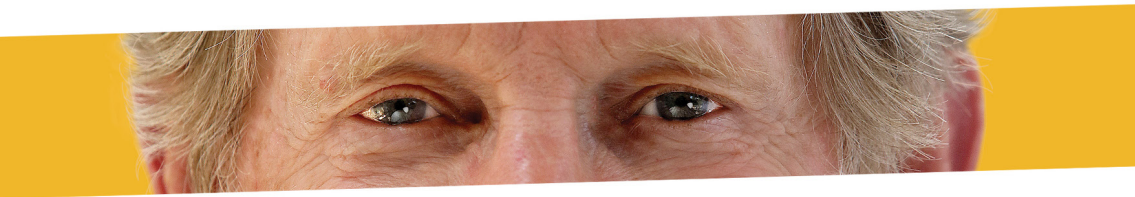




BE SEEN NOW!

Inspiring Insights into Being a Fearless Speaker



LEE GLICKSTEIN

Founder of Speaking Circles Int'l and Author of *Be Heard Now!*

Praise for *Be Seen Now!*

This useful and well-written book helped me find what is unique about my speaking content and style. It helped me connect my heart to my theories and communicate why the things I speak about are important to me.

—Susan Campbell, PhD, author of *Getting Real* and *From Triggered to Tranquil*

In a world where change is rampant and fear can set in, Lee draws a connection between you and the audience that is charismatic. Public speaking becomes a spiritual experience, where you co-create with your listeners.

—Helene Lerner, founder of WomenWorking.com, author of *Time for Me: Self-Care and Simple Pleasures for Women Who Do Too Much*

I recommend this book to all leaders and to anyone who wants to speak authentically in groups, meetings, and presentations.

—Sandra Zimmer, author of *It's Your Time to Shine: How to Overcome Fear of Public Speaking, Develop Authentic Presence and Speak from Your Heart*

Ayurvedic medicine says that speaking who you are improves your health. Expressing yourself fully increases your Agni (digestion), improves heart circulation and moods. Suppression of your voice represses your innate power. *Be Seen Now!* charts a practical path to living your healthiest self out loud.

—Cynthia Copple, author of *Know Your Blueprint: The Ayurvedic Secret to Restoring Your Vitality and Passion*

I highly recommend *Be Seen Now!* to anyone who wants to feel more present, relaxed, and self-assured as a speaker.

—John Amodeo, author of *Dancing with Fire: A Mindful Way to Loving Relationships*

I no longer endure a pre-performance anxiety headache, nor do I find myself overthinking public appearance ahead of time. *Be Seen Now!* adeptly guides the reader in the direction of authentic leadership.

—Nina Krebs, author of *Shades of Love and Loss: Caring for a Partner with Dementia*

Lee Glickstein makes a strong case for starting speeches with a personal story to build instant rapport. As the saying goes, people don't care what you know until they know you care. *Be Seen Now!* offers many great ways for speakers to show their audiences they care.

—Dan Janal, author of *Write Your Book in a Flash!*

This is a beautiful book that honors the true value of human beings and invites us to express ourselves from the place of innate magnificence that is inside each of us. Lee has a magnificent life calling in assisting people to open up their natural abilities to communicate. Highly recommended.

—Marilyn Gordon, author of *Realize Your Greatness:
A Spectacular Journey to Success, Transformation, and Spiritual Power*

This book is the perfect prescription for speakers who want to improve their delivery and presence with audiences. I love the “lack of technique” approach—it's easy, natural, and uplifting. It will influence my speaking going forward.

—Robert G. Kramer, author of *Taming the Black Dog of Depression:
A Guide for Those Who Are Suffering and Their Families*

I cannot recommend this new book more highly—it is truly a gem, filled with incredible wisdom that invites readers to take their communication skills to a much deeper and higher level, which will offer profound rewards for all who take his gentle, thoughtful ideas and wonderful insights to heart and put them into daily practice.”

