

Covert Stuttering *Exposed!*

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A Covert Stutterer's

Fear of Isolation

Where do
I belong?

Fluent World

Whoa! What was *that*?
We know you can do better.
Don't let it happen again...or
else.



Man, was *that* embarrassing!
We should've used a *normal*
speaker...but everybody
thought you were - you know,
normal.



How *dare* you deceive me!
You never mentioned "*that*."
It would've changed everything.
Liars aren't welcome here!

You can't understand
my world.
You're *too* fluent...
Why are you here?



You've *never* struggled like me.
You rarely stutter...
So what's your "big problem?"

What gall! Trying to
support *me*, as if
you're a *real*
stutterer...
You just can't relate.



Stuttering World

The Stuttering Iceberg

Blocks, repetitions,
prolongations,
secondary behaviors

Fear, shame, guilt,
embarrassment,
anxiety, isolation,
denial, hopelessness



The Covert Stuttering Iceberg

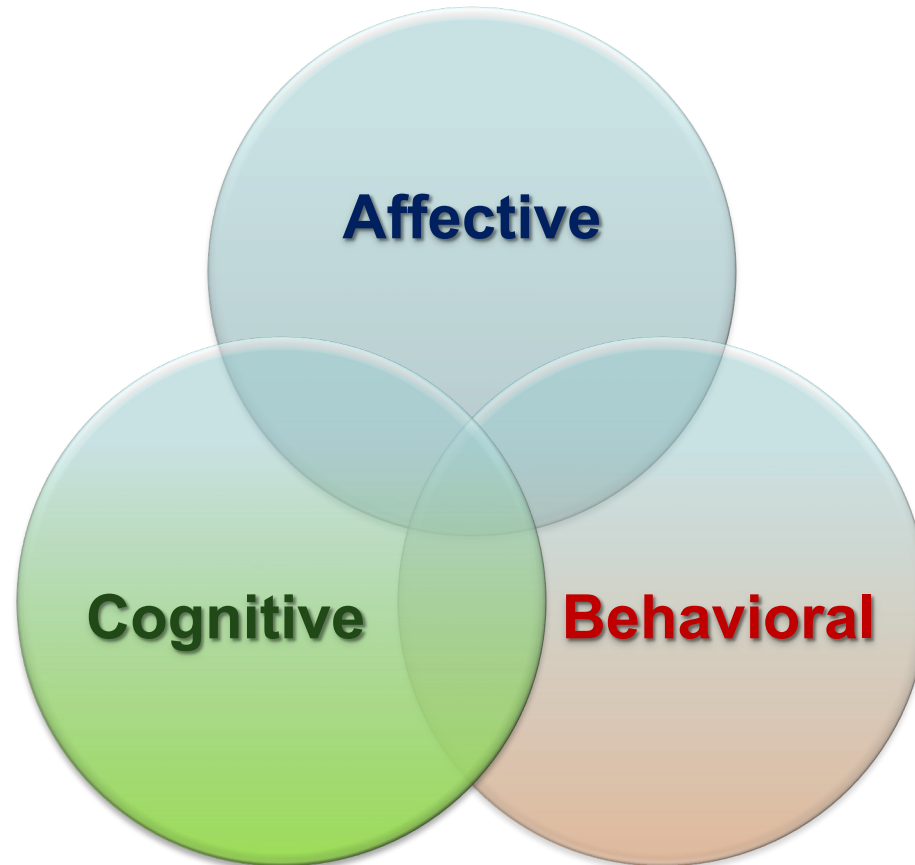


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Beliefs

- Subgroup of PWS who attempt to maintain the facade of fluency at ALL COSTS
- Arises when there is an interaction affective and cognitive domains of stuttering producing excessive fear and avoidance at the mere thought of stuttering or being associated with stuttering
- The reward of fluency far out-weighs the cost of being covert

