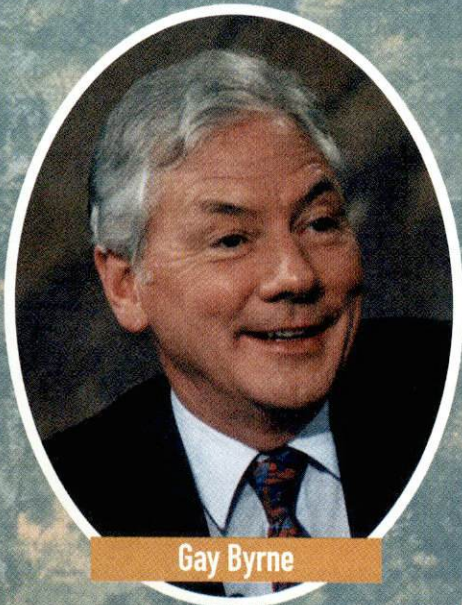


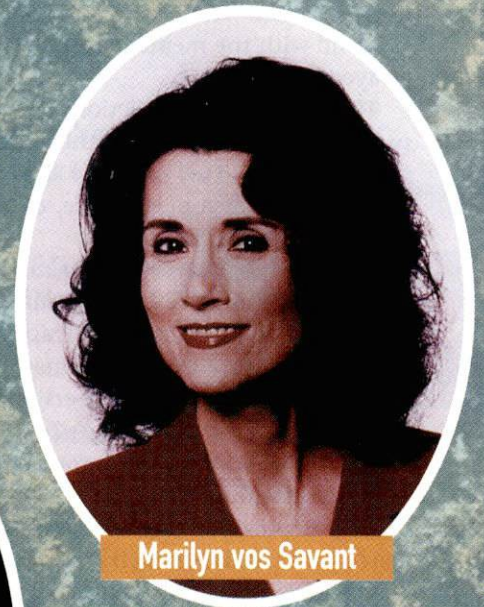
The TOASTMASTER®

JANUARY 2000

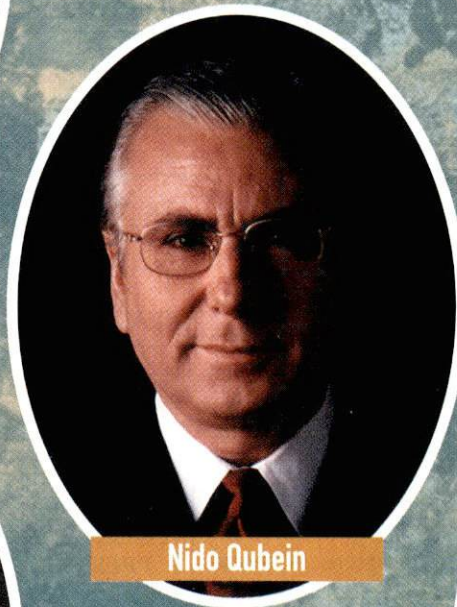
Meet the Five Outstanding Speakers of 1999



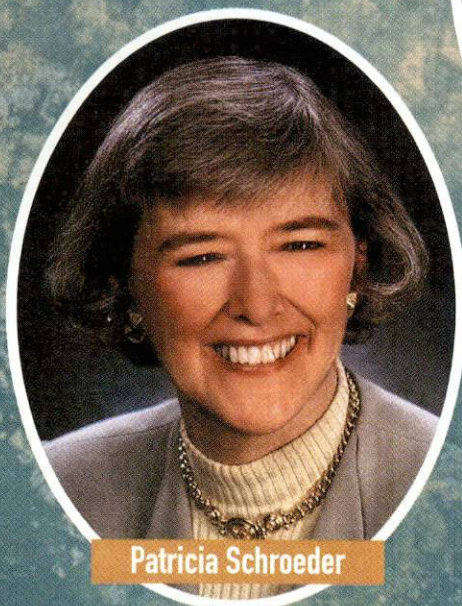
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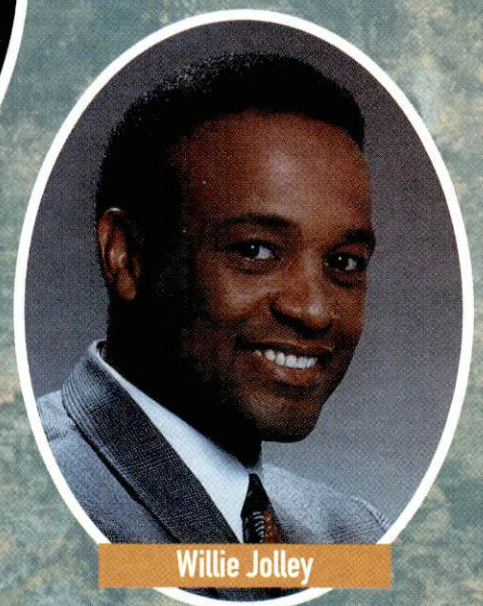
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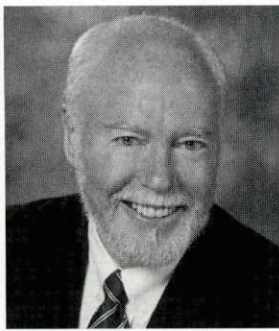


Willie Jolley

ALSO INSIDE:

Managing
Your Mind

Breaking the
Ice in Style



VIEWPOINT

That Organization Chart

Like our organization chart. All organizations depict their structure in a chart, whether they call it an organization chart, wiring diagram or some other more obscure term. Our structure is unique, an inverted pyramid with the member at the top and all other levels arrayed in support.

This is a graphic depiction of one of the most basic premises of quality in organizations, wherever in the world they are. This principle is a radical focus on and dedication to customer service, or as we phrase it, "service to the member."

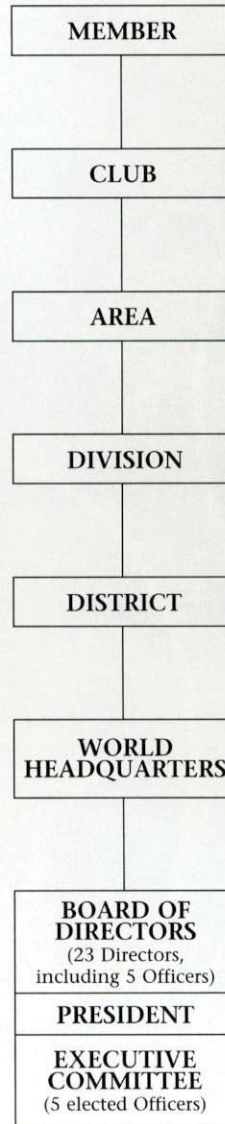
As we enter a New Year and the annual cycle of New Year's resolutions, let's renew our commitment to customer service at every level. More specifically, in our clubs, let's ensure every Toastmasters meeting provides an opportunity for our members to learn and grow. Let's commit to work the Successful Club Series module "Moments of Truth" in every one of our clubs within the next six months. Let's adopt mentoring programs that don't just provide lip service but actually keep mentors actively involved with each new member. Let's ensure that every club member is involved in either the communication or the leadership educational track (or both).

All other levels of Toastmasters leadership below the club (remember that inverted structure) have as their primary responsibility the duties to serve and support our clubs. Every one. Let's commit as area governors, at the division level, among our district teams, on our board of directors, to build and maintain quality clubs. If we gain and maintain this focus, we cannot fail to build quality at every level. We will have distinguished clubs, areas, divisions and districts everywhere in Toastmasters. Without this focus we are doomed to failure. If we lack a quality focus, whatever else we do, we will neglect our primary leadership responsibility to serve and support our clubs.

So, fellow Toastmasters, I ask you to join me in this New Year's resolution: to eat, sleep, live, love and breathe quality. And quality means customer service, everywhere in Toastmasters. If there's ever any doubt, just remember that ol' organization chart, and who's at the top.

Tim Keck

Tim Keck, DTM
International President



The TOASTMASTER

Publisher TERRENCE MCCANN
Editor SUZANNE FREY
Associate Editor NATALIE TRAN
Editorial Assistant MADGE HAMMOND
Graphic Design SUSAN CAMPBELL

TI OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Founder DR. RALPH C. SMEDLEY

OFFICERS

International President TIM KECK, DTM
2333 Kapiolani Blvd., #2108
Honolulu, HI 96826

Senior Vice President JOANNA MC WILLIAMS, DTM
17610 Midway #134-349
Dallas, TX 75287

Second Vice President ALFRED R. HERZING, DTM
20365 Via La Vieja
Yorba Linda, CA 92887

Third Vice President GAVIN BLAKEY, DTM
46 Corona Avenue QLD 4060
Australia

Immediate Past President TERRY R. DAILY, DTM
2715 Garland Lane N.
Plymouth, MN 55447

Executive Director TERRENCE J. MC CANN
Toastmasters International
P.O. Box 9052
Mission Viejo, CA 92690

Secretary-Treasurer MARCIE POWERS
Toastmasters International
P.O. Box 9052
Mission Viejo, CA 92690

DIRECTORS

DILIP R. ABAYASEKARA, DTM
17 Round Hill Road
Camp Hill, PA 17011

ROBERT P. BRENTIN, DTM
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Midland, MI 48640

J. ANDRÉE BROOKS, DTM
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Roanoke, VA 24018

DWIGHT C. EDSTROM, DTM
139 Cleveland
Rapid City, SD 57701

PATRICIA FONG, DTM
6657 Gloria Drive
Sacramento, CA 95831

MARSHA A. JAMES, DTM
1340 S. Beverly Glen Blvd., #308
Westwood, CA 90024-5224

MARJORIE J. KENNEDY, DTM
5110 High Pointe Drive
Pensacola, FL 32505

GLEN E. MURPHY, DTM
134 Tarawera Road
Rotorua, New Zealand

RUTH S. NEWSOME, DTM
504 Hickory Road
Bristol, TN 37620

SUSAN NIVEN, DTM
21080 - 20th Avenue
Langley, B.C., Canada V2Z 2G3

TERRY G. SCHUTT, DTM
714 White Horse Pike, Apt. 7
Oaklyn, NJ 08107

GREGORY D. SCOTT, DTM
17130 Van Buren Blvd., #95
Riverside, CA 92504

JOHN D. SMELSER, DTM
2714 Avalon Court
Richmond, TX 77469

PAULA D. TUNISON, DTM
P.O. Box 26338
Austin, TX 78755

JOHNNY T. "PAWE" UY, DTM
c/o Rostita's Colon, Colon Street
6000 Ceby City
Philippines

JAMES A. VOGEL, DTM
4756 Hamilton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45223

SHELLEY D. WALKER, DTM
54 Ravine Drive
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

FLOY C. WESTERMEIER, DTM
57839 Inglewood Lane
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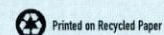
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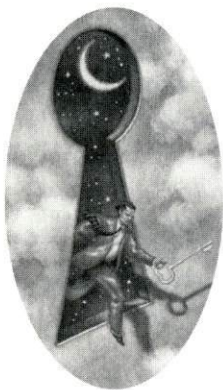
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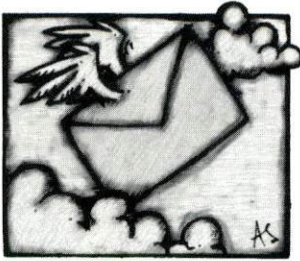
Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, giving them the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs, thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.



LETTERS

VETERANS HONORED

I was deeply touched by the article "The Hanoi Hilton Toastmasters" (October 1999) and the lessons of courage and forgiveness exemplified by Laird Gutteresen and his fellow Toastmasters. Thanks for honoring these men's bravery.

Cathy Coulthard, CTM
Eclectic Image Club 8542-35
River Falls, Wisconsin

PLEASED WITH PLAQUE

Yesterday I received my Distinguished Toastmaster plaque and a very nice letter from Executive Director Terrence McCann. The letter I expected. The plaque was a pleasant surprise!

Forward-thinking organizations seek ways to add value to their membership programs. The plaque is just that – added value. Thank you for making the effort to elevate Toastmasters' highest award to a special level.

McCann said in his letter, "Attaining this award was not an easy task." He is, of course, correct. However, as I look back over the last five years of my Toastmasters experience, I realize that if members will just stay true to their Toastmasters Promise, the DTM is actually easily obtained. It is we, the members, who make our journey toward DTM difficult, not Toastmasters. It's sad that we short-change ourselves by not striving to reach each level along the Communication and Leadership tracks. Toastmasters has not been tried and found without benefit; rather if members don't benefit, Toastmasters has not been tried.

William L. May Jr., DTM
USMC Advanced Toastmasters Club #8929-58
Spartanburg, South Carolina

CZECH CLUB CELEBRATES DIAMOND JUBILEE

Our club, Pardubice Enthusiasts, is young. Next year we will celebrate our second anniversary, but even after this short existence, we have realized the importance of having a Toastmasters club in our community. So we wanted to pay tribute to Toastmasters International and its founder during this Diamond Jubilee year.

Last October 4, our club participated in our city's Pardubice Festival by holding a special public meeting. The objective: to create awareness of the importance of public speaking skills and how our club benefits our city. We met at the entrance hall of European House, a prestigious multicultural site, and the city's mayor was among those attending the event. We focused on speech presentations and explaining Toastmasters ideas.

Tomas Wagner, CTM
Vice President, Public Relations
Club 9854-U
Czech Republic

INTENTIONAL TOASTMASTER

In 1989, I quit a high-paying job because I had to make a presentation to my colleagues. This year – so that I would have to face my fears of public speaking – I intentionally started a new business that required me to present training seminars. I joined Toastmasters in July to help me overcome my apprehension.

Within two months, I felt as if a million pounds had been lifted off my shoulders. Since then I have made a speech every month. My fellow Toastmasters' support is priceless. I also have made professional presentations to several audiences

and have received rave reviews. What a thrill! Thanks, Toastmasters.

