

# One Voice



International  
Stuttering  
Association

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Left: Thomas Krall (Board member); Middle: Benny Ravid (Board Chair); Right: Dritan Kici (Advisory board member). Photo courtesy to Benny Ravid.

**8th World Congress Held In Cavtat-Dubrovnik, Croatia, May 6-10, 2007**  
**Benny Ravid Was Elected Chair of The Board of ISA**  
**The First Stuttering Essay Contest: Prize-Winning Essays Inside!**  
**50 Years Experience with Stuttering – 14 Strategies for Change** by Mark Irwin  
**And articles from** Keith Boss, Joseph Lukong, Paul Goldstein

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***A world that understands Stuttering***

## 8<sup>th</sup> World Congress for People who Stutter

On 11 of May, 2007, in the beautiful Croatian coast town of Cavtat, near Dubrovnik the 8-th World Congress for the People Who Stutter, organized by International Stuttering Association and the Croatian Association “Hinko Freund”, concluded its activities with a new message for the world. More than 350 representatives of national stuttering associations, scientists, speech and language therapist, persons who stutter and others interested in stuttering, exchanged their ideas and studies, for a better understanding of stuttering and its recognition as a spectrum disability with heavy consequences on the

lives of people affected by this shattering communication disorder.

On Sunday the first day of the Congress, after the meeting for Member Associations, the representatives of the Associations elected the new ISA Board. Later in the Congress The ISA Board elected the new Chair who will lead this international association spread everywhere in the world for the next 3 years.

Mr. Benny Ravid from Israel Stuttering Association was elected Chair of the Board of ISA.

### ISA Statement

For the world to understand stuttering and remove ignorance we must all move beyond the borders of our own village.

In closing the 8-th World Congress For the People Who Stutter, with the theme “Inclusion: Creating Our Place In Society,” the International Stuttering Association, has chosen to spread the message that came out of all the discussions from the key speakers and other participants, using the words of Dr. Moussa Dao, from Burkina Faso, who said:

“Being physically disabled as well as a Person Who Stutters, has made me think a lot about stuttering: about the frustration of speaking, but not being able to say the right words, the need to find understanding for my disabilities from fellow human beings so we can all overcome our ignorance.

If by magic, I was offered the choice to be free of one of my disabilities, to run or to speak without stuttering, I would happily keep my

crippled legs in exchange for speaking without stuttering. Unfortunately, my physical disability attracts more attention than my stuttering.

We can get out of our village and discover that the world is a beautiful place where you should be listened to, for what you are saying, not the way you are saying it. There is need for so much respect and understanding. I have seen in the schools of my country that small steps towards better understanding of stuttering, especially in children, has freed them from discrimination and teasing, and has opened new windows for their lives.

We should work together. We must let everyone know that stuttering is a big problem not only because it affects more than 60 million people all over the world, but because it is misunderstood and ignored by society and the majority of the world’s governments.”

**ISA - International Stuttering Association acknowledges the Croatian Stuttering Association (Hinko Freund), its chair Suzana Jelcic Jaksic and all the Croatian friends who helped with the congress, for their warm hospitality and for the efficient congress organization.**

## Message of ISA Chair

*By Benny Ravid*

Dear friends!

To stress further the message of our closing statement, I must say that to find our place as equals in society we should advance our knowledge about stuttering, as part of a better understanding of stuttering by the whole society. This cannot be reached without taking upon our self's bold goals and new ideas for the future of ISA and creation of a new warm wind between Persons Who Stutter, the professional community of SLPs and one of the most important players, Governments all over the world. To begin with, we need better information about stuttering in schools. We need professional attention for our children. We need more attention for adults who stutter and legal acknowledgement of

stuttering as a spectrum disability that can go from mild to severe, like every other disability.

Maybe it is too soon to put down a mission statement for the next three years up to the Beijing Congress in China, but I was given permission by the my fellow board members of ISA to inform you that the main focus of our work will be on the children affected by stuttering, without forgetting the reason why the ISA was formed, supporting self help initiatives. It is time that self help should be considered to help our children in addition to helping adults.

Thank you for your great work and your trust.



*Retiring Board Chair Mark Irwin receiving an ISA Distinguished Service Award from Awards Committee Chair Mel Hoffman at the ISA Congress Gala Dinner in Dubrovnik*

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Stuttering Essay Contest

*By Masuhiko Kawasaki*

On May 8<sup>th</sup> 2007, the 1<sup>st</sup> Stuttering Essay Contest (SEC) was held in Cavtat, Croatia.

One of the reasons that stuttering isn't easily understood by the general public is that we, PWS, don't talk about ourselves to them. Especially, since we don't write about ourselves, the general public can't understand the reason why we, PWS, are anxious, or why we have any difficulty. If PWS write about their experiences in their essay, and if not only other PWS, but also the general public read it, I believe this will help transform the goal of ISA "A World That Understand Stuttering" into a reality. That was one of the

main goals of the Stuttering Essay Contest.

The SEC offers another significant benefit. It does not only help the readers understand PWS and stuttering. To write down one's experiences is to look back over one's painful past through the eyes of today's self, and to review the experiences objectively. Through this rearrangement of one's experiences, the essay writers can find new meaning in their experiences, and this might have the effect of healing.

Here are 14 essays, in order of submission.

