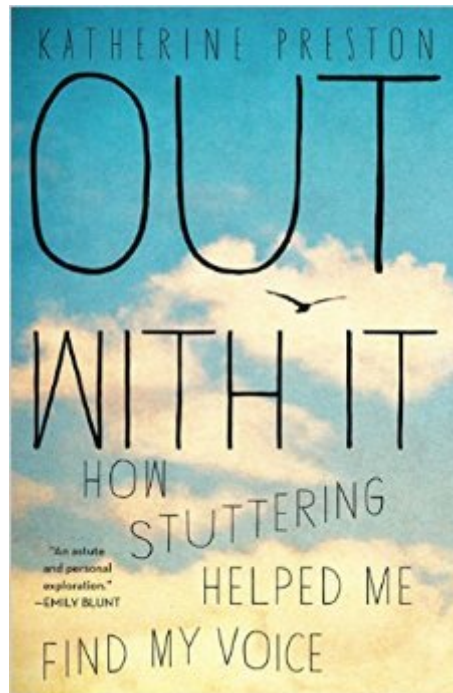


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# Out With It: How Stuttering Helped Me Find My Voice



## Synopsis

A compassionate, unflinching memoir • (David Mitchell, author of Cloud Atlas) by a young woman who fought for years to change who she was until she finally found her voice and learned to embrace her imperfection. > That's exactly what happened to Katherine Preston at the age of seven. Thus began a seventeen-year battle with her stutter, hiding her shame and denying anything was wrong. Finally, exhausted and humiliated, she left her home in London to travel around America meeting hundreds of stutterers- including celebrities, psychologists, writers, and others from all walks of life- as well as speech therapists and researchers. What began as a vague search for a cure became a journey that debunked the misconceptions shrouding the condition, and a love story that transformed her definition of normal. > is an anthology of expertise and experience that sheds light on an ancient problem that today affects 60 million people worldwide. It is a heartwarming memoir and a journalistic feat, a story about understanding yourself and learning to embrace the voice within.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I really enjoyed Katherine Preston's book about stuttering and found it very informative and moving. I'm one of the co-chapter leaders of the Manhattan Stuttering Group, a chapter of the National Stuttering Association. I remember when Katherine interviewed a number of our members (including me) several years ago, and I had always been curious to read the book. A few weeks ago, I heard it had been published, and I eagerly downloaded the ebook to my Kindle, and devoured it over the

past week or so. I am very impressed! While the book has become more of a personal memoir than a set of interviews with stutterers, she does a wonderful job of conveying what it's like to be a stutterer and the struggles that one feels. I found many of those parts very moving, and I could definitely identify with her struggles. She also includes some of the material from her interviews with other stutterers, as well as therapists and a few celebrities like Michael Palin of Monty Python, whose movie "A Fish Called Wanda" caused a big uproar in the stuttering community when it first came out and has been much discussed since. I never knew that his father stuttered and that the character in the movie was based on him. There are many wonderful anecdotes from Katherine and other stutterers, including from some people I have met over the years in the stuttering community. I also felt like I learned a lot from reading her book about some of the therapies out there and the history behind them, as well as the scientific research that has been done on the possible genetic causes of stuttering and future treatments that might develop from such research.

Twenty-eight year old Katherine Preston has struggled with the pain of stuttering, "a messy and complicated condition," since childhood. When teachers called on her, she feared that her classmates would tease her, someone would impatiently finish her sentences, or she would be dismissed as being mentally impaired. In her memoir, "Out with It," Preston courageously and candidly writes about her experiences and those of fellow stutterers from all walks of life. She and millions of others cope with blocks, repetitions, and other impediments that prevent them from expressing themselves fluently. Using powerful and evocative figurative language, Preston conveys the terror and aching self-consciousness that gripped her when she was ten and a boy asked her for her name. She recalls, "My name has been broken in half. My tongue lies taut and heavy, the tip glued to the base of my mouth." All she could say was the letter "k," over and over again, followed by "ka ka ka." "My name is the one word that never escapes my mouth unscathed." "Out with It" is an enlightening, poignant, and sensitive book in which Preston helps us understand the obstacles that stutterers face when they communicate with friends and family, attend school, speak with co-workers, or try to accomplish tasks as mundane as ordering a soy latte at Starbucks. Although speech therapists suggest a variety of techniques to ameliorate stutterers' dysfluency and anxiety, there is as yet no cure. Some children manage to overcome or outgrow their stuttering, reducing it "to a hazy memory tucked away in some dusty crevice." Others, like Preston, expect to continue stuttering as long as they live.

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