



THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION

A Nonprofit Organization

SPRING 2024

Since 1947... Helping Those Who Stutter



ONE

SIZE

DOES NOT

FIT ALL

JOHN STOSSEL AND EMILY BLUNT DISCUSS THEIR
STUTTERING STRUGGLES AND STRATEGIES

John Stossel, a longtime friend of the Stuttering Foundation, interviews Emily Blunt, with both acknowledging that when it comes to stuttering treatment,

ONE

SIZE

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Before anyone was "canceled" for saying a "wrong" thing, actress Emily Blunt and I feared speaking.

"It was terrifying.... You're just gripped with terror," says Blunt in my new video.

I also used to wake up scared, fearing I might have to do a few seconds of live TV. Emily and I feared speaking because we are both stutterers.

"Are you cured?" I ask Blunt.

"Are you?" she shoots back.

No, is the answer. Neither of us is cured. Stutterers rarely lose our fear of some words. But we've found ways to cope.

Blunt avoids situations that trigger her stutter. "I want to pitch a scene," she says, "I can't do it.... I would rather say, 'Give me the scene and I'll write it and then I'll send it to you.'"

On the phone, she fears trying to say her name. "If I'm calling someone and they go, 'What's your name?' It's tough."

Our stuttering was worse when we were kids. Blunt tried not to speak. She just shut up. "I didn't want to be in any of the school plays. I did not want to read out my poem in class." She wanted to keep her problem secret. "You did not talk about it at all."

Her family rarely talked about it even though her grandfather, uncle, and cousin stuttered too. "We have to destigmatize this thing," she tells me. "Nobody talks about it."

That's why she was talking to me.

Both Blunt and I work with a charity called the American Institute for Stuttering (AIS). AIS tells stutterers: Go ahead and speak, even if that means stuttering in front of people. This "go ahead and stutter" treatment is probably one of the better options. The happiest stutterers are those who speak freely, even if they stutter. But Neither Blunt nor I want to stutter in front of people.

It really misrepresents you," says Blunt. "You know what you want to say...but you can't convey it. It's just imprisoning."

And embarrassing. "The shame, that's the hardest thing," says Blunt. And yet she's a hugely successful actress.

Blunt doesn't stutter when she acts. That's not unusual. Playing another character allows many stutters to be fluent. It's why you probably don't know that Samuel L. Jackson, Bruce Willis, and James Earl Jones stutter, too. They just don't stutter on stage.

Blunt discovered the benefit of "acting another part" when she was 12. Doing impressions, she became fluent. "I could mess around in the playground and do silly voices," she says. A teacher noticed that. He encouraged her to act in a class play. "I did a really stupid Northern English accent. It did allow for great fluency!"

Did that start her movie career?

"It would make a great sound bite, but I wouldn't say it became the moment where I decided to be an actress. But it did free up my speech in a huge way."

While actors can do other voices, I couldn't do that when I got a job as a TV reporter. I didn't choose that job. I fell into it, never imagining that I'd go on the air. Seattle magazine had offered me work in their circulation department, but the magazine closed before I got there.

"Want to work in our TV station?" a manager asked. "OK," said young me. I did research for anchors and avoided speaking myself. Then they forced me to cover a story. I'd get a film editor to cut out my blocks. I dreaded speaking.

What finally helped me was intensive therapy at a clinic in Virginia. They used computers to reward us stutters if we initiated sounds gently. They also slowed our speech to two seconds per syllable.



That was really tedious. We sounded like cows mooing. But it helped me. Soon I learned to speak without blocking. It was as if a cork had been removed from my throat. You couldn't shut me up. That treatment allowed me to have a TV career.

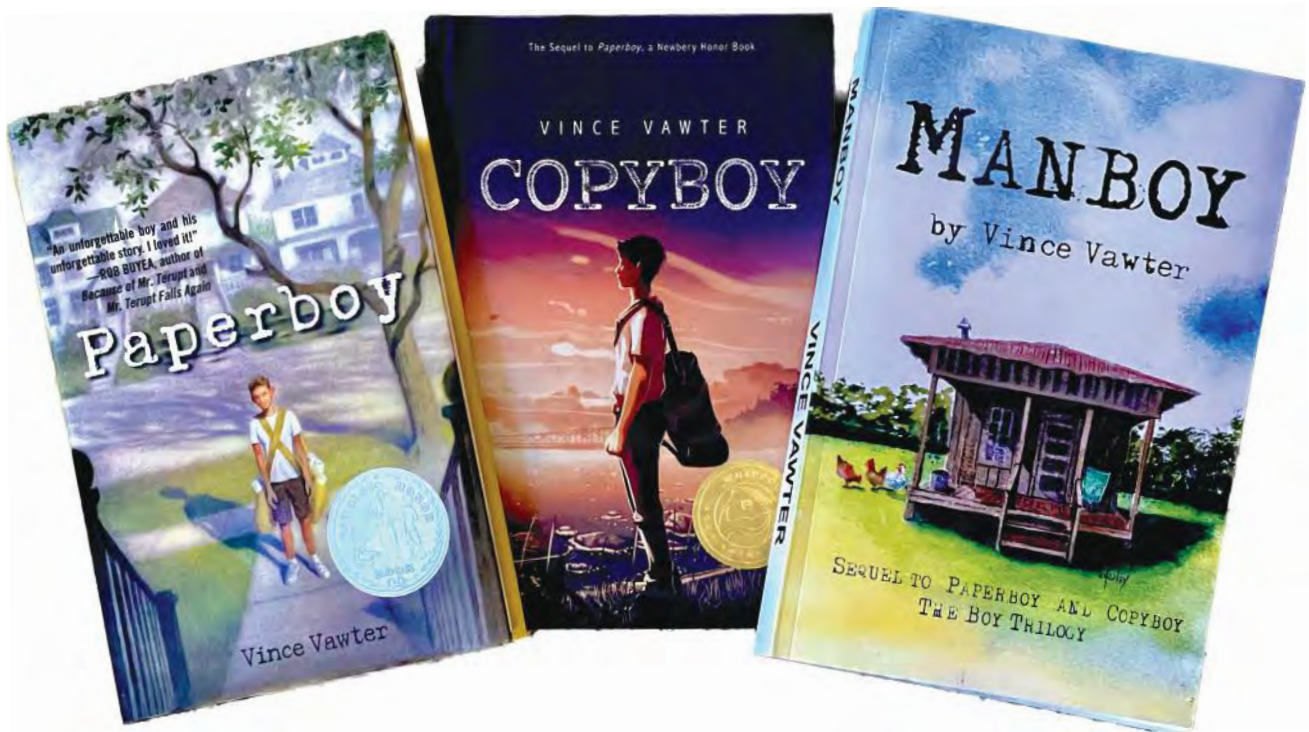
**"IT REALLY MISREPRESENTS YOU.
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO
SAY...BUT YOU CAN'T CONVEY IT.
IT'S JUST IMPRISONING."**

I assumed that treatment would work for everyone, but it didn't. Maybe other stutters, less motivated than I, didn't spend as much time practicing. In any case, that company is now out of business.

"I don't think one method will work for everyone," says Blunt.

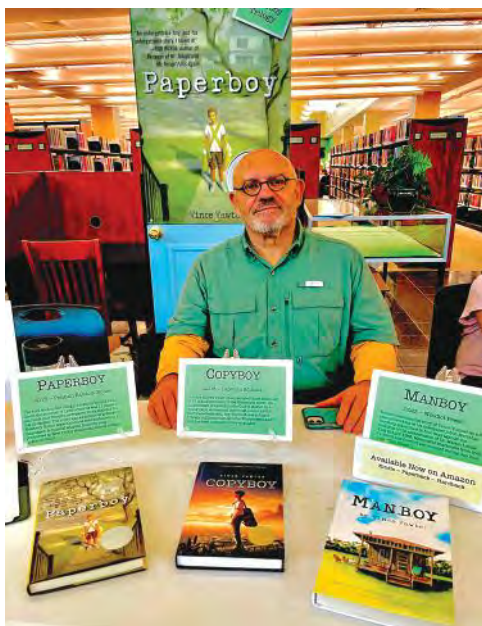
It won't.

It's good that we have choices.



Manboy Completes Vawter’s Trilogy

with Stuttering as a Major Thematic Element



Newbery Award-winning author, and friend of the Stuttering Foundation, Vince Vawter, completed his newspaper-themed trilogy with the publishing of *Manboy*, published in September 2023. Vawter, who stutters, grew up in the newspaper business, and spent more than four decades pursuing his craft. In retirement, his autobiographical trilogy, which includes *Paperboy*, *Copyboy* and *Manboy*, kept him busy writing each morning from 4:00am-6:30am—before his first cup of coffee.

The publishing of *Manboy* represent the end of a story arc first developed in *Paperboy* which follows the role of stuttering for the main character at different ages and phases of life.

“In *Paperboy*, the novel focuses on ‘Little Man’ Victor Vollmer and his stuttering at age 11, where we feel his confusion with the mysteries of stuttering. In *Copyboy*, Victor is 17, and we begin to see him as a more complete person, with his stuttering beginning to recede as he steps out on his own,” said Vawter.

"The stuttering in my books is certainly not fiction. I am still on that journey."

- Vince Vawter

"Now, in *Manboy*, Victor is 21 and takes on the larger task of acceptance of his stutter and learning to find his voice."

Through his works, Vawter has, at times, reflected on his own journey with stuttering and what led to incorporating it as a major thematic element in his writing:

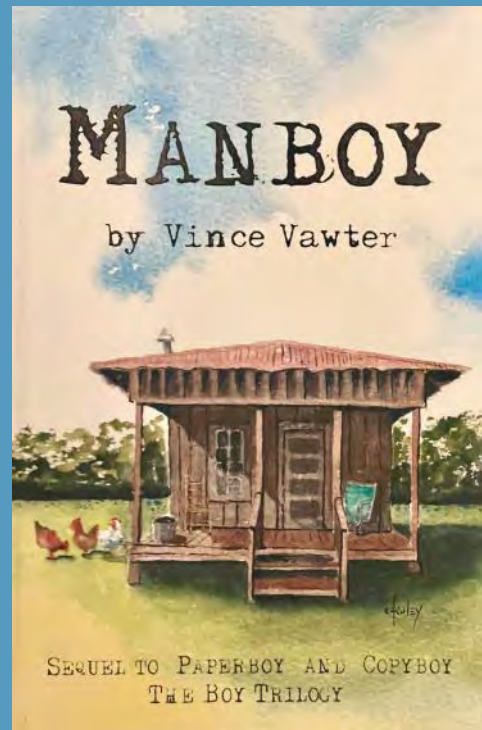
"It has been a central theme in my life. I did pass out on one occasion while trying to say my name. I did get embarrassed at a fancy restaurant and lose my spaghetti dinner in front of everybody. I did keep a thumbtack in my pocket and would jam it into my palm anytime I had to recite or read aloud in class. The stuttering in my books is certainly not fiction. I am still on that journey."

Vawter is thankful much has changed since he began speech therapy in 1951. "SLPs now treat the whole person, and emphasize the importance of overall health," he added. "I'm glad it's no longer the 'one size fits all' approach of my day."

In addition to writing, Vince spends his retirement traveling the country — physically and virtually — discussing his books with schools, reading and education groups, as well as stuttering advocacy organizations.



Vince Vawter, a native of Memphis and a person who stutters, retired after a 40-year career in newspapers. He and his wife, Betty, live in Tennessee on a small farm in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains. For more information, visit VinceVawter.com.

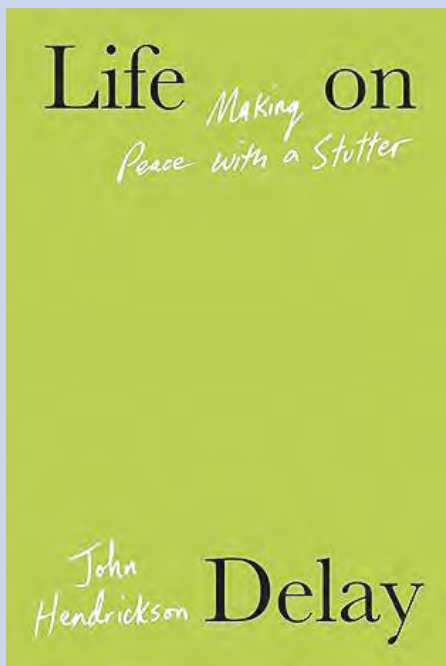


In Vawter's Manboy, Victor Vollmer is 21 years old now and has been waiting for three years to reunite with Philomene Moreau, the South Louisiana free spirit who saved his life in the Mississippi River. Soon after "Phil" arrives in Memphis, Vic's meticulously planned weekend comes crashing down as a world event suddenly unfolds.

Vic, still dealing with his worrisome stutter, and, Phil, needing badly to share her secret, grapple with the tumult paralyzing the city. Aiding in their desperate search to find solace is a wise and steadying soul from Vic's past.

Manboy is a work of historical fiction set against the actual newspaper headlines of five days in April 1968 that changed the world.

LIFE ON DELAY: A MUST READ



In the fall of 2019, John Hendrickson wrote a groundbreaking story for *The Atlantic* about Joe Biden’s decades-long journey with stuttering, as well as his own. The article went viral, reaching readers around the world and altering the course of Hendrickson’s life. Overnight, he was forced to publicly confront an element of himself that still caused him great pain.

He soon learned he wasn’t alone with his feelings: strangers who stutter began sending him their own personal stories, something that continues to this day. Now, in this reported memoir, Hendrickson takes us deep inside the mind and heart of a stutterer as he sets out to answer lingering questions about himself and his condition that he was often too afraid to ask.

In *Life on Delay*, Hendrickson writes candidly about bullying, substance abuse, depression, isolation, and other issues stutterers like him face daily. He explores the intricate family dynamics surrounding his own stutter and revisits key people from his past in unguarded interviews. Readers get an over-the-shoulder view of his childhood; his career as a journalist, which once seemed impossible; and his search for a romantic partner. Along the way, Hendrickson guides us through the evolution of speech therapy, the controversial quest for a “magic pill” to end stuttering, and the burgeoning self-help movement within the stuttering community. Beyond his own experiences, he shares portraits of fellow stutterers who have changed his life, and he writes about a pioneering doctor who is upending the field of speech therapy.

Life on Delay is an indelible account of perseverance, a soulful narrative about not giving up, and a glimpse into the process of making peace with our past and present selves.

A NEW YORKER BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR • USA TODAY BOOK CLUB PICK • ONE OF AUDIBLE'S BEST BIOS AND MEMOIRS OF 2023 • “A raw, intimate look at [Hendrickson's] life with a stutter. It’s a profoundly moving book that will reshape the way you think about people living with this condition.”—Esquire

“Life On Delay brims with empathy and honesty . . . It moved me in ways that I haven’t experienced before. It’s fantastic.”—Clint Smith, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller How the Word Is Passed

“I can’t remember the last time I read a book that made me want to both cry and cheer so much, often at the same time.”—Robert Kolker, best-selling author of Hidden Valley Road




New Continuing Education Courses

These courses are available online at www.StutteringCEUs.org

From Our Virtual Learning Series:

Assessing Preschoolers for Stuttering

Presented by:
Ellen M. Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F
 The Stuttering Foundation



In this hour and forty-minute presentation, Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F, discusses how the complexity of stuttering development necessitates a multi-faceted approach to assessment of preschoolers. She provides the rationale for and specific elements of screening and discusses comprehensive assessment protocols for use with preschoolers suspected of stuttering, and their caregivers. Case examples illustrate prioritization of assessment measures and formulation of recommendations to caregivers.