—Caroline Joy Adams, author of *The Power to Write:
Seven Keys to Discover Your Writer Within*

Breathing, eye availability, and being fully present in the room are just the beginning of the gold Lee offers. These practices will not only make you a better speaker but also a better listener in everyday life.

—Michelle Vandepas, author of *Purpose: The Alignment Guide*

I'm getting a copy of this breakthrough book for every young speaker I know, and some of the old ones. It clarifies what I've known as a professional speaker for thirty years, that when we can drop into a deeper level of ourselves, we have a good time and people get who we are. When I present from this place I feel like my words and presence are touching people.

—Dale Ledbetter, author of *From Mother with Love* and *How Wall Street Rips You Off—and What You Can Do to Defend Yourself*

Be Seen Now! is a must-read for anyone seeking to elevate their communication and leadership skills by breaking free from public speaking anxiety and truly connecting with their audiences. Glickstein doesn't just teach you how to speak; he shows you how to be seen and heard for who you truly are.

—Kathleen Gage, author of *Power Up for Profits*

What I love about Lee Glickstein's work is that he goes way beyond the tips and techniques of public speaking. Being an effective speaker has so little to do with technique and everything to do with the consciousness we are speaking from. *Be Seen Now!* is a treasure; each chapter is rich and satisfying. I came across one sentence that opened up a whole new world for me. As I continued reading I saw how each chapter continues the process of unfoldment. It really is a book on personal transformation. Like a rose that keeps opening, this is a book to savor and one I will return to often.

—Janice Campbell, author of *Practical Wisdom for Everyday Spirituality*

Be Seen Now! is a rich resource of unusual methods for those wanting to master public speaking in an authentic way. Using the information contained in this book is likely to cause the audience to perk up and perhaps even lean forward to fully take in what is being said!

—Kristin Morrison, business coach and author of *30 Days to Start and Grow Your Business*

Through practical, transformative ideas and exercises, *Be Seen Now!* will help you discover your own vitality as a communicator and connect with the magnificence of your listeners.

—Justin Epstein, senior minister of The Unity Center of New York City
and author of *Super You: 7 Steps to Profound Peace and Personal Power*

Lee Glickstein's tools in *Be Seen Now!* are impeccably orchestrated. This is the finest frequency evolution for both speaker and listener. This book is paramount for your speaking and listening future.

—Cheryl Scheurer, PhD, author of
Wealth Transformation: Integrity, Integrity, Integrity

Within these chapters, Lee creates an internal environment of safety, science, and self-reflection for the reader. *Be Seen Now!* encourages speakers to:

- ♦ communicate with sincerity and clarity
- ♦ infuse their audience with a relational presence and genuine heartfelt awareness
- ♦ create a daily practice of love and kindness for self and others

I recommend this book for teachers, therapists, spiritual leaders, and professional speakers. An audience of 1 or 1000 would benefit from these lessons.

—Debra Joy Hart, TEDx speaker and
author of *Grandma D's Bubbles: A Lesson in Life and Loss*

I recommend *Be Seen Now!* You will not just read it; you will keep it as a bible. Over thirty years ago, Lee Glickstein sparked my speaking abilities and lit a fire under me that allowed me to have confidence in myself even with a significant facial disfigurement. With that powerful starting point, I came to enjoy a speaking/performing/acting/comedy career for over a third of a century.

—David Roche, inspirational humorist and author of *The Church of 80% Sincerity*
and *Standing at the Back Door of Happiness: And How I Unlocked It*

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a Fearless Speaker



Lee Glickstein

Founder of Speaking Circles International

and Author of *Be Heard Now!*

End Your Fear of Public Speaking Forever

PRECOCITY PRESS

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Introduction

Do you have a message you feel compelled to share with the world? Are you eager to spread the word by speaking about an idea that is close to your heart? If this is your calling, this book is for you. If you just want to overcome public speaking anxiety, you have also come to the right place.