Prem Kumar	India	"Dear One-Voice readers"
Kazuo Kimura	Japan	"Thanks to my stutter, I was able to get married"
Masaru Kamitani	Japan	"The liquor store owner and I"
Joseph Nsubuga	Uganda	"Stuttering the 'Unchecked Luggage' on our speech flight"
Bruce Whitfield	New Zealand	"The joy of being someone who stutters"
Nina Clark-Whitfield	New Zealand	"Emily has a stststutter"
Jim Caroopen	Mauritius	"What is your name?"
Richard Stein	America	"Alien Nation"
Pramila Bohara	Nepal	"About Stuttering"
Anonymous	Australia	"Cinderella – The True Story"
Michael Winkler	Germany	"The Meaning of Stuttering"
Sri Jai Selgetz	No country listed	"A Letter to My Oldest Friend"
Deepak Karmacharya	Nepal	"Stutters Problems and Solutions"
Arne Hope	Norway	"The Frights and Joys of Speaking"

In total, we got 14 submissions, but 2 of them were not eligible for screening. For example, one essay was very interesting, but it was about twice as long as the contest guidelines proscribed. Another essay was disqualified because it was obviously meant as an advertisement for a particular therapy technique. The SEC cannot accept such

promotional material for consideration.

After explaining the goals of the SEC, I introduced former ISA Chair, Mark Irwin, and he announced the winners.

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	Nina Clark Whitfield
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	Masaru Kamitani
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Michael Winkler
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	Sri Jai Selgetz



Fortunately, Michael Winkler was present in this room, and he got a big round of applause. Then, I introduced Anita S. Blom and she read the 1<sup>st</sup> Prize Essay “Emily has a stststutter” in front of audiences. In this way, the 1<sup>st</sup> SEC finished successfully. I hope that three years from now, at the next World Congress, many good Stuttering Essays will be collected for the 2nd SEC.

At present, the SEC is only held in

English. But, in the near future, I hope that SEC will be held in many countries, in many areas and in many languages. It is important that PWS know that there are other PWS who have similar painful experiences. So, by sharing experiences with each other, we can develop a more objective view of our stuttering. I want PWS to know that there are many other PWS who live happily and fully with their stuttering.

## 1st Prize Essay: Emily has a Stststutter

By Nina Clark-Whitfield

Canterbury branch of the New Zealand Speak Easy Association

Emily hated literature class. That was when everyone in the class read aloud in turn. They each had to read two or three pages of their current novel. It was no big deal for the rest of the class – they didn’t have a stutter as Emily did. Therefore, no one understood her fear about reading aloud.

Emily had stuttered ever since she remembered. Even though she’d had speech therapy, it had made no difference. It wasn’t a speech problem per se but an emotional one. She only stuttered when she was nervous. And naturally she became nervous when she had to read aloud – a vicious circle.

For those who don’t know, a stutter is a hesitation of syllables – a blocked pause where the words or syllables are stuck. It can cause anxiety for the listener as well as the stutterer, who struggles to get the words out.

Emily sat staring out of the window. Her self-deprecating ditty, that she had composed about herself, was running through her head:

*When every utterance is a stutter  
And every syllable is a stammer,  
There’s nothing to be done –  
For such a stuttery stammerer.*

Emily’s wandering attention was refocused now, as she heard Mrs Ashby ask the class to take out their novels. She held her breath, distractedly listening to the clock ticking,

while Mrs Ashby nominated on which side of the room the reading was to begin. She crossed her fingers as she whispered to herself: “Please don’t let it be this side of the room.” Alas, for Emily, it was. Jane was asked to start the morning’s reading. Emily was nine desks from Jane. There would be plenty of time for Emily’s turn, before the bell rang.

In anticipation of having to read aloud, Emily had already broken out in a sweat. Now she was hot; now she was cold. In her chest, her heart pounded. Jenny had just finished her piece. There were seven more to read before Emily. She was so strung up she was almost quivering. Ten minutes before the break, there were six more to read. Emily felt sick. Her dread overwhelmed her. All the muscles in her neck tightened and were aching. All this time the clock ticked loudly. Everyone else in the class was so relaxed about reading aloud. For them, it was as easy as reciting the ABC. She wondered, for the millionth time, why she always managed to work herself into such a state. She made it harder for herself than it already was.

There were five more to read before Emily. Relentlessly, the clock ticked loudly. It was so silly. It wasn’t as if she couldn’t read. It was the fear that she wouldn’t get the words out – that she would stutter and stumble. The more worried she became, the worse her stutter became.

From the day that Emily started school, she had suffered from taunts in the playground because of her stutter. Over the years, her schoolmates had cruelly ridiculed her by imitating her stutter. When they mimicked her, she just wanted the ground to open up and swallow her. Unkind children were too ready to mock her misfortune. Therefore, she was deeply scarred by the painful memories of such incidents, which served to make her stutter worse because of heightened tension.

Now, as her musings came to an end, she became aware again of the clock ticking loudly. It had become her death-knell – a horrific sense of foreboding, the result of having stuttered all her life.

“Ding-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling-a-ling.” She was saved by the bell. For now, there was a reprieve. There was always a next time, though, when it would be just the same.

*When every utterance is a stutter  
And every syllable is a stammer,  
There's nothing to be done –  
For such a stuttery stammerer.*

Such is Emily's anguish – or any stutterer's, for that matter, who waits in turn to read aloud.

This surely is an exaggeration, you say? Alas, no! Emily will soon tell you in a quavering voice and with tears in her eyes that this is exactly as it is.

Very few people realize that stuttering afflicts one per cent of the population. Indeed, stuttering is a debilitating speech dysfluency. For those so disabled, it is an onerous

millstone to carry around the neck that inhibits meaningful relationships and normal social interaction. Often it dominates the stutterer's waking hours, turning him or her into a social pariah. It can even intrude into peaceful slumber as recurrent nightmares. Even though there is no actual cure, there is light at the end of this seemingly black tunnel. For those who truly seek deliverance from this accursed *bete noire*, there are speech techniques that can be learnt for controlling the stutter. To be sure, to use this tool requires great courage and fortitude. But this *is* the answer for beating this confounded curse: to prevent the blocks and facial contortions; to stem the flow of repetitions and prolongations. At the same time, the stutterer must seek a holistic lifestyle by minimizing stress and by discovering inner peace through relaxation. A comrade, to lend a friendly ear and share worries, goes a long way to reducing the stutterer's lonely isolation.

