

**To:** ISA Board of Directors; ISA Advisory Board of Directors and Member Associations (MA)

**From:** Michael Sugarman, ISA Chair

**Date:** 02 April 2010

**Re: April '10 e newsflash**

**Board membership and ISA administrative matters:**

Former Chair and Board Member Benny Ravid resigned as a Board member, and I hope he does well with his transition. He has asked not to participate in ISA matters. However, in this difficult time the ISA faces challenges that will help us to reflect and grow.

Summarized below are three recent motions considered by the Board:

**Motion #37:** Thomas Krall and the 10 Recommendations Committee prepared another Draft, this one version #5. Many Board members think that additional editing is needed for English expression (for Thomas, English is a second language) and for length. Some also think that some substantive points should be improved. Motion #37 was: Should Draft #5 be emailed at this time to the ISA member associations, for their review and comment, or should work instead occur, first, on a version #6. It was a close vote by the Board, but the vote was NO (to not distribute version #5 at this time). However, the subject is still under some discussion by the Board.

**Motion #38:** The Constitution provides that the ISA Board of Directors should have at least 5 members and no more than 9 members. The Constitution also provides that between ISA Membership meetings, the Board may appoint a person to serve as a Board member for the remainder of a term should there be a resignation or other opening. However, the Constitution does not require that the Board take any action. Motion #38 was: Should the membership of the ISA Board be increased to 9 (nine) at this time? The vote was NO.

**Motion #39:** This motion states that a procedure should be written and then approved to assist the Chair, in the future (should this be needed), in dealing with possible problems between members of the Board. The vote was YES.

**News about People Who Stutter (PWS):**

In the United States 'Our Time Theatre' will be honoring Carly Simon. As well, Ms. Simon will be singing in concert on behalf of 'Our Time Theatre.' 'Friends who Stutter'

keynote speaker will be Alan Rabinowitz, Ph.D. a wildlife conservationist and PWS. You can listen to him by going to [www.themoth.org/listen](http://www.themoth.org/listen)

### **Information about Stuttering for your consideration and discussion:**

The ISA does not endorse a particular theory or therapy---the following are for discussion among PWS and MA.

**Nan Ratner, Ph.D.** presentation for the East Bay Chapter (and other San Francisco Bay Area chapters) of the National Stuttering Association:

[http://www.bayareansa.com/Site/Nan\\_Ratner.html](http://www.bayareansa.com/Site/Nan_Ratner.html)

<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/hesp/facultyStaff/ratner/SF%20NSATranslating%20recent%20research.pdf>

**Gunars Neiders, M.A.** wrote this: My life's work

As many of us who had chronic stutter/stammer, I took control into my own hands. There are many of us who have become more or less spontaneously fluent. My journey started with defining stuttering as a total lifestyle, rather than simply an isolated speech impediment. I understood that stuttering has genetic, environmental, emotional, attitudinal, and, above all, learned elements that resulted in secondary, as well as primary, symptoms. The brain was in control - not the articulators, vocal folds or breathing.

Our lives move through various stages: 1) Genetic Make-up Stage—we do inherit the tendency to stutter, but these genes have to be expressed (activated); 2) Pre-Natal Stage—whatever happens in the womb does have an impact on whether the genes are activated; 3) Birthing Stage—trauma occurs during birth; 4) Early Language Acquisition Stage; 5) Language Development Difficulty Stage; 6) Awareness of Speech Difficulty Stage; 6) Comparison with Others Stage; 7) Definition as “Something is Deficient About Me” and Labeling Stage; 8) Classical Conditioning Associating Speech with Danger and Anxiety Stage; 9) Operant Conditioning of Forcing/Struggle in Speech Stage; 10) Operant Conditioning of Secondary Symptoms Stage; 11) Speech Situation Choice, Avocation, and Vocational Choice Stage; 12) Iatrogenic Traumatization and Hopelessness Building Stage; 13) Reaction Stage; and 14) finally, if we are lucky, Productive Therapy Stage—either conducted by a therapist or ourselves.

One way to get ourselves out of the bog of being stuck is to use a methodology as a guide. My serendipitous method was Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), because I saw a book by Albert Ellis and ended up in the same geographical location as he was. He became my therapist and then my mentor. After retiring from 36 years as a Boeing engineer, I switched from being part time involved in the field of psychology to a full time student at Argosy University . There I finally had time to fully understand the psychological implications of stuttering, based on Joseph Sheehan's

statement “Stuttering is what we do to avoid stuttering” and his iceberg analogy, which my friend Russ Hicks has popularized for our generation. Anne Smith has a volcano analogy that might be even more accurate. Wendell Johnson, a General Semanticist, really paved the way for REBT. In case you want to read the original informative prescription of one way of overcoming stuttering, my friend Judy Kuster has linked my dissertation on Stuttering Home Page

<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/> under NEW! [Theoretical Development of a Proposed Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy Based Model to Treat Persons with Chronic Perseverative Stuttering Syndrome](#) by Gunars K. Neiders.

