

# The Voice



January 2006

The Newsletter for The McGuire Programme (by Geoff Johnston)

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For the password to the Graduates' Section please contact Geoff Johnston.

I hope you all had a happy and safe Christmas and I wish for you and your families that 2006 will be an exciting year of moving forward and achieving your goals.

Welcome to the latest edition of *The Voice*. This issue contains information about courses available to you during 2006, an application form to reserve accommodation on those courses, information about support available and some stories and articles that you might find inspirational and informative.

The big news is that **Dave McGuire** is coming to Australia to instruct on a course in Melbourne and to run a couple of support group nights in Brisbane and Sydney. See below for details.

I encourage all graduates to attend a course this year whether you've fallen off the bike somewhere along the Road to Eloquence and want to get back on, or you just want to lift your recovery to the next level. Unfortunately there doesn't seem to be a resting place with recovering from stuttering; you're either moving forward by expanding your comfort zone or you're slipping back. Joining a public speaking club such as Toastmasters is great for moving forward with your recovery on a regular basis.

Can I also say that turbulence and relapse for most people is a NORMAL part of the recovery process. Every hurdle is a great opportunity to learn and enables you to come back quicker and stronger. If you have relapsed back to square one, I encourage you to get back to it with renewed focus. I don't know of another programme in the world as successful as the McGuire Programme so stop looking for the magic cure; if there was one, the programme wouldn't exist!

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## 2006 Course dates

**Sydney, 6-9 April 2006**, Hotel Y on the Park  
**Melbourne, 25-28 May 2006**, Hotel Y, Elizabeth St  
**Brisbane, 22-25 June 2006**, venue to be advised  
**Perth, 27-30 July 2006**, Kings Hotel  
**Sydney, 7-10 September 2006**, Hotel Y on the Park  
**Melbourne, 26-29 October 2006**, Hotel Y, Elizabeth St

**Dave McGuire will instruct on the Melbourne course 25-28 May 2006.** He will also hold a support group in Brisbane on Monday night 22nd May and in Sydney on Tuesday night 23rd May.

There will be 2-3 course instructors attending every course with at least one from interstate if possible. Graduates/coaches attending courses will be given ample opportunity to challenge their comfort zone by participating fully and possibly leading split sessions.

If you plan to attend one of these courses please let me know and if you require accommodation complete the form on the bottom of this newsletter and send to me with the amount required at least four weeks prior to

the course. Graduates are encouraged to stay at the hotel to gain the fullest benefit from the course.

## Why no courses scheduled for Adelaide in 2006?

To cover the expenses of conducting courses and programme administration, 7-8 students per course are required. We have not had that interest from SA recently. Graduates in SA are encourage to make use of cheap airfares to either Sydney or Melbourne for a refresher course and then to access the strong ongoing support in SA consisting of fortnightly Support Group and Toastmasters' meetings.

## Toastmasters' Success

McGuire graduates are having great success world-wide competing against "normal" speakers in public speaking competitions run by Toastmasters, Rostrum and other clubs. Here in Australia we have at least five (that I know of) graduates who have made their Toastmasters' division finals (ie state finals) to be held early in 2006. Good luck to those graduates

## **Staff training**

Staff training will be scheduled during 2006 courses according to the demand. People who want to further progress their recovery or put something back into the programme by coaching or instructing are encouraged to attend staff training.

Temporary coaches are also reminded of their obligation to attend the training to formalise their coaching status. Please contact me if you would like to participate in staff training.

## **Expanding Your Comfort Zone**

To recover from stuttering long-term involves changing our perceptions and beliefs about our speaking and of our own self-worth. It is no use attending a 4-day course and then not changing anything about our behaviour around speaking. People who do very well after a course are those that go home and set about executing a plan that incorporates radical changes around speaking situations. They seek out opportunities to speak, one-to-one, in small groups, making presentations at work, public speaking, becoming a teacher, whatever.

All of these activities have one thing in common; they all seek out opportunities to challenge their fears by expanding their comfort zone. Graduates who return home and continue their lives with no changes around speaking will of course relapse back into their old patterns of avoidance and fear that leads back to uncontrolled blocking.

So how do we go about implementing change after we attend a McGuire course? The following is an email from Wales graduate Alan Badmington which in my view sums up the process nicely:

You can read as many books/articles as you wish, and attend as many workshops/courses as you can afford. You can acquire a multitude of tools, join every available Internet group, and gain as wide an understanding about the subject as you are able. But that is still insufficient. You also need to put into practice what you have learned.