As a teacher of public speaking over the past thirty years, it has become clear to me that a willingness to be oneself, and the capacity to do so, are key components of enlightened leadership and sustainable relationships. I have facilitated thousands of groups whose participants have discovered, through practice and receptive listening, *how to be seen and heard for who they truly are*. And being seen and heard for who you truly are is a precondition for fearless public speaking.

So let's talk about the universal fear of public speaking. When you consider answering your calling to share your message, do you find yourself beset with anxiety? Even panic-stricken? Perhaps it's not quite that daunting, but you just

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

want to get past some level of performance anxiety or stage fright.

Now, consider the possibility that your difficulty is not, at its root, around speaking. Consider that the actual source of the block is not so much the act of speaking, but rather a pattern of *not being seen and heard for who you truly are*. If this idea intrigues you, stick around and wade in. You are about to learn that this block can be removed, and painlessly, through the practice of *Relational Presence*.

The Kindness Curriculum

*Be kind because every-
one you'll ever meet is
fighting a hard battle.*

—Bob Dylan

We have innumerable opportunities to be seen and heard by others. The settings may be informal social events, structured work meetings, or high-stakes public appearances. This book is about how to transform these opportunities into a natural connection with groups of any size, assemblies of any composition, and even one-on-one. You might be a CEO talking to your team, a guest giving a toast at a wedding, or an entrepreneur making a pitch at a networking meeting. Perhaps you're a teacher welcoming an assortment of parents to Back-to-School Night, or a parent consoling your kid after a difficult setback. I'm sure you're already thinking of a time or times when you are called on to address others.

Although different in purpose and level of audience engagement, all these encounters have something in common: the tone that the speaker sets. "Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see," writes Christian

Nestell Bovee. Perhaps in initiating connection with an audience, it is the essential kindness that the speaker brings to the interaction that sets that all-important tone.

Over decades of facilitating authentic speaking, I have come to call this type of interactional kindness “relational presence.” As this approach developed over time, it became clear to me that I have two main objectives. The first is to create a safe external environment in which speakers and their listeners can enjoy a deep sense of personal connection. My second goal is to guide speakers to develop the internal environment they need in order to discover how to be seen and heard for who they truly are—which is the key to becoming comfortable, fearless, and effective in front of any audience.

If you have been a student of public speaking, you’ve already been exposed to a whole host of tips, tricks, and performance techniques for engaging audiences. You’ve been advised to open with a provocative statement or an intriguing question. You’ve been shown how to gesture with your hands, vary your voice, and walk the stage. Although these measures can sometimes be useful in aiding speakers to “get through” a presentation, the relative success can often come at the expense of the speaker’s emotional well-being and can leave the audience cold, having deprived them of true connection.

The practice of relational presence as a method of mastering public speaking is fundamentally different. In fact, it is precisely the deliberate *absence* of technique that uplifts the energy of the speaker and leads to an easeful and effective connection between the speaker and the audience.

*Avoiding danger is no
safer in the long run
than outright exposure.
The fearful are caught as
often as the bold.*

—Helen Keller

How I Created the Speaking Circles® Program

The easiest way to explain how I evolved the method of Relational Presence, as taught in my Speaking Circles® program, is to tell you about my background. Anyone who has suffered with speaking anxiety can likely relate to my origin story, which begins in a cloud of smoke, literally. You see, my mom smoked two packs of Pall Mall cigarettes a day, including the nine months she was pregnant with me. I was born with a buzz. Still have it. It shows up as kind of a haze around groups, a vague feeling of disconnection. For most of my life that buzz contributed to an undercurrent of anxiety and a growing sense of not belonging. Not belonging in my own body, in my family, in the world around me.

