

a small guide to

Balance

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From a D.I.Y. perspective dealing with emotional imbalance
and cognitive distortions

with

non-fluency as an exemplary result of the emotional imbalance

Version 1.2

Acknowledgement

Over a period of a couple of months I have been reading books and articles that had a specific or more wide spread approach to emotions, feelings, the brain, relationships, non-fluency and or life. At some point it dawned on me that on a certain level of perspective, each book or article was in fact telling the same story. There was a link between the utmost clinical information and the utmost tree hugging hippie thoughts about life and being human. In between I found a spectrum of writings and philosophies that started to connect everything.

With endless gratitude for their guidance along my path to make the mind-shift happen and continue, I name the people and their books.

Bob G. Bodenhamer & L. Michael Hall - Figuring Out People, Mind Lines
(Neuro Semantics – Decoding & Encoding tool for your mind)

John C. Harrison - Conquer Your Fear of Speaking Before People
(Stuttering Hexagon)

L. Michael Hall - Communication Magic

David D. Burns - Feeling Good
(Depression & Cognitive Distortion)

O’Conner & McDermot & Seymour - NLP

Daniel Goleman - Vital Lies, Simple Truths , Emotional Intelligence
(How do we run our Operating System)

Philip Toshido Sudo – Zencomputer
(Eye & Mind opening approach to Humans & Technology)

Stuart Wilde - Infinite Self
(Modern approach to the Tao Te Ching)

Thich Nhat Hanh - Be Free Where You Are

Wayne Dyer - Power of Intention, Pulling Your Own Strings
(Mentor in attitude towards life)

Steve Chandler - Reinvent Yourself
(Mentor in attitude towards life)

Dalai Lama - The Power of Compassion
(Mentor in attitude towards life)

&

Everyone at the Neuro Semantics E-list who have shared their experiences, questions and insight.

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Preface

This small guide is an abbreviated version of a larger document that is still in progress towards completion. However, as my own recovery from non-fluency was so speedy and perhaps astonishing I felt I had to combine several tools and tips into a smaller version for other persons with stutter.

This is my gift to you. It is the result of a bunch of other people who guided me on my path towards recovery. The approach in this guide towards fluency is based on a couple of things that can be corrected by “simply” starting to think differently about yourself and the world outside your mind. The approach has everything to do with emotional imbalance and cognitive distortions. It does not cover breathing techniques.

Before you head on to the next chapters it is important that you understand what makes up your own personal version of non-fluency. Through my own experiences I'm positive about the fact that a major part of non-fluency and blocking is caused by mental distortions, but one cannot deny the fact that long learned breathing problems have their influence as well. So after you managed to clear up the emotional related problems, non-fluency might still exist for you. But even that can be relearned and thus dealt with.

Along my path I discovered that I was dealing with forms of depression that were keeping the imbalance active. These signs of depression or, repression if you will, were all based on cognitive distortion. Along with addressing these distortions, the non-fluency started to shift to fluency, clearly showing evidence of imbalance.

The methods I applied to uncover the causes of the imbalance come down to Neuro Semantics, Neuro Linguistic Programming, Harrison's Stuttering Hexagon and Burns' Definitions of Cognitive Distortion and Decode lists.

At the root of my quick recovery is the acceptance of the Stuttering Hexagon. This led to gateways to start working on. With Neuro Semantics I was able to step out of my normal way of thinking, which broadened the perspective on the software running in my head. NLP methods helped in dealing with distorted “movies from the past”. Burns approach to decoding depression taught me in an easy to understand and apply way how to, like Neuro Semantics, decode my inner talk and reframe the negative chatter into useful food for the mind. To amplify all this from a total different angle, I gave great thought to understand and follow the writings and philosophies of Dyer and Wilde.

I

“Formula to non-fluency”

There's more to your non-fluency than the non-fluency itself. You might, for obvious reasons, as you will find out, believe that it is a “thing” just like some other specific feature of yourself, but it is not. There is in fact a formula inside your mind that is creating the sum that renders you non-fluent.

You are in any aspect the sum of your subroutines. And with use of the right methods, and an open attitude to new things that can and will improve your life, you can exceed the sum of your subroutines.

Like with anything that you do in response to an external stimulus, your speech has become entwined with subroutines that “mess with it”. And these subroutines have been rewritten during the years you've been non-fluent, over and over again. Rendering them as much as part of you as all the other “rituals & habits” you perform.

Non-fluency, the more correct word for stuttering, is so much a part of your interaction with other people, that it is impossible to hide. The psychological side effects of this disturbance in your speech has led to cognitive distortions about who and what you are and how you think others perceive you. These beliefs are just as fundamental in your world as any other belief. But how many times haven't you believed something that turned out to be untrue, useless and total nonsense. Sometimes our opinion, based on private beliefs, are altered in a split second.

Remember that shiny red toy you had as a child. How it is engraved in your memory as clear as nothing else. But in a talk with your mom you hear it was orange. A discussion about the color of the toy is initiated. And next thing you know, you and mom are in the attic, digging through boxes. You find the toy and much to your surprise the toy turns out to be orange. In an instant your belief about the color is rewritten. New evidence has showed you the flaw in your perception of reality.

Like with this toy, everything you believe in right now that is making you into who you think you are, can be altered. Residing in the belief that you are who you are and that you don't need to change, while still running limiting beliefs is not really that smart. You can change what you want to change and keep what you want to keep. My guess is that you want to lose your non-fluency, and will agree that everything that is causing it should be drained from your system.

All you have to do is change the components of the formula that generates the non-fluency, or say, the emotional imbalance. The following chapters will address certain cognitive distortions that are common to persons with stutter.

II

“What are you?”

My dear friend, you are a collection of thoughts. You are not your body. Your pinky finger belongs to you, but you are not your pinky finger. And how would that knowledge help you in any way? Well...

