An Alternative Approach to the Singer's Breath: Method and Workshop

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AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO
THE SINGER’S BREATH: METHOD AND WORKSHOP

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in the College of Fine Arts at the University of Kentucky

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Asheville, North Carolina

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Lexington, KY
2016

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AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO THE SINGER’S BREATH: METHOD AND WORKSHOP

This research endeavors to stretch the boundaries of vocal training, a field defined by its century-old techniques and teachings, to include the cultivation of a relationship with the breath, body, and Self. The paper reviews the contributions of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough’s work with the breath and body and outlines a new method, *Unlock Your Breath (UYB) – Performance Breathwork*, which integrates the greatest strengths of those methods. *UYB Performance Breathwork* teaches the singer’s breath as a way towards deeper embodiment of Self (mind-body-voice relationship), while creating a stronger breath-body-voice connection with minimum effort and maximum efficiency.

This research demonstrates the efficacy of the *UYB* method through a workshop delivered in a university setting to study participants consisting of thirty-six vocal performance degree-pursuing students and three voice faculty members at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. The study used both quantitative and qualitative research methods consisting of a pre- and post-workshop questionnaire completed by each study participant and interviews with voice faculty.

Results of the study demonstrate three major obstacles that keep singers from connecting to their breath and body, and discovering their authentic voice: (1) absence of relationship with Self; (2) lack of self-worth; and (3) fear of vulnerability. The data also show that participation in the workshop significantly improved participants’ self-confidence, self-awareness, body and breathing knowledge, and self-rating of vocal skill, while decreasing participants’ concerns around others’ perceptions of them. The data support an understanding of the breath as the connecting force between the body, mind, and voice, and concludes that the voice is merely a reflection and manifestation of our current state-of-being, meaning our present relationship with the breath, body, and mind. These results suggest that the *UYB Performance Breathwork* method may be used to expand teaching of artistic human voice production. Using a breathing method that is grounded in somatic awareness resulted in student attainment of a much deeper intrapersonal relationship, while allowing for discovery of an authentic understanding of how the individual’s breath and body works in coordination with their voice.
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December 1, 2016
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When I decided to pursue a Doctor of Musical Arts, I had no idea of the emotional, physical and inner journey that was in front of me. As I reflect on the past decade and where I am as a person and scholar, I am in awe of having been given the opportunities to face those challenges and to expand my knowledge and Self. There were many difficult moments where I questioned if I had the resources or strength needed to finish. What I have come to learn is that the doctorate represents something much greater than myself; it represents a force and presence that has consistently expanded my conscious awareness, broken down my internal walls of self-doubt and sabotage, and has left me filled with humbleness and gratitude.

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the breath is the seed of who we truly are, and its roots are dependent on how we water and care for that seed. My time at the Middendorf Institute prepared me well for coming into relationship with my Breathing Coordination teacher Lynn Martin. I am humbled to have had the honor to study under Lynn, and my life has been blessed by her generosity of knowledge, skill and love for the breath and body. She taught me to believe in my gifts and to believe that what I had to offer the world of breathing was valuable and greatly needed. I would like to thank my Breathing Coordination colleague and friend Robin De Haas, for his dedication and continued contributions to the field of breathing.

I would like to thank Dr. Marilyn Taylor, Voice Department Chair at the University North Carolina School of the Arts, for allowing me to conduct my research at the university. I am grateful for her guidance throughout my singing journey and her conviction that my work will help change lives and voices.

I would like to thank my grandmother, who passed away in 2013, for her spiritual guidance and for always believing in my ability to do great things in my life. I am grateful to my parents for the many prayers and support during my academic career.

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I would like to thank my beautiful and amazing partner Hunter Flournoy for his gift of knowing and intuitive guidance, love and support. His coming into my life has
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PART I
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Definition of Topic

This document and method is a result of my journey to discover the singer’s breath and its connection to the voice and body. Throughout the dissertation, you will read words that might seem as if they do not belong in the area of music, such as wholeness, self, relationship, embodiment, vulnerability, safety, self-worth, and authenticity. My research shows that if we want to expand our understanding of the voice and breath relationship, we as a profession must push the boundaries of a field that has already been defined by centuries of teachings and vocal technique. The knowledge gained from my training and study at the Middendorf Institute in Berlin (2012/2013) and of the Breathing Coordination method in New York (2013-2015) was the genesis of this present study. This training initiated my thinking that we cannot work in the field of breath nor with the vibrations of sound without looking at the places in the body where the breath and vibrations are absent. Since I believe the goal of singing is for the voice to vibrate the whole Being, then the voice has to resonate from a place of wholeness (a body that is both emotionally and physically present), requiring the singer to learn how to use the voice, breath, and body in coordination while remaining emotionally open.

After years of hands-on training, research, study, and inner development in The Perceptible Breath by Ilse Middendorf (also referred to as The Experience of Breath or...
I have created the breathing method *Unlock Your Breath (UYB) – Performance Breathwork*, that has been tested in a university workshop as a resource and alternative approach to how we evaluate and work with the singer’s breath. The method and workshop experientially teaches the structure and function of breathing from an integrated body-mind-voice perspective. The student learns how individual breath functions in coordination with the voice, what their personal relationship is with the breath, and how to transfer that information into speech and singing. The method provides each student with simple and consistent principles and teachings that address individual needs and breathing patterns. The workshop design and approach has been shown to increase the overall vocal improvement rate within each voice studio, as well as the student’s retention rate and motivation, while providing a clear and precise explanation of the singer’s breath.

**Need for Study**

*The State of Vocal Instruction Today*

Shortly after my doctoral course work, I worked for the Admissions Office at the Juilliard School (2008/2009), assisting with the advanced selection and admissions process. I remember a specific conversation with voice faculty member Marlena Malas, in which she questioned the reason behind the decline of talent represented in the applications for both the Juilliard School and Manhattan School of Music (MSM). As an alumnus of MSM with long-standing relationships with the voice faculty, I suggested that

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the decline of talent might be reflective of how the voice is being taught in the twenty-first century, rather than a lack of talent.

My time at the Juilliard School greatly improved my aural diagnostic skills, training my ears to recognize the quality of sound I perceived the voice faculty were looking for in order to grant admission into the conservatory. It was a sound produced by a connected breath and body coordination with proper vocal fold closure. In my opinion, the admitted Juilliard students possessed this type of coordination naturally or learned it before applying to the conservatory.

Singers are taught that the breath and body connection is essential to the foundation of singing and technical development. The theory, practice, and communication of this knowledge vary greatly from studio to studio, and in some cases, may result in disconnected singing: singing without proper engagement and connection to the lower abdominal and pelvic floor muscles. Because of conservatory and university guidelines and limitations placed around touch and the teacher-student relationships in those settings, helping students to define a relationship with their breath and body can be challenging for any teacher.

Teaching students who have spent their whole lives developing an intimate relationship/dependency with technology also presents specific challenges for the voice teacher. Because of the lack of face-to-face human interaction and decline of interpersonal skills\(^3\), technology has created a disconnect around the student’s sense of self and a decline in personal and interpersonal awareness, a primary creative tool for the singer. In my experience, very few undergraduates arrive to a university voice program

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with a heightened sense of awareness, nor do they possess a grounded sense of who they are in relationship to their voice, breath, and body. In a time where technology dictates how we communicate with each other, the student’s ability to have deep interpersonal relationships and to remain present and connected to their own body can no longer be assumed.

Awareness of the relationship between breath and voice is the backbone to the art of singing and speech. To have a career in a competitive business, especially vocal performance, we must understand the interior relationship of our breathing body: the relationship with the Self. In this method and body of work, the Self is defined as one’s moment-to-moment relationship with one’s own voice, breath, body, and heart. The breath-body relationship is the interior compass which tells us when we are on track; it is an alignment that feels balanced, grounded, and fluid. It is through the relationship of the Self that we discover our authentic voice: a voice that is not constricted by tension, patterns, or beliefs that do not bring us into our greatest potential. Students need to be guided as to how to connect to their breath and body in a way that brings them into this deeper relationship, and fosters a Self that will help them live successful lives after university training. Because of the limited one-on-one time between students and teachers, teaching this type of relationship and breath connection is a challenge.

What would happen if the voice, breath, and body had equal attention? How would that change the way we teach the voice? What if the breath and body connection was first taught from a non-singing perspective, from the viewpoint of our day-to-day relationship with the breath and body? Would that change the production and quality of sound? These are the questions that inspired me to step back from the voice, to immerse
myself into the study of breathing outside of singing, and to discover what was missing in today’s approach to the singer’s breath.

*Breath and Voice: My Personal Journey*

Growing up as a dancer, my experience of the breath and body was always relational and organic, and the coordination between the two seemed to flow out of the intuitive nature of breath and movement. One of the reasons I fell in love with dance was because my heart, breath, and body were fully present, and it seemed as if my movement was being inspired by its relationship to my body. As I transitioned into studying the art of singing, I struggled to find the same breath and body coordination, which affected my ability to be fully present. I found it very difficult to connect to the lower abdominal and back areas, and my consistency of tone and ability to create breath compression was reflective of that challenge.

Throughout my vocal studies, I studied with some amazing teachers and vocal pedagogues, and I found their vocal instruction to be inspiring as well as concrete and systematically correct. However, the breath and body connection was always taught from the perspective of the voice, which did not provide me the somatic tools I personally needed to understand and discover my individual breath and its relationship to my emotional and physical body. As I began to transition out of university training and young artist programs, my singing and breathing experiences in Berlin suggested that vocal consistency and singing with a fully engaged body was the key to bridging into a successful European career in opera. Having a big voice or a unique quality of sound was no longer an advantage if the overall voice and breath support was inconsistent.
This research arose from my quest to find alternative breathing tools that would help me connect to my breath and body, while simultaneously improving my vocal consistency. Finding a way to integrate all that I had learned in my twenty years of vocal training – and to feel that the time and money I had invested in myself and voice was worth it – was crucial in claiming my truth and becoming an integrated artist.

Truth and integration remain a driving force behind my individual breathing process and the greater body of work. Learning how to conduct research and handle data while authentically being myself was the most challenging aspect of this dissertation. There were many times during the writing and data analysis where I questioned my skills and ability to push through what I did not know. Every time those doubts arose, I reminded myself of the study participants and the value of their data. The research had become an exercise in reflection, self-compassion, and vulnerability, showing that I too have the same struggles and fears as the participants. This journey has taught me that inquiring into the breath creates an interior relationship with our deepest Self that can shift our conscious awareness in ways that help us awaken to our authentic voice without shame or judgment – and live a truly authentic life.

Review of Literature

The project utilized sources including, but not limited to, historical and biographical texts, publications on different breathing and bodywork methods, psychology and medical resources, and vocal pedagogy materials. A broad historical overview and analysis of the breathing methods of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough provided a foundation for the document. Biographical information is drawn from Ilse
Middendorf’s leading publication *The Perceptible Breath: A Breathing Science*, as well as her book, *Der Atem und seine Bedeutung für den Menschen*; *Dr. Breath: The Story of Breathing Coordination* by Carl Stough and Reece Stough; and *Breathing: The Source of Life* by Carl Stough.

