**My Worrywart Within**

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Worry is like a thin stream of fear trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained - *Arthur Somers Roche.*

Why do many people are afraid of public speaking? And this is the same patent that keeps enduring my mind. It is not because I could not speak in public but because of the fraidy-cat and bundle of nerves when I start speaking.  I copiously remember when one of my colleagues invited me to join Toastmaster, the hesitation and unwillingness I had in the beginning.  What will I benefit from joining?  Will I improve, or will it be the same? But due to his persistence to invite me as well as his words of encouragement, a few days later, I had joined Toastmaster and was apprehensive that I would somehow brush up myself.

Then I started crafting my first, second, third, and nth speech with the unfaltering help and support of my mentor.  I understood that it is not only speaking that is being developed but writing not to mention.  I have learned from the educational module presented in one of the club meetings that the fear of public speaking is known as ***glossophobia***. And the symptoms range from knots in the stomach, sweaty palms, shaky legs, and tightness in the throat.  I have seen it on many occasions and experienced it myself for reasons that I don’t have a see-through answer.  At that moment, I realized preparation is one big important aspect.  As they say, the way to curtail your fear is to prepare thoroughly.

***Make sure you know your topic and prepare***

This may sound define plain as a pikestaff, but you should know your topic or subject. It is best to incorporate personal stories that relate to the audiences' experiences, thought processes, or values. Moreover, including stories in public speaking helps your audience remember your statements or speech for later recollection.  No one knows better than you do.  Plan and prepare your speech, practice it well.  Practice makes perfect. Learn the points where you require to use emphasis or pauses.  Make sure that you follow every project's objectives.  This would certainly be your guide to be able to deliver an excellent speech.

***Own the stage***

**Own the stage and take your mind off worrying about your performance.  Be confident.** Take the positive emotions from the questions that keep bothering in your mind onto the stage.  I know it sounds funny, but it supports, try to inhale, and exhale before you start your speech.  It helps slow the build-up of adrenalin and reduces your heart rate, thereby lessening feelings of worry and nervousness.