Everything that makes you who and what you are is a collection of thoughts that house in a brain, inside a skull that is connected to a skeleton, which is covered with flesh and skin. The real power that makes you, you, is inside that brain as complex structures of thought. This is vital to understand as this realization forms the bases of an enriched life. Knowing what you are for real and how you can alter your thoughts and the way you think, will provide you with the real power to overcome anything that you “think” is standing in your way towards your goals.

As Steve Chandler wrote: You can Reinvent Yourself.

So please understand, as it will be a great help in recovering from your non-fluency, that you can reinvent yourself from a person with stutter into a person with no stutter. Your mind is a construct of volatile thoughts, that can be altered and reprogrammed. No matter at what age you are right now, you can still learn, just like you learned yourself to feel anxiety and fears while in conversation with other people that fed the fear of being non-fluent and also your perception of who and what you are.

Chandler also wrote something that really caught my attention to understand this concept of being thought and not my body. Let me use that mix of analogy and logic to underline what I’m on about in this chapter.

When you bang your knee, you do not become your hurting knee. You accept the pain and continue to live your life. You adapt your doings and actions as you continue your life, as you know (from experience) that the pain in your knee will go away eventually. But when it comes to emotions like fear, anger and frustrations, you seem to become that fear, anger and frustration. You fail into adapting your doings and actions and continue your life. You give in to the emotion and become that emotion.

Real power and control over your thoughts, by knowing what you are at the core of things, will allow you to accept those emotions as part of you, but you will have the choice to become or not become that same emotion. And believe me that when that moment arrives where you know you have that choice, you will give preference to no longer become your emotions when they do not serve you.

Accept and know from now on that it is thoughts that lead to emotions. Then you start to feel things because of the emotions. Your mind will search for “meanings” to add to those feelings, and interpret them accordingly. You will in effect, recycle those thoughts and new beliefs are added to your Operating System. That’s just part of the mechanism that turn things into a habit. Just like you learned to stir your coffee or tea, to use a pencil to write, you learned how to get in an emotional imbalance when having to converse with someone else. Soon enough you trained your mind, yourself, to feel fear and anxiety, whenever you had to use your speech.

In your early years, when you started to learn to form sounds that made up words, there might have something gone wrong. Perhaps you belonged to the 25% of all children that are born, that have a small problem during this period of learning to create sounds that form words. Parents and other people notice this and create a focal point for you on that “speech problem”. Which is okay when it is dealt with as it should. But through ignorance to the matter of speech problems and the neglect to pay attention to the psychological aspect of this main means of communicating to others, you learn that your speech is out of the order, creating the loop of thoughts that will be recycled over and over again, by yourself.

So it is safe to say that to every extend you are the very cause of your non-fluency, because at some point the first initial cause is of no influence anymore. Just like you’ve learned to go to the bathroom yourself, leaving the diaper years behind, you have learned to be non-fluent.

Accept and know from now on that you are one gigantic structure of thoughts that form your actions and doings, with an urge to create most of those actions and doings into habits.

Ever tried to consciously ride your bike or car? Give it a try and you’ll notice it is near to impossible. I even dare to say it is impossible for you to even ride your bike or drive your car consciously. As soon as you start to consciously think about riding that bike or driving that car, you will run into problems. Now, relate that to your speech, see the similarity. You as a person with stutter are, beyond any doubt from my side, very conscious about your speech. And guess what? You’re non-fluent, right?

As soon as the penny drops and you understand how you are the creator of everything you do, simply by thought, you will become the apprentice of yourself who is also the real wizard. You can learn more from yourself than you might have ever believed. Your thoughts tell you all you have to know about yourself to correct where you are getting in your own way.

III

**“You are what you think, so think
as you want to be(come)”**

Really, it is as simple as that.

“No I don’t want to wear that stupid sweater, it will make me look like my teacher!”

See. Simple. You see the sweater, you give it some thought, you remember your pain in the butt teacher was wearing the same one, you decide you don’t want the same dress code, become the teachers look-alike, and so you decide on your own set of standards and principles you’re not going to wear that sweater.

Now take all that to another level, more deep, more somewhere in the realm of thoughts that uphold the structure of what is you. There you can do the same. In a way you can think yourself into fluency. You can start with the visualization of yourself already being fluent. I will admit that sometimes this kind of self-help talk might sound far fetched, still it holds truth as long as you allow yourself to give it some thought.

Remember when you were a kid and felt that yearning to drive a car all by yourself. Then at a certain age, you start to take driving lessons. Secretly you visualize yourself driving on your own, in your own car, with your license in your pocket. But then after the first test you fail. Still your desire to get that driver license is there. So you take some more lessons and do another test. Somehow you see no reason to give up. You will go all the way to get that license, because you want to reach that final goal: Driving a car, preferably legal.

How would this determination to reach that goal differ from any other goal, like gaining fluency for instance? It does not differ. Not when you get it into your head that it is all a process of thoughts, learning and time. And come on now. It is not that since you reached a certain age you’ve suddenly lost the ability to learn. Think of yourself a human, that is part of a still going on evolutionary process. We humans are still in evolution from primates to something higher. In that respect it is your obligation to keep on learning until you leave this earth. You are part of the evolution and thus you have a purpose on a very global scale. Learn and contribute to the evolution, simply by understanding that it is your own evolving that is the contribution.

Take my “friend”, Harvey Keitel. He reinvents himself all the time when he’s acting. And would you believe after seeing Reservoir Dogs for instance, that Harvey was a person with stutter? Or Samuel Jackson for that matter?

They drill up the oil to become someone else to play in front of the camera. They become who they need to be to perform their part in this or that movie. After that you have 90 or 120 minutes of perfection. And I'm sure somewhere in the editing room there's another 300 minutes of bloopers and scenes where performance did not meet the directors vision. No one is perfect. But I know it is difficult to let go of perfection when you're fed with this "one has to be perfect all the time" by television and media.

