

## **Stuttering Therapy: Treating the Whole Child**

By: Marilee L. Fini, M.A. CCC/SLP

### **I. Introduction**

- A. Background information**
- B. Preview of workshop**
- C. How do we treat the whole child?**

### **II. My Story**

- A. Early experiences with stuttering**
- B. Speech therapy**
- C. Discovery of NSA**

### **III. Understanding Stuttering**

#### **A. Definitions**

1. Stuttering-“A specific type of disruption in the forward flow of speech that accompanies a speaker’s feelings of ‘loss of control.’” (Yaruss, 2009, p. 4)
2. “Loss of control” - “The feeling that you know exactly what you want to say but for some reason that you cannot define, you are unable to say it.” (Yaruss, 2009, p. 5)
3. Secondary behaviors-“Extra behaviors”
4. “The stuttering disorder involves more than just the production of speech disfluencies.” (Yaruss, 2009, p. 6)
5. It involves “negative feelings and reactions, difficulty communicating and difficulty participating.” (Yaruss, 2009, p. 6)

#### **B. What does it feel like to stutter?**

According to Starkweather & Givens-Ackerman (1997), “The person who stutters in the middle of a block experiences diminished awareness of his or her surrounding. They lose awareness of where they are, what they are doing, to whom they are talking or any details in their immediate environment.” (p. 34)

#### **C. How do we feel in the moment of stuttering?**

Art Activity: Draw how it feels to be a listener in the moment of stuttering (Handouts, p. 9)

## **IV. Evaluation Process**

### **A. Physical components**

1. Stuttering Severity Instrument (SSI)
2. Stocker-Probe for Fluency and Language

### **B. Emotional components**

1. Interview/observations
2. Surveys
  - a. A-19 Scale for Children who Stutter
  - b. Modified Erickson Scale of Communication Attitudes
  - c. Overall Assessment of Speaker's Experience of Stuttering (OASES)
3. Art

## **V. Treatment Techniques for Preschool Children**

### **A. Determining goals**

1. Overall goals
  - a. Stabilize fluency
  - b. Create healthy attitudes about talking
2. Specific goals
  - a. Client will initiate questions/comments in a smooth manner when fluency enhancing strategies (reducing communicative stress, modifying questions, using of pauses in speech, reframing comments/questions) are used in the classroom environment with 80% acc.
  - b. SEE SCHOOL-AGE SECTION FOR MORE GOALS

### **B. Indirect therapy vs. direct therapy**

1. Create a fluency-enhancing environment
  - a. Slow rate
  - b. Delayed response
  - c. Avoid interrupting
  - d. Re-framing
  - e. Modifying questions

2. Direct therapy- Working directly with child and providing them speech strategies to make talking easier
  - a. Rationale for a direct approach
    - Frequency of stuttering is increasing
    - Struggle/tension more evident
    - Increased frustration level with stuttering
  - b. Integrating both approaches
    - Using fluency enhancing strategies simultaneously while using direct therapy

## VI. Treatment Techniques for School-age Children

### A. Determining goals

1. Overall goal: EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION  
According to Reardon (2003), a child must, “say what they want, when they want, how they want, to whom they want.”
2. “When we understand the student we are working with as an individual, we can be more effective in helping that child be successful in handling stuttering in the long-term.” (Reardon, 2010, p. 4)

### B. Specific techniques

1. Slow rate-Using easy and relaxed speech
  - *Client will use easy and slow speech with 90% acc.*
  - *Client will use appropriate phrasing and pausing with 90 % acc.*
  - *Client will use continuous phonation with 90% acc.*
2. Easy starts- “Starting words in sentences with less physical tension and a slightly slowed rate of speech.” (Reardon, 2003, p. 4)
  - Client will use an easy start at the beginning of the sentence with 90% acc.
3. Freezing the moment-Staying in the moment of stuttering
  - Purposes: -More knowledge of stuttering  
-Takes the emotionality out of stuttering
  - *Client will freeze the moment of stuttering for 3 seconds with 90% acc.*
4. Pull-out-“During the moment of stuttering, staying in the tension and sliding out by breaking down the tension in the speech mechanism before continuing on with the production of the word.” (Reardon, 2003, p. 4)
  - *Client will use a pull out strategy in structured tasks with 90% acc.*
5. Voluntary stuttering-Stuttering on purpose
  - Purpose: Gives power back to the client

