

Countering Stage Fright

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Hello students, I am Professor Smita Jha, and I am here to discuss another part of the discussion titled Countering Stage Fright and the subtitle When and Where Performance Anxiety Happens. Well, we discussed in length what stage fright is and why it occurs, and while defining stage fright, the very term performance anxiety automatically comes up. This is about the personality trait because individual variations are there from one person to another. Extrovert, introvert, someone feels comfortable on the stage while someone feels very awkward. Fear from the side of the audience, fear while speaking. Fear to execute, you know, the entire performance.

We have also discussed whether it is a phobia or what type of phobia, a kind of obsession. Because these things are very important to know, only then can you counter the stage fright. Remember I told you that while countering stage fright, you must know your personality traits and what kind of person you are- introspection to know where you are lacking. Therefore, I have decided to discuss a few points related to when and where performance anxiety takes place.

Very important point performance anxiety can happen in any setting where you feel worried about being judged for your performance, and I have seen students even in small classes with the teacher, sometimes even one-on-one. It is not something that a person is getting nervous about or developing fear in front of the audience. And this fear can happen even if you identify as being gifted with public speaking or whatever you may be performing. So it may emerge in front of large audiences and in front of smaller ones- this is what I want to tell you- intimate groups or one-on-one settings. A person may experience stage fright, you know, during various situations.

And what those situations? You need to know, because sometimes we feel that it is only a stage, but even in a closed room, in front of one person, you may get nervous. So, what are those conditions? And as I mentioned earlier, also job interviews, class presentations, exercise classes, work meetings, speaking to customer service representatives, making

small talks with strangers, and making speeches. See, these are the things, sometimes two or three friends, but even stammering. Stammering, or loss of words is also a kind of public fear while talking to the other person, interpersonal. Now, when you slip up, do not panic.

What does it mean? Sometimes, you miss something. Sometimes, You feel that you have not given the best presentation as you wanted to, but there is no point in panicking. There are various strategies that can improve your mental status. And what are those strategies? Practicing, you know, speech until one could reside it in his or her sleep. That is the automatic process.

But sometimes, what happens? Even in that automatic process is that you miss something, and it is here that you feel something missing, that is called panic. Your body will want to tense up, reverse, hide in the corner, but all that just you know makes you feel less confident. This is all mind setup. instead, you know, I would like to suggest that you lean forward, open up your posture, breathe deep and talk slowly, pause, and smile. See if these combinations with a pause will make you feel comfortable.

Now, you are sitting there in class. Imagine, if it is getting nervous in your seat, you glance up at your teacher silently praying that he or she does not call out your name next. See I mean the situation which does not invite any kind of panic fear attendance in the class. You know your class, class is not something where you have to speak up all the time, but then in attendance, you have to show your face, or you have to raise your voice. Even that could create a panic.

See, these are the situations where all such things you know related to phobia, nervousness, and anger occur. Before you can avert your eyes your teacher makes eye contact with you. The next second, you hear your name being called. Suddenly, what happened? Your stomach feels like it has relocated itself somewhere down around your feet. Even I have realized this everything in a very upsetting phase, maybe fear and nervousness.

You slowly stand up and shuffle to the front of the class to give your speech on an interesting topic or any current event. And as you examine the faces or look at the faces of your friends and classmates, all your thoughts flee your mind as if being erased from a chalkboard, completely erased. You stand there like a deer in the headlights, unsure how to begin; your mouth feels dry, your palms are sweaty, and it is suddenly way too hot in the classroom, and naturally, you will feel what is going on here. Are you having a mental breakdown? Really, see, this kind of physical activity or physical changes force you to examine to feel what kind of breakdown, but then no, you are just experiencing

stage fright. This is called stage fear.

Now, if this scenario sounds familiar, you are in good company. Many people experience stage fright. Keep this in mind: you are not the only one. This is very common and natural; in fact, it is so common that it has its own technical name, which is performance anxiety. And I have dealt with this performance anxiety.

Many people, including famous actors, athletes, and musicians, you know, regularly feel pangs of fear or performance anxiety when they have to perform in public. Performing in front of others can be nerve-racking. The stress you feel is real, and that is why your body reacts like it would in the case of real physical danger. This means the entire physics is in danger; you are losing control over your muscles. When you step on a stage or before a room full of people, your body's fight or flight mechanism kicks in.

This reaction creates the symptoms associated with stage fright including a racing heartbeat, hypersensitiveness, dry mouth, shaking hands, trembling muscles, nausea, vomiting tendency, or butterfly in the stomach and also blurry vision. See, because your performance depends entirely on your nervous system, the cause of performance anxiety is no mystery. It is the stress and anxiety associated with speaking or performing in front of others. So, when we have to perform in public all our insecurities surface. We worry about how we look, how we sound, and whether we will make mistakes.

No one wants to look or feel silly in front of others. So, we easily get stressed in these situations since so many people, several of you know, experience this particular pain and pangs. So, we should take it as a stride. As I said, this is all your mental setup. It seems like it should not be a big deal, but it can be.

It can affect your self-esteem and have a negative impact on your performance in school or on the job. I have seen a number of people, you know, even as grown ups, they have this nervous temperament because right from school, they could not eradicate or erase this particular tendency. Fortunately, we often know in advance when we need to perform in public. We know who is the audience, the ambiance, and other, you know, supporting things. So, this allows us to take some steps to conquer or to minimize or to neutralize performance anxiety allowing us to escape out onto that stage without any fright whatsoever.