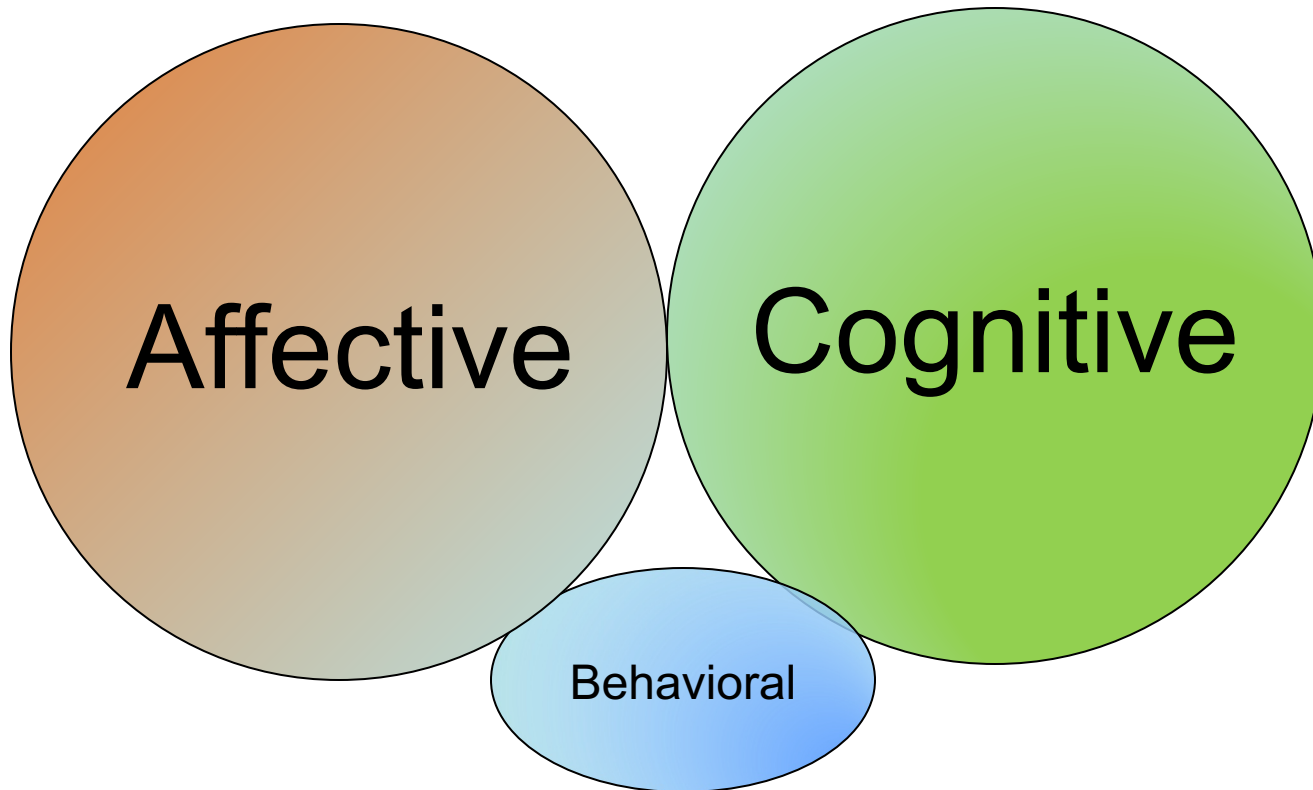
Components of Stuttering



What is being “Covert”?

- Having excessive fear of being perceived by others as being different because of stuttering
- Fear of the “secret of stuttering” being discovered
- Guilt for making the listener feel uncomfortable because of the stuttering
- Denial of the stuttering or the need to work on it
- Shame, the devaluation of oneself, festers the need to hide stuttering

Covert Stuttering Profile



Treatment Paradigms

- Typical Fluency Shaping Paradigm
 - Work on the Behavior (the “Doing” of Stuttering) and there won’t be anything else to work on
- Typical Stuttering Modification Paradigm
 - Work on managing the moment of stuttering through acceptance and modification
- Paradigm for Covert Stuttering
 - First, attack the fear through education, confrontation, reality, and building a tolerance for ‘little bobbles’
 - Then move into traditional stuttering modification therapy

Treatment

- Change in Cognitive and Affective components is essential
- The confronting stuttering is an attack on the *self* and is not always comfortable
- Group therapy is the recommended to
 - reduces feelings of isolation
 - established group affiliation
 - provides examples of courage
- Desensitization activities
- Challenge negative thoughts and beliefs

Starting the Journey

- Talk more openly about stuttering
- Mention stuttering to your family, friends, co-workers
- Advertise your stuttering by wearing NSA pin, carry NSA coffee mug around office
- Insert voluntary stutters on non-feared words
- Make phone calls to strangers and insert voluntary stutters
- Leave reading materials out in the open

Remember: *Start Small*

Do **SOMETHING**
Every Day
to Reach Your Goal

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Every Day