I Am Not Nervous
A Public Speaking Project For People Who Stutter

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the project was to provide opportunities for people who stutter in the Raleigh/Durham area to get comfortable with the uncomfortable by participating in public speaking groups for people who stutter. It aimed to manage negative attitudes and emotions and provide a safe space to practice public speaking.

COLLABORATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

COLLABORATION

POPULATION/METHODS

● All participants were people who stuttered.
● Participants were recruited from the National Stuttering Association-Raleigh Chapter.
● Participants attended the teen or adult public speaking group, Super Saturday, and/or NSA meetings.
● Participants participated in the Public Speaking Showcase.

GROUP FORMAT

● Icebreaker
  ○ Introductory activity designed to provide participants practice with saying their name while introducing themselves, an anxious occurrence for many people who stutter.
● Mindfulness Meditation
  ○ 3-5 minute guided meditation to help participants to focus on the present moment.
● Gratitude Statement
  ○ Reframing negative thoughts about stuttering into positive ones.
● Skill
  ○ Activity focused on aspects of public speaking, i.e. power posing, eye contact, filler words etc.
● Public Speaking
  ○ Participants practice public speaking using the skill learned in the session.
● Group Critiques

OUTCOMES

● 9 participants participated in the public speaking showcase.
● 11 graduate students from UNC-Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University volunteered during the program.
● Enhanced the curriculum of NSA-Raleigh Chapter to include public speaking tasks.
● 50 people who stutter and graduate students were served during the program.
● The Public Speaking Showcase will be sustained by the National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association chapter at NCCU.

ANECDOTAL STORIES

● “Thank you for the initiative Shian! I loved the event-how it brought together people of different ages and backgrounds to share their stories.”
● “The group is definitely helping me to combat my negative feelings about my stutter and becoming a better speaker to my peers.”
● “At first I was nervous to speak up, but the gentle pressure and questions from Shian really helped me to find my voice.”

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