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Specializing Exclusively in the Treatment of Stuttering Since 1982

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The New England Fluency Program

An Intensive Therapy Program for People Who Stutter

The New England Fluency Program is an integrated therapy program that combines both fluency shaping and stuttering modification approaches to treat individuals who stutter. Clients first confront, identify and become desensitized to moments of stuttering and listener reactions through clinic and community transfer activities. The program concentrates on developing the individual's awareness of physical, emotional, and cognitive components of stuttering and to restructure their beliefs about stuttering so that they can become more comfortable communicators.

Clients are also taught to physically reconstruct the motor behaviors necessary for fluent speech. Research supports that the muscle movement patterns associated with respiration, articulation, and phonation in individuals who stutter are initiated incorrectly. A disturbance in the flow of speech (stuttering) results when these muscle movements are initiated with excessive pressure, speed, and force. By retraining the individual's control of the oral musculature, larynx, and diaphragm, dysfluent speech becomes more fluent. Systematic transfer activities such as the use of the telephone, group conversations, and public speaking activities away from the clinic are completed in the final week of the therapy program.

The program also emphasizes mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques and promotes different ways for an individual to use their internal resources, even in challenging situations. Individuals are assisted in making alterations in their attitudes and belief systems in order to support the physical changes (fluency) that occur as a result of therapy.

Individuals completing the program make significant improvements in their overall level of fluency with approximately 80% of clients achieving fluency levels within the normal fluent range. Clients also report positive changes in the way they manage their stress, in attitudes that they hold about themselves and those around them, and in levels of confidence overall. Weekly post treatment contact with the clinician, for a minimum of two months, helps maintain the important changes derived from therapy. There is no additional fee for the two-month maintenance program following the intensive therapy program. In the case of school age children, support is offered to the public school speech/language pathologist working with the children completing the program.

The program is currently offered several times a year. Children participate in therapy during the summer months. Participants attend therapy for sixteen days, engaging in six - seven hours of therapy daily, four days a week. This intensive schedule is an essential factor in the success of the program.

The program is conducted by Adriana DiGrande, an experienced fluency specialist with over twenty-five years of experience and, since 1982, has worked exclusively with individuals who stutter. When possible, it is preferred that interested individuals attend a pre-program consultation. The purpose of the consultation is to discuss the program in greater detail and to determine appropriateness for the program.

If you have further questions regarding this program, or if you would like to schedule a consultation meeting, contact Adriana DiGrande at (781) 665 -6623 or by e-mail at digrande@bu.edu. Visit our website at www.stutteringtherapy.org for the current program schedule.