*Primary Literature on the Breath, Body, and Voice*

Ilse Middendorf’s life’s work and method, *The Perceptible Breath*, is one of two primary resources used to create the *Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork* method and workshop. Middendorf’s primary concept that “We let our Breath come. We let it go and wait, until it comes back naturally” is the inspiration and foundation of my work. Although Middendorf’s publications provide a wealth of knowledge, my overall knowledge base of the method comes directly from my experience and time invested at the Middendorf Institute. My breathwork teachers Michael Maar and Hiltrud Lampe are first generation Middendorf practitioners and maintained a very close relationship with Ilse Middendorf. My time spent at the Institute was only in the German language, which contained a much greater breadth and depth than any of Middendorf’s English publications. Being in the space where Middendorf taught and hearing her words spoken through her students made previous knowledge received from her publications of secondary importance and more a source of reference. That is not to discredit them, but to

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6 Stough and Stough, *Dr. Breath: The Story of Breathing Coordination*.
7 Carl Stough, *Breathing: The Source of Life* (New York: Carl Stough Institute of Breathing Coordination, 1996), DVD.
say that direct experiential knowledge outweighs any conceptual knowledge, which is one of the main principles taught by Middendorf. The dissertation does not exhaust literature for that exact reason. This is a study based on the study participants’ experience of a breathing method. With that said, there are many valuable resources that support the gathered data and encourage future directions of research in the area of breath and voice.

*Bone, Breath, and Gesture: Practices of Embodiment* by Don Hanlon Johnson is one the most insightful perspectives offered in the somatic literature.⁹ This book contains multiple interviews from luminaries in the field and leads the reader through their methods, weaving together the different modalities and establishing a core direction and goal towards deep embodiment. One of the interviews is with Ilse Middendorf, and the book also contains the Preface to *The Perceptible Breath*. In the interview, Middendorf addresses the struggle of the mind to control its perceptions and she points clearly to the fact that methods will continue to be developed to bring us out of the mind and into our breathing bodies. She goes on to say,

> Developments and laws in the sphere of breathing will be discovered that are not only in the mind’s control, but also the ability to feel. This can only be achieved by a constant ability to feel together with an undisturbed composure. I am aware of the difficulties putting an experience into words, so I shall try to describe it as I have perceived it. Thus “focusing-perceiving-breathing” will be the basis of it.¹⁰

In my breathing experience, Middendorf’s method teaches a new way of thinking that is not controlled by the mind’s perceptions. It teaches the breathing body to experience and feel its perceptions as inner knowledge and expansion, while allowing the mind to support the breath and body rather than running it.

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The second of the two primary sources used to create the current method workshop is the method of Carl Stough, *Breathing Coordination*. In his book, *Dr. Breath: The Story of Breathing Coordination*, Stough defines breathing coordination as the individualistic breathing pattern that engages all the muscles of respiration, both in conscious and unconscious breathing. Because most people have lost the natural coordination of the diaphragm, Stough’s goal was to recoordinate the diaphragm by providing “the most efficient deflation and inflation of the lungs with the least amount of muscular effort.” The book itself is not a guide to how the method works, but rather a book about Stough’s journey of working with the breath. Stough is poignant in expressing the need for the information to find its way not only into the lives of singers and athletes, but to all who wish to live a long and healthy life.

This book and additional publications from the Stough Institute document how Stough’s work extended the lives of countless emphysema patients as well as the careers of principle singers at the Metropolitan Opera. Stough does offer wonderful ideas and insights into the breath and its coordination, but only his students were left with the method after his death. I would not have been able to understand how the method transfers to the client without having been taught hands-on by my teacher and co-founder of *Breathing Coordination*, Lynn Martin. Most of the knowledge and compiled literature of Carl Stough’s method came directly from my training with Lynn in New York, the session notes and recordings, and my time spent with the *Breathing Coordination* team in Lausanne, Switzerland.

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A handful of dissertation and thesis have addressed the breathing methods of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough, but none have conducted a qualitative and quantitative study to analyze the benefits of an alternative approach to the singer’s breath from a combined method. An adequate number of publications found using JSTOR, PQDT, Medline, PubMed, and PsycINFO, exist on breathing and the body, as well as its relationship to the performing artist, and have been used as a quick reference. Additional resources on existing bodywork modalities and somatic awareness, such as Alexander technique\textsuperscript{12}, Gyrokinesis\textsuperscript{13} and Ideokinesis\textsuperscript{14}, have been collected to support the created method and workshop.

The teachings and literature of Lynn Martin’s mentor, Irene Dowd, has greatly influenced Martin’s work with Stough’s Breathing Coordination. Irene Dowd is an expert and pioneer in the field of Ideokinesis, “an approach in which the cerebral cortex (conscious part of the brain) initiates new patterns of muscle activity in order to re-tune skeletal joint position and motion.”\textsuperscript{15} Dowd is on the dance faculty of the Juilliard School as well as Columbia University and the American Dance Festival, and teaches dance, dance composition, and functional and kinesthetic anatomy. Dowd’s teaching ethics and methods found in the forward of Taking Root to Fly\textsuperscript{16} are an intrinsic part of Martin’s diagnostic approach to the breath. Dowd describes her teaching practice as "an individualized approach to solving functional problems of the musculoskeletal and

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{16} Dowd, \textit{Taking Root to Fly: Articles on Functional Anatomy}.
\end{thebibliography}
nervous systems which involve discomfort or inability to achieve functional movement potential."

She goes on to say,

Many of the understandings I have gained come from thinking of my students as “teachers,” and taking “instruction” from the direct communication of their movement patterns to me through my touching fingers. While watching someone move, I also let myself minutely mirror that choreography within my own body so as to engage my own kinesthesia (sense of movement as perceived by one’s own joints and muscles). By using my touch and vision in this way, I construct a sense of the individual kinesthetic anatomy particular to each person I come in contact with.

This intuitive way of teaching is one of the core principles of the created breathwork method and university workshop, a principle that stems from my collective knowledge of touch, sensory awareness, and overall diagnostic skills. Because every human body is different, the process of allowing the student to be the teacher is essential in my proposed diagnostic approach to the breath and body, which enables me to feel and understand the individual breathing patterns and how they affect the human voice.

Jessica Wolf’s The Art of Breathing served as an important resource and teaching tool throughout the workshop process. Wolf is an Alexander Practitioner as well as a previous student of Carl Stough, and has remained a collaborative colleague with Lynn Martin. Martin assisted in the creation of Wolf’s breathing animation and tutorial DVD, The Art of Breathing. Wolf’s breathing tutorial guides the viewer step-by-step through the breathing body, starting out with the skeletal body and gradually adding on all breathing muscles and organs. The DVD is a very comprehensive tutorial of the breathing mechanism, but is layered in a way that makes it simple for the beginning singer. Wolf

17 Matt, "Irene Dowd".
18 Dowd, Taking Root to Fly: Articles on Functional Anatomy, iii.
19 Jessica Wolf, Art of Breathing: Rib Animation (New York: Jessica Wolf, 2014), DVD.
has also published a set of articles under the same title, which provide an extensive look into her process with the breath, and how one might work with the acting voice. In 2002, Wolf created a training program for Alexander teachers called *The Art of Breathing*, which combines the methods of Carl Stough and F. M. Alexander. She is an associate professor at the Yale School of Drama, and has served on the faculty of the Juilliard School, as well as Aspen Music Festival and other prestigious programs.

Mabel Todd, the founder of Ideokinesis and author of *The Thinking Body*, underlines that the mechanics of breathing, movement, and their natural balance are deeply connected to all bodily tissues. The structural adaptations for these functions are closely interrelated. Movement and its relationship to the breath are essential for the body to remain efficient and active. Lulu Sweigard, a student of Todd’s, as well as the mentor of Irene Dowd, wrote in the preface of Todd’s book *The Thinking Body*,

Two years of study with Miss Todd convinced me that her unorthodox approach to teaching body balance and motion highly effective in producing more efficient mechanics of movement . . . any teaching which could produce such unquestionably good results in body alignment with simultaneous increase in efficiency and ease should be available to all in the educational system and not be confined to private teaching.21

As high performing athletes, singers need to understand the effect of movement on the breathing body. Most leading conservatories understand the importance of creating a performer versus a singer and for that reason include movement and somatic work as part of the fine arts training. However, in university training, most voice departments do not include sufficient courses that incorporate movement and breathing. The challenge for the voice student is that they stand still for most of the beginning years of their training,

21 Ibid., ix.
unless they have the opportunity to sing a role in a student production. Voice students generally stand in one place during voice lessons, master classes, and auditions. When do they have the opportunity to truly free the breath through movement? How are they to honestly understand their individual lower body connection (the connection from the lower abdominals to the feet) when they are not moving their bodies? The student needs to experience their breath through movement in order to establish an individualized breathing knowledge. Only after that experience, can the student understand the breath from a place of standing still. In my opinion, the university training programs are starting the singer’s educational career off with a performance handicap.

The Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork workshop’s format is designed to help the student merge the mind-body-voice into one process, the process of breathing. By creating a method based in practical and sensory experience, a method that does not split the mind and body, the student’s knowledge base and retention rate is significantly improved. In Charles Brook’s Sensory Awareness, he talks about the “still-growing mind-body split” in today’s culture, and often refers to this separation as the division between the “intellectual process and sensory experience.” In Barnaby Barrat’s book The Emergence of Somatic Psychology and Bodmind Therapy, Barrat is brilliant in the way he describes the disembodiment of today’s society.

The history of the westernized world is one of an escalating alienation from the process of embodied awareness. This is, by the same token, an escalating infatuation with the motif of domination over the other, with the dichotomies of subject/object or mind/body, and with the material and technological achievements that result from “living in our head.” We now need to return to a sense of belonging with our bodies – not to a program of conceptually evaluating

them, improving them, or attempting to control the mechanics, but to listening to
the wisdom that comes from their somatic semiotics.23

Barrat’s idea that we need to return to a sense of belonging with our bodies was
absolutely confirmed throughout the study. If the student is not in relationship with their
breath and body, then how are they to be in relationship with other people, let alone use
their voice to communicate with authenticity and self-confidence? If we allow the
student’s mind to continue to focus too much on the mechanics of breathing and singing,
rather than the inner listening and sensing, are we then teaching disconnection rather than
connection?

In Charlotte Silver and Charles Brooks’ book Reclaiming Vitality and Presence,
the chapter “On Breathing” draws a wonderful example as to what it means to be an artist
that is fully present and not caught up in the process of the mind.

Every person who plays the piano can tell you that to play pianissimo needs the
greatest presence, a kind of being fully there for this pianissimo, and for this only.
In the next moment he must be there for a crescendo, and then for a greater
crescendo, until the greatest power is developed.

And we have the same wonderful possibility in breathing. When we are lying on
the floor, breathing will react to our lying there, and it will nourish us. But it is
something else when we are playing the piano, or fighting, or when we are
running or jumping, or whatever it is. The response is breathing, if we are holding
it back or are not too uninterested or habitual inside so that it can’t happen, will
constantly allow the necessary supply of energy for what we are doing. We don’t
have to say, “Breathe!” For heaven’s sake, forget that! It comes by itself,
spontaneously – if we allow it. Therefore, it is the allowing – the possibility of
becoming more permissive – that we want to explore.24

23 Barnaby Barratt, The Emergence of Somatic Psychology and Bodymind Therapy (Basingstoke,
24 Richard Lowe and Stefan Laeng-Gilliatt, eds., Reclaiming Vitality and Presence: Sensory
Awareness as a Practice for Life: the Teachings of Charlotte Selver and Charles V. W. Brooks
There appears to be a consistent pattern or breathing perception between the experts and pioneers in the field of sensory awareness that the way to release habitual patterns and come back into the body is through allowing the breath, not by forcing it or controlling it. It is in the allowing that the conscious and unconscious breathing patterns emerge, which shines a light on the places in the breath and body that are resistant to letting go. These places of resistance in the breathing body are where the habitual patterns of tension and trauma live, as well as belief systems that do not support a full and successful life. In order to reset the breathing mechanism and optimize one’s breath and voice, these places of holding and locking need to be released.

