

Part 9 – Dealing with Nerves

Being nervous can be a pretty unpleasant feeling. Nobody likes to feel anxious, under-confident, fearful of the situation, unsure of themselves – and most people have experienced one or more of these feelings at some time or other. But the risk of feeling bad isn't the only problem.

Uncontrolled nervousness can alter your behaviour, your body language and what you say – when you feel nervous you can behave differently to how you usually behave. And interviews are doubly difficult because both you and the interviewer may be nervous.

Controlling your nerves isn't easy, and even if it were, it's one more thing to have to think about in what is an inherently stressful situation is. But keeping your anxiousness under control can reap such huge benefits that it is certainly worthwhile. And nerves can be controlled. Learning simple techniques will at first help, and eventually may even become an unconscious habit, so you automatically control your nerves better.

- Getting oxygen to your brain will make you able to think more clearly. Breathe deeply and slowly.
- Try breathing in for a count of five, then out for a count of five.
- Get some fresh air. Like breathing, this will increase the supply of oxygen to your brain and make you able to think more clearly.
- Take a short walk – for the same reason.
- People often have calming rituals, such as having a cigarette or a cup of tea if you don't have one, establish one!
- Have a drink – preferably a soft drink, juice or water. Remember that tea and coffee are stimulants, so if you are nervous, they won't help and could even make things worse – caffeine can make you feel more anxious!
- Find somewhere to sit down.
- Concentrate on relaxing

Keeping Things in Proportion

You are not alone. Everyone dries up at some stage. Pause in your conversation, or when asked a question. Count to five then continue. This doesn't sound as odd as you might think – pausing to gather your thoughts is a natural thing, and people often do it. Stop thinking about being nervous and start thinking about relaxing.