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Psychology today: Why Are We Scared of Public Speaking?

Communicating your ideas clearly and presenting them openly in public forum is essential component of success across several domains of life. Being good public speaker can help you advance your career, grow your business, and form strong collaborations. It can help you promote ideas and move people to action on issues that affect them directly and society at large. To do any of these things well requires fair amount of standing in front of audience and delivering a pitch, an idea, or a body of work. And sometimes only thing that stands between you and your audience is fear.

Glossophobia — a really cool and geeky name for fear of public speaking — appears when you are performing or expecting to perform oral presentation or a speech in front of other people. Fear of public speaking is frequently but incorrectly cited as people's biggest fear. Fear of public speaking is often not people's biggest fear; there are many other things that people are really scared of. Nevertheless, fear of public speaking is very common; approximately 25 percent of people report experiencing it.

While some people experience debilitating form of glossophobia, even a mild form can have devastating effects. Fear of public speaking can prevent you from taking risks to share your ideas, to speak about your work, and to present your solutions to problems that affect many people — and as a result, it can affect how much you grow personally and professionally, and how much impact you can have. At same time, any negative public speaking experiences will make it less likely that you will speak in public in future — fear teaches you to protect yourself from risky situations.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/smashing-the-brainblocks/201711/why-are-we-scared-public-speaking>