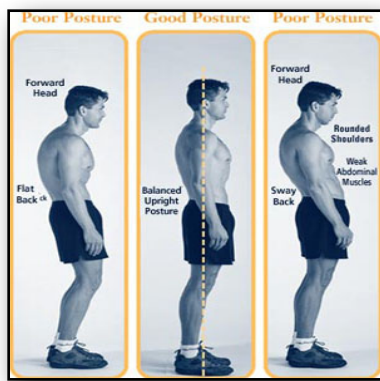


7 Steps to Proper Singing and Speaking

1) Posture and Presentation

Before we can **Breathe, Sing, Speak** or just walk around, we need to create good body posture. **Good Posture** is demonstrated when your body is standing straight up with no **"Hunch Back."** Imagine standing or walking while balancing a book on your head and this will create the effect I am talking about. This type of posture creates a many positive results for you. The most important aspects are an open **Lower Abdominal Cage** so you can consistently inhale a full breath and an **Erect Stance** that communicates to others that you are **Confident and Positive**.



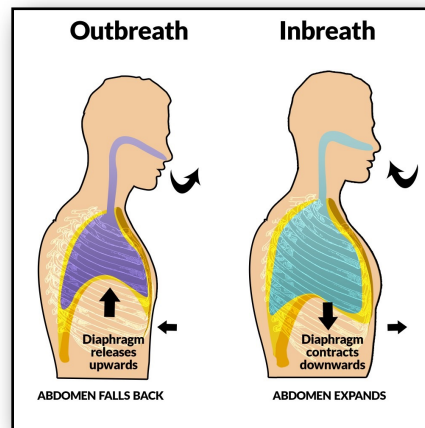
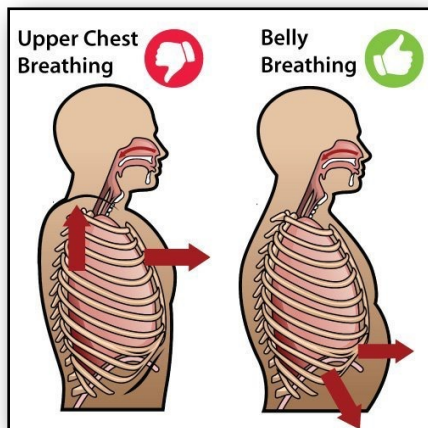
2) Vocal Warm-Up

Warming the voice up prior to vocalizing is very important prior to challenging our voice to perform great things. Since the body that sings or speaks actively uses muscles to perform properly, it just makes sense that it is important to **Perform Vocal Warm-ups** before we challenge our voice to stretch its capabilities. This is no different from a runner doing stretches or jogging.



3) Breathing Properly

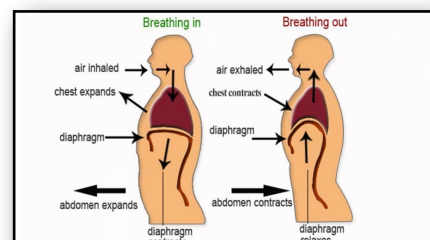
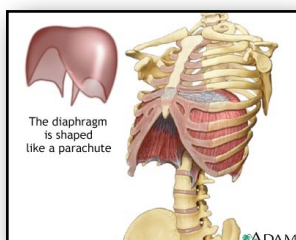
If you are breathing with your shoulders moving up and down, you are doing exactly what most students do when they start with me. **The reality is that you are breathing wrong.** The correct way to breath for everyone, no matter what you do in your life, is to extend your lower abdomen when you breathe. We may also call this, **"Belly Breathing."** The result of breathing this way is that you can inhale enough air to fill up your individual lung capacity. We might say, **"You will have a full tank."** We must start with a **Fall Tank of air.**



