



discovering your speaking

# Superpower

**be** moved



*Hi there.*

To my delight, authenticity has been a buzz word and goal of speakers for a long time. As “talks” have become a preferred and powerful platform for leaders (not just professional and motivational speakers), the door has opened to more and more people to share their stories in their own way.

This, my friends/speakers/Movers, is a wonderful thing! As a presentation coach whose mission is to create talks that move the world (not to create talks that are perfect and overly polished and ‘right but boring’) - I LOVE that audiences want more than just the standard chicken-dinner presentation.

**They want REAL. They want BRAVE. They want... YOU.**

That’s the good news. But it also means that more and more of us are finding ourselves up in front, and the bar is higher. Leading. Speaking. Daring. And in that big moment... sometimes WE DON’T FEEL LIKE OURSELVES. It can sometimes feel like we’re playing a role, or being a “character” of a speaker.

**Who do you become up on stage?** Hopefully, you are YOU...Your best friend should be able to recognize you on stage as the best and most daring version of yourself!

Because there is something essential about you that is true across the board, whatever "role" we sometimes feel we’re playing - and whatever we’re doing. An energy that flows from you, straight out into the world. **And that energy is your speaking superpower.** Defining, knowing and utilizing it can help you own the moment and bring your most free and authentic voice to the stage.

So I’m going to walk you through a process by which you can discover your Speaking Superpower! Are you ready? Let’s do this!

*Sally Z*

# The Story of the "Pearl Button" ...or discovering your Speaking Superpower

In the 90's, my friend Jane was an aspiring actor in L.A. She is amazingly talented - but as it goes in L.A., was struggling to make it big like she dreamed she would. So, as many young actors do, she took a class hoping to find the secret to landing more gigs and roles.

## Enter the "Discover Your Pearl Button" course.

In this class, she and her classmates would go to LAX airport (back

in the days before 9-11 and you could walk right up to the gates without a boarding pass) to do an experiment that would reveal what her "pearl button" is. Jane would bring three very different "character" outfits. And her classmates would bring sheets of paper with dozens of descriptive characteristics listed on them. And they would begin. Jane and her classmates would walk into a gate where people were waiting to board their plane. Jane was dressed as a character.

### **Character #1: Preppie Lady, wearing a golf skirt, tennies and polo shirt.**

Jane would stand around looking Preppie, while her classmates would hand around the characteristic sheets and say to these strangers waiting to get on their plane...

"See that woman over there? Would you mind circling three characteristics that you think apply to her?" (And because they're in LA and used to such shenanigans, they would.) The travelers boarded their plane; the class collected the sheets; and Jane went and changed for Character #2.

### **Character #2: Hippy Yoga Mom, wearing a long flowy skirt, peasant top, free-flowing hair.**

New travelers. Same thing. "See that woman over there? What three

characteristics apply?" Travelers boarded the plane. Classmates collected sheets. And Jane changed into...

### **Character #3: Power Work Woman, with a suit, briefcase, heels - looking busy and serious.**

Same spiel. "What three characteristics apply?"

And finally - after three very different characters, they collected all of the surveys and looked for the most common characteristics across the experience. What seemed to be emanating from Jane - regardless of what character she played? THAT is her Pearl Button.

Turns out, Jane is "sunny" (so true!) - and knowing that - she looked for "sunny" characters to audition for. If that's what

people 'get' from her, regardless of the role ... she might as well lean into it!

When Jane told me this story, it was one of those AHA moments... THIS IS TRUE FOR SPEAKERS, TOO, I told her! If we can know what energy audiences GET from us... that characteristic that is so essential to who we are that - despite our efforts to hide it and become something else - we can embrace and free it, creating a clearer and more authentic connection with our audiences.

Our audiences want to feel like they know us. So let's stop hiding what is essential, and instead share it... by discovering it, knowing it, and then utilizing it - our Pearl Button becomes our Speaking Superpower.

