

Countering Stage Fright

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Hello students, I am here once again to continue with the causes of stage fright. And as I told you, these topics are interrelated whether it is the definition of stage fright or symptoms of stage fright or the causes of stage fright, because if somebody wants to overcome from this terrible feeling, and this problem of anxiety, it is very important to know about the causes of stage fright. So, see, what are the discomforts that you feel with your own body? This is also one of the important points besides several, and in this regard, I have highlighted the lack of preparation, large audience, some health issues. So, why is it that we are all at ease physically with friends, but self-conscious and awkward in front of an audience? If that is you, then try to know about various conversations and listeners. Listen to others also. That will certainly help you to relax into your body.

Also, pay attention to how you stand, your sitting posture, gestures, and moves when you are in a comfortable environment. Then recreate that natural movement with a larger audience. Now, unless you have been trained as an actor or a singer, you are probably unaware of how to speak continuously, consistently with a regular breath or speech. Breathing is very important, whether your breathing habit is poor or consistent.

Public speaking requires more air than vegetative breathing because you speak emphatically. Also, you need to control your exhalation to sustain sound through the end of your idea. Diaphragmatic breathing is the way to do all of this. It is also great for calming your galloping heart. When you try to compare yourself with others, this also happens, and this is also the reason for inferiority or inferior complex.

Do not do it. Do not compare yourself with others. Your job is never to be an excellent speaker. It is to be interesting when you discuss your topic or passion, that is it. The really good news is that no one in the entire universe can do that as well as you because you are the person to tell us about it.

Truly, you are the one we came to hear. Develop this. Now, this negative impact that you

are inferior to others on your performance can be a major setback which threatens to destroy self-confidence and affects academic or professional success. Before we identify how to overcome stage fright, it is important, you know, to understand ourselves and other related situations. How to determine your public speaking fear- the level, the anxiety? I told you repeatedly that anxiety is there in everyone, but the intensity, the level varies from one individual to other individual.

And what are the responses in this regard? Are you influenced by a negative public speaking or performance situation that happened to you in the past? Did something teach you that public appearance are unpleasant, risky, or even dangerous? Have you been afraid to get up in front of others since then? Does the thought of giving a speech or presentation cause you excessive anxiety beforehand? Do you worry constantly about the upcoming speaking situation, a kind of anxiety, losing sleep, weak sleep, irregular sleep, have no appetite, or fixate on what is coming? Do you believe? You know what your audience is thinking. Can you hear them, means, can you feel them in your own mind, challenging and criticizing you? Are you certain that their facial expressions reveal their true feeling towards you? That is the negative thought, your greatest fear that everyone will see how nervous you are. In other words, do you think if I appear truly nervous, everyone will realize I do not know what I am talking about? Is this your big concern? Are you afraid that nervousness and anxiety will make you forget everything you are supposed to say? Do you picture yourself having a brain freeze? Are you convinced you will be unable to say anything or that you will forget key parts of your message? Fear of going blank, lack of skills, ask yourself. Are you convinced that you simply lack talent as a public speaker and should not be up there? Are you afraid that you will be found out and your secret will no longer be safe? And the physical reaction is your biggest problem. The physical responses you have when you speak in front of others.

Is your principal complain dry mouth, pounding heart, gastrointestinal distress because mind disturbed- your stomach disturbed, digestive problem, racing pulse, sweating, shaky voice, gasping for breath, breaking breath or other symptoms? Try to write down these physical reactions when you give presentations. If we talk of performance orientation, I may ask you, is your principal concern that you have to be an excellent speaker? Do you have this? Ask. Do you compare yourself to other speakers telling yourself you have to come up to their level? Is your skill in performance your major concern? There are many explanations and hypotheses on the causes of public speaking anxiety. And as I mentioned the book earlier also, the Challenge of Effective Speaking speaks of anxiety of some people that might be inborn. Individual backgrounds, temperament, behavior can result in public anxiety while objective stimuli can trigger public speaking anxiety.