In The Science of the Singing Voice by Johan Sundberg, Sundberg addresses the habits of respiration and the habitual muscle strategies of the singer. He writes, “A phonatory problem can often be solved by changing the habits of respiration.” If the habitual patterns of breathing are established during childhood, and are being reinforced when the student is not singing, then the field of voice has to consider an alternative approach that can effectively repattern non-singing habitual breathing/muscle patterns. Sundberg suggests, “The teacher may have to exert considerable energy to draw the beginner’s attention to such breathing habits and to teach the singer how to change them.” Helping the singer to understand how those patterns and habits influence their breath control and vocal phonation has to become a teaching goal in the voice studio. He goes on to say,

It is possible that different methods of respiration allow different degrees of such control. This is one way of explaining the importance of breath strategy to phonation. The way in which the subglottic pressure is controlled by the respiratory muscle system may generate reflexes that affect the activity in the laryngeal musculature. After all, the larynx and the lungs are closely interrelated systems; for instance, the former works as the gatekeeper of the latter. Hence,
there may be some reflex-based interrelations between breathing and phonation habits.  

Sundberg points specifically to the importance of why I created the method and to why the data suggests it is an effective method for anyone who uses his or her voice professionally. The method specifically targets the areas in the body that are not vibrating due to the lack of subglottic pressure, as well as the habitual patterns of tension that affect the over-all breath and body coordination. The student’s voice is always addressed from the perspective of the breathing body, and the individual patterns that emerge become the primary diagnostic tools for recoordinating the breath. This is why I concur with Sundberg that by addressing the “reflex-based interrelations between the breathing and phonation habits,” it is possible to improve the quality of one’s voice in a way that brings them into deeper relationship with their breath and body, which by the same token brings them into greater empowerment and wholeness as an artist.

Because the breath cannot be effectively separated from the emotional breathing body, a variety of psychological publications have been researched and used within the method and workshop development. The breathing mechanism and its patterns are interwoven with the emotional and muscular patterns of the body. These patterns are the physiological and psychological influences on everyone’s day-to-day life, and have a great effect on the efficiency and over-all success of the performer.

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Primary Literature on Education

Dr. Parker Palmer’s books, *The Courage to Teach* and *The Heart of Higher Education*, have served as insightful and useful resources, and they have provided concrete teaching approaches that show why the university breathwork workshop was so effective. In *The Courage to Teach*, Palmer describes two very different teaching approaches. The first approach places the expert between the knowledge and the amateur. The second approach eliminates the roles of expert and amateur and places the subject of learning, in this case the singer’s breath, in the center of a circle of knowers. This approach allows everyone to become the knower – anyone who is coming into relationship with the subject of learning – and the subject to be the focus.26 Palmer goes on to say,

This relationship begins when we allow the subject to occupy the center of our attention. This contrasts sharply with objectivism, which puts the expert at the center of our attention: in objectivism, the objects of knowing are so beyond our reach that the expert is the only party with whom we can connect. When we make the subject the center of our attention, we give it the respect and authority that we normally give only to human beings.27

This approach allows students to create a relationship with the subject of study and is essential in helping him or her to connect with their inner knowledge. The area of voice can no longer afford to place the Master at the top of the learning triangle because it is disempowering our young singers in a time when they desperately need to be taught empowerment and inner relationship skills. For this reason, all of my private and group breathwork sessions and master classes are conducted in a circle, placing the subject of study (e.g., the voice, breath, and body) at the center of the circle. In *The Heart of Higher

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27 Ibid., 105.
Education, Palmer goes into much further detail as to how higher education can begin fostering imagination and creativity in its students, which concurs with the results of the study.

In order to know, we must open ourselves to the other. In order to move with and be influenced by the other, we must be confident enough to be vulnerable, secure enough to open ourselves to the being and becoming of the unknown. A dominating arrogance will not serve. We must learn to be comfortable with not knowing, with ambiguity, and uncertainty. Only from what may appear to be weakness and ignorance can the new arise.  

This perspective pushes against decades and decades of how higher education has functioned. Learning how to rest in the uncertainties of not knowing opens a doorway for students and faculty to work toward becoming experts together, and for their creativity to flourish – which is the foundation of the Fine Arts.

Also helpful in developing the UYB Performance Breathwork workshop was Milhály Csikszentmihályi’s Finding Flow. The author tackles the psychology of how one’s life experiences and patterns make up the sense of self, and have a direct effect on whether it is possible to create optimal experiences and flow. In looking at the training and performance practice of the Olympic athlete and opera singer, there is a breath and body relationship to focus and flow – a relationship that produces minimum effort and maximum efficiency in the physical and mental body. Csikszentmihályi suggests that “complexity” and “the growth of self” are interrelated and cannot happen without each other. He goes on to say that complexity is made up of two psychological processes: “differentiation and integration.”

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Differentiation implies a movement towards uniqueness, towards separating oneself from others. Integration refers to its opposite: a union with other people, with ideas and entities beyond the self. A complex self is one that succeeds in combining these opposite tendencies.

Flow helps to integrate the self because in that state of deep concentration consciousness is unusually well ordered. Thoughts, intentions, feelings, and all the senses are focused on the same goal. Experience is in harmony. And when the flow episode is over, one feels more “together” than before, not only internally but also with the respect to other people and to the world in general.

A self that is only differentiated – not integrated – may attain great individual accomplishments, but risks being mired in self-centered egotism. By the same token, a person whose self is based exclusively on integration will be connected and secure, but lack autonomous individuality. Only when a person invests equal amounts of psychic energy in these two processes and avoids both selfishness and conformity is the self likely to reflect complexity.30

The process of “differentiation and integration” suggested by Csikszentmihályi requires a huge amount of focus and energy on the Self, avoiding both selfishness and conformity. In a time where students are constantly being hooked by social media and technology, the twenty-first century voice teacher is faced with the challenge of not only teaching voice, but teaching the student how to focus, practice, and merge those skills into their craft of performing.

With that said, students often begin university training without a clear understanding of what focusing means, nor the ability to put it into practice. In Eugene T. Gendlin’s book *Focusing*, he takes the reader through a six-movement process of how to build the skill of focusing. Similar to Ilse Middendorf, Gendlin makes clear distinctions that focusing is a skill that has to be developed and is often misinterpreted or confused with other sensory processes.

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30 Ibid., 41-42.
Focusing is not a process of talking at oneself. You listen to what comes from you, inside. You ask in a quiet, friendly, and sympathetic way, “What’s wrong?” You may never before have been quite this friendly to yourself.

Focusing is not an analytical process. Focusing, by contrast, is optimistic. It is based on the very positive expectation of change. It doesn’t envision a human being as a fixed structure whose shape can be analyzed once and for all. It envisions a person as a process, capable of continual change and forward movement. 31

Gendlin implies that if one engages the “voice of the critic” rather than focusing, they have made a conscious or an unconscious choice to move from productive to unproductive. In Jungian psychology, one might say that the critic’s voice engages the voice of the saboteur archetype – the aspect of the human psyche that involves sabotaging behavior patterns. From a breathing perspective, if the singer goes into critical analysis as a way of focusing on vocal technique, then the student is more likely to become disconnected from the breath and body. In most cases, the student will present with an excess of muscular tension in the thoracic cavity, as well as a predominantly technical or mechanical sound (a sung tone produced from the sole perspective of vocal technique, rather than an integrative sound of the artist’s Self and technique).

Literature on Grounded Theory

The methodology and research design of the present study is based in grounded theory: “the discovery of a theory from data that has systematically been obtained through social research.” 32 The aim of this study’s theory is to discover whether an alternative approach to the singer’s breath would be beneficial to the area of voice

training and help expand the teaching methods currently being used in the university system. The research was designed to inquire if the proposed method and workshop could aid in simplifying the singer’s breath, shorten the singer’s learning curve in relationship to understanding how the breath and body function in coordination, and increase the improvement rate within each voice studio by providing consistent information through the experience of breath.

The foundation of grounded theory is a study of a concept that is grounded in the observations and experiences of the study participants, which show a pattern of core concepts and themes. With that said, you may start out with an idea of what you are looking for, but you do not know what the study truly is until you process a significant part of the gathered data. The goal of the research process has been to get beyond the assumptions and preconceptionalized ideas to discover the core issues and underlying processes of the singer’s breath, and to see if the proposed method could help support the singer’s breathing process.

When analyzing qualitative data, it is very important for the investigators to become theoretically sensitive by immersing themselves into the data. The goal is to try to understand what the participants see as being significant and important. The data analysis process consists of open, axial, and selective coding; open coding is the process of generating initial concepts, axial coding is the development and linking of concepts into theoretical families, and selective coding is the formalizing of these relationships into a theoretical framework.\(^{33}\)

In Glaser’s book *Theoretical Sensitivity*, Glaser directs the researcher through a series of questions to help guide him/her through the coding process: What is actually happening here? Under what conditions does this happen? What is this data a study of? What category does this incident indicate? These types of questions help to define the theoretical categories. The importance of the core categories is to generate a theory that occurs around those core themes. “Without a core category an effort of grounded theory will drift in relevancy and workability.”

The researcher must gain the ability to recognize what is valuable in the data and give it meaning.

Existing literature can be used as data and integrated into the theory when compared with the emerging categories. Previous literature does provide concrete and theoretical examples, which can help point the researcher towards possible ideas. However, it is important to remain non-biased amidst the previous literature and to stay true to what the research is showing. The challenge for most researchers is knowing when and how to stop coding. Eventually, the research data will begin to find a flow and themes will emerge. When the moment comes where the flow stops and force begins to be the research tool, coding is stopped as saturation has been reached. “Saturation means no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop the properties of the category.”

My research, method, and workshop bridge the fields of somatic awareness and conscious breathing into the area of voice, an exploration that is relatively without precedent in the literature. The lack of existing literature addressing the voice from the

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35 Ibid.
somatic perspective has limited the vocal pedagogy resources used and is reflective of the need for this study. It is important when conducting research to balance the existing literature with maintaining theoretical sensitivity. In Strauss and Corbin’s book *Basics of Qualitative Research*, there are two components to maintaining theoretical sensitivity: “being well grounded in technical literature as well as from professional and personal experiences” and “continual interactions with the data – through your collection and analysis of the data.”[^37] I have continually strived to maintain this balance in my body of work, while searching for what is true.

The *UYB Performance Breathwork* method and workshop introduce new teaching concepts that expand our approach to the voice, breath and body, combining teaching and facilitation in a way that allows both teacher and student to become the knower. This method complements traditional vocal pedagogy in ways that can help develop sensory awareness while improving one’s relationship with the body and voice, making the work a potential powerful adjunct to traditional university training.

Research Methodology

*Participants*

The research data was gathered from study participants in a university breathwork workshop, which consisted of thirty-six vocal performance degree-pursuing students and three voice faculty members. Study participants were required to be ages 18+ and enrolled in a vocal performance degree program (undergraduate, masters, or professional studies) at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA). The study was

open to any gender, race, and voice type. Workshop demographics can be found in appendix A. The study was conducted under supervision of the UNCSA faculty and was granted approval by both the University of North Carolina (UNC) and University of Kentucky (UK) Institutional Review Boards (UK approval no. 14-0568-P4S).

