



## How to be more confident INSTANTLY

Your boss has just dropped a stack of files on your desk. A tower of files, so tall that the pile is threatening to topple over. As you jump up to grab the teetering files, your boss says from the door, with an icy warning in his voice, «It is imperative that these files are ready before lunchtime. Bring them round to my office as soon as you are finished.

You look at your watch. It is 10H45. You will never get this done before 12h00. You know full well, that if you do not, you are going to lose your job. A job that took you 15 months to find. A job that you need desperately.

You bit off more than you could chew. The job is just too demanding for you. You are just not capable of keeping things together. You are just not good enough. Not even for a job as relatively simple as this one.

You are starting to feel less and less confident in your ability to do this job. Your heart starts beating faster, you clench your teeth, your breathing becomes irregular, your head starts spinning...

What you urgently need is a quick injection of a substantial amount of instant self-confidence.

Since you do not have time to read an endless diatribe about how to boost your self-confidence in five minutes flat, I am going to keep this short.

1. The very first thing to do is to say "STOP!" out loud if possible. The way that you are talking to yourself is getting you nowhere. Telling yourself that you are not good enough for this job is counter-productive. Stop talking to yourself in this way immediately. Imagine you are a horse and that your rider has just pointed you at an impossible 6-foot jump. Freeze in

your tracks, as any sane horse would do. Stop and listen to this two-and-a-half-minute [confidence-boosting audio recording](#).

2. Instead of putting yourself down, build yourself up. Give yourself a quick pep-talk. You got this job, despite serious competition. Your boss must be convinced that you can do this. Now is the moment to repeat an empowering affirmation to yourself. Something like: I can do this job. I have all the qualifications needed. From a field of fifty applicants, I was the one chosen for this job. I haven't got much time to do this, but I can find a way to do it. I am very good at finding ways to get things done. I am good at lateral thinking. I am going to find a solution to this problem. I am going to get this job done. Many horses have an irrational fear of plastic bags. Imagine you are a horse. Tell yourself: This is only a plastic bag. There is no fire-breathing dragon intent on devouring as many ponies as he possibly can before breakfast, hiding in this plastic bag. I have walked past hundreds of plastic bags before and survived. Nothing happened. I can handle plastic bag situations. Like a horse's fear of a plastic bag, your fear may also be unfounded, or at least exaggerated.

3. Assume a power posture. Stand up if you can. (Close the door for two seconds or go to the loo.) Imagine you are Superman or Superwoman. Stand tall. Head up. Look straight ahead. Put your hands on your hips. You have got this. You can do this. Imagine you are a mare and the most drop-dead gorgeous pitch-black Friesian stallion is being led past your paddock. Chin up, girl! Now is the moment to put your hooves down, shake out your 3-foot mane and make a stand!

4. While you are standing there, take a few deep breaths. Breathe in for 5 seconds, hold for 5 seconds, breathe out for 5 seconds. Repeat this breathing pattern – it is called 'square breathing' – at least 5 times. Horses use breathing to calm each other. Imagine you are surrounded by your herd, grazing peacefully in a lush green meadow. All of you are breathing calmly and contentedly, knowing that because you watch out for each other, you are safe from harm. If you have time, do a 10-minute [guided mindfulness breathing meditation](#).

5. Spray on a minuscule amount of your favourite scent. If you are a horsewoman, think hay-barn stocked with enough hay for winter. A horse would probably think of a sweet-smelling spring meadow. Smells bypass the conscious mind and go straight to your unconscious mind where it can trigger a confidence-building memory. It also makes you feel fresher. More prepared. My favourite confidence-boosting essential oils are bergamot, gingerCO2 and grapefruit. You can keep a small bottle in one of your desk drawers. My horses prefer vetiver and valerian.

