



National Conference 2014, Pune

The Indian Stammering Association

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Definitions, Acronyms, and Abbreviations

- I. TISA – THE INDIAN STAMMERING ASSOCIATION
- II. IPWS – INDIAN PEOPLE WHO STAMMER
- III. PWS – PEOPLE WHO STAMMER
- IV. SHG – SELF HELP GROUP
- V. NC – NATIONAL CONFERENCE
- VI. SRCM – SHRI RAM CHANDRA MISSION
- VII. DR SACHIN – DR SATYENDRA SRIVASTAVA

- I.
- II.
- III.

1. Introduction of The Indian Stammering Association

The Indian Stammering Association (TISA) is a self-help association of Indian People Who Stammer (IPWS) and a charitable trust. It was founded by Dr Satyendra Srivastava in 2008 and head office is located at Dehradun, Uttarakhand. TISA is envisioned to assist People Who Stammer (PWS) in acceptance of their stammering and overcoming the associated behaviours and mindset, through self-help movement. Its purpose is to collect and disseminate relevant, correct and unbiased information for PWS and their families, friends and society in general. It is promoting a self-help group movement, where PWS learn to help each other and themselves in the ancient Indian spirit: "This Self is to be achieved through self-effort!"

To achieve the above vision, TISA conducts following activities throughout the year:

a. National Conferences

It is the biggest event of TISA which occurs every year with the purpose of providing a platform to PWS to share their experiences of stammering journey so that PWS can learn from each other. First National Conference (NC) conducted in Bubhneswar in 2011 with participation of almost 30 people followed by the NCs conducted in Coorg, Delhi, and Pune in 2012, 2013, and 2014 respectively. Participation in NCs are continuously increasing and more than 100 people participated in NC 2014.

b. Communication Workshops

TISA focuses on accepting stammering and promotes the techniques to improve communication with the philosophy communication transcends fluency. First communication workshop conducted in Pune in 2009 and now TISA conducts many workshops throughout the year to teach the techniques what PWS can use to improve their communication skills.

c. Self-help Group (SHG) Meetings

Studies have shown that SHGs provide most consistent and long-lasting support structure; more than any speech therapy or other technique/device. TISA co-ordinates city-wise SHGs in India; currently there are SHGs being run in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Pune, Surat, Hyderabad, Goa, Kolkata, Indore, Roorkee and Dehradun etc. SHGs conduct meetings once in a week so that local PWS can meet, practice the techniques and improve by self-help efforts.

d. Awareness Camps

Many SHGs organized the awareness programs in their own style, especially on International Stammering Awareness Day i.e. Oct 22. One big event organized by Delhi SHG was the Marathon for stammering awareness.

e. Publications

TISA published/ publishes following books and newsletters with the purpose to collect and disseminate relevant, correct and unbiased information for PWS:

- i. Apna Hath Jaggannath: This is self-help manual written by Dr Sachin and published on 18th August 2012 which focuses on acceptance and techniques to become a good communicator.
- ii. Samvad: Samvad is quarterly newsletter of TISA which covers all the activities of TISA.
- iii. 12 Questions on Stammering: It is a book to aware people about stammering. It covers the questions what comes in mind of PWS with the scientific answers.

2. National Conference 2014

National Conference 2014 was organized by Pune and Mumbai SHG under the leadership of Mr Virendra Shirse at Khandala, Lonavala, Pune from Oct 3-5, 2014. More than 100 people participated in NC 2014.



Image 1: Participants of NC 2014

Following are the activities conducted at NC 2014:

a. Introduction of participants

Over 100 participants were available in the hall of Zara Resort, Khandala and everyone was called to introduce themselves and told to stammer with ease.

b. Session by Dr Satyendra Srivastava

Dr Satyendra Srivastava is founder of TISA. He was called to initiate the NC 2014 and address the PWS. Everybody was expecting that he will share some magical techniques to overcome stammering, but he chose the topic “Random Acts of Kindness” to begin the NC. Random Acts of Kindness is to make your daily actions such a kind and it will lead to the development of human being. It is nothing but doing good works and don’t expect anything in return. E.g. helping someone in need, greet people, asking people about their wellness, donate your unused assets (clothes etc.), take your parents on vacations, give gifts to people, say thanks if someone helps you etc. Philosophy behind random acts of kindness is that you will not expect anything in return by doing any of the above tasks. Dr Sachin gave the message of being a good human being first and good communicator second, and it was one of the best take away of NC 2014.

