

# PERCEPTION STUDIOS

*it's what you think*

## Create Confidence

### *an Explore & Play Group Coaching Call*

led by Shannon Wilkinson, life coach and more

It's common to feel controlled by your emotions, like they are happening to you. But feelings aren't actually things, they are a constellation of experiences to which we apply a meaning and label. That constellation is essentially formed by three parts:

1. Your body, including all your internal sensations, your posture, breathing, proprioception, chemistry, nervous system, etc.
2. The pictures you make in your head.
3. The stories you tell yourself.

The good news is that when you recognize the different parts that make up a *feeling*, you can change feelings dramatically. When you change your feelings, you change your whole experience. You can feel more of what you want to feel, like confidence, and less of what you've been feeling, that doesn't support you.

I'll briefly talk about your body and the stories you tell yourself. I'll mostly focus on number two, the pictures you make in your head.

Let's start with number one, the body. Notice how you're holding your body right now. What's your breathing like? What kind of internal sensations can you notice when you turn your attention in that direction?

Now, imagine a confident posture. How would you be sitting if you were feeling really confident? You might even want to start taking that posture right now. Notice how your body feels when you're feeling confident. Pay attention to the internal sensations. What do you notice in your chest? In your belly? How about your shoulders; how do they feel when you're feeling completely confident? What is your breathing like when you're feeling really confident?

Let's spend a few minutes with the stories part of the equation. When you consider a situation where you're less than confident, what are you telling yourself? What's the meaning that you're giving to the sensations in your body? What's the chatter about?

What do you imagine a really confident person might be saying instead? What's the story you tell yourself in situations where you feel confident? (If you find that the chatter and voices are a particularly troublesome issue for you, take a look at previous Explore & Play call: [Quiet the Chatter](#).)

It's time to get more in-depth with number two above, the pictures that you make. These pictures are like maps to help you understand how to respond to something. The problem with these pictures is that things get left out, distorted and generalized, and we attach meaning to them.

To get an experience of what I'm talking about, imagine a problem situation you have. Notice what happens when you think about it. You might notice bodily sensation, a story, phrase or narration, that goes along with some kind of image.

Pay attention to the image, notice the details about it. Not so much the content of the picture, but rather the qualities of it. Where in space do you see it? It may be right in front of you, off to the side, close or far. Are you seeing it through your own eyes, or are you in the picture? Is it grainy or sharp? Bright or dim? Moving or still? How big is it?

# PERCEPTION STUDIOS

*it's what you think*

Now, start to play with those qualities. If it was close, move it further away. If it was clear, sharp and bright, make it dim, grainy and dull. Make it smaller.

Think about the original problem again. How do you feel about it now? You may not feel completely confident yet, but I bet you feel different about the problem.

**Let's inject some confidence into the picture!**

When you first try this visualization technique, you'll probably find it easiest to follow along with the recording (beginning at minute 13).

**Step 1:** Identify the picture of the problem or present situation that you want to change. What is in the picture?

**Step 2:** Turn your attention to when you've felt completely confident. It doesn't have to be related to the problem situation you'd like to change. It can be confidence about anything, even something as simple as tying your shoes. Just let yourself feel what it's like when you're completely confident.

Pay attention to the picture that comes up for you, specifically the qualities of the picture, when you think about being confident. Notice what confidence looks like to you, and make notes below:

1. Location of the image: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you see yourself in the picture or are you seeing through your eyes (circle one)
3. Bright or Dim
4. Framed (with edges) or Panoramic (circle one)
5. Color or Black & White (circle one)
6. Size of the image: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Anything unique you notice about the picture: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** Go back to the problem picture. Shrink it down to the size of a dot. Send it out onto the horizon. When you're ready, let it come flying back to you, with the content of the problem picture, but the look and qualities of the confidence picture. Repeat this at least three times.

**Step 4:** After doing it several times, what do you notice? Does your ability to bring up the original picture change? How do you feel when you think about the original problem now?

**Step 5:** Use the process! Have fun with it! Try adding in other supportive feelings to that of confidence. Have fun with it!

**Bonus Step:** When you're feeling completely confident in that situation, what's the next smallest step you can take to move you forward in that situation?

*I'd love to hear how you've used this process. You can also ask questions and make suggestions for future Explore & Play topics. Simply visit the [Explore & Play page](#), and scroll down to the form, or email me directly at: [shannon@perceptionstudios.net](mailto:shannon@perceptionstudios.net)*

Thanks for exploring & playing along!