From Our Virtual Learning Series:

Speech Disfluencies in Bilingual Speakers

Presented by:
Selma Saad Merouwe
 SLP, ECSF graduate, PhD candidate
 Lecturer and Researcher, Saint-Joseph University of Beirut




In this seventy-five minute presentation, Selma Saad Merouwe, SLP, ECSF, of Saint Joseph University, Beirut, discusses new research in bilingual people who stutter. Our insight into the frequency and types of the disfluencies of bilingual children who do, and do not stutter, is limited because research has primarily focused on monolinguals. Recently, many studies have been conducted that include children with different language profiles to better understand the interlinguistic characteristics that can distinguish bilingual children who do and do not stutter from their monolingual peers. Results inform the accurate clinical identification of stuttering in bilinguals. This presentation includes the theoretical background related to this specific topic, and some preliminary findings of a research project carried out in Lebanon.

From Our Virtual Learning Series:

Culturally-Responsive Guidelines for Serving Families of Bilingual Children Who Stutter

Presented by:
Ana Paula G. Souza Mummy, SLPD, CCC-SLP



In this seventy-five minute presentation, Ana Paula G. Souza Mummy, SLPD, CCC-SLP discusses cultural responsiveness as it pertains to working with bilingual families, with a special focus on bilingual children who stutter. She talks about the vital role of the home language as well as the far-reaching detrimental effects of removing or reducing use of the home language within the family. She also challenges the notion of treating bilingualism as a "demand" or "burden" on a child's linguistic system. She examines how language and culture tie to the importance of clinical and patient evidence when making treatment decisions, particularly when research evidence is lacking. Finally, she explores guiding principles for family-centered treatment, viable solutions, and practical recommendations for working with bilingual children who stutter and their families.

SECOND EDITION

advice to those who stutter

Expert help from 28 therapists who stutter themselves



Through this new audio version of the Stuttering Foundation Book, *Advice to Those Who Stutter*, SLPs will gain an understanding of stuttering by listening to the unique journeys of 28 well known speech-language pathologists. Course takers will learn about the behavioral, emotional, and attitudinal elements of each author's journey toward communicating successfully.





UNLOCKING THE GENETICS OF STUTTERING

Stuttering is a common speech disorder that interrupts speech fluency and tends to cluster in families.

Researchers have identified many genes that influence other severe speech disorders, like apraxia of speech and dysarthria, including through our programs at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute's Speech & Language Research Program and the NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence Translational Centre for Speech Disorders.

But despite over 20 years of research, the genetic architecture of stuttering remains poorly understood. Only four genes that cause stuttering have been identified to date. This is very different to other neurodevelopmental conditions where tens to hundreds of genes have been identified.

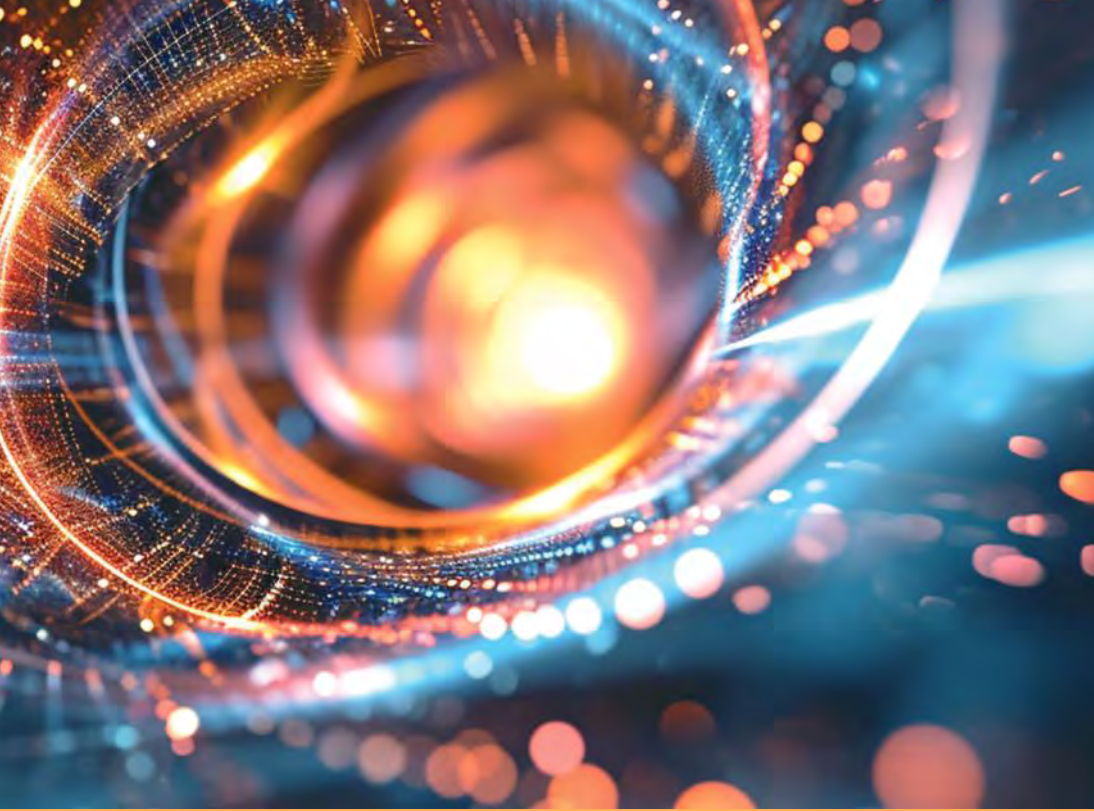
Our large team of researchers, led by the University of Melbourne in collaboration with 17 international institutions, has discovered a link between a newly discovered gene pathway and structural brain anomalies in some people who stutter into adulthood, opening up promising research avenues to enhance the understanding of persistent developmental stuttering.

In research published in the journal *Brain*, we studied 27 members of a four-generation Australian family; ten members of this family have stuttering and three used to have stuttering but this was resolved in adulthood after therapy.

Using brain imaging we found remarkable structural changes in the brains of those that stutter, that impact their speech and language development.

We also found a variant of a newly discovered gene called PPID in the family members with severe developmental stuttering. PPID codes for a chaperone protein, and so for the first time we have a link between stuttering and a 'chaperone pathway.'

Chaperones are proteins that shuttle other proteins to the correct part of a cell so they can complete their function. We suspect the damaged PPID gene changes the movement and function of various proteins during brain development, triggering neural changes that cause persistent stuttering.



By Professor Michael Hildebrand,
Austin Health and University of
Melbourne
and
Professor Angela Morgan,
Murdoch Children's Research
Institute and University of
Melbourne

RESEARCHERS HAVE LINKED A NEWLY DISCOVERED GENE TO PERSISTENT STUTTERING INTO ADULTHOOD, GIVING HOPE TO THOSE WITH SEVERE SPEECH DISORDERS

To test this, we generated a mouse model with the same gene defect, and the mice developed structural changes in similar brain regions to those of the family members with stuttering. This includes abnormalities of the corticospinal tracts which support speech and language development.

We have known for some time that there is a genetic link to stuttering, but this study is the first to show that genetic changes passed on in families can alter brain development leading to structural anomalies that underly stuttering.

This suggests we should change the genetic diagnostic protocol for some people who stutter to include brain imaging studies.

The study also opens up further research into this new chaperone pathway, and related pathways, which will continue to improve our understanding of the genetic architecture of persistent developmental stuttering.

FIGURE 1

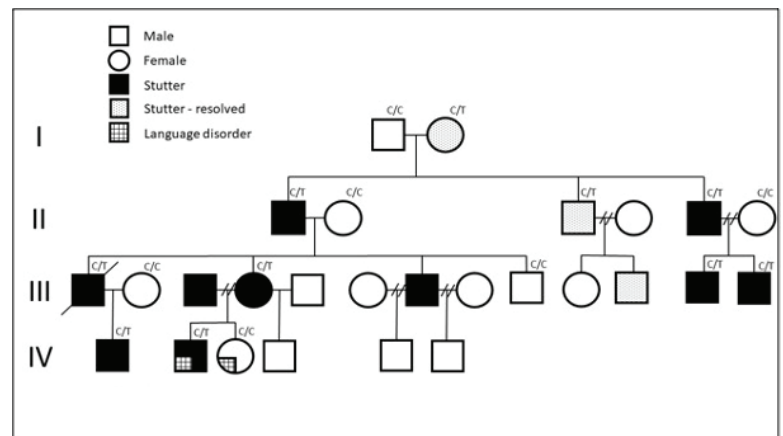


FIGURE 2

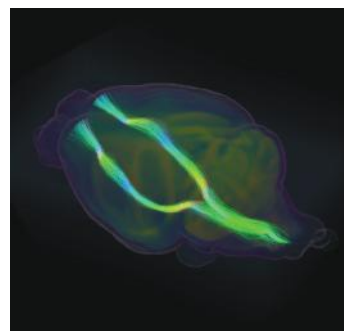


Figure 1. Family with Persistent Developmental stuttering and PPID Gene Variant. A Pedigree showing segregation of c.808C>T (p.Pro270Ser) missense variant in PPID.

Figure 2. Brain Imaging of Mouse Model with the Same PPID Gene Variant as the Family. Bird's eye view of a mouse brain with the corticospinal tracts highlighted. The tracts are white matter bundles that connect the spinal cord (not shown) to the motor cortex and have developed abnormally due to the PPID variant.



STUTTERING FOUNDATION[®]

PODCAST

2023 Season Five Podcast Episodes

New Year, but let's not forget the old!

Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | Stuttering Foundation

The Power of Group Therapy for Stuttering

Daniel Shaw, M.S., CCC-SLP & Jack Henderson, M.S., CCC-SLP | Vanderbilt University

What would stuttering be like if we wanted to stutter?

Christopher Constantino, Ph.D., CCC-SLP | Florida State University

Using the VRYCS To Learn how Parents of CWS View Thier Interactions

Cara Singer, Ph.D., CCC-SLP | Grand Valley State University

Covert Stuttering and Healing from Self-Stigma

Geneviève Lamoureux | Université de Montréal

The Meaning of Fluency

Evan Usler, Ph.D. | University of Delaware

Counseling Skills: It's all about the Listening!

Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | Stuttering Foundation

Research Update: Brain developmental trajectories associated with childhood stuttering persistence and recovery with Dr. Ho Ming Chow

Ho Ming Chow, Ph.D. | University of Delaware

Research Update: Strategies for Teachers to Support Children Who Stutter, Perspectives of Speech-Language Pathologists

Laura Wilson, Ph.D., CCC-SLP & Gabby Cozart, M.S., CCC-SLP | University of Tulsa

Autism and Stuttering

Marie Halpin, BSc (Hons), CertMRCSLT, HCPC | Ireland Public School System

How to Talk with Parents of Young Children Who are Stuttering

Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | Stuttering Foundation

Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT) and Stuttering

Heather Grossman, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | American Institute for Stuttering

The World's First Female Speech Therapist



Dr. Charles Van Riper, the renowned speech therapist, and person who stutters, became internationally known as a pioneer in the development of speech pathology, and is widely known to most SLPs through their academic work at University. Lesser known is his wife, Catherine Jane “Katy” “C.J.” Hull Van Riper, a pioneer in her own right.

The World's First Female Speech Therapist

Katy "C.J." Van Riper

THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION REMEMBERS



Catherine Jane "Katy" "C.J." Hull Van Riper was born in December 1909 in Washington, Iowa, to Dr. Henry Clay Hull and Hallie Berdo Hull. According to her husband's biography of her, C.J., also known as Katy, "was precocious intellectually, or at least verbally," leading to her graduation with honors from Washington High School as valedictorian.

After carefully considering where to attend college, she chose the familiar campus of the University of Iowa, where she had participated in contests and attended football games when younger—a decision that was "foreordained" according to her biography, "she was an Iowan with a capital I," it reads.

During her junior year, she enrolled in a speech pathology class, a new field of study at the university and one which seemed to fulfill her burgeoning interest in psychiatry and speech. "She did very well in it," reads her biography, "and found it utterly fascinating."

In her senior year, C.J. concentrated her studies in speech pathology. She observed others doing therapy in East Hall, and worked intensively with a few organic cases, several clients with articulation problems, and some foreign accent cases. She did not do any therapy with stutterers [sic] but observed in the stuttering clinic where she was enrolled.

She was the first woman to graduate in the new field of speech pathology.

Following advice from the head of the Speech Pathology department to "get away and meet new challenges," she was turned down for the first job to which she applied.



She then applied for a job at the University of Minnesota where a new speech clinic had recently been started. “To be on the faculty of a major university (and with only a B.A. degree), especially for a woman,” wrote Dr. Van Riper several decades ago, “was almost unheard of.”

He recalls Katy’s deliberations about the position:

...she had some ambivalence once the position was hers. She would have to leave her beloved Iowa. On the other hand it was good to have a chance to be a pioneer in speech therapy and she most certainly was that. Many years later when I asked her to speak at the University of Iowa, the master of ceremonies introduced me by saying, ‘Our speaker this morning is the husband of Catherine Hull, the first undergraduate major in speech correction—Dr. Van Riper.’

During her time at the University of Minnesota, she taught many of Dr. Bryngelson’s classes -- also a pioneer in speech therapy – and helped him with his research and edited his professional articles. Her salary for these many duties was \$1,200 per year. “It was the perfect job for me,” she wrote, “with new challenges every day.”

For five years, Katy taught and was in charge of the speech clinic at the University of Minnesota, one of the first such clinics in the country. After her marriage to Charles in 1936, she played a large part in organizing and the administering of the clinic at Western State Normal School in Kalamazoo, Michigan, alongside her husband, taking over his classes when he could not attend.

“I could not have pioneered the field of speech pathology without her,” wrote Dr. Van Riper at the time of her death in 1984. “My students and stutters [sic] called her the Earth Mother because they felt the impact of her caring. ‘Unto their needs, not mine,’ was the principle that governed her days... Some of my own impact has come through the many books I have written trying to provide tools for our profession. Without her aid, I couldn’t have written a one of them.”

When Dr. Van Riper no longer needed help at the clinic, and her own children were grown, Katy volunteered her services at the Kalamazoo Child Guidance Clinic and worked there part-time for many years. “She just had to serve others,” said Dr. Van Riper.

“I’d like to be remembered at the moment you see a beautiful sunset, a perfect flower, a starry night, a sad-eyed Springer, a child, or someone who needs a loving touch or an encouraging word,” she said late in her life.

***We remember her as a pioneer in speech therapy.
Thank you, Katy***



Stuttering Foundation President Jane Fraser had the honor of meeting Katy several decades ago.

STUTTERING FOUNDATION Q & A: ZACKARY BROWN



Originally from Wichita Falls, Texas, Zackary Brown is currently a second year Pediatric Physician Resident at Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital in New York City.

Family:

I grew up as the oldest of three boys with our mother. I went to 5 middle schools and 4 high schools, and each move presented its own unique challenge because of my stutter. We are a close-knit family and that connection has carried me through each trial.

Hobbies, Interests, Passions:

I have an exploratory spirit that gets excited seeing the world through the lens of different languages, cultures and foods. As a first-generation high school graduate, I realize that I am blessed with the unique purpose to uplift, encourage and support a generation of youth, while also fighting to ensure that each child has a fair and equitable state of living. From founding a scholarship at my high school to starting a free health screening organization to serve underprivileged communities, I live my passion daily both inside and outside of the hospital.

Successes:

I equate much of my success to the love and support of my family and village. I have spoken on national platforms in regards to mentorship, health disparities and advocacy practices in medicine. I have broken barriers and uplifted many young leaders and doctors who look like me.