Growing up with what is now termed ADHD, back when such neurodivergent differences in children had yet to be identified, I was saddled with the folksy diagnosis of “ants in my pants.” I spent my school days squirming in my seat and watching the big clock on the wall tick interminably slowly. My early public speaking experiences were in front of the family, around the dinner table, night after night, year after year, with a dad who alternately tuned me out or glared at me with daggers shooting from his eyes. My older brother regularly teased and ridiculed me, and my mom, the silent martyr, felt sorry for me. She too had to stifle her voice to survive. The sad part is that she was the brains of the family and its spiritual heart but had little voice in family decisions. It was as if we had elected the wrong president of the household and suffered mightily for it.

Like many of my “silent generation,” I developed social strategies to get by and mask my feelings of alienation. But the one situation in which I had no strategies with which to control my fear was when I was thrust into the center of attention. In school I dreaded being called on. Giving a book report in front of the class was torture; with all eyes upon me I numbed out and froze.

I managed to graduate from Brooklyn College in 1965 by cramming for tests without integrating the content of my courses in any meaningful way. I didn’t retain much information except for in the few courses in which the professor would occasionally meet my eyes for a sentence or two in a way that made me feel seen. Those few teachers showed me that there were learning environments in which I could sense connection, come alive, make a contribution. Looking back, what strikes me is how few teachers did that, and how little it would have taken to engage each student’s attention.

I suffered from social anxiety well into my forties. Always feeling like a deer in the headlights when the center of attention, I settled for a low-key job in the social services bureaucracy. In 1974 I quit and moved from the “buzzy” environment of New York City to the calmer setting of Northern California. It was there that I began to confront my “deer in the headlights” syndrome through psychological and spiritual counseling.

Although I made progress in my mental and spiritual health, I was not able to break the terror of speaking in front

of even small groups. But I had passion and humor to share with the world and was desperate to find a way out of my frustrating “prison of mind.” Approaches that were built on technique and performance, such as those of Toastmasters International, just triggered my anxiety.

I felt called to devise a more natural way to move through this anxiety. After decades of trial and error I finally came to realize that I had been approaching the problem from the wrong direction! I’d assumed my issue was some kind of block in speaking that I needed to power through. The epiphany was that the problem was not a block in speaking, but a block in noticing and letting in the available capacity of the audience to hear me. This undoubtedly seems counterintuitive—that you, the speaker, need to *listen to the listening* of the audience—but it works. You will learn why and how in this book.

This shift in approach transformed my experience with groups and led to the formulation of what I came to call the elements of Relational Presence. Starting with groups of friends, I began sharing my understanding of this public speaking paradox; and, through word of mouth my methodology gradually attracted others. Realizing I had uncovered an actual business opportunity in addition to a personal calling, I devised the Speaking Circles protocol based on the elements of Relational Presence. Since 1993, facilitators trained and certified by Speaking Circles International have spread this transformative approach to eight countries in six languages, training thousands of people to become confident, fearless, effective speakers.

The Elements of Relational Presence

Martin Buber, in *I and Thou*, writes:

Our relationship lives in the space between us—it doesn't live in me or in you, or even in the dialog between the two of us—it lives in the space we live in together, and that space is sacred space.

Underneath the superficial self . . . there is another self. More really us than I.

—Alan Watts

At Speaking Circles International, the sacred space Buber referred to is known as Relational Presence. It's the mindset we practice that informs our public expression. In a Speaking Circles session, participants take turns speaking (when words arise) and listening to each other, learning to be both authentic communicators and receptive audience members. This duality of roles reinforces the sense of relationship that is necessary to appreciate the full meaning of relational presence, the key to becoming a listener-friendly public speaker.

Whatever degree of anxiety you may have around fully accessing your voice, the cure is positive corrective experiences in an enriched listening environment. This experience of connection literally *rewires the brain*. My brain had essentially been wired in early childhood to trigger panic, and its byproduct, contraction, when all eyes were upon me. But the practice of relational presence builds powerful neuropathways that associate being seen with pleasure and expansion. (For precisely how this works, read chapter 1, The Phenomenon of Brain Neuroplasticity, page 5, and see the articles in the Appendix, Scientific Research Behind Relational Presence, page 233.)

