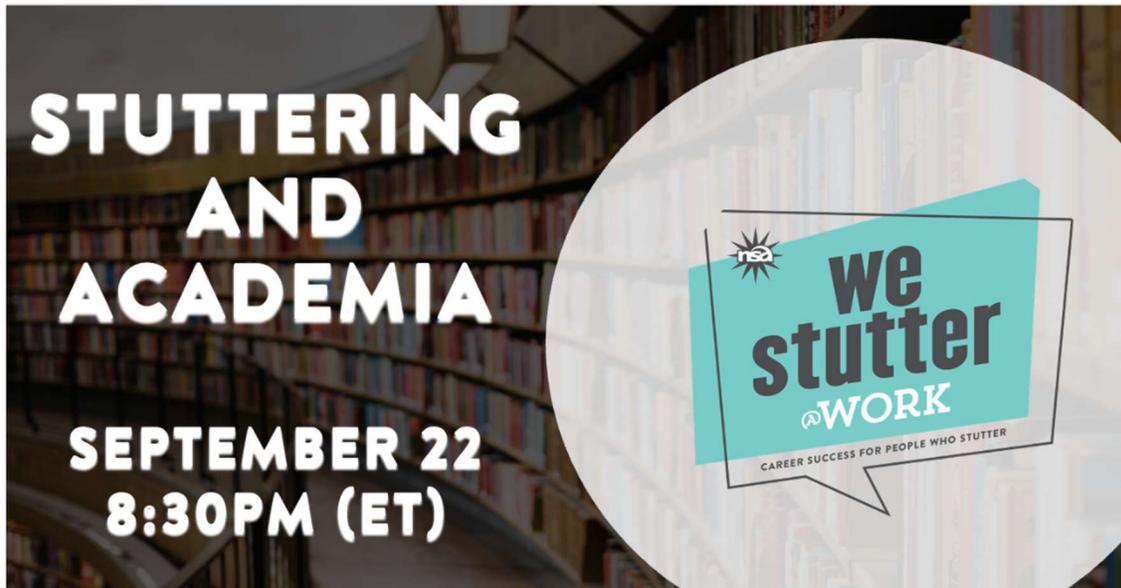


NATIONAL STUTTERING ASSOCIATION

IF YOU *stutter*, YOU ARE NOT *alone*.



**Wednesday, September 22, 2021**

## **Stuttering and Academia**

Sometimes it's easy to forget that universities and colleges are workplaces. Stuttering can be challenging for professors who stutter, as well as for students and colleagues who are not familiar with stuttering. In this engaging panel discussion, we will hear from several professors who stutter, who will discuss how they navigate stuttering across a variety of academic environments. Participants will be invited and encouraged to ask questions of the panel.

**Facilitator:** Charley Adams, PhD, CCC-SLP, Professor in Communication Sciences and Disorders at University of South Carolina.

**Panelists:** Scott Thompson, PhD, Professor in the Philosophy Department at West Virginia University and Adams State University; Ai Leen Choo, PhD, Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders Program at Georgia State University; William Webster, PhD, retired Dean, Faculty of Health Professions at Dalhousie University; and Jeffrey Brown, PhD, Postdoctoral Research Associate at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science

## Behind the Scenes - Chat Room Excerpt

Maya; Daniel; Arey:	I also the only person in my family who stutters, as far as I am aware.
Pamela:	It's so wonderful to see so many new faces and names here tonight.
Raena; Jeff; Arey; Taylor:	This is my first time at an NSA event. Thanks for having this webinar tonight!
Carl; Joseph:	Great to have you here! Welcome to all the first timers!
Ivens:	Hi everyone, I am not a professor/teacher, but I am a Supervisor, which I believe is similar to academia in some aspects. So this webinar is helpful. Thanks for having this!
Raena:	I also teach at a medical school. Glad I am not the only one!
Maya:	This is one of my first times being around other people who stutter. I've been pretty alone in my stutter my entire life.
Joseph:	You are no longer alone Maya. Welcome!
Samens:	Hi everyone, I am Egyptian and glade to be with you.
Hunter:	Hi everyone, I am not a professor, but I am a college student at Middle Tennessee State University. This is my first NSA meeting. I'm excited to be here.
Scott:	Has any dean or provost ever followed-up with you regarding the negative evaluations?
Anabel:	Great to have everyone here, you are not alone. We have an awesome community for support.
John:	That's right! Our mock interviews are a GREAT way to practice before an interview and get some jitters out!
Anabel:	You are a great inspiration Ai Leen!!!!
Maya:	For those who are into podcasts, I am launching a podcast around changing the conversation about stuttering. It will touch on this topic of disclosure and being a student who stutters. It is called PROUD STUTTER, and you can learn more about it here: <a href="http://www.proudstutter.com">www.proudstutter.com</a> .
Carl; Arey:	Awesome, Maya!; Thanks Maya...I'll def. tune in...
Ivens; Maroua; John; Jeff	Thanks Ai Leen, powerful message!; You are such an inspiration; You really are an inspiration Aileen!; Agreed, Ai Leen, you have a great philosophy!
Ai Leen:	It does Jean and I wouldn't be here without it!