Do you remember when you first began to stutter?

The better question is, “do I remember a time that I did NOT stutter?” For as long as I can remember, I have always had a stutter and it was not a subtle stutter that could be overlooked and/or ignored. With my family moving around a lot, my stutter often times made for awkward introductions as I would stutter with my name and where I was originally from.

Does it run in your family? Who else stutters?

Pronunciation concerns run in my family, but fluency concerns do not run in my family. I often times hear a family member say, “I used to stutter as a kid” but no one that I know still has a persistent stutter to this day.

Did you seek treatment? Did it help?

I was in speech therapy from the earliest age through my freshmen year of high school. I noticed that speech therapy, in my early years, was surrounded around the concept of “speak slower” as a “fix” to my stutter. It caused a lot of frustration for me throughout my middle school years, because it felt like a simplification to a complex issue that I was experiencing. I often times would say “if my stutter could be fixed by just speaking slower, I wouldn’t be stuttering right now.” Because of this frustration, I opted out of speech therapy in high school. I decided to own my stutter and become confident with my speech through my own ways. In a sense, speech therapy did help me with my pronunciation, but in terms of fluency I had to learn how to navigate the nuances of my stutter on my own.

Tell us about your experience with stuttering as a child.

As a child, it always felt as though my stutter was a lingering chip on my shoulder. Moments that felt simple for others, would be the spark to a panic attack for me. I would learn to find maneuvers to avoid group introductions, reading aloud or public speaking. The words “so introduce yourself,” as I stood in front of a new classroom would trigger intense anxiety, because I knew that my stutter would now become the center of attention. Hearing people say “you don’t know your name?” when you begin to stutter on your name, was a commonplace experience for me as a child. Luckily, I had an amazing support system at home that instilled a sense of confidence, self-worth and perseverance into me that allowed me to see myself as a child with a stutter and not as a stuttering child.

Has your stuttering gotten worse or better since you were younger? How?

That’s a tough question. I would say that my stutter has relatively been the same over the years. What I think has improved is my confidence when dealing with my stutter. I have learned that my stutter does not define my abilities, success and personality; rather my stutter is another aspect of my life. With this growth in confidence and introspection, I have learned how to embrace and take control of my stutter in a way that allowed me to lead with my personality rather than with the fear of my stutter.

How does stuttering affect you in your career?

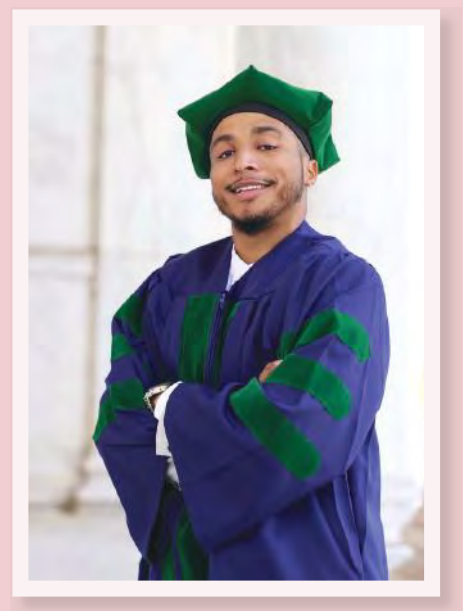
Being a pediatrician, you realize the role that communication has in every aspect of your career; whether that is garnering the trust of your family, vocalizing your thoughts, explaining diagnoses and/or just building rapport with your colleagues and families. In many ways, my stutter has a role in every aspect of my career. My biggest fear, entering into medicine, was the impact that my stutter would have on my patient encounters. In fact, the impact of my stutter was the premise of my personal statement when applying to residency. I made it the subject of my personal statement, because the thing that I feared most would turn out to be the very thing that allowed me to break down communication barriers and made me more relatable to my patients and families.

How is your stuttering today? What do you do to control or manage it, if anything?

My stuttering today is still very present and varies with my emotions, stressors and situations. I have grown to have confidence in my voice, but I would be disingenuous if I said that I still do not have many moments of self-doubt, insecurities and fear surrounding my stutter. I think what I learned most when managing my stutter is to give myself grace and patience. My stutter does not define or dictate the validity and impact of my voice. When I give myself grace to stutter, I realize that my confidence carries my voice through any room, even if it may take a little longer than the next person.

What are the biggest challenges stuttering has presented to you?

The biggest challenge about stuttering is that it is an insecurity that you cannot hide from the world. While some people can wear make-up to cover a blemish or wear a hat to hide their hair, our voice cannot be hidden unless you choose to be silent. Until your speech is your biggest insecurity, you don’t truly realize how much language is intertwined in the innerworkings of our everyday life. From the minute that you open up your mouth to speak, you hope that the words roll out smoothly but also bracing yourself for the chance that it might not. I’ve overcome many challenges as the first high school graduate in my family, but the biggest challenge to date is the fact that with my stutter I wear my biggest insecurity on my sleeve everyday for the world to see, critic and judge; all while expected to continue socializing and advancing myself and career. To have a stutter, is to be in a constant intrinsic battle with your fear and insecurities, while also battling the external stigma and judgment of the world.



What is your greatest accomplishment with regard to stuttering?

My greatest accomplishment with regard to stuttering is my ability to not let it define or limit my dreams. As a child, I distinctly remember having an internal battle of “how can you be a doctor if you have a stutter?” That was the toughest battle I had to face as a child, because the world around me would validate those fears with the jokes and bullying. At the same time, I was shrouded by affirmations, encouragement and love by my family and friends who believed in me, even in moments I doubted myself. I remember the day that I declined speech therapy at school and I told my mom that I did not want to “fix” my stutter, but I wanted to learn how to embrace it and be confident in it. From that moment on, I poured confidence into myself to not allow my stutter to ever limit my thoughts, and that was the greatest accomplishment in regards to my stutter.



Based upon your experiences, what would you like to tell children who stutter?

To all the children who stutter, I have 3 major things that I have learned and still practice to this day.

1) Your voice matters just as much as the next child. Whether it takes you 5 seconds or 5 minutes to say it, your voice and your story deserve to be told from your voice. Your most powerful tool will be your voice, so embrace it, love it and share it with the world

2) Give yourself grace and be patient with yourself. You will have days that your stutter may be worse than other days, but allow yourself that space to know that it is okay and you deserve to be heard on your worst days, just as much as your best days.

3) Be kind to yourself. Stuttering can give us many self-disparaging thoughts, but during those moments is when we must lean more into our kind thoughts.

Based upon your experiences, what would you tell parents of children who stutter?

To the parents of children who stutter, there are 3 things that you can do to best support your child who stutters:

1) Practice active listening. It can sometimes feel that the world is impatient and does not have the attention span to listen to your child when they are having a hard time with their speech. So when your child is speaking, actively engage them. Put your phone down, give them eye contact and directly address their concerns.

2) Provide a safe space. It is exhausting for a child to maneuver through a world where they feel judged from the moment that they open their mouth to speak. From the time your child walks out of your door until they return home, they are in a constant intrinsic battle with themselves and/or extrinsic battle with society. So when they get home, provide them with a space to know that their stutter is heard and it is not what defines them. Be a space of grace, nurturing and support.

3) Be supportive. Your support will give your child the confidence that they need to tackle any hurdle that arises on their journey. On the days that they feel most exhausted because of their speech, show them what grace, love and patience look like so that they can carry that with them through life.



DEAR SFA:

KIDS' LETTERS TO THE STUTTERING FOUNDATION

We'd love to hear about your dreams, your victories, the fears you have faced, the ways you've been challenged, or anything you wish people knew about stuttering! If you would like to send us a picture, letter, or poem, please e-mail us at info@stutteringhelp.org. We'll make sure you get a permission slip to fill out the needed information. We attempt to answer every child's letter personally, so be sure to include a contact name and postal addresses for either a parent or the SLP of the child along with your submission.*

**Please mail original artwork submissions on plain, unlined paper. Photocopies, scans and faxes of artwork cannot be accepted. Colorful markers and crayons are encouraged as pencil drawings can be difficult to reprint. If you'd rather submit a photo, it can be mailed directly along with your permission slip and letter; digital photos can be sent via email.*

For more information and/or to receive a permission form via email, please contact us at info@stutteringhelp.org.

Mail your letter, permission form, original color artwork and/or photographs to:

The Stuttering Foundation
P.O. Box 11749
Memphis, TN 38111-0749



My name is Sailor. I am eight years old. My birthday is September 27th. Fun fact about me: my Mimi, that means grandma, has the same birthday as me. My favorite strategy is chunking because it is easy to say what I want to say with that strategy. My favorite game is Mario's Wonder. I love to read, and I love science. When I grow up, I'm going to be a scientist. When I'm a scientist, I am going to make special collars that will make anything talk. My favorite books are *Dog Man*, *Wonder*, and stories on my Kindle. -Sailor, 8, Silverlake, WA



Sergio, 8, Phoenix, AZ

Hi, my name is Sergio, and I am 8 years old, and I have a stuttering problem and I don't really like it. So here is 1 strategy I use and its slow rate because it reminds me of my favorite sea animal. A turtle because babies are so cute. Especially the turtles. I try not to stutter. And the chance of me writing a letter, just like right now, is 100%. I would write another letter because it's easier to not stutter when I write. And it's ok to stutter because if you stutter you are actually special. If you do stutter, just to make sure that you are safe with it, if someone is bullying you you can tell them, "don't bully me because if you had the stuttering problem and you got bullied you would feel just how I feel right now. And that feeling is very embarrassing because you're making me feel like I am unlucky even though you are unlucky because you don't have the stuttering problem and if you do stutter you are actually very, very, very lucky." And I also like Roblox and Minecraft.

Sergio, 8, Phoenix, AZ



My name is Josiah, and I am 12 years old. Some of the things I like to do are playing video games and playing soccer. I also like to watch anime. The type of anime I like to watch is One Punch Man (OPM). Garou in OPM is kinda like my stuttering because he is fast and sneaky and strong. I mostly have blocks and repetitions. The biggest thing for me is I speak fast which causes me to stutter. I worked on some strategies that will help me get out of stuttering moments. I get nervous about stuttering when I talk to people I don't know. I feel most comfortable when I talk to people I know, and also my pets, because they don't judge me.

Stuttering has shaped me as a person by giving me determination and for me to never give up even though there are obstacles ahead of you. The advice I would give to kids that stutter is to never give up on their dreams and hope.

Josiah, 12, Fuquay Varina, NC

Hi! My name is Sam. I am 9 years old. My favorite things are YouTube, PS-5, PS-4, Switch, Xbox 1, Switch Lite, and my second PS-4, and Chef's Palette. They make yummy food. My favorite strategy is slow speech.

Sam, 10, Apex, NC



Hi, my name is Jackson, and I am 10 years old. I live on Lopez Island in Washington state. I am in 4th grade. I like to go herping; herping is searching for reptiles and amphibians. When I grow up, I want to be a herpetologist, that's somebody who studies reptiles and amphibians. I also just learned how to solve a Rubik's cube. I average around 1:25 seconds. I started to stutter when I was eight or nine years old. I also like to play chess and sometimes I go to chess tournaments. I don't stutter that much but when I do, I don't normally



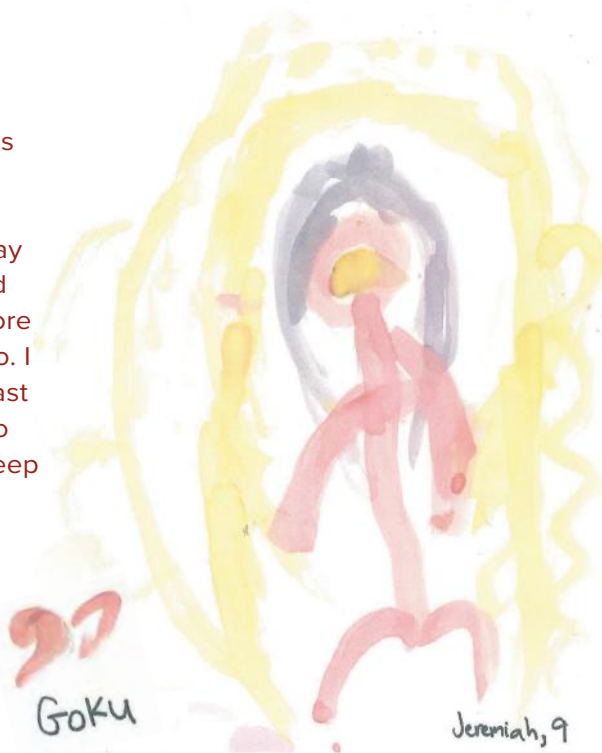
get bullied but here's my advice to make your stuttering less out of control. I normally do light touch. It helps me a lot. I also have a pet leopard gecko and I named it Noodle and I recently got it a bigger terrarium. I feed it almost every night. I like to ride my bike and sometimes I like to go to the skatepark and practice riding my bike. I hope if you stutter this helps you a lot and stuttering is not all that bad because it makes you unique.

Jackson, 10, Lopez Island, WA

Hi, I am Jeremiah, and I am 9 years old. I have stuttered since I was 4. When I stutter, I feel mad and embarrassed. I use easy onset to make my speech more clear. I've learned a lot in speech therapy, such as strategies and ways to make my speech better. I like to play video games and play outside. For the past 5 years, I have learned that it is very okay to stutter. People make fun of me, but I just ignore them. Nobody is perfect, so I just forgive them and let my anger go. I continue to say what I want to say even though I stutter. For the past 5 years, my speech progress has been getting better. My advice to you is to never give up on your dream, try your best, and take a deep breath when speaking. When you fall down on your dream, get up and keep going.

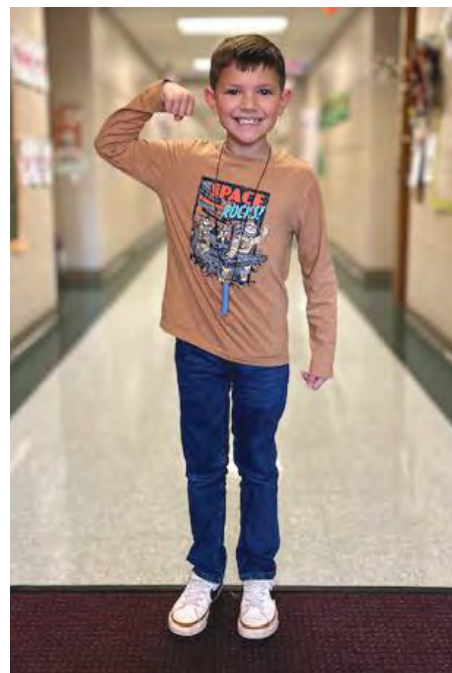
P.S. Rise up from the ashes. Keep moving forward. My secret is to keep on praying and believe your speech will get better. Do not give up.

