

“HOW TO GIVE A SPEECH WHEN YOUR KNEES ARE KNOCKING”

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THE TOPIC OF OUR PROGRAM TONIGHT IS HOW TO GIVE A SPEECH WHEN YOUR KNEES ARE KNOCKING. FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU THREE QUESTIONS.

1. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE EVER LISTENED TO AN AGONIZINGLY BORING SPEAKER WHO RAMBLED ON FOR AN HOUR ABOUT SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T INTEREST YOU?
2. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED STAGE FRIGHT?
3. WOULD YOU LIKE TO DEVELOP THE ABILITY TO OVERCOME STAGE FRIGHT?

OKAY LET'S TALK ABOUT DEVELOPING THE ABILITY TO OVERCOME STAGE FRIGHT. EVERYONE HAS BEEN PUT IN THIS POSITION AT SOMETIME OR ANOTHER. THE WORST THING ABOUT STAGE FRIGHT IS THAT IT MAKES US FEEL SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH US. IT BREEDS A LOW SELF-ESTEEM. BECAUSE WE MISUNDERSTAND WHAT CAUSES STAGE FRIGHT WE FEEL OTHERS ARE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN WE ARE.

HERE'S THE CAUSE OF STAGE FRIGHT AND WHY IT IS AS NORMAL AS SLEEPING, LAUGHING OR ANYTHING ELSE YOUR BODY DOES. WE ALL HAVE IT TO A DEGREE. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD THE OLD PROVERB “WE ALWAYS FEAR THE UNKOWN”? THE TRUTH BEHIND THAT PROVERB ... STAGE FRIGHT IS A PART OF EVERYONE'S LIFE - IT'S FEAR OF THE UNKOWN. HERE'S WHAT TAKES PLACE IN YOUR BRAIN AND BODY THAT PRODUCES STAGE FRIGHT. SUPPOSE YOU ARE GETTING READY TO MAKE A SPEECH. AS YOU THINK ABOUT IT ... YOU SEND STRONG SIGNALS TO YOUR COMPUTER (YOUR SUB-CONSCIOUS MIND.) YOUR COMPUTER IS ANXIOUS TO GIVE YOU SOME ANSWERS SO IT CHECKS THROUGH IT'S MEMORY SYSTEM AND TO IT'S AMAZEMENT DISCOVERS IT HAS NO INFORMATION STORED THAT WILL HELP YOU. IT GIVES YOU WHAT IT HAS AND THAT USUALLY CONSISTS OF SEVERAL STORIES RELATED TO SOMEONE WHO CAME UNGLUED IN FRONT OF A MICROPHONE, DROPPED THEIR NOTES OR SOME OTHER WIERD EVENT. 'WHAT HAPPENS IS THAT YOUR COMPUTER PANICS AND PUSHES A BUTTON THAT CAUSES YOUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL SYSTEM TO HEAT UP. THE END RESULT IS A QUIVERING STOMACH, HEADACHE, HANDS SHAKING, KNEES KNOCKING, HEART POUNDING, VOICE BECOMES HARD TO CONTROL AND THOUGH IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE...ALL OF THIS IS A NORMAL NATURAL REACTION. FOR LACK OF A BETTER TERM WE CALL IT STAGE FRIGHT. I'M GOING TO SHARE FIVE IDEAS THAT WILL HELP YOU

OVERCOME THIS FEAR.

THE FIRST IDEA IS.. TALK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU KNOW ABOUT. IT'S NO DISGRACE TO DECLINE TO SPEAK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT.

THE SECOND IDEA IS TALK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU CAN GET EXCITED ABOUT. HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED HOW SOMEONE'S EYES SPARKLE AND HOW AT EASE THEY SEEM TO BE WHEN THEY ARE ENTHUSED ABOUT SOMETHING. ENTHUSIASM DRIVES OUT THE NEGATIVE AND ACCENTS THE POSITIVE. WHEN YOUR ENTHUSIASM LEVEL IS UP YOU FORGET ABOUT THAT STAGE FRIGHT.

THE THIRD IDEA IS...GOOD PREPARATION. GOOD PREPARATION MEANS GATHERING ALL THE RESOURCE MATERIAL YOU CAN FIND ON THAT SUBJECT. GOOD PREPARATION MEANS TO DEVELOP A SCRIPT OR A SET OF NOTES. THEN REHEARSE YOUR SPEECH SO YOU WON'T BE GLUED TO YOUR NOTES. ANOTHER MUST OF GOOD PREPARATION IS PREPARING AN INTEREST CATCHING OPENING STATEMENT AND A STRONG CLOSE. IF YOU DO ALL THIS YOU WILL SEND YOUR AUDIENCE HOME SAYING, "I REALLY ENJOYED HER SPEECH. SHE KNEW WHAT SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT.

THE FOURTH IDEA, KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE. ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS: WHY AM I GIVING THIS SPEECH? WHAT DOES THE AUDIENCE REALLY KNOW ABOUT THIS SUBJECT? WILL THEY BE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS SUBJECT? HOW MANY WILL BE IN THE AUDIENCE? WILL I NEED VISUAL AIDS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING? BY KNOWING YOUR AUDIENCE YOU WILL FEEL 100% MORE SECURE IN GIVING YOUR SPEECH.

THE FIFTH AND FINAL IDEA IS SPEAK AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE. EMERSON ONCE SAID "DO THE THING YOU FEAR AND THE DEATH OF FEAR IS CERTAIN STAGE FRIGHT IS FEAR OF THE UNKOWN. IT'S NOT BEING SURE IF YOU'LL DO OR SAY THE WRONG THING. LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER AND SEE WHAT WE HAVE.

THE FIVE IDEAS ARE:

1. TALK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU KNOW ABOUT.
2. TALK ABOUT SOMETHING YOU CAN GET EXCITED ABOUT
3. MAKE GOOD PREPARATION AND DEVELOP A COMPLETE SEP OF NOTES
4. KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE
5. SPEAK AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY

THE KEY IDEA IS FOR YOU TO KNOW HOW TO OVERCOME STAGE FRIGHT. IT'S ALL A MATTER OF DOING THE THING YOU FEAR AND THE DEATH OF FEAR IS CERTAIN. AS YOU GIVE MORE SPEECHES YOU'LL DISCOVER YOUR NERVOUSNESS IS GOING AWAY. IF YOU'RE ANTHING LIKE ME IT WILL NEVER GO AWAY COMPLETELY BUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS YOU'LL HAVE THOSE BUTTERFLIES FLYING IN FORMATION AND YOU'LL MAKE A GOOD SPEECH.

NOW WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE GROUP PARTICIPATION.

- I WANT YOU ALL TO STAND AND FORM A CIRCLE.
- I HAVE A BAG OF ITEMS I GATHERED UP FROM AROUND THE HOUSE. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE AN EXERCISE OF COMING UP WITH A STORY. WHEN WE ARE CALLED UPON TO DO SOMETHING ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT. I WILL GIVE YOU A DEMONSTRATION FIRST TO GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF HOW TO MAKE A STORY ABOUT THESE ITEMS. DON'T BE SERIOUS. LET YOUR IMAGINATIONS TAKE OVER AND HAVE FUN.

GROUP PARTICIPATION FOLLOWS.

REFERENCES:

THE SOUND OF SILENCE . . . BY JOE TENERELLI

THE ART OF COMMUNICATION . . .TAPES BY JOHN SHAW