It's not "I'm going to run a 3-minute mile today", it's "I'm going to run my hardest today." Not "I'm going to ace the test tomorrow," but "I'm going to study for at least 90 minutes for tomorrow's test".

Achieving goals automatically boost your confidence, so only set goals that you have complete control over. Running can be an amazing way to set a goal you can control. Jill has a lovely blog about running here.

## **8. Being Angry is No Fun**

☒ Anger is usually a response to frustration over someone not meeting your expectations, and if that someone is yourself, this is related to goals. If it's someone else, then keep in mind that their behavior is not your job to control.

If other people treat you poorly, it's better to just make a note of it and adjust your expectations toward more realism in the future. It's fine to ask them to do it the next time differently, but what they do is up to them. Being angry about it is a decision, and if you decide not to get mad, you'll be better able to deal with the situation calmly and rationally.

Yes, things didn't go as you wanted them to. Being angry about it cannot possibly improve the situation, so save your energy for what will improve the situation. Being angry is not enjoyable, and far too many people make a habit of it. Don't

be one of them.

Indignant outrage can be remarkably addictive, but it's not an improvement, ever. Don't let it be one of your habits.

## **9. So Smile, Already**

It may seem bizarre, but it works anyway. Smiling will improve your mood, and often the mood of the people around you. Your brain is already wired to associate smiling with feeling happy, and it doesn't matter which one comes first – the other will naturally follow.

If you make a conscious effort to smile, you'll soon see things to smile about, because they come into better focus. The people you deal with will often smile back, and it becomes contagious. Confident people are happy, so it follows that happy people are assured. The two traits go together.

## **10. Use Affirmations**

Affirmations are statements of what you expect, and we all use them constantly, so keep yours positive. There is a whole field of psychology that focuses on affirmations because they're a method that has proven itself useful. Paying attention to your affirmations helps them work for you instead of against you.

Affirmations are a topic too broad to cover in depth here, but many people find them fascinating. One place to start looking into them is this article.


## **11. Let's Be Honest**

One of the problems with lying is that you have to keep track of the lies to avoid being caught doing it. It is much, much easier to remember the truth and being honest means never being trapped in a lie. Being caught lying is a small but constant worry, one that we can happily live without.

Confident people have no reason to lie. The truth is something that will do the job for them just fine. Of course, this will mean avoiding behavior that you'll feel a need to lie about.

Focusing on being honest won't always lead to people trusting you, and that's okay. Their opinions are their business, not yours. What it will always lead to is you trusting yourself, and that's an essential ingredient in being confident and self-assured in life.

## **12. Eat on Purpose**

We can't all expect to always enjoy perfect health, but we  can work on being as healthy as possible, and it's an effort that pays off in many ways. Nutrition has a lot of influence over how we look and feel, so it's worth learning about and paying attention to.

This doesn't mean that we need to become fanatical about our food (unless you want to), but it does mean that we need to learn something about nutrition and apply that knowledge to our diet.

This doesn't mean that you have to entirely give up junk food, either. It just means that we can't let junk food be the majority of our diet. There are a lot of false myths about food floating around, so you'll need to do some research, here. For example, non-fat is popular, but it's not healthy – you need some fats in your diet to thrive.

If most of what you eat is healthy food, then those things that you eat that aren't as healthy don't need to be guilty pleasures. They can just be pleasures without any guilt.

## **13. Pay Attention to the Details**

Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying “Watch the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves,” and this concept doesn't just apply to finances. Careful attention to detail is one ingredient in excellence. It's hard to be confident about

something in which the details have been ignored.

It is remarkably easy to be self-confident about having achieved excellence. The excellence does not have to be about other peoples achievements, either. It can just as easily be in comparison to your work in the past.

You don't have to play guitar as well as Jeff Beck to be proud of learning a new chord or song.

## **14. Expect to Win**

Don't always expect to win easily, but you can expect to win every time. This isn't about competition with other people, this is about achieving your goals.

There is no confidence in saying "I have failed," but "I haven't succeeded yet" is the essence of self-confidence, and anyone can say it. When you say it, mean it, and follow up on that.

## **15. Tackle the Problems As Soon As Possible**

Sometimes, problems go away all by themselves, but counting on that is a recipe for disaster. Confident people don't shy away from problems, they deal with them as quickly as they can, before the problem has a chance to grow and become harder to deal with.

## **16. Kill Your Television**

At least kill the habit of watching all night, every night. Few activities are as passive as watching television, and passivity does not build confidence.

You don't have to quit altogether, but you can at least be a careful consumer. Minimize what you watch, and be careful to only pick the very best shows and movies. Use the time you'll save by doing this on the other things in this list. Game of Thrones may be a great show, but the books are even better,



and reading is not a passive activity.

