OVERCOMING STAGE FRIGHT

AND IMPROVING YOUR PRESENCE

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NERVES ARE NOT YOUR ENEMY

• Harness your passion
• Practice (especially the first 5 minutes)
• Remember the audience wants to hear your message
MAKING MISTAKES

• We all do it
• Who cares?
IMAGINE....
PROGRESSIVE BREATHING EXERCISE

- Close eyes and focus on breathing
- Inhale on a count of Two
- Exhale on a count of Two
- Repeat on a count of Four, then Six, then Eight, then Ten

Exercise: https://theatrefolk.com
ANTIDOTES

- Positive visualization
- Preparation
- Practice
AUDIENCE

• Get them on your side
• Connect
SCENARIOS

Discuss in breakouts – 4 common but stressful scenarios

• What’s worked for you or will work?
BREAKOUT ROOMS

Situation 1: Last-minute invitation, or Short Time to prepare

Situation 2: Physical or tech Hurdles or Barriers

Situation 3: Not well-rested, distracted or other Stressors

Situation 4: Hecklers or Hostile audience members
BUT WHAT IF?

• They ask questions?
• They don’t?
• I don’t know the answer?
TIPS FOR HANDLING QUESTIONS

- Prepare
- What are they asking?
- Practice
PRACTICE RESPONDING

• Think of a question you’re afraid someone will ask
• Try out a response
APPLICATION

- Chalk talks
- Interview Questions
- Conference Presentations
- Debates, pitch competitions
IMPROVING STAGE PRESENCE

• Calibrate the message to the audience & location

• Bring emotional weight or suspense

[See John Lithgow’s dramatic press release reading on Stephen Colbert’s show, Comedy Central website from 2011]
USING YOUR BODY

- Posture
- Gesture
- Eye contact
- Facial expression
USING YOUR VOICE

• VOLUME
• PITCH, TONE, PROSODY (MELODY)
• ENUNCIATION
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

WHAT YOU CAN DO
2021 THREE MINUTE THESIS (3MT) COMPETITION

- Video submissions to enter
- Preliminary round competitions: February 22-26
- Final round competition: March 10

HTTPS://GRADSCOLLEGE.CORNELL.EDU/3MT
COACHING SESSIONS

HTTPS://GRADCAREERS.CORNELL.EDU

GET INVOLVED