

Toastmasters Offers a Safe and Therapeutic Place for Stutterers to Find Their Voices

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Nov. 17, 2010 [PRNewswire](#)/ -- The movie "[The King's Speech](#)," which debuts Nov. 26, documents King George VI's struggle to overcome his stutter and lead the U.K. through World War II. Like the King, America's approximately 3 million stutterers can improve by doing what they may fear the most: Speak in public. [Toastmasters International](#) (www.toastmasters.org) offers a supportive, safe and therapeutic atmosphere for people of all backgrounds to practice their speaking and leadership skills.

Jane Fraser, president of the Stuttering Foundation of America, says, "Many people have told us how helpful the [Toastmasters] organization has been for them. Not only do they gain valuable public speaking experience in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere, they are relieved to discover that most 'normal' speakers are also terrified to speak in public."

People who joined Toastmasters because of their life-long stutter share their experience:

- Byron Embry, of Colorado Springs, Colo., has a message: "Your handicap may just be your greatest asset." He should know. Growing up, Embry had a severe stutter and as a result, endured cruel taunts from others. However, his determination to overcome such drawbacks led him to tackle his speech problems head on. He became a professional baseball pitcher with the Atlanta Braves and is now a successful motivational speaker. Along the way, Toastmasters played a key role.

Embry's advice to people who stutter: "The first step is to understand that you are not alone. Second, understand there is a method and way for [the stutter] to be corrected. Speaking in front of an audience and getting feedback will get you positive results."

- Anna Margolina, of Redmond, Wash., grew up in Russia, where she underwent many years of speech therapy. After immigrating to the United State in 2001, her self-confidence and fluency plummeted as she became painfully aware that her accent, combined with her stutter, made it difficult for others to understand her. Instead of hiding behind her words, she joined Toastmasters.

Margolina's advice to people who stutter: "Be open about your stuttering and don't be afraid to talk about it. People do notice it, and if you haven't acknowledged your stuttering, they don't know how to react."

- Russ Hicks, of Plano, Texas, once considered public speaking impossible. "I discovered that if you face your fears, you find that your fears aren't as real as you think they are," he says. "It's one of the most empowering feelings in the world to do something that you or other people think you can't possibly do."

Hicks's advice to those who don't stutter: "When you talk to a stutterer, listen to what we're saying, not how we're saying it. Keep normal eye contact, and don't finish sentences for us."

To find a list of Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org/findaclub

About Toastmasters

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. The organization currently has more than 260,000 members in over 12,500 clubs in 113 countries. Since its founding in October 1924, the organization has helped more than 4 million men and women give presentations with poise and confidence. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org.

SOURCE Toastmasters International

SOURCE: Toastmasters International

Toastmasters Offers a Safe and Therapeutic Place for Stutterers to Find Their Voices

PR Newswire

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Nov. 17, 2010

RANCHO SANTA MARGARITA, Calif., Nov. 17, 2010 [PRNewswire](#)/ -- The movie "[The King's Speech](#)," which debuts Nov. 26, documents King George VI's struggle to overcome his stutter and lead the U.K. through World War II. Like the King, America's approximately 3 million stutterers can improve by doing what they may fear the most: Speak in public. [Toastmasters International](#) (www.toastmasters.org) offers a supportive, safe and therapeutic atmosphere for people of all backgrounds to practice their speaking and leadership skills.

Jane Fraser, president of the Stuttering Foundation of America, says, "Many people have told us how helpful the [Toastmasters] organization has been for them. Not only do they gain valuable public speaking experience in a friendly and encouraging atmosphere, they are relieved to discover that most 'normal' speakers are also terrified to speak in public."

People who joined Toastmasters because of their life-long stutter share their experience:

- Byron Embry, of Colorado Springs, Colo., has a message: "Your handicap may just be your greatest asset." He should know. Growing up, Embry had a severe stutter and as a result, endured cruel taunts from others. However, his determination to overcome such drawbacks led him to tackle his speech problems head on. He became a professional baseball pitcher with the Atlanta Braves and is now a successful motivational speaker. Along the way, Toastmasters played a key role.

Embry's advice to people who stutter: "The first step is to understand that you are not alone. Second, understand there is a method and way for [the stutter] to be corrected. Speaking in front of an audience and getting feedback will get you positive results."

- Anna Margolina, of Redmond, Wash., grew up in Russia, where she underwent many years of speech therapy. After immigrating to the United State in 2001, her self-confidence and fluency plummeted as she became painfully aware that her accent, combined with her stutter, made it difficult for others to understand her. Instead of hiding behind her words,

she joined Toastmasters.

Margolina's advice to people who stutter: "Be open about your stuttering and don't be afraid to talk about it. People do notice it, and if you haven't acknowledged your stuttering, they don't know how to react."

- Russ Hicks, of Plano, Texas, once considered public speaking impossible. "I discovered that if you face your fears, you find that your fears aren't as real as you think they are," he says. "It's one of the most empowering feelings in the world to do something that you or other people think you can't possibly do."

Hicks's advice to those who don't stutter: "When you talk to a stutterer, listen to what we're saying, not how we're saying it. Keep normal eye contact, and don't finish sentences for us."

To find a list of Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org/findaclub

About Toastmasters

Toastmasters International is a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. The organization currently has more than 260,000 members in over 12,500 clubs in 113 countries. Since its founding in October 1924, the organization has helped more than 4 million men and women give presentations with poise and confidence. For information about local Toastmasters clubs, please visit www.toastmasters.org.

SOURCE Toastmasters International

CONTACT: Suzanne Frey, sfrey@toastmasters.org, or Katie De Boer, both of Toastmasters International, +1-949-858-8255

Web Site: <http://www.toastmasters.org>

<https://mediacenter.toastmasters.org/newsreleases?item=31639>