## **17. The Negative Isn't Important, and This is Important**

Bad things happen to everyone, even confident people. We all have setbacks, and sometimes, they're difficult to overcome or accept. How much you focus on them is something that you do have control over.

The more time you spend focusing on the positive in life, the more positive your life will look to you. The less time you dwell on the negative, the more confident you will be of the positive parts of your life.

## **✘ 18. Stand Out From the Crowd**

One way of dealing with a lack of self-confidence is to mimic your peers. The downsides of this are that it prevents confidence and it helps you fade into the background. To enhance your confidence, you must remind yourself and others that you're an individual, not merely a member of some group.

If you have a secret passion for something unusual, don't let it be secret. Own it and be proud of it, and it becomes one more thing that you can feel confident about.

## **19. Don't Let Anyone Else Decide**

Insecure people feel better if everyone around them is doing the same thing. Don't let anyone else decide this for you. Decide for yourself, every time.

You don't need to argue with them or convince them otherwise. Smile, nod and do what you've chosen to do your way. Sure, on the job you've got to do it the way the boss wants it done, but don't lose track of the fact that you're in that job because you decided to be.

## **20. Different Isn't Always Better but Being Yourself Is**

Be genuine. You don't need to pretend, because what you are is good enough. It doesn't have to be good enough for anyone else, as long as it's good enough for you to be proud of.

It's impossible to blackmail someone who doesn't have something that they need to keep a secret. You're allowed to (and should) keep some things private, but don't ever make the mistake of being ashamed of those secrets. They're none of anyone else's business and are your decisions to make. It's your life, after all.

## **21. Be Kind**

Everyone makes mistakes and being gentle with someone who has made one will not only be appreciated but being kind improves your experience of it, as well. Unkindness is unpleasant to experience, so there's no benefit to be had in adding some to your day.

This is another thing that becomes a feedback loop. The more often you're kind to others, the more chance that they'll find a reason to be nice to you. Confident people don't need to look for things to be unkind about.

## **22. Being Wrong is Wonderful**

Nobody's always right, but too many people don't handle being wrong gracefully. There are not many things as annoying as someone who refuses to admit when they're wrong, or who always finds something else to blame it on. You don't need to be that person.

When you realize that you're wrong, admit it, and apologize if that's called for, but don't feel bad about it. Nobody is always right, so don't expect it from yourself.

If someone shows you that you've been wrong, thank them –

they've just given you a bit of education, and now you're wrong about one less thing. It's a positive thing, and you'll be surprised at how pleased people are when they see you react that way.

## **23. Life Isn't a Game**

Other than for recreation, you don't need to compete with or beat anyone. Nobody wins a dance, but everyone can enjoy dancing. Competing with others isn't what confident people spend their time on.

Confident people work toward being their personal best, and how well others are doing doesn't threaten them. If Joe is better than you at billiards, that's okay – you can focus on enjoying the game anyway while your skills improve.

## **24. Perception Decides Experience**

Keep yourself positive by focusing on the positive aspects of every situation. If you're asked to put in overtime on Friday, don't focus on missing what you'd planned to do, focus on the extra pay and the boss owing you a favor.

The result is the same, either way, but you'll enjoy the positive option more. It's a part of being confident that you can handle whatever surprises come up.

## **25. Life Is a Game After All**

In the long run, we're all dead, so don't take it too seriously. Enjoy the triumphs and good times, but don't make the defeats and bad times larger than they need to be.

If it weren't for bad weather, nobody would enjoy the good weather. Confident people know that they'll get through the clouds and that the sun will shine for them later, so don't sweat the petty stuff. On the cosmic scale, it's all petty things.

## **26. Don't Just Hear, Listen**

What you get out of an experience is directly proportional to how much attention you put into it. Not only do you enjoy things more when you focus on them, but keeping a high level of attention makes you appear and feel more confident. You have a better handle on things when you pay attention to them.

## **27. What Doesn't Matter as Much as How Well Does**

Who do you have more confidence in – the janitor who does an excellent job, or the top executive who makes mistakes regularly? Even mundane, low-skill tasks like sweeping a floor can add to confidence if they're done well.

## **28. Do Your Homework**

There's a reason for 'Be Prepared' being the motto of the Boy Scouts. Being prepared is a large factor in doing something well. Take the time to do enough research to know how to do something well, or practice a skill until you're good at it.

It's hard to feel anything but confident about something that you've mastered.

## **29. If It's Not Worth Doing Well, It's Not Worth Doing**

It's hard to take this too seriously. If it's worth your time to do, it's worth the time to do it well.