Thus, by simply choosing to journey down this positive road, rather than keeping to that old, familiar, steep, rough path that keeps the stutterer a victim of distorted speech patterns, life can be much richer and more enjoyable – no longer the constant battle of dejection and humiliation that it was.

Even Emily, the girl with the stststutter, has changed her tune. Fortunately, her self-deprecating ditty has now become:

*When every utterance was a stutter,  
And every syllable was a stammer,  
I found an amazing tool –  
So I'm not a stuttery stammerer.*

*(Continued from page 6)*

My feeling towards the liquor store owner was changed, too. Like the owner, I now believe that one should speak with a lively and loud voice even while stuttering: this simple manner is the correct way.

“H-h-h-h-Hello! M-m-m-m-May I-I-I-I help y-y-y-you?”

Today, I hear his lively, loud voice. I can picture him smiling. Now I feel comfortable hearing his voice.

## 2nd Prize Essay: The liquor store owner and I

*By Masaru Kamitani*

Japan Stuttering Project, Japan

“H-h-h-h-Hello! M-m-m-m-May I-I-I-I help y-y-y-you?”

From the store next door, I hear a lively and loud voice. He always stutters terribly. This man is my relative and he runs a liquor store. I certainly hated to hear his voice. I always thought, “Don’t speak loudly, you stutter terribly. You are so pathetic. Don’t stutter, keep quiet!”

He was one of the reasons that I began to stutter. When I was a second-year pupil in elementary school, there was another boy who stuttered in my neighborhood. I sometimes mocked his way of speaking. Soon another friend of mine said to me, “Be careful! You might catch stuttering from him. Your relative is a person who stutters.”

“What! No kidding! What should I do if I started to stutter?” From that very moment, my fear of stuttering overwhelmed me. At that time, stuttering was a shameful matter for me. I looked down on it. However, I began to stutter gradually. “I’m in trouble. I have become a person who stutters.” Soon, I couldn’t control my way of speaking at all.

I don’t know why, but I always had a classmate who stuttered, all throughout my schooldays. After I became a person who stutters, I despised stuttering even more. So, I didn’t talk to my stuttering classmate. I didn’t approach him, because I didn’t want to be associated with another stuttering person. I didn’t want my classmates to see two people speaking together with a stutter.

When I was called on to read a book in class, I read it with a stutter as a joke. Sometimes I made a pretense of stuttering on purpose. Some of my classmates said, “You stutter as a joke.” I didn’t want to admit my stuttering. I felt that I trampled the feelings of my classmate who stuttered, and I was sorry at heart. I couldn’t talk to him anymore.

After I started working, I continued to hide my stuttering. I wanted to cure it. As I was too busy to go to a speech clinic, everyday passed with feelings of confusion and melancholy.

At the beginning of this year, I was able to visit a meeting of the Osaka Stuttering Project, for the first time. Of course, I only went there to cure my stuttering, even if just a little bit. That was all. I didn’t want anything more. However, when I attended the meeting, my view of life changed completely. My way of thinking was reversed dramatically.

When I went to the meeting, I had 2 different feelings at the same time. One feeling was that I didn’t want to be compared to the other attendants. The other feeling was that I envied them and I wanted to become like them because they seemed very happy and positive even though they stuttered a lot. Before, I had completely avoided my friends who stutter. For 30 years, I had hated to admit my stuttering. So, I couldn’t believe that my beliefs changed so quickly, after only one short meeting.

Until I went to that meeting, I believed that good things and bad things in this world were completely separate and different. However, my way of thinking was reversed, like a coin reverses its sides. Now I believe speaking with a stutter can be a positive thing. I never dreamed how happy I could be, speaking to other people who stutter and enjoying their company. My way of thinking about my stuttering may change again in the future. But I want to treasure the feeling that I have in this moment. I wish I had become a member of the Osaka Stuttering Project much earlier, but I think we can start a new life anytime. So, now I want to start my new life with my new friends who stutter.

*(continued on page 5)*

## 3rd Prize Essay: The Meaning of Stuttering

By Michael Winkler

Dresden/Germany, February 2007

After certain experiences get alive inside of you it is difficult to imagine how it used to be before. For almost 25 years I had gone through various ups and downs in stuttering. Then I reached a particular point where everything seemed to be quite simple. It happened on a walking tour through a forest near Dresden, the city I live, in the middle of December 2006. I tried to catch a group which had started one hour before I did. Actually, I had not really been in a hurry and walked alone for almost two hours before I finally reached them. On my lonesome – but not lonely – way an idea as clear as a ray of sunlight entered my mind: *Stuttering is a corrective for the unconscious use of speech in the society; just like not being able to talk for mute people.*

But, what does that mean?

Everyone of us is a part of *the* society. Getting conscious about our own speaking always starts with ourselves; in exchange with other people. What did we say? How did we say it? Why ... all these questions. Usually people don't take that much care about the things they say. Yet, isn't every word a thing that can change other things, other people's minds? Changed minds can change other minds. In the end, it's the minds which give orders for any action using the spoken word or a signature as tools. Our words will be in some way materialized in the very end. Doesn't even the Bible say: *"In the beginning there was the word"*? If so, then we can be sure, that shortly after the first occurrence of speech there was also the first abuse of the word. If God exists then a specific countermeasure to limit that abuse must have been introduced to the world as well. But how did it happen? How can we recognise it?

