

UNDERSTANDING WHY PEOPLE ATTEND

Knowing the motivations behind why people attend stuttering support group meetings will help you to better focus your strategic thinking. Your 2023 Chapter Growth plan will need to include ideas to give attendees what they want by attending.

Talk. Learn. Connect.

People who attend stuttering support groups gain new perspectives and deeper understanding about stuttering by seeing, hearing, and learning from others who stutter.

Opportunity to Speak Without Shame or Judgement

Stuttering support groups provide a safe place where everyone can speak openly and freely without judgement from others.

Practice People Skills

People who stutter learn to socialize by socializing during support group meetings. This improves one's ability to be more comfortable engaging in conversation with people outside of the group.

Give Help. Receive Help.

Stuttering support groups are a place where struggles are shared, advice is given and together, everyone feels better.

source: Adults Who Stutter and Their Motivation for Attending Stuttering Support Groups: A Pilot Study (2020); Angela M. Medina, Naiceli Almeida, Kayleen Amarante, Natalie Martinez, and Michele Prezzemolo

BENEFITS TO ATTENDING

Research studies have qualitatively measured the positive impact people feel from attending stuttering support group meetings. As you develop your 2023 Chapter Growth plan, it's vital you understand the many benefits people experience by attending meetings. Some of these benefits are truly life changing. There is no doubt your work as a Chapter Leader can change lives of people who stutter (PWS) in the following ways:

Experience Less Self-Stigma*

PWS can learn to reject the public stigma and stereotypes attached to stuttering and, in the process, gain confidence to achieve life goals.

Achieve Greater Self-Acceptance*

Many PWS are on a journey to find an “inner peace” with stuttering. Attending support groups helps them to better accept stuttering as a characteristic and not as a self-limiting condition.

View Fluency Less of a Goal*

PWS can view fluency as their ultimate goal. However, many PWS report that by attending stuttering support groups they learn that perfect fluency isn't required to live a fuller life. In other words, PWS can learn “it's okay to stutter.”

Believe their Stuttering is Less Severe*

Research reveals that after attending stuttering support groups, some PWS report believing their stuttering severity is less.

Experience Higher Self-Esteem*

The effects of stuttering can cause PWS to feel inadequate, incompetent and other poor self-image issues. PWS who attend support groups report gaining greater self-confidence in themselves.

Less Likely to Avoid Speaking Situations**

PWS can live a life where they choose not to talk in high stress and low stress situations. By attending support group meetings, some PWS gain a greater comfort level in many speaking situations.

Less Likely to Believe Stuttering Interferes with Work or School**

The impact of stuttering can be harmful to PWS in workplace and educational settings. Many PWS who attend support groups come to believe that stuttering has less an impact on their abilities at work and at school.

More Likely to Talk about Stuttering with Others**

Being a part of a stuttering support group can have a positive impact on a PWS being more assured and knowledgeable to talk openly about stuttering with family, friends, and co-workers.

Greater Understanding of Not Being Alone**

Some PWS report not knowing anyone else who stuttered until they attended a support group meeting. By participating in a stuttering support group, PWS can realize they are not alone and they have a common bond with many others who stutter.

* **source:** Psychological Characteristics and Perceptions of Stuttering of Adults who Stutter with and without Support Group Experience (2013); Michael P. Boyle

** **source:** The Experience of People who Stutter: A Survey from the National Stuttering Association (2009); James A McClure, John A Tetkowsky, Richard D'Amico