From the perspective of the speaker unfamiliarity towards the words, the lack of

experience can easily stimulate public speaking anxiety. External objective factors also cannot be ignored such as unfamiliar environment, new audience. Moreover, the difference of status between speakers and the audience, for example, when speakers are employees who want to be appreciated by their superiors for working opportunities, and the listeners are the superiors, this status difference can induce the anxiety while holding speeches. Furthermore, the position of speakers and audience might also contribute to seizures of public speaking anxiety by making the speakers feel isolated and being scrutinized while the speakers are often separated from the audience. Well, these are the points that we can speak of, you know, in detail.

My personal advice- that you write, you write on the board, you write on the answer script, you write in your memory, you are not satisfied with your abilities. May be this is a legitimate concern, but it is also one of the easiest, you know, causes to remedy. I have seen a number of students in my life, in my long career, and I found them very shaky nervous. But with my words, with my training, you know, with my support, slowly, gradually with the passage of time, they developed into a good speaker, rather orator. One thing also, see, there are several things.

One thing also, that you try to listen to other. Now, in the present age we have digital world with us, we have access to internet and so many things. So, you listen to great leaders of the world and try to find out. Mostly, I advise my students to read newspaper, especially the editorial column, and find out some words. Words vocabulary, to enrich the vocabulary and to retain them.

They use those vocabulary most often regularly in day-to-day life. See it hardly matters that you speak in Hindi or English. Well, the mode of expression, the language, medium should not be the problem. It can be. The problem is, that if you stand on the stage to face the audience, how do you feel? Even in your own mother tongue, if it is Hindi, if you feel nervous, then you have a problem with the audience.

Because see, English is not our language. But then, if we are comfortable with the language, and if we are not comfortable with the audience, again it directs towards the stage fear. And also, you know, you try to find out causes. Because, remember, in the previous lecture of mine, I suggested that try to find out your trait- you are introvert or extrovert? Right from the childhood, you try to talk to others, your relatives, go to markets, go to your you know friends' houses, talk. That is also a kind of presentation, a speech.

And if not, you confine yourself into the four walls, I am sorry. You would not be able to develop your speaking quality, and my dear students, it is not in one day that you develop

this quality. It takes years and years. If you ask me, as a teacher, every time I feel nervous. But then, you know my confidence, my past experience, my knowledge- that supports me to get involved with the audience, or to involve audience with me, your energy.

If you speak like a robot, no one is going to pay attention. We teach in communication skills- non-verbal barriers. What are the barriers? You try to find out, you know, in advance the environment, the setting, to familiarize yourself. If you are feeling shaky, you go and on the same spot where you have to give the speech, you try to find out the setting or you can make rehearsal also. That is why I said hypnotherapy.

Walk is the best thing, like, I read if I have to prepare, because I said that the way you prepare, you are not going to speak as it is on the stage, because the situation, the time, you know, everything is different. So how to do it? That, you have to think of yourself. And as I said, it is spontaneous, automatic. Forget everything, rest of the world. Think that you are the boss of the stage.

See, students, they fear a lot of the exam. But I used to tell them, that you be sensitive, be fearful before the exam, but once you enter into the room, you are the king, you are the boss. Because after that, you cannot improve yourself. Whatever you know, you write to save your career. Similarly, before this you know presentation, you can be shaky, you can be nervous, you can be concerned, but once you are on the stage, forget the rest of the world.

"Now, I have to fight the battle." It is up to you that you win the race or you lose the race. And for winning, if you develop faith in yourself, "No, I have to do, come what may, I have to speak well," you see that you will conquer the world. So, my dear students, you have to develop yourselves. There is no medicine in this world that you eat, and you will be a good speaker.

There is no injection in the world which can give you the strength to be confident. My personal understanding is that you get a strength, energy due to your own understanding. How you read, how you work hard, a good speaker is may be God's gift. Suppose, I have powerful speech, I have command over language, but then in the present world, any can be earned. Even though you do not have powerful voice, but with practice, you can do, and the voice can be powerful with your confidence also.

How do you speak confidently? That can be your strength. Nobody can give you. So practice, practice, and practice. As I said, that I am a neurolinguistic consultant also, and even in that, hypnotherapy mirrors all these. One of the very vital points I discussed with

you- that audience.

Before you come, try to know about your audience. See there is a term called false assumption. If you have this, that "Oh, the audience might not be knowing anything, I will speak anything," no! This is the false assumption, and this may lead to your failure. So, you speak, do not try to be a failure.