Well, let's take a very popular example. Most of us were raised up in a time when TV and cars were common things of our everyday lives. Not so for our grandparents for who both things were as amazing as the Internet is for us nowadays. In some households the TV set(s) won't get switched off the whole day. Plenty of people drive their cars every day. How can we see and feel the difference of a life without TV sets or cars? Usually there's no reason for us to stop using such things unless a time will come when we get sort of fed up with them. Sometimes – and I assume that this is more probable – by certain circumstances we won't have a TV set or car anymore. Perhaps we're on holiday or had a car crash. In these times we may recognise that neither a TV set nor a car is really necessary for life. Surely, sometimes it's good to have one, but in fact these aren't things which will decide whether we'll survive or not. On the contrary, we're not in the least aware of the various side effects of watching TV and driving cars regularly. Not being able to watch TV in a crowd of TV freaks and lovers must almost be like not being able to speak freely in a crowd of "speak-the-whole-day-about-what-I-like" people. It must be similar to walking in a queue of four wheel cars.

However, times have changed. People who watch TV unconsciously are quite often overloaded with information, not being aware of what they see and feel in fact. Car drivers end up in traffic jams in at least half of their driving times. So, what's the advantage of using your own eyes to make up your opinion instead of watching the world on a TV screen? What's the benefit of walking in times of high speed and world-wide mobility? What's the use, the advantage ... well, the *meaning* of



stuttering in a time that puts communicative skills on the top of the agenda of necessary things in everyone's life?

It is the contrast. Stuttering creates distinctions, changes and thus awareness; no matter if we want that or not. It's up to us how we see and use it. Slowing down – not only on the streets and in the TV sets – is an issue of our recent lifetime; slowing down in speech as well. Speaking slower and less fluent demands some effort of the people listening. Usually people try to listen. Even if not ... is it our problem?

Scientific research has shown that the nervous system of people who stutter is different from those of fluent speakers. It makes us more sensitive when we speak. We, the people affected by stuttering, can decide whether we call this very characteristic a progressive, evolutionary development or a malfunction. Ignorance and missing self-esteem very often make us look like “poor people” who have to be helped in managing our lives. Sure, we need

the support of some people. Yet, it starts with the acceptance that stuttering is simply another way to talk. Firstly, we have to accept it as a part of us, of our souls. If stuttering was dangerous for the existence of our species then stuttering people would have died out over the centuries. However, more than 3200 years after Moses – another famous person who stuttered – lived, still millions of people stutter ... world-wide.

Stuttering is something very useful, maybe even necessary for human evolution. Years over years we were taught that – coming back to cars and watching TV once more – having a small car or even no car at all or not being informed about the last episode of the daily soap opera or the latest news won't allow us to be recognised members of the society. All that is only valuable when really needed – used consciously, meaning in time and with efficiency. More than fluent speaking, stuttering is a beneficial tool to watch ourselves and other people speak. Let's take it as a guide on our adventurous journey to consciousness.

## The 45 Member Associations of ISA

Africa (3)	Europe (22)	Lithuania	Multinational Organizations (3)
Burkina Faso	Austria	Luxembourg	• The European League of
Cameroon	Belgium	Netherlands	Stuttering Associations (ELSA)
South Africa	Bulgaria	Norway	• Passing Twice
	Croatia	Poland	• TTM-L (Latin America)
Asia (7)	Denmark	Spain (2 Associations)	
India	Estonia	Sweden	America (8)
Iran	Finland	Switzerland	Argentina
Israel	France	United Kingdom	Canada (3 Associations)
Japan (2 Associations)	Germany		USA (3 Associations)
Kyrgyzstan	Hungary	Australia/Oceania (2)	Brazil
Nepal	Iceland	Australia	
	Ireland	New Zealand	

## 3rd Prize Essay: A Letter to My Oldest Friend

*By Sri Jai Selgetz*

To my dear partner in life, Stutter.

We have been an inseparable couple now for too long to remember. We go everywhere together and everyone knows us as a couple but I have unfortunately reached a point in my life where I feel a need to have my own space so it is with the deepest of regret and the fondest of memories of both fun and sometimes traumatic moments, that I must seek your loving consent for a separation.

I remember the first time that we met when we were both only 5 years old. I had been asked to stand up in class at my new school and talk about my family when, with a burst of light, you came into the room and wrapped yourself around me like a warm glove. Your presence just took my breath away and left me speechless in awe of your power and stunning influence over every thread of emotion within my body. I went weak at the knees and my heart pounded with apprehension as you gazed into my eyes longingly wanting to be with me forever. From that day forward we have been as one.

I remember how jealous you were when I first rang a girl on the phone to ask her for a date. When she answered the phone you literally jumped on me from behind the door. As I struggled to release myself from your loving embraces you affectionately pulled at my face contorting it in all directions. When I finally released myself from your less than tender touch and went to ask the girl to escort me to a party you gently kissed my lips so that I could not speak those words that I so desperately wanted to say and you remained there until the phone dropped from my weakened grasp.

Our close relationship did not go unnoticed at school but all were jealous of your fondness for me. Whenever we embraced in their presence they would laugh and jeer me as they watched me react to your magnetic influence over every aspect of my being.

I remember the time I was thrown out of one classroom for misbehaving under your spell and being marched to the head masters office for a severe chastisement with the cane. When I was confronted with this mountain of a man staring down at me seeking an explanation for my unsociable behavior, you once again stopped me from saying those words that might have seen me in deeper trouble. I look back now with a smile on my face at how when I went to speak you shoved that invisible wet sock into my mouth then started shaking my head and rolling my eyes as you slapped my hand against my side as I was so desperate to speak and breath with that sock in my mouth. It must have looked so amazing to that man who just told me to go back to class and we laughed until we cried at what he must have thought.

Or the time that I was stopped by a police officer for doing 100 in a 60 zone in my car. At a time when a lesser friend would have turned her back on me you were there to help in your usual and brilliant way, always with that touch of a sense of humor. I still see the look on his face as you literally held my tongue on the top of my mouth as I tried to speak. The more I wrestled with you the more you held it there. At the time I felt you were very cruel but when the officer turned and walked away and you released the pressure on my tongue we once again laughed as I wiped away the tears of frustration as we sped off again into the night.

