



## Toward Spontaneous Speech: A Stutter Affirming Therapy Dr Chris Constantino

**Date:** Wednesday 11th October

**Time:** 13:00 - 17:00 (GMT)

**Venue:** ZOOM Live Streamed

**Speakers:** Dr Chris Constantino

**Registration:** Book online via our website ([www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk](http://www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk))

### Overview of the study day

Traditional ways of thinking and talking about stuttering have trapped both therapists and people who stutter in a vicious cycle. Stuttering is often thought of as a defect located within an individual. As such, stuttering is caused by pathology, leading to impaired communication and reduced quality of life. The cause of people who stutters problems is their lack of fluency and therefore, to solve their problems, we need to give them fluency. However, to date there is no guaranteed way for all people who stutter to effortlessly and consistently produce spontaneously fluent speech. Furthermore, attempts at fluency often make the speech of people who stutter more effortful and less enjoyable.

We can look at stuttering differently. Borrowing from the neurodiversity movement, we can shift our focus from pathology and impairment, instead emphasizing natural variation and the unique skills, experiences, and traits of people who stutter. Borrowing from social and relational models, we can see disability as a dynamic process, experienced when a person is unable to participate fully in society through a mismatch between their body and the environment around them. These ideas free the goal of therapy from the constraints of normalization (i.e., fluency), allowing us to instead focus on the values of our clients, such as spontaneity and joy in communication.



National  
Stammering  
CEN



[www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk](http://www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk)  
[nationalstammeringcen@gmail.com](mailto:nationalstammeringcen@gmail.com)



In this workshop, Dr. Christopher Constantino presents a therapy approach called stutter-affirming therapy. Stutter-affirming therapy focuses on conditioning the speaker's reaction to stuttering in ways that move toward and embrace stuttering (stutterphilic reactions) rather than in ways that move away from and reject stuttering (stutterphobic reactions). Dr. Constantino will discuss how speech-language therapists can help people who stutter foster positive stuttering identities using the three priorities of stutter-affirming therapy. First, reject fluency by reducing stutterphobic and increasing stutterphilic reactions to stammering. Second, value stuttering by discovering what speakers gain from it. Third, create an environment in which it is easier to stutter through education, advocacy, disclosure, and voluntary stammering. This workshop will cover the details of this approach in depth, using real clinical examples, and put these priorities in conversation with the most recent stuttering literature.

### **Information about our speaker:**

Christopher Constantino lives in Tallahassee with his wife, Megan, and sons, Augustine and Sebastian. He is a speech-language pathologist at Florida State University. He clinically supervises graduate students and researches how to improve the experience of stuttering. He teaches graduate classes on stuttering and counselling. Chris enjoys riding his bicycle.





### **Timetable for the day:**

**13:00 - 13:15** - Registration

**13:15 - 13:30** - Welcome and Introductions

**13:30 - 15:00** - Chris Constantino Presentation

**15:00 - 15:15** - Tea Break

**15:15 - 16:45** - Chris Constantino Presentation

**16:45 - 17:00** - Evaluation and Close

### **CEN Membership:**

You are able to access this study day (as well as a host of other benefits such as video recordings, Signal magazine, Facebook Group membership and further study days) by becoming a member of the National Stammering CEN with a 12mth subscription. You can purchase a subscription via the membership page on our website. The cost of attending the study day is included in your membership subscription. Bookings for the study day are made via our website on the events/news - study day page.

### **Any Questions?**

Please get in touch with us using the contact details below.



National  
Stammering  
CEN



[www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk](http://www.nationalstammeringcen.co.uk)  
[nationalstammeringcen@gmail.com](mailto:nationalstammeringcen@gmail.com)