You need to place yourself in the very situations where you experience difficulties. You need to remove yourself from the safe environment, face your fears, expand your comfort zones and tread unfamiliar paths. You need to do the things you think you cannot do.

I suppose you can equate it to digesting a manual on how to play a guitar, without actually acquiring such an instrument. You know the theory, but that is of limited value if it is not used for its intended purpose.

In my case, I chose to identify and question my self-

limiting beliefs, the very beliefs that were fuelling my speech difficulties and affecting many aspects of my life. I ceased avoiding words and situations, and widened my self-image to accommodate roles that I previously felt lay outside my scope.

My first McGuire course (back in May 2000) gave me the confidence and impetus to commence that journey. I made huge gains during those four days that allowed me to enjoy freedom of speech that I never thought possible.

The physical component (speech behaviour) of my hexagon underwent a huge positive boost in that brief period, due to the new techniques that I had acquired. My emotions, beliefs, perceptions and intentions were also positively influenced, but to a much lesser extent.

But I knew that those changes (which had occurred within a safe, controlled environment) were NOT permanent. I knew that unless I changed many things about myself, then the less positive parts of the hexagon would soon seek to re-establish the status quo. My stutter (which was nearly as old as me) would fight to live – it would resist the temporary changes that had occurred.

If I had stood still and retained the same mindset, then the gains that I had enjoyed would have been snatched away within a very short time.

I'll conclude with a quote:

"Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." WILL ROGERS

## **How to improve confidence and eloquence**

We must realise that to recover from stuttering is NOTHING to do with being "fluent". It's about feeling good about ourselves and looking forward to and enjoying speaking situations.

1. Revisit and LIVE the Five Directions.
2. Assertive self-acceptance that you're a recovering stutterer working at "getting good" at the sport of speaking.
3. Regular contacts – not five but 55 per session.
4. Join Toastmasters, Rostrum or a drama class and enjoy the experience of speaking.
5. Use your McGuire and personal support networks to help and support you.
6. Demote this personal trait stuttering that we are overcoming to the rank it deserves in who we are, not number one or even in the top ten!

## **Email discussion list**

An important and inspirational part of the world-wide McGuire support network is the email discussion list. Get to read the tips and stories from graduates

throughout the world and share your setbacks and triumphs.

There is a lot of information that gets passed through this medium, plus you get to know many graduates throughout the world.

Go to this link: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/FreeRd/>

1. If you don't already have a Yahoo ID then click on "Register" or, if you already have a Yahoo ID, then log in.
2. Click on 'Join this group' on the same page.

### Support groups

Adelaide – Rob Lucas – 0403 117 120

Brisbane – Gerry Hill – 0416 200 389

Perth – Geoff Martin – 0439 901 373

Melbourne

1. Heidelberg – Peter Jumeau - 0417 481 403
2. St Albans – Geoff Stevens - 0419 095 025
3. Springvale – Tom Fiala - 0417 146 208

Sydney – Parramatta

– Peter Ghisla - (02) 9484 1758

– Adam Robinson - 0412 998 252

Telephone support: International and Australian phone list and myself on (08) 8388 4663

### Speak Easy Convention 2006

Speak Easy (Aust) is an organisation offering support for people who are recovering from stuttering. The association is becoming more inclusive and it is hoped will become a truly representative group for all people recovering from stuttering in Australia. There are three McGuire graduates on the national Speak Easy committee including myself.

The 2006 Speak Easy Convention is being held at Caloundra, Queensland in March 2006. These conventions are great fun and a chance to meet many people at various stages of recovery. It's also an opportunity to expand your comfort zone by presenting a paper or running a workshop. We do have a McGuire graduate involved in the organising committee. I'll be a key-note speaker at the convention.

I hope there will be a large McGuire presence at the convention and we'll be able to treat it as a bit of a reunion.

I encourage people to join Speak Easy and have a voice in helping other people who stutter. The cost is \$35 a year for many benefits including a quarterly newsletter with McGuire contributions.

Refer: <http://www.speakeasy.org.au/> for a membership form and details of the Convention.

### Communicating with graduates

The main means of communicating news to graduates is via the website: [www.beyondstuttering.com.au](http://www.beyondstuttering.com.au)  
Contact me for the password to the graduates' section.

If you haven't access to the Internet, access and assistance is available at little or no cost at your local Library. While you're there, check out the updated international website on: [www.mcguireprogramme.com](http://www.mcguireprogramme.com)

### Advertising the Australian programme

I devote considerable time and money to advertising the Australian courses. However, it's really important that graduates help in this task. The health of local support groups and networks relies on new people coming into the group thereby revitalising ideas, attitudes and enthusiasm.