Procedure

The collected data was gathered from pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. The study participants had an initial recruitment meeting with principle investigator, Bradley Williard, to hear the recruitment dialogue (appendix B) and to sign the IRB approved “Consent to Participate in a Research Study” form. The consenting participants then filled out the pre-workshop questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions designed to establish a baseline of the study participant’s breathing knowledge and their personal relationship with the breath-body-voice. The comprehensive pre-workshop data questionnaire consisted of seven demographic questions; twenty personal history questions; twenty-three ordinal scale questions covering participants’ self-ratings of self-confidence, body and breath knowledge, concern with others’ perception, self-awareness, and vocal skill; twenty-nine true-false questions testing breath-body knowledge; and twenty-five short-answer questions covering the same five domains as the ordinal scale questions (appendix C).

Study participants then experienced the workshop procedure, consisting of: a two-hour group breathwork session; a one-hour documentary featuring Carl Stough and a fifteen-minute breathing animation by Jessica Wolf; a one-hour private breathwork session including table, stool, and floor work; a one-hour group session revisiting the
initial stool work; and a one-hour masterclass. The procedure was spread over a five-day period (appendix D).

The post-workshop questionnaire was given in a one-hour period at the end of the workshop, asking many of the same questions from the pre-workshop form, as well as new questions regarding the participant’s workshop experience. The post-workshop questionnaire omitted personal history questions and included eight ordinal scale questions asking participants to rate their experiences of the workshop procedure and six short-answer questions asking them to describe their experience of the procedure (appendix C).

The investigator conducted thirty-minute scripted faculty interviews, which used an IRB approved “teacher interview guideline.” The interviews were recorded and transcripts for all three faculty interviews can be found in appendix E. The investigator’s notes, journals, and workshop experiences are also considered data gathered through observational methods (appendix F).

Summary of Findings

Based on my experience and research findings, I believe there are three foundational elements that need to be developed if the singer wants to connect to their breath and body, and discover their authentic voice:

- Relationship with Self
- Self-worth
- Vulnerability
The data clearly supports that the breath is the connecting force between the body, mind, and voice. If the research shows that breath awareness is the way into wholeness as a singer, then why would we not open ourselves to deeper inquiry and discovery? In my experience and training in classical vocal technique, the voice has always been the predominant focus, yet the data from my research concludes that the voice is merely a reflection and manifestation of our current state-of-being, meaning our present relationship with the breath, body, and mind.

If we want to understand the voice, we have to understand the breath and body first. For example, the singer’s breathing coordination is very similar to how a juggler learns to juggle, which always begins with learning how to juggle one ball at a time. When the coordination and balance feels grounded and secure, the juggler then adds the next ball. Learning how to juggle all three balls takes time, patience, incredible precision, and the ability to slow down. It also requires the juggler to be okay with dropping the balls, learning how to pick them up, and starting the coordination all over again.

The juggler’s coordination and skill set is very similar to that of the singer’s breath-body-voice coordination and what is required for the singer to achieve optimal results. The first two balls for the voice student are the breath and body; the third ball is the voice. In my experience as a breathing specialist and working hands-on with hundreds of students, I can honestly say that young singers are trying to juggle the third ball prematurely. The goal for every student should be to establish a solid breath and body connection without the voice. If the voice teacher puts the voice first, the student is often left feeling vocally unstable and disconnected to their body.
For this reason, the area of voice must expand its ways of teaching and the approach to the human voice. Using a breathing method that is grounded in somatic awareness helps to bring the student into a much deeper relationship with him or herself, while allowing them to discover an authentic understanding and felt sense of how their individual breath and body works in coordination with the voice. By creating an experience that unlocks the breath and the habitual patterns of tension held in the body, the voice is able to become an equal partner in the breath-body-voice relationship. Therefore, the end result is a redistribution of breath pressure throughout the *whole* body.

The data from my research combined with my own hands-on experience working with the singer’s breath shows that the breath and body coordination is the key to helping voice students find their authentic voice and come into relationship with the whole body (breath-heart-body-voice). To understand the breath’s full relationship with the body takes patience, dedication, and time. Like any relationship, it requires a willingness and courage to not only look at the functional and structural components, but also the emotional.

It has taken years of research, study, practice, and reflection to come into relationship with my own breath awareness and to understand it from a place of deep embodiment and integration. The amount of time, focus, and knowledge it takes to learn how to teach this type of awareness and practice would be very difficult to achieve while maintaining a professional career. With that said, part of the objective behind creating a university workshop was to provide the voice teacher with alternative diagnostic breathing tools and to supplement their limited teaching time with the voice student.
Scope and Limitations

This research study examines whether the twenty-first century voice student would benefit from an alternative approach to the singer’s breath: an approach that teaches how to build relationship with the individual breath, body, and voice. The method and workshop gives the student a breathing experience that addresses their individual breathing needs, and diagnosis specific breathing and muscle patterns that are keeping them from achieving a healthy and optimal breathing coordination.

The study does not exhaust vocal pedagogy resources, nor is this a scientific study on how to breathe. The study only applies to the collected research data gathered before and after the university workshop and supporting resources. There are inherent limitations to qualitative studies, in that the workshop participants’ experiences cannot be replicated because the natural breath and their awareness is always changing. It is extremely difficult to replicate qualitative studies because the research occurs in the natural setting.\(^\text{38}\) It is important to note that the experience and behavior of one study participant might not be indicative of the group as a whole and would require further investigation.

UNCSA has an existing student body; therefore, the sample size and demographics were determined by the number of students enrolled in the voice program. The social economic status, race, and gender are a direct reflection of the university’s location, cost of attendance, and applicant pool. Future studies need to take in account the lack of probability sampling. Due to the time restriction created by the students’ schedule, the full method was adapted to create a concise workshop for UNCSA.

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Workshop limitations consisted of requiring the study participants to complete all consecutive steps of the method before completing the post-workshop questionnaire. Unfortunately, due to schedule conflicts, seven students had to withdraw from the study, which decreased the sample size to 29 participants. For future studies, a cumulative study at multiple universities would increase the sample size and perhaps also increase the variance in study participants’ demographics.

Chapter 2 provides the reader with an in-depth review of the various breathwork literature and methods that contributed to the development of *Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork*.
CHAPTER 2
OVERVIEW OF CONTRIBUTING METHODS

Recognizing the vast knowledge and brilliance of the methods of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough, as well as other mentors and teachers who have helped along the way, has been of great importance in developing my values as a teacher. By no means do I feel these methods lack in their approach or design, but as we grow in our individual consciousness and knowledge, so too must our methods. In creating a method or technique we must always sit in the place of possibility, inquiry, and discovery. It is my belief that methods are traps; the way out is through self-awareness and constantly challenging our own perspective. If I give a student a method as a solution to a problem, then I am giving them another belief or story to hold onto, which does not allow me to meet the individual needs of that voice student. But, if I give a student an alternative perspective or approach, then I am opening a doorway for them to see the voice and breath in a whole new way, and this allows for the student to discover their inner teacher. Ilse Middendorf embodied this teaching perspective by creating a breathing experience that allows the student to develop an individual relationship with his/her breath and body. Some students may need to go outside of themselves to create that relationship; others may need to go inside. The intuitive body guides the breath. The method is only there to function as a guideline, and the breath and body is the teacher.
Ilse Middendorf: *The Perceptible Breath*

*Seed of Breath*

During my first tablework session (1:1 private breathwork session that occurs on a massage table using hands-on tension release techniques) at the Middendorf Institute, my teacher, Hiltrud Lampe (a first-generation student and close friend of Ilse Middendorf), shared a message that was given to her many times by Middendorf. “We must treat the breath as a seed. We must grow it from a very small seedling; we must water it, give it sun and food, and nurture it so that it might grow into a magnificent tree. This takes time and patience, and it cannot be rushed.”

I remember thinking, how esoteric, beautiful, and time consuming! I needed to write a dissertation after all. Four years later, I understand the meaning behind Hiltrud’s message; she was giving me an invitation to create a deeper relationship with my Self through the experience of breath. Ilse Middendorf’s method, *The Perceptible Breath* (*Erfahrbare Atem*), as well as her breathing philosophy and principles are grounded in the “experience” of breath.¹ Because her teachings are rooted in the field of sensory awareness, her coloring and use of language on the subject matter evoke similar impressions to those stirred by the artists Monet and Rilke. Her words are deep and complex, yet full of bright and resonant color. The reader must let go of the thinking mind and approach the conceptual ideas through the experience of the body’s sensory system.

At the Middendorf Institute we were always asked, “Was spüren Sie?,” not “Was fühlen Sie?” In English, both questions would translate as “What do you feel?,” but in

German there is a much greater difference between the two. *Spüren* means to feel deeper; it means to go inside your Self and sense what is true. These questions are the essence of what it means to experience the breath as a seed, to let it crack open, and send its roots down deep into the soil. The breath is waiting on you to listen to it, so that you can walk through this life feeling grounded and in your body and voice. Middendorf wanted each of her students to experience the breath in a way that stirred their whole being; she wanted them to feel the breath in a way they never thought was possible.

*Middendorf’s Message*

Ilse Middendorf was born on September 21, 1910 in a little town called Frankenberg in Saxony, Germany. At age eleven, she began her journey to understand the meaning of breathing.

My childhood was happy. I used to spend a lot of time outside in the garden – to look after it, but also just to spend time there. One day, when I was in the garden, a voice called to me saying, “You have to breathe.” I was very astonished. I sat on a bench for two hours, just thinking about the meaning of this. Then I went to my mother, who said, “Just let it go. I don’t know what it is. Don’t bother about it.”

Although Middendorf received this message as an early teenager, her actual journey to understand the breath started at the age of five when she began studying the Menzler Method (a method grounded in deep internal sensing and movement). In her mid-teenage years, she went on to study gymnastics, but felt breathing was not being stressed enough and the movements being taught were in contradiction of the natural movement of the breath. The desire to teach a natural breathing movement inspired her to explore a variety...

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of modalities, including the Mastanang work from the Tibetan tradition, designed to teach
the integration of the body, state, and mind through movement.

Middendorf believed that if a person found their way based in the experience of
his or her breathing, then they also discover their own power, knowledge, and creativity.
The process of coming into one’s breath is an individual process.

One person goes inside, senses the breath moving, and his experience is based on
that. Another one goes outside to experience the breath moving there, and comes
back slowly…. And the one who first went inside goes outside the next time to
experience breathing there. A person with restricted breathing has to experience
first his own rhythm and to experience how it widens. Those parts which are too
narrow straighten up. They have to find a way into the wideness, and those parts
which are too wide have to find the way back. The work to find balance is very
important. You have to find the balance that is changing again and again and all
the time.

There is only one rule: it is centering breathing. Whenever you sense that you are
centered and breathing, there is also sensing of being centered. That’s the whole
thing. Out of that you make your own start, and you find your own process, but it
is all based on that: Sensing, Centering, Breathing.3

Middendorf’s method teaches to use one’s breath, body, and mind with profound
integrity and mindfulness. There is such elegance and ease to the method which allows
the student to feel safe to discover their inner teacher – the intuitive voice that guides one
towards wholeness and balance. This requires one to quiet the mind and to come into
deep listening and relationship with their breath and body; it is through the listening that
one begins to come into their authentic resonance and alignment.