Think about it. I for one never knew I had overweight and hair loss until the world around me kept telling me about it. On that note, thinking yourself fluent is easier than thinking yourself into having hair or a slim figure.

Instead of using all your minds potential to think about what is "wrong" with you and your life, you might give it a try to direct your focus on what you would like for yourself and your life. But don't get stuck in the wishing routines, as you know that is not going to work. You've probably wished for fluent speech all your life. Instead take the wishing a bit further. Think of the images and situation where you are fluent.

Imagine yourself walking into that bar and order that Coke all fluent. Imagine yourself finally fluent and talking to people, airing your opinions, having conversations, chatting about the weather and what not. This is NLP for you. Visualize yourself after the years of non-fluency where you have reached fluency. Think of what will happen when you have reached that level of what you desire for your speech. These fantasies will make you feel good and your funny brain will notice this. In there is the magic.

Imagining things that you would like to happen for yourself in the future are unfortunately enough, been mislabeled by people as fortune telling and wishful thinking. Imagining things to happen for yourself are too often misinterpreted as something that will hurt you in the end as you are also taught to have expectations. And from that approach you have learned that things don't often meet your expectations. Well, that's life for you. All you have to do is take it to another level. All you have to do is add some more language to the expectation. The magic word is:

Patience.

And with patience comes endurance.

IV

“Stop being judgmental”

My guess is that for some reason, somewhere in our history some people realized they could make money by creating the image of dented egos in other peoples mind. By addressing something called External Perfection (looks etc), a new culture was created and the flow of cash was set. And the only thing needed to keep it going is this one thing we all seemingly can do so well without any real effort.

“Judging people”

And isn't judging the easiest thing to do? And how often do you walk around with the idea that people are judging you? And would you take it from me that it is exactly that what is destabilizing your self-esteem? Well, it is.

You'll have to understand the mechanism behind it, before you become aware of the cruel effects it has on us. It's all a matter of balance, but I'll get to that in a different chapter.

Judging in it self has surely evolved and grown. I regard it as a virus in today's society that is causing traumas to so many young people. Forced by the moneymaking media to live up to unrealistic standards. Creating illusive and thus eluding ideals for people to believe to regard as their goals.

When you have made it your habit to have an opinion on people just by their looks or how they act, and your at it all the time, you can count on the fact that in your own mind the believe has manifested itself that you are too being judged all the time. From this believe comes the inner-dialog that makes you the neurotic you are.

“What are they thinking of me? How do I come across?” Catch my drift?

These questions will feed the imbalance of your self-esteem. When you have any doubt about how you come across, these questions, originating from your own habit to judge others, will enforce these doubts, as they are the answer to those same questions. Your mind will only provide you with answers you taught it to come up with!

Connected to this self doubt and imbalance of self-esteem is the non-fluency. So do your math, make the calculation, see the formula. Judging is linked to whatever makes you non-fluent. Once you stop judging others, the belief of being judged will alter and therefor your non-fluency as well. Step by step.

To underline the importance of you stopping judging others, you might take in consideration the simple fact that racism is based on the same crappy mechanism. And I

believe that unless you are a stammering Ku Klux Klan member, you'll have no real problem with addressing this judging system in your mind.

V

“Oh, but I’m a perfectionist”

Yeah right. Perfectionism is an illusion. Forget about it. If you, as a person with stutter are using this line in every day life, you might give it another thought after reading this chapter.

Perfectionism equals Fear of Failure. How about that?

You calling or even feeling yourself a perfectionist is yet another way of your mind trying to balance something out. It is a Vital Lie, to survive and deal with the imperfections you are so aware of (your non-fluency for example). Your mind is trying to compensate.

“Okay I might be non-fluent, but I’m a perfectionist, look at how I do things.”

My response to that would be: “You don’t even know yourself how right you are!”

Striving for perfection is something different from your deep embedded believe that you are not allowed to make a mistake. The beauty about perfection is that it does not exist, which is the one thing that makes it so perfect. All you’re left with is doing your best. Which is something you can do all the time.

See, perfectionism is just a term that got invented to describe the seemingly endless effort someone puts into achieving and creating the result of a certain set goal. An artist for instance has a vision about his art. He or she will go all the way to reach that perfection he seeks in a painting or a sculpture. Important to understand is that you can be a perfectionist as long as you remind yourself that it is okay to make a mistake. Athletes strive for perfection in their sports. But they go through zillions of attempts to reach that desired perfection. As long as they can accept the fact they too have to learn from their mistakes in order to reach perfection (within their own physical limitations!!) they are free of perfection being nothing but fear of failure.

You’ll have to understand that during your years of non-fluency and your conscious awareness of it, you have embedded a believe that your speech needs to be perfect. Your judging system makes sure you keep paying attention to it, by wondering what the others might think of you. You will allow yourself as little as possible slack in this. This is however not a need for perfecting your speech, oh no. It is your fear of failure in keeping up a normal way of talking. To which I must add that a normal way of speaking is relative in itself. How can there be a normal way of speaking when you have over 5 billion of variations? Get my point? Let go of this so-called need of being perfect. It is your need for perfection that renders you imperfect. It is your fear of failure caused by this illusion of perfection that renders you failing in reaching the desired fluency in your speech.

VI

“Mind reading”

It is funny in itself. So many people know that they are fooled by magicians that perform an act where they seem to be able to read someone’s mind. We know it is an illusion and that we are even paying for it to see it happen. We pay the green to be fooled into believing that the magician can read the mind of a person in the audience. And I for one would not like to pay a dollar to anyone who gives it some thought that the magician is actually able to read minds.