6. Let your body relax completely. Stand up, reach as high as you possibly can while breathing in and then bend over slowly, breathe out and let yourself go. Completely. Shake the tension out of your hands and fingers. Stand up again, put your shoulders back and if you are near a tap, wash your hands and your face. Let some cold water run over your wrists for a few seconds. Imagine you are a thirsty horse standing at a watering hole. Have a good, long, refreshing drink. You are starting to feel better. Stronger. More in control.



7. Back at your desk, hum your favourite motivating music to yourself. Something like Gloria Gaynor's 'I will survive' will do. If possible, bring it up on YouTube and listen to it for a minute. It will soon start running around in your mind. That is the sort of song you need for this: the type that you cannot get out of your mind once you hear it. One of my Friesian mares has got this thing for Tina Turner's Simply the Best. I play it at full blast in the dressage arena when we are working on difficult dressage moves.

8. Now, do a quick re-frame of the problem. Take the problem out of the "I can't possibly get this done in time" frame and put it in the 'I don't find this sort of problem as challenging as I did in the past. I can sort this sort of thing out in half the time allocated now' frame. Look at it from a different viewpoint. Is there more than one way to go about this? Can you delegate some of this work? Can a friend who owes you a favour help? Horses rely on their friends for their very survival. They look out for each other and for predators. Maybe a short chat with a supportive friend is all you need?

9. To get your mind in gear, take a few seconds to mentally rehearse doing this job in the time allocated. See yourself working through it, calmly and efficiently. See yourself looking at the clock from time to time and smiling as you realise how fast you are progressing. See yourself closing the final file with 15 minutes to spare. Watch yourself walking to your boss's office and confidently lay the files on his desk. Imagine the satisfaction on his face. Hear him thank you for a job well done.

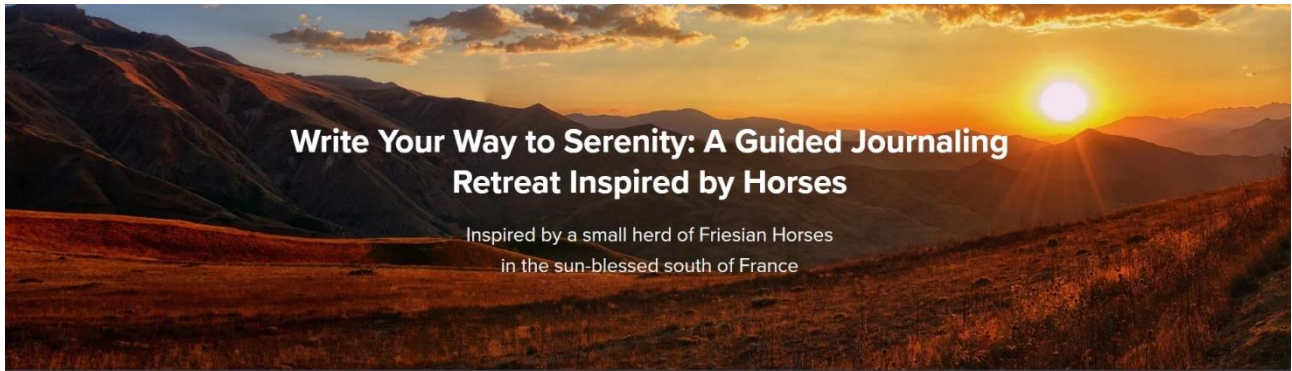
10. Smile. Think of something that makes you laugh. A joke. A funny clip you saw on YouTube: [Unpredictable Puddle](#). Your favourite funny movie. Allow yourself a quiet chuckle. Go on. Laughing releases endorphins. You will soon feel much happier.

If you are religious, say a quick prayer.

There you go. Instant self-confidence.

**I suggest you save this file somewhere on your computer where you can easily get hold of it next time you need an instant confidence boost.**

## Online Retreats



[An online retreat](#) for anyone interested in increasing their emotional, physical and social resilience by starting a journal, but does not have much time to invest and is looking for a simple, low-cost, easy-to-implement strategy that gives tangible and lasting results.



