

<https://ramonh.dev/nervous-about-speaking.pdf>

Nervous About Speaking?

Ramón Huidobro @hola_soy_milk

The audience wants
you to succeed!

The fear of public speaking or performance, often called stage fright, exacts a huge toll on self-confidence and self-esteem and causes some people to leave school or a job or pass up a promotion.

Conquering Stage Fright, Anxiety And Depression Association of America
<https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/social-anxiety-disorder/treatment/conquering-stage-fright>

Many, including seasoned professional performers, suffer in silent terror.

And because they feel embarrassed, people try to keep their fear a secret, even from a spouse or other close family members or friends.

Conquering Stage Fright, Anxiety And Depression Association of America
<https://adaa.org/understanding-anxiety/social-anxiety-disorder/treatment/conquering-stage-fright>



CC - Photo from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fight-or-flight_response

Ramón, if you get nervous giving talks, aren't you nervous right now?

Yes.

Yes.

Yes, I am.

And I'm not alone!



Ramón Huidobro @hola_soy_milk · 12 ene.

...

Dear speaker frens new and experienced, I would love to hear from you!
Preparing a smol something on my talk nerves:
Do you get nervous? If so, when (relative to the talk)? How do you handle it?

No stress if uncomfortable sharing. Please also feel free to DM and RT.
Thank you! ❤

54

18

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https://twitter.com/hola_soy_milk/status/1348930885974970368

Do you get nervous
it?

No stress if unco
Thank you! ❤



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All tweets are shared with
permission



Ramón Huidobro @hola_soy_milk · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I'll share too: I get extremely nervous during the 15-30 minutes leading up to my turn.

Talking to folks about anything else, watching the talk before mine if there is one, turning off all notifications and not looking at social media except to share slides helps.

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Jayne Mast @jayne_mast · 12 ene.

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En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Yes, every time. It comes in phases.

~2 week till the day before: Why did I do this? I don't even know what I'm going to talk about yet.

The day of: Super excited! Finally!

An hour before: This is gonna suck, I can't do this

On stage: Look! Smiling people! All's good again.

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Tierney Cyren @bitandbang · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Always, ramping up logarithmically for about 24 hours before it starts.
How much depends on the amount of practice I was able to get in.

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Tierney Cyren @bitandbang · 12 ene.

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Over time it's gone from hitting peak as I'm walking on stage and
sustaining throughout the talk to hitting peak as I'm walking on stage and
then leveling out.

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Laura @alicetragedy · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I usually get nervous right before my talk! If I haven't prepared properly, it will mean that it turns into rambling (even something as simple as an introduction of myself), so I tend to over-prepare, write my talk ahead of time, and practice a lot to make sure timing is good.

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<https://twitter.com/alicetragedy/status/1349088550550122496>



Don Goodman-Wilson @DEGoodmanWilson · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I get nervous starting a couple of hours before, and it builds as the time gets closer until I'm pretty sure I'm unbearable.

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<https://twitter.com/DEGoodmanWilson/status/1348950682133557251>



Jenn Creighton @gurlcode · 6h

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

This is my heart rate before & during my talk at React Conf 2019:



<https://twitter.com/gurlcode/status/1349005968756121602>

The level of nervousness
can totally vary!

What's this speaking engagement gonna be like?

-Is this a meetup? A conference? A company meeting?

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- How many people are in the audience?
- Is there someone I know in the audience?
- Is there an audience member qualified in the topic?



Amr Abdelwahab(عمرو) @amrAbdelwahab · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I am still trying to recognise the pattern but still can't capture it well

Sometimes I guess it has to do with how well I slept the day before it and
how tired I am



Amr Abdelwahab(عمرو) @amrAbdelwahab · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Also depends on whether it's a community am familiar with, a talk that I
gave before or the first time



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Luke Bonaccorsi @CodeFoodPixels · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I have a few years and a few conferences under my belt and the nerves depend on how many times I've given the talk. Definitely less nervous at a meetup though.

I usually don't do anything to do with the talk on the day, so I don't stress about it. Oh and pre-talk bathroom break.



Luke Bonaccorsi @CodeFoodPixels · 12 ene.

...

Nerves don't stop me from eating breakfast like it does other people, so I usually get to take full advantage of the hotel breakfast 😊



<https://twitter.com/CodeFoodPixels/status/1348956074624360449>



Vaishali Thakkar @vthakkar_ · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I generally get nervous at 2 points:

1. A night before the talk day and have to take some walks to calm my mind.

2. 20-30 mins before the talk. I mostly listen some acoustic music in a quiet place while thinking about my talk before entering the room.