c. Skit by Mumbai SHG

As movies play great role in impacting the life of people, that’s why NC started with a skit by Mumbai SHG to showcase the life of a stammerer. Skit presented the pain what stammerer feels in public environment and depicted

the story of all stammerers. It presented the recovery path of a stammerer to motivate the PWS about how to solve the problems, to look at life beyond stammering etc. In a nutshell, Mumbai SHG presented a story what every PWS could relate and aspired to follow in real life.



Image 2: Participants during Skit

d. Group Activities

Participants were divided into five Groups A-E, led by Dhruv Gupta, Taraq Garodia, Harish Usgaonker, Vishal Gupta, and Mitul Panchal. I was in Group A and we performed following activities:

i. Introduction in Four Different Styles of Speaking

We were 20 participants in Group A and we had to introduce ourselves in four different style of speaking viz normal voice, with voluntary stammering, with bouncing, and with prolongation. It was good session to analyse the speech with different techniques of stammering.

ii. Press Conference Activity

In this event, participants has to go on the stage and other PWS will ask random questions to him/ her. It is the similar set up like Press Conference of a celebrity. It was great opportunity for PWS to use any technique of stammering on the stage in a challenging situation.

iii. Table Topics Activity

In this event, participants were given random topics to speak on the stage by using any techniques of stammering.



Image 3: Group Activity

e. Voluntary Stammering in Local Train

It was life changing activity for all PWS. In this activity, PWS had to travel in local train from Lonavala to Pune and have to voluntary stammer in the train. PWS could spoke about stammering, TISA, ask other people if they know any stammerer, ask their feedback on stammering etc. Accepting stammering is an iceberg for PWS which is to be melted for the recovery journey of stammering and this activity focused on accepting the stammering in front of strangers. No technique of stammering works without accepting the fact that you stammer. After this activity, all PWS were feeling very relaxed, happy, and they just wanted to speak.

f. Sharing Experiences of Voluntary Stammering

This activity allowed every person to come on the stage and share their experiences about voluntary stammering activity of train. It was great to see the positive change in attitude and confidence of PWS after voluntary stammering activity. All PWS came to stage and shared their experiences.



Image 4: Participants Sharing Experiences

g. Mock Interviews and Suggestions

It was a formal activity to transfer the knowledge to young PWS. NC had many young PWS who are students and fresh graduate from college. PWS become very cautious about the stammering during interviews and focus on speaking fluently rather than technical concepts. In this activity, mock interviews were taken by some senior PWS who are at the top positions in their professional careers and feedback were given in front of all PWS so that everyone can learn from the feedback. Feedback helped to change the mindset of most of the PWS about interviews and gave lot of home work to PWS to work on.

h. A talk on Meditation

Mr Rahul Puntambekar from Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM) gave a talk on meditation. SRCM is a non-profit organization established with the purpose to "awaken the divine consciousness and support on the path of evolution". He taught the advantages of meditation and the benefits what it could give. Meditation helps for self-realization and to control the emotions. One of the main reason for stammering is psychology and meditation can play key role in dealing with that.

i. Feedback from Non-PWS

NC had approx. 10 non PWS includes friends and relatives of PWS. At the end of NC, feedback were taken from all non PWS about NC. They were not only happy for their relative/friend who stammer attended the NC but also very happy for themselves that they attended the NC. They were saying it was good learning experience to meet all PWS. They were saying that they will spread the more awareness about TISA in their circles.