You always had an air of unpredictability about you. I never knew when you would longingly seek my attention. You always had a habit of leaping onto me for the most affectionate of embraces when I was about to purchase an item in a shop and so much so that I felt more comfortable handing the shop assistant a note so that my words would be there should you choose at that moment to interfere with your soft lips and tended hold when you invariably and jealously sought my attention at those times.

Although I hated you at times I missed you when you were not there. I remember the time long ago that you just up and left me without any discussion or warning. I thought I would never see you again. Although your absence meant that I was able to amuse myself by freely talking to people without your constant attention to my welfare, I deep down longed for the security of your warm and tender touch. But I remember too clearly the day that you came back into my life and at that point I knew we would never again part and we were once again the talk of the town.

But life takes some funny twists and turns my dear old friend. I now have a wife and two children and a job that requires my constant attention and devotion. I no-longer have the time nor inclination to entertain the childlike behavior that you invoke in me when we conspire to reek havoc on other people through spoken communication when we touch each other's soul when we embrace. The adult in me longs to be set free of your constant yet caring watchful eye of protection.

You have on many occasions brought me great heart ache and pain yet you have been my greatest teacher. You have taught me to be more compassionate for other people. You have taught me to be less judgmental of others and thereby less judgmental of myself and my own faults. You have taught me that perfection is not the ultimate goal. You have

taught me to be comfortable with my own power. You have taught me to accept what is. You have taught me that I should not try to meet other people's expectations of me but to meet only my own expectations of myself and learn to live in my own world not the world that others create for themselves and would have me enter if not for your wise advice. And finally you have taught me that I should look into another person's eyes when I speak and not see them as someone to be feared but understand that we are all one and to learn to see the love in their soul behind the face or the voice before me.

My dearest Stutter, you have in your own loving but unusual way been a gift from God that has touched my life in so many ways but now we must part and go our separate ways for we have now learned the lesson that each had to learn from the other. Please do not hate me for making this decision but I know in my heart of hearts that our life together was destined to end this way and at this very moment.

Go in peace and love back to the light from which you came for you will always be in heart.

All my love,

Sri Jai Selgetz

## Members of ISA Board of directors

<b>Benny Ravid</b>	Chair	Israel	<b>John Steggle</b>	Vice Chair	Australia
<b>Joseph Lukong Tardzenyuy</b>	Secretary	Cameroon	<b>Thomas Krall</b>	Member	Germany
<b>Michael Sugarman</b>	Member	USA	<b>Masuhiko Kawasaki</b>	Member	Japan
<b>Keith Boss</b>	Member	England	<b>Dr Moussa Dao</b>	Member	Burkina Faso
<b>Suzana Jelčić-Jakšić</b>	Member	Croatia			

## The Balshezzar Gooblstone Story

By Paul Goldstein

**Part I** - Clark University, Worcester, Mass., 1973

I was a college freshman, age 19, sitting in the university's pub with another Clark student, a guy who I was meeting for the first time. He told me his name (now long-forgotten), introducing himself. Now it was my turn.

I struggled fiercely, with a huge red-in-the-face eye-bulging ghastly block which must have lasted for nearly a minute, and finally blurted out something that I thought was at least reasonably close to "Paul". (I decided not to even attempt my last name, of course.)

The immediate response from my listener (who I remember as being extraordinarily patient during that long interlude):

" 'Ball'? Your name is 'Ball'? That's unusual! *Is that short for 'Balshezzar' or something?*"

**Part II** - *International House, University of Chicago, 1980*

Seven years later... I was a University of Chicago graduate student, now in my mid-20's. Since the cafeteria at the International House where I lived was closed on Sunday evenings, I generally called to order take-out food on those evenings. Invariably I would be asked my last name - which ("Balshezzar"-type blocks notwithstanding) has always been much more difficult for me than my first name. Because I was never sure if the employee on the other end really understood my name at the completion of my struggles (and also was never really sure how accurate the end result would be), I would normally spell (or attempt to spell) my last name immediately after attempting to say it.

On this particular evening, I was calling a fried chicken take-out shack. After placing my order, I was asked the dreaded question: "Your last name?" There ensued

a gigantic battle with my vocal mechanism of truly gargantuan proportions (it must have been one of the worst blocks I had ever experienced that entire day), trying to get that name out, or at least some reasonable facsimile thereof. Many gasps and gargle sounds later, I finally succeeded in emitting two syllables which I thought were a reasonable approximation of "Goldstein". Triumphant, I then immediately started to spell it.

*"That's all right. I've got it!"* Declared the employee, cutting off my desperate attempt to finish spelling my last name before the next block hit.

Of course, I wondered what exactly it was that he "got". I received my answer a half-hour later when I walked down to the chicken shack to pick up my order.

I arrived at the chicken shack, and attempted once again to say my last name. As soon as I opened my mouth and started blocking, the employee (the same guy who I "talked to" on the phone) immediately knew who I was. He brought out my order. Attached to the box was an order slip with the name "Gooblstone".

**Part III** - *At a motel pool near Hollins College, Roanoke, Va., July 1985*

Five years later... Now past age 30, I had gone through the Precision Fluency Shaping Program the previous autumn at the Hollins Communications Research Institute in Roanoke. I was still basking in glorious fluency, and was back at the Institute for my first reunion (an annual weekend that I would attend for 17 straight years).

Many reunion attendees, staying at a nearby Howard Johnson's motel (today long gone, along with my fluency), were enjoying a poolside party on that hot summer evening. The reunion itself wouldn't start



until the following morning, so the first-time attendees like myself were unknown to most of the others. I introduced myself. Using the targets I had learned, I fluently said my name: "Paul Goldstein". No "Balshezzar"-type or "Gooblstone"-type block *this* time.