## Behind the Scenes - Chat Room Excerpt

Jill:	Hello. I want to become a teacher. My question is: what stuttering speech therapy have you had in the past and what techniques or fluency strategies are most helpful to improve communication skills and teaching effectiveness in the classroom? Thank you.
Daniel:	I am just transitioning from graduate school to my first real job as a mental health therapist. I have to schedule first time appointments and then have sessions. I usually worry that they will drop off, and I usually attribute them not wanting therapy to my stutter. While I know that is not true, I am wondering if it is almost a universal hard thing for PWS to begin new jobs and not give up on the dream job?
Rachael:	Anyone an SLP who stutters? If so, how would be the best way to tell your clients/patients that you stutter?
Arey:	I teach in high school...It's been my experience that I don't have to tell them, they will find out LOL.
Holly:	Hi Rachael! I'm a SLP and I also stutter. As soon as I introduce myself to a client/patient, I let them know I stutter as well. I've worked on disclosing this sooner rather than later.
Arey:	I personally, don't make a big deal out of it, I just tell people, sometimes I stutter...then move on to something else.
Maroua:	Dr. Scott, you are such an inspiration my friend.
Carl:	Scott, how did your adviser know the difference between "normal" disfluency and when you may have been stuttering more due to nervousness?
Pamela:	I worked in a high school too. I never really disclosed, but occasionally I'd get a kid who laughed or was rude. So I'll stop and say, "Hey, I stutter and I'm ok with it. And I hope you will be too." That usually solved that.
Carl:	We have a past webinar on our website that is devoted to disclosure, and we touch in it often in others. Check it out under our resources!
Arey:	"I don't stutter when I do the grades though" LOL! That's my joke in class.
Ai Leen; Carl:	LOL too funny! Love it. I'm sure that got 'em straight!
Taylor:	I stutter on every sound. LOL!

## Behind the Scenes - Chat Room Excerpt

Raena:	Wow- I thought I was the only one who couldn't jump in a conversation quickly! And so true about saying the graduate names!
Jeff:	I hear that: reading out loud is always a challenge for me (harder than spontaneous speech).
Raena:	I agree Jeff!
Evan:	I also have trouble with quick back and forth conversations. Unfortunately, I usually don't try to say something because I think I won't be able to get it out quickly and smoothly.
Maya:	It's not our problem, it is society's.
Carl:	"If you have an issue with me, it's not me - it's you"
Daniel; John; Sandra:	Ai Leen, great comment on taking the burden off of us! So well said Ai Leen!!; Thank you, Ai Leen!
Sameh:	I do stutter, and I work in sales. LOL
Anabel:	My stutter is not my problem, it is your problem.
Maya:	Verbal diversity - I prefer this term rather than the term disfluency.
Pamela:	Sometimes if I am talking about stuttering and not really stuttering (enough) I'll do some voluntary stuttering which almost always leads to natural stuttering anyway.
Jose:	There is a degree of psychological shift within those of us that stutter that when we initially reveal ourselves we stutter, makes the experience from then on a little easier.
Jeff:	Totally, Jose, you hit on it exactly.
Holly:	I like to think of the goal of speech therapy for people who stutter (PWS) is to learn effective communication not learn how to be fluent.
Arey:	Has anyone experienced speech therapy that has made a substantial difference with their stutter? I have found some techniques to manage it, but have never found anything that made a substantial difference?
Samuel:	I work in a research group and we do have lab meetings every week. I prepare nice PPTs but presents below 50% of my slides when our boss is around and about 80% without him. How do I improve when he is in the meeting? Thanks.
Sam:	During my PhD, I have severe stuttering with my advisor.

