

THE MAGAZINE FOR COMMUNICATORS & LEADERS | FEBRUARY 2018

TOASTMASTER®

A close-up portrait of Marc Williams, ACS, a Black man with a shaved head, wearing black-rimmed glasses, a dark blue suit jacket, a light blue shirt, and a purple tie. He is smiling warmly at the camera. The background is a soft, out-of-focus gradient of blue and purple.

Marc Williams, ACS

Educator and speaker inspires students and audiences

A solid white rectangular box, likely a placeholder for an image or graphic.

Tips and Techniques for
**Recruiting Members
to Your Club!**

**Presentation Technology
Enters a New Era**

The Value of Relationships



When most people think of February, they think of Valentine’s Day. A time to celebrate love and friendship. You might even call it “the relationship month.” We all form relationships: with work colleagues, in our personal lives, in Toastmasters. In my nearly 30 years as a Toastmaster, I have developed countless friendships through this organization, and they have enriched my life in so many ways.

I think about the bond I have built with Dan Rex, Toastmasters International’s Chief Executive Officer. Dan and I first became friends in 1995, back when I belonged to the only club in Sri Lanka. At that point, I had no idea what my future in Toastmasters held; we had no area, division or district that existed in my part of the world. I just knew that Dan was someone I liked and admired.

Over the years, our friendship has grown closer. In our respective roles, Dan and I now work together on projects that are vital to the future of Toastmasters. Sometimes we disagree about certain issues, yet as longtime friends we understand one another and trust each other, which enables us to express our opinions freely and honestly. Some discussions might be difficult, but they never become personal or hurtful—Dan and I value our friendship too much to let that happen.

The Toastmasters experience helps us cultivate strong relationships. We care about our fellow club members and want to support each other. In club meetings, we learn to listen attentively and to give and receive constructive feedback. These are important elements in any relationship. The Toastmasters program has helped me build valuable relationships outside of the organization, including in the corporate world. It has even helped me in my marriage and my family life.

The Toastmasters experience helps us cultivate strong relationships.

My wife, Sarumathy, and I have been married for 30 years, and we have two daughters, Avisha and Mahishaa. My Toastmasters training has enabled me to communicate my feelings to my wife and daughters—and more importantly, to listen and be silent when necessary. It has helped me to give and receive feedback, and to respect my adult daughters’ needs and ideas.

A life without relationships, without friends who are there for us, without people who need us and whom we need in return, might be a rewarding life to some, but for me it would be no life at all. Make the effort to strengthen your relationships. Maybe your efforts won’t work out. But maybe, just maybe, they will be the start of something special.

As you celebrate Valentine’s Day this month, take the time to appreciate all the relationships in your life, both inside and outside of Toastmasters.

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We empower individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders.



WHERE LEADERS ARE MADE

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The *Toastmaster* magazine (ISSN 00408263) is published monthly by Toastmasters International, Inc., 23182 Arroyo Vista, Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688, U.S.A. Periodicals postage paid at Mission Viejo, CA and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: Send address change to the *Toastmaster* magazine, P.O. Box 9052, Mission Viejo, CA 92690, U.S.A.

Published to promote the ideas and goals of Toastmasters International, a nonprofit educational organization of clubs throughout the world dedicated to teaching skills in public speaking and leadership. Members’ subscriptions are included in the \$45 semi-annual dues.

The official publication of Toastmasters International carries authorized notices and articles regarding the activities and interests of the organization, but responsibility is not assumed for the opinions of the authors of other articles. The *Toastmaster* magazine does not endorse or guarantee the products it advertises.

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Printed in U.S.A.

Congratulations to these clubs celebrating anniversaries and other milestones.



Money Mastery Toastmasters club in Singapore celebrates its 15th anniversary at Lazarus Island, off the southern coast of mainland Singapore.



Nearly 70 guests from 26 clubs celebrated Pacific Sunset Toastmasters' 25th anniversary at the Dragon Hill Lodge, located inside the United States Army Garrison Yongsan, Seoul, Republic of Korea (South Korea).



Members of the State Street Princeton club in Plainsboro, New Jersey, celebrate the end of summer with an outdoor meeting, some silly hats and their *Toastmaster* magazines.



Send your fun club photos to photos@toastmasters.org. Include a description and your club name, number and location. Photos must be in jpeg format with a resolution of at least 300 dpi (dots per inch) or 1 MB (megabyte). Out-of-focus images cannot be accepted. It is not necessary to include the Toastmaster magazine or other branded materials in your photos, but if Toastmasters materials are displayed, they must reflect the current brand.

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See more photos, videos and links online at www.toastmasters.org/Magazine.

February Online Extras:

- **Spread the Word: Grow Your Club**—Watch an exclusive Toastmasters video and view additional photos to learn more about the club experience. ▶ 📷
- **Creating a Positive Impact**—Discover more about Marc Williams' journey by watching a Toastmasters video interview. ▶
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▶ MEMBER MOMENT 

Overcoming Unemployment

BY MARY NESFIELD

It is estimated that the U.S. labor market lost millions of jobs in the late 2000s, a period known as the Great Recession. Toastmaster Eugene Beronilla was among those directly affected. He survived the worst of the recession by working on two public health projects, but both contracts ended in June 2012. Beronilla, ACS, ALB, went without work for a year and a half. But in 2012 he joined the Career Builders Toastmasters in San Diego, and he credits his club experience for boosting his confidence and helping him speak articulately in a variety of settings.

What was it like for you to be unemployed for so long?

I was so confident I could get a job that I didn't prepare for what it took [to find work]. It was after the first few rejections that I realized something was wrong, and I didn't have the life experience to avoid the slippery slope I was about to face. I went through a foreclosure process and almost lost my home.

How did this affect you?

I experienced a period of serious depression. Because of my public health background, I recognized the signs and I sought mental health services for the first time in my life. I realized how being unemployed for so long creates what I call a triple whammy: The longer you don't work, the more it affects your 1) finances, 2) marketability, and 3) most of all, your self-esteem because of the constant rejection when job searching. As my self-confidence weakened, my ability to carry myself well in interviews decreased. It helps to have a resource in place to deal with the mental health barriers.

Describe your current position.

I work in the Pediatrics department at the University of California, San Diego. I am contracted by San Diego County's Health and Human Services to manage the education, training and outreach activities of the Immunization Branch. In short, I share a responsibility to update everyone in the county on the federal regulations and information regarding immunizations.

Do you use your Toastmasters skills at work?

Yes, I am frequently expected to speak publicly in front of small groups to large conferences. I also facilitate high-level meetings, and even get requests to lead public speaking workshops. The pivotal point came when I addressed Congresswoman Susan



Eugene Beronilla, ACS, ALB

Davis and the San Diego Workforce Partnership, the organization that helps job seekers in San Diego County.

When Congresswoman Davis asked me to speak about my long-term unemployment, I was ready, because I outlined and practiced my talking points, just like we do in Toastmasters. She then surprised me by holding a press conference immediately afterward and asked me to say a few words. In front of cameras and microphones on the lectern, I told myself this was the most important Table Topic of my life. The media picked up some sound bites from what I said, which went to public radio, newsprint, and, I believe, a news station.

Congresswoman Davis even took my story to Capitol Hill [in Washington, D.C.] to help long-term unemployed constituents by saying, "Let's do this for Eugene." It was such an honor.

The reason I believe in the Toastmasters program is because it helped me accomplish what I set out to do when I first joined: 1) effectively speak in front of elected officials, and 2) effectively speak in front of the media.

What advice do you have for job seekers?

Do not give up and don't give in to the feelings of rejection. If you're in a serious slump to the point that you don't feel motivated to continue with the job search, seek mental health services or talk to a job recruiter. And keep active in your field. While unemployed, I took leadership roles in my Toastmasters club. I applied my organizational, administrative and graphic design skills to boost my club's membership and visibility in the community. That helped to keep my public speaking engine running so that when it came to that critical moment—in my case, the chat with a congressional leader and the media—I was already revved up.

Mary Nesfield is associate editor for the Toastmaster magazine.

▶ SNAPSHOT



Members of the Queen's Town club, from the Czech Republic, visit the Mumlavské Vodopády waterfalls in North Bohemia during the summer.

▶ BRAND CONTEST

Leaders in Lithuania

Members of the First Toastmasters of Lithuania club are all smiles as they pose with their banner for the Toastmasters International Brand Photo Contest, which they won in October.

Enter the Toastmasters monthly photo contest and give your club a chance to win a branded banner, lectern or marketing materials. The contest runs now through December 31, 2018. Visit bit.ly/Toastmasters-Brand-Contest for more information.



QUICK TAKES

▶ MEET MY MENTOR



Zivai Matondo, CC, ALB

BY MARY NESFIELD

Zivai Matondo, CC, ALB, is an independent distributor of health and beauty products. In addition to coaching and training other independent distributors, she is president of the Diplomatic Corps Toastmasters club in Harare, Zimbabwe.

In 2014, Tendai David Muranganwa, CC, ALB, joined the same club, and also earned a degree in International Studies at Midlands State University, Zimbabwe. He was hired in 2015 as an administrative assistant but became visually impaired. During his rehabilitation, he focused on Toastmasters and became the club's 2017-2018 vice president membership.

How did you find out about Toastmasters?

It was through my best friend, who is a member of Metropolitan Toastmasters club in Zimbabwe. I wanted to express my thoughts and ideas more clearly, so I joined.

What was the initial experience like for you?

When I met Zivai, I was shy and reserved, and lacked self-confidence. She saw past that, and because of her guidance, I became vice president public relations, for which I was recognized in 2015 as the Most Promising Toastmaster in Zimbabwe.