Patty Kreamer
Pittsburgh Club 144-13
Bridgeville, Pennsylvania

TACKLE YOUR FEAR

Joining Toastmasters is one of the best things I have ever done. It has taken me from having very little confidence to being able to tackle hurdles head-on. It has changed my way of thinking toward goals, and now I look for challenges instead of backing away. I've learned that you have to push yourself out of your comfort zone to succeed. I enjoy seeing new members finding out what Toastmasters can do for them.

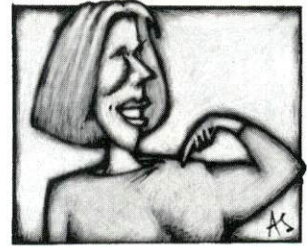
Simon Marsden, CTM
Toastmasters of Waikan 9572-72
Waikanae, New Zealand

QUALITY, NOT QUANTITY, IS PARAMOUNT

My response to the "For Some, More is Better" letter in the December 1999 issue is that whether Toastmasters meetings are one- or two-hours long is not as important as the quality and substance of the meetings.

Since I joined Toastmasters in 1975, I have belonged to clubs with meeting times ranging from one to two hours. The time was irrelevant. I have seen too many clubs in my travels in the United States and overseas whose meetings lasted two hours but failed to follow basic Toastmasters guidelines. Rather than sticking to the agenda, socializing was more the order of the day. I feel it is wrong to assume that clubs that meet for two hours get twice as much benefit as those that meet for one hour.

Bowman Olds, ATM
Bowman.M.Olds@saic.com
Speak Out at SAIC (SOS) Club 6984-27



By Loretta Dabbs, CTM, CL

From teacher to Toastmaster:

Committed to a Cause

WHEN I WALKED INTO MY FIRST TOASTMASTERS MEETING A YEAR ago, the air seemed charged with electricity. Four people greeted me at the door. Pizza and sodas were being served. And everyone was smiling. Someone sat next to me and began chatting.

“What’s going on here?” I wondered aloud. It turned out to be a going-away party for two dedicated ATMs, but for me it was a party celebrating a turning point in my life.

On that lucky day, I knew that my commitment to Toastmasters was a given. By the end of the hour, I had joined the club. Most members of my club are CTMs, and so my goal from day one was to become a CTM within a year. I planned to commit to making one speech every four to five weeks (six tops).

With a pen, I marked dates on a calendar when I would give each of the 10 speeches in Toastmasters’ first manual, beginning with the Ice Breaker. By completing all 10, I would earn my CTM and, I hoped, emerge from a cocoon of silence to become like one of the confident role models before me.

I was impressed by all the skills I would have to master to achieve my goal. Before I retired from my job as an elementary school teacher, I had many opportunities to speak. I spoke every day with confidence to my students, fellow teachers, counselors, administrators and groups of parents. But those presentations were not threatening – I was in my element and glowing. However, the thought of going beyond my safety sphere was a threat. Consequently, at big committee meetings and district conferences, I was silent unless addressed directly.

On the night of my retirement dinner, I was not required to speak but I felt compelled to, after having taught 28 successful years in the same school district. I had practiced a five-minute presentation for weeks, but when greeting at least 300 people at the big event, my voice constricted, and the joy that I had wanted to convey came out

in a whisper, even with a microphone. My last hurrah was humiliating.

The first thing I did after retirement was seek a Toastmasters club to join. Although I found a supportive, nonthreatening atmosphere at Toastmasters, each speech I gave was an ordeal. I kept asking myself, “Why

submit to such torture at age 62?”

Not only was I being closely observed, I was being judged by the evaluator and by every club member who knew what to look for. But the beauty of Toastmasters is that criticism was sandwiched between praise, and I was never made to feel foolish.

In each presentation, I made an effort to speak louder and to make eye contact with members of the audience. At first, I stared into space to maintain concentration. But after a while, the evaluations contained fewer negatives and more positives. My nervousness diminished speech after speech. One day – during my fourth speech – I felt complete confidence when talking about parenting. My old schoolmarm personality came to the fore, and that gave me the momentum needed to get through the next six speeches.

Ten months later I received my CTM. There was not a happier member in the room. Yet it took three more speeches in the Storytelling manual for me to really feel like a CTM. The most delicious moment was when the evaluator admitted he could find no fault with my presentation, and members concurred with applause.

Any Toastmaster can improve speaking skills with practice. However, practice comes with commitment to the cause. The pain of public speaking diminishes as confidence grows. Confidence grows with a concerted effort to give presentations on a regular basis. As with a savings account, the more you put in, the more you’ll have to spend when the time comes. **T**

Loretta Dabbs, CTM, CL, is a member of Orange County club 129-47 in Orlando, Florida.



The Invocation

Invocation, Meditation or Exhortation? Pick one and call it by its right name.

Every aspect of Toastmasters has its own way of stretching us and prompting us to grow. Every part of our agenda inspires us to draw on our own experiences, and every presentation stimulates a unique creative anxiety in each of us. Who can forget the worry accompanying the Ice Breaker? Who doesn't still experience some anxiety at Table Topics?

It's my hunch that the same thing happens with the invocation. It has become a traditional way to start meetings, yet little is said or written about competence and skill required for this particular speaking activity. Therefore, I'd like to call attention to the invocation and ask, "Is this the only way to start a meeting?"

The invocation has long been an honored practice when starting or convening events and meetings; we seem to have become comfortable with the invocation in almost any setting. Public prayer raises many issues in our political and legislative system. But my interest here is not political or legislative. Instead, I would like to explore how we, as Toastmasters, can best structure the invocation, how we can deliver it in light of its religious orientation, and how we can ascribe appropriate nomenclature to inspirational presentations that really are not invocations.

As a speaking activity intended to bring inspirational focus to the start of a meeting, the invocation should be brief and well-prepared. Whether original or not, the words need to have some personal meaning to the speaker. Rarely does anything sound more empty than an impersonal invocation.

The invocation also needs to be sensitive to the diverse religious orientations within a group. This makes the invocation perhaps the most delicate of all

speaking assignments and one that calls for careful preparation. Therefore, when the person designated to give an invocation is absent or no one has been assigned the task in advance, the club President should exercise caution in asking someone else to give an impromptu invocation. This is because the invocation is understood to be a prayer, making it unlike other impromptu speeches.

In my experience as a Toastmaster, I have witnessed more than one occasion of embarrassment when someone has been surprised with a request to give the invocation. Therefore, unless the President knows that a club member is comfortable giving the invocation without notice, it is advisable that the President assume the responsibility.

"... the audience might be guided to think of ocean waves – the symbol of power and consistency."

For those of us living in religiously diverse and culturally pluralistic countries, the definition of the word "invocation" and our cultural understanding of its purpose can create difficulties. As a result, it is important that the person giving the invocation respect that diversity.

On the other hand, an invocation is a prayer, and those present should respect the speaker's personal prayer orientation.

Toastmasters International is an organization concerned with appropriateness and definition. For example, a speaker might be corrected during an evaluation for using the word "podium" in place of the word "lectern." Or we differentiate between a "Working With Words" speech and a "Demonstration" speech. The same principle needs to be applied with respect to the invocation and other related activities.

Since the invocation is a form of prayer, some clubs decide to program start-up activities other than an invocation. Often these activities are identified as invocations

when, in fact, they are not. The following is a proposal to help ease this confusion:

INVOCATION

The invocation is a form of prayer, praise or worship, distinctly religious in nature. *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines it as "The act of petitioning for help or support," and as a "prayer of entreaty that is usually a call for divine presence." So the speaker is speaking on behalf of the group, addressing the deity. Invocation is intended to secure blessing or favor for those present, to express thankfulness, or to invite the presence of deity within the group.

The invocation may be specific by saying, "Dear God. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in Toastmasters. May our experience here inspire maturity and personal competence in each of us. Amen." Or it may be more general by saying, "Lord, may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable unto you."

MEDITATION

Meditation takes the form of contemplation or reflection. Here the speaker speaks as a member of the group to enhance awareness and vision. Meditation facilitates our attending to the inner person or to attributes that point to our higher potential.

In meditation, the speaker asks the audience to become aware of certain personal images, stories or experiences that have significant meaning to us and can offer strength for the day.

Meditation also can refer to the external. For example, the audience might be guided to think of ocean waves – the symbol of power and consistency. Similarly, an allusion to a gull or eagle might suggest that we should allow our spirits to soar with love, generosity and confidence.

EXHORTATION

Exhortation has to do with encouragement and motivation. Here the speaker speaks personally to the group. The emphasis is on behaviors, attitudes, feelings and perceptions related to success and achievement. The intention is to motivate.

Appealing to internal strength, exhortation calls for the listeners to be patient and disciplined. It recognizes the virtues of endurance and staying the course. If the speaker calls attention to times of uncertainty and struggle, then reminds listeners of their inner strength and wisdom, he or she is exhorting us to practice these qualities.

As an appeal to external strength, exhortation calls for us to take bold action and "Just do it!" Exhortation rec-



ognizes the virtue of initiative and risk-taking in challenging listeners to climb higher and to be more productive than ever.

Invocation, meditation and exhortation. If you have attended more than five or six Toastmasters meetings, you have probably heard them all. Yet we tend to call them all an invocation. Their function needs to be clarified in terms of what the speaker actually intends. It would be useful to hear the club President announce, "Toastmaster Mary Travis will now lead us in the invocation/meditation/exhortation." As an inspirational way to start meetings, this structure would point to specific speaking forms requiring different preparation and presentation skills. Finally, this framework provides appropriate alternatives for what has been traditionally considered a religiously oriented speaking assignment.

The invocation. Is it any way to start a meeting? Most assuredly. But it isn't the only way! **T**

*"Rarely does
anything sound more
empty than an
impersonal invocation."*

Michael Horton, CTM, is a professional speaker and consultant and a former member of two Toastmasters clubs in Ventura, California.

Learning to be positive

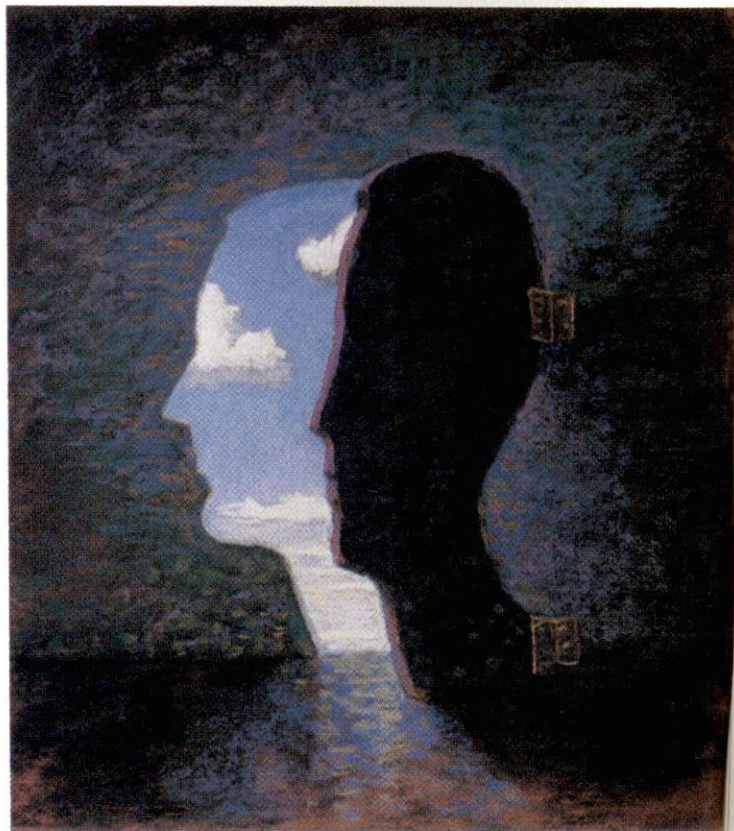
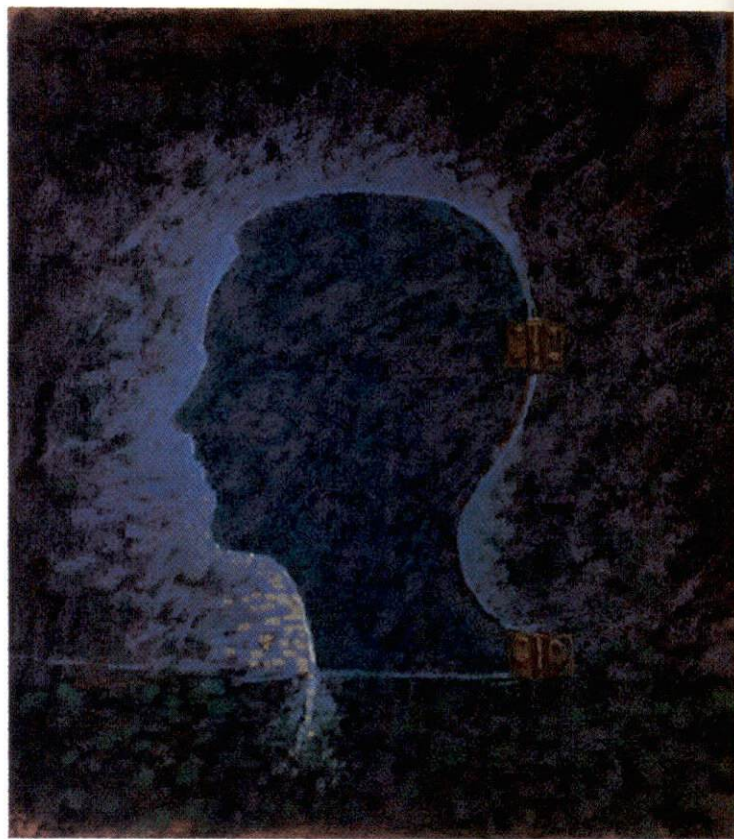
Managing Your Mind

Is the glass half-full? Or...is it half-empty?

