

Our Cover

COLIN CLOUD

The Mastermind Mentalist

By Simone Marron

If you haven't heard of Colin Cloud – you should have! Next to Derren Brown, in this author's opinion, and believed by most who see him, Colin is *the* best, and most entertaining mentalist in the business.

Colin was born at 6:31 a.m. on January 9, 1987, in St. John's Hospital in Livingston, Scotland, between Glasgow and Edinburgh. This type of precise answer is indicative of the attention to detail that Colin gives to everything in his life.

On leaving school, Colin's parents both served apprenticeships – his mother in childcare, and his father in plumbing. He tells us, "Growing up, I watched how hard my parents worked to become successful, building their own businesses, and creating and selling companies with passion, effort, hard work, and determination. Although they were not performers, that mindset of being able to do anything you put your mind to was instilled in me very early on."

Colin loved school and learning, but tells us, "Even though I attended college really young, the reality is that I have led a passion-driven life, much more than an education-driven one, and I think that really comes from them." Colin has one sister, Kirsty, who is two years younger

than him, and she works in one of the family businesses.

Colin attended Whitburn Academy – a middle/high school in West Lothian. Colin reflects, "It wasn't seen as being cool to be into learning, and a lot of students were disengaged from education. But I really loved it. As a kid, I especially loved chemistry and physics and understanding how the world worked."

Some years later, after university, Colin went to work at a company called



TITOU PHOTOGRAPHY



Colin blindfolded on stage before Mastermind begins.

Tree of Knowledge which was a motivational and training organization. He eventually became a part owner of the company. Colin explains, "Within Tree of Knowledge, I worked in about half of the high schools in Scotland and found out how challenging some high schools were compared to others. I discovered that Whitburn Academy was one of the more challenging schools."

As a kid, Colin received a Paul Daniels magic kit for Christmas. He reminisces, "My cousin Karen learned all the tricks, and performed them for the family before I could, so I then hated magic, and hated Karen more. Classic Karen move!"

Colin's perpetual fascination and number one inspiration has always been with Sherlock Holmes. He tells us, "I would flick through the book studying what I classed as the 'cool' stuff, where he would look a person up and down, and tell you what he knew. I would take notes and find ways to implement this in the real world. Sherlock really paved the way for my life of loving science and studying forensic investigation."

At the age of fifteen, Colin was accepted into Glasgow Caledonian University, where he studied forensic investigation.

Colin was shy as a kid but realized that in college, nobody knew him, so he was able to reinvent himself a little. He explains, "I decided I was going to be a little more outgoing, and thankfully got in with a good group of people who were into the comedy scene." He continues, "I became fascinated with comedy. I loved watching it live and on television. I loved the feeling of stuff making you laugh. As someone who loves understanding how things work, I wanted to know why things were funny, and learn how I could accomplish that skill."

After college, in 2007, because of his performing, Colin was head-hunted by the science and psychology-based Tree of Knowledge, and he tells us, "They knew and liked what I was doing and asked me to come in and perform in high schools with teenagers that were about to sit exams and had become disengaged. This involved chatting with audiences of one hundred teenagers for four to six hours at a time and getting them to pay attention. By getting them to laugh, it made them focus, and you could slip the messages in between the laughs. I really learned a lot about how to engage an audience with nothing other than words."



Above: Colin is awarded the *Broadway Baby Critic's Choice 'Bobby' Award*, August 2024. Ryan, Dad, Mom, Jenna, Colin, Ollie Downton (tech), and Lee Martin (UK promoter and owner of Gag Reflex). Right: A young Colin with his father.



After an appearance on *Dragon's Den*, the United Kingdom's equivalent of *Shark Tank*, the Tree of Knowledge concept blew up, and Colin was engaged to travel around the UK and Europe speaking to large companies. Colin tells us, "One of the messages to surface at the end of that time was 'If you are the sort of person that dreads waking up in the morning, you don't like going to work, the people you work with, or the job that you're doing, I've got a piece of groundbreaking advice for you – leave! Leave everybody else alone and go find the thing that does make you happy.'"