Something that adds greatly to the formula of your non-fluency is your belief that you can read other peoples mind. If I were to ask you this questions up front, you would probably deny it. Sure you would, as you know that it is impossible. But still you are doing it all the time.

“I stuttered, now he thinks I’m stupid”

“I stuttered, now she thinks something is wrong with me”

Do I have to go on?

A soon as your inner dialog is slipping in things like “he/she/they think(s)” you are “mind reading”. You are telling yourself, feeding yourself, with what ever your own mind comes up with to tell you what the other is thinking. But at the same time you will deny the fact that it is impossible to read someone’s mind for real. Stupid huh?

So why do you do it? Stop it! Stop doing it!

As long as you cannot read someone’s mind, there is no use in spending thought energy to that inner-dialog.

Ask a friend to sit down opposite of you. Then ask him or her to close their eyes. Then ask this person to think something really bad and negative about you and something very positive and good. If you sense a mood swing inside yourself from negative to positive or vise versa, and it matches with the sequence in which your friend thought something negative and positive, you might be the first human who can actually mind read. And then I suggest you contact me, as I’m sure we’re going to make a lot of money with it. If you did not feel anything happen, you’ve proven yourself you cannot, and thus that you can stop pretending you can.

Somewhere along the time line of your life you’ve been mislead by others that you should really care about what others think of you. This is part of the judging system. It is a load of BS. You can stop doing it. What other people think is not your business.

VII

“Not More, Nor less”

The rapper of the group Snap once said something that really stuck with me. He used it in one of their tracks as a lead-in.

“If being black is wrong, I don’t want to be right.”

All very noble, but my guess is that it is better to ignore the fact that there is something as black and white. In there is the only truth to gain the desired balance in ones mind, thinking and thus life. If this rapper of Snap is really starting to life his thesis, he will create the opposite of what he desires, which is equality. And I know he’s actually asking for this, because otherwise there would be no use in coming up with that thesis on choosing to be wrong if being black is wrong and white is right, right?

When you judge people you are running your life on a slippery floor. You will fall down. You will bring yourself down. Judging others is nothing but a mechanism that is fed by the imbalance that is coming from somewhere else in your mind. Something needs to be energized, lifted out of the darkness, and the easiest way to do so is to create an illusion in your head that you are more, because the one you judge is less. However the result is only temporary, as it has no real foundation. All you are doing is trying to mask your own imperfections and problems instead of addressing them in the right way.

Remember that anyone who tries to willingly or unwillingly bring you down by judging you is only trying to compensate for what is missing in the illusion of his or her own self-image. And remember that as soon as you judge others, you are doing the exact same thing. Trying to compensate.

Stop it. Make it your new belief that you are not more, nor less than everyone else. You are who you are and somewhere on your own time line in your own evolution between birth and death.

“People are People so why should it be, you and I should get along so awfully?”

Try to get a wider perspective on who you are. In essence you are thoughts inside a body and in that respect you do not differ from any other human (or animal). Think of the fact that there are over five billion people roaming this earth. Everyone is unique and has every reason to be here, because they are here. Easy as that. Now take some responsibility and decide that it is impossible to be more or less than anyone else.

The key in this is that as soon as you decide you are more then somebody else, you will create the possibility that there is another human that is more than you. And as soon as this belief is becoming reality in your mind and thoughts, you will bring imbalance to your self-esteem level. Like a ping-pong you might flip between levels of insecure

feelings about yourself as you give room to the believe that it is possible that you can be less than anybody else. This is a real stinker. You don't want that, because any thoughts that will lower your self-esteem, even temporarily will ignite the non-fluency patterns.

As soon as you make it your mantra to no longer feel more or less than anyone else, people will start to notice this. In a way you are oozing a certain respect that will call upon respect in others for you.

So this also includes stop making fun of others. To bad huh? But listen, here's the magic in that. When you make fun of others, willingly, to even hurt them at their core, you are making yourself susceptible to also be made fun of. Everything seeks balance. And as long as you make it your game to control that balance, keeping its fluctuations close at the core, you will desensitize yourself for things that can hurt you.

VIII

“Your parents”

Your (foster)parents... Need I say more?

Yes I do.

A toddler is running around the house and is filled with joy. His parents have some other couple visit them. Then one half of the couple says: Oh doesn't he look like his father, and just see how his nose resembles that of his mother.

If I were there, I would have to tape my mouth shut, or otherwise I would start to blurt out some other things about how much that toddler is and will become a down to the core product of its parents. It will be programmed with the illusions and fairy tales its parents have stored in their own minds. The toddler will grow up with some nicely neuro(tic) patterns engraved in its brain, that will “serve” him throughout all his life.

What is wrong with this. Not much. It is in fact inevitable. Perhaps even necessary. But there is a big but in this.

To a child, just like you have been yourself, parents are like “gods”. They pull the strings, they rule the child's world. They decide what is wrong and what is right. On that note, a sweater is something a child wears when the mother thinks it is chilly. I got that line from a fortune cookie. And I felt fortunate when I read that, as it made me understand so much about the strings that were still connecting me to the programs my parents had been embedding in my brain with much care.

You, yourself, should give it some thought on how much you are still running old believes that were useful to you when you were a child, but no longer serve you being an adolescent or adult. When somewhere along the line where you grew up these old childish beliefs were not corrected by new more realistic believes you can place trust in the fact you are still running those same programs.

From these childhood programs comes your fear of authority figures. From those same programs comes your inability to choose for yourself for what you think is best for you. From these programs comes your rebellious attitude towards rules. It is your new and older self that is starting to fight against this childhood programming that has turned you into that perfection seeking anarchist. That incurable know it all. You have not found your peace yet, because somewhere deep inside your mind you are still living your life as a child, well into adulthood.