For most of us, it depends on what's in the glass. A glass filled half way with the prune juice your mother insists you finish is definitely still half-full. But the same glass, containing the same amount of, say...a Starbuck's latte, is already half-empty. Regardless of what's actually *in* the glass, this age-old question serves as a litmus test for your state of mind. Are you a positive thinker or a pessimist? Finding the answer to that question may help determine the quality of the rest of your life!

Experts say positive thinkers are happier, healthier and more successful than those who dwell on the negative. Studies show that patients who maintain an upbeat attitude throughout an illness heal more rapidly than those who remain focused on their plight. Ask successful entrepreneurs how they got to the top, and chances are you'll be told they believed in themselves. Positive thinking and visual imagery are part of the training regimen of most celebrated athletes. Attitude is everything.

Why is it then, that for so many of us, the glass is perpetually half-empty? Motivational experts claim it's because we're not born with positive thinking skills. In fact, quite the contrary. Humans are equipped with more negative gauges than positive, which throughout centuries have served as survival devices. Upon hearing a loud noise, we are programmed to duck or recoil to protect ourselves. Centuries ago, that stimulus/response behavior may have saved you from a Woolly Mammoth! We're genetically predisposed to assume the worst after coming in contact with many stimuli. Good thing! We



BY KIMBERLY A. PORRAZZO ■ L L

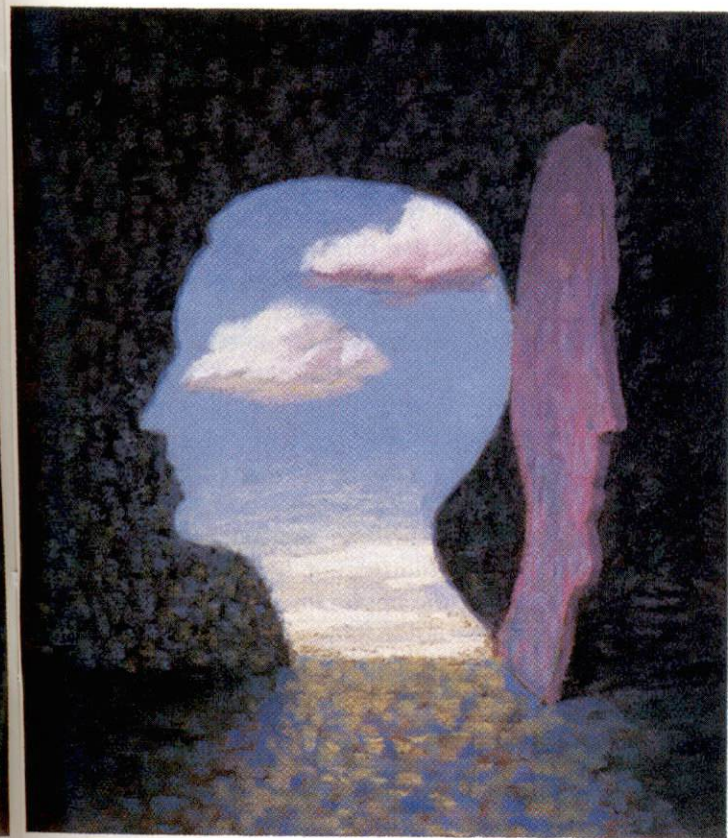
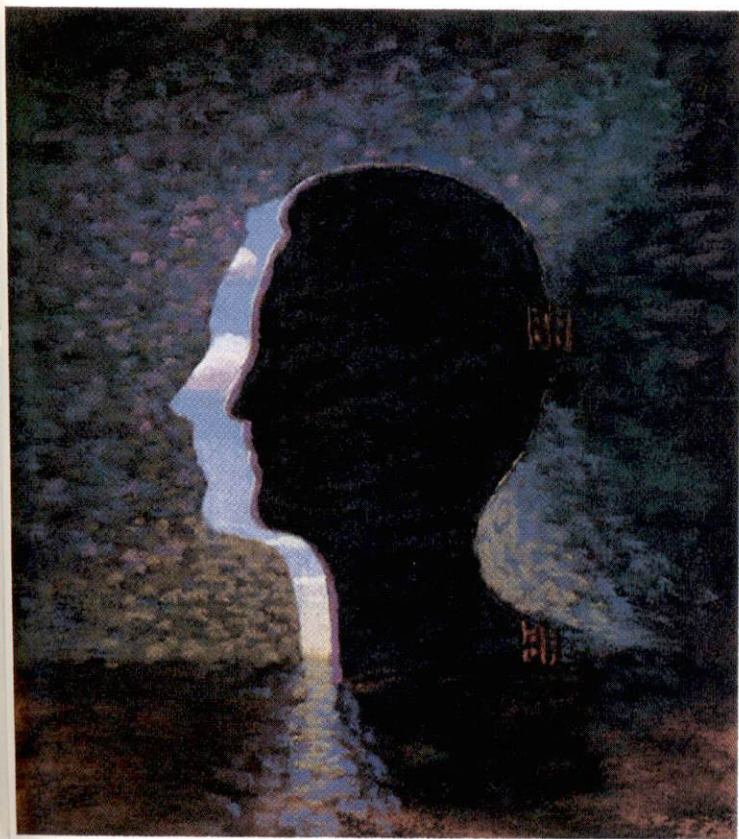


ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN GARN S

might not be here otherwise! While the outcome of such reactive behavior is positive (getting out of harm's way) the reaction itself (recoiling) is inherently negative. We're just wired that way.

Unlike its evil twin "negative thinking," which is innate, "positive thinking" is a learned behavior. It's not something that comes naturally. And that means learning to think positively requires practice. Once mastered, it can change your life.

"It's not just Pollyanna thinking anymore," claims psychologist Darrell Burnett of Laguna Niguel, California. "Neurologically, when you visualize yourself performing positively, certain parts of the brain are set in motion. The more you 'see' it, the more likely it is to happen."

Burnett, author of *Youth Sports and Self Esteem – A Guide For Parents* (Masters Press, Funagain Press), explained that the effects of positive thinking have been quantified. The theory was tested in a study that compared the scores of three groups of people making free-throw shots on a basketball court. After tallying scores from their first

"Neurologically, when you visualize yourself performing positively, certain parts of the brain are set in motion. The more you 'see' it, the more likely it is to happen."

attempts, each group was sent home with different instructions. Group A was told to practice every day. Group B was told *not* to practice. Group C was instructed not to touch a ball, but to visualize shooting free-throw shots for 10 minutes each day. When all three groups returned for retesting two weeks later, the first group (who practiced) improved its score by 25 percent. The second group (who didn't practice) showed no improvement. The last group (who only visualized shooting but never picked up a ball) improved a remarkable 23 percent! Hard evidence that positive thinking affects our performance.

Burnett pointed to another study on the subject, conducted at Emory University in Georgia. Two groups of runners were connected to a device that would monitor their brain waves. The first group was told to jog in place. The second group was told to sit quietly and to only visualize jogging in place. Monitors showed that in both groups almost every part of the brain that involving running was activated. "Neurologically it makes sense," Burnett explained. "The chemicals are set in motion."

What about the rest of us? Can consciously changing the way we think affect our performance too? Burnett says yes. "Feelings follow statements in the brain," he pointed out. "You can say, 'Boy am I tired,' and suddenly

you're very tired. Or, you might say, 'It's going to be one of those days,' and you spend the rest of the day looking for negative things. It really affects everything."

Take a moment and test this theory yourself. Close your eyes and relive one of your happiest moments. Recall the moment in vivid detail. Chances are good that thinking about the happy event made you smile. Why? As Burnett says, thoughts create feelings. In simple terms, your positive thoughts have produced a physical feeling. Like the "domino effect," ultimately your thoughts, which translate into feelings, affect your physical performance.

True positive thinkers don't just randomly choose issues or experiences in which to be upbeat. These happy people have cultivated a state of mind and nurtured it until it has become a part of their essence. They know that gaining control of their inner selves, their minds, will enable them to have more control of their outer selves; their bodies, their actions, and their decisions. They also know that this transformation takes place in small steps. So how do we train ourselves to become more positive?

*"You can improve your mental
fitness in the same way you
keep your body in shape."*

Best-selling author and Toastmasters' former Golden Gavel and Top Five Speaker Award recipient Harvey Mackey says it's a choice. "I learned at an early age that you have two choices when you wake up in the morning: to be an optimist, or to be a pessimist." Mackey adds that our lives are changed in two ways: by the books we read, and by the people we meet. "The way to keep yourself positive is to surround yourself with positive people." Mackey, whose books have sold over 10 million copies and have landed him on the *New York Times* Best-Sellers list four times, also runs a multimillion dollar company. "I hired most of the five hundred employees who work for me. If there is any trace of negativity in them, even if they are productive, I don't hire them," Mackey says.

When asked if he's ever encountered anything that he thought positive thinking wouldn't affect, Mackey talked of his bout with prostate cancer. After the initial impact, he decided approaching this challenge in a positive way couldn't hurt. "Six years ago I was stricken with prostate cancer and had radical cancer surgery at the Mayo clinic. I started calling survivors, looking on the Web and con-

tacting anybody and everybody for information. I decided to turn it into a positive. I'm convinced my frame of mind made a difference."

You can improve your mental fitness in the same way you keep your body in shape. Here are some daily exercises that will get you moving in the right direction.

PRACTICE SELF-TALK

It's important to become your own best friend. Be your own coach. Talk to your inner self as if you were talking to another person you care deeply about. When you're stuck in a long line at the bank, instead of continually looking at your watch and focusing on how frustrating the experience is, tell yourself to divert your thinking to something else. Think about something nice that happened that morning. Picture your children giving you a hug. Plan your evening. Each time your mind comes back to how long the wait is, listen to the coach inside of you and force your mind elsewhere.

DOES IT REALLY MATTER?

Okay, you blew it. As you wallow in the aftermath of a poorly delivered speech or terrible showing on the tennis court, keep your self-loathing at a minimum. Focus on putting the event into perspective. Ask yourself if your performance will make a difference in your life five years from now. Will you even remember it? If not, then let it go. Chalk it up to a learning experience and direct your energy to the future. Think about it tomorrow.

How you manage your mind affects your body. Lying awake at night worrying about something or reliving a failure only serves to postpone sleep, therefore depriving your body of something it needs to perform well. Your negative thoughts have a negative effect on your body. Remember the old expression, "Garbage in. Garbage out"? Nowhere is that more true than within yourself. Why not change your thought process?

If you can't think positively about what's on your mind, at least postpone your worry. Remember the way the *Gone With The Wind* heroine, Scarlett O'Hara, dealt with adversity? "I can't think about that now," she'd say, "I'll think about that tomorrow." She put the issue on the shelf, so to speak, until morning. By doing the same, you're not discounting the importance of your concern, you're merely putting it aside for a while, allowing your mind and body to regenerate. As a result, things probably will look a little better in the morning.

ALTERNATIVE THOUGHTS

Use the same determination you use at the gym when doing an extra ten repetitions on the weight machine to move your mind in a new direction. Coach your mind as you do your body. Rather than obsessing over being

stuck in a dead-end job, forge ahead with positive thoughts about how lucky you are to still have an income so you can search for the right job. Complaining about your current job only serves to bring you further down – mentally, physically and emotionally. Putting your attention on the soon-to-be-landed new position enables you to perform at a higher level now and during your job search. Behave “as if” the desired position is yours already.

According to Joan Harvey, author of *If I'm So Successful, Why Do I Feel Like Such a Fake?* (St. Martin's Press), 70 percent of successful people experience feelings of being imposters or fakes at some point. Dubbed the “imposter phenomenon,” the theory implies that high achievers sometimes feel as if they're playing a role and that eventually someone is going to find out that they aren't all they appear to be. However, by assuming a successful posture, by maintaining an authoritative air, these people have in fact been accepted as such. Dressing, walking and talking “as if” you've already become a success are sure ways to make it happen.

NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE

In the book, *You Can't Afford the Luxury of a Negative Thought* (Prelude Press), author Peter McWilliams points out that “fear is the energy behind doing your best work.” While fear may feel like a negative pull on your

brain, it can be tapped to propel you to your goal. As children we're trained that fear is a bad thing, something to listen to and run away from. As adults we know otherwise. The fear we feel before addressing a group of people can serve to make us better speakers. The adrenaline high can make us more animated and passionate about the topic. Focusing on fear alone can cause us to crumble at the podium. Positive thinkers realize and acknowledge the fear is there and it is real, yet they proceed anyway. Fear should be viewed simply as a force to move through.

As Eleanor Roosevelt said, “You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face... You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” Burnett offers three simple steps to living a more positive life:

1. “Realize that life is a process and try not to get hung up on the end product.”
2. “Allow yourself to make mistakes. Learn from them. Don't be preoccupied with trying not to make mistakes.”
3. “At night, before going to sleep, praise your efforts. Whatever happened today, say, ‘At least I'm still in the ballgame,’ – whatever that game is.” **T**

Kimberly A. Porrazzo is a freelance writer living in Lake Forest, California.