4) Diaphragmatic Breathing and Support

During my over 30 years of voice coaching hundreds of students, I have found that the basic understanding of the Diaphragm as an extremely important functional body part is one of the most misunderstood aspects of vocalizing. I am constantly amazed when I meet with singers who have worked for years with coaches and performed often who have little idea how The Diaphragm works. And most important, how to use it to make singing or speaking powerful and controlled. **The Abdominal Muscles, including the Core may be the most important muscles in our body, especially for singing and speaking.**

Without them, you cannot breathe on your own and your life will end very quickly without medical intervention. The Diaphragm is the top or upper muscle in the abdominal cage and contracts downward to open our lungs so air is drawn into the body to fill the opening space in the lungs. **Your complete understanding of how the Diaphragm Muscle functions in conjunction with the Core, is critical to proper speaking and singing.**



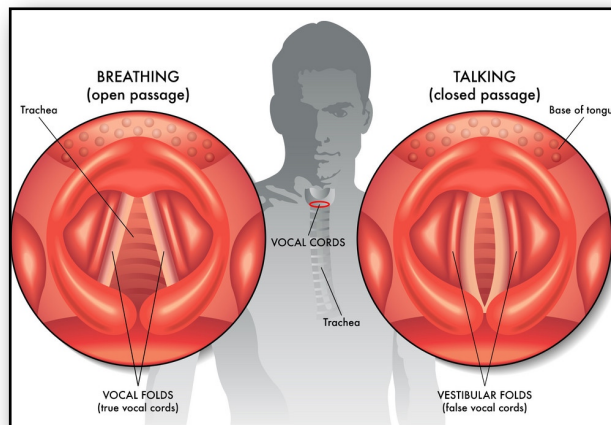
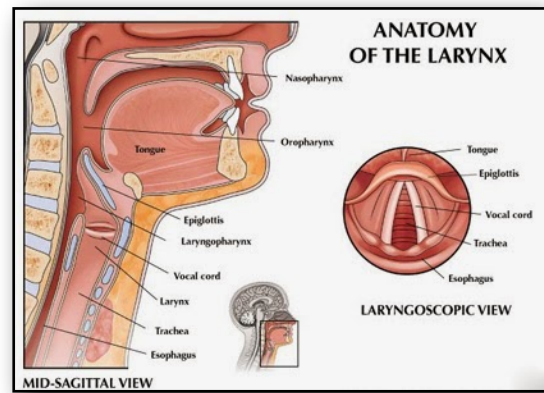
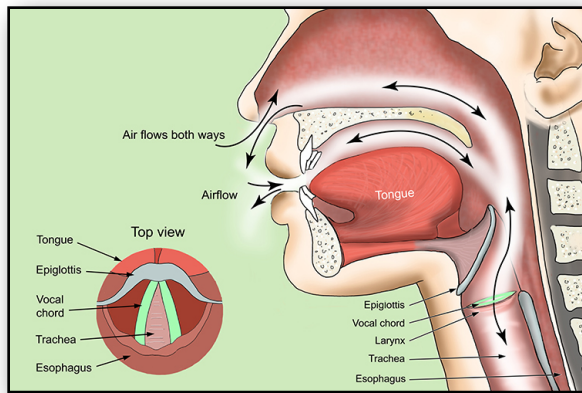
5) Vocal Cords and the Larynx

These important parts of our body are very powerful and also very delicate. Further, like the Diaphragm, they are often entirely misunderstood by even the most seasoned vocalists. The Larynx is the entire Voice Box, which includes the Muscles, Bones, Cartilage and Vocal Cords.

The Vocal Cords are the things that "buzz" when we make a vocal sound. This miracle instrument is responsible for two important functions; production a fundamental sound and production of varied pitches. It must be relaxed and free to operate at all times.

The greatest misconception I have found about the larynx is that many think that "it" is where "singing or speaking power comes from." This conclusion is what creates tension in the throat and eventually may lead to vocal cord damage. The sound created in the Vocal Cords is the effect and not the cause. This is compared to a car engine running without proper delivery of fuel pressure to feed the engine. Just like fuel, air must be delivered to the Vocal Cords under controlled pressure. Without it, both will just "Sputter".