One of Colin's inspirations and mentors was Drew McAdam, one of the most successful Scottish mentalists. McAdam took Colin under his wing while Colin was still at university and taught him so much. Most of all, he helped Colin realize that this could be his working profession, and that he could make a living doing what he really loved. McAdam's phone was constantly ringing with potential bookings, and Colin strived to emulate that.

Gavin Oattes was the head motivational speaker of Tree of Knowledge, and he and Colin ended up buying the company. Colin tells us, "He is hands down the most naturally funny person you will ever meet in your life. What I learned from him and Drew about comedy and connecting with

people was pivotal in me becoming the person that I am right now."

Other inspirational performers in Colin's early career were mentalists from the UK. He elaborates, "What Derren Brown, Andy Nyman, Andrew O'Connor, and Anthony Owen were creating in the early 2000s was groundbreaking. On one hand I'm holding *13 Steps to Mentalism* by Corinda, and on the other I'm watching a video of what they were creating, and I'm thinking 'This does not compute.' How have you taken this and turned it into that?"

In 2008 one of the original owners of Tree of Knowledge left to open a tea company franchise. One of their tearooms in the center of Edinburgh would close at 7 p.m., and Colin took on the room for a 7:30 p.m. show, giving them thirty minutes to set up for a Fringe Festival offering. Forty people a night would come and watch him performing mentalism. That was a far cry from the fifteen-hundred-seat room that Colin plays at the Festival nowadays.

Colin had been with Tree of Knowledge for four or five years. He was now twenty-five, and on one occasion when Colin delivered his "Leave and go find that thing that makes you happy" sentence, the hairs stood up on the back of his neck as he experienced a moment of realization. He explains, "I realized that I was not doing



Shin Lim, Dynamo, and Colin at the Mirage, April 2023.

what I wanted to do, and I basically had to have a real conversation with myself and make some changes.”

Colin had been doing four nights of performing every year at the Edinburgh Festival, and doing open-mic spots when he could. He tells us, “I had started getting better at performing, and thought if I don’t

go and do this now, then I am a hypocrite, and I’ll regret it for the rest of my life.”

Colin reminisces, “In 2001 I went to see Derren Brown perform the show *Derren Brown Live* (which eventually morphed into the one-off special called *The Gathering*), in a two-hundred seat theater in Scotland, and it was him working before he had his big team. I still think that show is my favorite that I ever saw. Most of the methods he used were just his, and it was amazing to just see Derren Brown live.” Later on, Colin discovered Maurice Fogel, Chan Canasta, and David Berglas, and deep dives into their material inspired him also.

The time had come for Colin to move on and follow his dream. He started performing twenty minutes on weekend nights at Wild Cabaret in Glasgow, but knew he had to try something more ambitious. Hearing that the touring show *The Illusionists* might be looking for a faster-paced mentalism act, Colin sent video of his twenty-minute act to Simon Painter, and tells us, “I think he thought that maybe I got lucky with that particular audience, and he asked me if I had any more footage that I could send him. I sent him ten links of the same act with different audiences, and he saw the same reactions in each one.”

Colin met with *The Illusionists*’ producers, and they asked him to host one of their West End London shows. Never having hosted before, Colin jumped at the opportunity. He told them, “Yes, easy, who else is in the show? They said Andrew Basso, Kevin James, and David Williamson. I was telling myself, ‘Just stay calm, and we’ll work it out.’” He more than worked it out, and soon he was traveling to North America to tour with *The Illusionists*.

While touring in 2017, producers from *America’s Got Talent* came to see one of the acts that was performing, and spotted Colin and asked him to compete. Colin relates, “I told them no thank you, as in my mind, the best that could happen from AGT would be that you might get a tour with *The Illusionists*, and I was already



Colin’s Edinburgh venue, McEwan Hall, where Sir Arthur Conan Doyle studied.