Jeremiah, 9, Purvis, MS



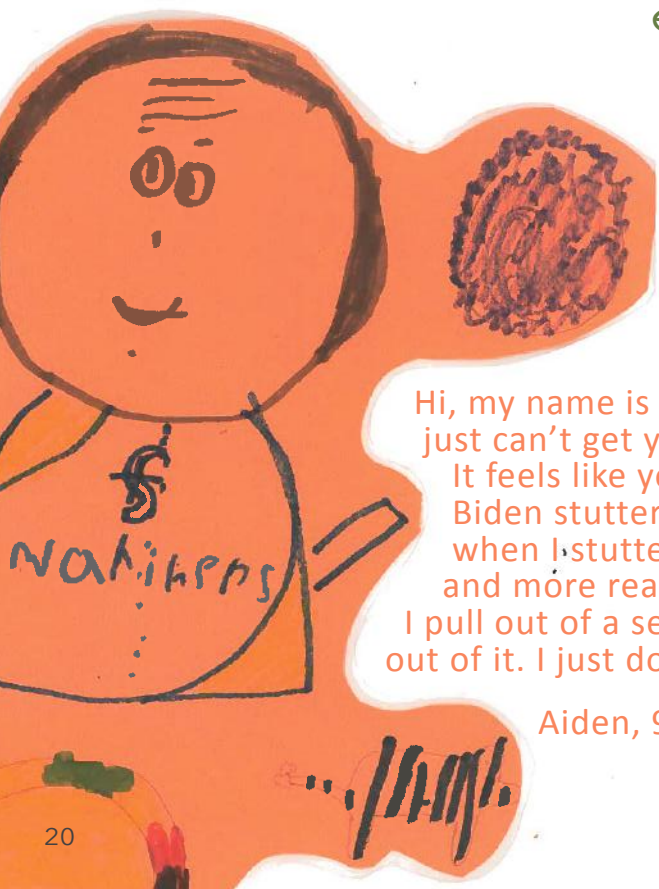
Hi, my name is Jacob. I am seven years old. I live in Ohio with my family. I like to play Roblox and play with my dinosaurs. I get stuck on my words and sounds sometimes. When I get stuck on my words, I use stretchy speech and easy onsets to speak clearer. Don't get discouraged because everyone gets stuck on their words sometimes.

Jacob, 7,
Dayton, OH



Hi, my name is Aiden. I like sports and I stutter. It feels like you just can't get your words out. You keep trying but it gets worse. It feels like you don't get anything done. And, you know Joe Biden stutters. I also feel ashamed when I make a mistake like when I stutter. It helps when I calm down because I get steady and more ready. The strategy I mostly use is pull out because I pull out of a sentence. It's easy because I say a word and I pull out of it. I just do it again and again until I don't stutter.

Aiden, 9, Seattle, WA



Hola me llamo Alan y tengo 7 años. A mi me gusta ir al zoológico con mi familia. Mis animales favoritos son la serpiente, el cocodrilo y las jirafas. También me gusta ir al trabajo con mi papá y jugar fútbol con él también. Con mi mamá, me gusta ir de vacaciones, cocinar huevos e ir al parque a jugar. Yo voy a una escuela bilingüe, donde aprendemos a leer, escribir y hablar en ambos español e inglés. Prefiero el español. En la escuela me gusta jugar con mis amigos, jugamos tag durante el recreo. Otra cosa, yo tartamudeo. Me cae bien con la tartamudez y no me molesta tartamudear.

Hello, my name is Alan, and I am 7 years old. I like to go to the zoo with my family. My favorite animals are snakes, crocodiles, and giraffes. I also like to go to work with my dad and play soccer with him too. With my mom, I like to go on vacation, cook eggs and go to the park to play. I go to a bilingual school, where we learn to read, write, and speak in both Spanish and English. I prefer Spanish. At school I like to play with my friends, we play tag during recess. Another thing is that I stutter. I don't mind stuttering; it does not bother me at all.

Alan, 7, Madison, WI



Hi, my name is Shaleia, and I am a 4th grader. I live in Madison, WI and go to a bilingual school where we learn how to read, write, and speak in both English and Spanish. I love to draw, and I just finished filling all the pages in my sketchbook. I really like to draw people. I also like to read Five Nights at Freddy's (FNAF) and my favorite character is Foxy. I want the game too. I love my family and especially playing an animal game with my baby sister. One of my favorite things to do with my family is go on our annual summer Jellystone camping trip. I love swimming at the pool there. I also love to dance and have taken dance classes for seven years! Oh, and sometimes I stutter. I stutter more at home than at school because I talk more at home. I get frustrated when I stutter, it usually happens when I'm talking to my parents about something, and I can't get the word out and forget what I want to say. Here is a picture of me by a rainbow volcano, hope you like it!

Shaleia, 9, Madison, WI



Hi, my name is Alyssa and I am 12 years old. My birthday is on Feb 14. And I stutter. I like to bake cookies and cakes. I have a hamster. His name is Buttercup. I stutter but not too bad. Sometimes it is hard. I used robot talking and my stop and pause. I love playing and animals. My favorite thing to play is Roblox. It is soooooo fun. I like to garden. It is fun. I garden because it reminds me of nature. I am in 5th grade. I live on Lopez Island. It's really pretty.

Alyssa, 12, Lopez Island, WA

I am Alex and I am 12 years old. I live in southwest California in the city of San Bernardino. I love playing video games, off-roading with my family, and going places. When I stutter, I get mad and speak slowly. My speech therapist helps me with easy onset as a strategy. She tells us to speak slowly and that it will help us to finish a sentence. My advice to others who stutter is to speak slowly.

Alex, 12, San Bernardino, CA



Hi, my name is Jizelah and I'm 11 years old. I live in Hollister CA, I'm in the 5th grade at Hollister Dual Language Academy. I started to stutter right before kindergarten when I was 4 years old. I started going to speech therapy when I was in kindergarten. My speech therapists taught me slow, easy speech and easy onset, and a lot of things for me to be able to control my speech.

I love cheering and going to competitions to perform. I don't like to talk in front of my class or in front of others. I also don't like to meet new people. People always say that I'm shy but it's not because I'm shy it's because I don't want to stutter when I talk. I love hanging out with my best friends. I also love to hang out with my dogs and my family. Every time I stutter, I get really frustrated with myself and get mad at myself. I don't like to read to the class or do a presentation because I think I'm going to stutter. Some of the things that work for me are to take a deep breath or slow down when I think I'm going to stutter.

Jizelah, 11, Hollister, CA

Hola, me llamo Alexis y tengo 7 años. Vivo en Madison, WI. Me gusta comer helado con mi familia, mi sabores favoritos son vainilla y superman. Mi comida favorita es hot dogs. Cuando vamos a la tienda, mi juguete favorito se llama pirata. Mi dulce favorito es cotton candy o jolly ranchers. En la escuela, me encanta jugar con mis amigos y aprender matematicas. Tambien me gusta el snack time y el recreo. Oh, y tambien tartamudeo. No me molesta la tartamudez y me gusta aprender sobre ella. Tambien me gustarfa que me mandaran un libro sobre la tartamudez. Yo creo que tartamudear mas en la casa queen la escuela porque hablo mas en la casa.

Hello, my name is Alexis and I am 7 years old. I live in Madison, WI. I like to eat ice cream with my family, my favorite flavors are vanilla and superman. My favorite food is hot dogs. When we go to the store, my favorite toy is called a pirate. My favorite candy is cotton candy or Jolly Ranchers. At school, I love playing with my friends and learning math. I also like snack time and recess. Oh, and I stutter too. I don't mind stuttering, and I like to learn about it. I also liked that you sent me a book about stuttering. I think I stutter more at home than at school because I talk more at home.

Alexis, 7, Madison, WI

Hi, my name is Titan. I am 7 years old. I am in the 2nd grade and my favorite subject in school is math. I like to play football and love hanging out with my dad. I stutter the most when I'm excited or mad. I don't like that I stutter, but my speech therapist is the best and helps to remind me that it's ok to stutter and encourages me to use slow and easy speech.

**Titan, 7,
Orlando, FL**



Hi my name is Argela, I am 8 years old,
 I want to become an engineer I know
 2 strategies that work fine I am already
 better! I have used them since I was 4 years
 old. I believe that stuttering can't make
 you fail to become what you dream to be
 God loves everyone the same.

coatesville P.A.

I drew a river because
 the tiny fish
 are like lumps
 in your throat.

Angela, 8, Coatesville, PA



My name is Yousif, and I am 9 years old. I live in Franklin, Wisconsin. I speak Arabic and English. I like drawing, Fortnite, soccer, gymnastics and collecting Pokémon. When I stutter, I use repetitions and prolongations. My strategies are easy onset and stretchy speech.

Yousif, 9, Franklin, WI



Hi, my name is Ava and I'm in the 4th grade. I've been stuttering since I can remember. When I was little, I used to apologize for stuttering. And now I regret it because you should never apologize for stuttering. Stuttering just happens and we have no control over it. One thing that really helps me is my attitude. A positive attitude is always key. Stuttering is like a speed bump in the road. Speed bumps are to remind us to slow down. A speed bump goes up and down just like our speech should. Everyone stutters sometimes no matter what. I have a sibling who talks over me, and it affects my speech. Hopefully she will grow out of this habit, and I hope your sibling, if you have one, does not do that. That's all for now.

Signing off,

Ava, 10, Wellington, FL



Hello! My name is Lincoln. I'm 9 years old. I'm in third grade and I live in Omaha, Nebraska. I like Pokémon Go, pecans, McDonald's, and taking care of my sister. I now have a new interest called Breath of the Wild. If you didn't know, it's a Zelda game. When I go to speech class, I feel happy to work on stuttering and feel ready to start the rest of my day.

Lincoln, 9, Omaha, NE



Hello! My name is Ziah and I live in Virginia. I am 10 years old. I like to draw, play with my dog, and play Minecraft. I stutter sometimes, and some people ask me why. But I think it's fine. Stuttering is normal for some kids. And here's a tip. If you stutter, just slow down, breathe and think of what you were going to say again.

Bye, ZIAH

Ziah, 10, Gretna, VA



My name is Leah. I am eight years old. I drew this because I have a cat that helps me. I also have anxiety and stutter and every time I stutter, I think about my cat and it helps me calm down. I styled her like the Egyptian Goddess Bastet. You have to find what calms you.

Leah, 8, Savannah, GA

Hi, my name is Billie Jo. I am 10 years old and live on Lopez Island. My fav car is a blue 1986 Caravan. My fav games are Minecraft and Roblox and Fortnite. My fav food is Filipino adobo and ice cream. I love corgis and games. I started stuttering in preschool here are a few strategies that helped: Deep breaths, thinking before I speak, easy onset, and light touch.

I got bullied because I stuttered in preschool. A kid tried to break my rib cage. Even though I got bullied I just say: sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me. The best way to see the sky is to fly, you can be what you want to be.

"Life is short and it's here to be lived."
- Kate Winslet

"Broken crayons still color."
- David Weaver

"When nothing goes right, go left."
- Martha Cecilia

"There is always light if only we're brave enough to see it. If only we're brave enough to be it."
- Amanda Gorman

"We will fail when we fail to try."
- Rosa Parks

"Don't sit down and wait for the opportunities to come. Get up and make them."
- Madam C. J. Walker

Billie Jo, 10, Lopez Island, WA

Hello, my name is Lincoln. I am 9 years old. I started stuttering when I was 7 years old, I still stutter but it's no biggie. Here's some advice, don't let your stuttering stop you. It can't control you. And it shouldn't. I draw cats as well. I have, and recommend, Kirby and the Forgotten Land. Adventure Time is good too. Look at this pretty good drawing, that is not an order.

Lincoln, 9, St. Paul, MN





Hello, my name is Brooks and I'm 14 years old. I'm an artist and football player. I also have braces and I'm very smart. I like to quote stuff from tv shows and movies. I'm a major Thomas and Friends fan. It's ok for others to stutter. My advice to someone who stutters is don't be hard on yourself. I can talk to people about whatever I want. I find it easiest when I slow down when I talk and by using my forward flowing speech.

Brooks, 14
Cannon Falls, MN



Hi, my name is Damian and I'm 10 years. I'm in the 5th grade and I started to stutter when I was in 3rd grade. Then I started to go to speech therapy in the 4th grade. I love my family and my favorite food is medium rare steak. Advice: If you stutter a lot, take a deep breath and think about what you are going to say so you don't get stuck.

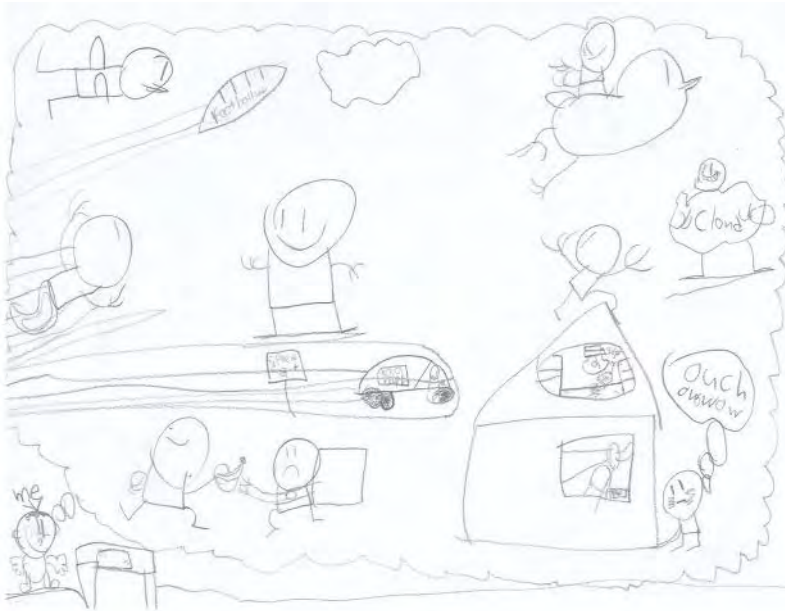
Damian, 10, Hollister, CA.



Hi! my name is Arya, and I am ten years old. I began to stutter when I was around 3, But now I only stutter when I am excited. I enjoy mountain Biking, rockclimbing, and crocheting. My favorite speech tool is stretching speech. ~~I~~ I want kids to know that my stuttering should not be more important than what I am saying.

- Arya L
age 10, 5th grade
P.S. I like your magazine!

Arya, 10, Omaha, NE



Hi, my name is Casey. I am a boy, just so you know. I was 9 years old when I wrote this. I live in Omaha, Nebraska. I am in third grade. My brother's name is Mills, but I just call him Moo Moo. No, he's not a cow! I like Sonic, Peanuts (as in Charlie Brown). I enjoy drawing, video games, making puns, and sitting in silence comfortably. I love summer, beaches, and more outdoor stuff. I am more of a nature person. I do like to draw things like this picture I submitted. My favorite thing to do while stuttering is scrunching up my muscles and letting go and relaxing and keep talking. Unfortunately, I have ADHD, a problem with my attention span, so it is hard to use my strategies and increases the chance of stuttering. But I'm getting better - yay! I say this a lot, but I have a big imagination. Like A BIG IMAGINATION!! Wow, this is a lot of words, but I wish to be a cartoonist when I grow up, so this is practice.

Casey, 9, Omaha, NE

Hello, my name is Meelah and I am 9. I am in the 4th grade, and I live in Virginia. I have stuttered since I was six years old. I go to speech therapy at my school. When I stutter, I get mad and upset. When I used to cheer, I would not stutter at all. I stutter more when I'm nervous. When I stutter, I use strategies like turtle pace, light contact, pausing, and relax then restart. I love cotton candy, I love face timing my best friend, and I love tacos. I hope that I have inspired you to do some things that I do to stop stuttering. I hope you find confidence and a good group of friends.

Meelah, 9, Richmond, VA

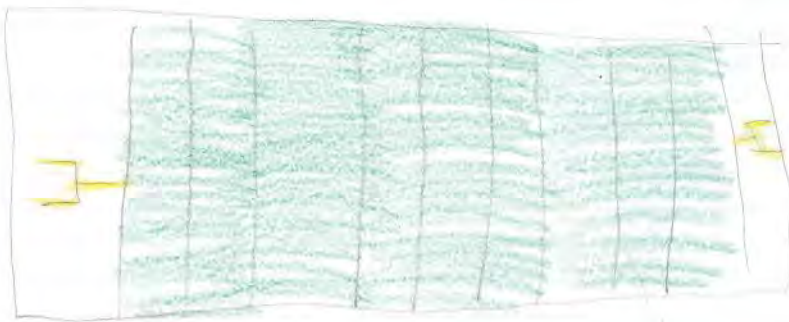


Hello, my name is Malakai. I have a hard time with my stutter. Other kids make fun of me because of it, and I go to speech therapy, and they help me with my stutter. I take deep breaths and talk slower.

