

5 Tips For Conquering Your Fear of Public Speaking



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Many studies have found that a fear of public speaking is the number one fear of people in North America. Even the fear of death comes in second behind public speaking.

For some, this fear is something they just have to work through. Maybe they can give the occasional presentation, but it's an incredibly tense and difficult experience. ***For many, the fear of public speaking is so great that it has a significant impact on their lives.***

Some people will avoid taking certain classes in college to avoid public speaking. Many choose a career path that doesn't involve getting up in front of a group.

If your fear of public speaking is so great that it results in avoidance and affects the choices you make in your life, it may be time to find a strategy to overcome it.

Implement these tips and begin conquering your fear of public speaking:

1. **Start small.** When it comes to public speaking, the bigger the crowd the bigger the fear. ***If you practice speaking in front of a small group of friends and family, it can help you build the confidence you need to speak in front of larger groups.***
2. **Preparation is key.** Do you fear public speaking because you're afraid you'll forget what you want to say and look foolish? Ensure that doesn't happen by being prepared.
 - Before your speech or presentation, organize all of the information you want to cover. This may include creating a PowerPoint presentation or other visual aids in addition to your prepared speech.
 - Spend some time practicing. ***By rehearsing, you can ensure you include everything you want to talk about, avoid forgetting any important points, and become more comfortable.***
3. **Avoid memorizing your speech.** Although it's important to be prepared and rehearse your speech, it isn't necessary to memorize your speech word for word. If you refrain from trying to memorize a script there's a lower amount of pressure and less possibility of error.
 - If you know your subject inside and out, you can speak intelligently about it without memorizing a script verbatim.
4. **Visualize yourself being successful when you give your presentation.** The human brain is unable to tell the difference between reality and that which is vividly imagined. ***Spend some time visualizing a successful presentation and it will help you build confidence.***
5. **Practice some breathing exercises before you give your presentation.** Breathing exercises are an effective way to cope with fear.
 - Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose and hold it. Then, release it slowly through

your mouth. Repeat this process until your heart rate decreases and you feel calm.

Many people try to deal with their fear of public speaking by avoiding it altogether, but that's an impractical solution. There will probably come a time when you'll have to get up in front of a group and speak. ***The only way to truly get past your fear of public speaking is to try it.*** Start practicing now. It will get easier each time you do it.