

AS EASY AS BREATHING

Seminar Outline

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It's Natural! - watch a pet or baby sleeping. (How can a such a small body project so loudly when it cries!)

The primitive reptilian brain stem regulates breathing - constricted when under threat with the Flight or Fight reaction.

Linked with posture

Stress = constriction. The throat tightens; shoulders hunch, cutting off air supply.

When challenged, we all tend to hold our breath which tenses our body. Many performers are trapped in ramrod frozen postures - "rib cage"

Breath Holding: causes insufficient oxygen flow to the brain
- thus a lower energy level.
-causes an imbalance between the left and right sides of the body & brain.

How to relate to the diaphragm in everyday life

- smell a flower
- fake a cough, a yawn or a sneeze.
- call 'fire' or 'stop'
- blow a piece of paper against a wall
- blow a candle
- compare "eee" breath with "oh".
- hiss

Not having enough air = usually a fear of running out.

- Waste rather than hoard your air.
- Empty lungs completely = deeper in breath.
- First exhale - extra huff ... wait ... inhale
 - gauge how fast the air should be expelled
 - think ahead when we can take a breath rather than mid-phrase.
 - RED pencil in emergency breaths (musicians and public speakers)
 - In rest bars breathe OUT- IN. (Pencil)
- Rib expansion
- Back expansion
- Whispered ahhh *
- Yawn

* See Taking Centre-Stage - pre'cis from Chapter 8.