How would you describe Zivai?

She is committed and hard-working, and she always wears a smile, regardless of the circumstances. She encouraged me to continue my Toastmasters journey, despite the challenges I faced when I lost my eyesight. She even assisted me with transportation.

What was the highlight of her mentorship for you?

It came in October 2015, when I volunteered as a ballot counter



FROM LEFT: Zivai Matondo and Tendai David Muranganwa

for the Humorous Speech Contest. Zivai insisted that I participate as a speaker. A few speeches later I was the 2015 District 74 Humorous Speech Contest champion at the conference held in East London, South Africa.

How do you apply what you've learned at Toastmasters?

I have developed strong interpersonal communication skills and can more effectively work as part of a team. I also teach others, including the youth in my church.

Why do you stay in Toastmasters?

Because of the supportive environment. I not only gained a mentor, but a motherly figure who teaches me life lessons by the example she sets.

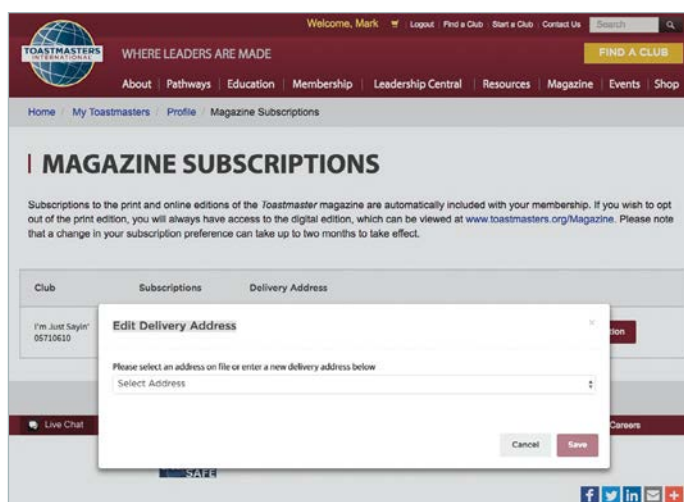
Mary Nesfield is associate editor of *Toastmaster magazine*.

▶ NEWS FROM TI

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If you choose to opt out, you can still enjoy the *Toastmaster* magazine online by visiting www.toastmasters.org/Magazine.



▶ ACCEPTING AN AWARD

Be Prepared for the Spotlight

BY PAUL STERMAN

Next month the Academy Awards ceremony takes place in Los Angeles. The finest in the film industry will be feted with golden trophies for their achievements. Here's betting that more than one acceptance speech starts off something like this:

"Oh my gosh, I can't believe it! How did this happen?! Um, uh ... I didn't even prepare anything to say, because I thought there was no way I would win!"

Sound familiar? Countless Oscar winners over the years have bounded onstage and spent precious time fumbling for words because they weren't expecting the honor. Or at least that's their explanation. But with only five nominations in most Oscar categories, nominees must know they have *some* chance to win. Best to prepare a speech in case they do—especially when millions around the world will be watching.

"The only thing worse than not ever getting to make an Oscar speech is getting to make an Oscar speech and then having nothing to say," Casey Affleck told the

Boston Globe newspaper after delivering a disjointed two-minute acceptance speech for the 2017 best actor Oscar.

The lesson doesn't just apply to big-name actors. Whether you're accepting an Oscar, a Toastmasters award or some kind of community recognition, be prepared for your big moment. This is the time to share heartfelt words, express your gratitude and enjoy the recognition from others.

The *Special Occasion Speeches* manual (item 226N in the Toastmasters online shop) provides tips for accepting an award (as well as other out-of-the-ordinary speeches). Advice to remember:

- ▶ **Put thought into what you're going to say**, prepare a speech and practice, practice, practice.
- ▶ **Speak from the heart and don't be afraid to show your personality.** Everyone appreciates authenticity. And if the occasion is right, a few words of tasteful humor can be a nice touch.

- ▶ **Recognize others.** Acknowledge the organization presenting you with the award and thank one or two others who played a major role in your achievement.
- ▶ **False modesty isn't flattering.** Don't say something like, "I really don't deserve this." Whoever presented you with the award thought you did. So what are you saying about their judgment?
- ▶ **Brevity is a virtue.** Audiences don't want to hear you recite a personal history or thank 20 people whose names you've written down on a list. Sincere, succinct and thoughtful—that's a winning recipe.

The 2018 Academy Awards take place March 4 in Los Angeles. If you're watching on TV, put your Toastmasters hat on and evaluate which acceptance speeches soar and which ones land with a thud. And if you accept an award in the near future, give a gracious speech and enjoy the moment!

Paul Sterman is senior editor of the *Toastmaster magazine*.

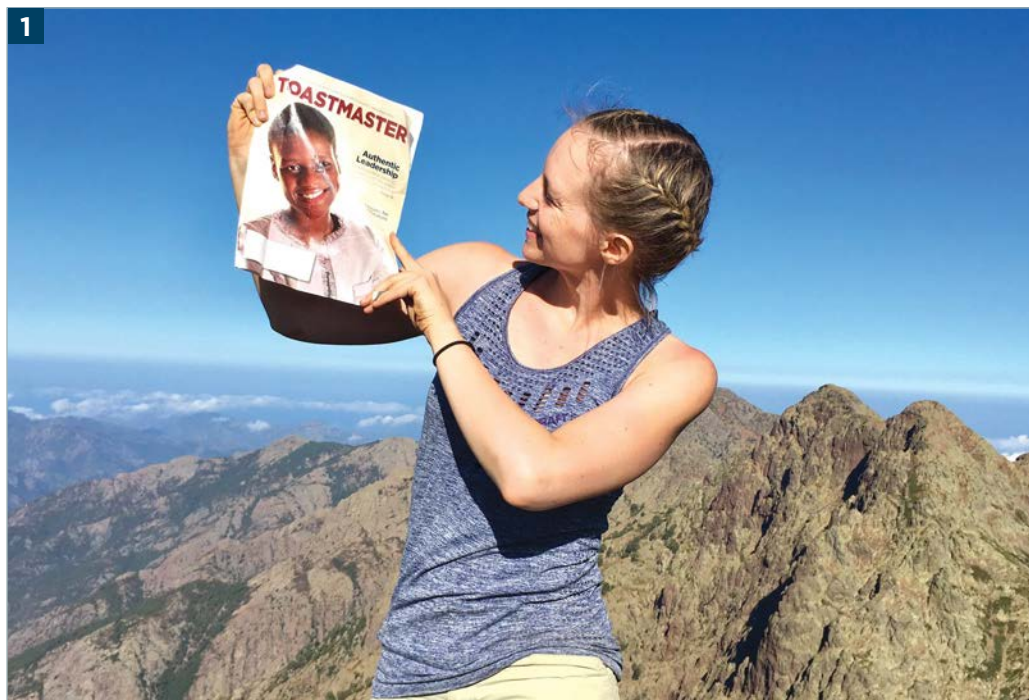


▶ MEMBER CONNECTIONS

A Cultural Immersion

Members of the Victoria Toastmasters club in Hong Kong pose with members of the Tokushima Toastmasters club in Japan, after starting a mutually beneficial partnership in the fall of 2016. Victoria Toastmasters was first approached by Tokushima club member Minoru Tamura, DTM, in September 2016—an invitation that came after the Tokushima club saw the Victoria club hiking photo in the *Toastmaster* magazine. After club representatives chatted for two months, the Tokushima club sent members to Hong Kong for a visit. In April 2017, a group of Victoria club members headed to Japan to support the Division G contest led by the Tokushima club. Both clubs envision a long-term partnership.





1

1 | SARAH JOHANNA DEJAEGER, CC, from Brussels, Belgium, poses on the Col de Stagni waypoint on the GR 20 hiking trail in Corsica, a Mediterranean island off the coast of France.

2 | MANAN TIWARY, from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, smiles brightly near a windmill at Zaanse Schans in the Netherlands.

3 | MASATOSHI DENKO, ACG, ALB, from Tokyo, Japan, takes in the view at Snæfellsjökull National Park in Iceland.

4 | BANDANA JAIN, from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, enjoys the swaying coconut trees and breezy beaches in Mauritius.




2




3



4

 **View additional photos** in this month's *Traveling Toastmaster* photo gallery at www.toastmasters.org/Magazine.

 **PICTURE YOURSELF HERE!** Pose with the *Toastmaster* magazine during your travels and submit your photos for a chance to be featured in an upcoming issue. Visit www.toastmasters.org/Submissions. Bon voyage!

The New Face of Millennials in Tech

It's time to do away with the stereotype of the socially awkward techie.

BY AAZIR MUNIR, CC, ALB

What is your stereotype of a “young person in tech”? Does it conjure up the image of a quiet, socially awkward person sitting in a corner mashing his keyboard all day and thinking about code or *Star Trek*? I love tech but I've always been determined never to be that person. The tech industry is like any other. To succeed in it, you need more than great ideas and technical expertise—you need to be able to communicate your message.

Living in the Waterloo region in Canada, fondly referred to by Canadians as the “Silicon Valley of the North,” I am lucky to be surrounded by a vibrant tech community. I have attended dozens of tech-related events in the area and seen how communication skills, or the lack thereof, can make or break a business.

I recently graduated from a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) program at the University of Waterloo and work for the software firm Venuiti Solutions Inc., as well as for the nonprofit organization Trusted Clothes. I have noted five essential streams of communication.