How do we achieve this? I believe the key to attracting new students onto the programme is for graduates to tell their good news story, to newspapers, talkback radio, TV, Service Clubs, anyone who'll listen. This publicity is more effective than expensive advertising. In addition, it provides a great opportunity for people to push out their comfort zone that will in the long-term make their recovery stronger.

I invite all graduates to put yourself out there. If you're not feeling a little stretched in speaking situations on a regular basis, then your comfort zone isn't expanding and it will start to constrict on you.

If you intend to do some local promotion of the programme, please contact me on (08) 8338 4663 prior to the interview to obtain the correct contact details for enquiries. Brochures, business cards, etc. are available on request and don't forget the enquiry phone no. 1300 134 543.

### New Year's Resolutions

How's this for a New Year's Resolution: "I hereby resolve to never allow the thoughts of stuttering to ever enter my mind. If it should try to get in, I shall immediately push it out. Therefore, I hereby resolve, "stuttering" shall no longer have 'rent free space' inside my head."  
Bobby Bodenhamer

How do we do this? The Checklist has an element called Centre and Clarify. You will recall that this happens before the breathing and speaking elements so therefore is pro-active rather than reactive. During Centre and Clarify you assess how you're feeling about the speaking situation and then decide whether you'll go into it as a "fluent" speaker or as a recovering stutterer using great technique which ideally includes some deliberate dysfluency.

In addition, this is the time during which you have an opportunity to say a resounding "NO" to negative

thoughts, feelings and emotions about the speaking situation and say a firm “YES” to strong thoughts that may include thinking about previous speaking situations in which you were powerful and eloquent thereby enacting the New Year’s resolution quoted above.

How do we make New Year’s resolutions work? It’s all very well to say I’ll do this and that in the New Year for example, “read aloud for 15 minutes every morning using exaggerated pause/breath/speak/release cycle”. I can almost promise that it won’t happen unless you set some written goals.

If you want some help with goal-setting download the Graduate Recovery Workbook from the website. Remember motivation comes from achieving goals so set “baby goals” and gradually make them more challenging.

**Affirmations**

Affirmations can be very powerful and can help overtime to change habits of the brain. You don’t really have to believe in the effectiveness of affirmations. The mind will absorb the message and if repeated long enough and frequently enough, may just start to influence you thoughts and feelings about speaking situations. For example my current favourite is, “I am confident in all speaking situations.” Write it down 20 times a day and you could be surprised with the results when combined with good technique.

**Ego States**

Many years ago I attended a management training course on TA (Transactional Analysis). The theory behind TA is that in any communication exchange we are in one of three possible ego states, Adult, Parent or

Child. The other person/group can be in any of those states as well. Have you ever noticed how you feel when you block and stutter? I’m guessing that you feel powerless, subordinate, fearful, inadequate, etc. What ego state are you choosing to be in? I believe every time we block we’re very much in the Child state. We have chosen to give away our power to control our thoughts, feelings, emotions and behaviour including talking, to someone external to us.

Remember the Cycle of Panic we learn about on a course?

*Cycle of Panic*



It’s the process we go through when we enter this Child-like state; a state of fear, anxiety and avoidance leading to blocking.

We’re no longer children and the strategies that may have had some useful purpose when we were children, no longer serve as well! Ensure that your thoughts and behaviour are adult. Believe in yourself, trust the teachings of the Programme and continuous improvement will be yours.

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Please book my accommodation for the course indicated below:

Tick one please:

- I have enclosed a cheque/money order made payable to “The McGuire Programme (Aust)”.
- I have transferred the required amount to the McGuire Programme’s bank account.

Tick one please:

- Sydney, 6-9 April 2006, Hotel Y on the Park - \$230 accommodation**
- Melbourne, 25-28 May 2006, Hotel Y, Elizabeth St - \$275 accommodation**
- Brisbane, 22-25 June 2006, venue to be advised – cost to be advised**
- Perth, 27-30 July 2006, Kings Hotel - \$200 accommodation**
- Sydney, 7-10 September 2006, Hotel Y on the Park - \$230 accommodation**
- Melbourne, 26-29 October 2006, Hotel Y, Elizabeth St - \$275 accommodation**

Name.....Telephone No. ....

Address..... Email: .....

Return to: PO Box 344, Balhannah, SA 5242. **Accommodation guaranteed only if payment is received at least four weeks before course commencement.**

PS You may also make a direct credit to: (If you do so, please advise me via email or phone)  
 Savings & Loans Credit Union, Gawler St, Mt Barker  
 BSB: 805023 Account No.: 02359655 Account Name: The McGuire Programme (Aust)