BY A WOMAN FOR WOMEN



5 CHEAT CODES TO CONFIDENCE

A QUICK GUIDE TO MASTERING THE ART OF AUTHENTIC SELF-EXPRESSION

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Welcome

To 5 Cheat Codes to Confidence.

What is confidence, and why do so many of us want it? Well because for most of us confidence is often not a natural gift you're born with, and for some of us maybe it was shut down and dimmed somewhere along our way to finding this book. Confidence is found in the radical decision to stop letting self-doubt and fear control your life, to step into your unique and full potential, it is a right to possess and a state of being you can actively choose to apply in any aspect of your life when you feel a desire or need to.

Here are some reasons why choosing to claim your confidence is a powerful, bold and often necessary act in reclaiming your most authentic self expression and life:

1. Confidence is an act of self-authority.
For too long, you may have outsourced your sense of self-worth to external factors—like what others think, by what you achieve, or how you look. Choosing to claim your confidence is the process of taking that authority back. It means you are the one who gets to decide how you feel about yourself, not your inner critic, not by your past failures, and definitely not by the opinions of others. Confidence is the ultimate form of self-empowerment.

2. Confidence is a pathway to a more authentic life.
When confidence is lacking, you often operate from a place of fear. You might say "yes" when you mean "no," stay silent when you want to speak up, or hide parts of yourself to avoid rejection. Claiming your confidence gives you the courage to live in alignment with your true self, your values, and your desires. It is the key to unlocking a life full of integrity, purpose and unique authenticity.





3. Confidence is a long term investment for well-being.
A lack of confidence is often a constant source of anxiety, stress, and self-criticism. This can lead to a stressful cycle of overthinking and self-sabotage that drains your energy and diminishes your happiness. By claiming your confidence, you are choosing to break that cycle. You are making a commitment to nurturing your mental, emotional and physical health, which will in turn positively impact every other area of your life.

4. Confidence is the fuel for growth and resilience.
Life will inevitably present challenges and setbacks. When you claim your confidence, you build an internal reservoir of resilience that allows you to face these challenges with grace and determination. You stop viewing obstacles as proof of your inadequacy and start seeing them as opportunities for growth. This shift in perspective is what allows you to persevere and ultimately succeed where others might more easily fall short and give up.

In essence, claiming your confidence is not just about how you appear in other people's perceptions of you; it is about taking true ownership of your life, it's about deciding that you are worthy of your own belief and that you have the right to confidently pursue a life that is fulfilling, purposeful, and truly your own.

What you might gain from reading this?

1. A strong sense of self awareness.
2. A more calm mind and tamed inner critic.
3. The ability to let go of fear and self doubt.
4. The self assurance to no longer freeze in anxiety.
5. An authentic and grounded energy that radiates humble confidence, felt and witnessed by everyone you meet.

Meet the Author



Hey there, my name is Shardasia Schwass and if you're reading this, chances are you've lived with that nagging voice of self-doubt for far too long. Trust me, I know the voice. For a long time I believed that confidence was something you were either born with or not. My own journey towards living more confidently was a series of challenging, often cringe worthy, essential steps toward a place of greater self-trust to gain confidence in my personal and professional life. From steps as small as saying “no” to things that I didn’t agree with, to taking leaps like shaving off my long hair and living in an Indian ashram for a few months. I am in no way a guru who has it all figured out; I am simply a human who has been on a path of self discovery and learned a few tools from a few challenging life lessons along the way. In the pages that follow, I will share some insights along with my top 5 cheat codes to confidence as promised. I believe these have first helped me, then supported my students and clients to break free from disempowering patterns and lives lived in fear and self doubt toward stepping into more radical authenticity with the confidence to live empowered and radiant lives. This book is my way of reaching out and saying, "Hey, if I can do this, so can you, let me remind you how."

With Love -Shardasia

Chapter One

Practising Presence

In the beginning...

There was a time before the internet, before mobile phones and communication devices. A time when if you felt the urge to check in on a friend, you'd make the bold decision to go visit. Without overthinking it, not even for a second, you'd take action, jump on your bike and roll on over not knowing whether they were actually home or not. You'd then literally knock on their door, maybe have to deal with a grumpy or overly excited parent or two before you got invited in or told to wait while they called out for your friend to come to the door. Believe it or not, my millennial readers there was a time before you just texted your friend that you're waiting at the end of their driveway, after several weeks of planning and aligning the perfect time to fit both of your seemingly "too busy" life schedules, yet not without a few reschedule messages in between you would eventually get to see your friend again, just to sit there scrolling on your devices sending each other funny memes and reels across the table at lunch.

