

3 Tips to Immediately Improve Your Communication

by Jo Lena Johnson

1. Breathe
2. Practice, Practice, Practice
3. Show It 'Til You Know It!

BREATHING HAS BENEFITS

First, clear your mind, which allows you to better control what you are about to say. This will put you in a better position to relay your message in an appropriate tone of voice. This is important because tone of voice is about 38% of your message. Third, you can give yourself a chance to pause to set your body language – which is 55% of your message. Unfold those arms! Put a smile on your face and focus on what you really need to share. When you are focused and your tone and body language match, you appear more confident and more credible.

Choose to take at least three deep breaths before you begin a (difficult) conversation with someone (who may be difficult), because breathing creates a physiological change.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

People who easily express themselves in writing don't always feel comfortable speaking what they have written. As an author, you



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must give people a reason to want to know more about you or about what you have to say. This starts with how you communicate by speaking. Being products of our environment, we tend to become “comfortable” and even “stuck” in the way we communicate. I call that autopilot – and it can be negative or positive.

Start with changing your body language. Since this makes up over 50% of your overall message, it makes sense that you practice better body language to achieve better results. Be neutral so that you help the other person feel comfortable and so that your message has a better chance of being well-received. This takes practice

and should be done even if you are communicating over the phone. If you simply stop to breathe, and put on a smile – even a fake one – then you will be in a better position to have your message heard as you intend it to be.

Use a mirror and practice smiling – even if you don't feel like smiling, you'll sound better.

Practice with a friend, co-worker, or significant other who will be honest about the message you are sending. Ask them for feedback and keep sharing until you get better.

Keep working through it, because mistakes will happen – habits are hard to break, but it will work if you are willing!

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Publishing and Marketing Panel Discussion

with Jennifer Geist & Heather Tearney

What do you need to consider when marketing and selling books to bookstores? What's the difference between self-publishing and assisted self-publishing? What are the differences between marketing a traditionally published book versus a self-published book?

The St. Louis Publishers Association strives to present topics that help aspiring and published authors answer questions about the publishing process, author promotion, and marketing books, and to accomplish that goal, on Wednesday, February 14, 2018, we'll host two experts, Jennifer Geist and Heather Tearney, for a panel discussion that will review the publishing process, provide marketing tips, and, most importantly, provide plenty of time for plenty of questions. Comments and questions for the panel can also be submitted in advance via email to SLPA President Warren Martin at president@stlouispublishers.org.

Jennifer Geist is the publisher at Pen & Publish, Inc., and its imprints: Brick Mantel Books, Open Books Press, and Transformation Media Books. With experience in editing, book compositing, photography, graphic and web design, marketing, writing, and more, she manages every book from acquisitions to publication and beyond. Geist received her bachelor's degree in creative writing with a focus in small press publishing through Southeast Missouri State University. She has worked with numerous small presses and her stories and

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Jan 10, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:
**Build Your Audience and Credibility
 with Confidence!**
 with Jo Lena Johnson
 — stlouispublishers.org/event-2745084

Feb 14, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:
**Publishing and Marketing
 Panel Discussion**
 with Jennifer Geist & Heather Tearney
 — stlouispublishers.org/event-2774079

Mar 14, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:
Hypnotic Book Marketing
 with Bob Baker

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SHOW IT 'TIL YOU KNOW IT!