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Mental Muscle Building

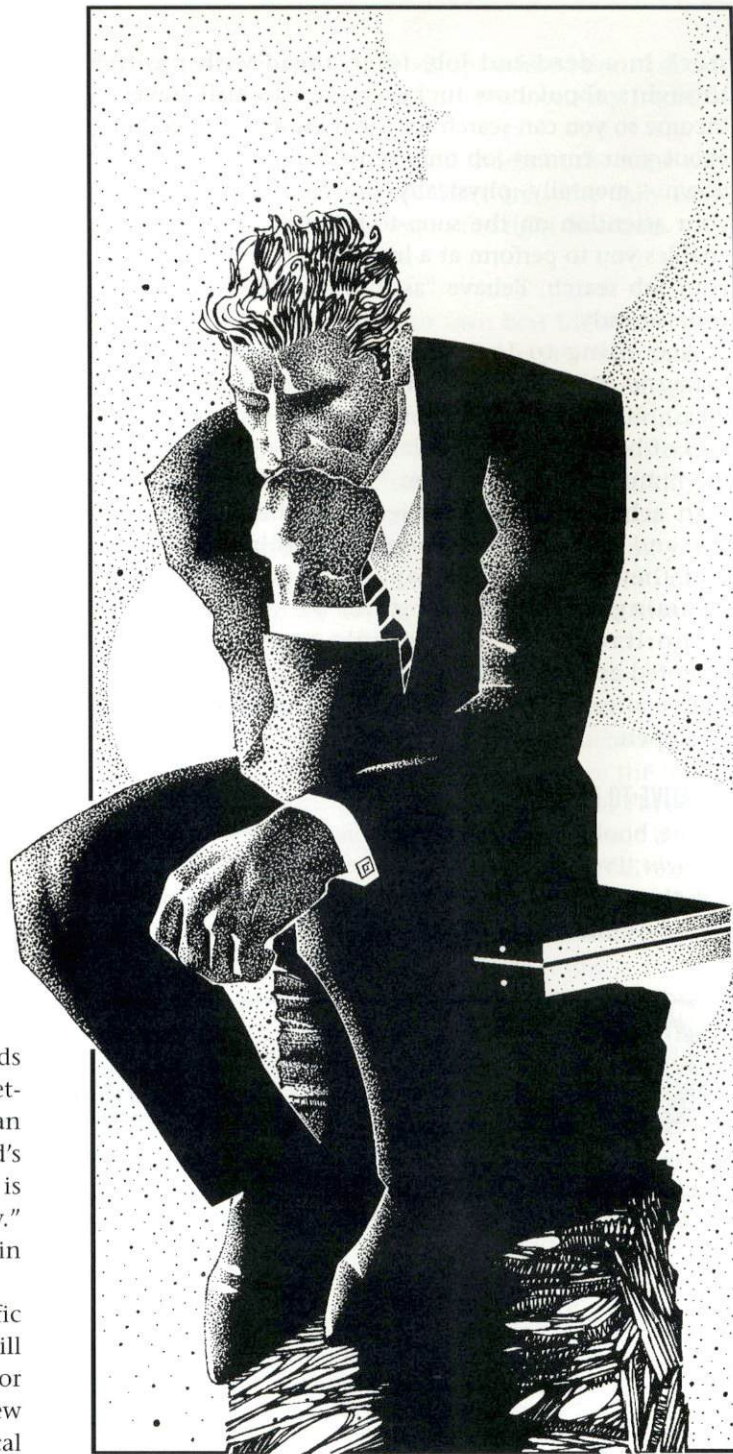
Your brain power: Use it or lose it!

Albert Einstein claimed that he had no special abilities, only persistence. But that was enough to develop the General Relativity Theory. With a great mind he might have solved a truly important problem – like how to generally keep your young children relatively quiet in restaurants.

Einstein was a humble genius, but even average minds remain mysterious marvels. The human brain is far better designed than any machine. Your eyes and brain can perform more image processing than all the world's supercomputers combined. Your associative memory is millions of times larger than any computer's "memory." And you have the capacity to reason, emote and create in a way that no machine will ever be able to.

The human brain has been called the last scientific frontier. Scientific knowledge of brain functions is still rudimentary. When trying to define consciousness, for example, scientists speak mostly in metaphor. But new studies have extinguished some persistent neurological myths.

Until recently, experts believed we were born with all the brain cells and neurons we'd ever possess. And that since after about age 30 a person loses significant numbers of neurons each day, mental decline is an inevitable result of aging. Wrong. Not only do we not lose cells, new research at Princeton University and the Salk Institute shows that we can actually add thousands of new neurons daily. Due to intensive mental and physical exercise, some octogenarians are sharper thinkers than they were as young adults.



"It's a classic case of use it or lose it," said psychologist Elizabeth Gould, who conducted the Princeton research. "It is very likely that if you lead a very active mental life, you are engaging the hippocampus." The hippocampus is an area of the brain that is vital for forming new memories. Our brains are more "plastic" than was once believed. My wife, a speech pathologist, tells me that we have the ability to "rewire," to create new mental circuitry that allows learning of new skills or relearning skills lost due to brain trauma.

Michael Merzenich, a pioneering neuroscientist at the University of California at San Francisco, agrees. "It's something that people don't realize. They don't think about the power that they have within themselves to change their brains."

Consider the example of a 65-year-old college professor who suffered a massive stroke that caused the loss of most muscle control on his right side. After five years of intensive therapy, he recovered fully. When he died many years later, autopsy revealed that the stroke had destroyed a large part of his brain – including the part that controlled many voluntary muscle movements. To regain those movements, another area of his brain had to be rewired to learn them. The new research partially explains this plasticity.

You're probably using a small fraction of your brain's potential. Estimates of how much brain capacity is typically used vary from 0.1 percent to 10 percent. But researchers are now encouraged by our ability to tap potential to learn new skills and stay mentally fit. And one of the new themes of brain research should encourage Toastmasters to stay with the program: For peak performance, our brains need lots of mental exercise, stimulation and new experiences.

The gift to us of this marvelous, mysterious instrument with bountiful creative potential implies almost a duty to tune our minds as best as we can. Since I'm probably operating closer to 0.1 percent of capacity than 10 percent, I decided to investigate current thinking on...thinking. (My ultimate quest, of course, was that elusive grail – the key to excellent child restaurant behavior.) I went looking for ways to think more clearly and creatively.

I found no shortage of suggestions. Here are a few favorites:

GO AGAINST THE GRAIN

Call this an antidote for jerking knees. We all have our viewpoints, developed – one hopes – from reflection, investigation and careful analysis of experience. Views are not inherently bad, of course, and our opinions might actually reside near the truth. But blindly accepting preconceived notions without holding them to the light and inspecting closely is lazy. Make it a habit and our minds become slovenly.

Author and speaker Reid Buckley suggests an exercise. Pick an issue you're passionate about, a cherished opinion you expound with serene confidence. Then find a piece by a favorite writer supporting your view, a text you think should silence and embarrass all dissenters. To you, at first reading, the arguments sing with untarnished beauty and stir your soul.

Now for the difficult, potentially painful, work of adjusting perspective. Dissect the piece from the opposite

viewpoint. Expose the leaps in logic, the weak evidence, the misleading statistics. Be merciless. Put your cherished author on trial. Conversely, find a piece promoting an opinion you loathe and rewrite it to make it stronger, more compelling. Ouch! Exercises like this can dislodge our brains from ruts and give us a better sense for what makes sound analysis.

SMART JOGGERS?

Possibly you thought those predawn joggers foggily observed during drowsy walks to fetch the morning paper were brainless – turns out they're building brain cells.

The Salk research showed a strong association between running and adding neurons in laboratory animals. Health-conscious mice that jogged on their little wheels developed up to twice as many new neurons as their couch-potato friends. Author of the study, neurobiologist Fred Gage, said, "The differences were so striking." He speculated that running and other vigorous exercise may provide similar results in people. Other researchers are confident they can prove that consistent aerobic exercise makes us smarter, possibly due to better blood flow to the brain and more efficient breathing.

WRITE IT DOWN

It may seem like cheating, but a great way to prevent losing important facts is to record them somewhere besides in our gray matter.

Our memories are remarkable, but they are overloaded. The only reliable way to retain facts with 100 percent accuracy is to place them on a notepad or computer screen. Writing information down has the added benefit of improving memory retention. Memory expert Douglas Herrmann, Ph.D., says, "You can throw notes away or never refer to them again and you'll still be much better off than if you didn't write them at all."

PICTURE THIS

What was the common thread to the inventing techniques of Leonardo da Vinci, Henry Ford, and Thomas Edison? All relied on sketching pictures to develop ideas. No wonder, says Thomas Armstrong, author of *7 Kinds of Smart*, the ability to think in pictures is important for complex reasoning.

Try an exercise: visualize an object from across the room. Mentally see it float toward you, elevated by your mental energy. Now, rotate it, first one way then the other. Let your mind's eye observe its detail from every perspective. Research shows that mental rehearsal can improve a performance, whether you're playing a violin or giving a speech.

Jack Nicklaus said he never hits a golf shot without "playing a little movie" in his head of precisely what he

*"For peak performance,
our brains need lots
of mental exercise,
stimulation and
new experiences."*

expects to happen. Speakers should mentally practice, visualizing the sights, sounds and sensations (including reverberating applause) of a successful speech.

FOCUS

Ours is the age of the 15-second sound bite, web surfing and remote control of 500 channels. Information hurtles past our scopes from all directions, but we often struggle with adjusting the focus and attending to detail for more than a moment.

High achievers in any field, from athletes to zoologists, have developed a laser-like ability to concentrate. World-class marksmen become trance-like (their brains emitting tell-tale, left-brain, alpha waves) just before pulling the trigger. Toastmasters have found that presenting a speech requires full concentration if we want to prevent a trance-like audience response.

You can improve your ability to filter the noise and concentrate your mind, and you can start now. Simply close your eyes and listen. Identify the distant siren, the wind brushing against your house, a ticking clock. Now pick one sound and dwell on it, tenaciously excluding all other input (unless your spouse is calling). Listen for subtle variations. Mentally see that chirping bird or the neighbor's lawnmower. Do this exercise periodically, lengthening the duration, and you might soon surf on your own alpha waves.

CREATE SOMETHING

Albert Einstein said, "When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the

"When I examine myself and my methods of thought, I come to the conclusion that the gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing positive knowledge."

— ALBERT EINSTEIN

gift of fantasy has meant more to me than my talent for absorbing positive knowledge." He was always imagining improbable possibilities, and if we want to be creative, we should too.

The key is to develop a skill for analogies and associations. The Pringles Potato Chip (bear with me) was created by a team trying to solve the problem of packing more chips into a given space. After several dead ends, they began focusing on analogies in nature. That led someone to think about packing leaves in a bag, and then wet leaves lying flat on each other. Eureka! Wet chips could be precisely formed to fit snugly.

Try the creative, fun exercise of starting with a big, blank sheet and a problem statement, like "How do I combine a trip to the next Toastmasters International convention with a family camping vacation?" Let your mind flow along a course of its choosing. Letting one thought trigger another, connect the ideas that meander more or less toward achieving the goal.

Like physical exercise, mental exercise is hard work. No pain, no gain, and all that. But the exciting news is that we have far more power to pump up our brains than once believed. There could be only one Einstein, but no one knows what you can accomplish – if you put your mind to it. **1**

Mark Hammerton, ATM-B, is a member of Strictly Speaking club 3025-62 in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

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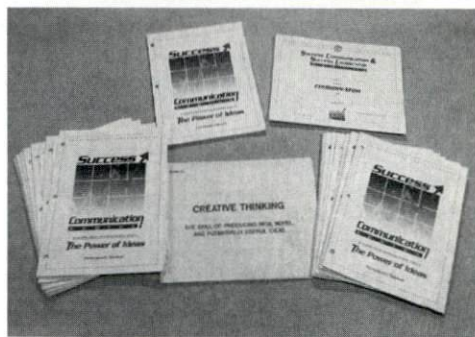
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Sheila Pierce, ATM-S

What you can do to boost your club's atmosphere.

Energize your meetings:

Don't be a Sucker!

HAVE YOU NOTICED HOW SOME CLUB MEETINGS SEEM TO sparkle like glitter and others seem to dawdle toward adjournment? The difference is energy! By raising the energy level of your meetings, you can make them enriching and empowering. Here are some things you can do to give every meeting a boost of energy!

When you're the speaker (or focal point, such as Topicsmaster or evaluator):

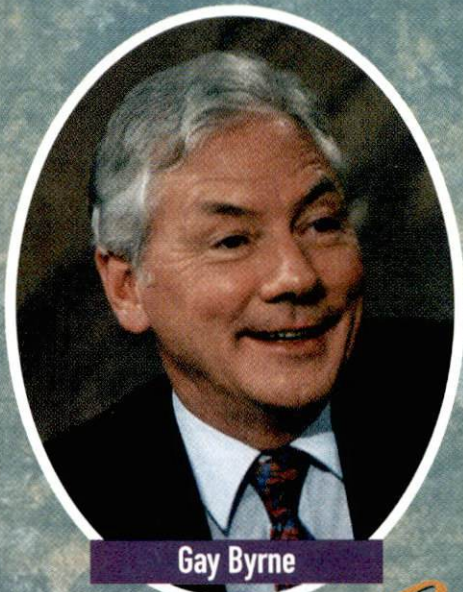
- **Walk quickly to the lectern.** This will be the audience's first impression of you. Put that spring in your step to tell your audience that the next few minutes are the highlight of your day!
- **Smile at your audience.** This may seem elementary, but it's nearly impossible not to smile back at someone who is smiling at you.
- **Project your voice.** A full, vibrant (even loud) voice causes the audience's ears to perk up. With ears perked up, listeners' posture, attention and energy level will follow.
- **Dress appropriately.** If casual attire (dressing down) tends to allow you to feel laid back, then dress up – as if you're having lunch with the president of your company.
- **Take care of yourself before the meeting.** Eat if you're hungry; take an aspirin if you have a headache; take a catnap if you're sleepy. The better you feel, the more energy you'll be able to share.
- **Don't whine** (unless it's part of your speech). Statements such as "I'm tired," "I had a rotten day," or "I almost didn't make it here tonight" need not be expressed. Now, if your club is like mine, we're all very close friends and share this type of information one-on-one to seek support, but it's not appropriate for broadcast.
- **Check your bad mood at the door.** No one wants to share it with you. And, chances are you'll forget to pick it up on your way out.