- Preschool children ~ add some normal dysfluencies to your speech
- School-age children/adults ~ doing voluntary stuttering together
- Use written models
- Have client teach another person how to stutter
- Use “non-feared” words FIRST and then progress to “feared” words
- *Client will voluntary stutter 3x during a conversation.*

#### 6. Tension reduction

- *Client will reduce the severity of stuttering (# of repetitions, length of prolongations, tension) through a variety of strategies with 90% acc.*

#### 7. Reducing avoidance behaviors

- a. Identify the behavior
  
- b. Eliminate in structured situations and move to conversation
  
- c. *Client will express his/her opinions in conversation w/o avoiding words, phrases or ideas with 90% acc.*

### **VII. Building Communication Skills**

#### **A. Increasing verbal interaction**

- *Client will verbally express himself in structured situations with 90% acc.*

#### **B. Working on eye contact**

1. Why is eye contact scary?
  
2. How do we improve eye contact?

- *Client will hold eye contact in the moment of stuttering on the word level with 90% acc.*

#### **C. Turn-taking skills**

- *Client will take turns appropriately in a structured task with 90% acc.*

### **VIII. Working with Parents**

#### **A. What do parents need?**

1. Knowledge- Providing information/resources on stuttering
  
2. Support- NSA newsletter, “Family Voices”

3. Validation

“It looks like you’re feeling embarrassed. I bet that feels uncomfortable.”

**IX. Working on Negative Beliefs and Emotions (Rentschler, 2004 p. 2)**

**A. How do we know there is an emotional component?**

1. “reports of feared words, sounds or situations”
2. “secondary characteristics”
3. “lacking confidence as a speaker”
4. “introversion; withdrawal in speaking situations”
5. “difficulty articulating feelings/emotions about stuttering”

**B. Determining goals**

1. Client will identify 5 negative beliefs about stuttering concerning a certain speaking situation with 90% acc.
  
2. Client will formulate 1-2 sentences about his/her feelings related to embarrassment after reading an article or seeing a video on stuttering with 90% acc.
  
3. Client will complete 1 task on their hierarchy of feared situations. (Handouts, p. 11)

**C. Activities for treating negative beliefs and emotions**

1. Writing /Art (Handouts, p. 12)
  
2. Role-playing activities (Handouts, p.13-14)
  
3. Providing positive feedback about talking
  - a. Exercise: What’s working in my speech? (Handouts, p. 15)
  
  - b. Examples of positive comments
    1. “You have such a great voice.”
    2. “I love your stories.”
    3. “You are a really good talker”
    4. “You express yourself so well.”



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## **ORGANIZATIONS/RESOURCES**

### ***Friends The Association of Young People Who Stutter***

Directors: Lee Caggiano/ John Ahlbach  
145 Hayrick Lane, Commack, NY 11725-1520  
Phone #: 1-866-866-8335  
E-mail: Lcaggiano@aol.com  
Website: [www.friendswhostutter.org](http://www.friendswhostutter.org)

### ***National Stuttering Association***

119 W. 40<sup>th</sup> Street, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10018  
Phone #: 1-800-937-8888  
E-mail: [info@WeStutter.org](mailto:info@WeStutter.org)  
Website: [www.WeStutter.org](http://www.WeStutter.org)

### ***Stuttering Foundation of America***

Director: Jane Fraser  
3100 Walnut Grove Rd., Suite 603  
P.O Box 11749  
Memphis, Tennessee 38111-0749  
Phone #: 1-800-992-9392  
Website: [www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org)