1. Vertical communication upward with your supervisors and bosses
2. Vertical communication downward with your employees and those you supervise
3. Horizontal communication with colleagues
4. Communication with clients
5. Communication with other outside sources (e.g., employees of other companies)

It is important to be aware of how we communicate in each of these streams. It is no longer sufficient to just deliver excellent presentations to colleagues and clients. Today, we must effectively convey our thoughts via a variety of platforms



Aazir Munir, CC, ALB

The way I explain a technical feature to a developer in Russia is going to be different from how I do so for a CEO in the United States.

(phone, video chat, email and social media) to a diverse set of listeners—many of whom may not have English as their first language. One thing I've learned is that regardless of the platform, I always stand up straight and smile when I speak to better project my voice and confidence.

It's important to know the background, skill set and key motivations of the people you're speaking to. Every time we have a new member on our team, or a new client, I research that individual on LinkedIn to get a better understanding of them. This helps to ensure I'm respecting that person's time and delivering information in the most effective way possible. The way I

explain a technical feature to a developer in Russia is going to be different from how I do so for a CEO in the United States. Knowing how to communicate with diverse groups is a skill often developed through “trial by fire.” By consciously working on it, you set yourself up for future success.

At KW Toastmasters, we are lucky to have a diverse membership, from entrepreneurs in their 50s to new Canadians looking to expand their communication skills. As club president, I have supportive people who help me uphold our great club atmosphere. Many are techie millennials themselves. We help each other expand our skills and, as a result, many of us see improvements in our careers and daily lives. Giving speeches and participating in Table Topics teach the importance of vocal variety, body language and so much more.

Another key tip for young tech professionals, other than to join Toastmasters, is to use your network. Find mentors who can help you. This can be as easy as asking a question on LinkedIn or through an online forum. I recently became a project manager and one of the first things I did was to reach out to someone more experienced to ask for advice. I also mentor individuals and I often learn new things from them.

Thanks to Toastmasters and the demand for communication skills in the marketplace, it's time for the stereotype of the socially awkward techie to give way to the image of a confident, articulate millennial. **T**

AAZIR MUNIR, ALB, is a project manager at Venuiti Solutions Inc. in Kitchener, Canada and president of Kitchener-Waterloo Toastmasters.

Member Achievements: Couples Edition

Learn how these members found Toastmasters and each other.

Sean Lloyd and Tonia Robinson-Lloyd

Orange, New Jersey



A Family of Toastmasters

Sean and I met more than 13 years ago, when he was visiting my homeland, Trinidad, with his father. His dad and my mom knew each other, and introduced us. When he returned home to New Jersey, he excitedly told his mother and sister about me, stating assuredly, "I am going to marry her!" I, of course, knew nothing of his plans until they materialized 12 years later. We were married by the civil court in New Jersey on August 19, 2015, and remarried in a church in Newark, New Jersey, on August 5, 2017, with our family, friends and Toastmasters family present.

In 2009, I had joined the Markham Sweet Talkers Toastmasters in Ontario, Canada, and my experience with the club helped me land my first job within three months of moving to Ontario. By the time I returned to Trinidad three years later, my mother and brother had both become Toastmasters. It was a family affair. I joined their club, Dynamic Speakers Toastmasters. We were there to support one another before meetings and discuss our speeches in detail, post-meeting. We all joined the club's executive team and even launched our own club, Inspired Speakers, at the University of Trinidad and Tobago in 2014.

Sean proposed to me, and upon earning my master's degree in clinical psychology, I left my family in Trinidad to start a life with him in New Jersey. We are both members of the Successful Speaking Toastmasters club in Newark. He jokes that I twisted his arm to join Toastmasters, but the truth is he enjoys it immensely when he is either giving speeches or being Table Topics Master.

Toastmasters helps to keep our lives exciting and purposeful, as there is always something new to learn, as well as an opportunity to give back. I encourage couples to join a Toastmasters club! It would be an investment with numerous returns.



Sean Lloyd and Tonia yd



Jayanthi Sundar and Sundararaman Chintamani

Sundararaman Chintamani and Jayanthi Sundar

Chennai, India



A 24/7 Mentor

Sundararaman Chintamani: I started my Toastmasters journey in 2008 by joining the club at the place where I worked. Later, I became a dual member by joining a community club, Medley Toastmasters in Chennai. When I was vice president membership, I could enroll more than 20 members, but my biggest challenge was to woo my wife to become a Toastmaster. Once she became a member, she never looked back. She became club president and introduced best practices such as video recording club meetings and making the recordings available to members. We also became role models for many other Toastmasters couples in Chennai.

Jayanthi Sundar: Initially, just as other Toastmasters spouses can be, I was skeptical of joining. I teased my husband about his passion for Toastmasters. But after some time, I was amazed by his perseverance and commitment. Out of curiosity, I wanted to look into it. So I expressed my interest in attending a Toastmasters conference. After seeing the positive energy flowing among the

members, I enrolled as a member of the Medley Toastmasters club. My husband and I always travel to meetings together and during that time we rehearse our speeches and prepare for Table Topics. Toastmasters made me realize that it is not just about becoming a Competent Communicator or leader, it goes beyond that. We take our speeches seriously. When I started my first manual project, my husband had already started on his Advanced Communicator Bronze journey. What else do you need than to have a mentor 24/7 to help you?



Jaap and Marian Evers

Jaap and Marian Evers

Masterton, New Zealand



Different Clubs, Different Perspectives

My husband and I met at a church youth group in the Netherlands. After dating for about two years, we got married and moved to the other side of the world—New Zealand. We planned to stay for a couple of years before moving back to the Netherlands, but 29 years later we're still living in New Zealand, as we like it so much here.

My husband works for the Dairy Research Institute (DRI), now called Fonterra, and about five years ago he joined their Toastmasters club, DRI Remark club. He got the whole family involved at times—for example, with doing Table Topics after dinner. When he completed his Competent Communicator, he chose *Storytelling* as one of his advanced manuals, and that caught my attention. I am a teacher and knew improved storytelling skills would enhance my teaching.

As I was unable to join my husband's club, I joined the Masterton Club in 2015. Although we are at different clubs, it is great being Toastmasters together. We have visited each other's clubs at times, and the two clubs take different approaches. After these visits, we bring new ideas to our own clubs.

Being at different stages in our Toastmasters journey means we can help each other. I benefit from my husband's experience and expertise, and I reciprocate by suggesting an interesting word of the day, Table Topics idea or speech topic. Last year we were both president of our respective clubs and enjoyed attending leadership courses together. We think it is important to spend time together and this is a hobby that we both get pleasure from, while gaining useful skills at the same time.

Toshiya and Mami Takahashi

Tokyo, Japan



Love in Many Languages

We met in Toastmasters in 2015 and are members of different clubs in Japan. My club, Tokyo Metropolitan Toastmasters, holds an annual joint meeting with the Japanese English Bilingual Toastmasters (JETM) club in Korea. In 2015, when my club accepted members from other clubs to be part of the joint meeting, my future wife, Mami, was one of them, and I became acquainted with her. We are both interested in Korea and language, and we have the same sense of values in many fields, so we saw each other as partners.

The second time we met in a joint meeting, we had a session about Korean language. Most of our Korean members spoke Japanese fluently. That is why we usually communicated with Korean members in English and Japanese. We wanted to introduce other Japanese members to the Korean language and discussed how we could help them understand the structure of the language. After spending more time together, Mami and I realized we had many things in common.

Although we are not in the same club, my wife sometimes participates in my club as a guest. To prepare speeches, we usually practice at home. We share our opinions with each other and modulate our speeches.

On March 4, 2017, we invited Toastmasters friends to our wedding ceremony and party, not only Japanese friends but also friends from the Korean club. They gave excellent speeches for the occasion. That made a great impression on other guests who didn't know about Toastmasters. They were high school friends, university friends, former and current colleagues, supervisors, old friends from abroad and relatives. They all heard about Toastmasters for the first time. **T**



Toshiya and Mami Takahashi

Do you have a Toastmasters success story you'd like to share about yourself or another member? Write it in 300 words or less and send with a high-resolution photo to submissions@toastmasters.org.

Make Your Next Speech Memorable

What you can learn from TED Talks.

BY LISA B. MARSHALL

They can teach you something new, change your perspective and inspire you to take action. They can make you laugh, cry and think. With over 1 billion views worldwide, it is likely that TED Talks have raised not only your expectations of other speakers, but also the audiences' expectations of you!

Today, it might be rare to find a Toastmaster who has never watched a TED Talk. Since 2006, TED (a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas) has been providing these massively popular presentations for free to help us become educated and connected global citizens—and they are powerfully addictive. Why? Because each talk focuses on one novel and big idea that the presenter passionately believes will help people, and it's delivered in an emotional or memorable way.

Let's break down the principles that make these talks so noteworthy and learn how to apply them to our own presentations.

Focus on one novel idea

One of the biggest mistakes that presenters make is trying to fit too many ideas into a short talk. Resist the urge to talk broadly and instead go deep by purposefully using narrative stories, specific examples and literary devices to support your single, key idea—which, by the way, you should be able to communicate in a sentence.

Next, craft a unique and unexpected approach to the topic. Why? Because the brain pays extra attention to newness—unexpected things spark our curiosity and interest. In fact, research suggests that novelty sets off brain responses that promote learning.

Finally, big ideas are ones that matter to many people. It is important to always choose a topic for which you can articulate not only why you care deeply about it, but more importantly why the audience should care, too. If your audience doesn't care about your idea, you've lost them.