Knowing the audience. And see, there is no established reason that how do you start? Or no established text that can tell you that how do you start, it is up to you. To make the audience involved into the discussion, you can throw a question with a smile, or with a quotation or your physical mode also. There will be no causes of anxiety. Anxiety can be part of your personality, but I have seen sometimes, the more you be anxious the more you be shaky the more you would be able to give good, best presentations. So, the kind of ability that you have and if you could locate that, see, you can be the best speaker.

Confidence. And the young students, see again, if I talk of age, this is found maximum in the younger generation. The older, they have this kind of confidence. The older, they have confidence with the experience, with age, with knowledge, but the younger generation they have this that they tend to shake, because they do not have much experience. I also advise my students and to you also, for getting command over this fear, that you go and you like Saturday, Sunday, you are free.

You do not have class. Make a group, like-minded group. Throw any topic, any burning topic and make discussion on this. Be positive all the time and with discussion, I am sure that every day, every Saturday, Sunday, every week, you could be able to you know minimize, neutralize the fear, intensity of fear. Everyone has fear. Even I have fear that whether I am going to do good or not.

But it does not mean that I fail and that leads to disaster. No. Before that, you control. That is why, this is my sincere request that you are young, world is with you, you have energy, you have time to improve, sit down and you write. You can speak in the mirror and you can see that what are the symptoms you are facing.

May be alone you are free, but you can ask your friend please sit down and I am trying to speak on some topic and find out that where I am at fault. And then write down. Write down that lack of consistency, forgetfulness, which is called blackout. Sometimes stammering. I have also seen students who stammer and then in isolation, they are fine.

And if I ask that what happened, they say, "Well ma'am, I mean I was stammering because psychologically I was very disturbed in front of my friends." So, you try to find

out that where you are psychologically disturbed and why. As I was dealing with the narcissist activity, that over-confidence, even that is bad. But lower confidence is equally bad. So, how to maintain balance between the two? That you work hard, practice, speak more and more, meet people just like that- market, college, teacher, friend, even your helper, talk to them.

And you find that slowly, gradually, you will be a fine speaker because not only that you need to come on the stage and you have to speak, but also in your daily life, you have to speak. So, my sincere suggestion is that my dear friends, you must know the world. Try to understand the world, understand the situation, know the people. Why audience is bad? Why people are sitting there? Even though they are, sometimes, it happens that they are smiling and you think, oh, they are mocking at yourself.

It is your thinking. It is your way of thinking. Do not think that. They must be enjoying the situation, that is why they are laughing, they are smiling. Make them laugh. A speech should not be full of monotony, so you can crack good jokes also.

So, how to crack jokes, that is also an art. So, what are the causes? Try to find out, sit with your seniors, sit with your teachers, sit with your friends. And one thing very important, all said and done, that with those friends who are positive enough, those who can encourage you, "Yes, you are doing right, you are really good." Rather saying, "No, you cannot do it." You know, this is also one of the reasons that what kind of association you have make positive friends talk to them, sit with them and speak up you can start with singing a song also. Your college functions, festivals, participate in them.

It is not only stage fright, there are other things also. And all together, if you participate in sports, if you participate in anchoring, see slowly, gradually, your personality will be developed. With these words, I want to conclude here today because I think that you will think over my suggestions seriously. You will sit with a pen and copy and write on pages 1, 2, 3, and 4 and address them one by one. I mean students ask me, "Madam, if I give a stage presentation, shall I walk very frequently?" I said, "No, do not walk frequently.

" Otherwise, this will also distract audience and then you will feel nervous. So, see brain is something that will direct you that what are the best ways to perform and this direction of brain will come to you only with practice. Practice, talk to people. This is the mool mantra of all things. Practice, read, enrich your vocabulary, yes language, your language should be rich, speak correct English, simple English, but this can be possible if you have an idea of other things.

Read newspapers, I always suggest, magazines. Even in group discussions, we have seen

students. There, some of the students are completely silent. Why? So, you develop knowledge, develop confidence. See the world will be yours, the main thing fundamental basic point is to develop confidence and with these words, I just give my best wishes to you to write down the things, and then you practice. See within 10 days I am telling you, you will feel confident and you will be a good speaker.

Now in my next lecture, we shall highlight some other problems related to stage fear. Till then, thank you very much.