



11 THINGS TO DO IF YOU ARE NERVOUS ABOUT GOING ONSTAGE

1. Stop thinking about how nervous you are! Remember that almost everyone is nervous almost every time. So what?!
2. Start thinking about something specific that you are going to say that you really want to communicate.
3. Have a conversation with someone else. The bartender, someone in the audience, another person who's going onstage. This gets you out of your head and into your voice.
4. Do some deep breathing. This is very calming and centering. If you don't know deep breathing techniques, go to a yoga class or search it online, or just take a few long slow breathes through your nose
5. If your hands are shaking and you have to hold paper onstage, hold your paper on a stiff notebook or clipboard, which will mask the shaking.
6. Steady yourself by touching yourself (not like that!). Hands in pocket, or on hips etc. This reminds you that you are still in your body – not floating outside it!
7. Look for (or imagine) the friendliest face in the crowd and direct your material to them. Remember that they are really interested in what you want to communicate.
8. Run through the bullet points of your material in your head, remembering that you know what you are saying.
9. Remember that the physical symptoms of excitement are exactly the same as nervousness. Nauseous, lightheaded, tight in the chest, full of adrenaline. Try to convince yourself you are excited not nervous.
10. Focus on your opening line. In the unusual event that you don't remember your opening line, look at your environment. Maybe you have something to say about the person who's onstage before you or how hot/cold/dark/light the room is. This remark will bring you and the audience together in the present moment – and that's what live performance is all about!
11. As soon as you get onstage, hold onto the microphone stand. It literally grounds you – and makes you feel more like a rock star.