



S E M I N A R S

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# Conquer Stage Fright: Perform with Confidence!

1. Understand the physiology and psychology of stage fright
2. Complete 50 relaxation sessions
3. Establish an optimal performance mindset
4. Use the Five Stages of Peak Performance
5. Positive performance practice

## 1. Understanding stage fright

Stage fright is caused by the activation of your body's stress response (mid brain). You have been triggered by the presence of a real or imagined danger. "Super juice" is now flooding your mind and body. Fight, flight or freeze takes over. The more it upsets you, the more intense it gets until you determine that you are safe.

### Physical Symptoms

Muscle tension  
Increased heart rate  
Shallow, rapid breathing  
Cold, clammy hands  
Dry mouth  
Stomach distress

### Emotional Symptoms

Distorted thinking  
Feeling overwhelmed  
Distracted or hyper-focused  
Emotionally upset  
Desire to run away  
Loss of confidence

### Interventions for stage fright

1. Relaxation exercises
2. The ten-count breathing exercise
3. Unlock the breath
4. "My body's activated, so what!"
5. Mental rehearsal/visualization
6. Create an optimal performance mindset: Bold, Confident, Free!
7. Positive self talk: "If it's not life threatening, it's trivial!"
8. Use the Five Stages of Peak Performance
9. Positive performance practice



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## The Five Stages of Peak Performance©

### Stage I. The foundation

What is your goal or intention?

Why are you pursuing this goal? What is your motivation?

How are you committed to being as you pursue this goal?

**Write down three words that describe how you are committed to being as you pursue your performance goal.**

Trigger words: \_\_\_\_\_

### Stage II. Ready!

Skill acquisition and mastery – Practice, Practice, Practice!

Constant self-awareness: evaluate, critique, experiment, observe, adjust.

Mental preparation/visualization.

How are you being as you pursue your goal?

What is incomplete? What is your plan to complete it?

When you plan your work and work your plan, your plan works!

**Important:** Declaring your preparation complete allows you to perform with freedom. Declare complete what is incomplete!

### Stage III. Set!

Get yourself mentally and physically set to perform.

Physical preparation includes your costume, props, transportation, food, grooming, etc.

Being mentally set: attention control, positive self-talk and mindset.

Pre-performance routines (warm-up routines) to access motor programs. No Rituals!!

Trigger words to access the desired mental states for the performance.

How are you being? Confident, Expressive, Bold!

### Stage IV. Go!

The performance.

Step into the sandbox, stay in the sandbox! Go Play!

Limited self-awareness, a present focus of awareness, ease, flow, in the zone.

No thoughts of victory, no thoughts of defeat!

### Stage V. The post performance debriefing

Each performance is a practice in performing.

What worked?

What didn't work?

What will you do next time?

**No post performance bashing!**



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## The Performance Attitude Questionnaire (Short form)

Complete the following sentences. Just put down whatever comes to mind.

- \_\_\_ Performing is...
- \_\_\_ I know I am ready to perform when...
- \_\_\_ The audience...
- \_\_\_ Criticism is...
- \_\_\_ What I like most about performing is...
- \_\_\_ Mistakes are...
- \_\_\_ I'd have more confidence if...
- \_\_\_ I get stressed out when...

## The Performance Profile Questionnaire (Short Form)

The **Performance Profile Questionnaire** explores different aspects of your experience as a performer. Read each question and reflect on your personal experience.

Answer each sentence as **TTrue, FFalse or SSometimes.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I usually feel anxious before I perform.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I am easily distracted when I perform.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I usually feel confident about my performance preparation.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I critique my performance while I am playing.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I am afraid of mistakes.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I often think about past "bad" or embarrassing performances.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I am critical of myself.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I have confidence in my ability to perform well.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I often wonder what others think of my playing.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy performing.



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## Resources

Music 259 BYU School of Music, Fall 2017: The Psychology of Music Performance

Jonskidmore.com

*Relax the Body Focus the Mind*: Skidmore, Found at jonskidmore.com

*Conquer Stage Fright, Perform with Confidence, the Intensive Workshop*: Skidmore

This is a greatly expanded and much more personal continuation of the workshop you participated in today. See jonskidmore.com for more details.

*Creating and Optimal Performance Mindset the Intensive Workshop*: Skidmore May 13<sup>th</sup> 2017.

This workshop is all about how to break out of the trap of the “default” mindset and step into the possibilities of your designed mindset. See jonskidmore.com for more details.

*Performance Anxiety Strategies: A Musician's Guide to Managing Stage Fright*: McGrath, Hendricks and Smith

*The Inner Game of Music*: Barry Green

*Performance Anxiety*: Maisel

*Applied Sports Psychology: Personal Growth to Peak Performance*: Williams

You Tube: Meditation/Relaxation

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