



Stage Fright

"Stage fright and nervousness can be a good thing!"

September 12, 2018

As we approach the first big performance of the season, it is a good time to discuss how to deal with nervousness. Almost everyone gets nervous when they perform in front of an audience. Some very famous professionals in all fields get literally sick before a performance, but they have learned how to deal with it. Generally with more and more experience, the nervousness diminishes and sometimes disappears.

Understand that most fear usually occurs before the performance and pretty much disappears as the show progresses. Here are some things you can do to help alleviate this problem, first in rehearsal:

- ★ Be prepared—the better you know your music and marching, the more confident you will be and the less nervous. Practice until it is easy.
- ★ Treat all rehearsals, especially “run thrus”, as performances. If you are in performance mode every day, shows will be routine and normal.

What you can do immediately before you step onto the field for a performance:

- ★ Do your breathing exercises.
- ★ Visualization—picture yourself performing the best you have done in rehearsals and what it feels like.
- ★ Look at the audience, stadium and press box as you approach the field and become familiar with it. Then it is not a surprise when you get ready to start the show.
- ★ Imagine the audience responding positively to the band’s performance.
- ★ Make eye contact with the members around you. Remember that you are *part of the marching band family* and that it is a team effort.
- ★ Transform the nervousness into energy and excitement and enjoy the exhilaration.

What you can do during the performance:

- ★ Use good breathing skills during the show whenever you can.
- ★ Focus on one thing at a time. Don’t worry about the whole show—just what you do next.



- ★ If you make a mistake (and almost everyone does), *recover* and get right back into the flow of the show. Don't dwell on what happened, but concentrate on what is coming next.

The **recovery is more important** than the mistake. Even if you fall down (and many members have), it really does not affect the outcome of the contest.

Remember nervousness *does not show* a fraction as much as it *feels*.

**Let the nervousness become energy and excitement and
enjoy the exhilaration!**

Enjoy the show!