Ryan Davidson, Derren Brown, Jenna Jones, Colin, and Colin's dad at the Voodoo Rooms in Edinburgh, May 2022.

doing that. But then Simon Painter called and told me that I was going to work AGT. I didn't want to, but when your boss tells you that you have to, you just do it."

It was a great experience for Colin, and he made quite an impact. He didn't make it to the finals, but he and the violinist Lindsey Stirling are the only two non-finalist competitors that have been invited back numerous times as guests on the show. Although not a huge fan of the show, Colin realizes the value it gives to performers, and he has now made about ten AGT appearances. He tells us, "It's like the modern-day Johnny Carson show. It's the most viewed show in the world."

Colin has made countless television appearances over the years, but his favorite was a royal variety performance at the London Palladium. He describes it, "Prince William and Kate Middleton were in attendance, and so were my parents. It was the perfect moment in time. Back then my goals were to tour with *The Illusionists* and do the royal variety performance, and I had done both. What would I do next? I didn't realize it at the time, but a Vegas show was also on my bucket list."

Colin toured with Shin Lim both in *The Illusionist* show, and in a more indie version of the show called *The Magicians*, which was in New Zealand. The rest of the stellar cast were Hector Mancha, Charlie Frye & Company, and Rob Zabrecky. During this time, Lim and Colin became

fast friends, and when Shin opened his show at The Mirage on the Las Vegas Strip, he asked Colin to be part of it.

Colin is thankful for the five years that he worked with Shin Lim at the Mirage. He tells us, "Being at the Mirage helped me get noticed by so many people that are high up in the entertainment world in Vegas. Many approached me asking if I would be interested in my own show, and in 2024, the time was just right to do it." He is excited that he now has the freedom to put on his own eighty-minute show that is just him, but recognizes that working with Shin was his second-favorite thing he has ever done.

Shin Lim says of Colin, "Colin is a great mentalist, putting his charismatic and entertaining style into classic methods, making his overall act appear fresh and new to the general public."

During his career, Colin's performing travels have taken him from London's West End to New York's Broadway, to Australia and New Zealand, all across North America (including Hollywood's Magic Castle), and to almost every English-speaking country in the world. He had the opportunity to tour in Europe, but was concerned that his timing and personality would not translate well with a translator.

After moving to Vegas, Colin worked for a few months with Theory 11 as their mentalist consultant. He tells us, "When you've just moved to Vegas and you're not making a living anymore, you panic and take all the magic-related work you can get. But it was really good fun working with JB and Ran Pink. That led to us writing the plot and the method for the *Now You See Me 3* movie together."

Early in his career, Colin published several books. He exclaims, "On reflection, I was probably too young to have done that. However, thanks to those books and Andrew Basso and Jeff Hobson reading them at the same time, when I sent my promo to Simon Painter, and Simon asked these two if they had heard of me, they both held up my book at the same time,



Colin with his dad, mom, and sister (and cats Hector and Ava) in Harthill, December 2018, right before *Cloud* left for Broadway.

and that was probably why I got booked on *The Illusionist* tour.”

Colin’s first book release in 2006 was *Force Be With You*, which covered his take on PK Touches. Many mentalists read and praised this work, and Colin was surprised to find that he started to become known by other respected performers. Next he released *Gregorian Minds*, a collaboration with the UK mentalist Kennedy, and a book with Paul Brooks titled *This Way Up*, about Svengali Pads. His next release was *Divine*, and Colin still uses slightly altered thinking from this publication to this day. Unfortunately, all of these writings are now out of print.

Colin also put out the *Opening Minds* DVD set with Alakazam Magic, and he shares a little secret about the birth of this project. “In February of 2010, I emailed Alakazam and told them I was lecturing at Mindvention later in the year. I asked them if they would be interested in filming a set of DVDs for release there. They loved the idea. Then I emailed Danny Archer at Mindvention and told him that I was taping a DVD set with Alakazam and asked them if they would like me to lecture at Mindvention, and release them there, and Danny thought that was a great idea.” He laughed and said, “That was genuinely a Drew McAdam way of thinking.”

