

## Taking The Fear Out Of Public Speaking

We all know that public speaking is one of the most feared endeavors for many, many people especially when we are not called on to do it very often. There are many ways to combat public speaking nerves but for some reason the very people who are the most scared do the least to get over this fear. There is one main thing we have to remember when we have this type of fear. It does not allow us to think straight because all or most of our brain activity moves to the rear of the brain where our 'fight or flight' reactions belong. There is minimal activity left in the frontal parts of the brain where our fine thinking skills are located. And what do you think will happen if we do not have access to fine cognitive processes, yes, our speaking will deteriorate even more. The answer is first to realize that this happens physiologically for a reason and the next step is to discover how to put this activity back where it belongs, in the frontal or neocortex as it is known, so a clearer thinking mind is available to you when you need it. Lets look at a few ways to do this then. Doing it in stages or smaller chunks will make this much easier. Firstly I really recommend that you do some slow deep breathing for a while, at least ten minutes, getting control of your breathing is a crucial first step to taking back an empowered mental state. Make a conscious effort to go somewhere quiet and breathe in to a count of seven using your diaphragm or belly (not chest breathing) and breathe out to a count of eleven seconds, After ten minutes you will find yourself calming down tremendously. It is the slow exhalation that lets your autonomic nervous system know it can calm down now and will begin to take your body away from a fight or flight response. Well done, the next step is to start rubbing your hands together for a few minutes and then suck your cheeks in hard whilst continuing to breathe. this may sound strange but the reason for this is that it moves activity back to your frontal brain area. Then you can look straight ahead and let your eyes move gently outwards so you become aware of the peripherals of the room you are in. this feels a little different at first but try it again, just move each eye outwards to observe the periphery of the place you are in. When you are in peripheral vision there is no 'internal voice' in your head saying things like 'i'm nervous'. You will be aware that there are no pictures in your mind either (of the large audience for example) that could further unnerve you. The peripheral vision technique actually quietsens your mind right down to a still point. Practice all the above before you actually do the speaking, at least a few weeks before and they will really help enormously.

### About the Author

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