Believe that your idea will help people

One way to boost interest is to share your genuine, authentic enthusiasm. In high school, I attended a Bob Seger concert that I will never forget. Seger and his Silver Bullet Band members were onstage playing and laughing with each other and the audience. It was like we were invited to their own little party. It was impossible for me not to feel their enthusiasm as if it were my own. On the way home I told my friend, "I want to enjoy whatever it is that I end up doing so much that other people around me can just feel it—just like Bob Seger."

Resist the urge to talk broadly and instead go deep to support your single, key idea.

Psychologists call this phenomenon "emotional contagion," a form of interpersonal influence. Emotion (both positive and negative) is contagious and can be used as a significant force. Presenters often limit their self-expression when delivering a talk—they don't allow themselves to relax, get carried away or really be in the moment. But it's exactly that vulnerable and sincere delivery that draws your audience closer and helps to create a personal connection.

Deliver your idea in a memorable way


To be memorable, it is important to share emotion, not logic. Narrative stories allow you to tap into listeners' emotions—making abstractness and complexity into something simple and concrete. Delivering in an emotional way means more than just sharing a humorous or heart-wrenching anecdote; it requires elements of story such as plot and relatable characters.

Catchphrases and props can also create vivid mental images and anchor your message in a person's mind. Analogies and metaphors are also helpful, particularly for novel ideas, because they relate your new ideas to experiences the audience is already familiar with. Studies show that learning new information is easiest when linked to prior knowledge. Analogies and figurative language facilitate this.

A TED Talk done right

A recent example of a short TED Talk that illustrates all of these points is one by Tim Ferriss entitled, "Why you should define your fears instead of your goals." The title creates curiosity and a desire to explore this single idea. Early on, Ferriss promises a method to overcome self-paralysis and take action—of course, this creates universal interest! Then within the first few sentences, he shares a shocking personal story and we understand why it's deeply important to him—creating connection and anticipation of his solution.

Next he rewards us with an emotional and memorable journey, which includes a powerful catchphrase ("fear-setting"), interesting metaphors ("a safety net for emotional free fall"), and novel images (a cow standing in the rain). He closes with a powerful one-two punch: a personal story about Jerzy Gregorek, one of the leaders of Poland's Solidarity movement, that includes a short motivational quote encapsulated as a chiasmus.

If you rigorously apply these principles, you will improve not only your Toastmaster talks, but your work and community presentations too. 

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Finding the Ideal Mentor

The first step in finding a mentor is to become the type of person that someone wants to work with. Astute observation can offer clues.

BY BILL BROWN, DTM

We frequently talk about Toastmasters as a learning experience. We stress speech evaluation, the opportunity to fail in a friendly environment, and mastering leadership. However, there is another area that has the potential to be the most valuable—mentoring.

As experienced Toastmasters, we assign a mentor to each new member, but all too often the mentoring process is treated as a minor role—simply a requirement in the *Competent Leadership* manual. As Pathways rolls out in each district, more emphasis will be placed on this important role. Why? What is its value? And how do you go about finding a good mentor?

I have found that many times a concept or process is best learned by looking at a similar situation in a different context. My recent experience *outside* of Toastmasters may show the answers to those questions.

A few months ago I passed a test required for an amateur radio license. I am fascinated by the communication aspects of the field, but the real driving force in amateur radio is electronics technology. Unfortunately for me, the limit of my electronics knowledge is reached when I plug in a device and turn it on.

To learn more, I joined a local amateur radio club that meets every week for an educational presentation. That sounds a lot like a Toastmasters meeting, doesn't it? This helps me to a point, but I still have many questions—very basic ones.

During the first meeting, Earl immediately handed me his card and said, "Call me anytime with your questions." That is a mentor—someone with expertise who is willing to help. I have his number on

speed dial. I also met Shane. Our personalities click, so we chat during every meeting. The club is working on a "homebrew" radio project to build a device, but I didn't have the skills to participate. Shane invited, "Come on over to my place and I will teach you how to solder." James offered, "I'll help you get the right components." While, Jaime added, "When you get your device built, let me know. I'll help you program it." Those are mentors.

**Mentors are everywhere.
You just have to look,
and ask.**

I am also interested in learning Morse Code, a method of transmitting text. That is Robert's topic. Every week at the radio club he runs a code practice. He is one of the quieter members, but I made a point to get to know him. He gives me tips to get up to speed quickly. He, too, is a mentor.

What does this show us? That mentors are everywhere. You just have to look, and ask. And you can have more than one. Mentoring, though, is not just a role to play. It is a partnership. It has two requirements—a person who wants to learn, and a person who wants to help. Mentors like to work with people who are willing to do what it takes to grow. The first step, then, in finding a good mentor is to become the type of person that someone wants to work with.

In Toastmasters, you will start out with one mentor who will help you learn the basics: how to be a timer, how to write your first few speeches and how to work in Pathways. The mentor is assigned to you.

Your vice president education may offer you a choice of mentors—talk with each one. Do your personalities click? Do they seem interested in being truly helpful?

As you attend more meetings, you will see how each member has unique strengths. Make a note of this, and when you need help in a particular area, seek out the member who has the strongest skills in that area. I am strong in speech delivery and wordsmithing. Another member will be strong in speech organization. Someone else may be strong in body language. Decide which members have the skills that you need today and put together a mentoring team for yourself.

How do you know where you need to improve? Listen to your evaluators. Do you frequently hear the same comments or suggestions?

The question remains: What is the value of a mentor? In a nutshell, it is targeted, accelerated learning. The Toastmasters program is great—it offers customized learning. Take advantage of it. Sometimes you will need help to move forward. And sometimes you will need someone to hold you accountable. A mentor can help you in all of these ways.

One final thought—mentoring goes two ways. We all have something to share. Be willing to help someone else learn, even if you are new. That is, after all, part of being a Toastmaster. **T**

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Spread the Word: Grow Your Club

Tips on recruiting new members.

BY MAUREEN ZAPPALA, DTM

Wouldn't it be great if everyone who visited your club, joined your club? Sure it would! But maybe you're thinking, *how do we even get someone to visit our club?*

Member recruitment is a common concern of Toastmasters clubs worldwide because building membership keeps a club strong and its members growing. Thankfully, there are many resources and techniques available to help your club develop an effective recruiting program.

Recruiting has several phases. First, you get the word out so visitors come in. Then you must create a visitor-friendly club environment. That means creating a fun and enjoyable experience for everyone. And while enjoying each other's company in a club is great, the heart of a good club is one that offers a high-quality experience when it comes to learning communication and leadership skills. No matter what you do to recruit new members, they may not stay engaged unless you deliver on the Toastmasters Brand Promise to empower them at every stage of their journey through personal and professional development. Club membership must offer a compelling benefit that is authentic and credible, and it must be consistently maintained.

Finally, you ask your visitors to join, and follow up with them, if necessary. Seems simple? It is! Let's break it down even further.

Get the Word Out

Recruiting starts with marketing and public relations—this falls on the shoulders of every member. When members adopt the mindset of sharing the benefits of Toastmasters, it's easier to draw in curious visitors. Traditional methods of getting the word

out have worked for decades and continue to be effective, even in today's electronic, digital and online culture. For example, consider these time-honored methods:

1 Hold a meeting in a public place. Sometimes you can schedule a club meeting during a community event such as a town festival, networking event or holiday fair. Try hosting a meeting in a coffee shop or even a park. Aero Speakers Club in Laverton, Melbourne, Australia, conducted an outdoor Table Topics session at a local open-air market on a busy Saturday, patterning it after the famous Hyde Park Soapbox style where someone stands on a box to deliver a speech, eliciting responses from passers-by. Helen McKenzie-Fairlie, ACB, CL, a member of the club, proudly reflects on the experience: "Our purpose was to recruit new members to charter our club." The club chartered within two months.

2 Use print media. Distribute fliers, hang posters, mail postcards. The Toastmasters website has free resources, including fliers, brochures, charts, manuals, surveys, PowerPoint templates, letter templates and digital files. For your own print media, be sure to consult the Brand Manual on the Toastmasters website, which gives guidelines for colors, fonts and logo use, as well as convenient downloadable logo elements. Get help from someone with a marketing/design/advertising background so your items are both visually attractive and marketing-minded. Focus on the benefits, not just the features, of club membership.

3 Issue press releases to announce special events, contest wins and other news of note within your club.

4 Conduct special training programs such as Speechcraft, or one of the modules from the Success Leadership series, and open it up to the community or your company.



To entice people to join their club, members of the Confident Voices Vilnius club in Vilnius, Lithuania, plan special events such as workshops, celebrations and meetings with guest speakers. They are also active on social media with posts of club photos, speech videos and member accomplishments. The group won Toastmasters International's Brand Photo Contest in November.

5 Invite guests to special events such as a speech contest, holiday party, open house or training event. Golden Speakers, a robust club in Fairfield, Iowa, population of 10,000, hosts regular open houses. Rick Starr, ACG, ALB, says, “We document everything about the event—the structure, publicity, content ... so it’s easier to plan the next event. We’ll get 75 to 100 people at these events, and many join over the next few months. After each event, we review what worked and what didn’t, and suggest changes ...” The plan works. His club has been President’s Distinguished almost every year since it chartered in 1999.

6 Participate in member-building campaigns: Talk Up Toastmasters, Beat the Clock, and the Smedley Award. See the Toastmasters website for more information about these.

Less traditional methods reflect our world’s reliance on digital methods and social media outlets. Clubs can reach a wider and more diverse population by using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Meetup, online video, virtual (online) meetings, email, text campaigns and club websites. Social media does not replace face-to-face contact, but it can help you build relationships.



