

M.O.R.E. Success with Cluttering Therapy

MOTIVATION - OWNERSHIP - RECOGNITION - EARNED FLUENCY

Listen to The Speech Umbrella podcast episodes [68](#) and [69](#) for a thorough discussion of assessment and treatment.

Cluttering Assessment

Look at all of these areas when assessing cluttering to form a complete picture of the client's needs.

- Syllable Collapse
- Articulation
- Mid Sentence Revisions
- Lack of Complex Language (is there a learning disability?)
- Run-on Sentences
- Missing Context and Details in Personal Narratives
- Syntax
- Prosody
- Rate of Speech

Treatment

Treatment is not linear. Clients will likely experience success in these different areas in a cyclical way, before it all comes together for them.

- Motivation: Talk about their interests and their future plans. Help them discover their *why* for improving communication. Show them cluttering is a real thing that affects them.
- Ownership: Watch for those moments when you can help them take ownership of their communication. They need to realize they have a responsibility to their listeners.

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- Recognition: Use video, voice recordings, and modeling to help them recognize *what* is happening *when*. Start with recognition of disfluencies shortly after the fact and progress to in the moment recognition. Recognition of disfluencies includes any of the areas uncovered in assessment, although it may be necessary to address them individually at first.

Some helpful activities are:

1. Use pennies to represent periods to control run-on sentences.
2. Record by video or voice, analyze, and redo. The redo helps them realize they can control cluttering.
3. Sit in front of a mirror and indicate whenever a disfluency occurs.
4. Use rubrics for self evaluation.
5. Ask them to use 2-3 sentences to talk about the subject at hand, so analysis is manageable. (Bonus—this teaches them to summarize!)
6. Use story length jokes.
7. Watch clips of comedians and actors and notice how they describe the setting, slow their rate of speech, and use intonation. Use these same skills as they tell jokes and stories.
8. Use scripts from familiar movies and work on precision of delivery. You can also use poems this way.
9. Share personal stories. Make sure that all parts of story grammar are represented: characters, setting, problem, feeling, action, complications and subsequent actions (if applicable), and resolution.