

TISA SHG Manual

(A handbook to conduct five 3 hour sessions in self help group for People who stammer. Exercises have been adopted from various sources.)

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TISA SHG Manual

This is a guideline and a work in progress. Use it to generate more ideas. Play with it. To keep the size of the manual manageable, we are not putting in all the relevant information here. We recommend that underlined words should be googled and read on-line.

You- the coordinator

This role can be rotated, only if you find suitable candidate in the group- not just to be 'democratic'. The coordinator should preferably have following qualities:

1. She or he need not be a “fluent” talker. But she or he should be able to communicate- using whatever means she or he is comfortable with and used to.
2. Should have lot of patience, stamina to deal with negativity & frustration; and skills to motivate one self in the LONG run.
3. Should be able to inspire, lead, encourage and manage the group effectively. This would sometime need exercising your authority based on your position as a TISA officer and sometime on your age, experience and other social or work related achievements etc.
4. Your facilitation style will have to be flexible and appropriate to situation. Example: if a member is repeatedly promoting a commercial therapist in the SHG, then you must take the charge authoritatively and ask the member firmly to stop violating a basic TISA tenet. In most other situations, the coordinator should be more like a coach, a friend, a mentor, a confidante.
5. Excellent time management and conflict management skill in the meeting is very important and can be learned as you go along, if you focus at it.
6. As a good facilitator- you should learn facilitation skills (active listening skills, asking open questions, counseling skills etc) and constantly try to upgrade YOUR own knowledge and skills.
7. Whatever you ask the group to do- you should be able to demonstrate it first yourself.
8. Listen more- talk less. Plan ahead. Be proactive.

Pre Meeting preparation

A small attendance discourages everyone. Personally phoning/ sms-ing/ emailing potential participants should be done well in advance. Audio-visual material if needed should be planned in advance. If you are going to share a case study, photocopy it in advance. Advertise the venue and time well.

Session one

Introduction

Welcome everyone with a smile. Dont complain about members being late etc (certainly not at this point !). Once everyone is seated, stand up- welcome them again and briefly share the plan (agenda) for the meeting. If members ask lengthy questions- politely tell them: “once we go through, many things will be clearer; please play along till then.”

Next, ask everyone to briefly give their first name (nothing more at this point)- by (demonstrate yourself)

1. standing up
2. Smiling – looking at everyone slowly - **saying nothing for full one minute**

3. saying just the first name **loudly** (use a technique if you want to-)
4. sit down

After everyone has given their first names, ask randomly some members name of others members. Some will fail to do so. Here, stand up and briefly emphasize the importance of “active listening” when others are talking. (PWS often show poor listening skills.)

Tell them, that you will be asking them to repeat / paraphrase what someone said a little earlier- so please pay attention.

Next- read out the ground rules (or photocopy and share):

1. Please dont take more than allotted time; when the buzzer rings second time, you must respect the group rule and stop.
2. You will not interrupt others.
3. Questions can be asked only with the permission of the chair.
4. No strong language/ no religious or political arguments. No gender bias in language or behavior.
5. No promotion of commercial interests. No promotion of “my cure is the only cure” kind of dogmatism. TISA policy will be respected in this regard (no promotion of illogical cures- Conch shell, Chinese water etc.)
6. Whatever members share in SHG will not be shared outside. Privacy will be respected.

Ex 1: Extempore Presentations

Material required: 10-12 folded paper slips with random but relevant “positive” topics (Indian economy; how to prepare for Interviews, IPL matches, Parenting, computer hygiene etc.).

Method: Circulate the paper box with all the slips and ask people to pick one blindly. Prepare for three minutes and then start sharing your thoughts on the topic for three minutes by turns. Ask everyone to pay attention, take notes if needed and evaluate the speaker on two counts: content & delivery - but dont allow questions at this stage. Let everyone speak for three minutes uninterrupted, one after another. The order should be random. You could start by asking: Okay, who wants to go first? Any volunteers? If no one volunteers, you can point to members randomly. Give chance to younger members first.

