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Critical Review of The Successful Stuttering Management Program (SSMP)

An Overview by:

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Successful Stuttering Management Program (SSMP)

- Stuttering modification approach created by Dr. Dorvan Breitenfeldt and Delores Rustad Lorenz from Eastern Washington University (EWU).
- Incorporates: Traditional nonavoidance and stuttering modification techniques and fluency-modification procedures. (Breitenfeldt, 1990)
- “Focus of therapy is to teach the speaker to “handle” the once feared and out-of-control stuttering experience.” (Breitenfeldt, 1990)
- This program has been used in workshops for the past 35 years at EWU.

Successful Stuttering Management Program (SSMP) Cont.

- Designed for Adolescents and Adults
- It works best with groups but can be done individually.
- The suggested length of a session is 2 ½ to 3 hours for 17 treatment sessions, but can be broken up into smaller time increments.
- Each session is broken up into objectives, procedures, materials, and activities.
- The clients do many assignments with familiar people and even more with unfamiliar people.

(Breitenfeldt et al, 1989)

[SSMP Manual]

- “Taking the therapy into the “real world” is the heart of the SSMP.”

(Breitenfeldt et al, 1989)

SSMP Theoretical Rationale

- A fundamental belief that stuttering is a “condition” that is chronic and the goal of therapy is for the person to “manage” the problem.
- Treats the whole person and not just the stuttering behavior
- Program is conducted to meet the individuals differences as much as possible
- Involves a group of people for emotional support and increased accountability

(Breitenfeldt et al, 1989)

Principle Components to SSMP

- Improvement of eye contact
- “Advertising” that they stutter
- Self awareness of speaking mechanism
- Teaching “handling procedures” to modify stuttering moments
- Developing “controlled normal speech”, emphasizing cognitive monitoring
- Negative practice of overt, easy stuttering (repetitions)

(Breitenfeldt, 1990)

“Success” Defined and Measured

- Dr. Dorvan Breitenfeldt stated that, success is measured by questioners that evaluate how well the individual feels they can control their stuttering, and how they perceive themselves as a person who stutters.
- The goal is to get the individual to be more confident in their ability to communicate.

(Breitenfeldt, 2004)

Generalization and Maintenance

- Two of the final sessions are designated for “Being your own clinician”, Session 15 and “Therapy Maintenance”, Session 16.
- Session 17 is “Graduation Day” including information for friends and family members

(Breitenfeldt et al, 1989)

Data Regarding Program's Success

- Management program workshop in the United States of America (7 participants) and South Africa (8 participants)
 - The Attitude Scale probing subjects' perceptions of what happens when they stutter and their feelings about stuttering found significant improvement between the pre and post treatment scores overall
 - Secondary Behaviors were significantly reduced after treatment
- All the subjects noted that they would refer others to future workshops.

[Strong Points]

- Eclectic Program-manages and identifies problems, such as the human environment, feelings and reactions
- Open Communication- clinicians of this program have an open phone line to their past, present, and future clients

(Breitenfeldt, 2004)

Weak Points

- Requires a clinician not a technician
 - Not just a person who is trying to reach a goal but needs to relate to people, share with them, and be there for them for life.
 - This is challenging on the clinician at times.
- All stuttering intervention has the challenge of maintaining success for life.

(Breitenfeldt, 2004)

[Recommendation]

- We like this program because:
 - Price of manual is reasonable at \$54.95
 - Group based with individual accountability
 - It teaches individuals to advertise themselves as a person who stutters rather than the stuttering introducing the individual to help decrease fear.
 - Teaches the individual to be their own clinician
 - Provides family support

Breitenfeldt <http://www.ssmppmanual.com/about.html>

- **“The clinician will guide and execute this therapy program, but it is the responsibility of the stutterer to accept not only the fact that he is a stutterer, but also the responsibility for changing his way of communicating to one that is much more socially acceptable.”**

(Breitenfeldt, D. H., (n.d.))

References

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- Breitenfeldt, D. H. (n.d.). retrieved Nov. 23, 2004, from Successful Stuttering Management Program Web site: <http://www.ssmmanual.com/>.
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