Although Colin has not competed with his act other than in AGT, in 2014 he won the Dave Lederman Award for Creativity in Mentalism, and in 2017 he received the Dunninger Award, both from the Psychic

Entertainers Association. He explains, “Winning the Dunninger Award was the other thing on my bucket list that I wanted to achieve. I consider it the highest honor in mentalism.” He also won the Scottish Comedy Award for Variety Performers, and the Broadway Baby Critics Choice Award for his compelling *After Dark* show. He continues, “I haven’t won an insane number of awards, but the ones I have are really important to me, and I’m very honored to even have been considered for them.”

Colin’s fast-paced unique mentalism, along with his comedic talent, was the perfect yin to Shin’s yang. For five years, their acts complimented each other, and the duo dazzled audiences from all over the world. However, Colin was always cognizant of the fact that this was Shin’s show, and when the Mirage announced the closure of their property, it was the perfect time for him to look to the future and his own Vegas show.

In June of 2024, Colin entered into a three-year contract with the possibility of extending at Harrah’s Las Vegas Hotel and Casino, owned by Caesar’s, in the three-hundred-and-sixty-seat-capacity Cabaret room. The soft opening of the show lasted four weeks before Colin had to close for a month due to his Edinburgh Festival appearances, which he had already contracted for the previous year, but his Vegas show *Mastermind* was at capacity on opening night, and consistently filled two hundred seats daily during that month. He looks back on that first month as being previews, and an opportunity for him to *sharpen the blade* that is the show.

Colin tells us, “It’s been great learning what works for me in that room and working out how I want to build on that moving forward.” Colin has always felt that it is important to start a show from the moment people walk into a room. His solution for that is to sit on a chair blindfolded, with his hands on his knees for thirty to forty minutes, from before the doors open until the show begins.



Colin performs with The Illusionists in December 2015.

It's a very impactful beginning to the *Mastermind* experience to see Colin spotlighted on center stage, where the only movement is the slow rhythmic expansion of his chest during the inhalation and exhalation of breaths. Screens on the stage invite audience members to take selfies with Colin from the floor, and to post these on their social media pages, asking people to comment with a random number that

may be used in the show, and of course tagging Colin.

Colin explains, "I'm just sitting on a stool not moving when the audience comes in, and it's meant to feel weird and different. I want my show to be very different from any other show. That was an opening that I used in my 2013 show called *Colin Cloud Kills*. I've always loved that moment, and knew it was what I wanted for my Vegas show."

Colin's show changes daily, as the nightly notes he makes are often implemented in the show the next day. While sitting blindfolded on his stool as the audience enters, in his mind he is often visually going through the notes from the previous day, getting ready to include them in his next performance.

All the music tracks that play while Colin is seated on the stool are from different moments in his life, and each holds a different memory. He relates, "I really get to pause, reflect and be internally grateful for all the people that helped me get to this moment."

Colin explains the concept of the show. "I try to take the audience on a journey. It starts with high energy, that gets more intense, and then gets meaningful, and then we focus, and ramp the energy back up. It's meant to be a journey of content, material, and the energy levels of the show."



DRAGON DREAMS PHOTOGRAPHY.



DRAGON DREAMS PHOTOGRAPHY.

I want the audience to leave feeling that it wasn't monotone, but not too much energy that would burn them out. I want them leaving feeling uplifted, and like they were the stars of the show."

Colin's work ethic is rigid. "My number-one priority is if you buy a ticket to spend your time in a room with me," he says, "I have a responsibility to deliver the best show I possibly can. I never want to make anyone think on any level that I don't want to be there, or that it might only be the second-best thing I have done today, or that I am just pressing 'play.' I want people to know that when I step off that stool and rip off my blindfold, that I'm as happy to be there as they are. That always needs to be my priority regarding work, outside of friends, relationships, and cats." His routine after every show is to stay up late re-writing notes and jokes so that he can always be the best he can be.