When everyone is finished, collect the paper slip (with marks out of ten for content and delivery) from everyone privately. Now, give every member 2 minutes each to share- how they felt while giving their 3 minute extempore talk. When they finish, summarize the discussion briefly by highlighting two facts:

1. We communicate better when we are calm during the act (PWS always get excited when they get a chance to speak; this can be unlearned through practice)
2. The capacity to be aware of your mental states, while talking to a group, and to manipulate it at will, comes through constant practice.

Now, ask members randomly why they have given a particular mark to a particular speaker under content and delivery: why low or high? Request people to give brief objective answers. Moderate this feedback- so that the concerned speaker is able to accept the feedback – instead of resisting it. Request the members to start their feedback with 'positives'. (Giving and receiving feedback JUDICIOUSLY is an important skill in work situations and relationships)

Members who performed poorly (not others), should be given the option of having a second chance, to practice changes suggested by the group. Let them speak again for three minutes on the same old

topic. Give them positive feedback if you notice an improvement. Encourage them. Draw their attention to the good things they may have done or achieved during this second presentation.

Conclude the exercise by recapitulating – the signs of good communication (eye contact; just two to three core ideas in a brief presentation; relaxed clear communication etc.)

Ex 2: Home Assignments

Assign some home work, thank them and disperse;

1. Give every member a link of one stammering (or related) blog or web page. Ask them to read it and be ready to make a formal brief (3 min) presentation in the next meeting.
2. Write a 200-300 word story from their childhood (not necessarily about stammering). Bring it in the next meeting. Assure them, no one will read it, unless they wanted to share. You will just look at it and put it in an envelope with their name on it and seal it. After 12 meetings, you will return the envelope to the writer, so that they can see what was going on in their heads over a long period.
3. If the group is emotionally ready, they can start a group blog too.

Conclude

Thanks everyone, share briefly your learning in this particular meeting- remind people about next meeting, time and venue and disperse. Conclude on some positive note. Sharing your learning is important- it sets a golden bench mark in transparency, open communication and highlights the potential for learning in every situation.

Post meeting: Self review

After about 2 days, send an email to all members- requesting their feedback about the last meeting. Clarify if anyone has an issue through email or phone (*why was I not given more time to talk? Etc.*)

Do your own personal evaluation by asking yourself (and others, if needed): How well did I facilitate this meeting? Did I stick to agenda? Did I ensure that everyone participated, spoke? Who were the quiet ones and why? Whom did I offend as a facilitator? How could the same results be achieved without offense? What questions from the group, I was not able to do justice to? How often and how long, was I speaking, driven by my own needs to talk, rather than the need of the group facilitation?

This analysis is the most important step- which helps you to grow as a good communicator, not just facilitator. Spend sometime on this. May be, write a private journal on these thoughts.

Session two

Introduction

Welcome everyone with a smile. Don't complain about members being late etc (certainly not at this point). Once everyone is seated, stand up- welcome them again and briefly share the plan (agenda) for the meeting. If members ask lengthy questions- politely tell them: "once we go through, many things will be clearer; please play along till then."

Next, ask everyone to briefly give a brief intro (this is the second meeting)- consisting of just name, designation at work and the company they work for. Just – 1. Name, 2. Designation 3.

Organization / company. For students it would be 1. Name 2. Class 3. College. Give a demo by:

1. standing up
2. Smiling – looking at everyone slowly - **saying nothing for full one minute**
3. saying name, designation & organization briefly but **loudly** (use a technique if you want to-)
4. sit down

Don't let people RAMBLE or EXPAND. Just tell them, that it is important to stick to this format and to be brief and that later they will have opportunities to tell more about themselves. Ask randomly some members details about other members. Some will fail to do so. Here, stand up and briefly emphasize the importance of "active listening" when others are talking as well as speaking LOUDLY. (PWS often speak at a low pitch and show poor listening skills.)

If needed, let the whole group, do the intro round once again- rapid, brief & loud.