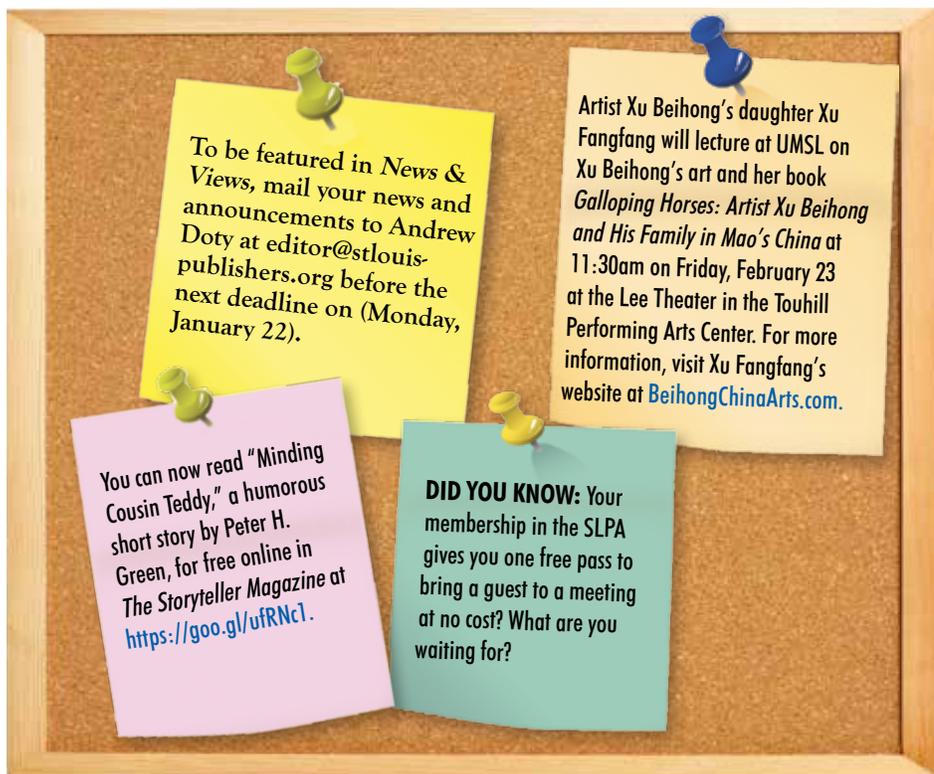
No matter how silly it may seem, try taking a deep breath and smiling to consciously evoke a different result, even if it seems out of your comfort zone. Many individuals can't even conjure up a smile unless they are looking at themselves in the mirror. Doing so after taking a deep breath will be easier, and if you get into the habit of practicing this before every conversation, you'll be amazed at the results.

Even putting on a fake smile can go a long way to changing your attitude and the attitudes of those around you. Try it. Go to the mall and smile at total strangers and watch how many smile back.

PRACTICE MAKES SKILLED

The power of the pen has historically been greater than most things in history. With technology and so many voices being expressed, you get to in this fast-paced world. Your voice, your pen, and your confidence will go a long way toward finding ways to express yourself. Give people a reason to care, a reason to listen, and the reason you chose to share!

Jo Lena Johnson is *The Absolute Good Resilience Coach* and the *Publisher of Mission Possible Press*.



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photos are published in a variety of literary magazines.

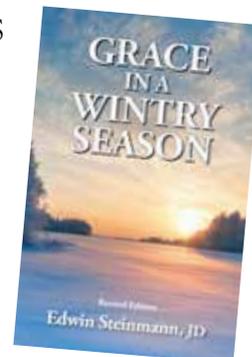
Heather Tearney has more than eight years of experience working with self-publishing authors around the country. She is the Director of the ShowMe Writers Masterclass conference, a partnership between Mizzou Publishing and the Columbia Chapter of the Missouri Writers' Guild, held each fall in Columbia, MO. Her journey with authors and printing books began with the installation of the Espresso Book Machine (EBM) in 2009 at The Mizzou Store. She has presented for Xerox and their Thought Leadership Workshops on the EBM and self-publishing, as well as having been a consultant for the company selling the EBM, On Demand Books. Since then, she has expanded the printing services offered to authors beyond the EBM and frequently works with authors on marketing not only their books, but also themselves.

THE BOOK CORNER

Grace in a Wintry Season

Edwin Steinmann

“THERE IS A MIND/ entity within (and without) us that/who knows us better than we know ourselves, loves us more than we



love ourselves, and is always trying to heal our woundedness via the dreams s/he creates in us every night and otherwise,” Steinmann says. “Grace is a spiritual memoir about hir, about hir transformative effect on me via several dreams and one mystical experience s/he created in me. I hope it’s helpful.” To learn more or purchase the book, visit <http://a.co/7Y3kNNs>.

Meets on the Second Wednesday of the Month

RICHMOND HEIGHTS
COMMUNITY CENTER (THE HEIGHTS)
The Argus Room • 8001 Dale Ave.
Richmond Heights, MO, 63117
(Child care available at The Heights)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm
Program begins at 7pm

The meeting concludes around 8:30pm
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members
Membership \$60 per year
Guests: \$10 at the door



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