



# The Freedom of Fluency

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# What is it?

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- Specific step-by-step procedure to teach clients to integrate motor skills with cognitive strategies applied to fluency
- For chronic stutterers
- Has long-term changes
- 2 basic components are motor training and mental shift



# Phase 1

## Motor Training Component

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- The physical modification of stuttering
- Unit 1: Fluency Targets
  - Deliberate phonation
  - Normal Breath
  - Easy stretch
- Unit 2: Self Monitoring
- The goal is to start where the client can perform successfully at a 90% level or above



# Phase 2

## Mental Shift Components

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- Internal attitudinal changes
  - Guided Relaxation
  - Mental Imagery
  - Affirmation Training
  - Self-Talk Strategies



# Deliberate Phonation

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- Slow and continuous voice pattern of speech
- Blending words and sentences together
- Best way to start is with a small number of words
- Breaking speech into smaller segments
- Similar to chunking
- Recommended use of auditory feedback
- Example: Connect the two words together as if it is one word “moo....who”



# Normal Breath

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- Inhale and exhale normal amounts of breath during deliberate phonation
- Identify normal breathing patterns
- Provide awareness of the breathing cycle
- Example: say the words “rain, pain, lane” all in one breath at a normal rate



# Easy Stretch

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- Prolonging the first phoneme of each word or phrase
- Applied to speech repetitions or blocks
- /m/ and /n/ phoneme most commonly used
- Focus on atypical buildup of pressure in the oral cavity prior to initiating speech
- Similar to easy onset
- Example: prolong the initial sound in an utterance “Hhhhhelp the man”



# Self Monitoring

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- To prevent relapse or maintain fluency
- Person is constantly monitoring what they say
- 3 different types of hand signals used for training are applied when the person is aware of a difficult situation and released slowly after
  - Clenched-fist
  - Finger-thumb
  - Pressure signal





# Guided Relaxation

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- Relaxation technique applied 20 minutes per session for the client to clear their mind and imagine a peaceful environment
- Can be applied during stressful times in a real situation
- Example: Clinician instructs client to breath deeply, count to three, and perhaps close their eyes



# Mental Imagery

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- Creating a mental picture of something or someone not actually present
- Don't anticipate negative speech
- This will only work if the person can clearly imagine a positive image
- Example: start simple and move to a more complex image. (Visualize introducing your spouse to a friend)



# Affirmation Training

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- Written goal or objective for the future
- Helps the client to accept desired statements as truths
- The goal is affirmed when they apply it to their speech
- Example: “Every day I feel myself becoming more fluent and more confident”



# Self-Talk Strategies

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- Programming positive thoughts about oneself
- Moves negative talk to positive talk encourages practice and motivation
- Example: client repeats their positive statement every morning and night in a mirror to themselves

# Personal Evaluation

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- This approach is classified as fluency shaping because the client is allowed to stutter and is taught techniques that adapt the stutter into a more natural way of communication
- The underlying theoretical rationale is to practice, maintain, and monitor
- The style of presentation is a progressive step-by-step therapy
- “Success” is defined and measured by being able to perform at a 90% success level or above, and being able to self monitor
- Generalization and maintenance is addressed by starting out with small segments of speech, then sentences, then scripts, and finally out into the community
- There is not any data that we found regarding the program’s success rate
- This program’s strong points are the use of individual and group counseling, physical strategies, and the use of a positive attitude
- This program’s weak points are the breathing techniques, and mental imagery
- We would recommend using parts of this approach such as the self monitoring techniques, the physical strategies, and the use of a positive attitude because we feel that these strategies would be beneficial to clients in a realistic setting