



American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders

*In the
Loop*

- ❖ **Board News**
- ❖ **Happenings**
- ❖ **Upcoming Events**

Keeping Members Informed

Board Members in the News

Joseph Donnaher, Treasurer, sponsored a Friends One Day Conference at CHOP

Rueben Schuff, Consumer Representative and Rita Thurman, Chair sponsored a One Day Conference on March 3, 2019 in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Rueben Schuff, Consumer Representative sponsored a One Day Friends Conference May 18, 2019 in Los Angeles, California.

Rita Thurman presented the CEUs for the National Stuttering Association One Day Conference in Boston on March 16.

Elyse Lambeth, Vice Chair sponsored a Friends One-Day Conference in Seattle Washington.

Happenings

Better Hearing & Speech Month

Talk With Me

Susan Meyers Fosnot, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F

Marketing & Public Relations for ABFFD

When I was a young child, people said to me, “You wear your heart on your sleeve” indicating I was too sensitive. Definitely, sensitivity was intended as “disapproval” because people have trouble dealing with feelings. People who stutter experience daily remarks from the listener who is perplexed about the stutter and assumes what they will say next to the person who stutters is well-substantiated advice that has never been heard before. In many cases, the listener does not know how to respond to stuttering because it is intermittent which leads the listener to passing judgment or providing well-meaning advice. Someone receiving unsolicited comments from a listener may infer that they need to defend who they are and spend a lifetime defending who they really are.

Over the years, I became empowered to my sensitivity. It is motivating and an honor to share such compassion like other caring speech-language pathologists do. High-quality therapists continue to grow, develop, and embrace learning. Clinicians respect the people they are working with and recognize that the client is paramount and deserves more than a quick response to treatment. They recognize that some treatment techniques may not be in the client’s best interest so they search for preeminent treatment protocols for the client and welcome the client’s input. A “one size fits all” model can be dangerous and counterproductive to treatment and a seasoned clinician recognizes this when developing goals and benchmarks.

Working as a team with the client is imperative and the most significant team associate is that client. This “compassion for others” led me to the journey of falling in love with working 45 years with people who stutter and providing research studies that provide treatment efficacy to the clinical process before it was in vogue. Opening up the ability to communicate in people who stutter (fondly called “my junior faculty”) was the “Road Not Taken” (Robert Frost, 1916) which became my mission statement.

We talk about what is under the surface of the iceberg and changing negative thoughts, beliefs, and feelings into positivity. The positive change comes within the clinical process between the esteemed client and a dedicated speech-language pathologist being equal partners in the clinical relationship. The clinician brings their expertise, training in the field of stuttering, and related areas of study (communication sciences and disorders, psychology, neuroscience, phonetics, linguistics, counseling, diversity, education, and other fields). The client provides insight into their communication skills, where they want to improve,

and the history of their treatment. The Gold Standard to working with people who stutter encompasses more than a method or just one philosophy. We need to embrace our differences and learn from our experiences moving forward in advancing our knowledge in treating and researching stuttering with compassion and our ability to listen to others that have different ideas from our outlook.

For May, 2019 Better Hearing and Speech month, we want to raise awareness about stuttering, the importance of board certification, and the role of ASHA members in providing life-altering treatment. The theme this year is "Communication across the Lifespan." Let us focus on inclusion (of all ages and the need to develop different therapy plans) not exclusion (client does not fit in our treatment approach). If we care about stuttering, I challenge all organizations to come together and provide open listening regarding the field of stuttering. Let us focus on the positive reasons we want to treat and research stuttering and let us think of better ways to disseminate the knowledge with including the client's thoughts and ideas. Let us be open-minded and put our heart into the evaluation and treatment process of stuttering. Let us remember that personal experiences can be shared but one-size does not fit all. Preschool children, school-age children and teens, and adults who stutter should be provided evaluation and treatment protocols that fit their needs. Clients should be an active participant within the clinical process no matter what part of their lifespan crosses your clinical practice.

We invited people to share their experience with stuttering from Board members, Board Certified Specialists, Certified speech-language pathologists, and clients who graciously shared their journey in the area of stuttering across the lifespan. Below are some examples.

