

A young tennis player walked to the parking lot after losing his match in straight sets and threw his gear in the trunk. “I think I should quit this lousy game” he muttered. Just then an old grey-haired coach walked up and asked, “How was your match?” “It was awful... I should take up basket weaving.”

The coach had a newspaper rolled up under his arm and asked the young player this question: “What if I told you I have an advanced copy of next week’s paper and it says here in the sports section that you won next weekend’s tournament... how would you feel right now?” “I’d be excited said the boy!” “Exactly” said the coach. “What would you think about today’s loss?”

“Well, I’d just blow it off as a lesson learned.” “Exactly”, said the coach. “And how would you feel about tomorrow’s practice session?” “I’d be fired-up and ready to go, and I’d be there early!” “Exactly” said the coach. “Now, act the way you want to become until you become the way you act.” “You mean I should fake it until I make it?” said the boy. “Exactly!” said the coach.

Most people understand that our brains affect our bodies. But does it work the other way around? The answer is YES! When you are confident and assertive your testosterone level is high, and the stress hormone, called Cortisol, is low. When you are insecure or stressed they both move in the opposite direction, and that’s why your performance suffers.

Here’s the important part. When we purposefully put our body into a strong powerful posture that expands our physical size, our testosterone increases and our cortisol decreases automatically. When we display weak powerless body postures that shrink our physical size our hormones move in the opposite direction. In fact, standing in the Superman or Superwoman position for as little as two minutes can significantly increase your confidence level because of the resulting chemical shift in testosterone and cortisol. It just doesn’t pay to act small!

With a little privacy – and two minutes of time, you can use your body to act the way you want to become and increase your chances of performing confidently – in sports and school. And the really good news is that if you do that daily, the newspaper article the old coach had under his arm can become a reality for you. “Act the way you want to become until you become the way you act.”

LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Students will learn how to use their bodies to impact their mental mindsets in two minutes.

INSTRUCTIONS: Distribute the handout to students after viewing the video. Invite students to share their answers to question #1 only.

CLASS DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Can you change your mood or confidence by changing your body?
2. How does the way you “carry yourself” affect your confidence or mood?
3. Can you think of any animals that enlarge their physical size in an attempt to show power or dominance?

1

In the video it says: “It just doesn’t pay to act small.” What does that mean to you?
Give examples.

Shared answer

2

In what situations would you benefit by acting the way you want to become in order to become the way you act?

Private answer