

Speaking Anxiety Tips & Tricks

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If you get anxious before public speaking, you're not alone! Here are some things you can do to calm your nerves before and during a presentation.

BEFORE your Presentation

① Rehearse

The more prepared you feel, the less nervous you'll be! Practice your speech until you can complete it within the allotted time without reading from your notes. Get feedback from a friend, if you can.

③ Exercise Lightly

Light exercise, like going for a brisk walk or doing yoga, will release serotonin, the happy hormone, into your body, making you feel more positive about the upcoming speech.

⑤ Problem Scenarios

It may seem counterproductive, but thinking about what might go wrong and coming up with a strategy to deal with it is a big help. If you are ready to handle problems, you'll be much calmer if they do arise.

② Visualize

As you work through your rehearsals, visualize yourself going through each step of the presentation. Imagine what the room will be like with an audience, and picture yourself giving the presentation successfully.

④ Fuel your Body

Caffeine and sugar can make you jittery, and there is an inevitable 'crash' later. So, avoid these, and instead eat a light and healthy meal a couple of hours before your speech.

Remember:
The audience wants you to succeed.

DURING your Presentation

① Think Differently

Anxiety and excitement both result in 'butterflies', and increase heart rate. It's all about the way you think about these cues. Think of them as signals of excitement to use this burst of energy in a positive way.

② Breathe

Many of us speak quickly when we're nervous. Bring a bottle of water with you to remind you to pause and breathe. Taking a few slow, deep breaths before you take the stage will help to calm you.

③ Eye Contact & Smile

Make eye contact with a few friendly faces as you look around the room, and, most importantly, remember to smile! It can reduce stress, and make you feel more relaxed. Your audience will appreciate it, too!