



# 8 Tips for Becoming a More Effective Public Speaker

- **Know that everyone has nerves when public speaking** (in-person or on live video)--even extroverts! Nervousness is a normal response, and managing it is a **skill you can learn**.
- **Recognize nervousness as a fight/flight/freeze response.**  
In fight/flight/freeze, we hold our breath. Recognize that this is what's happening, and focus on your breath--in particular, on breathing OUT. Reconnect to your body through your breath. Breathe from your abdomen, use your diaphragm. Next, connect to another body part, through wiggling your toes or your fingers.
- **Don't "Just imagine your audience" in a silly way to reduce nerves.**  
Ideas such as imagining your audience naked or wearing silly hats just don't work. When you're playing mental games with your audience. When you do that, you lose sight of the reason you're there and you end up accidentally *increasing* your nervousness.
- **Instead of imagining your audience, imagine your GIFT.**  
What are you giving your audience? It generates pleasant excitement (not nervousness) when we give a gift. Think about "If one person sees this and can take away one thing, what would that be?"
- **Don't practice in a mirror.**  
This makes you focus on yourself and makes you want to control your movements and expressions. Practice in a mirror will end up making you look stilted, stiff and less relatable. Instead, you want to focus on your GIFT and connecting with your audience.
- **Use rehearsal to practice *specific portions* of your speech and *specific techniques*.**  
For example; rehearse looking into the camera until it feels comfortable, or walking on to the stage and saying your first line or handling questions and transitions. Don't practice just go through your speech over and over. You won't be able to work thoroughly enough to make a real change and turn it into an effortless habit if you just keep repeating the whole speech. Instead, perfect small moments and build your overall skills gradually.
- **Remember: there is no "Right" way to speak, beyond being Authentic and Engaged.**  
You're there to *offer* the gift, not force one on anyone. Whether your audience accepts it is up to them. It's OK if not everyone loves it because \*there is always one person that *needs* the gift you're giving. Trust yourself, your message and your gift.
- **Remember to Nurture your body. Prepare a gift. Focus on Connection. and Simplify.**  
People will remember and be able to implement much less of your message than you might like, but they WILL remember how you made them feel. So keep it simple and genuine.