Explaining further how *Mastermind* was conceived, Colin tells us, "Going through the backbone of all my material, I was able to pick my favorite moments that didn't step on the toes of other routines, to find

the best structure for that venue. It was also important to make my show different from any other magic or mentalism show already playing in Vegas."

In each show, after Colin has proven his skills, he likes to turn the focus of the magic being about some of the audience members. He has no ego when on stage, and clearly cares about his fans. He tells us, "I like to step back and make the audience into the characters of the show. I am working on adding a recap at the end of the show, where all my helpers are thanked and mentioned by name."

Colin is really grateful to the entire *Mastermind* team and feels that he owes so much of the success of the show to them. He tells us, "Hollie England was so helpful during the first few weeks with the lighting and getting the blocking right. Carl Koterwski is the A/V expert for this room, and just understands everything. My manager Bill Herz is the man. He put me in touch with Bill Voelkner, who is my producer that helped me get into this room that I love so much."



Colin meets Kreskin in New York in April 2014. David Gerard, Kreskin, Colin, Eric Dittelman.



Final Limitless performance at the Mirage on July 1, 2024.

Colin flew the rest of his team in for the debut of *Mastermind*, which consisted of co-directors David Gerard and Ryan Davidson, who have been on his core team for years. Eric Dittelman and Brandon Queen also came in to watch and give notes. Colin adds, “Jenna and my dad were at every show for the first week giving notes too. I’m very grateful for all these people. Without them none of this would be happening right now.”

Colin continues, “On a funny note, my dad John was having a problem with the severe heat and wanted a slushy drink to cool himself down. He went to Fat Tuesdays, not realizing that their drinks contained alcohol, and arrived drunk out of his mind at one of our morning notes sessions.”

In the first month of the show, *Mastermind* improved in leaps and bounds with the help of his team. Colin jokes, “Let’s talk about the car crash of the dress run the day before opening night. Monday, July 1, 2024, will go down in history as being the hardest-working day of my career. At 11 a.m. we did a quick run-through of the show. At 1:30 p.m. I sat on a stool, and at 2 p.m. the room filled with people like Armando Lucero, Kevin James, Mat Franco, Mac King, and Bill Herz. I had also brought twenty people

to watch the show. The order and energy levels were not like they are now, material was misjudged, and there was one routine that should not have been in there.”

After the show, Colin sat with people taking notes and then ran over to The Mirage for a 4 p.m. *Limitless* show with Shin Lim. In between his spots, he ran to his dressing room where his team was consolidating notes from the earlier *Mastermind* show and discussing necessary changes. This continued through the 7:00 p.m. *Limitless* show, and Colin and his team remained in his dressing room brainstorming until 1:00 a.m.

Colin continues, “David Gerard told me that even if I made two changes to the show by tomorrow, it would be better. I shook my head, and said, ‘No, I’m making all of these changes tomorrow!’” Colin stayed up all night remaking and tweaking his show props. After two hours of sleep, he started memorizing the new version of the script, then returned to the theater to relight the show.

While rehearsing that afternoon, Colin learned that both the Caesar’s Presidents from the North and South of the Strip would be attending his show, along with John Katsilometes, the entertainment critic for the *Las Vegas Review Journal*. Colin shares, “I am used to improving my shows over time, but I have never turned around a show overnight as quickly as I did that day. Without the dress run we would have missed so many major things. I am so grateful to my entire team and those that gave me notes.”

After the show, the team spent an additional four hours going over notes and improvements. Colin tells us, “I’ll constantly be making notes on the show until the day I am done performing it.”

John Katsilometes’s review of the show appeared the next day in the *Review Journal*, saying, “I have finally seen why Colin Cloud had success in his one-man-shows. This guy is an expert showman, a spot-on delivery, great interaction with the crowd, and also, hair.”



Colin and Jenna, May 2024.