Give it some thought. I mean, isn't it just ridiculous that you parents still have so much power over you even when you are older then when they had you crawling around in the living room in diapers? It is ridiculous.

When you start to pay attention to your non-fluency, you might discover that you are totally fluent with animals and children. How's that possible? Well, they don't appeal as a threat to you. But why is it that (some) adults do trigger your non-fluent state? Well, they summon the child in you to surface. Your mind will make a switch and through your adult eyes you instantly perceive the world as a being that is running childhood believes and thus the linked fears. Your quick learning brain will adapt to the situation as it thinks it is required to do so.

Now, if you have reached a level where you can actually believe and feel that you are not more, nor less than anybody else (including your parents and any adult), these childhood fears will feel ridiculous to you, and by that you will start to alter your way of thinking and thus your non-fluency. Please see in this the link to the judgement system. Judging also means, thinking others to be "older" or "younger" than you, so as a "threat" or a "non-threat".

This might sound a bit too simple, but it can be as simple as that.

First there is a realization you have to admit to that there is a possibility you are still running useless programs from your childhood, that will instantly make you that child again as soon as the "right" trigger enters your perception through your senses.

IX

“Inner Dialog”

Language is the means of transportation between your consciousness and sub-consciousness. You are constantly talking to yourself. Any believe you have is based on words. You give words meaning by adding feelings to them. Along with all this your mind is crammed with images, sounds and smells that are somehow linked to these words.

Your own name is stored as a sound and word in your mind and attached to that is your whole perception of what is you. Hearing your name mentioned will trigger certain emotions in your gut. Add to that the lovely voice of the boy or girl you adore so much and you might even feel a shiver run down your spine straight to where the sun doesn't shine. Add to that the horrible voice of your boss and you instantly want to run and hide somewhere, or stick the guy to a dry wall with duct-tape and call it a piece of subsidized art, like Catalana did with the owner of an art Gallery.

Words are what rule us internally. Money does on the outside, but even that is optional as soon as you get the hang of how to bring balance back to your life.

The tip of the day, for the rest of your life, is to pay attention how it is you are talking to yourself. If you make it a habit to listen to what you are saying to yourself, about yourself, about others, about your goals, about life, etc, you'll soon enough have a clue what makes you tick, and what ticks you off.

Any negative inner chitchat should be examined and turned into more realistic chatter. It is in fact your inner dialog that holds the key to any success you desire for yourself. Someone who seems to have the inner drive to just go on and one with something he or she believes in, is sure enough free of any inner dialog that will work against him or her reaching that desired goal.

I for one triggered myself into non-fluency while I had gained a nice level of fluency. I would say something like:

“Hey, I'm not stammering anymore...”

which would instantly cure me from being fluent, and become the trusty good old non-fluent self again. This showed me to a large extend that I was doing all right, since I had been putting much effort in cleaning up my inner dialog. By putting much effort in cleaning up the words and the meanings I gave to them. In a way I had my vocabulary revised.

Funny enough was that with all this reprogramming of the inner dialog I also started to use profane words less and less. Interesting in itself, as much of my swearing

was in fact linked to the anger and frustration I had just escaped by starting to think differently about what and who I am.

Your inner dialog is the key to unlock your mysteries.

If you notice yourself saying you can't do this, you can't do that, you are prepping yourself with ease to become unable to do this or that. If you would change that dialog into I can't do it just yet, I have to learn how to do it, you are instantly opening up a to a wider horizon of possibilities. Read chapter VI again to give this some more thought and thus understanding.

It is you who is talking yourself into a non-resourceful state of mind. But the beauty is that you have the power to turn it around and prep yourself to become a resourceful person.

Take me for instance. While writing all this down, with hopes set on that somewhere in this will be a line of words that will get you to start thinking differently, I can hear a voice that is telling me to stop. I can clearly hear a voice that is trying to convince me that it is of no use. That voice is vigorously trying to explain to me that in all my writing will be something very vital missing the point. Etc.. bla bla..

But, I don't give in to it. Instead I continue to jot all this down as I feel I have to do this. Surely I hope this will shed a light or two on some PWS's perception on things, but if it does not help, it is okay as well. At least I've been giving it a try. I will not give in to the negative, limiting chatter of that one voice that rather has me glued to the TV.

Pay attention to your inner talk and start decoding yourself. Then make it a habit to feed your self with more realistic and positive talk. It will be of great benefit to you and your surrounding.

X

“Kill Negative Input”

Vital to the mechanism you would like to embed to gain balance in your emotional disturbance is to detach yourself from anything that has a negative influence. At least give it a try to turn off your TV, Radio and the negative chatter of people. Stop playing computer games that teach you to be immortal and able to carry 20 guns and tons of ammo.

See, you don't have to give it up, but you should limit your exposure to it. You might desire fluency, but in essence all you really want is peace, harmony and quietude for you and whom you love. And simply by starting to limit your watching the news to every other day will have an astonishing effect. Be careful what you decide to watch on TV. Instead grab a book, have a talk with a friend, go for a walk, a swim or a ride in your car. Take up a study instead of wasting your precious and unique life on sit-coms and neurotic TV shows and games. Give yourself a brake from the disease also known as the media.

Give it a try. Do it for a couple of weeks, a month or two, and feel how liberating it will feel.

During my period of studying myself and gaining fluency as a result I went for a walk every day in a park nearby. I would stay there for at least an hour. Sitting, walking, pondering and watching nature in its endless beauty. I gave up computer games, which I like, simply for the technology behind it and the now and the near heart attack when the virtual enemy has me pinned down and all I have to defend myself is some dental floss. I spend weekend after weekend with my precious books, and myself. Reading, pondering, and trying to figure out how that wisdom would serve me.