Ex 1 : Unfreezing our mouth

Material required: Video clips (Julia Irani, JP/sachin/ Tarun's video- showing positive body language / normal bouncing). View these videos beforehand and decide which you want to share.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNHQ1kgbkLA>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QU-Dsqjw-0k>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CEjNPEa5BO8>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b2HwgLN5Q94> (not for bouncing but for Excellent eye contact & positive body language)

Read Bouncing section at this page before hand (you may even want to have a print out at hand):

<http://www.stammer.in/menu-self-help-manual/168-art-shm-working-on-your-speech.html>

Since you will be introducing bouncing in this exercise, you should have a good practice of it. Phone JP or sachin to refresh your bouncing skills before the meeting.

Method: Screen 1-2 of the videos; pause & replay here and there, to highlight two things: the positive body language (chest out, head high, smile and unflinching eye contact- even **during** disfluency) and relaxed bouncing.

Now ask people to sit in a circle and request them to just IMITATE you, starting from your left or right. First round: look into the eyes of the person sitting on your left and say: Ma-ma-my name is Ni-ni-ni-Nitin. Make sure everyone does the same- bounce on 'My' and their name- at least thrice, while maintaining the eye contact. If not, repeat this round again.

Second round: Same as above (Ma-ma-my name is Ni-ni-Nitin) but with **smile** and **eye contact**. Give people feedback by name (Okay- Vijay- you tried but you bounced too quickly on your name-

as if you were running away from something; Would you please do it once more? Anil- you did well but forgot about smiling & eye contact? Want to try again?); repeat as often as necessary.

Third round: Start from your right and in Hindi (or the local language) for a change: “Ma-ma-ma-ma-mai ha-ha-ha-ha-haklata hun.” (I stammer). Vary the number of bouncing from extreme (10 with counting on fingers) to just one bounce. Finally with smile. Then, same in a low whisper, then almost shouting. Then, with a lot of hand gestures. Again, both hands folded tight behind. Let the group go through the entire combination and permutation of speech and body language while saying those three words.

Final round: Sit in a circle and start a story (just one line)- to which members would add one line in turn. Every one will bounce on one word. Now, the challenge is to think up of a good line to add to story as well as to bounce very normally on just one word in the sentence. Try as many variations as possible to put people through their paces: bounce on every second word. Bounce just once on every word. Tell the story backwards. Bounce rapidly- then bounce very slowly etc.

This exercise may have to be done many times to truly “unfreeze” people's mouth and emotions related to speech. This exercise can and should be made full of fun. Check one [example](#) of how this can be done.

Learnings: Conclude by summarizing the main learnings: First ask people how did they feel doing this exercise in various rounds? What was difficult and what was easy? Why? This exercise is about unfreezing our speech and related emotions. Bouncing takes away the pressure to say a word perfectly in one go. It also helps us to develop acceptance/ tolerance towards dis-fluency. In other words, we regain some control over our mouth and emotions. Emphasize that it takes lot of practice to be able to use bounce naturally as a part of your overall communication style; show them some of the TISA videos, referred above to demonstrate what it looks like.

Future practice: Ask people, how can they practice bouncing more and more, under different circumstances? To become really proficient at it? Help them to develop a plan: begin with bouncing on phone with SHG members once in 3 days to gradually more difficult tasks- like bouncing with family members, colleagues etc. Ask them to share their experiences (achievements and set backs) in the group by keeping a daily note (this could be the home work).

Ex 2: Home assignments & self rating matrix

Part 1: This is essentially a review session for the home work agreed upon in [the last meeting \(exercise 2\)](#). Ask people if they have done it. If not, dont get discouraged- just SMILE! Those who have done it- give them the chance to share it.

