

# No More Dead Fish Arms!

Dr. Kathryn Ricketts – University of Regina

## ***Embodied and dynamic presentations both in person and on line***

Skype meetings, teaching (or attending!) courses remotely, videoconferencing means that more and more our work is done on camera and the need to be embodied and dynamic is critical for successful and impactful communication.

In this fun and low-pressure workshop, Dr. Kathryn Ricketts shows us how to conquer the nerves that surface: shortness of breath, sweaty brow and fidgety hands and yes the dead fish arms when presenting both in person or virtually. This interactive talk opens up dynamic spaces of interplay where inhibitions are met with tricks and devices allowing a strong presence with ease and even delight!

## **Sand Traps – Fog – Thieves**

### **How does the nervous system work against us?**

- Breath
- Posture
- Projection
- Clarity

**Open Widows / Glass of water**

**Red Elastic Bands**

**Anchor not Shield**

**Silent partner/skunk**

## **Expression**

*Challenge the challenges on their own terms*

*Physical manifestations of nerves needs to be addressed physically so time needs to be allotted for both physical warm up and mental concentration*

## **Prompters for 1 minute presentations**

How do you make scrambled eggs?

What place would you like to travel to and why?

What is your favorite place to take tourists in Vancouver?

What is your favorite exercise and why?

What is your favorite desert?

Explain how to tie a shoe

Describe the route you take to get to work?

## **Strategies for Effective Presentations**

### **Your worst Critic**

Like a runner who will train with weights around their ankles so they can feel they are flying when it comes to the race, you, as a public speaker, should practice your presentation in front of your worst critics. If you cannot do this in reality then you could imagine these audience members when practicing. Visualize their presence, address them when they 'come into the room' and make eye contact with them throughout the presentation. In this way you will face the most challenging resistance and prove to yourself that you can still deliver with confidence and grace.

## **Emblems and artifacts**

Choose a small object that can be thought of as a mascot that you have present during the creation of and rehearsal of your presentation then place it in your pocket during the presentation. This can provide continuity from the calm, centered feeling you have in the creation and rehearsal to the charged atmosphere of the event. This artifact can work as an anchor or a secret that provides a private power to your presence.

## **Dedication**

Choose a person who has been an important force for you in relation to the content of your presentation; it could be a mentor, a friend or even a family member.

Photocopy a picture of that person and fold this up and place it in your pocket or in your notes for the presentation.

Have a moment before you present where you dedicate the success of your talk to this person acknowledging and valuing their impact on this event.

## **Before the public feedback**

Before you ask for feedback from anyone who has witnessed your presentation, do a quick self-reflective inventory. What would I consider to be the mistakes or weak points in my presentation? What was in my control or what was merely a bi-product of external conditions? What would I do differently next time? Can I make a personal contract with myself that will ensure that I work on the points that I have control to change?

This contract can be worked on before your next presentation or merely serve as a reminder or prompter just before your next public speaking event.

## **Resources:**

### **1. Benjamin Zander- The Transformative Power of Classical Music (Video)**

- [https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin zander on music and passion?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/benjamin_zander_on_music_and_passion?language=en)

### **2. Resonate: Present visual stories that transform audiences (Text)**

- <http://voyager.uregina.ca:7008/vwebv/holdingsInfo?searchId=86&recCount=50&recPointer=1&bibId=2088816>



**Kathryn Ricketts** is the Director of Professional Development and

Field Experience and an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education in the University of Regina and is also the chair of the Dance area in Arts Education. She also runs *The Listening Lab*, a visual and performing arts incubator that presents exhibitions and performances and explores new experimental languages in education. She has been working for the past 35 years in the field of dance and visual arts, presenting throughout Europe, South America, Africa and Canada. Her work in universities, schools, galleries and community centres focuses on social /political issues with dance, creative writing, and visual art as the mobilizing 'voice.' Her ongoing research furthers this interest into areas of literacy, embodiment and cultural studies towards inclusive education with a method she coins "Embodying Poetic Narrative."