When you're the audience:

- **Send the speaker energy.** This can mean simply focusing on the speaker and wishing that person success. You also can visualize an exchange of light passing back and forth, a kind of wave in the space between you and the speaker. Don't forget to add a sprinkle of appreciation for the message the speaker is giving you.
- **Hold onto the eye contact the speaker makes with you.** Don't look away until he looks away from you. If a thought pops into your head regarding an evaluation comment, you can wait just a few seconds to make the note. It can be disheartening for a speaker (especially one who is working on effective eye contact) to have to search the room for eyes to connect with.
- **Smile at the speaker** (unless, of course, the speech content makes that inappropriate). A frowning face – or even a neutral face – can lower the speaker's energy, which will affect the energy level in the entire room.
- **Laugh out loud** (when appropriate). Even if it's not the funniest thing you've heard all day. Laughter is a sure energy boost!
- **Applaud heartily, loudly and enthusiastically when the speaker is finished.**
- **Dress appropriately.**
- **Take care of yourself.**
- **Check your bad mood at the door!**

Since we started practicing these simple techniques, my Toastmasters club is becoming increasingly energetic, and our meetings are more lively and exciting. You too can teach others to send energy. First, Toastmasters. Next, home. Then, the workplace. Soon – the world! **1**

Sheila Pierce, ATM-S, is a member of Chapter Two Club 5270-F in Irvine, California.



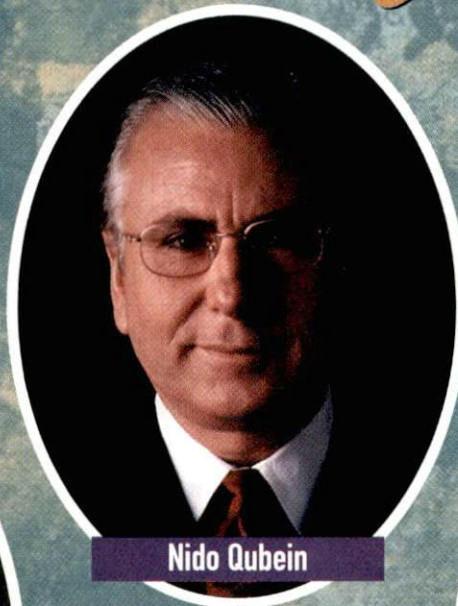
Gay Byrne

Toastmasters
International
honors a select
group of expert
communicators.



Marilyn vos Savant

Meet the Five Outstanding Speakers

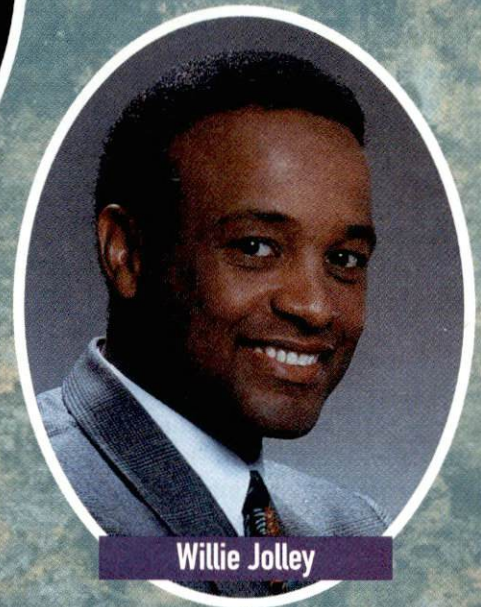


Nido Qubein

*When they speak,
we all listen!*



Patricia Schroeder



Willie Jolley

In keeping with an annual tradition, Toastmasters International last year asked members to name their favorite public speakers and leaders for the 1999 Top Five Speakers Award. Now the votes are in, the ballots are tallied and Toastmasters International is pleased to honor the following five outstanding communicators for their achievements and contributions in their respective fields of work:

■ **COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY:** **Nido Qubein**, chairman of Creative Services, an international consulting firm in North Carolina. A successful entrepreneur in the fields of banking, real estate and advertising, he is a partner in several companies and serves on the

ers of 1999

boards of 17 organizations. He is a prolific author, has served as president of the National Speakers Association and is the recipient of the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor.

■ **GOVERNMENT:** **Patricia Schroeder**, former U.S. Congresswoman from Colorado who left her post undefeated in 1996 after having served 24 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. She now is president and CEO of the Association of American Publishers, the national trade organization of the U.S. book publishing industry.

■ **INSPIRATIONAL/MOTIVATIONAL:** **Willie Jolley**, a popular motivational speaker whose trademark "inspiration" style involves singing, speaking and entertaining. Author of two books.

■ **EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL:** **Marilyn vos Savant**, a writer best known for her weekly *Parade* magazine column "Ask Marilyn," and her books on a variety of topics. She is listed in *Guinness Book of World Records* under "highest IQ" for both childhood and adult scores.

■ **MASS MEDIA:** **Gay Byrne**, retired host of Irish television's *The Late Late Show*. When the popular show ended after 37 years last May, it set a record as the world's longest-running live television talk show with the same presenter.

What can Toastmasters learn from these popular communicators? Let's take a closer look at the lives and speaking styles of each of the Five Outstanding Speakers of 1999:

Nido Qubein

Living an Immigrant's Dream



In 1966, 17-year-old Nido Qubein (pronounced Koo-bane) left his native country with a handful of English words and a head full of dreams. He also brought the simple belief that hard work and a clear vision would make those dreams come true.

It worked. Today the widely-acclaimed business leader, author, speaker and philanthropist not only lives his dreams, he has dedicated his life to helping others seek and achieve their dreams too.

Born in Lebanon in 1948, Qubein was raised by his mother and older brothers after the early death of his father. Although schooled in the Anglican Church of the Middle East, he came to America to attend a small Baptist school in North Carolina called Mount Olive College. He chose the school, he says, because the name was similar to the biblical Mount of Olives.

"When you're coming from 7,000 miles away, you look for some commonality," he explains with a smile.

He taught himself English by holding a tape recorder in one hand and an English dictionary in the other, and by memorizing 10 new words each day. "I worked very hard to make it all come together," he says simply. "It wasn't easy. Good things are never easy."

Knowing Qubein was always looking for opportunities to improve his communication skills, Qubein's college president asked him to speak about his youth in the Middle East to local churches and community groups. The success of these forays – and the monetary donations the ambitious student sometimes received from them – kindled his interest in public speaking.

Immediately after receiving his bachelor's degree in human relations, Qubein went on to earn a master's in business from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. After a successful stint as public relations director for the local United Way, Qubein used \$500 to finance a small publishing company for which he wrote and produced leadership materials sold by direct mail. His succinct guidelines for achievement made him a much-requested public speaker, and by 1973 he was making more than 200 speeches a year. Yet the five-figure income and accolades he received weren't enough.

"I was making essentially the same speech over and over again," he says of the inspirational presentations that became his early hallmark. "They give you a temporary boost, but when the adrenaline is gone, you tend to go flat again. In fact, motivation can actually cause frustration, because people are really looking for education."

With that in mind, Qubein set out to offer information he calls "meaningful and long-term, something duplicatable and functional." The result was the formation of a consulting firm called Creative Services, Inc., which today offers global clients cutting-edge, custom-designed learning systems.

"Motivation can actually cause frustration, because people are really looking for education."

— NIDO QUBEIN

Qubein believes his approach is successful because it concentrates more on educating than on training. "Animals are trained; people are educated," he contends. "People don't need to be trained to handle specific situations – they need to be taught to think and act like problem-solvers."

He also believes in personalizing his message. "I think my greatest strength as a speaker is the ability to connect with an audience," he says. "The Law of Identification suggests that when something becomes personal, it then becomes important. An effective speaker reaches out and touches the soul – not just the mind – of the audience. The only sure way to do that is to speak about matters that are personal and important to that audience, on that day, in that environment." It follows, then, that Qubein says his best speech was given to a small audience of 50 friends and family in his own home.

"It was a Christmas party immediately after my wife survived breast cancer," he recalls. "I spoke about balance in life, the blessings that come our way, the gratitude we should always show, and that out of adversity can emerge incredible abundance. I spoke from the heart and soul and connected perfectly. It's ironic," he adds, "that I would choose this free speech out of the 5,000 I have given over the years for a fee!"

In addition to speaking and consulting, Qubein today oversees a publishing empire that includes his more than a dozen top-selling books on subjects as diverse as communication, personal development and sales. He has produced numerous videos and audio cassettes, which have been widely translated and distributed worldwide. "I don't always present new ideas," he admits, "but rather remind people of ideas they may already know but are not using to their fullest."

But that's not all. The tireless entrepreneur and former president of the National Speakers Association is also a

partner in several companies; is a director of Southern National Bank Corporation; is active in his local chamber of commerce and United Way; writes a newspaper column; and serves on the boards of 17 organizations.

Qubein's business savvy led him to start a bank in 1986 and has made him a multimillionaire. To offer others the same opportunities he has enjoyed, he set up the Qubein Foundation, which provides scholarships to 40 young people each year. To date the Qubein Foundation has granted more than 400 scholarships, worth over a million dollars.

Work, he contends, is a privilege. "I absolutely love what I do. I characterize myself as being tremendously blessed with a multitude of opportunities. And I've had the privilege of knowing so many wonderful human beings, from whom I've learned so much."

One of those people was Qubein's mother, Victoria Ghawi Qubein, to whom one of his latest books, *How to Get Anything You Want* (Executive Press), is dedicated. A special piece of advice she gave him molded his life: "Walk hand in hand, side by side, with people who are great."

When Qubein arrived in the United States, he made up his mind not just to find those great people, but to become one himself. Judging by his honors and accomplishments, he has done just that: He was the youngest person ever inducted into the International Hall of Fame, his alma mater recently awarded him its first-ever honorary doctorate of laws degree, and his home city of High Point named him Citizen of the Year. And this August, he will receive Toastmasters' Golden Gavel Award and will address delegates during the International Convention in Miami, Florida.

Among the awards closest to his heart is the prestigious Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor, which was given to Qubein in 1997. The medal is awarded to distinguished living Americans who have made significant contributions to the nation's heritage and attained outstanding achievement. For someone who had lived in America for just 30 years, the award could mark the culmination of a dream. But not for Nido Qubein – the immigrant who is changing the way people think, speak and act still has a pocket full of dreams.

Patricia Schroeder

Much More Than a Politician



She's been called a maverick, a trailblazer and a champion of free speech. Former U.S. Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder bears each title proudly – and she continues to speak her mind every time she steps up to the podium.

"I have three pieces of advice for anyone thinking of entering

politics," she told a gathering of Baylor Law School graduates last month. "One, tell the truth. Two, don't do anything you wouldn't want reported on the front page of the newspaper. And three, if you find yourself in position number two, go back to number one." This characteristic blend of wit, candor and political insight has made Schroeder one of the most sought-after public speakers in the country today.

Those same qualities made her a standout during her legal and political careers as well. After graduating magna cum laude from the University of Minnesota in 1961, Schroeder went on to earn her juris doctor degree from Harvard Law School in 1964. She later practiced law in Denver, Colorado, then launched a successful bid for Congress in 1972. She was re-elected 11 times.

By the time Schroeder retired from her post as representative of the First Congressional District of Colorado in 1996, she had become the longest-serving woman in the U.S. House of Representatives, well-known for her consistent commitment to arms control, constitutional rights, and policies affecting women, children and families. She was named Dean of Congressional Women, co-chaired the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues for 10 years, and was the first woman to serve on the House Armed Services Committee. Being one of only 14 women in Congress, she recalls, was like "wearing a bathing suit in church - hard to miss."

After a one-year teaching stint at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Schroeder in 1997 assumed her current position as president and CEO of the Association of American Publishers (AAP), the national trade association of the U.S. book publishing industry.

Announcing Schroeder's appointment, AAP Chairman Richard Robinson, Chairman and CEO of Scholastic Inc., said: "In Pat Schroeder the publishing industry has gained an eloquent and respected advocate whose Congressional career is a case study in effective leadership. She has a thorough understanding of our industry's driving principles: protecting intellectual property in traditional freedom of expression, and ensuring that America's children are given the best possible educational opportunities in our schools and colleges."

Schroeder went back to Capital Hill last summer to testify on behalf of the U.S. publishing industry before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts and Intellectual Property, on which she had served as ranking member. She told her former colleagues that publishers are concerned about the legislative recommendations contained in a U.S. Copyright Office report on the use of digital technology in online college courses.

Schroeder's speaking style is warmly human and down-to-earth. Even when dealing with issues as complex as copyrights and foreign policy, she manages to weave in personal experiences and humor, putting a very human face on topics that might otherwise be considered imper-

sonal. "She's very visual and she has a way of putting complicated issues into a text that's not nearly so hard to understand," explains Schroeder's executive assistant Bert Marie Ramlow. "When she talks to people, she really connects to them."

Schroeder's secret? "I'm not preaching," she emphasizes. Schroeder also brings only a few notes to the lectern with her, allowing her to speak more conversationally. She advises fellow speakers not to read from a prepared script, while at the same time admitting that she sometimes can get carried away with her own storytelling. "I could use a little more discipline," she says. "I love tangents!"

"Schroeder manages to weave in personal experiences and humor, putting a very human face on topics that might otherwise be considered impersonal."

A wife and mother of two, Schroeder brings a distinctly feminine viewpoint to her work, a fact for which she doesn't apologize. Once when asked how she could possibly serve as both a Congresswoman and a mother, she replied, "I have a brain, I have a uterus, and I use both." Her outspoken nature has led her to say that her biggest problem in politics was the fact that the press usually quoted her correctly. In 1988, as one of America's few female presidential candidates, Schroeder was asked by a reporter how she could run for president as a woman. She responded, "What choice do I have?"

She considers the emotional speech she gave when she withdrew from the race to be her best ever. It was, however, a speech the press attacked her for. "I shed a few tears," she explains. "And I got slammed. But it was a much more human expression than the usual total control."

Schroeder, who gives approximately 50 speeches a year, always tries to offer audiences more than they expect. When asked to speak at universities, she will typically meet with classes and even eat lunch with students.