What happened was that I learned to feel peace inside myself. By becoming a bit of a hermit for a couple of weeks on end, I re-learned what it meant to feel peace. And my mind picked that up as something it desired more than the endless rundown on the news showing people being killed. I realized that no matter how bad I felt about that, it would never change the world. Wayne Dyer made a strong point about that. I realized I could be serving the world as it was and is, only by reconnecting myself to inner peace. And guess what? With this peace I managed to undermine the formula that kept the non-fluency active. From the relearned quietude I could manage my inner dialog even better and more accurate and useful.

Find peace, find fluency, reconnect to life, and reconnect to yourself.

XI

“Excuse me, I stutter”

There is a dangerous routine in this. It is masked and hidden. But all you have to do is to change your attitude a bit and it will do miracles for you. Any apology you make on behalf of something that is part of you, which makes up your current definition, is limiting your own freedom of existence.

Answer me this: How does your non-fluency cause harm to others?

Stop apologizing for your non-fluency. I mean it is not like you are sneezing someone right in the face. If you did that, then you might consider saying: Excuse me. But when it comes to something that is so much a part of who you currently are, never lower yourself by apologizing. You are not apologizing for the color of your skin, the color of your hair and eyes either. You are not apologizing for the sound of your voice, so why do it for your non-fluency?

You have to understand that the only time you might want to express your apologies to someone else is when you are actually causing them harm. Only if you said something not all that nice, or you poked their eye with your elbow, you would want to ask for being pardoned, but never, never for your way of talking!

Answer me this: How does your non-fluency cause harm to others?

It doesn't, does it? No it doesn't, so there is nothing in the world that should make you say something like: “Oh excuse me, I have a stutter, please bare with me...”

You might want to give it a try to turn things around. How nice is a person that doesn't bare with you when you are struggling with words? How “well” a human being, would the impatience make that person? And could it be that this person, that doesn't bare with you, should ask for an apology? Think about it. Who is causing harm to who? And wouldn't it be great and bring utter peace when you stopped making a fuzz about getting someone to apologize to you about things that mean something to you?

Stop saying sorry for who you are. You don't say sorry when you do something nice. You don't say sorry when you do something that is regarded as normal. How many times have you felt it was really unnecessary for someone else to say sorry to you? As the matter at hand was not a big deal.

Sure, your non-fluency is a big deal to you. But who do you think you are to think that someone else is regarding it a big deal? I hope you know what I mean by that remark. Compare your non-fluent speech to sneezing directly in someone's face. Do you still think you should apologize for the non-fluency? You have to understand that as soon as you say: “Excuse me, I stutter...”, you are acting out of an imbalance in your self-

esteem. You saying sorry is the result of you lowering yourself instead of keeping the “Not More, Nor Less” routine running. You are judging yourself less than the person you apologize to, otherwise there would not be a need for you to do so.

XII

“Embrace your fear”

Ever been so afraid you could taste it in your mouth? No one likes to be afraid, and yet there are plenty of neurotics that seek the thrill and jump of bridges with an elastic band. They don't like the fear, they are simply addicted to the chemicals the brain releases when doing something like jumping of a bridge. Their perception and thus belief about what fear means to them has changed.

As a child you have been taught to fear certain things. Funny is, that this resulted in not fearing what your were told to fear (as it was dangerous, like drinking poisonous window cleaner or touching fire), but the fear itself. Fear is the emotion rendered by the alarming thoughts, and it is this emotion you feel and start to reinterpret and recycle.

So along your time line you've come across situations that summoned this feeling of “I fear this” in your perception. With your brain as speedy as it is and always on the lookout to keep you away from harm, occurrences during these situations are stored in your mind with these beliefs of fearing these situations.

Not always. Not always with the same intensity or strength, as more beliefs are roaming around in your brain, but still it can happen. Even more when it happens over and over again to become a habitual response with according results.

It is your own resistance to these sensations of fear that keep these sensations of fear alive. You keep telling yourself you should fear that fear. And all you have to do is to embrace that fear to make it disappear or at least make it dissolve more and more until it is gone. Think back of the time where you had to plunge in the deep of the swimming pool, or something like that. Encouraged to do it by friends, even by not wanting to look like a sissy, you did make that plunge. And after enough attempts and some time, it became normal to you. In a way you accepted and embraced that fear, by telling yourself that you had to overcome that fear, as there was something else that out ruled that fear.

During my recovery I stepped willingly into many situations, even setting them up, to experience the fear that came with social interactions. I knew I had to confront myself with the feelings inside myself that were linked to talking to others. While doing so and reliving my habitual feelings of fear, I also realized it was going to take time to deal with it and embed the “fear canceling” inner dialog. So I thought of something else to speed things up.

I knew that most of the external triggers that interfered with me being fluent were very subtle. I also knew that most of my fears were ghosts, programmed during my childhood. As an adult I had done simply too much things to be a what you would call “a fearful person”. On a larger scale I had developed a level of “game” in my mind, to boldly go where I thought I had to go. But still there were these fears that were

preventing me to take it just that little step further. So to really give the good old amygdala a good jolt I devised a little scheme to summon them all up at once.

Changes come from action and so I planned walks through the dark woods in the middle of the night. I selected a section of woods nearby that I knew reasonably well.

The first nightly walk through that utter darkness was incredibly interesting. Rationally I knew there was no danger, no real threat, but still I was really on edge as I walked through the darkness. Every shade and every sound seemed to ignite a fear inside me. I felt cautious and alarmed. Even though I did not want to look behind me, something inside me was starting to force me to check my back. My rational and adult part was actually having a good time. With this walk through the dark woods I was triggering my little fears with subtle stimuli through my senses. I felt countless shivers run down my spine. I felt cold and hot at the same time. Down at the core of my mind every alarm bell was ringing and telling me to run for my life.

