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Introduction to Communication Disorders 100

12, October 2022

Paper Writing Assignment #2

The videos I watched were presented by artist Achilleas Souras, art therapist Jenny McGuire, and American musical icon Bill Withers.

All three speakers are different people so it makes sense that their experiences with life would all be different. The biggest difference is how they let their stutter affect them. Souras said that the stutter impacted their artistic style, and it is almost omnipresent in his artistic decisions. McGuire said that when she was growing up it was difficult to accept herself with the stutter and was afraid to make phone calls, which contradicted how her personality was. She learned to overcome this and actively practiced talking without hiding their stutter. Finally Withers said it affected him a lot as a child and people back in the day would make fun of him, even adults. When he grew up, he used it to empower himself and even gave an address to a university in his hometown where they made fun of him. Another difference is how their lives turned out. All of them lived a fulfilling life that is no worse than someone living without ever having a stutter. They all had the freedom to form their own life story.

At the same time, even though they are different people they have a stutter as a common point between them. They all said they had experiences where stuttering affected how they interacted with people. With Souras, he said he had to find new ways to convey himself nonverbally, through art and other means. McGuire said that she was afraid to make phone calls and had to alter the way she thought about speaking to get over that fear, and Withers said that when he was a kid people thought there was something wrong with him. Withers had to learn to accept that some people just do not understand what it is like being different.

I believe if I had a stutter, I would be a lot less social. Even without one, in my public-school life I was not exactly outgoing and afraid to talk to new people. I could see that if I did have a stutter, I would have been even more afraid and maybe not make any friends. I wonder how it would affect me now. I think it would make me speak more. People have told me close to me that I like hearing my own voice because often I speak to myself or repeat things that people say just because they have a different accent. It is not because I want to make fun of them, but I just want to feel how it is like saying the word like that. I wonder if I had a stutter if I would do it even more to practice saying words out of the ordinary. I also like talking nonsensically, I will often say sentences that make no sense or are completely out of order, with a stutter I could see myself either doing it less or more. It would make me think about what I am saying more or make my speech sometimes make even less sense. I could see it going both ways, having a stutter could make me think more about how I speak and affect how I make friends, or it could do the opposite and make me speak more and maybe the friends I have now would be no different. I cannot say for certain what would happen, but it is interesting to think about.