Those who have studied the web link- should make a brief presentation (3-5 minutes). Moderate question answers, only after every one has finished (PWS sometime have a compulsion to shoot a question *the moment* it comes to their head. They need to learn, how to keep a question in the head and WAIT for the right time to ask the question); Make sure that questions are objective and meaningful (no leg pulling). Encourage members to find something positive to say about the presentation first. You could tell them that – 'if you have got one negative feedback to share, first identify and share FIVE positive things about the presentation. And if you cant find five positive points – go for a ten day Vipassana course!'¹

Those who have brought 200-300 word story from their childhood (not necessarily about stammering)- give them the option, if they want to share it verbally. If not, put it in an envelop, seal it and tell them- that it will remain safe with you and you will give it back to them on first anniversary of SHG or some such occasion. But do ask them to share how they felt while writing it. (Here the purpose is to help members learn how to be more open. Hiding even immaterial things

¹ Can a presentation be so bad that audience cant find five good things to say about it? The issue here is not about objective reality out there- but about the 'subject' who goes looking for it.

becomes an obsession with PWS). Share the printout of this write up or related articles. ([ref](#))

Part 2: Let us be objective about our stammer!

Introduce the theme: We often use superlatives to describe our and others' speech difficulties. "I had a very Bad stammer today! Oh- I got stuck on 'Kolkata' for ever and ever! Oh- she was stammering like hell" etc. On the other hand, classical speech therapy books define stammering as "dis-fluencies on more than 10% of words in speech." In other words, 9% dis-fluencies will not attract the label of "stammering"! Of course other factors too count- but if we focus on feelings too much and never bother to count the physical behavior- we dont have a common language to share & discuss our experiences.

Because we never objectively count and study our speech, we never know if it is improving or not- and if so, under what circumstances etc. The chances are, our attitude to our speech and speech itself will improve if we were to objectively record it, measure it, study it.

Now share the following matrix if time is short. If you have about 45 minutes, divide the group in to two and ask them to develop a prototype. Moderate the exercise by asking relevant questions, giving your inputs, encouraging younger people to talk and question. Finally make sure that the group adopts a matrix which, at the minimum has following indicators and is practical too (not too complex or elaborate):

Day 1	13/04/10	(NB: fill it every night)	
Type of difficulties	audience	Place	Anything special
Silent block – about 30 second	On phone- with colleague	Home-	On word "Tuesday"
Struggled repetition- brief	Auto driver	market	"KKKarol bagh" felt bad.

Ask members to brainstorm to agree upon 5-7 key words to describe the type of difficulties in column one. Also, they should make a list of difficulties they foresee in filling this matrix daily. Tackle these one by one using good problem solving skills. Ask them to discuss, if - how and when this record should be peer reviewed? Benefits would be apparent after about seven days' consistent use.

Conclusion: Ask if anyone has a doubt or question. Thank everyone and end with something inspiring (there are many web sites offering great quotes: [ref](#)). Remind everyone the venue and time for the next meet. Thank everyone sincerely and disperse.

Post meeting: Phone people to practice some bouncing and to find out how the matrix is coming along. Encourage members to invite other PWS they may be running into, to next meeting.

Dealing with 'Orator'

You will come across a PWS who has successfully helped himself to some extent and now wants to practice talking at every opportunity. He or she would often feel that SHG (a 'captive' audience) is the rightful place for him to demonstrate and practice his fluency *ad lib*. Such PWS will often ignore the time limits and will insist on talking on or off the topic. Try to make them understand that TISA SHG is for PWS at a different level of growth. It certainly is not for them. For them, a suitable place will be Toast masters and other such Public speaking clubs. The membership fee for many of these clubs is very small. Search on Internet and give them the address of Toast master. Make sure that they dont disrupt your SHG meetings- with their urge to talk.

Sessions Three

Welcome as in session one.

Introduce the agenda briefly: A stammering movie followed by review of homework ([matrix](#))

Introduction: Today, the introduction should be a little bit more substantial. Ask members to introduce their “Stammer” today. “My friend stammer has known me since I was 7 year old. He used to follow me into the play ground during recess..etc.” Time 3 minutes each. Ask people to use humor while describing their stammer over the years. And BOUNCE. People while talking about their stammering, often get emotional and forget all about eye contact, positive body language, bouncing, time limit etc. Hold them to these standards firmly- as part of their ongoing training.