Breath is a connecting force. It creates a bodily equilibrium and balance that helps
us to make inner and outer expressions interchangeable. It connects the human
being with the outside world and the outside world with his inner world.
Breathing is an original unceasing movement and therefore actual life.
Experiencing the breath means to start to live in a new way. Breathing became my
“guiderope” that enables me to lead the body and with it the spiritual and mental

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3 Beringer, "Interview with Ilse Middendorf," 70.
into a new “opening” to life where meaning is, to achieve a wider consciousness and greater expansion in the inner and outer spaces.\textsuperscript{4}

In my experience, her teachings inspire her students to move and speak on the breath with grace and balance while listening to the breath within, and allowing the breath to offer motivation and inspiration to one’s individual movement and breath expression. Middendorf’s presence at the Institute in Berlin, as well as her well-lived life and legacy, represents a deep embodiment of all of these qualities: integrity, mindfulness, grace, and balance. She used her breath expression through movement and words, communicating what the breath was telling her.

Middendorf suggested that we reflect on how the breath inspires the voice, considering that we would not be able to speak without the breath. The breathing movement springs up and out of “the inner space of our existence according to its laws – from the entirety of the body-soul-spirit.” The breath neither stays in the conscious nor unconscious part of the mind; it floats back and forth between the two states. When both aspects “join together with movement, it creates and develops the breathing movement.” This particular movement is caused by the inspiration (inspirato – in spirit) of breath, which “carries an essential aura and statement of the person who offers it as a true expression of their soul.” In my opinion, the voice and its resonance is the manifestation and coordinated expression of the individual breathing movement and Self.\textsuperscript{5}

\textsuperscript{4} Middendorf, \textit{The Perceptible Breath: A Breathing Science}, 12.
\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 45.
Ripple Effect

Middendorf suggests that in “looking at the breathing movement of different people, we can see enormous differences in form, focal point, depth and timing.” If in our everyday life we observe the breath closer and take the time to sense into it, we will find that a person’s breath is always shifting; the breathing patterns are as “individual as the person’s voice, his facial expressions, his gestures, writing, or his handshake.”

Middendorf goes further to define this type of breathing movement as being “concentric ripples,” similar to the ripples that you would create if you threw a stone into still water. Each of these ripples contain breathing rhythms that affect every action and movement of the body, and as you become more in tune with what a healthy rhythm looks and feels like, it becomes more obvious when the overall rhythm structure is disrupted and what the contributing influences might be.

The breathing rhythm (depth and timing of the breathing and the length of the individual phases of the breathing movement; inhalation, exhalation, and rest) depends on each of the physiological-biochemical needs of the body and is at the same time subject to various influences developing out of the human’s environment. One’s mental spiritual situation has also an effect on the breathing rhythm at every single moment of one’s life.6

The breathing rhythm is a key component to Middendorf’s work and method; she stresses the importance of heightening our own awareness as teachers within the art of diagnosing the breath. This does not mean that we need to become psychotherapists in the voice studio; we need to work within our expertise. However, we do need to be able to recognize signs of distress and disconnection in the breathing mechanism associated with non-verbal communication and speech. Understanding the breathing patterns and

6 Ibid., 209-10.
rhythms from a non-singing perspective will help voice teachers to understand their students’ individual breathing bodies and how outside factors might influence the singing voice.

*Breathing Experience*

Middendorf was a genius at translating organic and creative energy into movement and breath. Her background as a dancer and gymnast, combined with her study in tai chi, created a full breath and body expression through movement. The design and creativeness of Middendorf’s method embodies her movement experience. The majority of the method, aside from the individual table work, takes place sitting or standing within a group, also called stool work (*stuhl arbeit*). A group session consists of five to twenty participants sitting in the formation of a circle. This helps to form a safe container, which allows the group as a whole to experience breathing as a unit. Everyone is guided to sit and experience his or her breathing rhythm without disturbing the flow. It is important in the beginning for the participants to distinguish between unconscious respiratory function and conscious breathing (breathing by one’s own will). The conscious breathing pattern used in the Middendorf method is inhale-exhale-rest, and repeat. The “resting” or “waiting” at the end of the exhalation opens an opportunity to let the breath go and to allow it to come back naturally. This breathing pattern, along with the other components of the Middendorf method, guides the student slowly into relationship with their breath and body. It teaches them to sense every part of their breathing body through movement, stretching, pressure point work, tapping, and stroking.
The stool work gradually leads the body to understand the difference between breathing (inhale, exhale, and rest – the breath pressure wave), focusing (concentration on a specific point of the body while ignoring all other parts), and perceiving (sensing). These three elements – breathing, focusing, and perceiving – are used to bring the student deeper into the experience of breath while heightening their awareness. Middendorf was very clear and poignant as to how she defined an “experience.”

Experience requires impartiality – i.e. to have no formed ideas. An experience that has developed from the experienced is an “openness” to influences, courage for new, not yet experienced, curiosity in gradual layering. Experience is a spiritual attitude, not an intellectual activity. Only if I experience I can contemplate and analyze all the different components of “being.” It can become a power, if it is integrated. It is an inner knowledge when it is added to intuition, and it is a reflex, if it is physical as animals.7

Part of integrating the experience of breath is discovering the difference between sensing and feeling. Middendorf describes this sensation as being “the physical perception of stimuli of the present moment.” Feelings and emotions happen after the present moment, and are considered separate from sensation because sensation always takes place in front of the emotional reaction. There is never a beginning, middle, or end to the work because the breath is always continuing; the focus is integration of the experience.8 When one approaches the method with dedication and daily implementation, he or she has the opportunity to integrate their experience into everyday life and career, which can open the door to their true breath expression.

My teachers at the Middendorf Institute always prefaced each class with, “There is no right or wrong way to breathe. Concepts associated with “correct breathing” have

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7 Ibid., 18.
no place in the work of the experience of breath. It is the student that points the way to the teacher, not the other way around.”

This type of atmosphere created a safe container for each participant to go more deeply and quickly into the work. Middendorf knew that through the power of breath, the body is brought into the spiritual – an inner knowledge. The reason she is considered to be one of the greats in the field of breathwork is because she was able to achieve within her method a guide to balancing the inner and outer breath, the inner and outer us, making way for a breathing method that fosters individual expression and authenticity.

Finding Balance

The stool work is very methodical in its approach to the physical body. The student is constantly collecting and receiving breathing data through means of inquiry: contrasting and comparing, sensing, feeling, and discovering different breath-body relationships through movement. Drawing on Middendorf’s background in dance and gymnastics, the stool work is designed from a breathing movement perspective; it possesses restorative and balancing benefits to the body’s alignment, conditioning, and coordination. The movement exercises almost always begin on one side of the body, focusing on specific parts. Once the breath awareness to that specific part has been achieved, the opposite side is given the same process. After experiencing the different breath and body exercises throughout the whole body, the student has a much greater chance of finding a balanced center, which changes the way they walk, stand, sit, speak, and breathe.

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9 Ibid.
For me as a singer and as someone who deals with lower back pain, I found this aspect of the stool work to be invaluable. Even though you are experiencing the breath through three different processes (breathing, focusing, perceiving), the movement exercises lead you to discover where the body is out of alignment, or which part of the body needs the focused breath, i.e. directing breath to a specific part of the body for therapeutic reasons. From the singing perspective, the stool work is essential for helping the student find their individual breath center and alignment.

Breathing Integration

As mentioned previously, the guided breathing cycle of the Middendorf method is similar to that of a normal breathing cycle. However, after the exhalation, the student is encouraged to wait for the breath to come back naturally. This rest or pause gives the student the opportunity to listen to their body, to let the breath go, and to allow the breath to come back on its own. Meditative defocusing practices such as waiting for the breath, as is practiced in the Middendorf method, have been shown to balance the autonomic nervous system, shifting from sympathetic (fight or flight) dominance towards increased parasympathetic (rest and digest) activity.\(^\text{10}\) Learning how to balance the autonomic nervous system through conscious breathing and somatic experience is one of the foundational skills to becoming present and connected to your breath and body, especially when it comes to dealing with performance anxiety and high-stress situations.

The Middendorf method is exceptional at integrating the breathing experience and knowledge. The reason the integration is so exceptional is because of the rest after the exhalation. The rest allows the student’s breath to relax and settle without any action or interruption to the breathing body. It gives the student time after each exhale to perceive, to feel, to sense, and to understand the minute shifts that are taking place in the physical and emotional breathing body. Once the student feels the breath and body in a new way, the sensations and experience become inner knowledge. This type of experiential knowledge combined with the pause allows for a much faster rate of integration.

Middendorf draws from C.G. Jung’s psychological types and diagram of the soul (fig. 2.1) as a tool to help the student integrate the experience of breath into their day-to-day life. Jung divides the soul into a circle diagram consisting of four-quadrants (two pairs of opposites): from top to bottom “thought” and “feeling” and from left to right “perception” and “intuition.”

![Figure 2.1. C. G. Jung’s divisions of the soul. (Middendorf, The Perceptible Breath: A Breathing Science, 22.)](image)
Middendorf is very clear that this particular differentiation by Jung is very much a core principle in her method and is crucial to awareness building.

This differentiation is imperative for our work on the breath, although the ability to perceive has not been aroused in many people – or has been long suppressed, together with feeling. One of the most beautiful gifts we receive from breathing is the ability to perceive, which enables us to open up to a large field of heightening awareness.¹¹

Separating out the four components – thought, feeling, perception, intuition - is how one builds awareness. Being in relationship with the breath and body is learning how to process one’s individual sensory awareness within these four categories and slowly integrating the new awareness into everyday life.

**Hands of Breath**

The Middendorf tablework (breathwork facilitated on a massage table) is very different from the stool work because it is dependent on the touch of the practitioner. The work is very specific to the student’s individual breathing body, patterns, and needs. The practitioner always begins with his or her hands placed on the student’s abdomen, bringing the student’s awareness to the abdominals and slowly guiding them to relax into the Middendorf breathing cycle (inhale-exhale-rest). As the student relaxes into the breathing rhythm, the practitioner moves his hands in a clockwise motion – starting at the xiphoid process in the 12 o’clock position, tracing down the right side towards the bottom of the abdomen, and up the left side returning to the 12 o’clock sternal position. This movement brings the student very quickly into their emotional breathing body and

heightens the breath awareness. Once an emotional bridge has been established between the breathing body and Self, the practitioner can move into targeting specific areas that need releasing within the body and breathing mechanism.

The general hand movement in the tablework is based on the student’s inhale and exhale. The practitioner gently applies pressure to specific muscles, using their hands or fingers to create a sensation of external pressure on the student’s breathing body, which is then slowly released in coordination with the breathing cycle. A helpful image to understand this concept is to imagine as if you were working with a giant balloon; envision pressing your hand gently against the side of the balloon. As the practitioner, you would feel the air pressure and the balloon itself becoming resistant to your touch. But if you release your touch, the pressure would then stabilize back into the balloon’s normal shape. This is exactly what it feels like from the practitioner’s point of view.