Members of the Amdavad Toastmasters club in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India, gather for some outdoor fun.



Members of Ningbo Better Man Toastmasters in Ningbo Zhejiang, China, express their enthusiasm for their club with warm smiles.

Jenilee Taylor, DTM, of Cuyahoga Falls Toastmasters club in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, says, “Our best recruiting campaigns have had recruiting as a secondary intent. More guests join us because they love our Facebook updates. They see the fun we have and they want to be part of it. We start conversations on social media and visitors come.”

Meetup is a social media tool where people can search for groups of people who share similar interests. A Toastmasters club can list its meeting on Meetup and people can find it by searching for keywords like “public speaking” or “leadership development.” You can include all the meeting details, as well as general information about the club, and the benefits of membership.

“More guests join us because they love our Facebook updates. They see the fun we have and they want to be part of it.”

If your club has a website, it’s essential that the information is current, complete and accurate. If a website visitor sees the most recent post is from your 2015 spring contest, they’ll see a lack of attention to the site and assume the club is not up-to-date. It’s also critical that inquiries are handled promptly. When a visitor submits a question and receives no reply, it’s a poor reflection on your club and on Toastmasters, in general. People will remember that experience for a very long time.

The website of the NUS Toastmasters club (www.nustm.org) in Singapore is fresh and modern-looking. It is clear, current and compelling and offers member testimonials and states the benefits of Toastmasters. There’s also a terrific promotional video, called *The First Step* (youtu.be/kYf7boG4oQU) showing the process of going from a frustrated and frightened speaker to a guest, and then a member. The club posts videos on its website and on YouTube. Finally, there’s an FAQ that’s easy to navigate

with dropdown menus, and a blog with tips, resources and news. It must be working well. This club was ranked second in overall education awards for 2017.

YouTube is a fantastic recruiting tool. Not only is video the ideal medium for speakers, it engages people in a way that print media or web posts cannot. You can find “Video Tips and Tricks” on the Toastmasters website to guide you as you create your own.

These marketing outlets provide your club with huge opportunities to get the word out to get visitors in. The next step is to create a great experience for them.

Moments of Truth

In marketing, a “moment of truth” is when a customer engages with a brand, product or service, and develops an impression about it. In your club, you can evaluate that engagement with the Moments of Truth module in the Successful Club Series. A visitor forms a first impression before they walk into your meeting. If your venue is hard to find, or has insufficient parking or complicated security procedures, visitors may be frustrated or embarrassed for being late. Anything you do to help visitors find you will pay great dividends.

Queens Best Toastmasters club in Elmhurst, New York, was ranked as the No. 1 club in education awards in 2017. Its website offers precise directions to the meeting site, including what subway or bus line to take, where to park and a detailed description of the building interior. Invest in signs for your building’s exterior doors and halls, leading visitors to your meeting. Is your meeting room accessible to all? Is it quiet enough to conduct a meeting? Is it set up ahead of time to project a professional image? Is your club banner displayed? Clubs meet in all types of venues from corporate conference rooms to public libraries or church basements. Whatever the space, make sure it’s comfortable, spacious and acoustically adequate.

When visitors arrive, are they warmly welcomed? Do you provide nametags? Is the meeting well-planned so that there’s not



Club celebrations are part of the fun at the Perissos Horizon Toastmasters club in Accra, Ghana.



The Colombo Toastmasters club in Sri Lanka holds theme meetings to give members and visitors an enjoyable experience.

a lot of confusion beforehand? Are people adequately prepared? Start and end the meeting on time, because that communicates respect. Have guests introduce themselves to the club, stating how they found the meeting and what drew them in. Allow them to participate in Table Topics if they'd like. And always keep the energy and mood positive. Toastmasters are so accustomed to applause and energy, it's easy to forget that most visitors are quite surprised and often magnetically drawn to it.

Ask for the Sale

Peter Kossowan, DTM, from Edmonton, Canada, has the remarkable distinction of chartering more than 164 clubs. His sales background helps him attract visitors and convert them to members. He says, "I've been to many Toastmasters demo meetings where the people conducting the meeting don't ask for the sale! They don't invite the visitors to join. You have to ask for the sale!"

Many Toastmasters mistakenly assume that if a guest likes what they see, they'll simply join. However, only a few will. Most won't. Guests may leave the meeting wanting to join, but were not confident enough to ask how. If only someone asked them to join! On the flip side, it's tempting to say *You should join our club!* But that is not an effective invitation. The word "should" may be counter-productive. Denver psychologist Susan Heitler writes in *Psychology Today* about how the word "should" often sets unrealistic expectations, induces guilt and decreases the desire to do what you otherwise might want done. Peter Kossowan prefers a softer invitation. He says to visitors, "Now that you've seen the benefits of Toastmasters, would you like to join the club?"

Follow Up

Many visitors will join on the spot. Many, however, will need time to decide, making follow-up critical. Call them, or send a hand-written note. So few people send hand-written notes anymore, but they're always appreciated. Get a guest's permission to add them to the club email list, and keep them on it until they un-

subscribe. Past District Governor Dana Barnes, DTM, a member of three clubs near Cheyenne, Wyoming (Cheyenne 798, High Plains and Rock Springs Raconteurs), says, "One visitor joined after 13 years (yes, 13!), because she kept getting emails." Ian Murray, CC, CL, of Brunswick, Victoria, Australia, echoes this. A member of two clubs, he says, "When people notice and decide to opt-in to a mailing list, it's a request for more information. Make sure they get regular updates as they mature from interested guest to stalwart member." Max Lopez of Daybreakers Club in Houston says, "Email interesting tidbits about member successes and club activities . . . Without follow-up, we . . . miss so much."

While enjoying each other's company in a club is great, the heart of a good club is one that offers a high-quality experience when it comes to learning communication and leadership skills.

Recruiting is a lifestyle within strong clubs. It's not just a once-and-done activity, nor is it the job of only the vice president membership or vice president public relations. If every member adopts a recruiting mindset, you just may see a non-stop flow of visitors to your club meetings, and those visitors will become members. **T**

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ONLINE EXTRAS: Watch an exclusive Toastmasters video and view additional photos to learn more about the club experience.

Mind Matters

How mindfulness can enhance your life.

BY CAREN SCHNUR NEILE, PH.D.

There is a great cartoon of a yoga student doing what is called the Warrior Pose—that is, standing with feet wide apart, front knee bent, arms outstretched. Eight squiggly bubbles circling her head reveal thoughts like “Am I doing this right?” “Am I doing *anything* right?” “What is my life’s purpose?” “Should I get chips for dinner?”

The title of the cartoon: The Worrier Pose.

Clearly the cartoonist hit on what may be the number one issue on many modern minds: everything. If you too find focus difficult because you are consumed by thoughts of self-judgment and other distractions, you could benefit from the practice of mindfulness: a concept that can help improve not only public speaking, but also listening, leadership—and living.

Mindfulness is by no means a new idea. Practitioners of yoga and Buddhism have been employing it for centuries. Since the 1970s, however, the influence of mindfulness has expanded to fields as diverse as psychotherapy, sports and leadership.

So what is mindfulness? Take a look at three related, but different, perspectives.

1 The moment

Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction program at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, is generally credited with bringing secular mindfulness to the United States. To him, mindfulness means “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally.”

In other words, when you are involved in an activity, whether it’s speaking, spending time at work or with family, pay attention. Be completely present. Dedicate your full mind to what you’re doing. Instead of thinking about yesterday or tomorrow, concentrate on what your senses tell you

about that very moment. And instead of weighing the pros and cons of what you or anyone else is doing, simply be.

Many people turn to various forms of meditation to practice mindfulness. The key to meditation is to accept that as human beings, our minds will jump from thing to thing, and that’s all OK. Meditation is not about falling into a trance-like state. Rather, it is the activity of bringing your mind back when it wanders—training it to settle on the here and now.

2 The mind

According to psychotherapist Dawn Barie, founder of the Center for Mindful Living in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, mindfulness is “nonjudgmental awareness of mental states.”

“The practice allows for the development of equanimity and inner balance about otherwise unpleasant or stressful mental states,” she writes. “This helps to cultivate mental and emotional health and resiliency.”

Barie says that when it comes to public speaking, mindfulness practice helps promote self-confidence, which makes it easier not only to speak but also to communicate a vision.

“Mindfulness allows one to more readily access creativity and intuition necessary for publicly communicating a vision and problem-solving,” she says.

Mindfulness combats speaking anxiety because it regulates the emotions, naturally calming anxiety and allowing the speaker to think clearly and behave more spontaneously. It’s not that we aren’t going to be anxious sometimes. It’s just that we can observe these feelings as they appear and let them pass away, minimizing their effect.

3 The members

In 2001, Toastmaster Karen Hudson co-founded the Mindful Communicators Club in Woodland Hills, California, be-

cause, she explains, she is a person who is mindful of others and felt the club would benefit people.

“When I prepare a speech I am also mindful,” Hudson adds. “My first concern is to know what the audience wants and needs for me to share with them from my expertise.”

Club President David Ballantine strives to continue that people-centered legacy today.

“I think mindfulness is about being aware of different people in the club,” he says, “knowing about the diversity of people’s experiences, so we can be more aware and more respectful, and encourage them to share their own stories from their work and lives so they feel seen and heard.

“That gives them a good experience, and that gives them a reason to come back. They feel more connected.”

Ballantine remembers one situation in particular. He was talking with the outgoing club president, Joe Sumekh, CC, CL, and the incoming president, Marcia Iturbe, ACB, ALB. Ballantine was about to start as the club’s vice president education.