Malakai, 10, Phoenix, AZ



Hi I am clay and I am 9 years old, and I live in Denmark Wisconsin. I like to play football, I have a lot of football cards and me, dad and grandpa Tom like to pull horses. I also like to go to the Wisconsin fair to show pigs. First I come to speech at 10:00 and me and Mrs. Freitag, My speech teachers we play games then we practice the strategies that I use to get out my words easy. I did a presentation on stuttering for my class. I taught them about blocks, repetitions and prolongations. I like to use timed speech and bouncing out. This year I learned that famous people like Ed Sheeran, George Springer and Alex Carter had speech like me. Your speech doesn't make you different from other people!



Clay Age 9 Denmark, WI

Hi my name is Leah I am in 4th grade and I stutter and my favorite hobbies is taking everything out of the garage and I am 9 I am going to be 10 in May 1 and I love my family and my cousins.

by Leah

9

Watsonville CA

Hi, I'm Olivia. I'm 10 years old and have been stuttering since I was 4 or 5. I'm going into middle school. I have been in speech therapy for 6 months and that seems to have already helped me. My favorite strategies that have helped me are: easy starts, stretch, and bounce. People who stutter may feel lost sometimes; even for those who don't stutter I want to share my favorite quote: **"not all who wander are lost."** I like this quote because not all who wander in their minds are lost in their thoughts. If you don't feel confident in anything, just remember to be YOU because there's no one else left to be.

Olivia, 10
Escondido, CA



Hi, my name is Mills and I am a 6-year-old boy. Sometimes I stutter. Some of the kids in my class also stutter. I have a brother. He is 9 years old. Sometimes I feel shy. I like pickles and green and Kirby and the Forgotten Land. I want to be a gamer in my future.

Mills, 6, Omaha, NE

Hi, my name is Emerson. I am 9 years old. I live in Amarillo, TX. I love to play pickleball and basketball. I started stuttering when I was in first grade. I started speech in the 2nd grade. My favorite strategy to use is cancellation. My advice is to not let your stuttering bother you or stop you from talking. When I grow up, I want to be a pharmacist because they help people with medicine, and they make good money. I like video games like Roblox, Fortnite, and UFC 4. I can't wait for UFC 5 to come out.

Emerson, 9, Amarillo, TX



Hi, my name is Esme, and I am 7 years old. I go to a bilingual school in Madison, WI, where we learn how to read, write, and speak in both English and Spanish. My favorite parts of school are recess, math, and accountability time, where we have to make sure we finish all of our work and then we get to play games. I have a big family and I love hanging out with them. I love to go on picnics with my family and go to splash pad or water parks. I also like to play games with my family. I also stutter. Stuttering doesn't bother me; I sometimes repeat words when I talk. I like to learn about stuttering.

Esme, 7, Madison, WI



Hi my name is Dominick.
I am 10 I am from
New Jersey. I don't let
my stutter bother me
I take my time to
defeat my stutter.
It is part of my
personality which
makes me unique.



DRAGON

BALLZ

Dominick, 10, Clifton, NJ

P.S. Love



Payton, 10

Hi, I'm Payton. I'm in fourth grade, and I like baseball, softball, climbing, running, singing, and dancing. I'm scared of stuttering and don't like speaking or singing in front of my class. When I stutter, I forget everything that just happened. It feels frustrating. Singing has helped me be able to speak to people. Using music and dance has helped me to speak with more ease. If you stutter, take a deep breath, and try again. You'll be on the smooth wave.

P.S. My secret is to keep on believing in yourself, and don't give up. Look back at your time in speech and remember all you've learned to help you in life.

Payton, 10 Purvis, MS



Hello, my name is Emmalyn. I'm a bit different than most people. I have a stutter, my dad does too! Well, I'm glad that one of my family members has one too, so I'm not left out. By the way, I'm 7 and my birthday is March 1st. I love making crafts. I like school but waking up early is not the best. I love my teacher. She's very nice. I love, love, LOVE the beach. I like handwriting too! I love playing with my friends! I like cleaning my room. I love my family; the Lord gave me a loving family. I was born in Texas; my best friend was too! Thumbs up to stutters! -Emmalyn, 7, Forest, VA



Hi, my name is Justin. I am 9 years old, and I live in Queens, NY. I have one sister. She always plays with me. I love to play Roblox, Minecraft and Call of Duty. Sometimes when I play Call of Duty people add me and when I talk to them on speaker, they laugh at me. They tell me I'm not good enough to get a lot of wins. They tell me I can't do anything because I stammer but I prove them wrong! I do good. I got so many wins, they only got 8 and I got 10. Now, I just play with people who think I'm actually good at the game and respect me. Stammering is a normal thing for people to do. When I play Minecraft and I stammer people talk over me. Some people stick up for me and that makes me feel happy and much better. Sometimes when playing, I sing, and it happens. People give me a round of applause. Also, for me it's hard to make friends in school because I stammer a lot and they don't understand what I say. Some people understand me, and they are my friends. They think it's not a bad thing and that it's natural. For me people who stutter are regular. You should never give up and always try and show people that stuttering is not bad!

Justin, 9, Queens, NY



My name is Ridge. I'm in 5th grade. I have a dog and a cat. I like to play baseball and gaga ball. I don't stutter on the field because I am in my comfort zone. Stuttering does not mean anything is wrong. For some people like me, you have to slow down and do easy-on-sets.

Ridge, 10, Bloomington, IN

I like
Drawing.

I like to play
tag with my freinds



Hi! my name is Roselyn. I am in first grade. I began to stutter when I was four or five years old. Now I am 6 years old and I go to speech class. In speech we talk about stuttering and some strategies to help me not stutter. Some strategies I use to not stutter are speaking in phrases, light contact and stretchy speech. When I stutter I feel shy and nervous. When I stutter I feel like kids would laugh at me. But I learned that it is ok to stutter and you should be confident and you should believe in yourself.

Roselyn, 6
Queens, NY



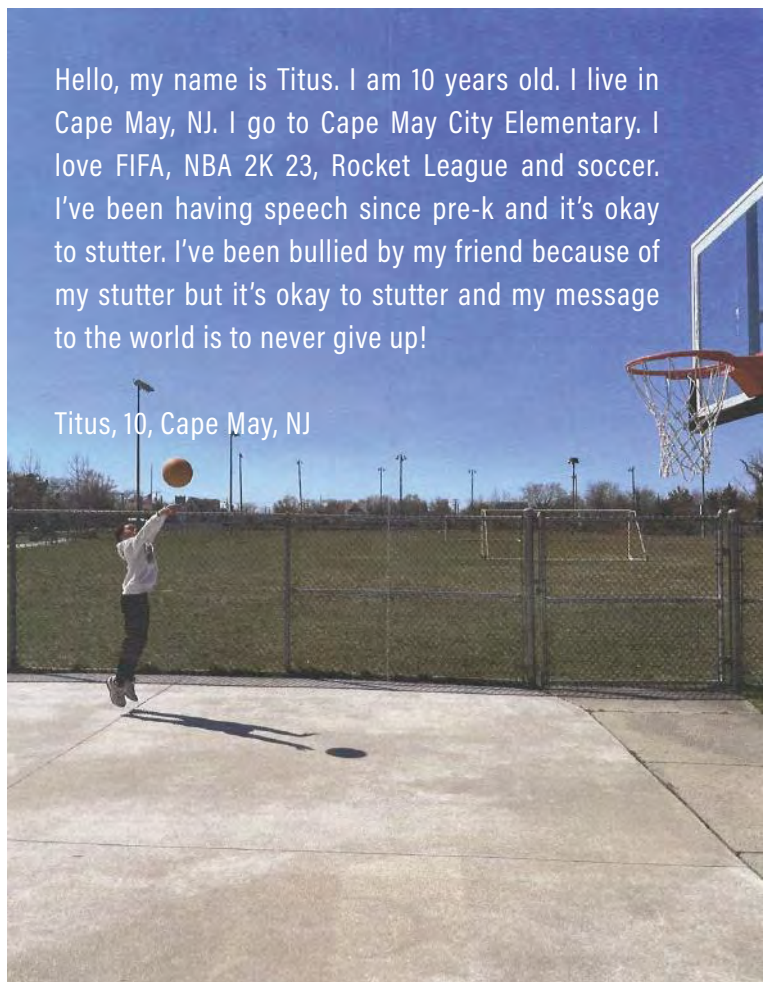
Hi, my name is Sa'miyah. I do dance and gymnastics and my favorite dance team is Pink Dynamic Dolls, which is the team I dance on. I'm in 3rd grade. Sometimes when I stutter, it helps me learn new things about myself. My favorite things to do when I have free time are to play Roblox and Fortnite. When I was younger, I thought I was amazing for not being like anybody else. Being different is good because differences help you know who you are. If differences weren't made, everyone would look like each other and the whole world would be bonkers!

Sa'miyah, 9, Bettendorf, IA

Hi, my name is Itzayana. I am 11 years old and in 5th grade at Hollister Dual Language Academy. I have been stuttering since I was 3 years old.

Sometimes it can be embarrassing to speak. One time we were reading a book in class, and it mentioned stuttering and I felt like everyone was looking at me. Stuttering makes me anxious and then it makes it hard for me to talk. My favorite things include softball and basketball. My favorite foods are enfrijoladas and pizza. I've had two speech therapists. They both taught me how to slow down and use stretchy speech. I am also working on my /r/ sounds.

Itzayana, 11, Hollister, CA



Hello, my name is Titus. I am 10 years old. I live in Cape May, NJ. I go to Cape May City Elementary. I love FIFA, NBA 2K 23, Rocket League and soccer. I've been having speech since pre-k and it's okay to stutter. I've been bullied by my friend because of my stutter but it's okay to stutter and my message to the world is to never give up!

Titus, 10, Cape May, NJ



NASCAR DRIVER
MASON MASSEY ON

SPEEDING & STUTTERING

STUTTERING FOUNDATION Q & A: MASON MASSEY



Family:

My family has always been involved in racing. I remember going to watch my uncle race when I was very young, and that's what first initially made me want to do it. We are a very close family, and we have always supported each other in everything we do.

Hobbies, Interests, Passions:

Racing consumes most of my time, but I really enjoy golfing and fitness. Racing is number one. I always try to spread positivity, and I'm passionate about being there for other people who stutter.

Successes:

I have a great support system that is most important. I've had the same goals since I was very young, and I've trusted in God's plan for me throughout my whole career. I've done my best to make sure nothing interferes with the goals that I have.

Originally from Douglasville, Georgia, Mason Massey is an American professional stock car racing driver who competes full-time in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, driving the No. 02 Chevrolet Silverado for Young's Motorsports. He has also competed in the NASCAR Xfinity Series and the ARCA Menards Series East in the past. Massey has recorded over 200 feature wins, 11 championships, and 10 track records across multiple classes. He currently resides in Mooresville, North Carolina.

Do you remember when you first began to stutter?

I do not specially remember, but my parents said I started stuttering when I was around 3 years old.

Does it run in your family? Who else stutters?

It does, my grandmother and my uncle have a stutter. I tried many different pathologists, the best one I've ever had is Tim Mackasey. I started going to him when I was 8 years old, and he helped me throughout my teen years as well. He really helped me become more comfortable speaking with people, and really helped me with techniques to help my fluency. I still use everything he told me today..

Has your stuttering gotten worse or better since you were younger? How?

My stuttering has gotten much better as I've gotten older. You have your good days and bad days, but the older I get the better I am at managing those bad days. I stuttered a lot when I was a child, and still stutter, but I really worked hard on trying to put myself out there a lot. For me, it was all about accepting who I am and that I will always have a stutter. When I finally stopped worrying about what people thought of my stutter, I became more comfortable and I could really focus on my techniques I've learned over the years.

How did it affect you growing up?

It was definitely tough at times. I had many moments where I just didn't know what to do anymore, and I would just give up on trying to improve it. It took me awhile to realize that I am more than a stutter. When you let it just absolutely consume you, it only gets worse and worse. So, as a young kid, it's hard to accept something about yourself that nobody else around you is going through. I didn't have the confidence that I needed yet.

How does stuttering affect you as a professional driver?

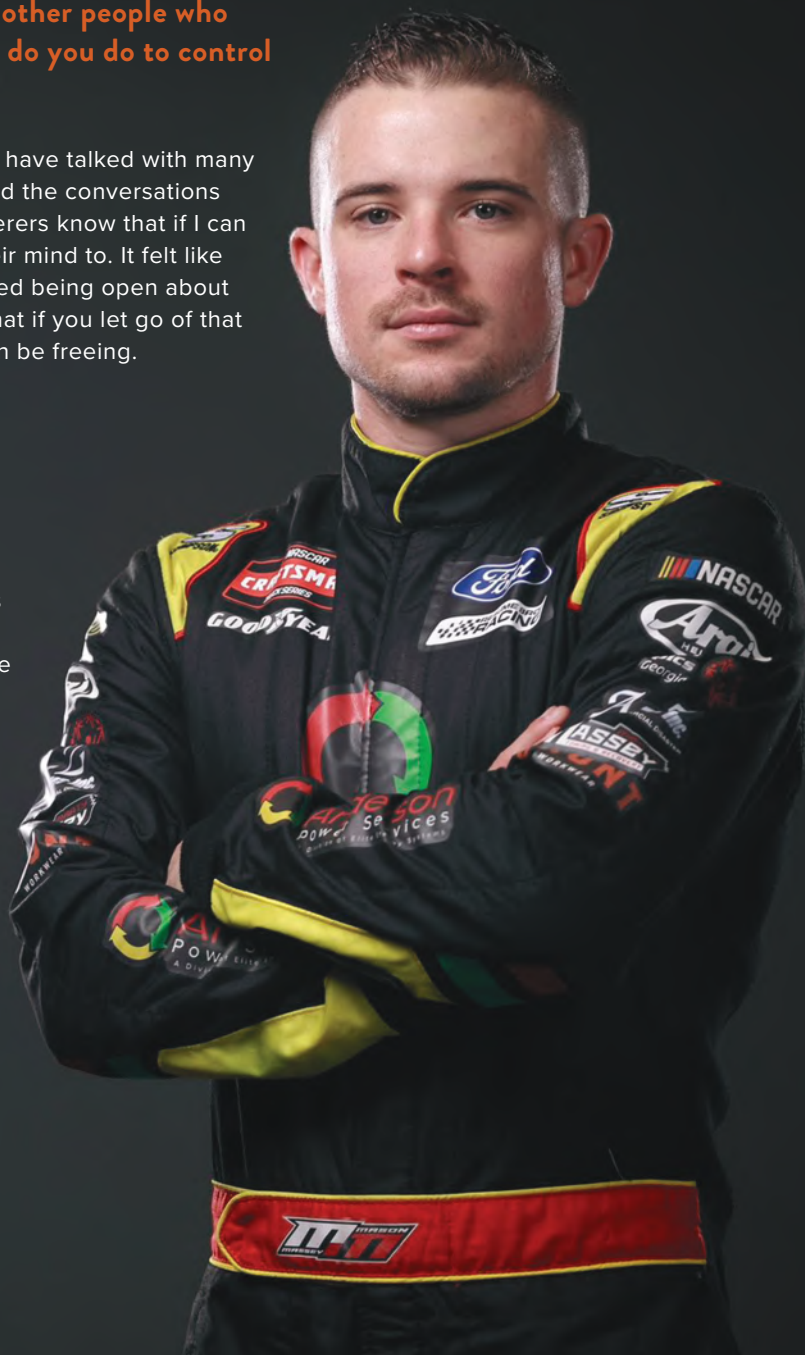
As a driver, we have to be in constant communication with our team, do interviews, and interact with fans. It has its challenges, but I have always tried to not let it affect me doing what I love. As a kid, it was definitely harder because I just didn't like interacting with people. I've had a good experience in NASCAR with it so far. I've put myself out there way more, and that has helped me gain so much more confidence.