Then I told my listeners how difficult it had been to say my name in the past, and to illustrate my point with (a purely retrospective) wicked delight, launched into my "Balshezzar" and "Gooblstone" vignettes, putting those two little stories from my life together for the first time. Then at the end, I announced, "*So I guess my name must be - **Balshezzar Gooblstone!***"

**Part IV -** *At a motel restaurant near Hollins College, Roanoke, Va., July 1985*

It was the following morning, just before the scheduled beginning of the reunion activities. I'm not a breakfast person at all, but I decided to join other reunion

attendees for a breakfast at the motel restaurant. Many of the attendees I had first met the previous evening were sitting at a long table, enjoying their food (and in most cases, their fluency).

A few seats away across the table from me sat a young couple who recognized me from the previous evening, and had heard part of my "Balshezzar Gooblstone" speech.

I knew they hadn't heard the speech in its entirety, as one of them remarked to everyone within listening range, "*Have you all here met Balshezzar Gooblstone? Boy, did he use to have **one hell** of a time saying his name!*"

A moment later, there was a response from someone else sitting nearby.

"***Balshezzar Gooblstone?** Whew! ... And I thought **my own** name was difficult!!*"

## The 8th World Congress for People Who Stutter

*By Keith Boss*

ISA Board and Outreach

BSA (British Stammering Association) Trustee and Secretary to the BSA Board of Trustees

This was held in the beautiful town of Cavtat. Eryl, my partner, and I have many memories of Cavtat. Eating evening meals in the Tavernas around the bay; the boat trips to Dubrovnik; the early morning swims before breakfast; relaxing times on the balcony overlooking the sea as well as many other things, a disco, to name just one more.

However I had gone to the World Congress to meet people. I wanted to meet the members of the ISA Board, soon to change, and to meet the Advisory Board. I wanted to meet many people I had been in contact with via email over the last year to put faces to names. Working with Stefan, our retired Chair of ISA Outreach had been a real pleasure and because of the work I had carried out in ISA Outreach I had been in contact with all our Special Friends who wanted to remain in

touch with the ISA. It was a real privilege to meet some of you. I knew I would meet Prem, one of the team of Indians who were helping me with my ISA work in India. He greeted me in the entrance lobby and asked me to guess who he was. I could not. He had to tell me! (I think I left my brain in England.) It was so good to see him. I met several old friends during the Congress and made many new friends. I will not name names, but I thank all of you who made my first World Congress a unique experience. We can only have one first World Congress. The 8<sup>th</sup> was mine, and I enjoyed all of it. Thank you.

I would like to thank our host Croatia Association Hinko Freund. They did such a tremendous amount of work before, during and after the 8<sup>th</sup> World Congress. When we update the ISA Congress World Manual it will

include much of what we experienced at Cavtat. Thank you.

However other people in addition to Hinko Freund and the team working on the Congress made our stay very special. We had an address by Mr. Stjepan Mesić, the president of the Republic of Croatia. We had hotel staff looking after us. We all stayed in a range of hotels and were looked after by other Cavtat people. Wherever we went to shop / eat / drink, we were made welcome. There are many people in Croatia who contributed to our happy visit to their Country. I would like to thank each and everyone. Thank you.

Last but not least, what happened at the Congress? There were some excellent pre congress workshops, but for me the main Congress started with the member Associations' Meeting on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2007. The meeting followed the Agenda, until the election of the new ISA Board. Unfortunately in the excitement of the election process we forgot to read the Constitution, and eleven people were elected to the ISA Board. (Subsequently when this was noticed we took steps to correct the mistake.) There are now nine representatives from member Associations on ISA Board. This is the correct number.

In between many of us taking workshops; attending workshops; attending Keynote addresses; chairing sessions; networking; eating; dancing or sleeping, the ISA Board held some meetings to elect new officers. We elected a new ISA Chair, Benny Ravid; ISA Vice Chair, John Steggles and ISA Secretary, Joseph Lukong Tardzenyuy. All three were appreciative of the help from the previous office holders, and the future advice that will be on offer as well. Once the office holders were in place the new ISA Boards (Main and Advisory) discussed where we wanted the ISA to go in the next three years and began to talk

over how we would get there. These discussions have been carrying on since the Congress via email. Shortly we expect to publish our plans to the Member Associations.

The ISA Boards were very clear about a few things. We all expect to reinforce our mission 'A world that understands stuttering'; we all want to re-establish good working relationships with our member Associations and keep in close contact with our special friends and we want to build on the work started in Perth in 2004 where ISP-S (International Speech Project-Stuttering) was conceived and launched in Cameroon in October 2005. The first mission was in June 2006 in Lomé in Togo.

There are many countries in the world where stutterers do not fully contribute to the economy of the country or lead healthy lives because they are not in a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alma-Ata\\_declaration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alma-Ata_declaration)). Continued help by the ISA ISP-S team can and will make a difference.

The ISA Board has a lot of work it wants to do. Some of it, you the reader can do. Are you ready for the challenge of giving support to the ISA to help stutterers in other countries who are desperately seeking help from various National Associations and the ISA? If you have a little free time and want to join me in my Outreach work, or join in any of the other aspects of ISA work, please contact the ISA. Your message will reach me. The more volunteers we have helping, the more we can do in Outreach prior to work by the ISP-S team. The ISA will thrive with additional volunteers with a little free time.

I am looking forward to meeting some of you over the next 3 years, or in China at the 9<sup>th</sup> World Congress for People Who Stutter.

## The Benefits of Attending A World Congress for People Who Stutter

*By Joseph Lukong*

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Board member and Secretary of ISA,  
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The just ended world congress for people who stutter that took place in Croatia was the second of its kind that I attended in my 10 years of involvement in stuttering self help in and out of Cameroon. The first world congress that I attended was in Perth Western Australia in 2004.