Ex 1: Analysis & review of Unspeakable

Material required: Unspeakable, Video/ laptop, one page plot [summary](#). You should see the movie before hand, so that you can explain the dialogues etc to members. (you have a choice: may want to screen another movie- Speaking of Courage; here is the [review](#).)

Screen **Unspeakable**. Many members will say: *Copy the movie on to my pen drive- and I will watch it at home*. This never works. Tell them: watching together and discussing it is the real exercise. Give them one page handout on the movie first. Give five minutes to read it. Then screen the movie. Pause and replay relevant or interesting sections to help members understand. The movie is full of such scenes, themes & stories. Research the background (like the story of Marty Jezer) and share that too. During these pauses, you can even ask people: did you ever have a similar urge or experience? Let these pauses be brief so that the flow of the movie is not disturbed by your commentary..

Finally at the end of the movie-

1. Ask members to stand up and share their reactions, using bouncing and good eye contact, for 3 minutes each.
2. Then, divide them in two groups and ask them to brain storm and debate why this movie should / should not get an Oscar. Give the two groups 5 minutes to ready their arguments. You as moderator, have to make sure that -
 - Discussions stay on course
 - Arguments are logical & substantial
 - The “communicative pressure” goes up gradually- but does not overwhelm the speaker. This you may do by joining the debate and rapidly firing 2-3 questions at the speaker who is doing just fine. The idea is to create artificial barriers to fluency and help members practice good speaking skills under STRESS.
 - Give a balanced feedback on how the two groups performed in the debate. The idea to be conveyed is: in a group discussion- speaking rapidly, without much depth or substance is no good. A better impression is created by people who speak calmly (not necessarily slowly) BUT to the point. Ask them- do you always feel a kind of excitement whenever you begin to talk? why? Does it interfere with your capacity to think and articulate your thoughts? What can be done about it?
3. Ask the group, what all can be imitated by YOU personally from the movie: make a list. Is there something, which can be done by the group as a whole? Introduce the idea of doing “China Town” exercise as a group over next few days. (this exercise means, going out in small groups and practicing voluntary stuttering- bouncing to begin with- with strangers in shopping mall etc. followed by a peer review.)

If need be, replay this section to help people understand how, voluntary stuttering can quieten your emotions and generate fluency : 01.20 – 2.30 (VTS_01_3.VOB)

Ex 2: review the home assignments

Ask how many people have filled the [matrix](#), discussed and agreed in the last meeting and want to share for group review. Those who wish to- give them a 5-7 minutes to share their matrix. The group and you may respond to this sharing in “problem solving mode”: offering suggestions and helping the member think laterally- rather than questioning his/her observations.

Example: some one reports excessive stammering while talking to his/her supervisor on phone; start by accepting that his/her feelings of distress are valid. Dont try to minimize the importance of these feelings. Next, help her/him by asking:

Why do you think you had this bout of excessive disfluency? Listen to answers carefully and respond to them. Make your tentative guess if no clear picture is emerging: Could it be because you had chosen a wrong time to phone- when you or he was under too much time pressure? Could it be because of the poor line? Background noise? Were you going over the last appraisal done by the same supervisor, in the back of your mind, as you spoke with him on phone? Is there some unresolved issue between you two? Was it because as you spoke on phone, your parents were in the same room and this bothered you unconsciously? Etc. The idea is to help the member find his way out of emotional thinking to “logical” thinking, geared to solving problems rather than feeling helpless, feeling bad for oneself. It is also to help the members monitor their speech over a long period and become objective about the whole issue.

Review with the group, if there is a need to change the matrix. Review other group activities too:

1. If someone is writing a blog: ask the group to review it and share their reactions.
2. Has the group tried to recruit new members? How? What was the outcome? How can it be better coordinated?
3. Is the group planning a big birthday bash together? Can a family get together also be organized?
4. Can the group plan a story writing/ drawing competition for 10-15 children who stammer? (the group is strengthened by doing meaningful things together- and you may have to facilitate a discussion and planning along these lines).