My Positive Outlook, Leo

I want to start this off by saying that I am a person who stutters. A person just like you, with the same normal characteristics, but sometimes my brain runs faster than my tongue can catch up to, and they bump. Nothing crazy, nothing outrageous, actually pretty normal considering there are far worse disabilities that people deal with out there. Currently at age 21, I am at the best in terms of my speech, better than it has ever been. I have dealt with a speech impediment for more than 15 years of my life and let me tell you, it's not easy. I have been embarrassed, I have felt left out, I have been disappointed, but that and more combine to make me the person that I am today. Let me go a little deep into it to explain what exactly I mean by that. Being a person who stuttered especially for majority of my younger years, mostly during my 4 years of high school, I have always been a listener. Being a listener has taught me patience, intelligence, and self-control. I look at situations different than most people, at least I feel that way. My stutter has made me appreciate all the little things in life that most people may not even care about. I have always observed my peers and dreamed about having a flawless speech like most. Finally, I came to an understanding that nothing worth having in life comes with ease in the world we live in. It was November of 2018, I decided to give a final shot in speech therapy. I had been so disappointed in past experiences with SLPs, SLPs that didn't know much about their profession but somehow ended up in that field, so I was unwilling to seek help anymore. I was very hesitant but with the support and guidance of my aunt, on November 25th, 2018, I stepped in to an office of a board-certified specialist. I walked in not knowing what to expect and walked out with the biggest smile anyone had seen on my face for years. During a 2-hour evaluation session, she gave me so much knowledge and hope that my future started to flash in front of my eyes. She gave me the feeling and power to realize that we all have a voice, in my case it was time to wake that voice up, because it had been asleep for almost two decades. The very next day, me and my therapist got to work. We went through various speech tools and techniques to determine what really works in my case, since every individual is different. After we identified the techniques that worked tremendously well for me, we started to master them. Within two months, my speech improved drastically, everyone that knew me started to notice immense progress. The confidence, the joy, the power that I gained and I'm still gaining every day is impossible to explain, words

cannot suffice. I am doing things in my life that I never imagined was possible, there is no more self-doubt in me because now I can communicate. I learned that I can never cure my stutter, but I definitely CAN become better communicator, that being prosody and fluency. Now being six months deep into my therapy, I feel reborn. This is a new life I'm living, with challenges that I'm welcoming and defeating them off my way daily. During this short period of time, I have climbed so high on my ladder that I can't even look down, because I would for sure be scared of the heights I've accomplished. Now I look at myself as a fluent communicator with prosody, that sometimes happens to stutter, and I won't stop until I reach my destination. At the end of the day, this is not a race for me, but a marathon, and the best thing about it, is that I am going at my own pace without worrying about others.

Jenny

Although I have struggled with stuttering for as long as I can remember, it wasn't until my speech became truly debilitating that I realized I was actually a person who stutters. For years, I thought if I followed the advice of others and slowed down the rate of my speech, thought about what I wanted to say before I said it or more carefully enunciated my words, that I would be able to successfully manage my stuttering. It wasn't until I was practically unable to speak that I began seriously investigating all of the stuttering support resources available. During this time I discovered both a remarkable fluency specialist as well as the NSA. Together, both the NSA and my speech therapist offered life-changing coping strategies as well as fluency techniques that would shape the beginning of my healing journey.

I think that my life would have been so different and filled with a greater acceptance of my stuttering had I had the opportunity to learn about effective fluency strategies as well as ways in which I could confidently advertise my disfluency. Instead, I had to wait until my thirties to start to liberate myself from all of the negative aspects that years of my stuttering had caused.

The positivity of a multifaceted and comprehensive approach to stuttering clearly addresses both the outward manifestations of disfluency as well as the underlying sentiments that imbue every thought and action. Taking full advantage of the restorative energy that resulted from finally taking charge of my fluency was just what I needed to further release myself from the decades of pain & humiliation that I have let stuttering bring into my life. Now stuttering is just a part of me and in no way defines me. That's how I define progress and believe that this positive mindset has been instrumental in my ability to heal from the effects of this speech affliction and allow me the ability to move forward.

Recent clients' attitudes toward speech therapy for stuttering

Glenn Weybright, M.S., CCC-SLP, BCS-F
CEU Coordinator for ABFFD,

From the family of a nine year old girl who stutters:

We believe by far the biggest benefit of speech therapy is the installation of confidence in P. She knows that stuttering does not define her as a person. P. realizes that her stuttering is just one small piece of her. She has many great talents and gifts. Stuttering just happens to be one of them.

From O., a ten year old girl who stutters

"I feel way better about my speech after getting to know Glenn. I like meeting up with him and getting more tools. It's helpful for the whole family to understand stuttering better. It's easy to talk to Glenn because he also has a stutte.,"

From B. a mid-thirties man who stutters

In many ways, I did not understand the ways that stuttering affected my life until I started therapy. By addressing the core insecurities I held about my stuttering, I realized my fear of how others would perceive my stuttering kept me from living out my life the way I wanted to. I would quite literally avoid new

situations where I may have to say my name, or simply speak out loud at all. Therapy has enabled me to face those situations with new found confidence.