Sometimes, getting it done quickly is more important than taking the time to do your best job, but try to do your best as often as you can. Doing your best is something that's easy to feel confident about.

## **30. You Don't Know It All**

Nobody knows it all, and confident people don't need to pretend that they do. Be willing to admit when you don't know – that's the only way you can be open to learning about it.

Learning something new automatically increases your confidence.

### **31. Try Something New**

It may not have worked out as well as you'd have liked it to, but you've won anyway. Now that you know how it worked out, you've learned something.

You may have never had an interest in square dancing, but you'll never know if it's fun to do until you try it. It, or any other new activity, may not be your cup of tea, but a confident person welcomes the challenge of a new experience, and sometimes, it works out even better than you expected it.

### **32. Enjoy Your Achievements**

When something you do goes well, stop and pay attention. Even if nobody else notices, you know you did well, and you deserve to bask in that feeling for a while. It's just one more thing to feel confident about.

### **33. Look Busy**

Everyone needs some downtime occasionally, but confident people spend very little time being idle. Don't overcrowd your schedule, but keep occupied.

There are only 24 hours in everyone's day, but confident people don't waste much of that. There is always something to be done, so see that it gets done. Achievements build confidence.

### **34. Expect The Best**

It's amazing how much people will live up to or down to your expectations. Assume that people will do their best for you, and they usually will.

Be confident that you're worth their best, and that they'll see that in you. This works more often than you might think.

## **35. Do the Healthy Things**



Drink plenty of water. Get enough sleep every night. It's easy to put things like that off until later, but confident people know that they're worth taking good care of.

## **36. Learn Something New**

Few things keep our minds in top working order better than learning something new. It doesn't have to have an immediate practical use, either. Knowledge doesn't take up much storage space.

Don't wait for something to catch your attention. Pick a subject at random, and learn something about it. Confident people aren't afraid to tackle a new topic and add it to their knowledge base.

## **37. You've Got This, Every Time**

You might not succeed at first, or even the tenth time you try. This doesn't matter at all. If you keep working at it until you succeed, you will.

Persistence is a trait of confident people. Only people who lack confidence give up if it doesn't work the first time.

## **38. Think Slow**

Many mistakes are caused by not thinking things through carefully beforehand. Work on avoiding problems caused by acting impulsively.

Give your actions enough thought before you act. You'll have fewer regrets and more confidence that your actions will work out as you expect them to.

## **39. Clean Your Desk**

It's harder to do well at something in the midst of clutter or mess. It's a time saver to clean your work area before

starting work, no matter what area you're working in.

You won't be distracted by the mess, and it won't get in your way or leave you feeling claustrophobic. Every project is easier if started on a clean slate.

## **40. Exercise to Energize**

It's easy to understand why some people get hooked on going to the gym. The more physical energy you use, the more you have. Being fit (or at least fitter) comes along with unexpected benefits.

It doesn't have to be doing sets at the gym, either. Some activity of any sort helps, even walking for a half-hour every day. People with active lifestyles sleep better, have more energy, and feel more confident in themselves.

The hardest part is starting. If you can force your way through the first two weeks, the rest is much easier.

## **41. Walk Tall**

There's a good reason that mothers used to nag their children to keep good posture. It has a definite effect on how we think of ourselves, and how others think of us.

Someone who slouches around with poor posture looks (and probably feels) like they lack self-confidence. Someone with good posture looks self-confident, and feels that way, too.

Pay attention to your posture for a couple of weeks. It doesn't take very long before it becomes an automatic habit.

## **42. Don't Tell Them, Show Them**

People brag about their good qualities because they're afraid that nobody will see them otherwise. This is not a habit of confident people, and it doesn't look like one, either. Braggarts earn the poor reputation that they get for doing it.

Other people's opinions aren't important to confident people. They simply assume that if other people look for their admirable qualities and accomplishments, they'll be able to find them.

Confident people know that the only opinion that matters is their own.

### **43. Random Acts of Kindness**

People often encourage doing kind acts for strangers with the idea that it just makes the world a better place for everyone to live in. They're not wrong, but they're missing an important part of it.

How you make other people feel when you go out of your way to help a stranger is mostly incidental. The truth is that committing a random act of kindness will improve your mood, usually all out of proportion to the effort you put into it. It doesn't look like it until you look at it carefully, but it's doing a favor for yourself.

Here's a list of random acts of kindness you can do today.

### **44. Unclutter**

Studies show that our possessions don't make us as happy as our experiences do, as surprising as that may sound. The Swedish have a word for it, 'lagom'. It translates to 'just right,' neither too little nor too much.

Remember Little Red Riding Hood. Too many possessions not only clutter your home, but they clutter your life, too. If you haven't used something in a year, it's not doing you any good, it's in your way. Confident people don't appear on an episode of Hoarders.