Relational presence is made up of seven essential elements.

1. The Element of Listening

As listening is the powerful intelligence in the room, the primary guideline in relational presence practice is for the listeners. In the Speaking Circles protocol, the audience is guided to be available in a way that supports the person in front of the room to relax into that listening intelligence. *Once your priority up in front is to make the listening in the room more important than your speaking, a big shift happens.* With this new priority, the pace of your thinking and speaking naturally harmonizes with the listening in the room.

This same protocol works for both beginner and professional speakers because it goes to the common root cause of such public speaking ills as performance anxiety, self-consciousness, and diminished authenticity. It goes back to how we were listened to as children. Or not listened to. How our voice was valued, or not valued. As they begin to master this element of listening, many formerly nervous speakers find themselves flowing with ease as they speak.

2. The Element of Gaze

Whatever your content, when you face an audience in any situation your primary objective is to actually *see* them before you start talking to them. And to see them *while* you talk to them, staying for a sentence or two with each person. You don't have to get around to all of them; authentic connection

just asks that you see the ones you look at in a way that makes them *feel seen*. A five-second “gaze of kind regard” as you speak gives the listener a potent hit of your relational essence, and the whole room feels it.

Seeing your listeners so they feel seen is a key element of magnetism and connection, so you will come across variations of that phrase several times on these pages.

3. The Element of Stillness

Our species is in its infancy as social beings. Or one might say, our toddlerhood. The expression “terrible 2000s” has been coined not only as a play on the idea of the “terrible twos” many parents of toddlers report experiencing, but also to acknowledge that the early couple of decades of this millennium, the 2000s, have been perceived as utterly chaotic. As polarization among humans in the world is tearing apart families, communities, and nations, many of us are finding mindful ways to soothe our savage nervous systems and move toward inner peace. In these *uh-oh!* times we need to seek our own counsel by locating an inner stillness from which we can listen to ourselves, our loved ones, and those we interact with. As public speakers, that includes our audiences.

We know far more than we think we know, and far less than some claim to know. But it is in stillness that this becomes apparent. “To the mind that is still, the whole universe surrenders,” said the ancient Chinese philosopher Chuang Tzu.

4. The Element of Breath

Breathing in attunement with an audience slows and stills speedy minds, including your own.

If the speaker is not breathing easily, chances are neither is the audience. There are at least three opportunities to employ the element of breath. The most important breath is the one taken before saying a word. Another is after an important idea. Allow a long, leisurely breath in through the nose, stopping at the top for a few seconds, and letting it slowly out as you gaze around the room appreciating your audience. This lets them know it's okay for *them* to breathe. Taking a breath like this after making a significant point is the silent punctuation that allows the information to land and the group to feel connected to you and to each other. And when you get to a place where you are not sure what you will say next, a relaxing breath will help you think more clearly.

5. The Element of Belonging

Through these elements, the relationally present speaker facilitates a field of belonging in a room. With open ears and an open mind, the speaker is ready to share with the audience the experience of listening. With available eyes, the speaker sees those audience members as individuals, and with the breath, the speaker stills a jumpy mind and joins the listeners in the act of being present. They feel they belong in their chair, in their body, in this listening community.

Separation anxiety runs rampant in modern society, where epidemic polarization threatens nations and neighborhoods, families and couples. Holding forth in front of a group is a golden opportunity to bring people together in, at the very least, a shared learning environment. Your calm leadership can offer your listeners relief from daily anxieties as they find themselves in a field of belonging. Such a field has the power to soothe nervous systems.