Perhaps I'm over exaggerating this experience, but I was amplifying the sensations all the time. I tried to remember scenes from "The Blair Witch Project" and more the like. I was creating the worst horror movie, right inside my mind. And with every childish fear that came to surface I told myself it was okay, utilizing NLP and Neuro Semantics to reframe the inner dialog.

This first walk lasted an hour. In the last 20 minutes all my fears had gone. I was walking there, like owning the woods, or it feeling like it was my home.

The following night I went back to the woods. Again alarm bells started ringing and my mind was telling me to run back to my car. Well, it was more like a feeling of not wanting to be there, giving preference to the inside of my car. But I continued, as I knew I had found a way to desensitize myself from deep embedded fears. After ten minutes I felt okay again and even comfortable.

The third night in the woods I was trotting along as if it were daylight. I owned the place. And the coolest thing happened. Suddenly I realized that I had stumbled on a perfect way to let go of everything that had to do with my life during the day. In those dark woods I was alone, with the animals, and in a perfect harmony with something that was beyond my normal comprehension. And so I'm still a frequent visitor of those same woods during the middle of the night. Walking, ever so slowly and just letting go of everything that haunts me from daily experiences with other humans. A sensation of freedom fills me from top to bottom.

And you know what? Ever since those first three nights in those dark woods, I've experienced something that is beyond words. But I will try to explain as I think it relates to PWS and them being so hyper sensitive to sensory input.

By overloading my system with igniting these fears, surrounded by darkness and strange sounds, I fried those same fears. What happened was that I embraced the fears that were triggered by the subtle input through my senses. Every little fear that stuck its head up was re-framed into nothingness. This has resulted in me reaching a balance inside myself that is so linked to situations where I talk to other people. Subtle triggers that used to get me into a non-fluent state are slimmed and trimmed down. And so, I'm

no longer a victim of old embedded fears that would make me feel uncomfortable while talking to other people. Which creates more fluency!

But it doesn't end there. The effect of this confrontation with childhood fears during these first walks in the dark woods has really brought a certain balance to my system. I can feel it every where I go, everywhere I am. And whenever I do feel something boiling up from deep inside, I can go back to these woods and remind me that I no longer have to feel that fear.

It is all a game of allowing yourself to change subtle fears in your system and regain control over your own life, step by step.

Walking through the dark woods is no big deal. At least not when there are no real voracious predators lurking behind every tree to have you as a nightly snack. All I'm saying or trying to point out is that you will greatly benefit from tricks like this you can play on your mind. I suggest you find something in your own life that will resemble my walk through the woods. Seek your subtle, faint fears, and summon them up. Then embrace them and deal with them. Make them dissolve and feel the freedom.

XIII

“They all look at me”

If you are a PWS you surely have said this to yourself countless times. But even if you are not a PWS, and an ordinary fluent organism (I say with a smile), you're probably not free from this kind of self talk. It seems that along with being a human comes the importance of “what others think of us” and from that “they look at me, what are they thinking?”. This is part of the mind reading we think we are capable of, but of which we know we are not, but still practice like a mantra.

Along with the illusion of others looking at you come all the fears that you learned yourself to feel when you think others look at you. Behind this mechanism is a world of thoughts that hold the message that you should live up to certain standards created by that which resides outside your mind. Most humans like attention, and to some degree we can't live without. But the minute we become the center of attention things seem to go wrong. We don't want it. We start to feel uncomfortable. And yes, there are also specimens of the human race that seek the center of attention, because otherwise they can't feel happy (about themselves).

100 people can look at you at the same time, and still you can't be hurt.

1000 people can look at you at the same time, and still you can't be hurt in anyway.

The same goes for 1 single human or 5 billion. There is no such thing as death-ray eyes so what are you worrying about? People that are looking at you are also looking at other people. And how would you know they were looking at you when you didn't look at them? People look at other people, that is what people do. And there is nothing you can do about it. Except for realizing that you can't be hurt in anyway when for some reason you become the center of attention.

As part of my own depression I was becoming very neurotic about the fact that others were looking at me. This didn't even have that much to do with my own non-fluency. Over time, this awareness of others looking at me resulted in a huge amount of tension in my body. Even when I walked a shopping center, pretending to mind my own business, I would feel every pair of eyes staring at me. And then, when I for instance slipped over the slippery tiles, or whatever, I would become the center of attention, as I knew every single person in that shopping center saw it. They all would think what a fool I was and laugh at me.

But hey... pssst... It's all just an illusion!

It is actually rather arrogant to walk around and believe that every one is looking at you intently. Please note the joke. What is making you so different that others should look at you? Think about it. Turn the cognitive distortion around. Play with the concept. Just as much as you look at others, others will look at you. From that knowledge you can

start to play with what you are thinking. I mean, why should others look at you and think there is something wrong with you. For the same money they might be looking at you with interest, as in regarding you as a “looker”.

Remember a time where you had to sit with a bunch of people at a conference table. Things are discussed and you are asked for your point of view on the subject. Or something is said and you know it is utter crap, so you have to inform the crowd that facts are different than earlier stated. You draw and get the attention. People at the conference table will look at you. Sure they do. They have to as it is you who is talking or trying to talk. This level of attention should not upset you in anyway as it is as normal as the air you have to breath to stay alive and yes to make sounds with your vocal chords.

Meanwhile, in your mind, the struggle starts with the attention you are getting. People are looking at you, and you start to wonder and drift off to places where you are pondering about what others are thinking of you. You might think you have to perform well, you don't cut yourself some slack, you don't allow yourself to make a mistake, you don't allow yourself to be non-fluent, and in the end all you are getting is a non-fluent person that is you with a useless thoughts flooded brain.

Let's rebuild the situation.