Confidence is often mistaken for a feeling of invincibility or a loud display of bravado, in reality it starts much more subtle than that. True confidence is often a quiet, powerful state that is rooted in deep presence — the ability to be fully engaged in the present moment. When you are present, you are not caught in past regrets or the future's anxieties. You are anchored in the now, and this is where genuine self-assurance and confidence is born. At its core, confidence is an act of self-trust—the belief that you can handle whatever arises. Presence is where this trust is put into practice, you are not trying to control the outcome or predict every variable.

Instead, you are simply trusting your ability to think on your feet and respond in the moment. Just like in the scenario I explained in the beginning, jumping on your bike to visit a friend before mobile phones and the internet, this was full of uncontrollable variables like “what if it rains on my way?”, “what if they are not home?”, “what if they don’t even feel like seeing me?”. These were all possibilities but in a time when there were no alternatives or ways to find out beforehand, you’d take the leap and deal with the variables as or when they would arise. We have since created a world of perceived convenience, where we can now check the forecast at our fingertips, and after a few taps on a screen find out if your friend is home or not and if they even have the capacity to hang out. In my humble opinion we have shortcutted ourselves from the ability to make bold decisions and take action, to trust in our ability to deal with challenges or rejection face to face. We have created all these ways to avoid “inconvenience” that has left our ability to cope and make decisions on the spot, under stress or pressure weak and un-trained. Which in turn, has left us so debilitated in anxiety when it comes to decision-making. Just the thought of taking the first step without researching online all the possible scenarios to avoid discomfort before we decide what to do next, is a far too common reality leaving us often completely frozen and indecisive, so we end up doing nothing at all. I believe this is a con of our technologically advanced and dependent world, sugar-coated in convenience, riddled in distractions, suspending us in our overthinking minds and far from being grounded in active presence, but I digress.
Yet, this leads me back to how confidence is connected to presence. Confidence is magnetic, and its power lies in its ability to foster genuine connection. When you are fully present in a conversation, you make eye contact, you listen attentively, and you respond with sincerity. This level of engagement tells the other person that they are seen and heard, which builds trust and strengthens the relationship.

Conversely, a lack of presence is immediately noticeable. If you are distracted—looking at your phone, glancing around the room, or thinking about what to say next—you come across as disengaged and even a little insecure. People sense this and may feel that you are not worth their attention. When you practice presence, you give others your most valuable resource: your focus. This simple act of respect makes you appear more credible, charismatic, and ultimately, more confident.

A lack of confidence is often just a mental state of distraction. You may be in a room with someone or alone, but your mind is replaying a past mistake or rehearsing a future conversation, does this sound familiar? These constant mental gymnastics puts your body into a state of low-level stress. Your nervous system is on edge, and your body language reflects it through fidgeting, closed posture, or shallow breathing.

Presence is the antidote.

By intentionally focusing on your senses and your immediate environment, you signal to your brain that you are safe. This calms your nervous system, allowing you to move, listen and speak with quiet poise and presence. The simple act of taking a breath and feeling your feet on the floor can immediately ground you, transforming your physical state from anxious to calm. This isn't just a mental trick; it's a physiological shift that builds the foundation for more confident behavior.

Cheat Code #1: Practising Presence.

First start by practising presence in solitude, every morning as you wake, before you reach for your devices, rush out of bed or even open your eyes, start with presence.

Morning Presence Method:
(Minimum 5 minutes-maximum as long as you need)

Keep your eyes closed while still in bed, become aware of your breath, take 3 rounds of full deep breaths, fully in to the belly, ribs and chest then sighing out the mouth with each exhale. Then become aware of your body in bed, feel the blankets over your body or your clothes on your skin, observe any parts of your body holding tension or tightness, keep breathing deeper and softening into those spaces. Now become aware of your mindstream, observe the stories or “to-do” lists already playing out, lay with them, let the thoughts arise and fall away with the breath for a few minutes, continue to return to the present moment.
Then & only then, shall you rise and start your day from this conscious, grounded and present space. Take pauses as many times as you need throughout your day just like this to stay present. For example, in the car before entering work, on your lunch break, before the important meeting or going for a drink with a friend, before picking up the kids or coming back home after a long day, pause in practising presence often.

Chapter Two

Action is the Antidote

But what about the inner overthinker?...

