Conquering Public Speaking Anxiety

Nervous about your Senior Boards? It is said that most Americans are more afraid of public speaking than they are of death. Amazing, isn’t it? If you’re nervous about your senior boards, try the following techniques:

* Practice. It is the best method for overcoming anxiety. Even if you are still nervous when you walk into the room, at least you will be less likely to forget what you are talking about when you are well-practiced.
* Breathe. When we are nervous, we tend to take shallow breaths. Just before your speech, think about taking slow, deep breaths. This will help calm you.
* Remember that your audience is pulling for you. Everyone in the room wants you to succeed. Keeping this in mind often helps overcome public speaking anxiety.
* Keep in mind, too, that most people are afraid of public speaking. This levels the playing field and means that your audience is not quite a critical as you might think.
* Stay positive. Those who think negatively about themselves will be more nervous.
* Understand that anxiety can be a healthy response to an uncomfortable situation. Acknowledge that you’re nervous and that it’s okay.
* Set up a reward for yourself for completion of the senior boards. This gives you something positive to focus on. You could, for example, plan on taking yourself out to dinner as a celebration.
* Get some exercise. Burn off that anxiety in a good workout.
* Eat well and get sleep. You will feel more confident if you feel good physically.
* Talk to someone about your fears. Sometimes, just getting it off your chest can help.
* Don’t overreact. The Senior Boards are not a life or death situation, even if you have convinced yourself that it is.
* Don’t procrastinate. The last thing you need when you’re nervous is the stress of last-minute pressure. Prepare now!