When you are sitting at that table, you must have some importance or value to the matters that are discussed. Your opinion counts and is regarded as useful by whatever authority that has arranged the meeting. This means that you might be asked for that opinion, or that you are regarded to air it when you think it contributes to the matters at hand. When you do speak and get the attention of all the eyes, it means that people give your opinion the attention it needs. Just like you have been looking at others when they spoke or will speak after you. You are just as much a part of the community at that conference table. You are in that respect not more, nor less than anybody else.

Now don't come to me with hierarchical chatter, rendering you less in respect to your superiors. This has nothing to do with you as a human. The hierarchical setting is caused by contracts signed that came with the job and has nothing to do with you as a human being.

Look at things from a broader perspective. That is the trick. Don't put so much attention to details. Step out of your narrow thinking.

When you walk into a bar, the people who are already inside will look at you. If you are a man, women will look at you to see if you could well be their perfect mate. Like wise if you are a woman. People will scope you out and their brains will sort the given information out. There is nothing you can do about that. But you can remind yourself when you walk in, that as soon as you've found your “safe zone” at the bar or at a table, you will scope out the rest of the crowd. And surely you will look at the people that come in and leave, and run your own routines.

I learned from simply asking a lot of people, that most of the times people stare and look at whoever is coming into a bar, to see if it is someone they know. If it is not, they often “let go” of thinking about the person who walked in and continue whatever they were doing. So try to change your perspective on what the world is doing to you by looking at the world and think of what you do to this same world. Quite often you will

discover that you are doing the same thing as what you believe the world is doing to you. And this realization will result in a ease down on yourself. It might nullify the fact that you have some issues with “They are looking at me.”

I for one like to look at people. When I look at women I want to discover what it is that makes them attractive in my “judging system”. Quite often I see that there is a strange difference between women in a beauty that can be categorized as Natural beauty and Fashion beauty. My years at the photo-studio have surely fired this interest.

Most Fashion Beauty lacks something deep. And in Natural Beauty you’ll have to look beyond the layers to get to a point where you can feel it.

Look at people and know you are looked at as well. But when you look at others, put some effort in discovering what makes them so beautiful and special. Look beyond the fashion statements they try to portray. Look behind the curtains and facades. Observe and feel what others ooze. Discover what they have, even what they are trying to hide. Observe and learn. Practice it and soon enough you’ll start to feel different when you notice that others are doing the same to you.

XIV

“Smile, break the ice”

With ten years of depression in my backpack, a genuine smile had become a rare event on my face. Now, don't laugh, but I really had to start to practice having a smile that was real and not made out of plastic. But I put some effort in it to feel that smile inside me and show it to the world. During walks through shopping centers or whatever I would practice it. I would dig deep inside and feel that revelation of starting to get in touch with happiness again, that shift from imbalance to balance, and show it in a subtle smile on my face. I learned that even feeling happy is something that has to do with habitual performance in this strange world. It has all to do with knowing what it is all about, life I mean.

Now, to get some idea of how I would look when I smiled or not, I spend quite some time in front of the mirror. I made it a game to see the subtle changes between the more angry and more happy look. And I was stunned that the difference can be very, very subtle.

And it is this subtle change that people pick up. When in conversation with someone this subtle difference will have an impact on the conversation, its content and course. Perhaps it is hard to imagine, but you will start to understand and see this when you start paying attention to it.

Tension that surfaces for no real apparent reason in a conversation can fade by a simple smile that lingers through. I'm not implying that you should start to walk around like a tooth paste commercial, but you should take some notice of the fact how you enter conversations with people. Even when you're in a bar and have the nerve as a PWS to order your own drink, step into ordering that drink with a smile towards the bartender. Look at the people that are in your angle of reception and give them that genuine smile. That subtle smile. They will pick it up. And then notice that some might return that smile, even if ever so subtle. It might show up as a subtle squint of the eyes, a little, near to invisible curl at the corners of the mouth. Some might even look away, when they see your smile, but that is a sign they have some insecure feelings that mess with their perception of the world surrounding them.

One moment comes to mind where I was at the post office. I had just made sure that a package was on its way to a customer when I turned around and noticed a young woman walk in. Sure enough I was already feeling great that day, so my smile was simply the result of giving in to that welcome feeling, but when I saw this girl I was trying to detect the natural beauty she was hiding. Our eyes met and she looked away.

As a former PWS I could have easily picked that up as a rejection, but I don't perceive the world any longer as something that rejects me. And so I kept my smile, kept looking at the girl and tucked away my receipt for the package. This is all a matter of

seconds, but it can last a life time sometimes. As I got closer to the girl, playing with her natural beauty in my thoughts, she looked at me and I noticed the rapid movements in her eyes. I can't mind read, but to me it seemed she was feeling somewhat insecure. Still it must have been my smile that made her look at me for a fourth time, add a smile on her face and having me leave with a whispered "hello" from her lips in my ears and heart.

Open up to the world around you and start to notice the subtle little presents this world has to offer. It is everywhere. Look, feel and experience. Break the ice, be the first to break the tension with that smile. As said, you don't have to be a walking tooth paste commercial. All you have to do is work on that subtle difference and create the habit to have that smile distort your mug to feel in control of your life.

Remember that anyone who is giving you a hard time by the way they look at you, by the way they choose to have their face zooming in on you, has nothing to do with you. At least not all the time. In most cases it reflects only how their own thoughts, emotions and feelings have a grip on their life.

But even if someone is angry with you, because you actually did something that upset them, you don't have to feel intimidated by it. I don't know if you have ever seen the guards at the Indian and Pakistan border, but they look at each other with big eyes and what not. It is a ritual from years and years ago to play the intimidation game. But when you look at it, it is hilarious. Take this in mind when someone looks at you with an angry face. Take a moment to observe it and then feel how absurd it looks. Then realize you look absurd and silly every time you show your frustration and anger through the shape of your face. This should make it easier for you to choose a more happy face and no longer feel intimidated or affected when someone gives you the "daemon look".

