

8 Techniques

For Reducing *ANXIETY* When Speaking





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As a professional speech coach, trainer, author, and keynote speaker, Alan Hoffler equips individuals to become GREAT speakers. He gives his audience and his coaching clients a practical, systematic approach that ANYONE can apply to speaking. He believes that GREAT speakers get opportunities that ordinary speakers don't. The belief of those at MillsWyck Communications is that ANYONE can become a great speaker.



About the Author



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[Paige Armstrong](#), MSW, LCSW, is the founder of [Life Enrichment Resources](#), a successful private practice specializing in treating addictions, trauma, codependency, and relationship issues. She has served as a psychotherapist, coach, educator and educational speaker. She is passionate about collaborating with clients to provide tools, strategies and techniques that help them achieve the enrichment, fulfillment, happiness, joy, connection, and intimacy they deserve and desire.



Tip #1:

Breathe Slowly.

Anxiety will automatically speed up the heart and body. Breathing will automatically slow it down. Take long, slow, deep breaths Breathe in on a count of eight; then out on a count of eight. Repeat twice, then slow it down by breathing in to a count of six and out to a count of six. Repeat twice. Continue by doing this on a count of four and then two.



Tip #2:

Ask yourself, “*What is the worst thing that can happen?*”

Most of the time, what we imagine (and our minds can get really creative!) will happen is NOT what actually happens. When we slow down and think logically through expected possibilities, we often realize that the likelihood of what we have imagined has little (or NO) chance of actually happening.



Tip #3:

Acknowledge the FEAR and kick it to the curb.

Fear can be a positive thing and is there to let us know that we are in danger or threatened. Thank goodness we have that signal to tell us to fight, flight (run), or freeze (stay still) when a dangerous situation does arise. However, often when giving a speech or presentation, we are not in physical danger, despite our feelings. Usually it is our “ego” that feels emotionally threatened by being embarrassed that something could go wrong or that we forget our words. Remember, forgetting your words is not going to kill you or anyone else.



Tip #4:

Be prepared!

Great speakers do not become great speakers overnight. Do whatever it takes to help you prepare. Take a speaking class. Interview other speakers you admire to explore their journey of how they became great. Practice in front of a mirror or with small groups of people. Buy a book on how to become a great speaker. Practice. Practice. Practice.



Tip #5:

Be able to laugh at yourself and have fun!

None of us are perfect. Often we put more demands on ourselves to be perfect than the audience puts on us. The audience does not expect us to be perfect. The more we relax and have fun, the more we will see this reflected in our audience reactions. They will reflect us.



Tip #6:

Change your thinking - Change your feelings!

We might have thoughts of *I can't do this, I'm horrible at this, people don't want to hear what I have to say, etc.* This is normal when fear and anxiety has kicked in. However, changing our thoughts to *I can do this, what I have to share is important, I am good at delivering the important information,* are all messages that support the speaker and promote feelings of confidence rather than anxiety. Believe in yourself!



Tip #7:

Chunk it down!

You do not have to accomplish it all at one time. Break it down into manageable segments, so that the goal becomes getting through each step rather than the whole “kit and caboodle”. For example: My goal is to get through the introduction first before hitting the closing remarks. When presenting in “chunks”, you will be finished before you know it!



Tip #8:

Seek professional help.

In some instances, anxiety can be so severe that the above techniques may still not work. There may be a deeper underlying anxiety challenge that is getting in the way of you being your best. A trained therapist can help you work through this anxiety, and become successful at giving speeches.



Contact us for more!

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