Women, in particular, seem to feel a kinship with Schroeder, who was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1995. It was Schroeder who expedited the National Security Committee's vote to allow women to fly combat missions in 1991. She authored the Violence Against Women Act, which strengthened efforts by law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and victim service organizations to combat crimes against women. As Chairman of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, she saw the Family and Medical Leave Act to fruition - a fitting

legislative achievement for a lifetime of work on behalf of women's and family issues.

Addressing students at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock in December, Schroeder said that too many Americans still believe "the 'F word' is 'feminine.'" She also labeled as "popular fiction" the belief that the traditional role of women in America has been to stay at home, raise children and create "an island of tranquility" for their husbands. "I don't have a home like that," she quipped. "Mine is more like the Devil's Triangle – you're lucky if you get out alive." Schroeder added that during this new century she hopes confrontational differences will end and men and women can become truly equal.

Schroeder is the author of two books, *Champion of the Great American Family* (Random House, 1989), which outlines a family policy agenda for the 21st century, and *24 Years of House Work...and the Place is Still a Mess* (Andrews McMeel, 1998). Both display the candor and intellect that have made Patricia Schroeder an American icon – and the voice of those who might otherwise have gone unheard.

Willie Jolley

The Greatest Singer You've Ever Heard Speak



Scheduled to perform at a Nashville nightclub in 1990, singer Willie Jolley was told on arrival that he could turn around and go home. He had been replaced by a karaoke machine.

It was a moment most entertainers would consider far from inspiring. But then, Willie Jolley isn't most entertainers. He's an "inspirainer" whose newest book, *A Setback Is a Setup for a Comeback* (St. Martin's Press), captures the optimistic energy that has made him one of the most popular motivational speakers in the United States.

A former recording artist who signed his first record deal at the age of 17, the Washington D.C. native forged an early career singing jingles for such companies as Pizza Hut, 7-Eleven and Oldsmobile. For years he dominated the Washington Area Music Association's awards, capturing the title of "Best Male Vocalist" in 1986, 1989 and 1990, and "Best Male Inspirational Vocalist" in 1991 and '92. He performed at the Kennedy Center, Lincoln Center and Caesars Palace.

But he regards that unsuccessful singing engagement in Nashville as the highlight of his career. "I suddenly realized I had put my destiny in the hands of others," he

says. "I realized I was more than just a singer. It was a minute that changed my life."

That life-changing minute has enabled Willie Jolley to help change the lives of millions of people around the world. Not long after returning home from Nashville, Jolley was asked by the Washington D.C. Public Schools

*"The more entertaining you are,
the more energized the audience
becomes – and they send that
energy right back to you."*

– WILLIE JOLLEY

Drug Prevention Division to develop a music and arts program that would encourage young people to seek healthful alternatives to drugs and violence. The result, a program called "Positive Images," became an overnight success – and Willie Jolley realized he had found his niche. With only \$200 in the bank and a young family to support, he decided to risk everything to become an educational motivator.

Within just a few years, he had founded his own company – InspirTainment – garnered dozens of national awards, written a book, and earned the title "Mr. Standing Ovation." Today he travels around the world spreading his message of positive change to nearly 200 groups a year. "For a speaker I'm a little different," he says. "I'll talk to anybody – kids, adults, corporations, trade associations."

His message of positive change effortlessly crosses age, ethnic and economic barriers, while his music, enthusiasm and sincerity grab listeners around the heart. "I think my greatest asset is my ability to communicate in a number of different mediums: speaking, singing and drama," he explains. "This asset allows me to reach different people in different ways, because some respond to the words, while others respond better to the music, and some are taken by the movements. I want to make sure I reach each person and maximize the impact."

His multi-faceted approach is evident with every performance. Addressing an inner-city high school recently, Jolley opened with a soaring rendition of "The Impossible Dream." As the applause faded, his smile widened. "Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I want you to dream! Dream the impossible and you'll do the incredible!" The audience was riveted. Jolley then launched into one of his favorite subjects: The power of the minute.

"Use your time wisely, because the minute is very unforgiving," he said. "It only takes one minute to change your life forever." By breaking down self-improvement into 60-second increments, Jolley helps listeners see change as real – and reachable. "A minute is

the starting point of building your dreams. From a great minute comes a great hour, and from a great hour comes a great day, and from a great day, then a great month, then a great year, and from there you can be the architect of a lifetime – and it starts with a single minute!”

Jolley’s dual background in psychology and theology (he holds a bachelor’s degree in the former and a master’s in the latter) helps him touch audiences on both practical and spiritual levels. He teaches realistic goal-setting, but preaches about the power of the human spirit. And he serves up both with an energy that ignites action – prowling the stage, gesturing widely, frowning, grinning, singing, shouting.

“I don’t think every speaker has to have the physical energy that I have,” he says. “But I do believe you must be passionate about your subject. The more entertaining you are, the more energized the audience becomes – and they send that energy right back to you.”

Jolley credits Toastmasters and the National Speakers Association with helping him hone his style and mold his career. “My recommendation to anyone thinking of embarking on a public speaking career is to first join a Toastmasters club. Toastmasters taught me how to speak. NSA taught me how to get paid to speak.

“Somebody once said that this is the hardest ‘easiest’ business in the world,” he continues with a laugh. “He was right! Talk to some professional speakers, and you’ll learn that our job involves a lot of travel and sacrifice. But it’s a wonderful opportunity to impact people, to inspire, and to change lives.”

The ability to impact lives is a gift Jolley takes very seriously. He recently spoke at a convention dedicated to a young man who had been killed in a car accident. He considers the speech he delivered that day to be one of his best.

“They asked me to address the group because the young man had heard me speak a year earlier and it had completely changed his life. His grades had improved, he had been elected to a state office, and he constantly talked about the impact of my speech and book on his life,” he explains. “When he died, his dad put my ‘It Only Takes a Minute’ quote on his headstone.” That quote, the cornerstone of Jolley’s bestseller, *It Only Takes a Minute to Change Your Life* (St. Martin’s Press), is an unforgettable part of Jolley’s presentations.

As the audience claps in rhythm, the man who motivates brings home his powerful point: “It’s up to every one of us to take charge of our life and to make it what we want. If you think that it takes too much time, think again, ‘cause I’m telling you it doesn’t! The fact is...it only takes, takes a minute to make up your mind that now is your time to make your run! It only takes, only takes a minute – 60 seconds to begin to decide to win. Just get it on!”

The audience is on its feet. Mr. Standing Ovation has lived up to his name once again.

Marilyn vos Savant

A Quicksilver Mind at Work



U ntil 1985, Marilyn vos Savant led a quiet life in St. Louis, Missouri. Then her IQ score of 228, based on the results of a Stanford-Binet intelligence test she took at age 10, was revealed to the editors of *The Guinness Book of World Records*. Quickly deemed the world’s smartest person, vos Savant soon

found herself in the spotlight and a magnet for talk show audiences who insisted she tell them when the world will end, and answer questions on any topic.

She moved to New York to pursue a writing career and began writing the “Ask Marilyn” column in 1986 for *Parade*, the Sunday magazine distributed by 342 newspapers throughout the United States. With a circulation of 37 million, this magazine has the highest readership in the world.

“I had some trepidation at first,” she admits. “*Parade* was publishing an article about my appearance in *The Guinness Book of Records* under the category ‘Highest IQ,’ and editor Walter Anderson wondered whether I might be willing to answer some classic questions at the end of the interview, questions such as, ‘Which came first, the chicken or the egg?’ My initial thought was that it might seem self-important; I might appear to believe that I could answer questions about which people had argued for centuries. But Walter maintained that this attitude was too self-conscious. If others felt comfortable offering answers, why should I refrain from it?”

So one of the world’s most popular columnists was born. (She has since been inducted into the Guinness Hall of Fame.) In her 14 years with the magazine, vos Savant has received hundreds of thousands of letters from *Parade* readers on a variety of topics: philosophy, science, politics, the arts, math problems and brain teasers. Often, vos Savant will answer one question with another, or pose riddle-like analogies in her responses.

In reviewing a collection of her columns, *Publishers Weekly* wrote, “Hardly the pedantic intellectual one might expect, vos Savant is both earthy and glamorous, and more reminiscent of a Marilyn named Monroe than Einstein or Hawking. ... [She is] an original thinker.” *Kirkus Reviews* called vos Savant, “succinct yet eloquent” and “a quicksilver mind at work.”

A response that stirred international controversy in 1990–1991 in the end proved vos Savant to be correct. The problem, a probability question, was dubbed “the Monty Hall Dilemma” after the host of the American game show *Let’s Make a Deal*, which featured a two-stage decision process involving options to stick with one’s initial guess or switch

to another alternative. The outcry from math professors and other professionals who disagreed with vos Savant's answer was so overwhelming that *Parade* magazine published an unprecedented four columns on the subject, twice devoting an entire page to just that one item, and calling for a national math experiment to test vos Savant's answer. This resulted in "about 1,000 real-life probability experiments, representing efforts by some 50,000 students across the nation, from third grade to postgraduate school," according to vos Savant.

The New York Times wrote a front-page article about the debate, and then news wires picked it up and spread the discussion internationally. A scholarly analysis of tens of thousands of the Monty Hall Dilemma letters to "Ask Marilyn" was completed by Donald Granberg, Ph.D., of the University of Missouri Graduate School's Center for Research in Social Behavior and is included as an appendix in vos Savant's book, *The Power of Logical Thinking* (St. Martin's Press, 1996).

The conclusion? "The consensus is that Marilyn's answer was essentially correct, provided one makes some highly plausible assumptions," according to Granberg. And *Skeptical Inquirer* (Volume 15, Summer 1991) put it this way: "... As a rule, when Marilyn vos Savant speaks in her weekly *Parade* magazine column, 'Ask Marilyn,' ... people listen. In the instance discussed below, they may have been listening, but they weren't believing - although they should have been."

The "Ask Marilyn" column receives about 52,000 letters a year. Despite the occasional debate over her responses, vos Savant says she "loves [writing the column] more and more every year... There's only one question I don't like to receive," she concedes. "It is: 'Is that your real name?'" Indeed, it is. In fact, it appears twice (independently) in her immediate family. Marilyn vos Savant was born in a blue-collar neighborhood in downtown St. Louis, Missouri, the daughter of an Italian immigrant, Marina vos Savant, and German immigrant Joseph Mach, the son of a coal miner. Her maternal grandparents were Mary Savant and Joseph vos Savant, also a coal miner.

"Looking into a microscope is important, but looking into a microphone can be just as important, if not more so."

— MARILYN VOS SAVANT

"I use my mother's name because I think mothers deserve more credit in this regard. Men already have their names on everything from airports to buildings to cities to museums to racetracks to rivers to religions. I can think of nothing that women deserve to have their names on more than children." She adds, "If I wanted to use a more pres-

A Clarity of Vision

By Marilyn vos Savant

What we Americans need for the 21st century and the beginning of the third millennium:

SEVEN SACRED VIRTUES

1. The Humility to know that we are not alone in the world.
2. The Generosity to allow others to have what they deserve.
3. The Restraint to control our most passionate impulses.
4. The Kindness to tolerate the mistakes of our fellow man.
5. The Moderation to satisfy ourselves with the necessities.
6. The Charity to help those who are unable to help themselves.
7. The Diligence to make ourselves useful in the modern world.

The year 2000: a time to work, a time to play, a time to live and a time to love. Let us rejoice in our place on this great planet hurtling through space and time into a glorious unknown.

Reprinted from the December 5, 1999 "Ask Marilyn" column in Parade magazine.

tigious name, I would have used my father's. The name Mach ranks among the most well-known in science."

And science is a part of vos Savant's everyday life - even at the breakfast table. In 1987, she married Robert Jarvik, M.D., inventor of the Jarvik 7 artificial heart. Writer Isaac Asimov, who gave vos Savant away (her father had died a year earlier), called the marriage "a meeting of the minds." Dr. Jarvik's best man was Tom Gaidosh, who had been one of the earliest recipients of the Jarvik 7 artificial heart. Vos Savant serves as an executive at her husband's company, Jarvik Heart, Inc.

After a year-long stint as a television news contributor, vos Savant is now branching into writing plays, the first of which was produced Off-Off-Broadway in the fall of 1999. "Many people think that those of us with high IQs should be channeled into scientific careers, but I disagree wholeheartedly," she says. "The sciences are already filled with bright people. Wouldn't it be nice if more bright people were in politics, for example, instead? Looking into a microscope is important, but looking into a microphone can be just as important, if not more so."

Putting that sentiment into practice, vos Savant serves on the Board of Directors of the National Council on Economic Education, and she is a member of the advisory boards of the National Association for Gifted Children and the National Museum of Women's History. Her interests are in quality education and thinking, as well as in medicine and research.

Vos Savant knows a lot, and her many books and columns show her wit at work. She offers brain teasers and logic puzzles for math and science buffs, as well as humorous contemplations on more crowd-pleasing sub-

jects, such as politics and love. Among her books are *Ask Marilyn: Answers to America's Most Frequently Asked Questions* (St. Martin's Press, 1992); *The World's Most Famous Math Problem: The Proof of Fermat's Last Theorem and Other Mathematical Mysteries* (St. Martin's Press, 1993); *"I've Forgotten Everything I Learned in School!": A Refresher Course to Help You Reclaim Your Education* (St. Martin's Press, 1994); *More Marilyn: Some Like It Bright!* (St. Martin's Press, 1994); *The Power of Logical Thinking: Easy Lessons in the Art of Reasoning – and Hard Facts About Its Absence in Our Lives* (St. Martin's Press, 1996); *Of Course I'm for Monogamy; I'm also for Everlasting Peace and an End to Taxes* (St. Martin's Press, 1996). W. W. Norton will publish her next book, *The Art of Spelling*, in the fall of 2000.