Home Assignments: Web-links to study and share. Also ask members to brush up their videography skills – by shooting short videos, using phone camera or whatever they have, and reviewing them at home- since next session will utilize these skills.

Session 4

Welcome as in session one.

Introduce the agenda briefly: Videography in pairs followed by review of homework.

Introduction: Today, the introduction should be a little bit more substantial. Ask members to introduce their families, their hobbies and other interests. BUT time 3 minutes each! Ask people to use good eye contact, smile, bounce on one word in each sentence and brief pause at every punctuation (comma, hiphen, colon, full stop etc.). Hold them to these standards firmly- as part of their ongoing training. (Google search for Pausing technique in stammering management).

Ex 1: Fun with a camera

Material required: some phone camera or video camera. Lap-top or TV monitor for immediate review. Room should have good lighting to help recording.

Method: Ask everyone to chose their buddy or partner for this exercise (based on their comfort level etc.). First you give a demo- by asking your partner to record you while you are interviewed by a member. You should be able to demonstrate during the interview- couple of good natural blocks (like your original ones), some effortless bouncing, good eye contact, good pauses- and an overall good body language. If you get a natural stutter- nothing like it- let it come out and be recorded. Let it be a brief 3-4 minute recording. Transfer it on Lap-top or TV monitor and review it with the group. Replay it 2-3 times. Then, ask them following questions:

1. What is the over all impression: did the speaker seem apprehensive? Or relaxed? Calm? Why? On what grounds do you say that? A recorder (member) can record these points. The group can be asked to keep these very points in mind when they face the camera.
2. Ask them about fluent sections? What do they like? Why? Does it outweigh the moments of dis-fluencies?
3. Ask them to analyze the body language? The facial gestures? The movement of the gaze? Etc.
4. What all did the speaker do, when he had a block or stutter? (help them to classify and understand- primary and secondary behaviors of stammering). Ask them to even guess about thoughts and emotions during block.
5. Is the over all message coming through clear? If not, why? Is it just stutter or something else? The sentence structure, choice of words, volume, pitch?
6. What would you recommend for this speaker?

Now, ask them to spread out with their partner and do the same exercise. For group to review each and every recording would be too time consuming- so ask them to record and peer-review with the partner itself. The same partner can record and shoot questions. Some fast learners can try out other possibilities: video-recording while the partner is talking on phone to an authority figure (parents, a senior colleague etc.). You as facilitator, should go around looking at different couples, giving them feedback and encouragement; if you find some of the recordings offer special insights, select these for a group review, before concluding the exercise.

During group review of the selected recordings, make sure that the concerned person is emotionally ready for the group review. For many, it is too painful/ embarrassing to see themselves stammering on screen. Use the questions above to guide (not restrict) the review. Summarize by asking the group: have you learned anything new about your stammering? Let the group brainstorm intensely on this question. For many of us, this is the first time we have objectively looked at our face during stammering and speaking. A lot of mystery about “my stammering” is taken away in these few

hours. Now, you are willing to work at it, instead of running away from it. Many people will become desensitized too in this process.

On the other hand, some PWS will have little or no dis-fluency when faced with camera. This, an un/sub-conscious phenomena, may seem very gratifying but is not good for overall recovery. Unless, we dont bring our stammering out in the open, what are going to work at? But quite often, this is a deep psychological phenomena with no conscious control over it. Encourage such members to fake it, to stammer on purpose- just for fun. This may take some trying over many attempts. Good chances are that in the process, their hidden ice-berg will start surfacing. And melting too.

Further ideas: These should ideally come from the group itself, encouraged by the facilitator. The group may want to explore these:

1. Recording each other while they phone a relative, boss, customer care etc.
2. Recording each other doing a role play (based on “China town” exercise).
3. Everyone does a 3 minute video-recording on a theme “Message to a future young PWS” and puts it up on youtube or TISA blog
4. Record a group discussion on a theme (get ideas from Stuttertalk) and put it up as a podcast.