### **45. Take a Hint From the Japanese**

I'm told that when a mistake happens in Japanese companies,



that there is very little attention paid to who made the mistake because that doesn't matter. The attention is given to how to fix the problem and ensure that it doesn't happen again.

Assigning (or dodging) blame doesn't do anything to fix the problem, it's a waste of time and energy. If it was your mistake, own it immediately, apologize, and shift the focus to how to correct it. If it was someone else's mistake, the most efficient way to deal with it is still going to be to focus on the cure.

Confident people don't expect themselves to be perfect, but they do expect themselves to be able to handle problems when they crop up.

## **46. Uproot the Couch Potato**

Everyone should get some downtime, but nobody thrives by making it a major feature in their life. The physical activity isn't the only important part of this. The mental activity is just as important.

Spending 2 hours on Facebook, for example, just scrolling through the newsfeed for entertainment is a pretty passive activity. Spending the same 2 hours on Facebook liking and commenting on all of the things that catch your attention is much more active and engaging. That's the opposite of passivity. Confident people don't just observe, they engage and contribute.

## **47. Focus is a Habit**

If you see someone who seems self-confident, it's a pretty safe bet that they also look like they're paying attention. Everybody can run across distractions, but confident people watch them go by without following them.

Even the most distractible person can make a conscious effort to focus on the matter at hand rather than follow the

distraction. It may not be easy at first, but the more you work on it, the easier it becomes. The less you pay attention to distractions, the less they'll crop up for you.

## ✘ **48. Do it Now**

Everyone has some portion of their to-do list that's been there for a while. It's sometimes hard to notice it, but those unfinished projects are a bad source of guilt and dissatisfaction. Confident people don't need or want that in their lives.

So grab the oldest project on your to-do list and either discard it and turn to the next-oldest or get it done. You'll feel better for the shorter to-do list, and the sense of accomplishment you'll get from getting it done will automatically add to your confidence level.

## **49. Volunteer**

Not every confident person volunteers, but almost every volunteer has plenty of self-confidence. You usually meet interesting people and learn things by volunteering.

Sometimes, the best thing you can do for your state of mind is to help someone else. It's also an excellent way to network with other confident, successful people.

## **50. Be Grateful and Aware of It**

This one is important. It's easy to focus on the negative things in your life, but it's much better for your mood and confidence to focus on the positive, and be glad that they're positive. You're not (I hope) living the life of a crippled beggar on the streets of Calcutta, no matter how overwhelming your challenges may seem to be. Here are 60 things in life to be grateful for.

## **51. Positive Self-Talk**

One way to improve self-esteem is through positive self-talk. Positive self talk will give your brain a much needed boost. You will feel better too. This is different from affirmations. How can you do it? Keep positive words in your mind and try to catch yourself when you hear negative words. Words like can vs can't will really help. Tell yourself things like '*I have confidence in me*' or '*I have confidence*'. Always be mindful about the thoughts you keep in your head.

## **52. Build Yourself Up**

Its important that you are seen as confident. And one of the best ways to do that is to build yourself up. What this means is that you should build yourself up in every way. I'm talking about the way you talk, walk, look and everything. Most of the points here tells you how to do them individually. This point is for your overall self.

## **53. Empower Yourself**

It's truly a great feeling when you feel empowered. Being confident has a lot to do with empowering ourselves and help make you the best you can be. Here's a cool post about how you can do that.

# **Conclusion**

Despite all of the problems and worries that the media tries to bring to your attention, we are living in the best times in history. Poverty is lower, worldwide, than it has ever been before, and we're surrounded by technological marvels that weren't even dreamed of 10 years ago. Pay attention to that, and enjoy it.

With those 52 actions, it's your turn now! Which actions are you going to take today? Start by sharing this to encourage

others!

How are you going to use one of these positive actions? Please share your experience doing so with the 3Q Leadership Blog community by sharing your comments!

Again, I would like to thank Rebecca Tensen *Self Development Secrets* for this guest post and dedicating her blog to such an important area of concern and growth.



**More? You Betcha!** I am sharing some of the most popular 3Q articles which have had between 30,000 and 60,000 reads. I hope that you will chose topics that speak to you and the content of these articles will be of value. And, your feedback and suggestions are always appreciated and welcomed!

### Realizing Leadership Magazine Cover Story

- Women and Leadership: Ten Critical Steps Forward for Women and Men
- The Individual and Organizational Imperative for 3Q Leadership
- Using Failure to Succeed
- Possibility Thinking, Doing and Results
- Ten Ways to Build Great Leadership in Turbulent Times
- I Choose the Road Less Traveled
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