What this movement achieves is a heightened state of breathing awareness in the specific region in which the practitioner is working, and simultaneously releases patterns of holding. The hand movements are always synchronized with the student’s breathing cycle, creating a deeper understanding of that region’s relationship to the breath and body. For example, if the practitioner applies pressure on the inhalation, they then will release the pressure on the exhalation. This type of touch, because the student is lying down, allows for gravity to do its job in assisting in the release of tension and holding in the body. It is very important that the practitioner’s hands are always moving in tandem with the student’s breath, never dominating the breath and body. This type of work is about relationship and coming together as one breathing unit.
Mother’s First Touch

Touch and the quality of touch are two of the most important elements of the Middendorf method, especially when it comes to the tablework. The practitioner’s goal is to help guide the student into a deeper awareness and relationship with their breath and body through the guided breathing cycle (inhale-exhale-rest). The quality of touch in particular needs to hold the student’s breath, similar to how a mother would hold their newborn. It is important for the practitioner to maintain a heightened sense of awareness and superior tracking skills when it comes to working with the breath. One must be able to track any shift in the breathing pattern and know how to slowly guide the student back into the Middendorf pattern of inhale-exhale-rest. My teachers at the Institute emphasized that you are not only in relationship with the student’s breath, but you are in relationship with their entire body.

In my opinion as a breathing specialist, before you can be in relationship with another person’s breath, you must be in relationship with your own. I have seen many breath and bodyworkers forget about their own breathing while working. If you touch the student and forget about your own breathing relationship, the result will most likely be a lack of trust and safety between practitioner and student, which in turn limits the student’s ability to relax into the breathwork. In order for any sensory awareness modality to be effective or successful, the teacher or practitioner must always be in relationship with their own breathing body first, then the student.

The therapeutic and awareness benefits of the Middendorf tablework are profound and life changing. My Middendorf mentor and teacher, Hiltrud Lampe, showed me that in order for me to come into relationship with my whole Self, there must be a slowing down
in the mind, breath, and body. She taught me that it is possible to feel safe in my own
breath and body – a topic that needs to be addressed for anyone considering the
performing arts as a serious career choice. Hiltrud’s presence, voice, and touch made me
feel safe enough to let go and to explore the inner and outer parts of myself that I did not
know.

Five Breathing Spaces

In The Perceptible Breath, Middendorf describes five essential breathing spaces,
which can be simplified by location: there is the lower space (pelvic floor and lower
abdominals), the middle space (solar plexus), the upper space (upper torso and neck),
outer space (crown of head and outside the physical body), and the inner space (the
counterpart of the outer space, the connection to who you are in relationship to the
universe).

A breathing space does not simply mean the expansion by inhaling into one or
more body areas. Rather it marks the beginning of a bodily development which
will only be felt and perceived when the body cavities shrink back into their initial
positions.

If the stretched diaphragm walls now swing back into their initial position while I
am aware of my Self (focusing) and of this aroused feelings (sensing) then
something more than the functional change in tension during loosening occurs, a
power which acquires a direction that is experienced as a flow originated in the
trinity of body-soul and spirit. Whether one becomes fully aware of this current
depends on training.12

Middendorf taught that these five spaces followed the guide rope of breathing. In The
Perceptible Breath, she describes the five spaces as “five fields of power which are

12 Ibid., 31.
interchanging with one another and which opens new layers of consciousness for us. The spiritual and mental contents have now overcome the bodily ones.” In my opinion, she found a way to see the body’s energetic system through the lens of the breath, which created a method that could effectively balance the inner and outer spaces of the Self.

Vowel Breathing Space

Ilse Middendorf also taught the importance and power of exploring what she called the “vowel breathing spaces.” In order for the student to experience and understand what a “vowel breathing space” means, they must first experience each vowel (u – e – i – o – a – ä – ö – ü) without phonation. The purpose of the vowel process is to create a relationship with each vowel and their individual breathing spaces – inhaling and exhaling on each vowel without sound.

There is a specific correlation between different parts of the breathing body and different vowels. If this relationship is developed, it can help singers not only find a deeper connection to the language, but how and where the language is felt in their body. This requires the student to deepen their senses as to where they feel the breath move in their physical body, as well as their energetic breathing body.

Once the student has developed a relationship with each vowel, they can then start combining vowels into vowel partnerships. The vowel partnerships used in the Middendorf method are: [u] with [i], [e] with [o], and [ɛ] with [y]. These partnerships will either strengthen or weaken the individual vowel depending on how they are used.  

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13 Ibid., 40-41.
For example, the student would inhale on [u] and exhale on [i], or they would inhale on [i] and exhale on [u]. The reason behind the vowel partnership is to provide the student with a sensory awareness experience that teaches where both vowel spaces meet in the overall breathing space, and how they contrast and compare.

Phonation is the last piece added to the vowel breathwork, which follows the same process as the silent vowels. In *The Perceptible Breath*, Middendorf addresses the breath and voice relationship, and how resonance fills in the vowel breathing space.

So far I have been talking about working with vowels and breath in silence. When the vowel sounds in the exhalation, the resonance expands widely, even wider than the vowel space and its contours, which developed during the inhalation phase. The vowel space clarity and definition also determines the depth, fullness, and strength of the sound, as well as its resonance. This can be seen clearly when working with actors. Speech gains “vividness” without the actor making an effort. His instrument, his body, has already been sharpened so to speak, by means of silent work on vowels and expresses itself in sound and word creations accordingly.15

Because the student has developed a vowel relationship based on the breath and body alone, when the voice is added, the voice intuitively understands its relationship and function with the whole body. The result is a balanced coordination between the breath, body, and voice.

After the vowel breathwork has integrated into each student’s breathing process, consonants [pə-tə-kə] and others are introduced, helping the student to understand the consonant and vowel relationship. This is a very multi-layered approach to building a sensory awareness relationship with vowels and consonants. The process requires an expertise in sensory awareness, as well as the experiential knowledge of how to integrate vowels from a non-singing perspective.

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Finding One’s Voice

The mind is a powerful tool, especially when it comes to the breath and voice relationship. Because singing uses voluntary breathing, the breath is always ruled by the mind for the purpose of producing a sung tone. Voluntary breathing is inherently performance related, as in sports and bodywork practices. Middendorf addresses voluntary breathing in *The Perceptible Breath*.

The breath which is influenced by the mind can achieve much. Where one has to use one’s breath deliberately – these ways of breathing always serve one goal and they make an impression on me, my soul and the spirit from the outside inward, they are impressed on, put on, forced on. This kind of breathing is a measure taken by the mind with its own implicit limits.16

Middendorf wanted instead for students to be impressed by their breath from the inside-out, which also expressed the essence of their soul from the inside-out. She wanted a fluid and inward buoyancy of breath because she knew that this type of breathing movement inspired an ease and flexibility in one’s breath, body, voice, and spirit.

Singers often try to control and micromanage the breathing process as part of their vocal technique. This type of singer usually presents with a breathing pattern so controlled by the mind that there is no room for flexibility in the mechanism, or even presence to the natural breath. The Middendorf method does not believe in using one’s force or individual will to breathe. If we do not allow the breath to come back to us, and instead we suck it in, then the breathing result will not be a balanced or centered breath. Middendorf goes further to say that there will be “no result, if we do not allow the breath to come.”

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16 Ibid., 25-26.
To sing, speak, or contemplate a vowel and to experience one’s own breathing space means really to let the breath come. If one helps the breath eagerly to experience, “fetching” the breath, the space searched for, will not reveal itself.¹⁷

How does one achieve this type of centered breathing while maintaining one’s inner connection, especially when one is constantly being hooked by external needs and outside influences? It is possible, but it requires a masterful level of breathing and body awareness in which the goal is to maintain the balance between tension and release, between the inner and outer, and between the conscious and unconscious.

Balance does not mean to lock into the middle and ground with force. Balance is the process of pendulation. It requires one to build physical and emotional muscles of resilience and to embrace the discomfort of not always being centered or balanced. The intention in centering is how to return to center with as much ease and flexibility as possible while maintaining one’s inner alignment.

The Middendorf method encourages the student to sit and listen to their body and to let go of the idea that they must control it in order to get it right. In my experience of working with singers, the rest that Middendorf has created in her breathing pattern is the place where the student learns how to let go. With that said, I have worked with students where the rest brings up a lot of fears: fear of being seen, fear of vulnerability, fear of being present, fear of not having enough air, fear of getting something wrong, and fear of feeling free. The Middendorf method introduces a means for the student to let go and to discover how to connect to their individual breath and body and to find the answers inside themselves. This is how we train singers to become intuitive independent artists who are grounded in experiential knowledge rather than relying on outside information.

¹⁷ Ibid., 61.
Letting Go

By the end of my time at the Middendorf Institute, I knew I was being called to share the “experience of breath” with other singers, but there was a missing pedagogical component. I intuitively felt that the feminine experiential approach of Middendorf would greatly benefit from a masculine counterpart, balancing out what Middendorf herself recognized as a method grounded in the feminine.

The male way needs will. When this is the basis, the breathing is under the law of the will. We are opposite the male way. In our work we can grow spatiality, a breathing place. This is power you can experience in reality; it is a real thing. Out of this, we have direction. But to get this space I have first to be centered, to sense, and to breathe.

The male way of being grows out of the female. In the next decade, we have to experience the balance between those two things: male/female, yin/yang, whatever you call it. It has to come, this balance.18

I do believe that we have come into the time in history that Middendorf was speaking of, to the time where everyone’s goal is to find balance in every aspect of life. I also believe that it is our nature to grow out of the feminine because it was how we were created. In singing, the singer knows this process very well, the balance of light and dark, the balance of tension and release, and how sometimes in order for one to learn that balance, they may have to go to the extremes to find their way back to middle.

My goal in creating the Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork method and university workshop was to provide the singer with an approach to the breath and body that lived in the middle. I realized during my time at the Middendorf Institute that there were certain blind spots in the method as it pertained to the professional voice. Unfortunately, the Middendorf method does not adequately address the breathing

18 Beringer, "Interview with Ilse Middendorf," 71=72.
compression required to sustain an operatic tone, nor does the method systematically address the balance and coordination of tension and release held simultaneously in the singer’s breathing body. With that said, I am humbled to have had the honor to learn from the first-generation descendants of Ilse Middendorf, who many experts in the field of somatic awareness consider her be the “Mother of Breath.” Middendorf created a method and experience that teaches deep relationship and embodiment which has the potential to change lives, create authentic voices, and restore the breathing body back to its original state.

Carl Stough: *Breathing Coordination*

*Stough’s Breathing Journey*

The *Breathing Coordination* method of Carl Stough was developed in the late 1950's when, as a gifted choral director, Stough received a call from Dr. Maurice Small, Chief of Tuberculosis Management at East Orange New Jersey Veteran's Hospital. Dr. Small's hospital wards were overflowing with a new disease called emphysema. He hoped that Stough, with his accomplished background in voice and choral conducting, might be able to help his post-World War II patients find relief. Upon meeting these patients and seeing them locked in a state of eternal gasping, Stough found his hands going instinctively to their rigid chests. By the simple act of touching the ribs, he was able to release some tension. However, when the patients went to thank Stough for the relief, their entire breathing mechanism locked up. Stough thought that if he could teach just one patient to make a clear vowel sound without the chest locking, he could make a permanent change in their condition.
Stough’s experiences led him to believe that he could “redevelop coordination among the many muscles that go into breathing” through various tension release techniques and speech, creating a slow excursion of the diaphragm on the exhale that allowed it to travel high enough in the thoracic cavity to release the ribs and support the pressure needed to produce a spoken tone. This type of breathing coordination was dependent on how much air one could release before locking up the mechanism.