Since the last congress, I had been looking forward and preparing to attend the 8th World congress in Croatia as I knew it would bring untold benefits to me. I was looking forward to meeting old friends; creating new relationships; networking with people who stutter as well as speech professionals, and learning of the latest developments in stuttering self help, research and treatment.

All of this was present in Croatia and I found it difficult and painful to say goodbye to the friends I had met in Croatia and to leave the beautiful and lovely towns of Cavtat and Dubrovnik at the end of the congress.

World congresses for PWS are events where people who stutter can express themselves without fear of being teased about their stutter by our fluent compatriots. At such congresses you often see PWS doing some of those life changing things that they might not have the courage of doing in their normal life. Personally, I did one of those things during the Croatian congress. I was asked to chair a session that had seven speakers and I had the task of introducing these speakers in front of an International audience. This is one of those things I would not have dreamed of doing. With the courage I got from my friends, I managed to do it.

Before going to Croatia, I was invited by the

leader of the Cambridge self help group for people who stutter in England to address their monthly meeting. Robert, the leader of this group and I were guests on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire where we answered several questions from the radio journalist on stuttering. These are some of those challenges that I would have run away from. But with the support of my friends, I agreed to take part at this meeting and on the radio broadcast.

I also visited the British Stammering Association (BSA) offices in London where I met with the Chair Velda Osborne, the Chief Executive Norbert Lieckfeldt and their staff. I got an insight on the working of the BSA.

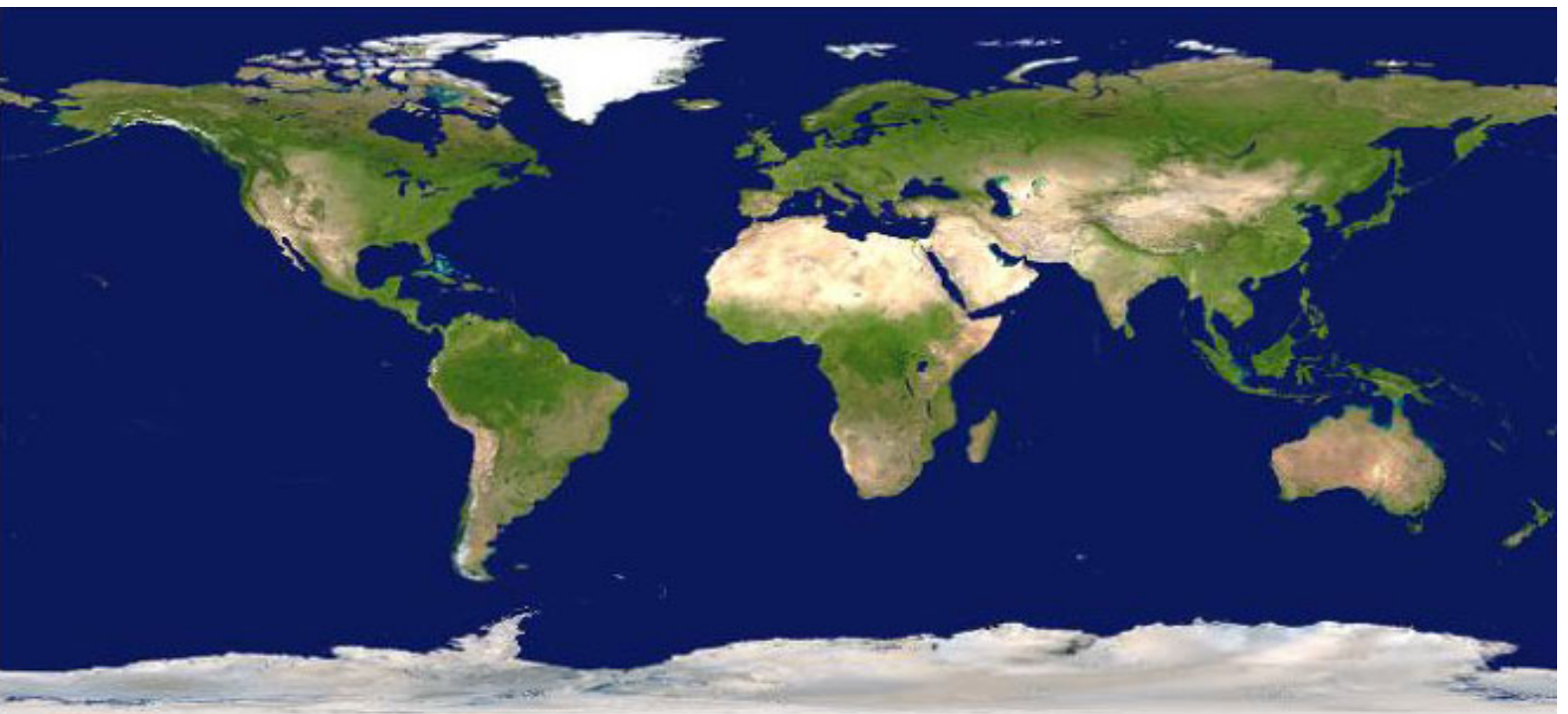
I am already back in Cameroon being empowered with much information from the congress which will inspire our work here in Cameroon and in Africa.

I wouldn't have been able to make the costly trip to Croatia without the scholarship that I received from the ISA to cover some of my travel costs. I wish to express my thanks to Mark Irwin, Judith Eckardt, Stefan Hoffmann, Hermann Christmann and all those who coordinated the scholarship scheme. I wish also to thank the good will of people and Associations that contributed money to this scholarship scheme.

Equally I would like to thank Suzana Jelcic-Jaksic, the congress convener, and her team for the good job they did in the organization of this congress. Last and not the least, I would like to thank Paul Brocklehurst, Keith Boss and Eryl Howard my UK friends who made my visit there a nice one.