So we tried practising presence in the morning but all you could overthink about was what needed to happen that day, what you forgot to do the day before and what you really wanted to have for breakfast? I call this "the monkey mind" the part of your mind that wants to run free, climb all the possible scenario trees and shake the fruits off them to distract you from anything but calm, grounded peaceful presence. By now you might be giggling, thinking "phew I'm not the only one". I am here to declare that thinking is exactly what our mind is meant to do! But it is when we over-think scenarios, repeat past worries or pre-play future doubts incessantly that our humble minds innocent purpose of thinking has become untamed and unhinged. Though the mind is just doing it's job, when overthinking, the mind is in overdrive. This is when it is needing some support to chill out before we burn out, it's time for the overthinker to take a back seat. Just like most conscious things, this may require a little training to keep it in line, which may feel challenging to begin, but it's not impossible.

Overthinking is silent sabotage...

Imagine this, you wake up, you practise presence, finish your morning routine, check your emails and to your surprise you have magnetically received a message with the job opportunity of your dreams, a role that requires you to be fully seen with your unique gifts and well compensated for it too! For a split second you're excited but just moments later the inner overthinker rears its head and slides in with "this is too good to be true", "you're not ready yet", "what if not everyone will like what you share", "that is too much responsibility for you to handle", "what if you fail and people find out?". The overthinker wins and you turn

down the opportunity with some lame excuse and stay small and in your comfort zone. The reality is, you either know this kind of story and the thought process so well, or you have likely unconsciously let the inner overthinker ruin opportunities like this before all in the name of staying comfortable over fully claiming your confidence and being seen, whether it be in a career opportunity, family responsibility or a love interest, similar thought processes may apply.

Confidence isn't just about what you do; it starts with what you think, and nothing erodes confidence faster than the externally silent, relentless cycle of overthinking. Overthinking is the enemy of self-assurance because it keeps you trapped in a state of analysis paralysis, where you're so busy dissecting every possibility that you never take action. It's the voice that whispers, "What if?" until you're too paralyzed to even try. Confidence is built on trust, specifically the trust you have in yourself. When you overthink, you are essentially telling yourself over and over, that you cannot be trusted to handle a situation. You're saying that you are not capable of thinking on your feet, adapting to a challenge, or recovering from a mistake. Every time you hesitate because you are overthinking, you're reinforcing the belief that you are not good enough, you teach your brain to doubt its own judgment and its ability to handle things in the moment. This is a subtle but profound form of self-sabotage. It's not the external outcome that shatters your confidence; it's the internal dialogue that convinces you that you are not even worthy of taking the risk.

Cheat Code #2: Action is the Antidote.

You may practice this anytime you are faced with an opportunity that requires action to move forward. Aim to take action before the over thinking settles in and over thinks you out of an opportunity or the next move leaving you debilitated in anxiety, procrastination or in-action.

The Countdown Method :
(It only takes 3 seconds!)

It literally says it in the name, any time you're faced with an opportunity to make a decision as soon as you catch the overthinking creep in, OVERRIDE IT count down 3 - 2 - 1 and on 1 take physical action.

Start small, follow your natural impulse or intuitive instinct, even if it isn't a final decision or solution, even if you just stand up and walk outside or into another room. This is training your brain that it is safe to move forward, no matter the physical action taken, interrupting the overthinking from spiralling will over time begin to shorten the time spent overthinking and you will in turn become more productive and bold in your actions one short countdown and seemingly small action at a time.

Hey, if you're loving what you're reading so far and this guide is proving helpful to you, please share about it on social media and/or tell your friends and family to submit their emails and get their free copy too at www.mindfulmindfood.com.

Want to help me even further? Once you have finished reading, leave your review in the review section at www.mindfulmindfood.com.

Chapter Three

Reframe and Replace

It's time to address the inner critic...

Now, we have tried practising presence, and attempted to ward off the overthinker with the countdown method but now you have discovered that the overthinker has developed a whole persona? Maybe you even have a name for yours already? Again, you can relax and maybe sleep a little better knowing you're not the only one. Here we have identified the inner critic. The harsh, often negative inner voice that only speaks pessimistically, that sees the world in a shade of grey. The voice that is afraid of anything and everything that challenges your growth or wants to expand your comfort zone. You know the voice i'm talking about right? I mean if you didn't you'd not likely be reading this book, but maybe you really don't know what i'm talking about, so you could totally just skip this chapter if it doesn't apply to you.
You must be getting the message by now that confidence is not built on perfection, it takes practice right? Confidence is built on a healthy relationship with your inner world and this then affects your outer world. For many, the voice of the inner critic is relentless, learning to tame this voice is not about silencing it completely, but about changing your relationship with it so it no longer holds you captive. It is possible to learn to live in harmony with it, without completely shaming and shutting down this aspect of your being.