How has discussing your stutter openly been received by fans? Any special stories of feedback from fans or other people who stutter? How is your stuttering today? What do you do to control or manage it, if anything?

It has gotten an overwhelming amount of positivity. I have talked with many people who stutter since then, and I've really enjoyed the conversations I've had with everybody. I just make sure other stutterers know that if I can do what I'm doing, they can do anything they set their mind to. It felt like a weight that was lifted off my shoulders after I started being open about it. It has actually improved since then. I do believe that if you let go of that anxiety of hoping people don't hear you stutter it can be freeing.

What are the biggest challenges stuttering has presented to you?

It was definitely tough at times. I had many moments where I just didn't know what to do anymore, and I would just give up on trying to improve it. It took me awhile to realize that I am more than a stutter. When you let it just absolutely consume you, it only gets worse and worse. So, as a young kid, it's hard to accept something about yourself that nobody else around you is going through. I didn't have the confidence that I needed yet.



What is your greatest accomplishment with regard to stuttering?

In regards to stuttering, I think my biggest accomplishment has been being open and talking about it here lately. To see how many people were positively affected by me doing that, it's an amazing feeling. Stutterers all sort of feel a connection to each other because we know what we have all been through. It's been really cool to hear other people's stories and give them a positive message.

Based upon your experiences, what would you like to tell children who stutter?

Find something you love to do, make goals, and focus on that. Do not let your stutter hold you back. It is a challenge you have to overcome, but it's not something that should hold you back. Everyone has challenges they face in their life; you develop character and confidence by overcoming them. I've always tried to use it to motivate me, and keep me fired up to accomplish my goals in life. Don't let worrying about what other people think get in the way of what you love to do.

Based upon your experiences, what would you tell parents of children who stutter?

I would say that stuttering is a lot for a child to go through. It is much harder to make friends, and it is harder as a child to understand how to deal with a stutter. Understand that there will be good days and there will be not so good days. Help them find something they love to do, and encourage them to put themselves out there as much as they can.

Learn more about Mason at www.masonmassey.com and follow him on Instagram and Facebook at [@masonmasseyracing](https://www.instagram.com/masonmasseyracing)





STUTTERING FOUNDATION® PODCAST

Top 10 Most Popular Stuttering Foundation Podcast Episodes:

#1. S1:E1: Communication Over Fluency

Sara MacIntyre, M.A., CCC-SLP, Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F

#2. S4:E8: Why Stuttering Occurs: The Role of Cognitive Conflict and Control

Evan Usler, Ph.D., University of Delaware

#3. S1:E15: Supporting and Partnering with Parents of Children Who Stutter

Sara MacIntyre, M.A., CCC-SLP, Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F

#4. S4:E4: Jack's Journey: Exploring Stuttering Acceptance

Jack Rodriguez, Texas State University; University of Texas at Austin

#5. S3:E9: Covert Stuttering: Understanding the Path to Change

Caryn Herring, M.S., CCC-SLP, Michigan State University; Friends:
The National Association of Young People Who Stutter

#6. S1:E10: Our Journeys: The Power of Support & Advice to Therapists

Mary, Aileen, and Josette

#7. S1:E14: Thawing The Stuttering Iceberg

Courtney Luckman, M.A., CCC-SLP; NYU (Ph.D. Candidate), Rise Speech Therapy

#8. S4:E5: es, Avoidance Reduction Therapy (ARTS®) is for Kids, too!

Ben Goldstein, M.A., CCC-SLP; Sisskin Stuttering Center; Prince George's County Public Schools

#9. S2:E4: Panel Part 1: Our Stories

Megan, Heather, Jack, Emily, & Courtney

#10. S4:E10: The Power of Storytelling and Affirmation in Stuttering Therapy

Derek Daniels, Ph.D., CCC-SLP; Wayne State University



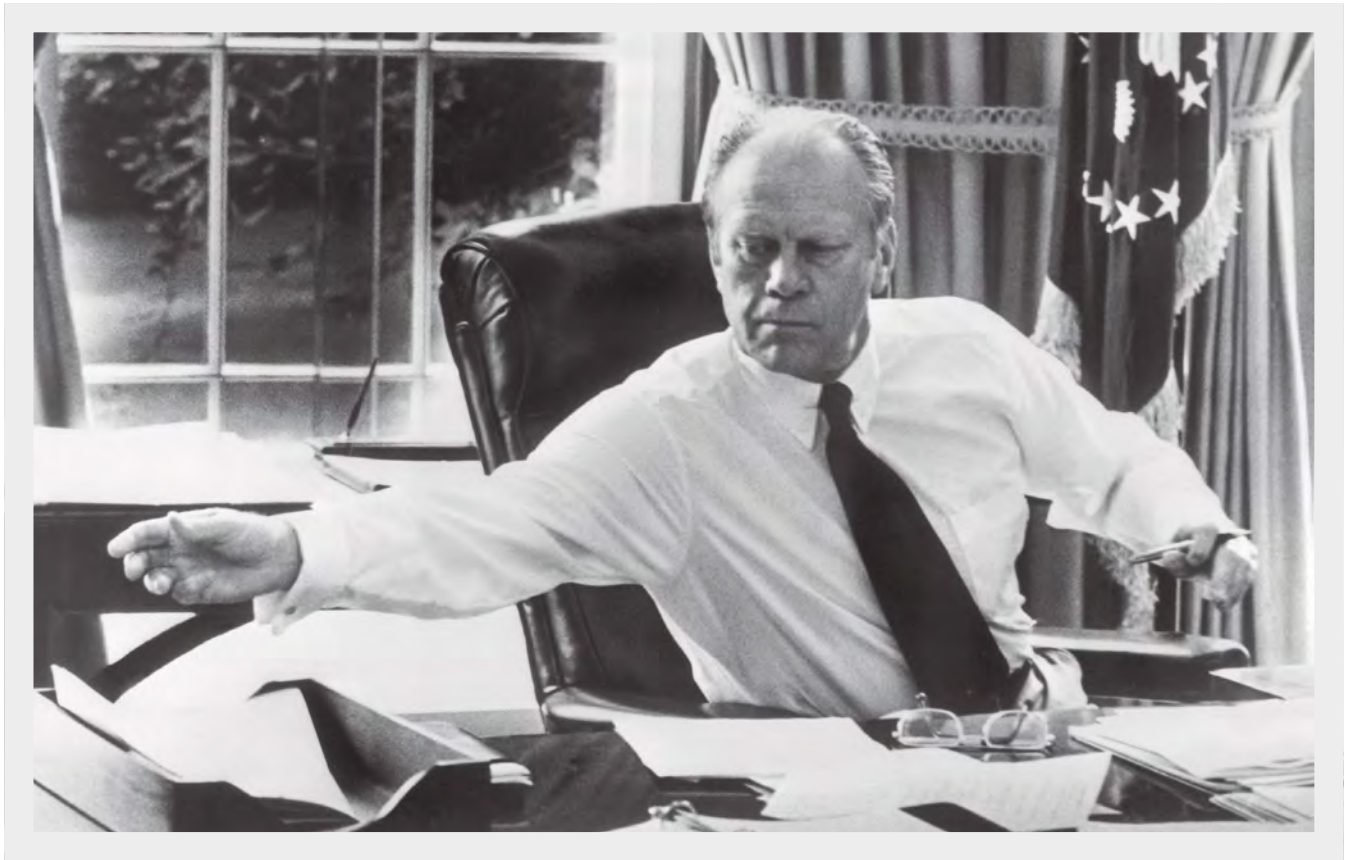
GERALD FORD

AMERICAN PRESIDENT, AMERICAN STUTTERER



Gerald Rudolph Ford Jr. was an American politician who served as the 38th president of the United States from 1974 to 1977. He previously served as the leader of the Republican Party in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1965 to 1973, and as the 40th vice president under President Richard Nixon from 1973 to 1974. Ford succeeded to the presidency when Nixon resigned in 1974, but was defeated for election to a full term in 1976. Ford is the only person to become U.S. president without winning an election for president or vice president.

Ford was born in Omaha, Nebraska and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He attended the University of Michigan, where he played for the school's football team before eventually attending Yale Law School. Afterward, he served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1942 to 1946. Ford began his political career in 1949 as the U.S. representative from Michigan's 5th congressional district, serving in this capacity for nearly 25 years, the final nine of them as the House minority leader. In December 1973, two months after Spiro Agnew's resignation, Ford became the first person appointed to the vice presidency under the terms of the 25th Amendment. After the subsequent resignation of President Nixon in August 1974, Ford immediately assumed the presidency.



The American public is well aware of Joe Biden's childhood stuttering as it has been prominently covered in his three presidential campaigns and two vice-presidential campaigns. Surprisingly, an April 20, 2023 Wall Street Journal book review "An Ordinary Man Review: Underestimating Gerald Ford" brought to light that President Gerald Ford struggled with stuttering in elementary school and junior high.

The 2023 biography *An Ordinary Man: The Surprising Life and Historic Presidency of Gerald R. Ford* by Richard Norton Smith discussed how President Ford's childhood was affected by stuttering. Smith summarized Ford's issues with stuttering, and when describing his childhood, wrote that it was "compounded by a severe case of stuttering that plagued the boy for several years."

Many years prior to the publication of Smith's book, the topic received coverage in a December 28, 2006 article in the Washington Post, "The Homegrown Decency of Gerald Ford," which gave an interesting synopsis of how he successfully dealt with his debilitating stutter, "Young Jerry also had a stuttering problem (By the time he reached high school, however, the stutter was gone, as if he had miraculously laid it in his hand and flung it across a nearby lake)."

The 38th president, and the only president who was not elected president or vice president, is almost universally not known to have been a person who stutters. This legacy of the Republican president may not have received attention during his days as vice president or president, but now some 50 years after President Ford took office, the shining example of Gerald R. Ford casts stuttering in a most positive light as it proves presidential stuttering is truly bipartisan.



AHHHELP!



Feeling lost?
Get help at www.stutteringhelp.org

Help for Parents of Kids Who Stutter is as Close as Your Local Library

Thanks to some generous donations, the Stuttering Foundation has donated a DVD, entitled *Kids Who Stutter: Parents Speak*, to public libraries across the country. In this 16-minute DVD, parents and speech-language experts talk about how to promote easier talking as they interact with their children. The professionals offer simple tips parents can follow easily.

The DVD features some of the world's leading therapists with children who stutter, including: Lisa A Scott, Ph.D., Florida State University's School of Communication Science and Disorders; Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University School of Medicine; speech-language consultants Frances Cook, MBE, MSc, Willie Botterill, MSc, and Elaine Kelman, MSc.

"This is an important tool for families and teachers of children who stutter," added Jane Fraser, president of the nonprofit Stuttering Foundation. "Our latest DVD is designed to give parents and teachers the tools they need to play a vital role in the process of helping children who stutter."

Help for kids who stutter is as close as your library

The Stuttering Foundation
Contributor

Kids who stutter have a lot to say, and friends can show them how in "Stuttering: For Kids By Kids," a DVD in English and Spanish starring kids who stutter, available at most public libraries or through interlibrary loan.

Many children who stutter never met others who struggle with the same disability. In this DVD from the Stuttering Foundation, meet kids who recount how they handle challenges such as

worried what other people might think if I do stutter and wonder if I'll be able to get out of my blocks and things."

"All those interested in helping kids learn to communicate with their young

[Kids Who Stutter Parents Speak]

StutteringHelp.org
800-992-9392



No. 0080
16 minutes

COMMUNI
Stuttering Foundation
donates resources to
Lafayette County
Public Library

The Stuttering Foundation
Contributor

Thanks to generous donors, the Stuttering Foundation has donated books and DVDs to public libraries across the country, including the Lafayette County Public Library.

Stuttering Foundation books are directed to parents of children who stutter, adults who stutter, speech pathologists, pediatricians, family physicians, nurses, health care professionals, hospitals, schools, day-care centers and all those concerned with the problem of stuttering. The DVDs feature some of the world's leading therapists with children who stutter. Since the original publication, Foundation materials have reached millions of individuals worldwide. More than three million Americans stutter, yet stuttering remains misunderstood by most people," said Jane Fraser, president of the Stuttering Foundation. "Myths such as believing people who stutter are less intelligent or suffer from psychological problems still persist. Recent research refuting these erroneous beliefs." Sixteen books and DVDs produced by the 76-year-old nonprofit are available for free to any public library. The Foundation has provided free materials to over 20,000 public libraries nationwide. A

For more information about stuttering, write the nonprofit Stuttering Foundation, P.O. Box 11749; Memphis, TN 38111-0749, call 800-992-9392, or visit www.stutteringhelp.org.

TOASTMASTERS

CELEBRATES 100 YEARS!

Toastmasters International is a non-profit educational organization that builds confidence and teaches public speaking skills through a worldwide network of clubs that meet online and in person. In a supportive community or corporate environment, members prepare and deliver speeches, respond to impromptu questions, and give and receive constructive feedback.

“Over the years, we have heard from many people who stutter who have joined Toastmasters,” said the Stuttering Foundation’s Jane Fraser. “Many have been surprised at how many people, without stuttering, are afraid of public speaking. That is one of the reasons Toastmasters has such success – everyone learns to become a better communicator regardless of what talents they bring with them when they join.”

For more information, visit www.toastmasters.org

SFA at AAP



For more than 30 years, the Stuttering Foundation has attended the annual convention of the American Academy of Pediatrics—this year’s event was held in Washington, D.C.

“When parents have questions or concerns about the health and development of their children, the first place they look for advice is from their doctor,” said Stuttering Foundation President Jane Fraser. “As a result, pediatricians have become the first source of information on stuttering for many families.”

By providing books, videos and brochures to conference attendees, the Stuttering Foundation ensures timely and accurate information is always available to pediatrician offices for parents of children who stutter.

In addition, the Stuttering Foundation regularly mails more than 46,000 copies of its seminal book on children who stutter to pediatricians nationwide.





**Temperament, Stuttering Frequency
and impact in Preschool Children Who Stutter**

Sarah Delpeche, MSc, BSc(Hons), RegMRCSLT, RegHCPC | Michael Palin Centre

ARTS® in Action

Vivian Sisskin, M.S., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | University of Maryland; Sisskin Stuttering Center

Counseling Persons with Communication Disorders

David Luterman, D.Ed., CCC-SLP | Emerson College

Culturally-Responsive Guidelines for Serving Families of Bilingual Children Who Stutter

Ana Paula G. Mummy, SLPD, CCC-SLP | East Texas Baptist University

Stuttering Concealment: Correlates with Quality of Life and Clinical Implications

Hope Gerlach-Houck, Ph.D., CCC-SLP | Western Michigan University

Assessing Preschoolers Who Stutter

Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | Stuttering Foundation

Working With Autistic Children Who Stutter

Gemma Clarke, MSc, BA(Hons) | Michael Palin Centre

Shifting Perspectives Within School-Based Stuttering Treatment

Timothy Flynn, M.S., CCC-SLP | Arlington Public Schools, VA

Working On The Family Level

David Luterman, D.Ed., CCC-SLP | Emerson College

First, Do No Harm. How Not to Hurt When We Want to Help.