John Gomez (Speech-Language Pathologist & Filmmaker)

Why do I enjoy working with people who stutter? Where do I begin? The answer to that question is very multi-layered and complex. What I am about to say is, of course, a generality. However, I think one of the main reasons I like working with (and being in the company of people who stutter) is that they often have characteristics that I highly value. In particular, I find SINCERITY and EMOTIONAL DEPTH to be chief characteristics among many people who stutter. I'm not sure exactly why these features are so prevalent... I have often theorized that people who stutter (versus your "average" person) have spent a greater amount of their lives self-reflecting, observing others and building rich inner lives. I (as the conversational partner) feel that I am the beneficiary of the inner richness that comes from a person who has taken the time to truly contemplate life. Along my personal journey, I have met many people who stutter and I am a better person because of it.

Rita Thurman, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCS-F, Chair for the ABFFD

Being part of this group of dynamic professionals, who focus on improving the quality of services for people who stutter, was the most exciting career change I have made. After providing therapy for people who stutter for 30 years, I wanted to broaden my skills and knowledge base. I started the Specialization process in 2006, began to hone my skills, think critically about quality treatment and connect with caring, devoted clinicians. I continue to grow and appreciate the collaboration of these amazing therapists. Come be a part of our community!

- **Here is what ASHA has to say about ABFFD courses:**
- "In 2015, The American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders joined 532 organizations across the county and around the world that have had their organizational process and courses reviewed by our experts in continuing education to ensure the highest possible standards are met."
- In order to achieve ASHA Approved CE Provider status, the American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders completed a rigorous application process and successfully demonstrated adherence to the ASHA Continuing Education Board standards that focus on the design, development, administration, and evaluation of its continuing education courses offered for audiologists and speech-language pathologists. The American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders agreed to comply with ASHA CEB standards and can promote their organization and courses using the ASHA CE logo on promotional course material. In addition, the American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders is listed on the ASHA CEB's Approved CE Provider list and their courses that meet CEB standards appear in the ASHA CE Course Search on the ASHA website at www.asha.org

Please join us in supporting these courses and spread the word to colleagues looking for CEU, Asha Approved Credits.

- **American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders (ABFFD) is ASHA Approved to be a Continuing Education (CE) Provider**

- **ASHA Approved CE Provider Status Demonstrates Commitment to High-Quality CE Programming for Audiologists and Speech-Language Pathologists**



About the American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders

The American Board of Fluency and Fluency Disorders was the first clinical specialty program approved by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association in 1998. The idea of a specialty program was driven by the need to give consumers access to professionals with advanced knowledge and skills, and to educate and recognize expert clinicians.

The specialty program, initially known as the Specialty Board on Fluency Disorders, came into being through the efforts of both professionals and consumers. It was championed by ASHA's Special Interest Division 4, Fluency and Fluency Disorders, with support from the National Stuttering Association and the Stuttering Foundation of America.

About the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA)

ASHA is the national professional, scientific, and credentialing association for more than 166,000 audiologists, speech-language pathologists, and speech, language, and hearing scientists. Audiologists specialize in preventing and assessing hearing and balance disorders as well as providing audiologic treatment including hearing aids. Speech-language pathologists identify, assess, and treat speech and language problems including swallowing disorders. For more information, please visit www.asha.org or call 800-498-2071.

About the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Continuing Education Board (CEB)

The ASHA CEB supports and facilitates professional development by assisting individuals in the management of lifelong learning; encouraging the availability of quality, relevant CE opportunities through its network of ASHA Approved Continuing Education Providers; and recognizing individual accomplishments in CE with the ASHA Award for Continuing Education (ACE).

- **Flier available** for members to download and bring to presentations/conferences. Please help spread the word about the importance of becoming a BCS-F!
- **Grievances** pertaining to a professional holding BCS-F certification should be filed directly through ASHA at ethics@ASHA.org.

INTERESTED IN SUMMER CAMPS & CLINICS this summer?

The Speech Foundation of America has put together a fabulous list of Summer Camps and clinics for this summer. Please visit: [Summer Camps and Clinics | Stuttering Foundation: A ...www.stutteringhelp.org/clinics-summer](#) for more information.
https://search.aol.com/aol/search?s_chn=prt_wlcme&q=SFA+list+of+camps+for+kids+who+stutter&s_it=wscreen50-bb

Facebook Page

Please visit the ABFFD on Facebook Page. Please send Brooke Leiman, M.A., CCC-SLP, BCS-F, Social Media Director (brooke.leiman@nationaltherapycenter.com) information regarding upcoming presentations, publications, or other events or accomplishments so we can keep our members informed!