Emphysema causes damage and breakdown of the alveolar sacs, which then traps the air causing difficult exhalation and poor exchange of oxygen to the bloodstream. Stough was of the belief that the alveolar damage caused by the emphysema left the patient susceptible to recurrent respiratory infections and, if the breathing muscles were constantly locked or did not have the strength to guide the old air out of the lungs, the patient would be more susceptible to those infections. Because Stough’s method demonstrated the ability to force more air out of the lungs that was previously trapped, more than any pulmonary doctor thought possible, the patients’ breathing coordination appeared to improve, which suggested a reduction of residual volume of air.

In Johan Sundberg’s *The Science of the Singing Voice*, he addresses how singing benefits one’s vital capacity in breathing (the amount of air we use for breathing and speaking; the volume difference between total lung volume and the residual volume of air in the lungs). Sundberg goes on to say,

We conclude that a considerable larger portion of the vital capacities is used in singing and in loud reading than in normal speech. It would then be natural for professional singers or actors to expand their capacities somewhat. Gould (1977) has shown that singers possess a vital capacity about 20% greater than the average

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20 Stough, *Breathing: The Source of Life*.
for non-singers. This expansion does not take place by an increase of total lung volume, but rather by a reduction of the residual volume. Thus, voice training seems to have an effect, amongst others, of teaching one to take advantage of a greater portion of one’s total lung volume. It seems that one simply learns how to squeeze one’s lung more efficiently.  

With Carl Stough’s background in voice as a graduate of Westminster Choir College, his experiences led him to believe that vocal phonation could develop and tone the diaphragm, and its motion was a result of its developed strength. This perspective enabled Stough to see the blind spots of the methods being used to treat emphysema. He was aware of the fact that he was pioneering in a “no-man’s land between anatomy and physiology” with no degree in either area, but he felt a responsibility to the patients to continue the work. Even though there was insufficient empirical evidence due to no test controls, the doctors observed through cinefluorography that Stough was changing the diaphragm; the patients’ breathing patterns were improving and they were leaving the hospital.  

As shown in the photos of Mr. Cannon (fig. 2.2), one can see visible increases in weight and muscle tone, decreases in muscle tension in the thoracic cavity, and improved body alignment over the period of six-months of Breathing Coordination with Carl Stough. The black marks in the x-rays shown in figure 2.3 indicate Stough’s measurements of diaphragmatic excursion before and after Breathing Coordination.

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22 Ibid., 35.
23 Ericson, "Musician Devises Aid in Lung Cases."
In the DVD Breathing: The Source of Life, Stough talks about how our attention and focus needs to be on the exhalation. “If we cannot get the old air out, how are we going to get the new air into the body?” By bringing our attention to the exhale, we increase the
amount of air being expelled from the body. Therefore, we have a better chance of
increasing the volume of oxygen received on the inhale.\textsuperscript{24}

Stough’s work with opera singers such as Lauren Flanigan of the Metropolitan
Opera proved to be beneficial to the singing voice. Stough believed the abdominal and
intercostal muscles needed to work in coordination when singing with the full-voice, but
should be exercised separately. He goes on to say that singers need to develop the
abdominals, but no muscle should be used with force within vocal production. Stough
worked to achieve a breathing coordination that produced a sound using maximum
efficiency of air with minimum effort. The perfect natural sound is a result of how the air
pressure is made in the lungs to pass through the glottis. The minute you engage any
primary or secondary breathing muscle with force, you are creating an increase of
subglottal pressure which disrupts the breathing coordination.

The documented video recordings of Carl Stough working hands-on are
extraordinary examples of how one creates a safe space while establishing trust in
teaching. Stough’s ability to be fully present with each student while holding a space for
deep listening has made a great impression on my core values and the way I teach.
Stough knew that listening to the voice and its resonance was not enough to diagnose
disrupted breathing and vocal patterns. The greater skill was in listening to the combined
voice-breath-body response, and how that relationship functioned in coordination. In my
opinion, Stough was tuning his breathing gestalt – any sound, movement, or breath
inspired by the connected whole Self – with the student’s breath to create a safe container
for them to relax and explore their breathing relationship.

\textsuperscript{24} Stough, \textit{Breathing: The Source of Life}. 
Stough believed that we were born with the correct breathing coordination, and his goal was to return his patients to that coordination. He felt that everyone possessed their own vocal signature which was authentic to the individual’s “center of sound,” and when you hit your center, you produce a resonating frequency that causes a vibration in every organ, cell and molecule. This idea is very similar to Middendorf’s stone analogy regarding the ripple effect of the breathing rhythm, but Stough is diagnosing the inner and outer alignment from the perspective of the voice. Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough shared the same idea that these vibrations were nourishing every cell of the body.

The Next Generation

When Carl Stough created the Carl Stough Institute of Breathing Coordination in 1965, his goal was to provide education and research in the area of physiology as it pertained to the function of respiratory muscles. Stough believed that Breathing Coordination could improve the health of every human being and it was his dream to make it available throughout the world. Unfortunately, Stough passed away in October of 2000, leaving a wonderful legacy, but no training program to train future practitioners in the method.25 At this point, there were only a handful of practitioners who had incorporated Stough’s Principles of Breathing Coordination into their work, and who had the expertise to teach those principles.

Stough was a master at creating a safe breathing space for his clients and intuitively knew exactly how to release years of accumulated muscle tension and breathing patterns; he believed, however, that his level of intuition and skill could not be

dissected and reproduced in a training program. Stough’s students nevertheless believed that the method’s benefits outweighed Stough’s attachment to his work, which is why in 2006, Stough’s assistant and collaborator, Lynn Martin, began a new collaboration with my colleague and friend, Robin De Hass. Robin, a longtime student of Lynn’s, has established a successful practitioner training program in Lausanne, Switzerland, teaching the Principles of Breathing Coordination according to Lynn Martin and Robin De Hass and has been instrumental in expanding the efforts of Carl Stough.

_The Dancer’s Touch_

My first meeting with Lynn Martin took place in April of 2013 at her lovely studio in New York. I remember our first meeting; we spoke with such depth and passion about the breath, and the importance of getting the work out into the world. The only other time I had experienced this type of connection over the breath was during my tenure at the Middendorf Institute in Berlin. It was evident that Lynn’s life’s work was inspired by the same question that had also inspired Middendorf on her journey: what is the meaning of the breath? But Lynn was taking the question even further; she wanted to understand every muscle, posture, movement, and sound that affected the breathing mechanism. I marveled at the vast amount of knowledge and understanding of functional anatomy she shared during our first meetings. After my first tablework session, I knew I had found the masculine counterpart to Ilse Middendorf’s method, and I also knew that Lynn possessed the same sensitivity and care for the breath, body, and voice that I had come to love at the Middendorf Institute.
Because of my training in Middendorf, I had an acute awareness and sensitivity as to how one should touch another’s breathing body and what that quality of touch needed to possess. Lynn embodied the principles I had learned about listening to the breath and body, and her hands worked as intuitive masterpieces. She possessed the breathing and anatomical vocabulary, as well as the left-brain analytical process that I needed to complete my understanding of the breathing body and its relationship to the voice.

As I spent time getting to know Lynn, she told me of her love for dance, movement, and the body. Lynn trained as a dancer, but through her work with Carl Stough, she also discovered a love for the human voice. One of Lynn’s greatest influences to her work in Breathing Coordination is that of her mentor, teacher, and friend, Irene Dowd. Because of Dowd’s studies in dance and choreography at The Juilliard School, combined with studies in philosophy, anatomy, neuroanatomy, and neuroscience, she is a powerhouse in the field of anatomy and movement. Lynn also draws upon the legacy, knowledge, and expertise of Irene Dowd’s teacher, Dr. Lulu Sweigard, a pioneer and master in the field of Ideokinesis – an approach to the improvement of human posture, muscle patterns, and body movement through the means of visual and kinesthetic imagery.

With Lynn’s background in dance and movement, combined with the knowledge she acquired from assisting and teaching with Carl Stough, I could not have imagined a more perfect fit, not only for the Middendorf method, but also for my own journey. All of these synchronicities around dance stirred a deep calling in me to reclaim that part of my own inner child that stopped dancing because of family bullying and the misguided belief that “boys don’t dance.” My coming into relationship with Lynn and learning the
principles of *Breathing Coordination* by Carl Stough made a space for me to integrate all the parts of myself that had been shamed as a child. Her presence and courage inspired me to discover all the places in my life where my breath and voice needed to dance and how the breathing coordination of one’s own breath could also bring the voice and body alive.

*Profound Presence*

Watching Lynn work hands-on with other students is one of the greatest gifts I have been given in my breathing journey. She embodies all of Stough’s qualities of teaching and listening, but my experience is that there is a divine presence working through Lynn. The first time I watched Lynn work on someone else’s breath was during a weeklong *Breathing Coordination* workshop in Lausanne, Switzerland. Lynn meticulously examined every part of the participant’s body: scanning the body for structural alignment issues, variances of the right and left side, ribcage irregularities, muscle irregularities, and overall symmetry. In this very analytical state, she held such grounded presence coupled with profound silence and devotion of service. It was like watching Teresa of Avila or Catherine of Sienna at work; there is no other way to describe it.

I learned more than any book could have taught me from watching Lynn work with each workshop participant. It was clear that Lynn had studied and dissected every aspect of Stough’s method and the breathing principles. What Stough believed was not teachable, Lynn Martin has proven to be very teachable. The thirty years of research to which she has entirely dedicated herself has resulted in an organic and fluid methodology
that has both breadth and depth of anatomical and structural understanding and knowledge.

**Breathing Coordination Methodology**

*Breathing Coordination* teaches that the student’s foundation begins with a clear understanding of functional anatomy. Understanding the structure and function of each joint, bone, and muscle is the groundwork to understanding how each body part influences the breathing mechanism, voice, and movement.

*Breathing Coordination* investigates all twenty-four ribs, the primary and secondary breathing muscles, and every skeletal and muscular structure affecting breathing coordination. The method provides a comprehensive understanding of functional anatomy and re-coordinates the breathing mechanism through various tension reduction techniques and sensory awareness exercises. By decreasing the residual volume of air in the lungs to minimal levels, the student is able to use his or her body as an efficient instrument of sound that is balanced and consistent, while also renewing the lungs’ oxygen levels. The primary goal is to improve one’s health and performance, as well as one’s movement and breathing potential.

*Breathing Coordination* methodology covers location, observation, common problems, and goals. The first two steps (location and observation) involve looking at the structure and function of the primary and secondary breathing muscles and their functional relationship to the skeletal structure. This encompasses researching and discovering specific parts of the body from an anatomical perspective, as well as understanding their movement potential and effects on vocal production. Once there is a
clear understanding of how the breathing mechanism functions in coordination with the body and voice, steps three and four (common problems and specific goals) can be addressed. By teaching location and observation first, both the student and teacher are able to localize specific muscle tension and structural alignment issues. This information positions the student to not only integrate the gathered anatomical data and information, but to understand their specific breathing assessment and how to create a strategy of improvement.

*The Potter’s Wheel*

In *Breathing Coordination*, the practitioner draws on every sensory awareness skill that is available to them in the present moment, requiring them to be fully present. They take their time accessing, feeling, sensing, touching, and observing the student on the table, gathering data from the breath and body. It is how the practitioner perceives what is missing in the body’s alignment and breath connection. This type of sensory awareness and intuitive information points them in the direction of somatic tension and indicates where they need to go in the student’s body to help the student feel connected.