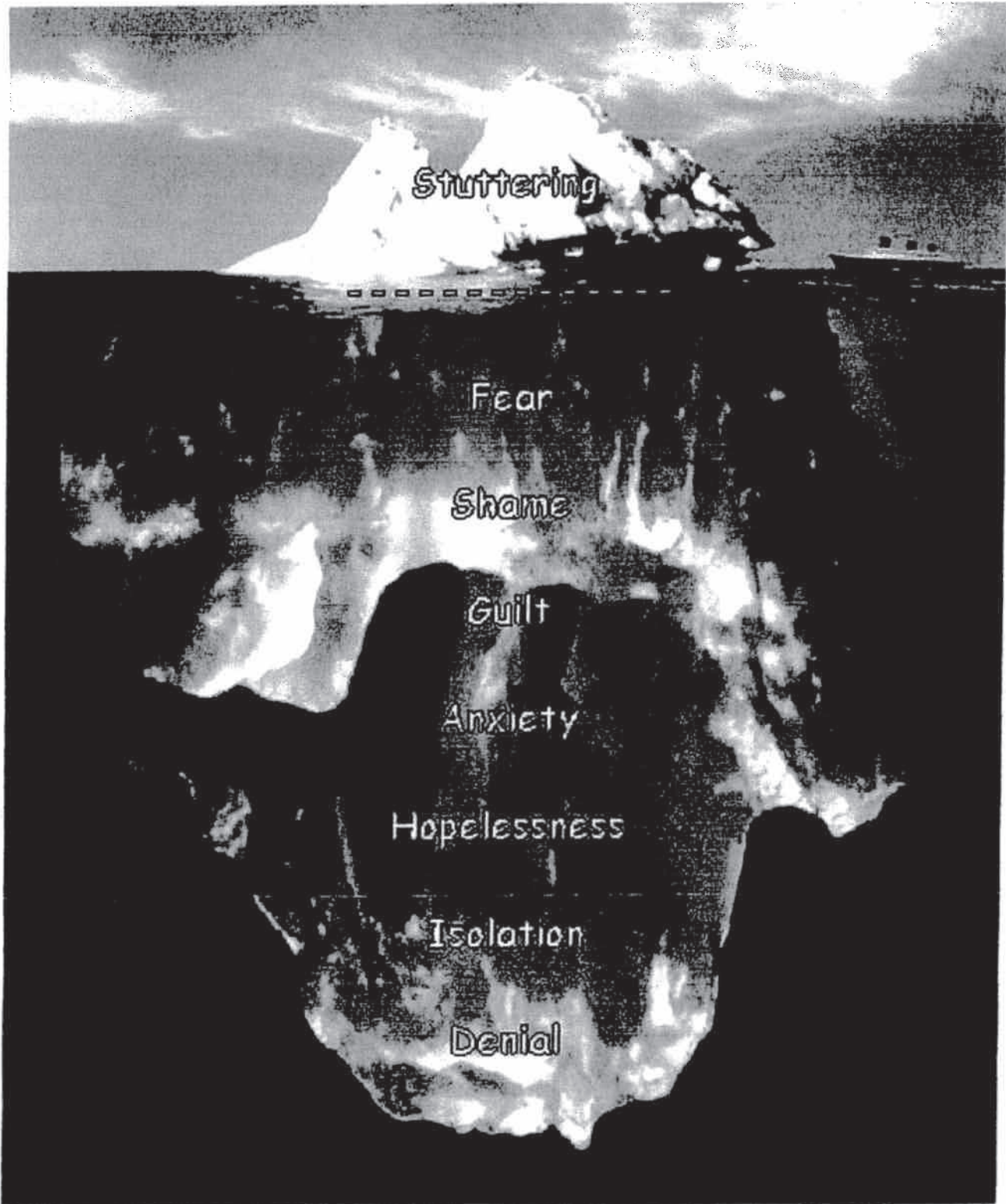
## **Resources on the INTERNET**

[www.stutteringhomepage.com](http://www.stutteringhomepage.com) {Excellent resources for stuttering}  
<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/schools/SID4page2.html> {Internet resources for working with preschoolers}  
[www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster4/part60.html](http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster4/part60.html) {Contains a list of many resources for kids and teens who stutter}  
<http://www.schneiderspeech.com/media/> {Excellent video clips of "real life stories of stuttering"}  
<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/isadarchive/onlineconference.html> {International Stuttering Awareness Day}  
**Marilee Fini's Website:** [www.mlf-speech-therapy.com](http://www.mlf-speech-therapy.com)

## ART ACTIVITY

DIRECTIONS: Draw a picture of how it feels to be in the stuttering moment

# The Iceberg Analogy of Stuttering



[www.russhicks.com/iceberg](http://www.russhicks.com/iceberg)

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