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Vaishali Thakkar @vthakkar_ · 12 ene.

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Also, over the years I've realised that sitting arrangements of an audience makes a lot of difference for me.

Theatre and boardroom style sitting == more nervous
Classroom style sitting == less nervous



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https://twitter.com/vthakkar_/status/1348951767673815041



Tobias Pfeiffer @PragTob · 12 ene.

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Why would I be tired? Well I'm exactly the kind of person who tries to fall asleep, thinks about the talk, has an idea for a great new concept of slides then gets up and works on their slides until 4am. Same for new information coming up. Like the MJIT benchmarks...

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Tobias Pfeiffer @PragTob · 12 ene.

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Of course at [@rug_b](#) I'm so chill I can impromptu give a talk without slides and don't be nervous. There are so many nice known faces in the audience I practically don't register it as nervousness often times.

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When do you get nervous?



Adrienne 🍵🍰 @AdrienneTacke · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Always. The 20 min leading up to my talk are the worst.

I take care of small things right before my talk; things that, should I notice them *during* would throw me off: Chapstick -> dry lips, tea w/ honey = no raspy voice, having a small pastry to quell the stomach rumbles 😂





kaja nö @AlizeNero · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I get super nervous and usually spend half of the night before the talk going through my slides and changing them here and there. I also film myself giving the talk to an imaginary audience, so the worst cringe is already gone.



<https://twitter.com/AlizeNero/status/1348961641107501058>



Jeremy Wagner @malchata · 13 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I get nervous within ten minutes of going on and then as I'm on stage, I just sort of leave my body and find myself back in the speaker lounge like I teleported there or something.

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<https://twitter.com/malchata/status/1349220421774815232>



Peb Ruswono Aryan @pebaryan · 12 ene.

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En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Yes I do, it's before and until the first 10-15 minute of the talk. so far i tried to cope it with rehearsal w/ audience and between rehearsal and the delivery i tries to integrate the rehearsal experience by visualizing what will i do differently on the actual presentation. hth

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acid @acid23 · 12 ene.

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En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

It depends on the audience & topic but I get nervous to a degree all the time. It starts a few hours before and builds up.

But that's just stage fright and I accepted it as normal long ago (I also have this when doing public reading, for example) and it goes away when I'm in it.

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schwaduary ❤️
@Schwad4HD14

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En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I also find a weird nervousness about 8-12 minutes in.

I wonder "am I just saying words? do my conclusions make any sense? do I seem interested in this? is this clicking?"

I then try to fix on a few people who make eye contact and smile

[Traducir Tweet](#)

12:28 p. m. · 14 ene. 2021 · Twitter Web App

1 Me gusta

<https://twitter.com/Schwad4HD14/status/1349679750239969280>

It's a little different
for everybody!

Leading up to the talk

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- Sneak an earlier peek at the venue

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- Talk to folks about anything else

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- Keep backups of my slides

Leading up to the talk

- Sneak an earlier peek at the venue
- Talk to folks about anything else
- Lose myself in the talk before mine
- Keep backups of my slides
- Mute notifications!



Lian Li 🌈
@Chimney42

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Yes! I still get nervous, also when doing online talks.
Usually it starts about 30-60 minutes before.
I do have a routine now, where I go through my slides
once more, then meditate for 5-10 minutes.

[Traducir Tweet](#)

10:58 a. m. · 12 ene. 2021 · Twitter Web App

5 Me gusta



<https://twitter.com/Chimney42/status/1348932457513541632>



Tobias Pfeiffer @PragTob · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

It depends as always :)

Most common is the talk before my talk. So, often I don't go (although recently I usually go) and instead I go somewhere and chill and listen to music (usually punk rock/hardcore/etc) going through parts of the talk in my head.

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Tobias Pfeiffer @PragTob · 12 ene.

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What's almost a must is listening to one of my fav songs right before the talk - Refused: New Noise is a favorite here. Again, usually some rock with passion and a lot of energy.

If I'm tired I like to drink half a bottle of Mate before.

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<https://twitter.com/PragTob/status/1348939085096906752>



Laura @alicetragedy · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @alicetragedy y @hola_soy_milk

Depending on the event and my mood, I will either distract myself with another talk, spend time with friends / good acquaintances, get some fresh air, and/or be alone to take deep breaths. (also: I need to go to the bathroom right before, lol)

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<https://twitter.com/alicetragedy/status/1349088550550122496>



Terence Lee @hone02 · 13 ene.