6. The Element of Silence

In good personal relationships, whether in friendship, love, or therapy, natural silences arise, and some are golden. But with audiences, it takes a relationally present speaker to allow golden silences to show up. Such silences can let a point land and give the audience the time and space to process what they've heard. When you allow the psychic space that a natural pause provides, "public speaking" becomes a series of private communions. Silences may be perceived by some as dead air, but when they are allowed to happen organically, they foster a vibrancy.

7. The Element of Connection

Authentic connection with our audiences is our aim, but the way to bring this element in is by paying attention to the six previous elements. Any *overt effort to connect* results in a degree of *disconnection*, a false effort the audience can detect. In the language of relational presence, speakers *allow* or *invite* connection rather than *make* connection.

Similarly, we don't use the term *eye contact*, as it signals a forced technique that one *does*, a kind of *eye service* akin to the shallow meaning of *lip service*. Instead, we talk about a quality one *has*: the speaker offers *available eyes* or provides *listening eyes*. Authentic connection cannot be induced or cajoled. It simply happens when you allow your connection with yourself to turn inside out.

Organization of this Book

In 1996, I self-published *Be Heard Now! End Your Fear of Public Speaking Forever*, which was picked up by Broadway Books in 1998 for nationwide distribution. Since then, I've written hundreds of essays that transmit new insights and facets of my teaching and lifelong learning. I trust that the essays I chose for this book will bring warmth and a listener-friendly mindset into your speaking, and even into your daily conversations. The insights are intentionally varied and short. You can use the Table of Contents to dip into titles that call to you, and you might reflect on how each one relates to your capacity to speak in front of groups. I include stories and quotes from Speaking Circles participants whose lives in front of groups were transformed.

This book is divided into four parts, plus an appendix:

Part 1, The Way of Relational Presence, defines and elaborates on the various elements of the method. The intent of the essays in Part 1 is to both clarify the elements of relational presence and inspire you to incorporate them into your public practice.

Part 2, On Giving a Talk, offers insights into the phases of public speaking: prepping to give a speech, structuring a talk, and irresistibly opening a talk.

Part 3, The Zoom Revolution, is about the Zoom boom. When the global Covid-19 pandemic hit in 2020 we were compelled to find a way to bring the relational presence practice online. This seemed like a stopgap measure until lockdowns were lifted and we could get back to normal. But necessity being the mother of invention, in the ensuing years we have found ingenious ways to use technology to *transcend* technology. Even those who feel “totally Zoomed out” can calm their nerves and sharpen their public speaking skills in the “real world” without leaving their home or office. A great advantage of the Zoom Circles is that they include people from around the nation and the world. This part of the book is thus about the virtual application of relational presence practice such that the Zoom Speaking Circles experience has the feel of sitting cozily around the fireplace. Really!

Part 4, Mirror Workplay, offers essays and exercises that guide you in practicing “listening eyes” and fruitful self-talk in the privacy of your own mirror. If you feel called to dive into the deep end of the warm, safe pool of presence, you might start in the Mirror Workplay section (page 207), where you’ll have the novel experience of affectionately gazing into your own eyes.

Appendix: I include an appendix that elaborates on scientific research around how the practice of relational presence rewires your brain for a better life, for connections of all

kinds, not only for the art of public speaking. The articles in the Appendix are written by members of the Speaking Circles International leadership team.

Do It Yourself!

If the practice of relational presence speaks to you, it would be ideal if you could attend a professionally facilitated Speaking Circle in person if there is one in your area, or via Zoom from wherever you live. If those options are not available to you, I want you to know that *you can practice the principles of relational presence free of charge*, either with yourself in a mirror (aloud or silently), or with someone in your life willing to be a relational presence practice partner. To that end, after each essay you will be invited to do a two-minute exercise that will provide you with a real-life experience of the insight.

If you are inspired to create your own Relational Presence practice group, Speaking Circles International holds regular Zoom meetings (no fee) to discuss how to get a group started and how to sustain it. Email Lee at lee@speakingcircles.com for information.