

Go Out There

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First Edition: 2026

Published by 321Lumina

321Lumina.com

ISBN (paperback): _____-_____-_____-_____

ISBN (ebook): _____-_____-_____-_____

Printed in the United States of America

Cover and interior design by 321Lumina

Go Out There

*A Story About Confidence
for Teenagers*

Blurt Snodgrass

a 321Lumina.com book

*For every kid
who's been standing outside that door
a little too long.*

*A short piece for teenagers
about what confidence actually is
and where it really comes from.*

There is a kid standing outside a door.

Maybe it's the door to a classroom. Maybe it's the door to a party. Maybe it's the door to a stage, or a gym, or a job interview, or a first date, or a moment that feels way too big for one person to walk into alone.

The kid's heart is doing that thing. You know the thing.

And the voice starts up, right on schedule.

You're not ready. You're not good enough. Fix more things first. Wait until you're sure.

Here's what nobody tells you about that voice: it was never written by you. It's like spam that got into your inbox before you knew how to set up filters. Someone else typed it. Someone else sent it. And somewhere along the way, you forgot to delete it.

The real you is still in there. Waiting. Patient. A little annoyed, honestly.



Most people think confidence means feeling amazing all the time. Like some kids were just born with it — they

walk into rooms and people turn and look and somehow everyone already wants to follow them before they've said a single word.

But that's not what confidence actually is.

Confidence is not a feeling. It is not a personality. It is not something you either have or you don't.

Confidence is a skill. It is buildable. It is learnable. It works the same way learning guitar works, or learning to swim fast and slow, or learning anything worth knowing.

And here is the actual definition — the real one, not the fake one:

Confidence is deciding you belong somewhere before you have proof that you do.

That's it. Not a guarantee. Not a promise that it will go perfectly. Just a decision — made in advance, quietly, by you — that you are allowed to be in the room.

That's the whole thing. Keep that one. It's yours now.



Here's the trap most teenagers fall into.

They wait.

They wait to feel ready. They wait for someone to tell them they're good enough. They wait for enough likes, enough compliments, enough evidence that the world has voted them in.

That's called outsourcing. You are handing your self-belief to other people and hoping they give it back in good condition.

Picture a kid who posts a photo. A good one. She felt good when she took it. But then she puts the phone down and picks it up again thirty seconds later. Then again. Then again. Counting. Calculating. Letting a number decide how she feels about herself that afternoon.

That's the mirror in someone else's hands.

Here's the problem with that: if you let other people hold your mirror, they get to decide what you see in it. And they won't always be careful. Some of them will smudge it on purpose. Some of them will drop it without noticing.

You cannot build your confidence on someone else's reaction. It will never be stable enough to stand on.

No one is coming to officially declare you ready. There is no ceremony. There is no certificate. There is no moment where the world finally says *okay, now you have permission*.

The only permission that has ever mattered is the one you give yourself.



So what do you actually do?

First: forgive yourself. Fast and completely, with no exceptions.

This sounds soft. It is not soft. It is the hardest thing on this list and also the most important.

Think about a kid who bombed a presentation in front of the whole class. Wrong slide. Wrong words. Face went red. Someone laughed. She walked back to her seat wanting to disappear through the floor.

Now imagine she carries that moment around for the next six months. Every time she has to speak, that memory

shows up first. It gets louder than her actual voice.

That's what unforgiven mistakes do. They take up space that belongs to you.

You cannot build something solid on a foundation of shame. You cannot perform while secretly punishing yourself for every embarrassing moment, every time you froze or failed or wished you could disappear.

Self-forgiveness is not making excuses. It is not pretending things didn't happen. It is saying: *that was then, and I am still here, and I am still worth betting on.*

Real confidence only lives in a body that feels safe with itself.



Second: pick how you'll show up.

There's a kid who's terrified of his first day at a new school. New town. Knows nobody. Walks in feeling like he's invisible and enormous at the same time.

But here's what he does. Before he opens the door he makes a quiet decision. Not a performance. Not a fake

smile. Just a choice: *I'm going to be the guy who's easy to talk to today.*

That's it. That's the move.

He doesn't feel confident. But he picked a role. And the role gave him somewhere to put his hands.

You do this already, every day, without realizing it. You act differently with your best friend than with a teacher. You show up differently on the field than at the dinner table. You already know how to step into roles.

So choose them on purpose. Before you walk through a door, decide who is walking through it. Not a performance. Not a mask. Just the version of you that belongs in that room — because every version of you belongs somewhere, and you get to pick which one shows up.



Third: move before you feel ready.

This is the one nobody wants to hear.

There's a kid who wanted to try out for the school play for three years. Three years of watching other people do

the thing she wanted to do. Three years of telling herself *next year, when I'm more ready, when I'm better, when I'm sure.*

Year four she tried out. She forgot two lines. Her voice shook on the third.

She got a part.

Confidence did not come before she walked into that audition. It came because she did. The feeling caught up later — on opening night, when the lights went up and she finally felt like herself.

Maybe the first time you raise your hand you give the wrong answer. Maybe the first time you try out you don't make the team. Maybe you walk through the door and it's awkward and strange and nothing like you imagined.

That's not evidence that you weren't ready. That's just what going first feels like.

You do not need to feel confident. You need to move like you already are.



Here is the thing about walking into a room with nothing to prove.

It changes everything.

Not because you are pretending. Not because you have mastered some trick of posture or eye contact or the right thing to say. But because when you genuinely have nothing to prove, you stop performing for the room and start actually being in it. You act like you belong before you have proof, and your body eventually catches up.

People feel that. They lean toward it without knowing why. It is not dominance. It is not volume. It is safety and composure — and from composure grows something even deeper, which is a quiet kind of authority that no one can take from you because no one gave it to you in the first place.

You built it. Yourself. From the inside.



So here you are. Still standing outside that door.

Heart still doing the thing.

The voice starts up again — *you're not ready, you're not enough, wait, fix, earn it first* —

And this time you recognize it. It was never yours. It was spam. And you know how to delete spam.

Yours is the other voice. The quieter one underneath. The one that has been waiting this whole time.

The one that says:

I'm allowed to be here.

I have nothing to prove.

I am built for this.

Let's go.

You reach for the door.



The End

Now go.

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