“We were asking Joe for advice,” he recalls. “Joe is very kind. He simply said, ‘No matter what happens, everything will be all right.’ Ever since, I’ve kept Joe’s words in my head. Before a big meeting, I let go of worry because I know it will always turn out OK.”

All three perspectives described above are essential for mindful Toastmasters. When our focus is on the present moment, we will not only accomplish the task at hand, we will also be more accepting of our emotions and those of others. When we listen, we can completely listen with our ears, eyes and hearts. When we speak, we can feel confident that intrusive thoughts and emotions, whatever they are, will not prevent us from communicating our message. And when we lead, we can do so with the sensitivity that comes from feeling good about ourselves, connecting



with others and having the mental clarity to focus positively on what really matters.

Cultivating Mindfulness

It should come as no surprise that our fast-paced, technology-driven world makes mindfulness more and more difficult to come by, and thus more and more crucial. But you don't have to go very far out of your way to practice it. All you need is to learn some simple skills and daily strategies.

- **Step away from the phone.** A recent study found that when cell phones are within reach, students don't perform as well on tests—even if they don't use them! Just the knowledge that a phone is around is apparently enough to distract us.

- **Do one thing at a time, and do it well.** Psychologists claim there is really no such thing as multitasking. Rather than actually engaging in two or more tasks simultaneously, our brains toggle from one to the other, accomplishing about as much on each as if we were drunk. Didn't hear what your boss was saying on that conference call? Were you texting a friend by any chance?

- **Switch it up.** Are you right-handed? Try to accomplish a simple task like brushing your teeth or stirring milk into your coffee with your left. We do so many things without paying attention that changing a simple habit once in a while forces us to focus on our actions.

Our fast-paced, technology-driven world makes mindfulness more and more difficult to come by.

- **Sense it.** Developed in the early 1970s, "Sensurround" gave theatergoers a multisensory experience during the film *Earthquake*—they actually felt their seats move! Although the technology went out of fashion before the decade was over, the filmmakers were onto something. Many of us tend to focus on the sense of sight without paying nearly as much attention to our other senses. Take a walk in the park or the mall—or just sit at your desk. Use all your senses to fully experience the moment. Ask

yourself: *What do I hear? What do I smell? What do I feel? What do I taste?*

- **Focus your body.** Barie, the psychotherapist, recommends a simple meditative activity to enhance mindfulness. You can do it almost anywhere. Place your awareness at the center of your body, at the middle of your abdomen. This allows you to gently withdraw your attention from thinking while strengthening your awareness on the present moment. Observe the transient nature of your feelings, thoughts and physical sensations.

Cultivating this type of present-moment awareness of the body and mind promotes mental strength and clarity, says Barie, while directing your actions with intention and purpose. In this way, you can respond more skillfully to any challenges that arise.

And that, as we know, is what Toastmasters is all about. **T**

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BY DAVE ZIELINSKI

In 2018, speakers are using mobile devices, 3D tools and online skills to make an impact.

The world of presentation technology is in the midst of a revolution. More speakers are using iPads and tablets to present to their audiences, using these mobile devices as a way to have “nonlinear conversations” with audiences rather than deliver formal presentations. The emergence of augmented reality and virtual reality technologies, as well as the arrival of Microsoft PowerPoint’s new 3D tools, is allowing speakers to add valuable new dimensions to presentation content and delivery styles.

A New Era in

Presentation

In addition, as more speakers are asked to deliver presentations online, the ability to master evolving webinar technologies and develop online speaking skills has grown more urgent. Knowing how to keep audiences on the edge of their seats with just your voice and slides beamed to the screens of mobile devices will be an increasingly sought-after skill in the future.

These were among the major themes at the recent Presentation Summit in Clearwater Beach, Florida, an annual conference with international flavor that showcases the latest presentation technologies, slide-design ideas and delivery tips in the industry. The Summit brings together many of the world’s top PowerPoint experts, presentation-skill coaches and technology vendors in the spirit of exchanging cutting-edge ideas and enhancing attendees’ presentation skills.

From Presentations to ‘Conversations’

One of the biggest trends in the industry is the growing use of mobile devices for facilitating “conversations” rather than delivering traditional presentations, says Tom Howell, creative director of Synapsis Creative, a presentation design agency in Sydney, Australia, who presented at the Summit.

“We’re seeing more people want to have two-way dialogues rather than give a traditional presentation, especially in smaller group settings,” says Howell. “The evolution of the iPad and tablets has made that possible because presenters can show slideware in small groups, putting more focus on back-and-forth discussion, answering questions and on interactivity than you can in many formal presentations.”

Howell says more of his executive clients are using tablets to make intimate sales pitches to customers or to present to colleagues. “They might have five or so people in a meeting and want to sit down with them using a tablet to show slides or other content, often passing the tablet around,” he says. “They’re finding audiences appreciate these structured but informal dialogues.”

Understanding audience expectations takes on even greater importance in these scenarios, Howell says. “If you hand someone an iPad during a presentation, they’re often expecting to interact with it and for it to behave like the apps they use in their everyday life,” he says. “That’s where we often see a disconnect, with presenters who want to put together slides in the standard way when presenting with tablets. You need to think outside the box in these situations.”

Howell encourages speakers to design slides for “nonlinear” conversations with audiences—avoiding committing to presenting

Technology

slides in a particular sequence—which allows them to more easily move from topic to topic based on expressed audience interest.

“We often put together presentations for clients that are 100 slides long, but the presenter may only end up using eight or 10 of those slides because of what audiences require in the moment,” Howell says. “If you make people listen to you talk about product A when they really want more information about product B, you’re doing everyone a disservice.”

PowerPoint has long had the ability to hyperlink one slide to another to support this “leapfrogging” purpose, but Howell says many remain unfamiliar with the feature.

PowerPoint has versions of its slideware designed for iPad and Android tablets, and Howell suggests keeping your slide design simple—less is often more with tablet-based presentations—using uncluttered slides, few bullet points and avoiding flashy graphics. Pass the tablet around where it makes sense and encourage the audience to touch, swipe or scroll. For sales presentations, consider showing product photos or YouTube videos of client testimonials, he says.

Presenters also may want to connect their mobile devices to projectors or external screens and should know how to do so.



Apple's **AirPlay** device, for example, allows speakers to mirror presentation content from their tablets or smartphones to an Apple television screen.

Rise of Immersive Technologies

Another conference theme was the continuing evolution of what's known as *immersive* technology—systems that blur the line between the physical and simulated worlds and can bring valuable new dimensions and impact to presentations. While some of these tools have yet to achieve mainstream use, others have rapidly matured and are being used regularly in today's presentations.

"The rise of augmented reality and virtual reality is helping presenters change the way they tell their stories," says Lia Barnakova, a strategy and leadership consultant who works with Fortune 500 organizations to help them anticipate and stay ahead of market disruptions. Barnakova also shares innovative ways to use emerging technologies and PowerPoint on her popular YouTube channel.

One of the biggest trends in the industry is the growing use of mobile devices for facilitating "conversations" rather than delivering traditional presentations.

In augmented reality (AR), virtual objects are superimposed over a real, existing environment to enhance the user experience. Environments are "augmented" with things like video, graphics, sound or even smell. Two examples are a car dashboard that can identify objects in front of a vehicle, overlaying a display of object details on top of what the driver is seeing in real life, and a virtual line displayed on a patient's body to show a surgeon where to make an incision.

How might AR be used in a presentation today? Barnakova says a speaker could use the technology to "superimpose" videos on printed handouts for an audience. The speaker would install the first frame of the video on the handout, allowing audience members to scan that image with their smartphones and trigger playing of the full video on their phones.

"Not only is the presenter leaving behind handouts, he or she is creating an additional layer of education and engagement with a video that further explains or demonstrates key points," Barnakova says.

Toastmasters can use a free app called **Aurasma** to experiment with augmented reality in their own presentations; Barnakova created a tutorial on her YouTube channel that shows how to use the tool.

The Swedish company IKEA recently introduced a new augmented-reality application that allows customers to visualize furniture they're considering buying in rooms of their existing homes. The app, called **IKEA Place**, uses 3D technology to enable customers to see how sofas, armchairs or coffee tables will fit into their current room designs.

Microsoft also has added augmented reality features to its PowerPoint software, introducing a new suite of 3D tools for use on slides. Users can insert 3D models directly into presentations or documents to help illustrate points, to provide a 360-degree viewing perspective of products or other objects, with the ability to tilt up or down to show specific aspects of images.

A large collection of free 3D models is available through PowerPoint's online catalog **Remix 3D**; the models can be customized for specific uses with a free tool called **Paint 3D**, Barnakova says.

Exploring a Virtual Reality

Virtual reality (VR) is another area of immersive technology that has gradually grown more affordable, user-friendly and practical for presenters. Virtual reality is an artificial, computer-generated environment that users can explore and interact with. One unique use of VR is to address the fear of public speaking, Barnakova says.

A company called Limbix offers a virtual reality experience designed to help users deal with a variety of phobias, including stage fright. The system was developed by technology experts and psychologists as a form of exposure therapy, using "real-world capture" video and mobile technology to create authentic environments built from panoramic images and videos, not animated graphics.

"Users put on a VR headset and see an audience sitting in front of them around a boardroom table—images of *real* people, not animated characters—and see their actual presentation slides on a laptop in front of them in the virtual room," Barnakova says.

The process can start with neutral audiences then progress to more challenging groups who are yawning, looking at their phones or becoming disengaged. The system requires a Google Daydream headset that costs about \$75 and a compatible smartphone, Barnakova says.