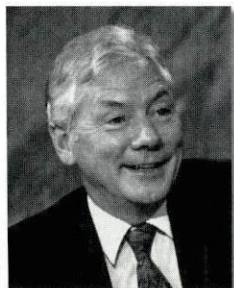
"Professionally," vos Savant says, "I am now in my real element. I have a national voice, a national ear to the country, and I am blissfully happy. I hear from everyone from prisoners to priests, and I've been sent everything from baked goods to Bibles."

She adds, "The last time I took an IQ test was about 15 years ago, and that will stay the last time. I think I've taken just about every test known to mankind, and I don't like them any more now than I did in the beginning. They're measures of intelligence, all right, but they're crude measures, at best, and clearly inadequate. Wisdom, for example, is far more important. All wise people are intelligent – whether they know it or not – but not all intelligent people are wise – whether they know it or not."

Considering her high public profile, it's no wonder vos Savant receives numerous offers for speaking engagements, but she turns down everything that doesn't have a strong personal appeal to her. "Speaking is a joy, not a duty. The best speakers love what they do. As for myself, I do only what I love."

Gay Byrne

An Irish Broadcasting Legend



Irish legend has it that a kiss on the Blarney Stone endows the giver with the gift of persuasive eloquence. If so, Gay Byrne must have kissed more than his fair share. Ireland's media icon has talked his way into the homes and hearts of millions of his countrymen over the course of a long and illustrious career.

From 1962 to 1999, Byrne kept viewers glued to their tellies with his wildly popular *The Late Late Show*. Modeled after America's *The Ed Sullivan Show*, the Friday night program set trends, influenced minds, and

launched stars. It also showcased the exceptional talents of Ireland's most beloved broadcaster. By all accounts, Byrne is an anomaly: A gentle, affable interviewer in a field dominated by aggressive, ratings-inspired showmen. For 37 years, Byrne made running a number-one show look like fun. The announcement of his retirement last summer brought tears to eyes throughout the Emerald Isle – along with praise for a job well done.

"Gay Byrne is a great listener – a dangerous trait in Ireland, a land of talkers! So we tell him everything, even things we didn't mean to tell at all."

"For so many years, the *The Late Late Show* has been a part of who we are; the forum in which Irish experiences, good and bad, have been discussed and debated," says Ireland's President Mary McAleese. "Like all great broadcasting, it has sometimes been provocative, sometimes light-hearted, but always entertaining. How could it be otherwise with the exceptional talents of Gay Byrne?"

Gabriel Mary Byrne got his first taste of broadcasting in 1946 at the age of 10. Featured briefly on a radio program called *Children of the Microphone*, he never forgot the thrill. "I remember coming home and feeling so good," he recalls in an interview in Ireland's *RTE Guide* in May, 1999. "I thought there should be banners in the street and at least a pipe band to welcome me back to South Circular Road, having rocked the world of showbiz. The reality was nobody had heard it, but I was impressed with it, and somewhere inside of me I thought, 'Yes, I'd like to do more of that.'"

Fast-forward to 1958. Byrne, a 22-year-old insurance salesman, had dreams of hitting it big on Ireland's Radio Eireann. In his spare time, he occasionally hosted small radio shows, but he couldn't seem to get any further. Then came his first big break. "I had just done a jazz program for Kevin Roche, assistant music director of Radio Eireann at the time. So there I was in this small office, dealing with insurance, but wishing and hoping... And then the phone rang. It was Kevin Roche. The voice I'd wanted so much to hear said, 'I want you to write and host a half-hour program of dance music for Christmas night, from 11:30 to midnight.'"

Television didn't yet exist. Christmas listenership was huge, and the late-night period even more so. "A ballroom dance program was a risky idea, but I knew it would work. I kept my cool, thanked Kevin and said, 'I'll start work on that straight away.' I put down the phone,

(Continued on page 28)



Breaking the Ice in Style

What's so interesting about your "boring" life? Everything!

Angie had eagerly joined Toastmasters at the urging of a friend, and her Ice Breaker speech was looming large on the horizon. She wanted to make a good first impression, yet she couldn't think of many superlatives about her life. "My life has been so average," she groaned. "Boring, even. I don't want to talk about my boring life! I'll just put everybody to sleep."

New Toastmasters around the world have felt the same lament. "I was born. I grew up, and now here I am. What's so interesting about that?"

Everything! But remember that you must invest a little homework time and be willing to let some creative thoughts bang about in your head if you want to deliver an Ice Breaker speech that leaves your audience with the feeling of wanting to know more about you. Fortunately, a number of resources are available to help you. Try one of these approaches to help melt that initial ice:

If Toastmasters has taught me one thing, it's that it isn't so much what you say as how you say it that counts. Indiana Jones' life story could send an audience off to dreamland if all he did were to drone on about the facts. After all, some elements of life are common to us all. We were all born somewhere, for example. I was born in a tiny town in South Dakota and grew up on a farm. Nothing very noteworthy about that. But the event of my birth takes on a more colorful tone when I say that I was born during a terrible blizzard. And when my mother announced it was time, the roads were impassable, and she had to walk to the hospital in the middle of the night. Now that's an entrance . . . and an Ice Breaker.

But nothing of note took place surrounding the time or place of your birth? Maybe you just aren't aware of it.

A stop at your local library should yield an opportunity to browse references like *The Timetables of History* (Bernard Grun. Simon & Shuster, 1991). This is a marvelously simple, yet deliciously inclusive, chronological history of major events in specific categories like history and politics, music, literature and theater, religion, science and daily life.

It stretches year-by-year from 5,000 B.C. to 1990, just before the last edition was published.

I looked up the year of my birth, 1951, and noted that North Korean forces had broken through the 38th parallel; J.D. Salinger published *The Catcher in the Rye*; Marlin Brando was looking steamy in *A Streetcar Named Desire*; and color television was first introduced in the United States that year. Any one of these historical events would make a fine springboard into an Ice Breaker speech:

Two events occurred in the year 1951 that changed the course of history forever: color television arrived in the United States and Linda Meehan made her debut on the planet!

OR

Two literary masterworks arrived on the scene in 1951: one was J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye," and the other was me!

Locating these facts took no more than 10 minutes of reading time, and I was off on a novel approach to my first speech: tying the ordinary events of my life to famous events in history that are crystalline in the public's memory. Ask yourself what was happening in the world at various times in your life? Who was president?

BY LINDA MEEHAN ■ ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC C. WESTBROOK

What were the hit songs you recall? Who won an Academy Award that year? Where were you when the first moonwalk took place? What were you doing the moment in 1963 when you heard President John F. Kennedy had been shot? So what if you didn't go to Woodstock? What were you doing instead of going to Woodstock?

This strategy helps to anchor you as a human being in the audience's collective perception, because they can instantly relate your story to their own experiences at many of history's unforgettable moments. You will see heads nod in recognition or remembrance and knowing smiles light up faces, and you'll know you've made a connection. Now keep that theme going throughout your Ice Breaker.

Another approach is to use some famous quotes that can be related to less famous events of your life. An old standard and my favorite reference when I need to flesh out my speeches or write with a powerful quote is *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* (John Bartlett, 16th edition, Little, Brown & Co., 1992). This book is cross-referenced by key words in the quote itself, as well as by the name of the person who said it. If you're looking for something to connect the audience to your school years, you might turn to the words "school," "education" or

"teacher" and find that Aristotle said, "Education is the best provision for old age." Then you could easily use this quote as a humorous (or serious) segue between school and the events since your graduation.

Aristotle said that education is the best provision for old age, so I threw myself into high school with all the energy of any 16-year-old boy and majored in the electric bass, gunning the engine of my dad's car and avoiding homework at all costs.

Can't take the time to find a parking spot at your library? Don't be discouraged – help is but a mouse click away. A wonderful Web site for aficionados of the pithy quote is www.quoteland.com. It's free and it's a site that's easily navigated, with cross-referencing by topic and by author.

If quotes or historical events just aren't your style, try this on your first speech: Find the earliest photograph you can of yourself. Add to it a funny childhood snapshot, maybe a picture of you as a teenage cheerleader or standing by your first car. Dig out your high school or college graduation picture, wedding portrait or family

Combat the Shakes With the Power of Imagination

By Rachel Abramson, CTM

At Toastmasters, the most nerve-racking speech will be the first: your Ice Breaker. How can you possibly get up there and talk about yourself for four to six minutes? Nervousness may be expressed as shaking knees, butterflies that refuse to fly in formation, a pounding heart and/or an overwhelming fear that you'll forget your speech. Nervousness is often responsible for slowing us down or stopping us from giving a speech altogether. And nervousness is not limited to just the Ice Breaker.

Yet, getting up to speak can be of tremendous value to you. Being able to speak in public, and speak well, will enhance your career progression. It also will have a positive effect on your self-esteem and self-confidence.

So what can you do to combat debilitating nerves and get you on your road to public speaking success?

You have heard it said before: You must rehearse your speech. But what I suggest is a little different. This time, use the power of your imagination. Here's how:

Step 1: Decide what your goal is in giving your speech. What do you hope to achieve?

Step 2: Determine what you will see when you have achieved your goal. What will others see? What will you hear? What will others hear? What will you feel? What will the audience's mood be?

Determine what you will see, hear and feel when you give your opening words, the body of your speech, and your conclusion. What do you anticipate your audience will see, hear and feel throughout your speech? How will that make you feel each step of the way?

Don't worry if you don't have the answer for each of these questions. Some people find certain questions easier to answer than others. Just tackle those that are easiest for you to answer.

Step 3: Now you are ready to harness the power of your imagination. Begin by relaxing. Make sure you are truly comfortable. Then imagine that you hear the Toastmaster call you to the podium. Imagine drawing a couple of deep breaths before you get up from your seat – feeling calm and relaxed. Imagine getting up and walking toward the podium, drawing a couple more deep breaths and feeling comfortable. Imagine shaking the Toastmaster's hand, drawing yet a few deep breaths and feeling at ease.

photo. If you were in the military, find a picture of yourself in uniform. Have the photos enlarged at an inexpensive film processing kiosk found in shopping malls, or on a good-quality photocopier. You may even want to write a few captions. Cut out of white paper a "thought bubble" like those you see in cartoons and make up a line to go in it that relates to your image in the photo. You'll make a spontaneous connection with your Toastmasters audience by putting a thought bubble on your baby picture and having it read:

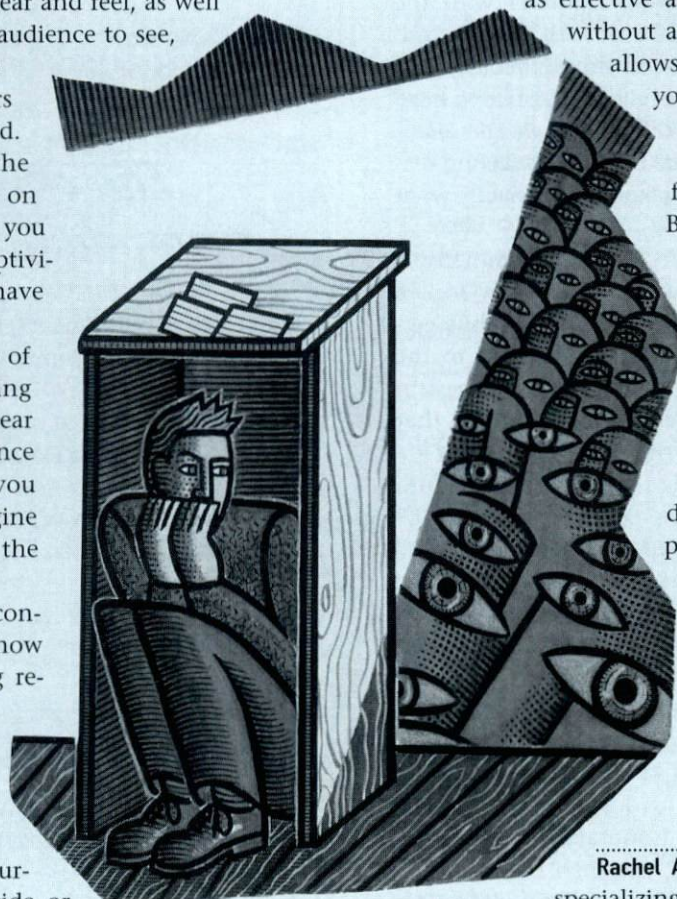
Little do they know it, heh heh, but some day I'll get to be the Grammarian!

If nerves are a problem, as they often are in an Ice Breaker speech, and you don't want to handle visual aids, you might take this road: Let's say you're one of those inspired people who knew from earliest childhood that you wanted to be a doctor, a police officer, a teacher or a mother. Then tie all of the events you can to that one lifelong desire and tell how each event furthered you in reaching your goal. Talk about the teachers or relatives who inspired you and how you responded to them. All of us have encountered obstacles in

Then imagine giving the opening words, noticing what you expected to see, hear and feel, as well as what you expected your audience to see, hear and feel. Perhaps you can see audience members smiling, taking in every word. Perhaps you can hear the silence as listeners focus on your every word. Perhaps you can feel their warmth, receptivity and interest in what you have to say.

Imagine giving the body of your speech, again noting what you expected to see, hear and feel. Imagine the audience responding exactly as you would like them to. Imagine your satisfaction in seeing the speech proceed as planned.

Imagine delivering your concluding words. Imagine how you feel to see them being received exactly as expected. Imagine how pleased with yourself you can be as you shake the Toastmaster's hand and walk back to your seat. Allow yourself to relish a sense of pride or accomplishment for having delivered the speech to the best of your ability. You've earned it!



our journeys. What nearly kept you from achieving your dreams, and how did you overcome it?

No matter which approach you take or how you feel about the facts of your life, be upbeat and positive. If you didn't have a fantasy childhood, and many of us didn't, don't dwell on the negative aspects or blame others for things that happened to you, but rather talk about how you overcame them to be where you are today. Don't begin by telling your audience that your life is boring or dull. This sets them up to believe the worst! Do take the time to write an orderly chronology of your life, but don't include every minute detail. The idea is to give your audience a general introduction to the intriguing new person who has just joined their club!