So, how can Vocal Fuel (air) be delivered to the "engine" the correct way? Finding the answer to this question and being able to use all the related parts of your body to perform properly is what a student can learn with the right Vocal Coach.

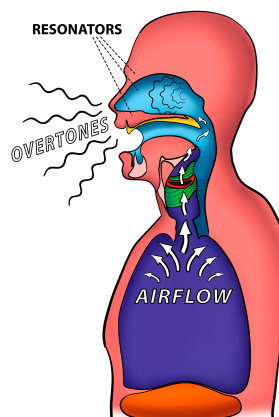
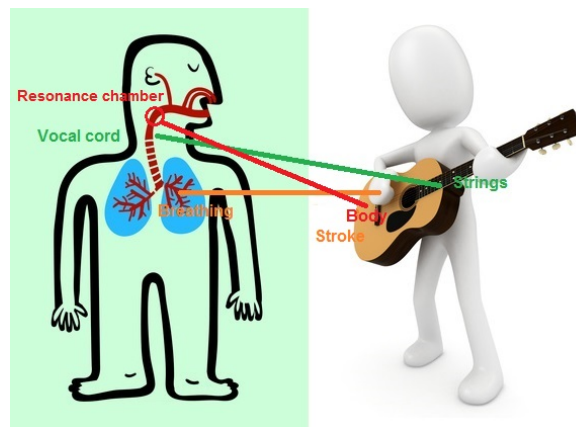


6) The Throat and Head or as I call them, "The Amplifier"

After we have learned to breathe correctly, contract our diaphragm to its muscular potential, control the amount and power of our airflow and create vibrant, free and tuned pitches from our Larynx, we are then responsible for molding the tone quality and clarity of our communication in the Throat and Head to produce powerful musical style and clear diction.

The "Amplifier" is where this metamorphosis takes place. This is where the final sound we call "You" is created. The great flexibility found here to manipulate sound quality and diction is demonstrated in the talent of Comedians. Many of them are able to mimic the voices of other people by altering the resonating spaces in the Throat and Head as well as modifying their diction to create a duplicate character.

As a singer, we do the same thing when we decide to sing Rock, Pop, Country or Opera. All these varied styles require changes within the Amplifier to produce them properly.



