

Activities to Promote Vocal Health and Safety

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In applied voice lessons and Vocal Mechanism we look at the body as a whole as it relates to singing, using techniques from several body awareness disciplines, such as Alexander Technique, Feldenkrais, Yoga, and Body Mapping. Due to the nature of singing, it is essential that we understand how the body moves and how to release tension and align the body. Releasing tension makes it possible to align the body, which allows the body to function more efficiently, thus positively affecting the vocal sound. In class and applied lessons we discuss the skeletal structure and the muscles involved in posture, breathing, and phonation. We explore exercises from the body awareness disciplines prior to singing and during the vocal warm up. Students are given specific exercises each week to practice on their own.

The following list includes various body awareness disciplines and resources

1. Exercises that help students understand the six places of balance- **What Every Singer Needs to Know about the Body** by Malde
2. Accent Method exercises- **If in Doubt, Breath Out!** By Ron Morris and Linda Hutchison
3. Exercises from the Alexander Technique-**Art of Breathing** by Jessica Wolf and **Voice and the Alexander Technique** by Jane Ruby Heirich
4. Yoga poses- **Vocal Yoga** by Heather Lyle
5. Awareness through movement exercises from the Feldenkrais Method-Body and **Voice: Somatic Re-education** by Marina Gilman and **Singing with your Whole Self** by Samuel Nelson and Elizabeth Blades-Zeller
6. Whole body voice training- **Complete Vocal Fitness** by Claudia Friedlander and **Whole Body Voice Training** by Ruth Hennessy

Equipment Used

Breath Builder
Bosu
Chango-paws
Kinesthetic board
Activity stones
Exercise bands
Exercise balls
Accu-wand
Yoga block
Straws
Yoga mat
Medicine ball
Model skeleton
Posters of Yoga poses and exercises
Posters of voice anatomy
Model larynx