Ryan Pollard, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | University of Colorado, Boulder

Assessment with School-Aged Children Who Stutter

Sharon Millard, Ph.D., RegMRCSLT, RegHCPC | Michael Palin Centre

Cluttering: Expanding Your Evaluation and Treatment Horizons

Kathleen Scaler-Scott, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCF-S | Misericordia University

Recordings of many of the past Virtual Learning sessions can be found at www.StutteringHelp.org/Streaming. You can register for upcoming Virtual Learning Sessions at StutteringHelp.org/VirtualLearning

SFA BLOGGER JORDAN NORTHRUP SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE OF

STUTTERING IN THE MILITARY



Jordan Northrup has served in the United States Marine Corps from August 2003 to the present. During that time, he commanded at the platoon and company level, served as special and primary staff, and as an action and liaison officer as well. In 2015, he transferred from active duty to the USMC Reserves and continues to support the Marine Corps as a Federal Civilian employee, stationed at Marine Corps Base Quantico.

He holds the rank of Major.

Jordan sat down with the Stuttering Foundation to discuss his unique experience of bravely facing the challenge of stuttering in the military.

Did stuttering have any bearing on your decision to join the military?

I was born with a stutter; it's always been with me. In 2003, my college grades were poor, and I didn't have any real career prospects ahead of me. Rather than studying, I had fallen into the party scene because I wanted to be cool and accepted. I lacked confidence and trained myself to sit in the back of the room and stay quiet. Despite my failures, I had enough foresight to know that I needed a change, and I needed it fast. Several friends of mine were joining the military, and they encouraged me to come with them and find out more. I spoke with some Marine Corps recruiters and made the decision that joining would give me the tools I needed to turn my life around.

Before joining, did you have any concerns about how your stutter would impact your ability to serve?

Naturally, I was nervous about how my stutter would impact my ability to serve. Up until that time in my life, I'd made it my mission to make myself invisible, at least as it related to school. I knew that joining the military would push me into uncomfortable situations and experiences.

Did you discuss your stutter with superiors or fellow service members when you first began serving? Were you teased?

During the recruiting process, I did discuss my stutter with my recruiting team. I had no knowledge or experience to speak of, so I leaned heavily on their advice. They told me that my stutter would create challenges, but nothing that I couldn't overcome. While I was nervous about bootcamp, I knew I needed a significant change in my life; it was worth the risk.

Surviving basic training (bootcamp) with a stutter is no joke. Most of the time, I was able to get through each day without too much trouble. No one "talks" in bootcamp... they shout, and shout in unison. When the drill instructor gives a command, the entire platoon shouts "Aye Sir" at the top of their lungs. Those situations were easy for me. Things got difficult when the situation would require me to speak individually. Each morning we woke up and lined up in front of our beds (racks) so the drill instructor could get a visual and verbal count. The count would start on one end of the squad bay, with each recruit shouting the next number in the sequence. I was number 56. Each morning I could feel the block building in my throat. Sometimes I was able to shout fluently, other times not.

Once the drill instructors found a weakness in you, it became a focal point. As soon as the drill instructors realized I had a stutter, they would make me stand alone at the front of the squad bay and read something aloud so all the recruits could hear me stutter; they knew it would be embarrassing.

I think the worst experience I ever had was during Officer Candidate School in 2005. I had already been an enlisted Marine for two years by then, but I wanted to become an officer. The course is 10 weeks of intense training and scrutiny. In a sense, it's a 10-week job interview. I was in Second Platoon with about 30 guys. Each week, we had to write evaluations on our peers. These evaluations were private documents that the instructors used to gain more insight on the candidates. What we didn't know was at the end of the 10-week course, we would be offered the chance to read what people had said about us...rather than calling them "peer evaluations," we termed them "spear evaluations."

As I read what my peers had written about me, several entries stood out. One of my peers wrote, "Candidate Northrup should be denied a commission in the USMC because he can't talk straight." For 10 weeks, I had thought this guy was my friend, but it turns out he wasn't. And he wasn't the only one who wrote things like that about me. I've never forgotten that. Reading comments like that was very hurtful, even if they had no real power. Like the rest of us, I was granted a commission and have served faithfully since then. I made it a point to perform to the best of my ability. In fact, when it came time for my peer group to be promoted to the rank of Captain, I was meritoriously promoted a year ahead of my entire group. I felt like justice had been served.

"As soon as the drill instructors realized I had a stutter, they would make me stand alone at the front of the squad bay and read something aloud so all the recruits could hear me stutter; they knew it would be embarrassing."

Did you try to hide your stutter, or did you stutter openly? How did others react?

I've never been one to hide my stutter; at the same time, I've never openly disclosed it either. I go about my duties and if I stutter, then I stutter. Marines make of it what they will. I will say that all the Marines I've worked with have been very professional. If one of them has a negative opinion about my stutter, they've kept it to themselves. To a Marine, what's important is mission accomplishment and troop welfare. I would add to that personal performance. Outstanding performance covers a multitude of sins. Over the years, I've made it a point to perform to the best of my ability such that any negativity surrounding my stutter is downplayed.

How did your stutter make it difficult for you to serve?

Like with any situation in life, not being able to communicate as clearly as you'd like takes its toll. In my head, I know what I want to say, but my body doesn't always cooperate. My stutter is much harder to manage when I'm facing periods of stress, fear, physical exhaustion, or frustration. As you can imagine, all those factors are present at one point or another, sometimes together. Whether the situation is briefing an operation to senior officials, conducting a combat operation during deployment, or participating in a working group, the stressors are real and present. I can remember one such experience during my first combat deployment. I was commanding a convoy in the Al-Anbar province of Iraq. During the convoy, we came under intense enemy fire. As the Marine officer in charge, command and control was my responsibility. I had to organize our defenses and our response, use the radio to communicate with my higher headquarters, and assess several Marines for medical evacuation. All of that required me to speak constantly on the radio until the situation was resolved. Stuttering at a time like that was less than ideal, but I strove to remain calm and collected as I passed information and orders. After the situation was resolved, we were able to continue the mission with no loss of life.

Another example is from later in my career. I was attending a working group with peers and senior officers to develop certain logistical concepts. During a meeting like this, it is customary to go around the room one at a time and introduce yourself. I'm sure you can imagine the stress something like this would cause for a person who stutters. I was near the end of the line with about 30 Marines ahead of me. I watched the "moment" get

closer and closer. I got into my own head and ended up with a mild panic attack. Finally, it was my turn and I squeaked out my name and role while stuttering heavily. It was incredibly embarrassing. No one said anything, but I can imagine what the others in the room thought. During a situation like this, I've found it helpful to quickly get through the embarrassment and then contribute as much to the conversation as possible. This way, the last impression I leave will be one of competence rather than stuttering.

Was your stutter ever helpful?

I can't think of a time when my stutter was helpful, other than it made me practice public speaking often. As a Marine Corps officer, you are expected to speak aloud on any number of occasions. You may be speaking extemporaneously while addressing your troops after a training event, you may be passing information during a unit staff meeting, or you may be onstage presenting a new concept to a large audience. Whatever the situation, you're expected to be "on." As a person who stutters, it's easy for me to get stuck when speaking aloud. I've found that extra preparedness significantly increases my ability to speak fluently.

Did you use any tips or tricks to help you with your stutter?

I don't have any tricks per se. I would offer that excessive preparation for speaking events pays dividends. I do a lot of public speaking, whether it's for my Marine Corps career, or being on stage for my book. I rehearse what I'm going to say as often as I can, so when I'm on stage, the material is very familiar to me. The less my mind has to search for what to say, the more fluent I can be.

As my career has progressed, I stutter less in the day-to-day environment. I believe this is because I'm more experienced and comfortable in my professional environment. When I do stutter, it's usually during a larger meeting or presentation where I know I'll have to speak aloud. When those situations occur, I do my best to stay calm through deep breathing exercises. They help to calm my nerves. Additionally, I've found that manuscripting, or writing down what I want to say verbatim, does not work well for me. That requires me to read aloud and make it sound natural and flowing. I tend to stutter my way through it. Instead, I use bullet points with ideas and themes. The bullet points keep me focused and on track while allowing my mind to fill in the gaps.

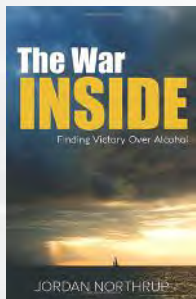
What would you say to another person who stutters wanting to join the military?

I would say go for it. If you want to serve your country, there is a pathway open to you. It may not be easy, but it is possible, and of course, very rewarding. Don't let your fears hold you back.

Would you prepare differently if you had the chance to do it again?

I'm not sure that I could have prepared differently. The basic training phase is the most difficult. There is no access to SLPs, medication, or speech fluency devices. If you are using any of these, you'll need to learn to do without for at least a year (basic training, combat schools, job schools). Once you get out in the Fleet Marine Force (what is commonly referred to as 'being in the Marines'), you can resume any medication or therapy (at no cost to you...it's all covered). But until then, I would prepare by learning as much as you can about the Marine Corps. There's a saying that luck is when preparedness meets opportunity. Being armed with extensive knowledge will go a long way to making the basic training experience easier. Also, I would offer that sometimes during hard experiences, we tend to focus our attention on getting out of the situation, or maybe what life will be like afterward. In the terms of basic training, we think about life outside of bootcamp... the things we'll do, friends we will see, and the places we'll go. In a sense, we stop focusing on the "now" and think about the future. I would argue this is the wrong approach. Basic training (bootcamp) is only 3 months. It seems like an eternity when you're going through it, but it's no more than a brief interlude in your life. I look back on 20 years in the Marines and wonder where the time went. So, while you're in bootcamp, focus 100 percent of your effort on what you're doing in the moment. Learn all you can. Become the best Marine possible. Don't focus on the outside environment. I promise that basic training will go much faster that way.

How can people connect with you?



I'm on FB and Instagram as @jordannorthrup. Also, my book, *The War Inside: Finding Victory over Alcohol*, can be found on Amazon. Email is jordan.northrup@gmail.com. Please reach out! I want to help as many PWS as I can!

During his time in the service, Jordan traveled extensively for training and deployments. He was been stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Marine Corps Base Quantico, and the Pentagon. For training, he went to Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Marine Corps Base 29 Palms, Iraq (Al-Anbar Province) and Afghanistan twice (Kandahar, Kabul).

Jordan has three combat deployments. He deployed to Iraq with 3rd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment (3/2 - an infantry battalion), serving as the platoon commander of the Motor Transport Platoon. He commanded 75 Marines whose mission was to execute convoys (resupply, troop transport, detainee transport), mounted patrols, and route clearance. In the seven months they were deployed, his platoon executed 235 combat missions, and he personally commanded 115 of them. They were involved in firefights, IED explosions, and routinely took incoming mortar fire. Thankfully, none of his Marines were wounded or killed.

During his second deployment, he was assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 24, part of the 24th Marine Corps Expeditionary Unit. Their assignment was to deploy to Kandahar, Afghanistan, and engage the Taliban in combat operations. His role during this deployment was the primary staff position of Logistics Officer, the senior logistics advisor to the Commanding Officer. It was his responsibility to coordinate and sustain all battalion logistics efforts across the range of combat operations. He was deployed for a total of eight months.

His last deployment was for one year to Kabul, Afghanistan. He was serving at the Pentagon at the time. A quota came down the chain of command for a logistics officer to deploy to support Task Force Spotlight. The chain of command selected Jordan for the role, and he deployed soon thereafter. Once in country, their Task Force's mission was to organize, train, and regulate the 3rd party security contractor companies in country, which provided security to bases and other facilities around the country. These companies routinely hired Afghans from the local economy. As such, there wasn't much regulation or oversight. His Task Force provided what was needed to maintain good order and discipline.



2024: IN MEMORIAM

Sulaiman AbdulNour
 John Acquavella
 Kay Armstead
 Dr. Kelmer Baxter
 David R. Berry, Sr.
 Curt Betebenner
 Dennis W. Blager
 Dr. Oliver Bloodstein
 Sister Charleen Bloom
 Harold Bray
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J. EDGAR HOOVER

THE CONTROVERSIAL MAN BEHIND THE FBI

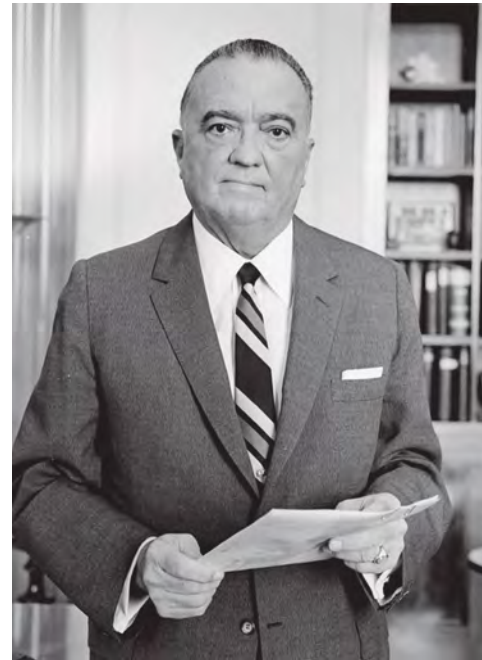
On October 20, 2023, the movie *Killers of the Flower Moon* was released in theaters. The film is both directed and produced by Martin Scorsese. It stars Robert DeNiro, Leonardo DiCaprio and Lily Gladstone. It has a strong supporting cast with actors like John Lithgow and Brendan Fraser.

It is based on a 2017 book of the same name by David Grann that explores murders of wealthy Osage people in Oklahoma in the 1920's, after massive oil deposits were found on their land. While the official count was twenty murders of Osage Indians, Grann speculates that it could be in the hundreds. It is ironic that David Grann's 2017 book *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* went into detail about the start of the FBI and its founder, the highly controversial J. Edgar Hoover. Ironically, it brought to light the issue of Hoover's stuttering.

J. Edgar Hoover was the sixth director of the Bureau of Investigation, the agency that was the forerunner of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He was the catalyst in the founding of the FBI in 1935 and remained the director until his death at age 77 in 1972.

As a young person, he made an effort to overcome his stuttering by teaching himself to speak very quickly. This speaking style carried on throughout his life and was noted by others. His speech was so fast as an adult that stenographers regularly had difficulty following him.

Killers of the Flower Moon states, "Hoover, who believed that his men should conquer their deficiencies the way he conquered his childhood stutter, purged anyone who failed to meet his exacting standards." The April 28, 2017 New York Times review of the book, "Solving a Reign of Terror Against Native Americans" states about Hoover being an unlikely candidate to



John Edgar Hoover (January 1, 1895 – May 2, 1972) was an American law-enforcement administrator who served as the final Director of the Bureau of Investigation (BOI) and the first Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). Hoover became instrumental in founding the FBI in June 1935, where he remained as director for an additional 37 years until his death in May 1972 – serving a total of 48 years leading both the BOI and the FBI and under eight Presidents.

become the first FBI Director, “He was diminutive, struggled with a stutter and a fear of germs, and lived with his mother.”

The 2011 movie *J. Edgar*, which starred Leonardo DiCaprio in the lead role, makes light of the fact that Hoover used a practiced cadence of speech to circumvent stuttering. The mention of the nickname “Speed” suggests that fast talking was the result of stuttering. The 1993 book *The True Story of J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI* by Barry Denenberg echoes the origin of the nickname “Speed” in relation to Hoover’s “machine gun-like manner of speaking and states, “In order to overcome an early stuttering problem, he spent hours practicing in front of his bedroom mirror.”