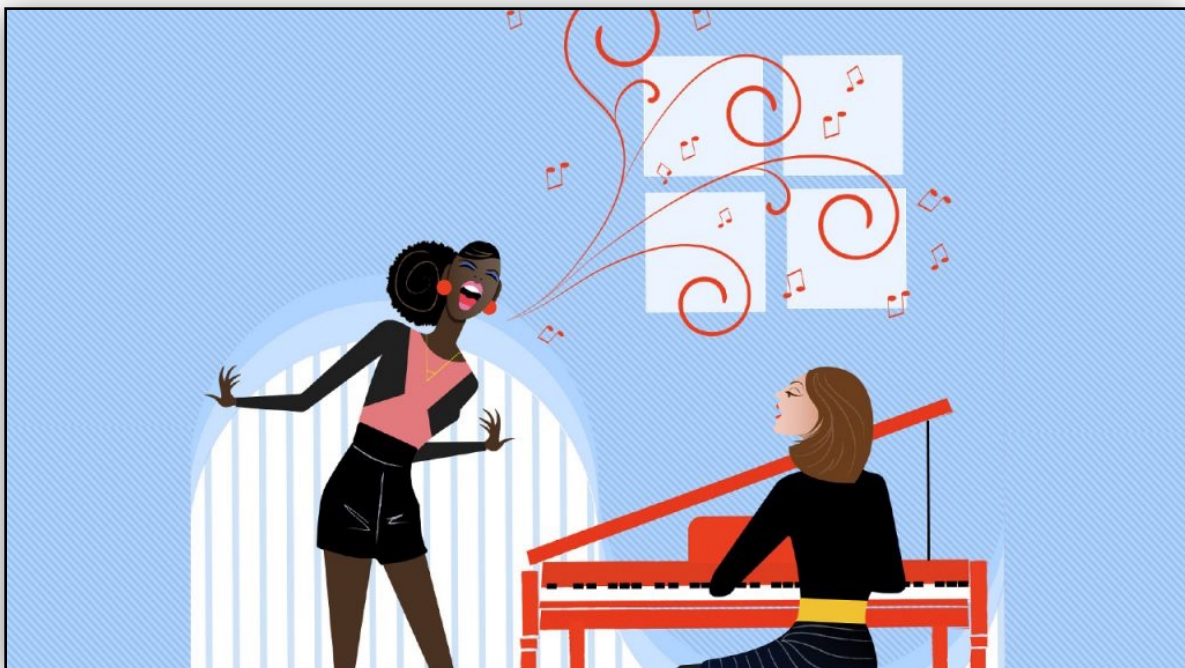
7) Interpretation

Once all the above basics have been learned and you can begin to operate them as a team, it is time to experience the most important aspect of any performance. This is your interpretation. Another way to say this is that we need to "get into character."

When I directed the Capistrano Chorale, I instructed all the members throughout our rehearsals and especially leading up to our dress rehearsals that **if they would sing each song like they personally wrote it yesterday and were performing it for the first time with all that fresh emotion, they would be able to interpret the music effectively and naturally.** This approach, done properly, always results in speech and music that is more powerful. It is a matter of cause and effect. When we use an effect to get an effect, for example, we may try to perform more emotion in a given passage by deciding to perform louder. We may be louder but the "increased emotion" may not be "natural".

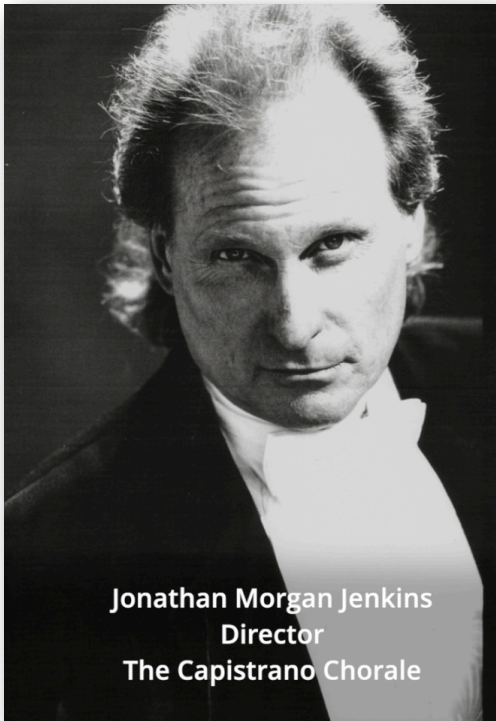
But, if we get the effect by the cause, for example, we perform louder and with more emotion because we "feel" the raw emotion of the moment, we may also sing louder but this time it will come from raw emotion and not from an analytical approach to singing the song properly. **Does this not make perfect sense? We can certainly agree that most emotional music was created to express a deep and real emotion.** Therefore, we should also agree that the best way to relive that emotion is to experience it again when we are performing.

This is the method the great actors of our day use to be powerful actors and we should use it for singing or speaking without fail.



"Your Voice Is Your Life" with Veteran Vocal Coach - Jonathan Morgan Jenkins

These are only a few of the many steps that a Singer or Speaker must take to become an accomplished vocalist. The often quoted expression of every novice performer, "You either got it or you don't," is a cruel deception. That is like saying that you can't play a Clarinet before you have even tried to learn how.



Jonathan Morgan Jenkins
Director
The Capistrano Chorale

Don't make the mistake of many and convince yourself that you do not require any training because you are a "gifted vocalist." I highly recommend that you purchase my Vocal Training Book "Singing and Speaking on the Edge of a Grunt" for only 9.95 to learn my Vocal Training secrets.

In this powerful book, the "7 Steps to Proper Singing and Speaking" will be fully explained.

Links to Connect with Jonathan

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