## Behind the Scenes - Chat Room Excerpt

Ivens:	Similar to Will Webster, I find when I overly prepare, I feel less anxiety when presenting, and I also use "sequence" notecards. I still stutter, but less nervous.
Jose:	...and/or pretend to have an accent
Pamela:	I think sometimes we stutter more in front of authority. Any high stakes speaking situation which we think we'll be judged, we might stutter more. At least, that's what I often found when I was trying to hide stuttering.
Jeff:	Definitely, Pamela: stuttering may not be psychological in origin, but it's certainly influenced by our psychology!
John:	Absolutely Pam!! Interviews and dates were tough for me. Situations which we think well be judged
Ai Leen:	Same with me Will! I can tell from my disfluency when I am coming down with something.
Jose:	Knowing the material/topic for which you are giving a lecture about, diminishes nervousness and anxiety.
Pamela:	One time working in high school, I was leading the National Honor Society, and leading the kids in a pledge before calling their names for awards. With the pledge, I'd say, now repeat after me, but don't repeat the stutters. It always got a chuckle, advertised I stutter, and eased my anxiety.
Rebecca:	I really like what some of you said (Scott & Jeff) about role playing, There is interesting research on speech neurology and there might be actual difference in the neural basis between when we speak in a "performative" way vs. not.
Arey; Carl:	That's was a great idea Pamela! Love it, Pam! Great way to ease any tension and disclose: double win.
Pamela:	Humor is always helpful.
Joshua:	As a professor who stutters openly, I tell them I stutter and I will struggle in front of the class. This is a great opportunity to tell the entire class there is no hiding and if I can speak confidently then you too can participate in class!
Anabel:	I would say to think of stuttering as a friend, someone that makes you unique and work with them because thinking it as an enemy and trying to hide is draining mentally and physically.
Jeff; Anabel:	Great strategy, Joshua: I might have to borrow that, if you don't mind!; Love that Joshua!!! This is amazing.

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Pamela:	Ai Leen - good points. But I think way too few people realize how easy it is to accommodate someone who stutters.
Arey:	Well said Anabel...it's totally draining...I just had to learn to accept it and move on.
Ai Leen:	Please reach out to me, I want to hear your stories. Email me at achool@gsu.edu
John:	Amen Ai Leen that's our goal at We Stutter @ Work
Arey; Okey:	Will do Ai Leen. I work as a lawyer too.; Sounds like a great qualitative study Ai Leen!
Pamela:	I've heard SLP students say they've been told by clinical supervisors that they must work on their own fluency before continuing on.
Holly:	As a SLP (for 15 years) and PWS (for 35 years), I questioned if I could be a SLP but it was actually my Communication Disorders Professors that gave me the confidence to continue on the SLP path! I'm so thankful for their guidance when I was doubting myself.
Joshua:	FYI - International Stuttering Awareness Day is 1 month away. October 22nd is a great day to spread awareness at work! Put it on the college calendar, make a post and tell your students and faculty!
Pamela:	Also, encourage people to check out the online International Stuttering Awareness Day conference that runs the whole month of October. Papers and audio submissions by PWS, SLPs, family etc. You can interact with the authors. <a href="http://www.isastutter.org">www.isastutter.org</a>
Elena; Joel; Natalie; Ivens; Chris; Kodjo: Arey; Chyncia; Arey: Jean; Tonya; Kim; Kimberly:	Thanks for sharing everyone!; Thank you all so much. To the panel especially, it was good to hear your voices and listen to your experiences; Thank you!; Thanks, great webinar!; Thank you everyone! Thank you for moderating Charley!; This was great. Thanks for all your insights!; Great stories and information!; Thank you!! Once again I have learned so much. Such a great community; Thank you! This was immensely helpful.
Ai Leen:	Thank you! This has been such a wonderful experience for me to learn about your experiences with stuttering.
Jeff:	Thanks, Charley, and to my fellow panelists and everyone who attended tonight!

**Links:**

[www.westutter.org/CareerSuccess](http://www.westutter.org/CareerSuccess)

<https://westutter.org/careersuccess/mock-interviews>

<https://westutter.org/careersuccess/webinars>

<https://westutter.org/careersuccess/profiles>