How to Cope with Speech Anxiety

1.) PRACTICE
At least 3 times. In front of a mirror, a roommate, friends, strangers, your dog, Coe College Speaking Center consultants, a campus squirrel, etc.

2.) FAKE IT ’TIL YOU MAKE IT
Channel anxiety into delivery. Speaking and moving can reduce tension. Show enthusiasm. Move purposefully, use gestures, vary your voice.

3.) ADAPT TO AUDIENCE
Analyze demographics, values, beliefs, knowledge of audience. Choose relevant topics. Establish reasons to listen and common ground. Use examples specific to audience members.

4.) BE CONVERSATIONAL
Imagine you’re speaking one-to-one with each individual. Keep the engaged engaged. Engage the disengaged. Eye contact, posture, gestures, voice.

5.) INVOLVE AUDIENCE
Ask questions, facilitate discussion, allow audience participation in activities, demonstrations.

Coe College Speaking Center
Stewart Memorial Library, 1st floor
Mon-Thu 8 am-10 pm, Fri 8 am-5 pm