Caveat: In talking to John Tetnowski, another good friend of mine, at a Tacoma workshop where he presented to 126 Speech and Language Pathologists, we both agreed that we have not established whether there is only one type of developmental stuttering. Another friend of mine, Walter Manning, the author of the popular Clinical Decision Making in Fluency Disorders (in its Third Edition), is investigating another psychological approach to stuttering—Narrative Therapy. Frances Cook and Willie Botterill have just released DVD No. 9900 through The Stuttering Foundation “Tools for Success: A Cognitive Behavior Therapy Taster”. The conclusion I reach is that even if REBT is not the only way, the psychological approach is on the ascent.

### **Trip to India by Keith Boss (ISA Board member):**

I asked Keith Boss to share his trip to India. Keith wrote the following:

I planted the idea of TISA (The Indian Stammering Association) to Indian People Who Stammer (IPWS) in 2006. A milestone event occurred near the end of last year. TISA was registered as a Charity. I regarded it as very good news and decided to go to India to help them to celebrate the achievement, so I made a private visit to meet many of my TISA friends. This is a brief overview of my visit in February 2010. A longer version will be presented in One Voice 28 (in July). TISA has a blog site and many people I met wrote their thoughts of my visit on the blog site and included many pictures and two or three videos. These can be seen at <http://t-tisa.blogspot.com/>. If you want to follow my trip in date order, start way down on page two and work backwards. Most, but not all is in date sequence. More information also exists at <http://stammer.in/>.

I gave TISA possible dates and they planned a round tour so that I could meet with as many of the 13 SHGs as possible. I arrived in Delhi on the 11<sup>th</sup> February and returned to the UK on the 26<sup>th</sup> February. Dr. Sachin, the TISA coordinator, joined me for much of the visit. We spent time with SHGs in and near Delhi, Pune, Chennai and Herbertpur in the foothills of the Himalayas. We and other TISA members met privately or in groups with IPWS / SHGs / media (newspapers and TV) / teachers / schools and a teacher training degree college / employers / parents, families, friends / Therapists / local health staff / and anyone with an interest who wanted to talk. We talked and gave workshops about how stammering affected our lives; possible therapies; SHGs; management of school classes where there are children who

stammer (CWS); education; pre-school CWS; employment and improving communication and leadership skills to help both employee and employer and other relevant subjects like interviews / dating / etc..

My trip to India was very beneficial for me. I focused on helping others and in doing so I received many benefits myself. This was the first chance for the newly formed TISA Charity Association to demonstrate the undoubted capabilities of its members. Members had a reason to step outside their families / their SHGs / their work places / their comfort zones; to meet other TISA members; to carry out synchronised complex organisational tasks which will be useful when they start to plan State / National conferences. We spread the awareness about stammering in India with the help of several local newspapers and the Livemint website with a long article and a video clip. I look forward to the day when I can raise funds for an ISP-S visit to India.

### **Cluttering Online Conference:**

Judy Kuster has asked me to spread the word on the 'Cluttering Online Conference'. Here's what Judy wrote:

IT'S ABOUT TIME ....to recognize cluttering! The first online cluttering conference will open on April 14, 2010, linked to the top of The Stuttering Home Page (<http://www.stutteringhomepage.com>).

The conference is FREELY available and open to the public, especially anyone interested in cluttering, a fluency disorder sometimes co-occurring with stuttering and sometimes confused with stuttering.

Conference presentations are written in a reader-friendly style for an international audience, by persons who know cluttering from a personal perspective (people who clutter and their family members) as well as by leading professionals who treat, teach, research, and publish about cluttering from Europe, the United States and Canada. Each presentation will have a threaded discussion attached where participants can respond to the papers, making comments or asking questions of the presenters. A special feature (The Prof is In) will provide opportunity for clinicians, consumers and their families to ask questions of several experts in cluttering. The threaded discussions will be "open" from April 14-May 5. Some of the features of the conference will include video and audio examples of cluttering, a "clinical nugget" section with ideas for treating cluttering, reports of recent research, an opportunity to debate the definition of cluttering and help choose a logo for the International Cluttering Association, as well as presentations on the diagnosis and treatment of cluttering.

Although the entire conference is freely available, it is also available for 1.5 CEUs (15 hours) or 1 university credit through Minnesota State University, Mankato. Those wishing to take the conference for CEUs or credit should contact Carol Myhre ([carol.myhre@mnsu.edu](mailto:carol.myhre@mnsu.edu)) to learn of the requirements and how to register for the summer session at Minnesota State University.

**ISAD Themes:**

I am again seeking your input for ISAD themes. Please email me your suggestions. I came up with one on Saturday. "People Who Stutter Inspire Other People Who Stutter"

Warmly,

Michael Sugarman, ISA Chair