Image 5: Non PWS sharing their views

3. Take Away

It was really great three days experiences and one of the best days of 2014 for me. Following are take away for me:

a. Stammering Recovery Plan

Following are the activities that I am planning to follow to recover my stammering. NC provided me a platform to know lot about these activities from other PWS.

i. Accepting Stammering

Accepting stammering means to desensitize yourself to a level that you will feel proud to say that you stammer. It's a very long journey to reach to that stage. Some of the components of accepting stammering are, you will not feel bad when you stammer at any point, you will not substitute any word, you will always take initiative to talk whether you stammer or not etc. One of the best way to accept stammering is to challenge yourself at every point if you have fear for anything.

ii. Know Your Stammering

It includes the activities to analyse the pattern of your stammering. As every PWS stammer in different style, so it is necessary to analyse your own style and improve in your own style by using the techniques whatever suits you best.

iii. Practice Various Techniques

There are many techniques for the recovery of stammering i.e. bouncing, prolongation, block correction etc. After knowing the pattern of your stammering, you can try any technique whatever suits you better with the purpose to be a better communicator not the fluent.

iv. Vipasana

Vipasana is one of the best form of meditation. It purifies the human being and the solutions of all psychological problems. One of the reason of stammering is also psychology, so Vipasana plays key role in recovery journey of stammering.

b. Networking

NC had 100+ participants, from 18 to 60 years of age, from students to managers/ businessmen, from Delhi to Kolkata. Following is the demographic map of participants:

Participants Demographic Details

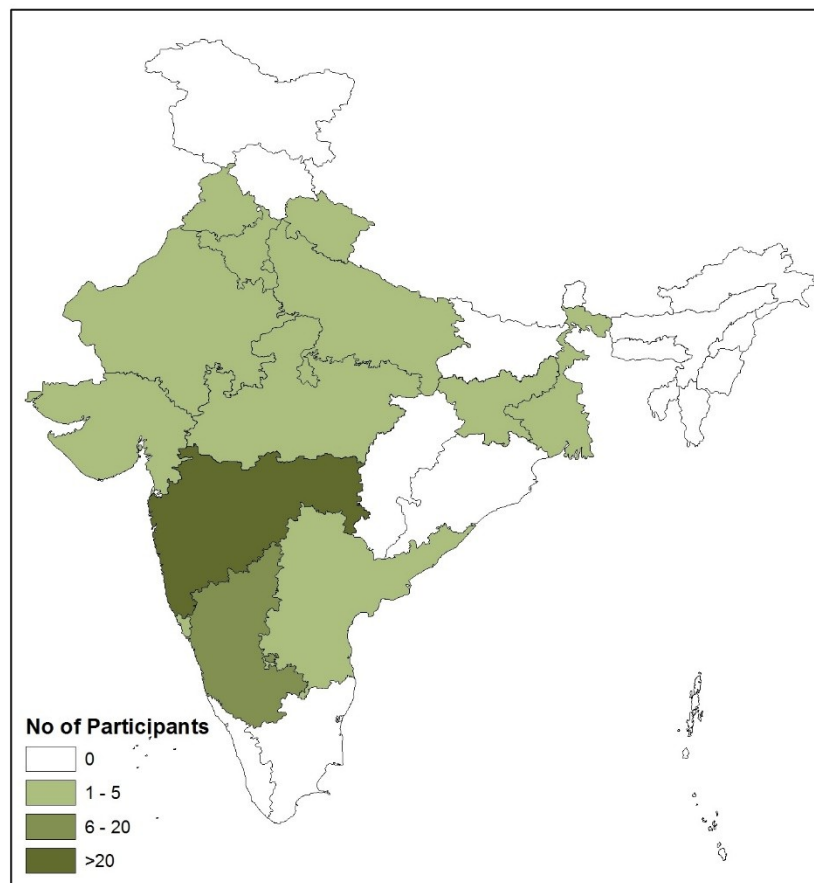


Image 6: Participants Demographic Details

c. Random Acts of Kindness

NC also taught many important point of life except stammering. One of the key point was random acts of kindness. I was little bit changed in last one year and start comparing everything with money. Random acts of kindness is something which make you good human being and you can't compare it with money. This is one of the best learning of NC.

4. References

- i. <http://t-tisa.blogspot.in>
- ii. <http://stammer.in>
- iii. <http://stammer.in/publications/NewSHManual.pdf>

IV.