**Are you ready to figure out what your superpower is? Let's begin!**

# Pearl Buttons

Active	Debonair	Fun-loving	Loyal
Adaptable	Decent	Funny	Optimistic
Adventurous	Decisive	Generous	Passionate
Ambitious	Dedicated	Gentle	Perceptive
Articulate	Deep	Genuine	Persistent
Balanced	Determined	Glamorous	Positive
Bold	Dignified	Graceful	Quick-witted
Bright	Disciplined	Hard-working	Resourceful
Brilliant	Eager	Humble	Sensitive
Calm	Earnest	Impressive	Serious
Careful	Easy-going	Independent	Silly
Caring	Energetic	Innocent	Sincere
Cheerful	Engaging	Innovative	Sharp Skillful
Charming	Exciting	Insightful	Smart
Compassionate	Expressive	Intelligent	Straight-talker
Confident	Fair	Intuitive	Sympathetic
Capable	Farsighted	Kind	Trustworthy
Conscientious	Forthright	Joyful	Versatile
Courageous	Flexible	Knowledgeable	Warm
Creative	Focused	Leader	Wise
Curious	Free-thinking	Likable	
Daring	Friendly	Lovable	

# The Process

## Keep In Mind:

- » Words will fail us in this process. Nothing will feel quite exactly right. That's ok! The goal is to get into the ballpark of what seems about right.
- » This will evolve! As we evolve, so does your Pearl Button. Keeping in tune with who you are is a powerful speaking necessity!
- » In what context? Work? Home? - The awesome thing about your Pearl Button is that it should be present regardless of role or context.

Start here

## Step #1: Look through the characteristics.

Take a look at this list of characteristics, and just circle those that feel central and essential to who you are. Don't stop, just circle.

## Step #2: Pick 5.

Now go back through and pick your favorite five. Which ones are you drawn to most? Don't overthink it - just choose.

## Step #3: Narrow to 3.

And you thought picking five was hard! Narrow your search to three.

## Step #4: Find someone to verbally share them with.

Right now - go find a coworker, or hop on Skype, or track down a partner or friend.

## Step #5: Talk them through. You have one minute. (Keep it simple!)

**Talker:** Share why you chose each characteristic. Don't be shy. This is not the time for modesty!

**Listener:** Nod empathetically! Observe carefully. Don't argue. ("Really?! That's a surprising choice!" is not helpful.)

## Step #6: Listener gives feedback on observations.

**Listener:** Which of the characteristics brought out the most in them physically? Which characteristic was most animated? Which one had the most emotion behind it?

**Talker:** Take note.

### Step #7: Choose ONE.

#### Use these ideas as your guide:

Which one did you have the strongest reaction to? Which one is more like an energy? (I.e., “thoughtful” vs. “smart”) Which one feels mostly right (without it being exactly right)? Which one gets you the most excited? Which one are you proudest of?

And then just put a stake in the ground. (You can always change your mind!)

### Step #8: Get feedback from three other sources.

#### Say this:

“Hi, I’m doing this project where I’m trying to identify a core characteristic that people experience from me. It might not be my strongest characteristic internally - but the strongest characteristic that people experience from me as we interact. Right now I’m thinking \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Do any of those strike you as particularly true, or in the ballpark? What am I missing here? If you had to give me one word to describe the kind of energy I give off, what would it be?

Thank you, you’re awesome, I appreciate you!

### Step #9: Keep evolving your choice.

This is just the first step in the process. Keep asking for feedback. Keep updating it as you learn more about who you are on stage and how you can bring more of YOU to the moment!

Take your word, and plop it into a Thesaurus. Riff on it. Brainstorm. It might end up more like a nonsense word than an actual word, and that’s ok too! There’s no wrong word.

**But what if my word is negative?** Every shadow has light, and every light has shadow. Choose a positive frame for your essence. (I.e., Determined vs Stubborn)

### Step #10: Let me know about it!

Hop on Instagram and share your #speakingpower with a picture that represents your Superpower, and WHY you chose it! Tag @BeMovedSpeaking and #SpeakingSuperpower.

I can’t wait to see it!

*End here*

Other self-awareness tools that help bring your real self to the moment: Myers-Briggs, Enneagram, StrengthsFinder, and How to Fascinate. For more expert speaking advice, go to BeMoved.com.