Colin went into that show mentally exhausted but pumped with adrenaline, and the improvement to the show was miraculous. Colin shares, “I felt as if the show went from a four out of ten the day before, to an eleven out of ten on opening night. I literally felt like the Jack Bauer of magic. The pressure of that twenty-four-hour period was insanity. We are still making minor tweaks, and I feel like the show is 85 percent there. However, I would recommend to anyone opening a new show to take off at least a week between closing one show and opening the next. Also, I can’t stress enough how important it is to have a team around you for guidance to see the things that you can’t see on your own.”

Every night after his show at Harrah’s, Colin and his girlfriend Jenna Jones dissect the show, and discuss potential improvements to implement. Jenna watches the show every night, watching from different angles, and together they come up with new ideas and lines for future shows. Colin elaborates, “Sometimes it takes a month of trying out a new joke in the mirror watching facial expressions and timing to get it

right. Magic is hard. You’re not only learning the methods, but you also need to learn to connect with people, and if you’re doing comedy – how to be funny.”

Colin and Jenna have been together for about two years. She is a psychologist and TMS therapist, and Colin tells us, “It’s great having someone who is not a performer who can watch stuff like a real person and give their honest input to help find improvements.”

Colin is not a party animal, and when not working on his show, he loves being at home with his cats. Colin talks lovingly about his cats, “I have three. Ava is the oldest, Milo is a rescue from during lockdown, and Henry is my youngest, and I just love them. When people ask what my hobbies are, I tell them I love my daily workouts and hanging with my cats.”

There are three routines that Colin has always wanted to put into his show, but his life has been so hectic, that he has not had the opportunity to work on these as he would like. Now he has the time to work on these and looks forward to being able to include them in future *Mastermind* shows. He explains, “These are routines that have always excited me, and I think they will be ideal for this audience.”

Last year Colin performed a very different show at the Edinburgh Festival. It was called *After Dark*. He explains, “People thought it was called *After Dark* because it was late at night, but it was because it referenced a dark period in my life. It was a mental health related show and led up to me talking about the night that I tried to commit suicide. As I performed the razor blade swallowing, the audio of a therapy session between me and my therapist played in the background. This reframed the show and really made people understand the message. When they played it back in their mind, they had a different comprehension of the opening line which was ‘It’s really great to still be here.’”

The performance was only for five nights and was emotionally draining. Colin elaborates, “Usually after a show people tell me it was hilarious and amazing. With



Opening night with Shin Lim at the Mirage, June 2019.

this show, I still got that, but people would go on to share their stories and thank me. Mental health is dealt with better in the United States than it is in the UK. People in the UK still struggle to talk about mental health, and I had many message me to tell me that they didn't realize you could talk about mental health in this way."

One night, late after his third show, a couple contacted Colin to share with him that on their way home, while crossing the Forth Road Bridge, they had spotted someone standing on the bridge. Normally they would have just ignored it and driven home, but because of how his show's message had impacted them, they pulled over and approached the man who was contemplating jumping and talked him down.

Usually, to win an award at the Fringe Festival, you have to perform the entire month, but after only five nights, Broadway Baby awarded Colin with the Critics Choice Award. Colin elaborates, "To have had that kind of effect in just five days was mind-blowing." The director of the venue immediately invited Colin back for a month in 2024. Colin accepted enthusiastically, not realizing that a year

later he would be headlining in his own Vegas show with Caesars Entertainment. He tells us, "I'm glad I'm doing it, but part of me was feeling that I would rather be in Vegas building on my new show. The other part of me realized that Edinburgh is the reason I am here, and it is nice to go back and pay homage to the Fringe Festival." Colin's 2024 Fringe show was titled *Consequences*. Colin did twenty-six shows there plus about twenty to thirty additional ten-minute spots around smaller venues to try out additional material for his Vegas show *Mastermind*.

After Dark is not a show that Colin plans on ever performing again, but he did film his performances, and is trying to work out some of the details to eventually be able to release it on some kind of Pay Per View platform, with the proceeds going to a mental health charity.