Ex 2 : Best listener award

Review the home assignments. Those members who have done it, should be given 5-7 minutes each to present their assignment. When everyone is finished- let there be a question answer session, moderated by you. Before starting, explain ground rules:

- 1 Everyone will demonstrate bouncing, positive body language (eye contact, posture) and PAUSING, whenever they speak. (Monitor this regularly and give appropriate feedback.)
2. Everyone will listen ACTIVELY. Questions should be asked to cross check this randomly.
3. Everyone will respect time limits. You must stop at the second ring of the buzzer. You may speak with permission of the facilitator.
4. Every “areas to improve” feedback will be preceded by four positive feedbacks. (PWS concentrate on negativities all their life. Thinking positively is an important skill which they must master, before giving feedback to others.)
5. Before you conclude, give out “best listener award” to the person, who consistently demonstrates good listening skills, offers creative and useful feedback on being asked and follows discussion carefully. How to do this: after an intricate discussion on some point- ask everyone to summarize in 2 minutes the preceding discussion. Not just repeat – who said what- but recap, paraphrase and give your own summary of the issue. Only people who listen intelligently and closely will be able to do it. This aspect of communication has to be reinforced repeatedly. Tell the group that communication is a two way street- listening (with understanding) is even more important than speaking.

Humor is the best medicine

Ask members to review following links as home assignments and ask them to share a funny moment from their life in the next session (not necessarily related to stammering).

<http://www.mnsu.edu/comdis/kuster/humor.html>

Those who are net savvy, ask them to review and share about this link, in addition to above.

[HumorMatters](#) provides information and resources about the healing power of therapeutic humor.

[Laughing Out Loud to Good Health](#) provides opportunities to study the impact of emotions on stress and the use of laughter as therapy.

Session 5

Welcome as in session one.

Introduce the agenda briefly:

- Introduction of SELF using Johari window
- Introduction & practice of Prolongation technique followed by
- review of homework.

JOHARI window

Today, the introduction should be a little bit more 'technical'. Explain Jo-hari window BRIEFLY. ([ref 1](#), [ref 2](#), [ref 3](#), [ref 4](#)) Give a photocopy of a filled out example and a brief write up, to help everyone understand. It might be helpful for people to do it with a partner. If so, ask people to choose and sit with their partners. These partners could be same as in last videography exercise.

Step 2: Hand everyone a blank Jo-Hari matrix and ask them to fill it (as much as they can comfortably) over next 10 minutes.

Step 3: Ask them to do a peer review of the outputs with partner in next 10 minutes.

Step 4: Ask if any group wants to voluntarily share their matrix with the whole group. If so, give them ample time to present their matrix- using good communication skills (bouncing, pausing, eye contact)

Conclude the exercise by asking and summarizing how one can enlarge the first quadrant (open); discuss the role of seeking feedback, self-disclosure, and accepting challenges in self growth.

Ex 1: Asking questions that matter

Material required: A4 size papers with one word names of various objects: Rabbit, Boss, Pen, Computer, Tree, water, dog etc. Couple of safety pins.

Research and practice prolongation technique beforehand.

Method: First explain prolongation technique: stretching the first sound (syllable) of a word. Ask members to recall what they did this morning, prolonging one word in every sentence. After some practice, tell them that the group is going to play a game- based on asking intelligent questions with prolongation. Ask every one to stand in a circle. Stand at the head and explain:

1. We are going to play a guessing game. An A4 page with a word on it will be pinned to your back and you will slowly move in the middle of the group. You can't see the word on it- but others can.
2. You have to ask one complete question at a time from any of the members standing in circle around you to make your guess. You must PROLONG one word in the question. You can go on asking the question from different members until you guess correctly.
3. The members are supposed to answer in *yes, no, not applicable, dont know*. No other words or gestures will be used to convey the information.
4. The trick would be to guess correctly with least number of questions.
5. Questions should be like: Is it l---iving object? Is it e-----dible? Is it present in this r----oom at the moment? Is it b----ig? You can not directly ask: is it D---og?
6. Facilitator will keep a count of how many questions were asked and if the questions were valid or not. Of course the focus should also be on having fun.

