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Your Speaking Platform: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

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By *Mara Purl, Actress/Author/Audio Book Performer*

Your Speaking Platform: Who, What, When, Where, Why?

These are the classic journalist's questions. They also form the perfect structure for building an author-speaker platform.

Who?

A. Who are you as a speaker? The first thing that will happen at your next talk is that someone will introduce you with a bio. What will that bio say? Will it run the gamut, describing your starring role in a highschool play and concluding with your latest best-seller? Probably not! Instead, it will focus on who you are being in the world, and the credential that support who you say you are.

B. Who are you addressing? What are the members of this particular audience working on? How can you help them achieve their goals? By tailoring your address to their needs, rather than speaking about what interests you, you're truly engaging your audience.

What?

What are you offering? The next thing that will happen at your next talk is that a title will be announced. What will that title be? Will it instantly grab the attention of your audience? Will it be of service to them? Will it promise they'll go home with a something valuable they didn't have before?

When?

When is the most important time of your life? It's now. Living in the now is critical to standing in front of others and offering them a talk, a seminar, a lecture, a program. If you are not fully in this moment, the audience will sense you are elsewhere. They'll go elsewhere too.

How can you stay in the now? Sometimes it's as simple as making eye contact. Always, it's a wonderful idea not only to "listen" but to be a listening for those you're speaking to. By opening not only your ears, but your intuition, you can really tune in to your audience. And they will know you truly get them.

Where?

Where are you in your life? An awareness of some of the previous "chapters" of your life make for good story-telling because it shows your capacity to be honest, and vulnerable. How about sharing some of the mistakes you made? That's "where" you were when you made these mistakes. And because you were able to laugh at yourself (and the audience can laugh with you), and learn (and the audience can learn with you), you are now at a different place in your life, rather than being stuck.

Why?

Why did you want to be a speaker in the first place? Was it to bring attention to earn money? To bring attention to yourself? To compete with other speakers? Though there's nothing inherently wrong with any of these answers, they don't contain enough "good" to be powerful. By "good" I mean a sense of service, an unselfish desire to share, a commitment to transformation and inspiration.

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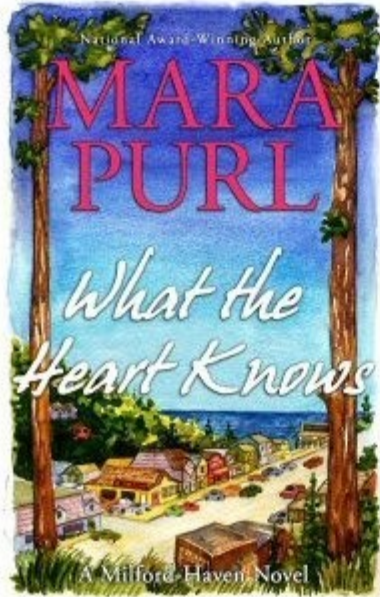
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Mara Puri is the author of the popular Milford-Haven Novels, based on her BBC radio drama with 4.5 million U.K. listeners. Mara speaks nationally on creativity and personal transformation, and is an accomplished audio book performer. She was an actress on Days Of Our Lives, and a journalist for the A.P, Rolling Stone and The Financial Times of London.



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Blog Tour Visit #16—Women Speakers Association « The Milford-Haven Novels says:
August 27, 2011 at 11:20 pm

[...] Women are up to something interesting in the world these days. We like to connect, rather than compete; we like to compliment and complement because this way of behaving creates a background of relatedness, which lays the groundwork for agreement and synergy. My post today, for example, is the Who, What, When, Where, Why of creating a Speaker's Platform. [...]

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