...

En respuesta a [@hola_soy_milk](#)

I get super nervous when speaking even after so many years. It's at the highest the 30 minutes before the talk. A lot of it goes away once I start speaking on stage. [@tenderlove](#) gave me a pro tip of dressing up for my talks and having a ritual to help for calming my nerves.

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Emanuela @brassy · 12 ene.

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En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

Being nervous means you care. And this is great. I used to get really nervous the morning of the talk, especially if I had time to 'tweak' the presentation. I started to book a hairdress appointment just for styling. I'm relaxed and I feel great, I love it! 1/2

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Emanuela @brassy · 12 ene.

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+ Knowing by heart the first 2/5mins of the presentation really helps. This is why I usually use the intro to share a personal story, something that I know well and I'm comfortable sharing. After that, you have a connection with the audience and it's easier!

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<https://twitter.com/brassy/status/1348952612700303360>





JulieG @stringy · 13 ene.

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En respuesta a [@hola_soy_milk](#) y [@yatil](#)

Oh boy, do I get nervous! It increases slowly from the time I wake up. Rehearsing a LOT is the most helpful thing. Also wearing a shirt that doesn't show sweat marks, and having a clean shirt to change into if I'm going to be spending time with people afterwards.

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Confessions of a Public
Speaker
Scott Berkun



acid @acid23 · 12 ene.

I learned that practicing helps me a lot! Ideally with some feedback from friends/professionals. And there's a bunch of useful advice in "confessions of a public speaker".

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<https://twitter.com/acid23/status/1348969962036228096>



Srushtika Neelakantam @Srushtika · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

1 min guided deep breathing exercise helps a lot! 😊 Also, actively stopping any thoughts about the content of the talk helps me too... Otherwise, I keep thinking if I remember it all and it quickly goes into a loop of revising what's supposed to come after what etc. 🤪

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Michelle Barker @MicheBarks · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a [@hola_soy_milk](#)

Yes, definitely! Especially in the 1–2 hours before. One thing that helps me is to massively focus on memorising and delivering the beginning part of the talk, and rehearse it over and over again in my head. I know that if I deliver a good beginning I can get through the rest.

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<https://twitter.com/MicheBarks/status/1348969291786424320>

During the talk

During the talk

- Find a few friendly faces smiling at me, and occasionally speak ‘at’ them!

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- It takes a few minutes, and then I’m in the flow

During the talk

- Find a few friendly faces smiling at me, and occasionally speak ‘at’ them!
- It takes a few minutes, and then I’m in the flow
- Remember: I’m watching myself the closest out of everyone



Mistakes/mishaps happen,
and folks will rarely notice
or remember



🎮 Silvia Gaetano 🍫 @meowstations · 12 ene.

Anyway, while prep is important, the main thing for me is to know that I like what I'm talking about & the message I'm conveying is all mine. To expand: these are my words and my opinions about the subject matter and I'd love for everyone to feel as excited about it as I do.

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🎮 Silvia Gaetano 🍫 @meowstations · 12 ene.

To cope I make sure I have something to fidget with that isn't distracting to the audience (no endless clicking of pens or pieces of paper that shake because of nerves).

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🎮 Silvia Gaetano 🍫 @meowstations · 12 ene.

Monitoring my breathing and talking speed, as well as taking sips of water during the talk also help with slowing and calming down.

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<https://twitter.com/meowstations/status/1348953433995431936>



Laura @alicetragedy · 12 ene.

...

During the talk, I've learned not to fidget but instead drink water. I actually write this in my presentation notes: [DRINK WATER!]. It's super helpful! I time it during moments where I think the audience may need to think a bit or take photos of the slides for social media.

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<https://twitter.com/alicetragedy/status/1349088550550122496>



Tobias Pfeiffer @PragTob · 12 ene.

...

During the talk it _really_ helps me to find that one person who looks at the talk very interested, nods and laughs at your jokes. Every time I get a bit nervous I look at them. I still remember the face of that person for my @FullStackFest talk :D

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Content warning: Medication

Please consult with a specialist!



Cassie Evans @cassiecodes · 10h

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I take propranolol. It's a beta blocker that stops the physical reactions to nerves.

You still feel nervous but your body doesn't betray you - sweaty palms, shaky knees, tremors in your voice etc.

It is a miracle drug.