7. The facilitator should lead the exercise and go first in the center and ask some one to stick an unknown label on to her/his back.

Conclusion: Ask the group

1. Do PWS find asking questions more difficult than answering someone. Why? Is it because most interrogative words start with K sound OR could it be that asking questions means sticking your neck out? There are no clear answers but ask people to debate and discuss the issue for sometime.
2. When not asking questions can be dangerous? (brainstorm)
3. What are the other reasons why people may not ask questions? What situations?
4. Then, offer feedback to the quality of prolongations done by various members. Also, some feedback on logical thinking involved in the exercise. Ask members to come up with their examples of logical /lateral thinking and share it in 3 minutes.

Ask the group to brainstorm how they can get more practice to prolong: among the group, then on phone with strangers, in office, at home etc.

Ex 2 : Stuttering Interviews

Material required: Printouts of questionnaires and FAQ on stammering from TISA website. Before groups goes out to interview people about stammering, they should read FAQ and know basic facts so that they can answer questions about stammering. Here is the basic text of questionnaire which should be adapted to local context and preferably translated into local dialect:

Greetings. Can I take your five minutes? I just want to ask a few questions. (No, I am not selling anything). I am from an organization working for people who stammer. I am doing a survey. I am taking notes, just to help me remember. Is it okay with you?

Take down name, age and gender, only if the person is willing to share these. Just read out the questions- dont paraphrase or explain.

Q1: What do you think stammering is?

Q2: Do you know anyone who stammers?

Q3: Why do people stammer?

Q4: When someone stammers, talking to you, how do you feel? How does it affect you?

Q5: What do you do under these circumstances- to help?

Q6: What do you think of people who stammer? What kind of people are they?

Q7: Would you hire one, if you had a vacancy? Why? Why not?

Q8: what do you think stammerers should do to help themselves?

If time permits, you can add and improvise more questions. Normally, this is enough. NOW, you can educate the person about stammering, if the situations permits it. Regarding stammering protocol, just emphasize three things: Dont interrupt; Dont look away; Slow your speech down. Conclude with a sincere thank and tell him about your self help group- that he can refer any PWS to your SHG.

Method: Explain the purpose of stuttering interviews- to desensitize ourselves, to increase comfort level while talking to strangers about stammering, to cross check our assumptions as to what people think about stammering.

Discuss & distribute the questionnaire. Divide members in groups of three and ask everyone to conduct one interview and then gather in the room by the appointed time. If there is a shopping mall, park etc. close by, the three interviews per group should not take more than 40-50 minutes. Remind members to be thoughtful about the comfort and needs of the interviewee.

When people return, welcome them and ask them to share their experiences, briefly group wise,

focusing on:

1. How did it feel- asking questions from strangers about stammering?
2. What helped to go ahead? Some technique? Some thought?
3. What old assumptions got challenged?
4. What new information have they learned? Etc.

Summarize the lessons learned and highlight the fact that may be, for the first time, they were taking a proactive stance on stammering- as they interviewed the person and then “educated” them. When you give up “victim” mentality and take on a proactive role, your perception and feelings radically change.

Review of home assignments: Those who have done it, should be given 3-5 minutes each to share funny events from their life. Tell them, that timing and delivery of punch line is an important skill- and you will be watching for it!

Give the assignments for the next session, thank and conclude.

Conclusion

We conclude here the first module of this manual. As you go through these exercises over a period- you would discover that conducting the exercises, taking notes and browsing them is the basis of much knowledge. This is also the basis of your own training manual- if you work a little on your notes. If TISA could collect all such ideas into a portable manual, it would be a great help for those who want to help other PWS, have the time and energy- but little know-how.

In this process, you would discover that while you are concerned about others, your own communication & facilitation skill is improving by itself in the process. You will also develop problem solving skills- since this initiative will be swamped by all kind of problems- both outside and inside you: your own motivation levels, your own conviction and commitment, your own readiness to anticipate and plan for the problems etc.

Best wishes on this journey of self-discovery!