Another company called Byond also has a virtual reality system with potential for future use in presentations, she says.

Mastering Remote Presentations

As the demand for delivering presentations online grows, so too does the need for speakers to master the skills needed to give effective webinars and webcasts. Ken Molay, president of Webinar Success, a company in Cary, North Carolina, that offers webinar training and consulting services, delivered a session at the Summit with tips and tactics for becoming a more memorable online presenter. What follows is a selection of Molay's advice.

Simplify slide design. Participants will access your webinars in many different ways so adjust your slide design accordingly. "With remote attendees you often have no idea what's happening," Molay says. "They may be on a slow Wi-Fi connection or they might be viewing on a tiny screen on a mobile device."

So simplify slide design and use strong contrasting colors, large text, graphics that are easily comprehended and beware of animation. "If you like using animated transitions from one slide to another, or if you use 'fly ins' on slides, those effects can often come out wrong or jerky on the viewers' end and you have no way of knowing," Molay says. Use simple "appears and disappears" or quick fades instead.

Use audience interaction strategically. It's easy for remote audiences to become distracted by their smartphones or incoming e-mail, so using techniques to keep them engaged and focused is critical. Job one toward that end is to have quality content chock-full of real-world, relevant examples.

Webinar platforms allow presenters to use things like instantaneous audience polls, “things not possible when you're presenting in-person to audiences,” Molay says. “In a room full of people it's harder to ask, ‘how many of you believe A, B, C or D?’ and then receive instant, summarized responses on the screen.”

Presenters also can use the technology to provide a personal touch, since they can see a list of participant names on screen. “You might say, ‘Jim just typed in a comment and seems to believe this ... or Mary seems to indicate she does things a little differently,’” Molay says. “It builds a sense that you are having a two-way conversation rather than delivering a monologue.”



“The rise of augmented reality and virtual reality is helping presenters change the way they tell their stories.”

— LIA BARNAKOVA

Presenters should be more “predictive” in how they plan and rehearse for webinars, Molay says, especially when it comes to audience involvement. “You can't wing it the same way a speaker on stage is able to read an audience's body language and switch gears if they sense boredom or restlessness,” he says.

Plan exactly where in your session you might insert an audience poll, where it makes sense to stimulate conversation through typed chat or when you might ask participants to click buttons to “virtually” raise their hands. “You need to factor in extra time for rehearsing with the technology so you can use it seamlessly,” Molay says.



Your voice is everything. Since most webinars only feature a presenter's audio and little or no video, it's vital to infuse the proper energy and variation in your voice, Molay says.

“Your voice is carrying the full load of expressiveness so you need to think differently about how you use it,” Molay says. “Abandon a conversational tone and put extra energy into your speaking style so you don't sound flat. It might require going beyond your comfort zone, but it's crucial to keeping audience interest.” 📺

Dave Zielinski is a freelance journalist in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and a frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster* magazine.



ONLINE EXTRAS: Learn how to enhance your presentations by exploring the newest technology through hyperlinks.



Creating a Positive Impact

Educator and speaker Marc Williams, ACS, ALB, on realizing one's potential and teaching others to do the same.

BY JOHN J. GLOZEK, JR., ACS, ALB

Walking down the hall at the Secondary School for Journalism in Brooklyn, New York, Marc Williams, a fairly new principal, was eager to share some exciting news with his superintendent. One of the school's graduating seniors earned a coveted POSSE Scholarship, a noteworthy achievement for a student attending a historically struggling school. Applicants must demonstrate public speaking, listening, negotiation, and leadership skills. Statistically, only about 5 percent of nominees across the United States earn the four-year college scholarship.

But the news did not stop there. The students in the Advanced Placement Computer Science class, a course that hadn't previously been offered at this historically low-performing school, developed an app to address the issue of surplus food being trashed in an area with a hunger problem. A student who may not have a meal to eat after the school day can use the app to locate a participating restaurant that will prepare a bagged meal for the student to take home. The team entered the app into the Samsung Solve For Tomorrow competition for a chance to win a \$150,000 technology grant. In April 2017, this group of young computer techs from the typically underfunded school became one of three national champions and officially launched their



MOESY app that summer. As the school's principal during that time, Williams could not have been prouder.

The journey to creating a positive impact began with his own inspiring story of reversing the foreboding start of a haunted past.

Hiding underneath the pillows of a couch, at the age of 3, Williams shut his eyes tightly, trying to erase the image of his mother screaming and his thought-to-be-father suffering a tragic death at the hands of two intruders. The trauma, never to be spoken of, replayed in his mind throughout his years as a student in the public schools of New York City. Statistically, he could very well have become an incarcerated dropout. Though his single, illiterate mother could not help him with his homework, she was an inspiration to pursue a better life.

Years later, Williams graduated from New York University with a master's degree in speech communication. His mother's eyes welled with tears. She lived long enough to see her son become an English teacher, an after-school activity advisor and a mentor.

Williams went on to become an assistant principal serving the high-achieving students at the rigorous Brooklyn Tech high school—his alma mater. One day he was approached by a former student who told him: "You should be at another school where there are children who could use your help."

The opportunity came when Williams received an offer from a superintendent of one of those underserved schools. Faced with only 24 hours to make a career-changing decision, Williams—a 20-year educator, six-year Toastmaster and

“His best attribute is his belief in people’s potential to grow and become better.”

—GERALD WAGONER

finalist in the 2014 World Championship of Public Speaking—agreed to become the principal of a school that was in danger of closing.

From an elite institution to a challenging environment with negative press, a revolving door of principals, and children from a zip code that match the area where he was raised, Williams took what he learned and the network he created as a Toastmaster to turn the school around. “To make the learning experience at the school better, Mr. Williams used data, enhanced critical thinking, and was open to suggestions from the community,” said chemistry teacher Annabel Dsouza.

Williams increased the school’s graduation rate; galvanized the staff, students and parents; and created a new vision as a school for journalism and communications. “His best attribute is his belief in people’s potential to grow and become better,” says English teacher Gerald Wagoner.

Outside of campus reads a sign: Secondary School for Journalism. Arriving on his first day, Williams didn’t see anything resembling journalism. The revitalized vision for the school was to build a premier journalism track from high school to the professional newsroom. Plans for a functional newsroom for students to learn both on-camera and behind-the-camera skills became a part of the discussion. Winning the Samsung grant could pave the way. Meanwhile, Williams worked with teachers to build journalism units within the core curriculum and furthered strategic partnerships with organizations like BRIC Media Arts and The LAMP to teach photo and video journalism skills after school hours.

The key to making a positive impact, Williams said, is boosting the morale of the staff, students and parents and creating a culture of trust, collaboration and high expectations. Graduating senior



Marc Williams with students at the Secondary School for Journalism in Brooklyn, New York.

Destiny Dorismond said, “Principal Williams took time out of his busy schedule to continue to edit my paper ... he asked me, ‘Do you want the admissions office to accept you because of what you’ve been through or because of what you can do because of what you’ve been through?’ That really spoke to me.”

It is often expected that a principal must make major changes within three years. But those who have successfully turned schools around have attested that it takes more time. Williams has spent

a lifetime turning his own life around. Using a sense of perspective and a drive that transformed the son of a mother who could neither read nor write, Williams is motivated to have the same positive impact on students.

Why did you join Toastmasters?

After coaching a coworker on a presentation she was to deliver, she asked me if I had ever considered being a professional speaker. Then she lent me her collection of *Want to Be a Professional Speaker?*

“I have an aspiration of returning to the World Championship of Public Speaking finals and bringing home a trophy that I can display for my children.”

—MARC WILLIAMS

DVDs. While watching them, I noticed that all the presenters credited Toastmasters for their growth. I found the nearest club, LIU Brooklyn Toastmasters, and joined.

How did Toastmasters play a role in your career?

After my first year of membership, one of the teachers in my department commented on how I seemed more confident. Knowing that Toastmasters was the only new adjustment in my life, I credit my membership for my growth in confidence. That in turn gave me the confidence to join a team of professional development presenters. It put me at the front of the room to be seen by other educational leaders, including those at a national conference for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Months later, I was offered my position as principal.

What advice would you give to someone who is faced with the challenge of transforming a difficult situation?

There are two critical components to the mindset that will help you overcome any challenge. The first is having a definitive vision for what it is that you want to accomplish. The second is the understanding that while success is never guaranteed, neither is failure. A former student revealed that as close as he got to rock bottom, what pulled him through was the belief that if you try simply to see *if* you can get the results you want, your efforts may lead to some surprising results.

What's next for you?

It's my dream to travel the world to speak on stages to help others empower



Marc Williams discusses a topic with students (above) and gives a training presentation about his Rules of Engagement.

PHOTOS BY RALPH M. FERRARO

their minds and equip them with the Rules of Engagement for presentations and communications. It's the perfect combination of my two passions: speaking to inspire and educating others. The world will be my classroom. In addition, I will be transitioning from my role as principal to educate and train other educators to instill a greater impact on student achievement. I'll be using my Toastmasters background to help educators develop self-marketing and presentation skills to secure permanent positions. The role gives me the opportunity to motivate, educate and elevate. On top of that, I have an aspiration of returning to the World Championship of Public Speaking finals and bringing home a trophy that I can display for my children, for students

and for colleagues. It will be the symbol of what can be achieved and the reminder of the impact anyone can have on someone else. **T**

John J. Glozek, Jr., ACS, ALB, is a member of Huntington Club in New York and Long Island's only advanced club, Pinnacle Speakers. He is the publisher of *Golfing Magazine*, the author of *Business Golf: Your Key to Business Success Through Golf*, the president of the *International Network of Golf*, and is working on being a stand-up comedian.



