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Applying to College

Including Stuttering in your Essays and Personal Statements

Tips:

- Present stuttering in a positive light
 - Consider the language you use.
 - “Living” with stuttering is better than “suffering” or “struggling” with stuttering.
 - Stuttering can be a “difference” rather than a “disorder”, “impairment”, “disability”, “impediment” or “handicap”.
 - Write about how you have grown, changed, or matured because of your experiences with stuttering, therapy, or support.
- Include how your unique experiences and qualities will be positive contributions to the college community.
 - Using words such as “diversity”, “inclusion”, “tolerance” and “acceptance” in your ideas and plans might be helpful.
 - Example... Consider participation in groups such as “Best Buddies” if the college has a chapter.
 - Consider ideas for community service within the college community.
- Include a description of how you have changed/grown by including a real story or experience, something the reader can visualize.
 - Consider writing about an experience characterized by fear/avoidance, contrasted with an experience that demonstrated courage/confidence.
 - Include emotional content when describing these experiences (how you felt and what you thought).

Ideas for content when describing yourself:

Personal Growth

- *Insight* into your own behavior
- *Problem solving* based on what you learned in therapy or in a support group.
- *Acceptance* of things you can't change and working to change the things you can. “I am more than my stuttering”.
- *Applying* therapy concepts to other areas of life (ie. facing fears).
- Ability to accept feedback and learning to *evaluate yourself* (successes/failures)
- *Maturity* inherent in knowing that ultimately *you* are responsible for the change you create.

Leadership Skills

- *Supporting* and reaching out to others new to the therapy process (or to the support group).
- *Sharing* your own strategies in the hopes of helping others.
- Taking responsibility for group dynamics by *setting a model* of contributing and responding to others.
- Being open about stuttering to help *shape positive public perceptions* of stuttering (advertising).
- Writing about stuttering, presenting about stuttering, making videos about stuttering in order to *inform or educate others* (consider what you have done in school, church, social groups, etc.)
- *Taking a stand* against teasing and bullying in your school and social networks.

Personal Qualities and Character

- Taking *responsibility* for your own behavior and for the changes you make.
- Taking *initiative* in seeking out speaking opportunities or opportunities to advertise stuttering.
- *Awareness* and *sensitivity* to all differences (not just stuttering), and setting an example of *acceptance* and *tolerance*.
- *Diligence* in working toward personal goals.
- *Planning and organizational skills* needed to carry out assignments and change long standing habits.
- Demonstrating *courage* in the face of fear.