An article on the 2011 biopic entitled “The Making of ‘J. Edgar’” in the November 2, 2011 edition of *The Hollywood Reporter* stated that director Clint Eastwood wished to confirm with screenwriter Dustin Lane Black certain aspects of Hoover’s life portrayed in the script. Black said about Eastwood, “He wanted to know about the stutter [that Hoover had as a youth]. He said, ‘Did you make up the stutter?’ Things he thought were really good, he wanted to make sure weren’t just convenient. I really respected that.”

Another 2011 review from the site *From the Front Row* made mention of Hoover’s stuttering when describing his relationship with his mother: “..... While not an overbearing woman, demanded greatness of her son, and had trained the stutter out of him.”

With speech therapy not advanced during the years of Hoover’s youth, he no doubt practiced one of the many the “home remedy” techniques which were promoted by self-styled speech correctionists of the time. The 1991 biography *J. Edgar Hoover: The Man and His Secrets* by Curt Gentry gives an insight into the speech exercises practiced by a young Hoover. “As a youth Hoover stuttered. Researching the subject, he found an article which asserted that for some the cure was to talk not slower but faster. Practicing alone in his room

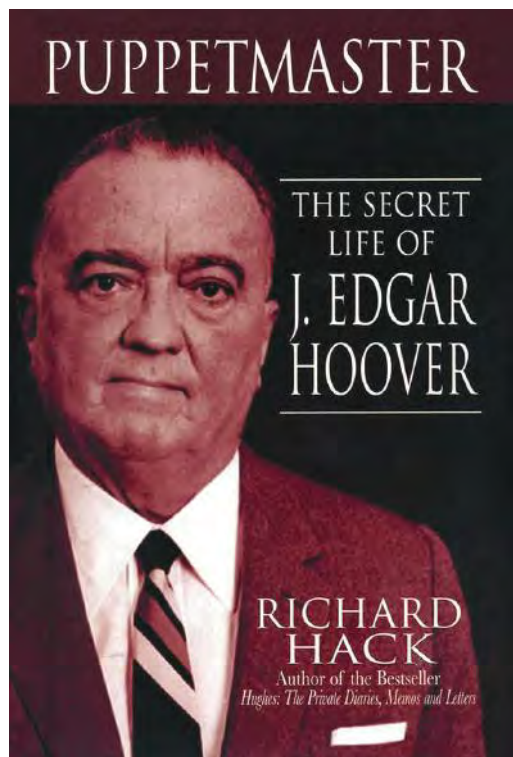


(his young nieces sometimes surreptitiously listening), he learned to talk rapidly – and except in moments of great stress – overcame the problem. But he didn't stop at that. A nightmare common to all stutterers is the prospect of addressing a crowd. Hoover took up debating, and by his junior year at Central High School had led the team undefeated through twelve straight contests, himself taking the affirmative on such topics as, "Cuba Should Be Annexed to the United States."

Another biography, *J. Edgar Hoover: Controversial FBI Director* by Kevin Cunningham (2006), gives more insight, "Though Edward did well in school, he began stuttering in the first grade. His father thought it would work itself out, but his mother sought treatment. The solution proposed was that he talk faster. Edgar practiced in his room for hours with a single-mindedness that would show throughout his life. It took time to master fluent speaking. Even in adulthood he needed to practice. But he conquered the stutter enough that he became star of his debate team in high school."

Puppetmaster: The Secret Life of J. Edgar Hoover by Richard Hack, a 2004 biography, offers further insight, "By the time he entered his first year at Brent Elementary School several blocks from his home, Edgar was a precocious reader with a shy personality that intensified when he developed a stutter as the school year was ending.....While his father chose to comfort his son with promises that the condition would pass with time, young Hoover's mother took him to specialists in search of an immediate cure." Later in the book, a passage about Hoover's years as FBI Director, "He was, however, far from satisfied. Despite years of speech making, Hoover was troubled by the occasional stutter, practicing long into the night to overcome the affliction."

The release of the movie *Killers of the Flower Moon* will not address Hoover's stuttering like the book version but will provide a look at how the modern FBI was formed. People who stutter will no doubt be amazed that the very first FBI Director, J. Edgar Hoover, was a person who stuttered and successfully managed his speech throughout his life and high-profile career that remains controversial to this day.



The True Story Behind the *Teacher Who Made a Difference*



My name is Corinne Litzenberg and I am a stutterer. I stuttered for as long as I can remember. I grew up in a family with five brothers and sisters and was the second oldest. One of my brothers, Albert, stuttered but he outgrew his stutter. Not me. When I was four years old, a speech pathologist named Mrs. Taylor came to our house once a week to help me with my speech.

In elementary school I had a speech teacher who would come to my classroom and take me down the hall for help with my speaking. In third grade, my teacher, Mrs. Cassidy helped me with my stutter when some children made fun of me. I won a school-wide poetry contest for my grade level and had to recite my poem over the school intercom. Mrs. Cassidy practiced with me during lunchtime until I read it perfectly.

When my parents were getting divorced the heartache and stress affected my speech. I had a setback and stuttered more than ever. I attended a small, private school from sixth to twelfth grade. With only thirteen in my class, I felt more comfortable but I still stuttered. I used the strategy of substitution of words and chose words that were easier for me to say. For example, instead of saying “ham-burger” I would blurt “burger.” H’s and three syllable words were hard for me so I would search my mind’s word bank for an easier word to substitute. My teachers helped me find my voice through writing. I developed a large, descriptive vocabulary. They would tell me that I painted pictures in their minds with my writing and storytelling.

After graduating from the University of Delaware with a degree in elementary education and special education, I taught second and third grade like Mrs. Cassidy. I was fluent in the classroom and found my true passion teaching young children. My principals would place any students who stuttered in my classroom because they knew I understood their communication challenges and that I would help them with their strategies.

I also wrote science curriculum and attended meetings with other teachers in our county at the board office. There were times I wanted to share my thoughts and great ideas with a large group of educators but I could not interject and speak up for fear I would stutter. Instead, I wrote my ideas and shared them with the elementary supervisor.

I was a single parent and raised my two children when they were four and six. After completing my Masters degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Loyola College, I began writing children’s historical and environmental books while teaching. As an author and a teacher, I challenged myself to earn a Doctorate of



Education from Wilmington University. My mother and sister came to my dissertation defense and were surprised and proud of how fluently I presented my research to the panel of professors. I gave it my all.

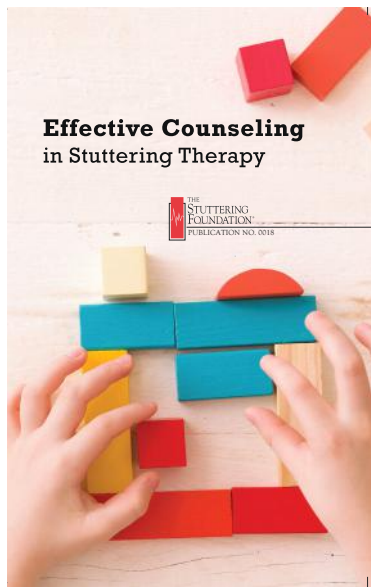
I retired from thirty-two years of teaching but I am still writing children’s books. One of my books I wrote was for The Stuttering Foundation, *The Teacher Who Made a Difference*. When I saw the movie, *The King’s Speech*, it inspired me to tell my story. The book is about my third grade teacher, Mrs. Cassidy who made a difference. I hope you read this book to help you with your stutter. To date, I am a published author of thirteen children’s books. My latest book, *L is for Lewes, An A to Z Maritime History* recently won first place in History from the Delaware Press Association and was a 2023 award winner from The National Federation of Press Women.

Did you know that there are famous singers who stutter when they speak and yet sing fluently? In every career path, there are successful people who overcame obstacles in their lives including stutterers. I also perform historical portrayals in front of small groups without a stutter but it takes practice. I still stutter if I do not get enough sleep or I am going through a stressful situation. I practice my strategies and self care when needed.

No goal is too lofty if you believe in yourself. Dream big and never let anyone tell you that you can’t reach your goals. Seek out those special people you meet in your life like I did, the “candle-lighters” who will encourage you to set your goals and help light the way for you. Don’t pay attention to the “candle blowers” who bully you because you stutter. One day they may see your bright light and you may be a light for them. So let your light shine bright.

This book is available as a free download at StutteringHelp.org/free-e-book

NEW AUDIO BOOK RELEASE



This audio version of the Stuttering Foundation book *Effective Counseling in Stuttering Therapy* presents how counseling principles and methods are used to help those who stutter and their families explore and address their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in therapy for stuttering across the lifespan.

Twenty-eight well-known stuttering specialist clinicians, scholars, and teachers each contribute a chapter to this volume. They include Hugo G. Gregory, PhD (Northwestern University), Eugene B. Cooper, EdD (University of Alabama), Joseph G. Sheehan, PhD (University of California, Los Angeles), Diane G. Hill, MA, CCC-SLP (Northwestern University), Dean E. Williams, PhD (University of Iowa), Charles Van Riper, PhD (Western Michigan University), Barry Guitar, PhD, CCC-SLP (University of Vermont) and Julie Reville, MS, CCC-SLP (University of Vermont), Patricia M. Zebrowski, PhD, CCC-SLP (University of Iowa), and Peter Ramig, PhD, CCC-SLP (University of Colorado, Boulder).

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It's easy to include the Stuttering Foundation in your will, and it will do a world of good! Contact us and/or your legal advisor for assistance.

Charitable contributions, and bequests to the Foundation are tax-deductible, subject to limitations under the code. We welcome gifts of appreciated stock for which you may deduct full market value for income tax purposes. The Stuttering Foundation is a recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please check with your financial advisor, employer, and or legal advisor for details.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (the CAA) signed into law on December 28, 2020, maintains and expands the charitable contribution incentives originally enacted by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (the CARES Act).

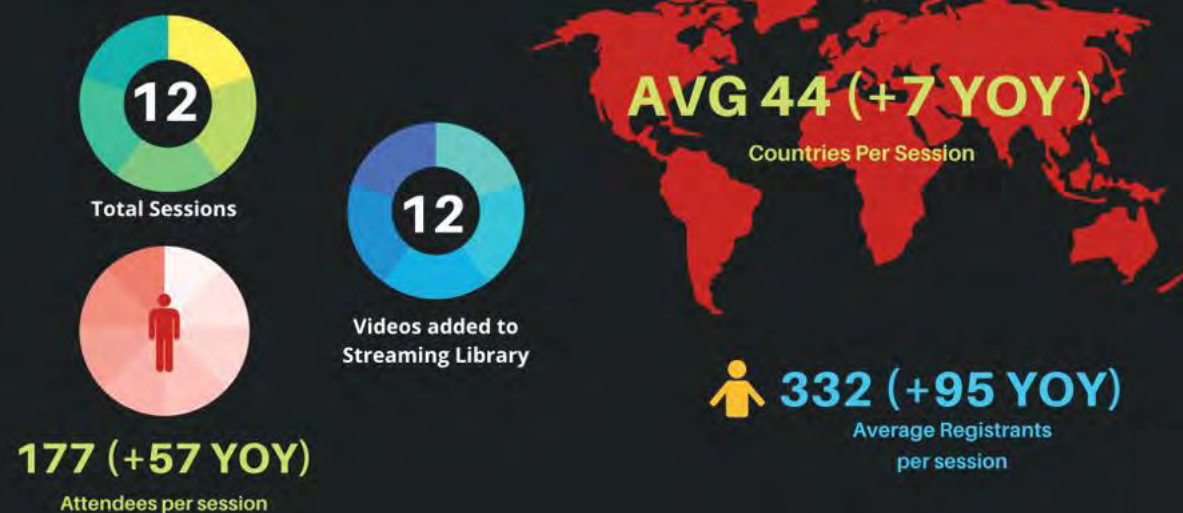
The enhanced charitable contribution deduction benefits apply solely to qualified charitable contributions, which are contributions made in cash to a public charity or "50% charity." For these purposes, this includes a private operating foundation, such as the Stuttering Foundation.



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Virtual Learning by Stuttering Foundation 2023 Analytics

[YOY= year over year growth (from last year)]



SESSION WITH HIGHEST ATTENDANCE & HIGHEST REGISTRATION

Counseling Persons with Communication Disorders

David Luterman, D.Ed., CCC-SLP | Emerson College, Professor Emeritus



SESSION WITH HIGHEST PERCENTAGE ATTENDEES BASED ON REGISTRATION

Assessment with School-Aged Children Who Stutter

Sharon Millard, Ph.D., RegMRCSLT, RegHCPC | Michael Palin Centre



SESSION WITH MOST COUNTRIES REPRESENTED [RANGE 38-50]

Assessing Preschoolers Who Stutter

Ellen Kelly, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, BCS-F | Stuttering Foundation

Temperament, Stuttering Frequency and Impact in Preschool Children Who Stutter

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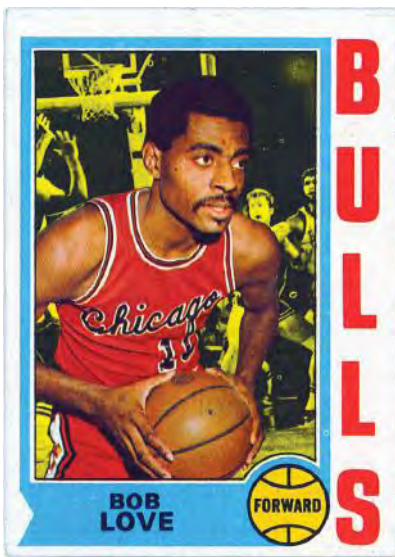
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Today my message to young people who stutter and their parents is direct: don't wait like I did. Speech therapy during childhood has the greatest chance of success.

-Bob Love



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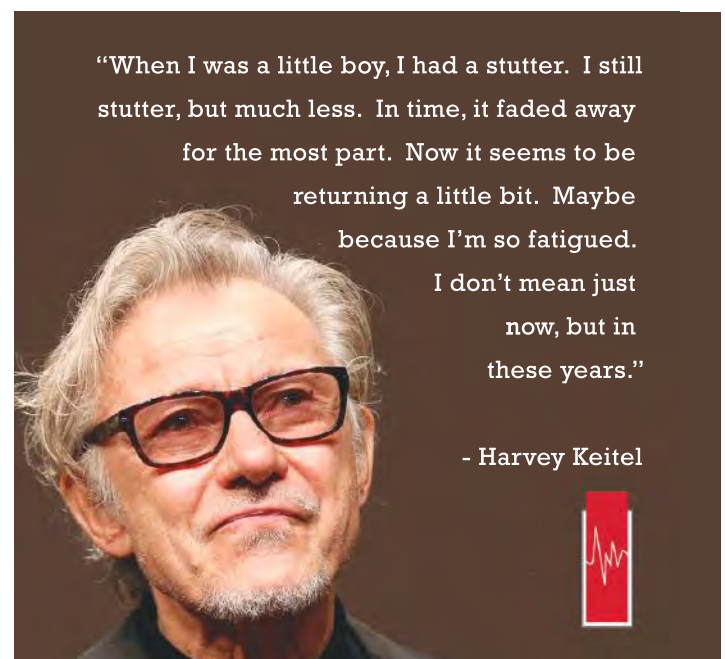
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“When I was a little boy, I had a stutter. I still stutter, but much less. In time, it faded away for the most part. Now it seems to be returning a little bit. Maybe because I’m so fatigued. I don’t mean just now, but in these years.”

- Harvey Keitel





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I wanted everything ,
I didn't want to miss
anything, and I felt
like I was missing out."

- Emily Blunt






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