ONLINE EXTRAS: Discover more about Marc Williams' journey by watching a Toastmasters video interview.

Paths of Progress

Members laud new opportunities for growth in Pathways.

BY PAUL STERMAN

Paul White, DTM, had high hopes for the Pathways learning experience. Before the new education program became available in his district, he was starting to feel stagnant in Toastmasters. He was looking for a spark—and he found it.

“Pathways presents fresh ways of looking at things I was already familiar with, and does so in greater depth,” says White, a longtime member in Virginia. “In Pathways, I have ventured out of my comfort zone.”

Since its launch last year, the program has been rolling out in phases around the world. This month Pathways comes to regions 3 and 5, the seventh and eighth regions where Pathways is available to members. The rollout is expected to be complete by the end of the 2017–2018 program year.

Pathways, which includes more than 300 competencies you can learn, was designed to help members develop skills to apply in the world outside Toastmasters. And that’s one of the things members say they most appreciate about it. Vincent Chen, a member of the Tampines Changkat club in Singapore, works as a human resources administrator. After completing the **Leadership Development** path in the new program, he says he’s stronger at his job.

“I have improved my leadership, listening and coaching skills, so I’m better able to guide some of my colleagues at work when they have queries on policies,” says Chen, a Toastmaster since 2014.

The program has 10 different paths. Each one integrates communication and leadership (except for **Presentation Mastery**, which is dedicated solely to public speaking). The educational content in Pathways will continue to evolve and expand. Currently, two additional paths are being developed: **Humor** (available toward the end of this year) and **Advanced Leadership** (available in 2019).

If you work in Pathways online (and nearly all members do so far), you can access interactive tools, such as videos

and tutorials. If you have questions about navigating Base Camp (the online system where you access everything you need for the learning experience), there are tutorials that help with that.

“The online tools helped me a lot,” says Muha Muhaimin Latif, who has completed the **Visionary Communication** path. “Especially the first time I did Pathways, because I didn’t have anyone to ask. I just depended on the guidance from the tutorials and videos.”

“Practicing skills in handling a Q&A and managing a difficult audience are directly transferable to the real-life business world.”

—GEOFF ANDREW, DTM

Latif, a member of the Kebayoran Toastmasters club in Indonesia, says the competencies he gained from the path will help him both in his personal life and in his work as a therapist. Visionary Communication includes such projects as *Understanding Your Communication Style*, *Ethical Leadership* and *Manage Projects Successfully*.

“The path helped me develop my ability to clearly envision my projects in advance, so I can share project goals with my team and we can achieve them easily,” he says.

Geoff Andrew, DTM, has been highly involved with Pathways from the start, serving as a member volunteer in various capacities. The 18-year member, who belongs to two clubs in Kuala Lumpur, has completed the Presentation Mastery path. He says he particularly liked projects in Levels 3, 4 and 5—members advance through five levels of progressive complexity in a path—because they challenged and pushed him. Among the

most meaningful to him: *Leading in a Voluntary Organization*, *Managing a Difficult Audience*, *Making Connections Through Networking* and *Question-and-Answer Session*.

“Practicing skills in handling a Q&A and managing a difficult audience are directly transferable to the real-life business world,” says Andrew, the managing director of a publishing company.

A longtime leader in Toastmasters, Andrew also completed the **Pathways Mentor Program**. Mentoring is a big part of the learning experience, and the three-project Mentor Program is an optional course for anyone who wants to further their skills in this area. **Introduction to Toastmasters Mentoring** is a required project in Level 2 of every path.

White, the Virginia member, also did the Presentation Mastery path. He praised the online path resources. “To have video clips of World Champions of Public Speaking or complete very interesting assessments as I discovered my communication style was a big surprise to me,” he says. “To hear an effective evaluation and be able to compare my evaluations with that one was eye-opening both for what I do well and where I could improve.”

Particularly exciting to White is how he is able to apply what he learned in the path. He has become a successful professional speaker and organized two well-attended storytelling events at George Mason University in Virginia. Both events were the product of a High Performance Leadership project in Pathways.

In short, says White, he feels reinvigorated. “After years of feeling that speaking had become routine and not a challenge ... I was enticed by Pathways to again explore the awe and wonder of public speaking.” ■

For more information about Pathways, visit www.toastmasters.org/Pathways.

Paul Sterman is senior editor of the *Toastmaster* magazine.



The Winter Olympics

Sliding, speeding, flying and other signs of mental instability.

BY JOHN CADLEY

The Winter Olympics are going on this month in Pyeongchang, South Korea, and they have me wondering: What makes people go out in the freezing cold and do crazy things? Just going out in the freezing cold is crazy enough. The Summer Olympics I can understand—a little throwing, running and jumping in the sunshine, where the worst that can happen to you is a pulled hamstring or a sore quadricep. The Winter Olympics, on the other hand, involve high-speed movement on slick, frozen surfaces where the worst that can happen to you is the worst that can happen to you. Perhaps that's why the Summer Olympics started in 776 B.C. and the Winter Games didn't begin until 1924. It took 2,700 years for human beings to work up the nerve to try some of this stuff.

Take the luge, for instance, an event in which two humans lie face up on a small sled and rocket down an iced track at speeds approaching 90 mph—with very little means of control. Historians tell us the Vikings invented it in 800 A.D. but they don't say why. My guess is it was a form of torture to terrify their prisoners to death. It only became a sport when the famous warrior Ivar the Boneless, bored with conquering and pillaging, decided to try it for himself and said, "You know what, guys? This is actually kind of fun."

The practice faded along with the fearsome Norsemen, but it was oddly resurrected in the Swiss town of St. Moritz when English tourists stole the sleds of delivery boys to go careening down the streets for a little winter fun. And fun

it was—for them. Not so much for the people they hit. Deciding that flying pedestrians was not the way to promote tourism, the St. Moritz Chamber of Commerce built the Brits a separate track and the era of competitive lugging began. The first organized race occurred in Europe in 1883. Americans were more cautious. They didn't adopt the sport until 1965, and then only if they could forego the traditional skin-tight, aerodynamic luge outfits for steel-plated suits of armor.

What sane person would think that propelling yourself off a ramp 300 feet high is a good idea?

Cousin to the luge is the skeleton, where, instead of screaming down a chute of ice feet first, you make it a little more interesting by going *head first!* The requirements are minimal: a sled, helmet, speedsuit, spiked shoes and a notarized letter from a board-certified psychiatrist affirming that you are not completely out of your mind.

Ski jumping is another activity where mental health may play a role. What sane person would think that propelling yourself off a ramp 300 feet high is a good idea? Olaf Rye, that's who. Olaf was a Norwegian military man in the 19th century who, the story goes, liked to amuse himself by getting a little air under his skis. Another

story—more credible in my view—is that the sport originated when a bartender in Oslo, depressed by the endless Nordic winter, told a friend he was going to kill himself by jumping off a cliff, upon which the friend replied: "Strap on a pair of skis so if you change your mind on the way down you'll have something to land on."

Then there's the biathlon, not so much dangerous as curious: cross-country skiing and then stopping to shoot at a target. OK, but ... *why?* Again, we can look to our northern European friends for the answer. The biathlon is a Scandinavian tradition that began as a form of military training for national defense in snowy conditions. There were originally four events: shooting *while* skiing downhill at full speed; skiing through trees; skiing big hills without falling; and flat-ground skiing with a backpack and rifle. The last is the only one to survive because its participants were the only ones to survive.

I do like curling, which comes to us from the wonderful—and sensible—country of Scotland. You may think the sport is boring but that's the point. The worst that can happen is you lose, which is actually good because in curling the winners traditionally buy the losers a few drinks. That's my kind of sport, where you drink heavily after the event rather than having to drink heavily before it. **T**

John Cadley, a former advertising copywriter, is a freelance writer and musician living in Fayetteville, New York. Learn more at www.cadleys.com.

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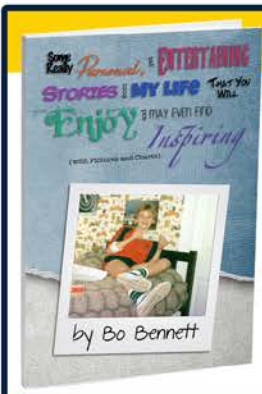
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CLIENT SPOTLIGHT - BO BENNETT, DTM

You might know Bo as the creator of FreeToastHost, the host of the Toastmasters Podcast, or the Founder of eBookIt.com. Or perhaps you never heard of the guy. Either way, you will enjoy his latest book, *Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring*.

What is a "normal childhood?" Does it include almost being murdered by your sister with an ax? Speeding around town in the back of a station wagon because your mom is chasing an "alien spaceship"? Being busted by the police for intent to light a pond on fire? Tackling your mom to the ground and wrestling a knife out of her hand because she was trying to kill your dad? While my stories may be unique, readers will be able to relate to the broader themes are part of a normal childhood such as sibling rivalry, eccentric parents, doing stupid things, and frequently preventing one's parents from literally murdering each other.

Although some of the subject matter is not something one would generally laugh at, you have my permission to laugh. Social rules don't apply here; my rules do. It works for me, and who knows, after reading the stories from my past, you might be inspired to see your own screwed up past in a more humorous light.

Some Really Personal, Yet Entertaining Stories From My Life That You Will Enjoy and May Even Find Inspiring by Bo Bennett is available in ebook, paperback, and audio, at 

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