

Fearless Speaking Video #1 - Silence

I'd like to welcome you to the Fearless Speaking video series. I'll be offering seven videos, each with a secret that I've learned. These secrets are something that I've discovered along my way to overcome my own stage fright. I'm Doreen Hamilton, Founder of the Essential Speaking Institute and Training Director of Speaking Circles® International.

My first video today is the secret of Silence. When people are speaking in front of a group or even just one-on-one, I know that the biggest fear that they tell me about is that they're going to go blank, they'll lose their way, they'll stumble over the words, something that will give the audience an indication that they're afraid, that they're terrified.

I think that underneath there is a problem with a comfort in silence, a stillness. Inside I think everybody can access, if we work at it, a silent still point that is beneath all the chaos. The chaos around what are people thinking, what are people saying, will they like me, are they going to approve of what I have to say, am I going to be laughed at?

There are all these thoughts that are racing, and what happens is that the heartbeat starts flapping around and beating hard. Pretty soon you can't even hear yourself think, and the easiest way is just to disengage and go blank. I'm thinking that... what about if we just could all be secure in the fact that silence is a wonderful calm place to find? Of course it's like any muscle. You have to develop it. It's like going to a gym to develop the silence muscle.

And how to do that? Well some people have meditation practices, some people go out in nature, some people just sit quietly for five minutes a day. Whatever your path to a silent still point, I want to encourage you to investigate that because that's the first secret to fearless speaking.

When you can be unafraid, fearless about being silent, then when you do happen to lose your way or when you do happen to go blank you're simply able to say "now where was I?" You know there are all sorts of ways you can retrieve your words, but if you're afraid of silence, afraid of the pause, afraid of the gap, you are going to increase the adrenaline and the fear that's going to race through your body.

It's okay to be silent!

The next video I will be offering you is the second secret and that is Presence.