

The logo for Forbes Finance Council, featuring the word "Forbes" in a large, white, serif font, with "Finance Council" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it, separated by a vertical line.

Three Reasons To Strengthen Your Mind With Positive Intelligence

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Physical exercise is necessary for your health to improve your immune system, your circulatory system, your mental health, among other physical benefits. How about training your mind for mental strength as you would your muscles? Everyone deals with stress. Leaders in finance have due dates, actions items and auditors to review what they have done. Presenting a poor forecast to your management team or board of directors, laying off employees or other bad news can also trigger stress. Constantly thinking about past negative events and worrying about something negative that might happen is a problem.

I have been a life-long student of self-help to aid in becoming the person I want to be. I have read Dale Carnegie's *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* many times and have put the suggested techniques into practice to improve my life. It was a good prerequisite to the course I am now taking by Shirzad Chamine called *Positive Intelligence*. My course is led by executive coach Phil Holberton and has opened my eyes to a self-critical judge and mental saboteurs that reside in everyone. They are created and shaped by individuals through their life experiences beginning at a young age.

Learn To Recognize Stress Factors

I discovered that today's judges and saboteurs could have been created to help you avoid trauma and danger, but now they could be problematic in your adult life. They can control you with fear if you let them, and many people are unaware of the influences they have over how you deal with stress and other negative feelings. The course provides guidance and a strategy to recognize factors that you interpret as stress and reset yourself back to a calm and

rational mind when an emotional response is automatically triggered by your mind ([amygdala](#) to be specific) that sends out the signal for “fight or flight.”

It takes a good amount of self-reflection and individual decoding to discover how your past may be influencing your life today. Cognitive-behavioral psychology techniques are taught to help you avoid negative mind patterns and replace them with more mentally positive choices.

Learn From Failures

One helpful exercise that really stood out to me was to find a childhood picture of yourself at a young age. That picture was the pure, original you before the other events in your life brought you to where you are today. That person is still you. When you beat yourself up over a failure or mistake, you are punishing the innocent child that is still you. There are better ways to treat yourself and learn from failures or errors in judgment. You may be able to turn negative experiences into a gift. Your goal is to approach life more as a sage and to be mentally stronger.

Build Emotional Intelligence

Gaining strength in positive intelligence can lead to improvement in the more widely known [emotional quotient](#) (EQ), or sometimes emotional intelligence. My own growth in this area has led to a greater feeling of well-being. I would have feelings of “road rage” on any given day in my commute. I can feel the stress in my start to build, but I can now quickly shut it down and have empathy for the other driver. Perhaps the other driver experienced a recent trauma that left them distracted or was being yelled at by their boss during a “hands-free” drive. You do not know what other drivers are going through.

The finance world is at a time of high stress, and improving one’s mental health does not have the stigma as it did in the past. Taking time to invest in yourself can make you more productive, more focused on tasks and give you a greater awareness and empathy for the people around you. As a manager of people, this is a skill you should have. It can help you and your team build trust and be on the path to an [infinite mindset](#), one where thinking goes beyond simply the first-order effects of decisions to second- and third-order effects.

If you would like more information or would like to join a Positive Intelligence Pod, please contact Nancy Gunter at nancy@guntertraining.com