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Dear Doctor / Colleague,

This letter will shed some light on

### *Stuttering versus Cluttering – What's the difference?*

#### **What is stuttering?**

Stuttering is a disruption in the fluency of verbal expression characterized by involuntary, audible or silent, repetitions or prolongations of sounds or syllables. These are not readily controllable and may be accompanied by other movements and by emotions of negative nature such as fear, embarrassment, or irritation (Wingate 1964). Strictly speaking, stuttering is a symptom, not a disease, but the term *stuttering* usually refers to both the disorder and symptom. The stutterer is doing the opposite of what normal speaker would do: He is trying to talk on inhalation instead of after inhalation. He does this as a reaction to the fact that most of his air being exhaled BEFORE it can be used for phonation.

#### **What is Cluttering?**

*Cluttering is a disorder of both speech and language processing that frequently results in rapid, dysrhythmic, sporadic, unorganized, and often unintelligible speech. (Daly, 1993)*

#### **How can we differentiate between stuttering and cluttering?**

#### **The clutterer vs. stutterer:**

- n Talks BETTER under stress
- n Talks BETTER when interrupted
- n Talks BETTER on longer sentences
- n Talks BETTER in a foreign language
- n Reads BETTER unfamiliar texts
- n Doesn't seem to care how he talks
- n Doesn't have remissions, in his speech disorder.
- n Talks WORSE when calm
- n Doesn't pay attention to what is said
- n Unaware of his speech

**Can they co-exist? YES!**

A patient may show symptoms of BOTH disorders together. Thus, he will be classified as clutterer-stutterer and will show: word-finding difficulty, poor reading abilities, poor memory, poor story-telling abilities and interestingly, superior skills in math and science (Daly, 1993)

**How do we treat stuttering and cluttering?**

Treatment for stuttering disorder is not easy - since we don't really know the cause for sure, we try to manipulate the speech production using: mind control/attitudes, changing the speech patterns (clinically proven to help a lot of patients!), changing breathing patterns( most beneficial to those patients that acquire hoarse voice due to their stuttering!), and teaching muscles relaxation.

Treatment for cluttering might be even harder and differs from treatment of stuttering. We typically will be working on awareness of the patient towards his speech problem , teaching oral-motor coordination exercises ( to stop the mumbling effect), teaching relaxation drills, emphasizing organizational language treatment, teaching memory strategies, teaching rate control techniques (clinically proven to help a lot of patients!).

**I trust you have gained some insight from this educational note. I appreciate the opportunity of being of service to you and your patients. Please e-mail me at [galslp@gmail.com](mailto:galslp@gmail.com) if you would like this or previous information to be sent to you via e-mail in a digital format.**

Thank you,

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