# 50 Years Experience with Stuttering 14 Strategies for Change

By Mark Irwin, BDS  
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World Congress for People Who Stutter  
Cavtat, Croatia May 2007

Congress Theme:

“Creating our place in society...”

What is Stuttering?



**Answer 1:** Speech dysfluency characterized by repetitions, elongations and blocks.

Oxford Dictionary Definition

*“**Stutter** - to speak with involuntary breaks and pauses or with spasmodic repetitions of syllables or sounds.”*

**Answer 2:** Speech dysfluency characterized by **overt** behavior of repetitions and blocks, and the **covert** behavior of avoidance, substitution and circumlocution.

Definition by W. Perkins

(JFD 1984 p.431)

*“Temporary **overt** or **covert** loss of control of ability to move forward fluently in the execution of linguistically formulated speech”.*

**Answer 3:** Shame, fear, frustration, anxiety, embarrassment, low self-confidence and self-esteem which is associated with overt and covert chronic speech dysfluency.

Definition by E. Cooper

(JFD 1993, p.382).

*“Stuttering is a diagnostic label referring to a clinical syndrome characterized most frequently by abnormal and persistent dysfluencies in speech accompanied by characteristic affective, behavioral and cognitive patterns.”*

### 3 definitive features of stuttering

From the definitions above we can ascertain that there are three definitive features of stuttering:

- Overt
- Covert
- Stuttering associated with negative emotional and attitudinal responses

### Diagnostic Criteria for Stuttering

Taken from the DSM IV (the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders), the classification used by health professionals in the USA.

Whilst this addresses the first 2 definitive features of stuttering, it leaves the 3<sup>rd</sup> out. That is why a new term is needed; Stuttered Speech Syndrome.

### What is Stuttered Speech Syndrome?

**Stuttered Speech Syndrome** *n. Pathology* Stuttered speech exaggerated by feelings of loss of control, associated panic and anxiety, frustration, anger, embarrassment, low self confidence and self-esteem and confusion over issues of personal identity.

#### **Diagnostic criteria for 307.0 (Stuttering)**

- A. Disturbance in the normal fluency and time patterning of speech (inappropriate for the individual's age), characterized by frequent occurrences of one or more of the following:
- (1) sound and syllable repetitions
  - (2) sound prolongations
  - (3) interjections
  - (4) broken words (e.g., pauses within a word)
  - (5) audible or silent blocking (filled or unfilled pauses in speech)
  - (6) circumlocutions (word substitutions to avoid problematic words)
  - (7) words produced with an excess of physical tension
  - (8) monosyllabic whole-word repetitions (e.g., "I-I-I-I see him")
- B. The disturbance in fluency interferes with academic or occupational achievement or with social communication.
- C. If a speech-motor or sensory deficit is present, the speech difficulties are in excess of those usually associated with these problems.

Coding note: If a speech-motor or sensory deficit or a neurological condition is present, code the condition on Axis III.

Why Introduce a new term? Why is this important?

1. It creates terms to differentiate between the dysfluency:
  - The speaker hears (overt stuttering)
  - The speaker hides (covert stuttering)
  - The speaker feels as a result of what he/she hears and hides. (part of Stuttered Speech Syndrome)
2. Because non-reactive dysfluency is a different condition to Stuttered Speech Syndrome.
3. Allows us to appreciate that what some people are recovering from is not dysfluent speech, and that's OK

To Explain Further......consider Anorexia Nervosa

- As thinness is to Anorexia Nervosa, stuttering is to Stuttered Speech Syndrome.
- Thinness and stuttering are physiological, Anorexia Nervosa and Stuttered Speech Syndrome imply an additional psychological condition.
- “Sending some people who stutter to a speech pathologist is like sending an anorexic to a dietician.”
  - Jenny Hille, SLP (mother of stuttering child)
- “Sending people with Stuttered Speech Syndrome to a speech pathologist is like sending an anorexic to a dietician. “
  - Mark Irwin, PWS



Possible Objections

There's no existing problem anyway

It's too difficult to introduce a new term

Why not simply separate stuttering and social phobia?

and Responses

ASHA finds it necessary to use 4 different definitions of Stuttering

Every new idea has to start somewhere. e.g. post-natal depression, post traumatic stress disorder, ADHD

The stuttering experience is different when affected by social phobia/anxiety.

14 Strategies for Change

## 4 Strategies for changing stuttering

1. See a speech pathologist
2. Slow down
3. Breath support
4. Link words

## 10 Strategies for changing Stuttered Speech Syndrome

1. **Become more assertive.**  
Observe and spend time with assertive people.
2. **Increase self esteem and self confidence.**  
Know more, read more and take more courses.
3. **Focus on what I was doing right.**  
I learnt to smile more, relax, listen, breathe etc.
4. **Monitor anxiety level in relation to other people.**  
Controlled emotional response.
5. **Restructure negative associations.**  
Positive replay.
6. **Lower resting level of anxiety.** Meditation and self-hypnosis.
7. **Practice Success and Feeling of Success.** Practice in a winning environment.
8. **Keep on Track.** Join a support group.
9. **Change self-image as a speaker.** Record success by keeping a journal.
10. **Keep a sense of humor and a realistic perspective.**  
**Remember...**the Journey of 1000 miles begins with a single step  
Obstacles are only opportunities in disguise  
The smallest action is better than the noblest intent  
Life is a journey, not a destination. Have fun along the way.

Summary

1. There is a difference between stuttering the speaker hears, hides and feels.
2. This difference is so significant to issues of research, therapy and public awareness that new terminology is needed:
  - Overt Stuttering
  - Covert Stuttering and
  - Stuttered Speech Syndrome.
3. In dealing with Stuttering and Stuttered Speech Syndrome, whatever else improve communication with yourself

Join us in working towards in ISA's vision:  
A world that understands stuttering

and help us create our place in society...