How did it even get there in the first place?

Your inner critic isn't a random enemy; it's often a well-meaning but misguided protector. This voice often was developed in early childhood as a way to keep you safe by helping you avoid failure or rejection.

For example, if you were criticized for a mistake, your brain might have created an inner critic to point out every potential error, hoping to prevent a similar painful experience in the future. Over time, this well-meaning protector can become an overzealous bully, constantly reminding you of your perceived shortcomings. Though we may never completely rid your psyche of this voice, it is possible to work with it so it no longer rules your life and hinders your ability to shine with confidence, here is how.

Cheat Code #3: Reframe and Replace

This can be applied anytime the inner critic is becoming too overbearing, if presence and action aren't working, it's time to really sit with it, giving it time and space to be acknowledged, treating it like the fearful voice of your inner child begging to be seen and heard. We will allow for that, then let it gently know its okay and they are no longer running the show.

The R & R Method:
(Minimum 5 minutes till as long as you need)
You will need a notepad/journal and pen for this one.

Step 1) Find yourself a space to sit and focus, giving your undivided attention to the voice of the inner critic.
Step 2) Observe the thoughts and narratives playing out.
Step 3) Write them down exactly as they are playing out in your mind.
Step 4) Reframe each thought by acknowledging that is is only a thought that you are having.
Step 5) Replace & create a positive opposite sentence to the initial thought, affirm the best case scenario.

For example;
Inner critic: "I'm going to mess this up"
Reframe: "I am aware that I am having a thought that I may mess this up"
Replace: "I am well prepared and capable of handling this, I can do this"

Chapter Four

Anchored in Affirmations

The more you believe it, the more you'll be it...

Just like the way the unconscious inner critic's words felt hard wired in after years of never being addressed, so to, can you replace and rewire beliefs with more positive ones. When they are practised consistently they can become anchored in to our self belief and way of being too.
Affirmations are more than just positive words; they are a powerful tool for rewiring your brain's negative thought patterns. They work by intentionally and consistently introducing positive beliefs into your mind, effectively overriding the ingrained self-doubt and limitations that erode your confidence. The power lies in their ability to shift your focus from what you lack to what you truly are, or what you are fully capable of becoming.

Your brain is a master of creating neural pathways, which are like super fast highways for your thoughts. If you've spent years repeating a negative belief—such as "I'm not good enough"— chances are you've built a strong neural pathway for that thought, this is why self-doubt can feel so automatic. Affirmations act like a construction crew, building a new, more positive highway. They might start out like a gravel road, seemingly slower and a little bumpy when growing to believe in them, but when you constantly repeat a new affirmation, you begin to create a deeper and more defined highway. The more you use this new neural pathway, the stronger it becomes, and the more likely your brain is to default to this new, confident belief instead of the old, self-limiting one. This is the neuroscientific basis of why they work: repetition creates belief, belief creates action, action creates habits and habits create a life. What kind of life have your beliefs been unconsciously creating?

Cheat Code #4: Anchored Affirmations

This can be best applied early in the morning, not long after you wake, while your brain is still in a theta brainwave state. Before you check devices, before the noise of the world creeps in, it's up to you to consciously program it first, before anyone else has the chance to sway your thoughts and frequency of the day. But first what are affirmations? They are short positive, personal "I" or "My" statements spoken in the present tense, expressed with emotion and feeling, repeated with conviction - not just empty words.

Anchored Affirmations Method:
(Minimum 5 minutes till as long as you need)
You will need a notepad/journal and pen for this one.

Step 1) Get clarity on what you want to affirm. In the evening, sit with yourself, journal your goals and intentions for the next day or week ahead, think about what would be required to achieve them.
Step 2) Formulate 3 affirmations and stick to them for the week, or till your goal is achieved. For example: You have a presentation at work this week, your affirmations could be.
"My voice and opinions are worthy of being heard"
"My presence is valuable"
"I am strong, I am brave"
Step 3) Each day, after you wake and have first practised presence, it's time to set your frequency of the day before all distractions, repeat your affirmations for a minimum of 3 times each
Step 4) Repeat in your head or out loud throughout the day anytime you start to hear the thoughts of fear or doubt trying to creep back in. You may even write them on post it notes or mirrors around your home or in your car to serve as constant reminders.

Chapter Five

Genuine Gratitude

Then comes gratitude...