Cassie Evans @cassiecodes · 10h

...

Also, slow circular breathing, standing very tall to allow air into your lungs, physically 'shaking out' the nerves and telling yourself you're excited not nervous.

(excitement and nerves are very similar)



<https://twitter.com/cassiecodes/status/1348947543565209600>



Andy Bell @piccalilli_ · 9h

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I'm a desperately nervous speaker to the point where I can barely breathe before I go on stage.

The thing that gets me on stage is the buzz you get while you're on there, but longterm, I'm gonna head @cassiecodes advice and take some propranolol or kalms in the run-up.

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Andy Bell @piccalilli_ · 9h

...

In terms of getting through it all, my speaker notes are a full script. It means I don't panic having to remember everything and it really helps me to stay on time too!

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Martin Splitt @g33konaut · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a [@hola_soy_milk](#)

Boy, yes, I get nervous! I'm taking every talk seriously and I don't want to waste anyone's time. I deal with this by going through the story I want to share one more time and I imagine one person in the crowd to go "Oh, I didn't know that, thanks!" and that makes me happy

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↑

After the talk / Q&A

Story Time:
my experience

“Huh, I don’t know, great
question!

“I don’t know about this, but
let’s talk about it off stage”

Saying you don't have the
answer is not only A-OK, but
A-wesome!

“This isn’t a question but
more of a statement”



soapdog @soapdog · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a [@hola_soy_milk](#)

I don't usually get nervous. That is because I realised that my talk doesn't need to be perfect. I'm not doing it because I need to add value to my persona and get better job offers. I just like talking and storytelling.

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soapdog @soapdog · 12 ene.

...

I also realised that some people in the audience, maybe a lot of them, will know more than I do. Some will ask tricky questions, and it is OK to tell them you don't know, that you'll research that and you can get back to them if they want.

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soapdog @soapdog · 12 ene.

...

Once the pressure of giving a perfect talks and knowing all the answers was lifted, there was no reason for being nervous anymore.

<https://twitter.com/soapdog/status/1348953733753950208>
3/3

Folks will approach and
thank you for your talk

But! It's totally cool to go get
some private downtime

Reframing



Lian Li 🏳️‍🌈 @Chimney42 · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @Chimney42 y @hola_soy_milk

But most importantly, I've learned and accepted that being nervous is just a part of this. And actually, a really good and important part, because if I'm not nervous, it means I don't care and if I don't care, why even bother?

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Grayson, artist and creator @graysonarts · 12 ene.

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I get nervous but I reframe nervous as excited (ultimately they are the same emotion) and it's always when I'm waiting to go on stage or go up to the podium.

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<https://twitter.com/graysonarts/status/1349004986722754560>



Silvia Gaetano 🍵 @meowstations · 12 ene.

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Ultimately though, I've just come to realise that I just get nervous and that's OK. If it's a topic I want to talk about, the nerves are worth it 🎉

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<https://twitter.com/meowstations/status/1348953433995431936>



Franziska Hauck   @_francied · 12 ene.

...

Of course I get nervous! But I need and leverage the excitement. It's half the fun!

It takes between 1 to 5 minutes to be „in the groove“. That's when it turns and I'm hyperfocused on the talk. Flow, if you will.

If I didn't get nervous I would feel lack of respect for the talk

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Chris Heilmann @codepo8 · 12 ene.

...

14 years on stage and I get nervous, directly before the talk. I use that energy to drive my talk. I get into a “well, I am here and I might as well do my best” mode.

If I ever not get nervous, I'll stop presenting, as that is the day I think I am more important than my content.

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<https://twitter.com/codepo8/status/1348961830237040641>



Jill Augustine, PhD. @jill_codes · 12 ene.

...

En respuesta a @hola_soy_milk

I am an experienced speaker and have spoken to audiences of 500+. I get nervous once the talk scheduled before mine has started speaking. I don't really "handle it". I practice mindfulness/noting...

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Jill Augustine, PhD. @jill_codes · 12 ene.

...

which means acknowledging the feeling, but not avoiding it. I don't see being nervous as bad. It's just how I feel in the moment. I appreciate this takes a lot of mental agility and training though 😊

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https://twitter.com/jill_codes/status/1348933617456656384

Before I go,
a few points:

Loads of people get
nervous!

It's not bad to finish
early, or a minute or
two late.

You are likely the most focused on your body language at the time.

The audience wants
you to succeed!

Thank you

Ramón Huidobro

@hola_soy_milk