[An online retreat](#) that will introduce you to a step-by-step process that will enable you to identify your unique life purpose and give you the clarity and certainty that you need so that you can reach your full potential.

## Onsite Retreats

In an emergency, a quick confidence fix can come in very handy, but in the long run, if you lack self-confidence, you are going to need to do more in-depth work. I have worked with people with stress management and confidence issues for more than 25 years, first as a medical doctor specialising in stress-induced disease and for the last decade by hosting my [Camino de Santiago Walking Retreats](#) and [Connect with Horses Mindfulness and Meditation Retreats](#).

The problem with this approach is that I can only help a certain number of people with each clinic, so I created a [couple of online retreats](#) (see above) and wrote a [couple of books](#) (see below) to enable me to reach a larger audience.



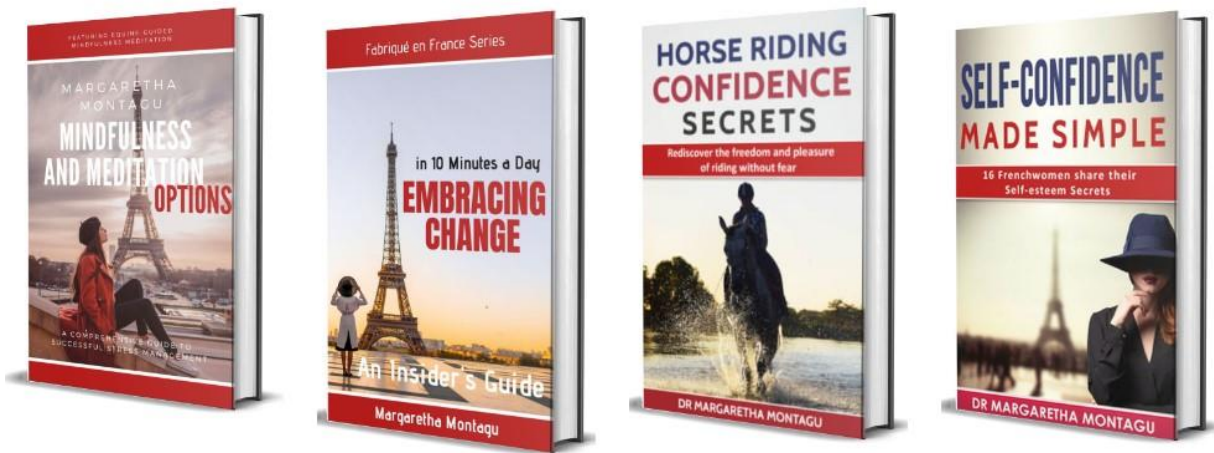
## Books

Living in France, I have often noticed that French women seem to be able to cope with stressful situations more confidently than women of other nationalities. Many of the clients who come to our farm here in the south of France to attend one of my workshops have also remarked on this. «How do they manage to stay so cool, calm and collected?» is an exasperated sigh I have heard more than once.

Admittedly, I had quite a bit of fun, interviewing my friends and harvesting their stories and explanations about why French women are (or are not) more confident than women from other nationalities. The result is my book, *Confidence made Simple – 16 French Women's Confidence Secrets*, a light-hearted look at boosting one's self-confidence the French way.

If you are into horses, don't miss my book *Mindfulness and Meditation Options – Stay Focused in a face-paced World*. It features equine-guided mindfulness meditation. Each chapter starts with a letter written to me by a potential participant in one of the personal empowerment workshops I host here in the south of France.

Each letter reveals a specific problem or set of problems that readers will be able to identify with. The letter is followed by a detailed explanation of how to solve the writer's problems using mindfulness and meditation. If you too would like to find out more about



mindfulness and meditation and how it can benefit you in a practical and sustainable way, this is the book for you.

Hope to meet you soon, either online or in France!

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