

INTERVIEW: ADULT FLUENCY EVALUATION

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BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF STUTTERING:

This is an introductory portion of the interview. The focus should be on getting the client to describe in specific terms what they believe to be their problem. This section explores specific information regarding the onset and development of the stuttering problem.

General Description of Communication Problem

- Describe as specifically as possible the difficulty you are having with talking at the present time. Who referred you for this evaluation and why?

Onset of Communication Problem

- Who first noticed that you had/have a problem talking?
- At what age did this occur?
- What behaviors to this belief?
- What did people do, if anything, to give you the you had a problem talking?
- When did you first come to believe you had a problem talking? What led you to this belief?
- How often did you have problems talking once you first become aware?

Development of Communication Problem:

- Describe the specific characteristics of your speech at different periods of your life.
- Did you observe any changes as you got older? Explain.
- How often did you experience problems talking? Did this change as you got older?
- Describe the type of situations when you found it easier to talk and when it was more difficult to talk? Explain what made it more easy or difficult.
- Describe how you perceived others reacted to the way you talked. What did they do or not do?
- Describe how you felt about the way you talked and other peoples reactions.
- Describe what other people, such as your parents, teachers, siblings, or others do or not do to help you with your speech problem? What were your reactions to these things? Did they help?
- Describe anything you did to help yourself with your problem. Did any of these things help? Explain.

PRESENT STATUS OF PROBLEM:

In this section, focus is placed on describing as specifically as possible the characteristics of the client's behavior, and response patterns associated with their speech problem. The client should be encouraged to be as explicit as possible. The clinician should prompt for examples and demonstrations. Emphasis is placed on identifying the relationship among the client's speech patterns as they relate to their beliefs, feelings, reactions, and goals.

Awareness

- Who believes you have a speech problem at the present time?
- Are there people you talk to on a regular basis who don't know that you have a problem?

Variability

- In general, how often do you experience problems talking? On average how many times will you stutter in a week? A day?
- At present, is your problem consistent or does it vary? Describe how it varies relative to (1) the frequency of occurrence of stuttering moments, (2) how long stuttering moments last, and (3) the degree of struggle you experience during stuttering moments.
- Describe times when you find it easier to talk. Explain what you think makes these times easier.
- Describe times when you find it more difficult to talk. Explain what you think makes these times harder for you.

Anticipation

- Are you able to tell when you are going to have problems?
- What happens that lets you know?
- Is this consistent or variable?
- How accurate are you in predicting you will have a problem?
- How often do you anticipate stuttering (e.g. in a week, a day)?
- Does anticipating stuttering bother you in any way? Explain.

Adjustment/Coping Strategies

- Do you do anything to hide your problem from others? Describe.
- Do you do anything to prevent or avoid the problem from occurring? Describe.
- Do you do anything to get out of or shorten the problem when it occurs? Describe.
- Describe whether these strategies help or not? To reduce the frequency/severity of the problem? To make speech more “easy” and “natural”?
- Do you avoid any person, place, or situation because of your speech problem? Explain. What affects does this have on you and your problem?

Emotional Arousal

- Do you experience any emotional arousal that is associated with talking? To what degree do you consider your emotional reactions to be a part of your problem?
- Let’s discuss your emotional reactions in more detail.
- Do you experience any emotional arousal before you talk or have difficulty? Rate the degree of arousal you typically experience (1-5 scale). Describe what you are typically thinking before you stutter.
- Do you experience emotional arousal while you stuttering? Rate degree of arousal you typically experience (1-5 scale). What thoughts do you typically have at this time?
- Do you experience emotional arousal after you have experienced problems talking? Rate the degree of arousal you typically experience (1-5 scale). What thoughts do you have at this time?
- What affects does your emotional arousal have on the way you talk?

Effects of Stuttering on Personal Relationships

- Describe how you think other people react to the way you talk. What do people do, specifically, to give you this impression? How often do you observe these behaviors from others? When was the last time you observed someone reacting to your stuttering?
- Describe the effects, if any, your speech has on your social life and your personal relationships.
- What, specifically, do you believe would be different about you or your life if you did not stutter?

Effects on Stuttering on Professional/Educational Development

- Describe what, if any, effects your stuttering problem have on your education and/or professional goals. Explain.

CLIENT'S PERCEPTION OF SEVERITY

This section explores the client's perception of how severe they believe their problem is to them. Severity is a relative term and encompasses many areas of speech and communication. The clinician can use a five-point severity scale to help the client put the questions into context. Rating of 1 indicates a very mild problem and a 5 indicates a very severe problem.

- Rate what you consider to be the overall severity of your problem using a one-to-five rating scale with 1 being very mild and 5 being very severe.
- Using the same five-point scale, rate the severity of your problem in terms of the actual speaking difficulty you experience. the same five-point scale.
- Using the same five-point scale, rate the severity of your problem in terms of the emotional arousal and reactions you experience.

PREVIOUS THERAPY

The clinician explores with the client the nature and philosophy of any previous treatment. This includes any beliefs or opinions the client has regarding what they have learned to do to more effectively handle their problem.

- Have you ever had any treatment for your stuttering or any other communication problem?
- When did you have this treatment, and how long did it last?
- Describe as specifically as possible the goals of the treatment. What were you trying to accomplish?
- Describe as specifically as possible what you learned to do to help with your problem.
- What aspects of treatment did you find helpful? Explain.
- What aspects of treatment did you find not helpful? Explain.

CLIENT'S GOALS

This section explores specifically what the client considers to be a "successful" speaker. Encourage the client to be as specific as possible.

- Describe what you would like to occur as a results of therapy at the present time.
- Describe what you would consider to be successful talking.