There are as many ways to approach your first speech as there are individuals in your organization. With a little thought and effort, you're sure to find the spark that ignites your audience's imagination, and after that, melting the ice just comes naturally! **T**

Linda Meehan is a member of Tri-Lakes Club 2199-22 in Branson, Missouri.

Rehearsing through the power of your imagination is as effective as rehearsing out loud (with or without an audience). Imaginal rehearsal allows you to tap into the power of your subconscious mind to give yourself the experience of delivering your speech successfully, calmly and confidently. Beyond that, presenting your speech at your club is a mere formality.

Practice this way before each speech you give in and outside of Toastmasters. Combine this technique with what you are already doing to prepare for your speeches. One day, you may delightfully surprise yourself to discover that you no longer get nervous at all. That will be the day when you can begin to enjoy public speaking. I should know. That happened to me as I was returning to my seat after my 12th Toastmasters speech. **T**

Rachel Abramson, CTM, is a psychologist, specializing in career counseling and hypnotherapy. She is a member of Balaclava Club 3952-73 in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

Five Top Speakers of 1999

(continued from page 23)

punched the air and said, 'Yes, I've cracked it!' I knew I'd made it in the door."

It was a break that would change Irish broadcasting forever. Before long, Byrne was in charge of the station, introducing songs, reading the news, and even playing the national anthem at the end of the night. He loved it all.

"I say this to young broadcasters: Always remember – everything you do is leading to the next big moment." Byrne's next "big moment" came when he learned that Ireland's first TV station was looking for presenters. Byrne pestered the manager of the station until he finally was granted an interview. Given a dummy news bulletin to read as an audition, Byrne passed with flying colors – so much so that he was told to read the news that very night on live television.

"This was the first time I had read on camera, so I had to master the art of looking up a lot. TelePrompTers had yet to be invented, so I had to absorb sentences and sell them to the camera," he recalls.

Byrne must have mastered the skill, because within two years he was asked to host Ireland's first televised quiz show, *Jackpot*. The 26-year-old Dubliner with the Cheshire cat grin was an immediate hit with viewers. And exactly six months later – while still simultaneously juggling several radio shows – he was given a chance to head a summer replacement program called *The Late Late Show*. By October of 1963 when *The Late Late Show's* second season kicked off, it was clear the "jackpot" was exactly what Gay Byrne had hit.

Whether hosting *The Late Late Show* or his immensely popular *Gay Byrne Radio Show* (which ran daily for 26 years), fans loved Byrne's ability to be himself while getting others to do the same. From Mother Teresa to the rock band U2, Byrne knew how to bring out the best in his guests. One of them, Maeve Binchy, described that ability in simple terms: "Gay Byrne is a great listener – a dangerous trait in Ireland, a land of talkers! So we tell him everything, even things we didn't mean to tell at all." Another guest called Byrne "an expert cutter-to-the-chase and leader-up-the-garden-path. He has always had the confidence of the Irish public in his impartiality, in his deft handling of sensitive issues, and in his integrity. In this generation he has made a positive difference in all our lives. What better tribute can anyone be given?"

There may be no more fitting tribute for a man of words than words of praise. But countless other honors have come Byrne's way during his long career on radio and television, including an honorary degree from Dublin's Trinity College in 1988, the Irish Lord Mayor's Award in 1990, and the Toastmasters Communication and Leadership award in 1995. He recently received the Gold Card Award – the highest honor given by The

International Variety Club, an international charity organization founded by leaders in American show business. And with the announcement of his retirement from television, the tributes just keep on coming.

Calling him a legend, a mentor and an ambassador, fans have spent the last eight months paying homage to Gay Byrne. Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Atlantic Airways, believes that only a few folks will be happier now that Byrne is off the air. "The only people to celebrate Gay Byrne's retirement are club owners and restaurateurs," says Branson. "Friday nights may now come alive again as people switch off their sets and go out on the town."

Byrne feels good about the change. It's time to move over, he says, and relinquish the throne to a younger generation. But first, two pieces of advice for those wishing to fill his shoes. "One: Get experience speaking in public. Take any gig, amateur drama or debating society, and get good at what you wish to do," he told *RTE Guide*. "Two: Become an expert in something. If you are an expert in something, you can always approach a producer. Get to know who everybody is and take it from there."

The man who defines Irish broadcasting is ready for new faces and some well-earned space. But most Irish eyes aren't smiling. After nearly 40 years in their homes and hearts, it will take a while to adjust to life without Gay Byrne. **I**

Editor's Note: Don't forget to nominate your favorite five speakers for 2000. See ballot on page 30.

The Past Years' Outstanding Speakers are:

1998: Louis Rukeyser, J.C. Watts, Christopher Reeve, Jimmy Carter, Susan Molinari

1997: Jim McCann, Margaret Thatcher, Zig Ziglar, Elizabeth Dole, Dr. Laura Schlessinger

1996: Kenneth Blanchard, Gen. Colin Powell, Billy Mills, Elie Wiesel, Diane Sawyer

1995: Tom Peters, Nelson Mandela, Deepak Chopra, Barbara Jordan, Garrison Keillor

1994: Peter Legge, Jack Kemp, Stephen Covey, Dennis Prager, Rush Limbaugh

1993: Harvey Mackay, Mario Cuomo, Anthony Robbins, Jesse Jackson, Nina Totenberg

1992: Lee Iacocca, Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf, Robert Schuller, Les Brown, Paul Harvey.

All five of our Outstanding Speakers were asked to answer six questions about public speaking. Here are some insights from the four who responded:

1 What would you consider your greatest strength as a speaker and communicator?

Willie Jolley: My ability to communicate through speaking, singing and drama. This allows me to reach different people in different ways.

Nido Qubein: My ability to connect with my audience...to speak about matters that are personal and important to that audience, on that day, in that environment. An effective speaker reaches out and touches the soul (not only the mind) of his audience.

Patricia Schroeder: I'm not preaching!

Marilyn vos Savant: I both enjoy and respect my readers and listeners. They can tell. If you don't find people fascinating, they won't find you too darned fascinating either.

2 If you had to improve one aspect of your speaking style, what would that be?

Willie Jolley: Crafting words to make even clearer pictures in the listener's mind. I am always trying to improve every aspect of my speaking style.

Nido Qubein: I'd pause more, reduce my pace slightly, and constantly work at developing a voice pitch that has a wider and deeper variance.

Patricia Schroeder: A little more discipline. I love tangents!

Marilyn vos Savant: I'd like to be more passionate, but instead I always look relaxed and calm. That doesn't reflect the real person. Deep down, I am passionate.

3 Which do you consider to be the best speech you've ever given? Why?

Willie Jolley: The one I gave for an FHA/HERO Convention, dedicated to a young man who had been killed in a car accident in Indiana. I was asked to speak because the victim had heard me a year earlier and had consistently talked about the impact of my speech and my book on his life.

Nido Qubein: I guess my best speech was given to an audience of 50 or more in my home at a Christmas party immediately after my wife survived breast cancer.

Patricia Schroeder: When I withdrew from the [1998] presidency race, I shed a few tears. I got slammed but felt it was a much more human expression than the usual total control.

Marilyn vos Savant: The best speech I have ever given wasn't in public; it was a private plea over lunch. And it worked - maybe because it wasn't scripted; it was heartfelt, and it was important to both parties. In an ideal world, that's what all public speaking engagements should be.

Speaking Tips From the Experts

4 Have you had any role models when it comes to public speaking? If so, who?

Willie Jolley: Les Brown, Zig Ziglar, Dennis Kimbro, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Rev. Walter Fauntroy and Dr. Robert Schuller.

Nido Qubein: Top of the list would be Dr. Norman Vincent Peale who was a wonderful mentor to me and a terrific speaker. He told me that his style is simple: make a point and wrap it with a story; make another point and wrap it with a story, never making more than three or four points per presentation.

Patricia Schroeder: John F. Kennedy had a wonderful speaking style.

Marilyn vos Savant: I used to admire people who could "move millions" until I learned that when millions are listening, they're always moved. Now I admire people who can move a roomful. That's tougher.

5 What do you consider to be the single most important element of an effective speech?

Willie Jolley: Stories!

Nido Qubein: Clarity. Unless the audience can follow the speaker and understand clearly what he/she is saying, all the substance and style in the world will add up to little or nothing.

Patricia Schroeder: Knowing what you want people to take away from your speech.

Marilyn vos Savant: Personality. People don't listen to speeches to be enlightened by their content. They listen to be enlightened by their speaker.

6 What would be your first advice to anyone wanting to become a better communicator?

Willie Jolley: Join a Toastmasters club; speak as often as you can; speak not to impress, but to inspire; have fun!

Nido Qubein: Understand the process of communication, then practice, practice, practice.

Patricia Schroeder: Do not read!

Marilyn vos Savant: My advice is the same as the reply of the bystander when asked by a passing tourist for directions on how to get to Carnegie Hall: "practice, practice, practice."

Vote For Your Favorite Speakers

Each year Toastmasters International selects and officially honors Five Outstanding Speakers, one each from specific categories listed on the ballot below. By recognizing individuals for their communication skills, we hope to create greater public interest in, and understanding of, the art of public speaking.

Please fill in the nomination form below and send it to the Publications Department at World Headquarters. The final list of names will be published in *The Toastmaster* and announced via press releases to the media.

JUDGING CRITERIA – The nominees' abilities as "outstanding speakers" will be evaluated in terms of message and delivery. A great speaker has "something to say," so factors such as importance, timeliness and relevance of the message to the audience will be considered. Nominees will be selected based on their achievements or contributions in the following seven areas:

1. Degree to which the person's success can be attributed to his or her communication skills.
2. Amount of influence on public opinion.
3. Demonstration of leadership.
4. Service to the community, state or nation.
5. Commitment to a cause, product, idea or business.
6. Ability to effect change.
7. Dedication to improving the lives of others.

Please Note: The Outstanding Speakers of 1999 and those from previous years are not eligible for nomination. (See list on page 28). All ballots must be postmarked by May 1, 2000.

Outstanding Speakers Ballot

1. COMMERCE OR INDUSTRY

Nominee _____

I think this person is an Outstanding Speaker because: _____

2. GOVERNMENT

Nominee _____

I think this person is an Outstanding Speaker because: _____

3. INSPIRATION OR MOTIVATION

Nominee _____

I think this person is an Outstanding Speaker because: _____

4. EDUCATION OR SOCIAL

Nominee _____

I think this person is an Outstanding Speaker because: _____

5. MASS MEDIA

Nominee _____

I think this person is an Outstanding Speaker because: _____

Submitted by: _____ Club/District No. _____

Please mail this form by May 1, 2000, to: Toastmasters International, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, Attn: Publications Dept.



The following listings are arranged in numerical order by district and club number.

DTM

Congratulations to these Toastmasters who have received the Distinguished Toastmaster certificate, Toastmasters International's highest recognition.

- Robert L. Johnson, 1-F
- Kate Ayres, 6648-6
- Lauretta DeForge, 7487-7
- Floy Westemeier, 1056-8
- Edwin Rowold Jr., 6629-8
- Donald C. Lee, 7628-10
- David Harrill, 3820-12
- Peter Hawthorne, 9047-19
- Jean Dier, 4284-24
- SaraRuth Barger, 7377-37
- Joanne Buchanan, 2289-40
- Terry S. Jones, 8090-42
- Satya Sarkar, 7774-55
- Donald S. Cogan, 7033-56
- Yvonne S. Reeder, 7649-58
- William L. May Jr., 9829-58
- Lionel Guerard, 3064-64
- Cindy L. Behlmar, 2619-66
- Nora N. Smith, 3351-66
- Janet C. Frick, 5688-66
- Patricia H. Jordan, 6473-66
- Geoffrey Alan Cousins, 6684-73

- Capital City TMC, 1684-43
- Port Credit, 1474-60
- Coffee County, 1719-63

40 years

- Castle, 3056-36
- Raconteurs, 3075-39
- Scarborough, 3090-60
- Limestone City, 3045-61
- Eblana, 3103-71
- Algoa, 2457-74

35 years

- Lutheran Brotherhood, 1767-6
- Richardson Noon TM's, 2146-50
- Lafayette, 2678-68
- Christchurch, 1866-72

30 years

- Top O Morning, 2061-19
- Yawn Patrol, 3306-62
- Ku-Ring-Gai, 1091-70

25 years

- West County, 2905-8
- Kerr-McGee Noon Express, 907-16
- Sacramento Solos, 1031-39
- Novartis-East Hanover, 2371-46
- Air-Jet, 2714-53
- Blarney, 3579-71

20 years

- Honeywell Astros, 1227-6
- Northern Express, 1335-6

- Thriftbuilders, 1414-6
- Newners, 2593-12
- Town Criers, 2577-32
- Select, 1638-38
- Taiping, 552-51
- Columbia Uptown, 2968-58

Ralph C. Smedley Memorial Fund

Associate

- Keiko Omachi
- The Salt River Project, in honor of Nancy Starr, recipient of the 1999 Karl F. Abel Volunteer Recognition Award

Contributor

- Linda Singer, in memory of John V. Slyker, DTM, International Director 1980-82
- Vincent Murray, Jr.
- Past International Director Renate E. Daniels, DTM, in memory of John V. Slyker, DTM, International Director 1980-82
- Past International Director Frank Slane, DTM, and Phyllis Slane, in

- memory of John V. Slyker, DTM, International Director 1980-82
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- Gusta Seltermar, in memory of Patrick Pepe
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- Dr. and Mrs. Russell F. Briner, in memory of Mary Elizabeth Davis Marchand, DTM
- Past International President John B. Miller, ATM, and Billie Miller, in memory of Loring Dalton, ATM, International Director 1968-70
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55 years

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50 years

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45 years

- Tempe, 1715-3
- Metropolitan, 1696-6
- Totem Pole, 610-7
- Hettinger, 1705-20

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