It is not something that you are being pushed to a situation where everything is bleak, everything is dark. It is well known that where you have to speak, the audience, the topic. Therefore, you need to prepare in advance. Perhaps, the best strategy to fight stage fright is to be prepared, well prepared. Know what you are going to say, and practice until you

know it by heart.

In the time leading up to your performance, eat healthily and get plenty of sleep. Lacking vitamins and other minerals can cause depression, can cause a kind of timidity, weakness and water will make you hydrated. So, taking care of your mind and body will help you to fight those stressful feelings. A stress fight is a universal human experience, and I say repeatedly that it occurs with varying intensity in everyone who stands before an audience. The anxiety generated in this situation stems from the re-emergence of certain key developmental experiences.

The dynamics involved are related both to genital and to pre-genital conflicts. Shame arises from conflicts around exhibitions, from concerns over genital inadequacy, and from the fear of loss of control. Guilt is produced from the aggravation inherent in self-display and from the fear of the destruction of one's rivals along with the dread of retaliation- because we are discussing when and where. So, how a person is different from the other is the main question. And for that, certain hormones, certain unconscious, you know, feelings and memories that make you responsible to be, you know, nervous.

A major portion of stage fright reaction is the reactivation of the crisis of separation-individuation, which generates separation anxiety connected to the fear of asserting oneself as a separate individual, will result in the withdrawal of love and admiration by a maternal figure in the audience and this is a very important point. What kind of feeling do you have in the back of your mind? The various developmental experiences are differently weighted in each individual's stage fright reaction depending on the vicissitudes of his early childhood experience. Perhaps it is fortunate that few performers ever completely master stage fright for an intangible sense of communion between the performer and his audience might well be lost as a byproduct of the mastery. Again, this is an important point to remember, and this is called narcissistic issues. When and where? The one situation is when you are trembling, you are shaking, you are not confident, and the other situation is that you are more than confident.

So, stage fright is an over determined symptom of all persons who must perform before an audience. The performer may experience disintegration anxiety as he searches for a mirroring or an idealized object to make him feel complete and loved. Anxiety may be generated by his fantasy that he is stirring up the envy and persecution of others as a defense against his own envy. He also may develop anxiety over his fear that his success is depriving others and harming them. The performer's concern over his greed may activate unconscious anxiety.

This is what I was telling you: unconscious belief, sentiment, emotion, unconscious

anxieties about depleting the very object he seeks of all it has to give. Conversely, if he projects greediness onto the audience, he may fear that he will be devoured. And finally, he may become extraordinarily anxious over the thrust toward autonomy that his assertive act of performing represents to him. He may feel that if he does not perform according to the expectations of his audience mother, he will lose the audience's love and admiration. Although it is a potentially disabling problem, see the mental problem, stage fright adds a unique dimension to the vitality of live performance.

In a stage fight, you know one of the most important factors: the audience; know the audience because you have a fear of the audience. So, when you look at the audience, they appear to be demons, ghosts, or killers, but if you have that and see the audience being very good and affectionate, you see your attitude will be changed. It is emblematic of the electric interaction between the performer and the audience that makes the theater a place of magic. Audience members bring a certain degree of reality to the performer's fears. They may cheer him on, but they may also secretly hope for disaster.

As the performer balances on the rager's edge of the audience's ambivalent empathy for him, a sense of dangerous excitement is created. This interactional tension makes live performance a unique medium that can never be replaced by film or recording. So, as one performer put it, it creates a feeling of delicious dread, a mixture of horror and anticipation. Remember I told you that stage fright is more of the future incident, the anticipation of failure, and obsession with self-image. So, there are several questions: do narcissistic individuals make effective public speakers? Delivering a speech affords an opportunity to garner the attention and admiration of others- factors that are of central importance to narcissistic individuals who are motivated to maintain or enhance their grandiose self-image.

Now, the new word because when we talk of narcissism, the aspect of grandiose is very important to discuss. What is grandiose self-image? Across a range of performance domains, narcissistic grandiosity is consistently associated with good performance when opportunities for personal glory are evident. And when presented with such opportunities, you know through the presence of a crowd, narcissistic individuals raise their performance level related to when admiration or glory is less readily available. Narcissistic grandiosity is characterized by a range of qualities that may be highly adaptive in the performance domain. For example, narcissistic individuals tend to be more optimistic and confident than their relatively non-narcissistic counterparts.

As such, narcissistic people might be especially effective public speakers. But then the other part is also how they believe in their potential. As I said, there are two types of people: less confident and overconfident. So, this narcissistic potential is the category of

overconfidence. However, it is well recognized that narcissism has both bright and dark sides and is associated with numerous paradoxical and self-defeating behaviors, such as reacting aggressively to threats or rejection.

One recently proposed model of narcissism with promise for resolving these paradoxes argues that the behavior of narcissistic individuals can be better understood by considering narcissism through two related yet distinct dimensions- narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry. See narcissistic admiration and narcissistic rivalry. You need to know this: what are these concepts? The concept proposes that a fundamental goal of the narcissistic individual is to maintain their grandiose self-view, looking at the self, oneself with a very high, you know, optimistic view. However, this goal can be achieved through 2 distinct affective motivational cognitive and behavioral pathways associated with narcissistic admiration and rivalry. So, students, you should know what kind of problem you are facing, when, and where.

So, I have explained in detail what is the quality of narcissistic individuals and their grandiose self-image. So, today, I stop here with the word that let us discuss the grandiose self-image of narcissism in the other lecture in detail. Thank you very much. Have a good day.