One highlight of returning to Edinburgh in 2024 where Colin performed sold-out shows for the entire fringe, was that he got to propose to his girlfriend Jenna on stage during one of his shows. She flew out to spend time with him, and Colin secretly flew her mother in so she could witness the



Colin with Prince William in November 2017 after the Royal Variety Performance at the London Palladium.

event. Dealing with flight cancelations and barely managing to pull it all together, it went off successfully. He tells us, “It was easily one of the most nerve-wracking shows that I’ve ever done. I saw them enter the theater during my show, and realized that this was real and actually happening.”

It was the perfect time. Both of their families were there. They both love Edinburgh and the Fringe, and it was the ideal place and time for both of them. The

nerves turned into excitement, and Colin recognizes that this may have been the best show that he did at the Fringe. The audience were definitely on their side.

Advice that Colin has for magicians is to learn to always be able to dig yourself out of a hole when performing. He explains, “Magicians need to be able to remedy anything on stage that could be a potential failure. For me, comedy has always helped. Whenever anything would go dreadfully wrong, I realized early on that if I couldn’t save it, I needed to make it as funny as possible, by using my personality and humor to rescue the situation. I know that’s never the goal. As a magician, you’re meant to make it amazing, but making it hilarious is a great backup.”

Recognizing that in the beginning performers often dare to be bad, Colin reminisces on a memory from early in his career. He was about eighteen at the time and was performing Richard Osterlind’s Q&A *The Final Question*. He laughs as he tells us, “I was performing at an event and reaching in for questions. At the end of the show, there were two slips of paper that I hadn’t used. I opened them to see



Colin, Kodi Lee, and Shin Lim.



Colin as he prepares to go live on The Today Show in New York, December 2018

what they wrote, and both people had written, ‘How much longer do we need to watch this?’” He continues, “In retrospect, I realized that it was a bit monotonous. It’s okay to make mistakes, but you must go and think about how that could have been avoided, and how to make sure you don’t repeat it.”

Colin also shares that you should picture magic like it was a line of ladders that you need to climb. One ladder represents skill, one is connection, another is storytelling, and then there is humor. He explains, “What tends to happen is that people try to climb all the ladders at the same time. They need to climb the ladder of skill and master that first, so that they can then turn their focus to climbing the ladder of connection, and then comedy. When that is mastered, then they can try the harder methods. Trying to master everything too quickly can give us mediocre performances. Do something easier and get used to practicing a different script that is you. If you want to be a serious performer, break it down into these quadrants and tackle them step by step. If you want to stand out as a performer, doing what has already been done will not get you there.”

Colin can’t stress strongly enough the importance of surrounding yourself with “no” people. He explains, “I surround myself with people who will be brutally

honest with me, but I know it comes from a place of love. Early on I saw performers surrounding themselves with ‘yes’ people – who would tell them everything they did was good, and I think they sometimes got a bit delusional about what was working for their audiences. I would often watch the audiences, and notice that the audience disagreed. As I get older, I realize the importance of ridding myself of ego and surrounding myself with people I trust and can take advice from.”

David and Ryan are Colin’s “no” people. They will tell him when something is good, but more importantly, they will tell him when they see something that doesn’t work or can be improved – offering solutions that will remedy it quickly. Colin emphasizes, “If people think I am good and like what I do, it is only because I surround myself with people like David and Ryan. Find your core team and really push what you are doing as far as you can. That is the *unlock* to improve very quickly.”

Colin is in such a great place right now that he says his current bucket list is learning to be more present and grateful for what he has rather than thinking about what would be next. He explains, “The next thing might just be to someday vanish and take time away from all of this. It’s still surreal to me to say I’m a headliner on the Las Vegas Strip. It’s mad! I really want to be good at minimizing my ego because I always want to treat everyone the same way. I’m so thankful.”

Next time you are in Vegas, be sure to go and see this charismatic, entertaining, loveable performer. He is unique with his approach to mentalism in a powerful way. Colin is the most entertaining mentalist in the United States today, and you will be doing yourself a favor seeing this “Mastermind” at work.

Simone Marron serves as International Secretary for the I.B.M., as well as webmaster at www.magician.org. You may reach her by email at internationalsecretary@magician.org.