

Always Perform Confidently

Presentation for FluteWild! 2011

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Share Experiences of Stage Fright

Techniques for how to control Stage Fright

Improve Your Stage Presence

- Pretend you know what you are doing "Fake it till you make it"
- Acknowledge your audience and your fellow performers on stage
- Tuning on stage
- When on stage:
 - ~Be comfortable in your clothes and dress the part
 - ~If you make a mistake, pretend it did not happen
 - ~Ignore lights in your eyes
 - ~Smile
 - ~Look at the audience or just above it
 - ~Look at the other performers
 - ~Timing
 - ~Bowling

Improve your self-confidence

- Pile up small successes in performance and write the successes down
 - ~Play for people who love you
 - ~Play for people in care centers
 - ~Play for small groups of people you know
 - ~Play easy music
 - ~Please share your ideas
- Go back to the basics of knowing your music
 - ~Mark the breaths, crescendos, and decrescendos
 - ~Understand the form and the rhythms, articulations
 - ~Practice every day from now until the performance
 - ~Practice the scales and arpeggios that are in the piece
 - ~Practice etudes in the key of your piece, or that shares some other characteristic of the piece
 - ~Record yourself playing and try to improve on one point
- Spend time writing down all the things you love about playing the flute, how well you are playing, what you like about your music, what feelings you want to evoke with your performance

Increase your Positive Self-Talk and Affirmations

- “I am weak, I am strong” demonstration
- Respect the subconscious mind and the true correlation between what you say to yourself and how you perform ie

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- Take responsibility for the words you are saying to yourself and change them if they are negative
- How to change negative self-talk:
 - ~Use a beeping timer to signal self-talk evaluation and write down the negative. Repeat this throughout the day
 - ~Tell the voice of the negative self-talk to stop saying negative things
 - ~Change the mean things to positive things in your notebook
 - ~Say the positive things to yourself whenever you feel stressed and nervous

Visualization-Progressive Muscle relaxation

- Consciously soften and releasing the tension from one part of the body at a time until the whole body is relaxed. Start at your toes and go up to the head and neck. This creates different brain waves and these waves are more creative.
- Then picture yourself performing the way you want to perform with as much detail as possible. Include all your senses and emotions, goals, certain passages, the expressiveness of the music, breathing.
- Under deep relaxation, the subconscious receives these messages and makes them a memory
- Practice this technique as often as you can

Reconsider the perfect performance

- Perfection: a goal for the practice room
- Remember that live performances are much more risky
- Humans are not perfect
- Strive for excellence instead of perfection
- Create the music and release it to the audience, it is not yours anymore
- Say "It is what it is" or "This is who I am and this is what I have to give and it is fine"

Record Courageous Acts

- ~Write down the details of your courage every day
- ~Read through your courageous acts every week

Make sure you use your abilities the way you want to – Do you have too many commitments outside of music, are you playing the music you love, the performances you adore?

Energize down-seven steps

1. Form a clear intent like "I am going to play this piece with great energy and expression"
2. Fix a focal point
3. Breathe purposefully
4. Release tension in the tight spots of your body
5. Find your center-below bellybutton, inside about three inches

6. Repeat a statement (Process cue) developed earlier-pick one that reminds you of what you want to accomplish - Mine is "Pearls" and comes from the idea to make each note a pearl of sound
7. Open your eyes and throw you energy, from your center, at the focal point

Practice this process often throughout a day 3-7 times for 3 weeks

Conclusion

- These techniques will help you know what to think and how to act when you go on stage.
- The emotional and mental side of performance takes as much time as preparing the music - maybe even more.

Resources

Performance Under Stress: Performing Your Best Under Pressure by Don Greene
(Roatledge Publishers, 2002)

Fight Your Fear and Win by Don Greene (Broadway Press, 2001)

<http://performconfidently.com> Conquering Performance Anxiety From Inside Out
by Helen Spielman from Pan the Flute Magazine, June 2009