We started this book from the bottom, in the pits of miracle blocking self doubt and inner critics. As we find our way into the last chapter and final cheat code I intentionally saved the best for last. Now I know you might be eye-rolling full of sass as an effect of the confidence you have gained so far by reading this, but yes Genuine Gratitude is our 5th and final cheat code to confidence. We hear the word "gratitude" often, it would be in the top 21 list of buzzwords of our time if there were one, but this is not just basic gratitude like a "something you're grateful for today" kind of gratitude. It's genuine gratitude like feel it in your ancestral bones and kissing the earth you walk apon cause you realise how amazing you and your life already are kind of gratitude.
Why gratitude and how does it equate to confidence?
Gratitude is important for confidence because it shifts your focus from what you lack to what you have, which is a fundamental requirement for a strong sense of self-worth and a magnet for miracles. When you're constantly focusing on your shortcomings, mistakes, or what others have that you don't, you create a mindset of lack that erodes your self-belief. Gratitude counters this by training your brain to see the abundance, strengths, and successes in your life, thereby building a more positive and resilient self-image, which is the true roots that form foundations for your confidence to flourish and be truly witnessed and felt by others.

Cheat Code #5: Genuine Gratitude

This code can be applied anytime anywhere, and if you practise it enough it becomes a frequency you will be rooted in that magnetises your biggest dreams before your inner critic even has the chance to

question if you're ready! Okay, but where do we start with gratitude? To make gratitude a powerful code for confidence, you need to turn it into a consistent practice that goes beyond simply saying "thank you." Instead of focusing on things outside of you, anchor your gratitude practice within yourself.

It starts with you...

Remember your skills, talents, and accomplishments, no matter how small. Think about a time you solved a problem, helped a friend, or learned a new skill. This reminds you of your inherent capabilities and reinforces a sense of competence. Find the silver linings, when you face a setback or a moment of self-doubt, use gratitude as an immediate reframing technique. Acknowledge the feeling of frustration, but then consciously pivot to gratitude. For example, if you make a mistake in a presentation, you can say to yourself, "I'm disappointed I made that mistake, but I'm grateful for the courage I had to speak up in the first place, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to learn from this." This prevents the mistake from becoming a defining moment of failure.

The Daily Gratitude Method:
(Minimum 5 minutes till as long as you need, best practised in evening for daily reflection)
Optional : notepad/journal and pen.

Step 1) Pause for a few breaths, get clarity on or write out 3 positive things or actions you're grateful for that day or in your life so far.
Step 2) Get clarity or write down 1 challenge you were grateful for that day or in your life so far, what did you learn or how can you grow from it?
Step 3) Express your gratitude, simply outloud or share with someone and ask them if they are open to answer the two previous steps back for themselves. (A great dinner table conversation starter)
Step 4) Express your genuine gratitude toward someone or something in your life out loud or via message. This act reinforces your sense of belonging and reminds you that you are supported, valued and connected.

Taking the time to thank people who have supported you, believed in you, or helped you in some way can be a powerful way to boost your own confidence as well as theirs! This can and should be expressed at anytime of the day when the situations to give thanks and show gratitude arise and the best part is, it's free!



In Conclusion

To truly claim your confidence, you must understand that it is not a destination but a continuous practice of showing up for yourself. It's not a fixed state to achieve, but like a muscle you build through consistent, intentional practise and action. The final and most important lesson is to eventually shift your focus from practicing confidence to being confident. With these 5 cheat codes to confidence, you've learned that true confidence is not about completely eliminating fear, but about acting in spite of it. It's about recognizing your inner critic's voice and choosing to empower it. It's about grounding yourself in the present moment, using your body as an anchor to alter your mind and regulate your nervous system, to reframing setbacks as opportunities for gratitude and growth. Every time you consciously choose to take a small, brave action—whether it's using an anchored affirmation before a meeting or simply making eye contact and smiling at a stranger—you are reinforcing the neural pathways of self-belief in turn fueling your confidence. These small wins accumulate over time, building a foundation of resilience that no external force can shake.

Ultimately, the journey toward confidence is about forging a more compassionate relationship with yourself...

It's about accepting your imperfections, forgiving your mistakes, and trusting your ability to handle whatever comes your way. The confidence you have been searching for isn't hidden in a distant achievement, a future state of perfection or in the validation of others. Your confidence resides within your willingness to be authentic, to be vulnerable, and to keep showing up for yourself one courageous step at a time. The work is not over, maybe it has just begun. Now you have my top 5 cheat codes to confidence in your tool box for life to send you on your way. It's time to put them into practice, a life overflowing with confidence is waiting for you to claim it.

With Love -Shardasia