In my experience, therapeutic touch requires a finesse that is gentle and guided with intuitive authority. In order to get the muscles in the thoracic cavity to release, the practitioner’s hands need to touch the body in a way that is very similar to how a potter works with wet clay on the potter’s wheel. He or she needs to work with great intention and skill, using their hands to mold each rib and their surrounding muscles into a beautiful work of art. The practitioner must also understand the anatomical structure of the body as well as the direction of muscle fibers in order to affectively release tension.
When resculpting the muscular silhouette, the practitioner’s hands need to smooth out the muscles by slowly rubbing and guiding the muscular fibers in their individual direction. You have to begin learning how to lead the parts of your body into their desired position, and let them know what you want them to do; this requires guided intention. This tension release technique will effectively release the muscles around the ribs, as well as create space where each rib connects to its corresponding vertebrae. Because of the different directions of the multi-layered abdominals, each layer must be approached in the same manner, which also helps to release the hip flexors and pelvic floor muscles. All twenty-four ribs and their 100 articulators need to move freely, which requires a close examination of all primary and secondary breathing muscles, especially the shoulder and pectoral girdle that surrounds the upper ribs.

Experiences in Breathing Coordination

The methodology of Breathing Coordination, with its rich interweaving of anatomy and physiology, intuitive therapeutic touch, guided imagery, and relational presence can best be understood through several specific examples of interactions with Breathing Coordination clients. The sections below explore the application of Breathing Coordination to several specific client situations I have encountered with Lynn’s clients and my own. The first illustrates a process of tension reduction and recoordination through sensory awareness and visual/tactile-kinesthetic imagery. The second illustrates the power of experiential sensory awareness exercises. The third illustrates the integration of therapeutic touch and vocal training methods.
**Pig in a Blanket:** The tension reduction and recoordination process consists of two kinds of tools: sensory awareness, and visual and tactile-kinesthetic imagery. One of the first times I watched Lynn work on someone else’s breath, she found that the participant’s left fifth rib was slightly rotated in its costal cartilage (the cartilage located between the sternum and rib that also functions as a rib articulator). From a functional anatomy perspective, when a rib is turned in its adjoining costal cartilage, it creates a “speed bump” for the diaphragm. If the diaphragm cannot move smoothly upward on the exhale, it will create an imbalance in the breathing coordination. Lynn’s goal was to guide the rib back into its cartilage and effectively create a balanced breathing coordination that would enable the diaphragm to glide smoothly on its ascent.

Using one of Stough’s descriptions, Lynn told the student, “I believe you have a pig out of the blanket.” Needless to say, this American phrase was a little confusing and surprising for the European participant, especially in reference to her rib. Lynn went on to tell the story of how Carl Stough loved using this particular phrase to describe the relationship between the ribs and their adjoining cartilage. He felt the imagery of a tiny hotdog wrapped in a biscuit communicated the structure and function of the costal cartilage in a very simple way. Growing up in North Carolina, I knew exactly what Lynn meant, and appreciated the humor in Stough’s description. Lynn went on to say, “You have to speak to the rib with your hands and gently convince it to go back into place.” She instructed the student to work with the rib on her own, massaging and kneading the muscles around the left fifth rib. She also recommended that the student slide her hands from the left side of the ribcage downward diagonally across her body to the right side, as well as stroking the entire left thoracic cavity from top to bottom, including the left lower
abdominals. These stroking movements helped to relax the interwoven and tight intercostals muscles surrounding the rib, which enabled the holding pattern to release.

Over the next few days, Lynn slowly and methodically worked with the turned rib, and was successful in releasing the deep holding pattern that had established itself in the surrounding muscles and breathing pattern. I remember her saying, “The student has to get a sense of where these bones are in the body because otherwise, they do not understand how the muscles work in coordination.” I knew I was watching a master at work, not only with how she used her hands, but how she used her words with humor and gentle authority to make the student feel safe.

_Honey on a Spoon:_ One of the sensory awareness exercises used during my _Breathing Coordination_ studies was the use of honey on a spoon. Workshop participants were instructed to put the spoon of honey in their mouth, to roll it around on the tongue, and to slowly let it dissipate. Participants were then asked, “How does this experience translate into the way you move and breathe?” This type of somatic process engages all five senses (sound, sight, touch, smell, taste), integrates as realized knowledge, and brings the student into the present moment. Once this occurs, the student then knows what it feels like to “be” honey, to move like honey, and to allow the ribs to release like honey. One of the examples that I created and consistently go back to when teaching is the image of the rib cage being a honeycomb. What would happen if we allowed the breath on the exhale to drip like honey down the sides of the honeycomb? How does that image change our quality of exhalation? Does it help release a pattern of holding? These types of questions teach us how to become intuitive teachers and students, and how the process of awareness is the key to becoming consistent and well-integrated artists.
I recall Lynn working on a student’s neck during a tablework session. She said, “Think of your neck as if it were a Chinese arch bridge, beautifully smooth with a gradual curve from one end to the other. Now imagine as if someone has painted honey across the back-bottom curve of your skull, going from ear-to-ear; now slowly move your head side-to-side.” The visual image combined with the honey awareness changes the function and structure of the neck; therefore, changing the student’s overall neck relationship. This skill set combined with Lynn’s expertise in Stough’s *Breathing Coordination* has enriched her approach to the method.

*Waves of Numbers:* The goal is always balance, and balance contains both tension and release. By increasing our sensory awareness, we also increase our chances of obtaining this type of balance and coordination, not only in the breathing mechanism, but also in our physical and emotional body. I recall Lynn telling me of an exchange Irene Dowd had with one of her student dancers at The Juilliard School; she said, “No muscles are ever completely relaxed; they are all in communication with the brain and central nervous system (CNS) at all times. If you find a completely relaxed muscle, you should call 911 because that is a medical emergency.” As a breathing practitioner, you must be able to see, sense, feel, and differentiate between needed and unneeded tension.

I remember my first table session with Lynn; there was a specific tension-release method that immediately took me back to the sensation of being rocked as a small child, creating energetic waves of comfort and release. As I continued my studies in *Breathing Coordination*, I understood why her hands were placed on each side of my ribcage, moving the thoracic cavity from side-to-side and walking her hands from the top of the thoracic cavity downward towards the sides of the hips. This type of rocking and
movement creates a spinal articulation, which helps to release each rib at the attachment site of the thoracic vertebra while simultaneously elongating the rib cage. This particular tension-release method, along with the downward motion on the ribs, only takes place on the exhale while the student is silently speaking numbers 1 through 10 repeatedly. It is important to let the student know that it is not a competition as to how long they can count, but it is an exercise in learning how far the breath can extend before the muscles around the ribcage lockup.

In my experience, the counting of numbers serves several different purposes in the exercise. First, numbers are words that we don’t have to think about when putting to an exercise. Second, they are also among the first words that we learned as children and contain the original unconscious breathing patterns. Finally, the variety of vowels and consonants in the numbers 1 through 10 engage the tongue and jaw, which keeps the throat open. If the student does not use their articulators to pronounce the words, you will hear a deficiency in vocal tone and breath stability.

Once the student has achieved the desired breathing coordination without the voice, the spoken voice is then introduced into the numbers process. When the voice is combined, speech and muscle patterns will surface and show where the student is holding tension, or lack thereof, in the body. This requires fine-tuned diagnostic skills because the practitioner must be able to sense subtle movements and holding patterns in the body. Often the eyes cannot see these movements or patterns, and the hands need to be sensitive enough to feel and listen to the slightest muscle engagements.
In the *Breathing Coordination Sessions* video, Stough talks about the motion of the diaphragm being a result of its strength and how its strength is its structure. Stough suggested that the diaphragm should be able to rise to the fourth or fifth rib. In order for the diaphragm to maintain its original structure and strength, the edges of the vocal folds need to approximate in coordination with the rise of the diaphragm, producing a slow diaphragmatic release on the exhale.

During my studies with Lynn, she made it very clear that one needs to have the confidence that a modest amount of air will be enough, both for the need of oxygen and phonation. As one moves into producing a spoken or sung tone, the inhalation does not need to change. It is important to understand that the airflow should not be interrupted; an interruption will affect the breathing coordination and vocal placement. Singers should not try to put their sound somewhere or make the vocal resonance happen; resonance is a result of an uninterrupted airflow. Learning how to release the muscles surrounding the ribcage while maintaining an engagement of the lower abdominals is part of regulating the airflow. As a singer ascends in pitch, the voice needs a little more air pressure so the ribs can absorb the sound and the voice can stay in alignment. It is important for the singer to maintain the vocal fold closure as the pressure increases; otherwise the singer will over-open the vocal mechanism and lose the breath compression.

What *Breathing Coordination* is hoping to achieve is a balance in coordination where all the ribs equalize the breath flow and pressure above and below the vocal folds. *Breathing Coordination* teaches the singer the value of pressure absorption in the body,

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26 Carl Stough, *Breathing Coordination Sessions* (New York: Carl Stough Institute of Breathing Coordination), DVD.
which they define as a decrease of subglottic pressure, created by a decrease of tension in the thoracic cavity. Allowing for more absorption to take place in the ribs, muscles, and organs will help balance out the air pressure and increase the singer’s overall resonance. Part of this process is learning how to manage one’s airflow through moderate vocal fold adduction force to balance out the air pressure. For example, if there is too much air going through a consonant, the next vowel is in trouble. By engaging the articulators with more intention and strength (without pushing), the consonant is created without raising the airflow and therefore stabilizes the proceeding vowel. If the singer over-engages the first four to five ribs the air pressure will increase, creating a greater amount of subglottal pressure which will result in a thick vocal fold mass. If the first four to five ribs are under engaged, there will be a decrease in air pressure which will result in a breathy tone or a slight moment of air before the tone begins. In my experience, if the abdominal muscles are used gently and efficiently in relationship to the relaxation of the diaphragm on the exhale, the singer will have a greater chance of achieving an exhalatory pressure that can work in coordination with proper vocal fold closure.

*Blending Gender*

In my opinion, the *Breathing Coordination* method is a systematic approach that allows the student to integrate a functional understanding of the anatomy of breathing and movement into speech and singing. By starting with anatomy, the student goes outside of him or herself to learn the information, in contrast to the Middendorf approach where the student goes inward to sense and feel the body’s relationship with one’s inner and outer Self.
I do believe that if my breathing foundation had begun with the principles of *Breathing Coordination* by Carl Stough, my breathing experience and current teaching principles would be very different, and most likely dominated by the analytical mind. Because of my training and experience at the Middendorf Institute, and having established a somatic foundation and knowledge base, I was able to take the teachings of Carl Stough and implement them immediately into my work and breathing process. If learning these methods in this particular order helped me to come into relationship with my voice, breath and body, would it be helpful for others?

I created a new method, weaving together the masculine Stough and the feminine Middendorf approaches while drawing on my experiences as a dancer and singer. “An alternative approach to the singer’s breath” arose out of two methods that I love and honor and from mentors and teachers that I love and respect. It is my hope and joy that the method I have created will help those who want to come into their breath and body, and learn how to use their voice to vibrate All of who they are.

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CHAPTER 3
UNLOCK YOUR BREATHE® METHOD AND WORKSHOP

Creation of the Method

A Breath Awakening

“An alternative approach to the singer’s breath” and method arose from my desire to understand my own breath as a singer and artist. In the fall of 2011, I moved to Berlin, Germany to audition for various opera houses and agents. My arrival in Berlin was an exciting and challenging time. Learning to speak a new language and how one navigates through a new culture has its challenges, not to mention the learning curve of figuring out the German business of singing and how an American singer fits into that process.

After a few agent auditions, there seemed to be a common theme emerging in the feedback: I was not fully connected to my breath and body. A colleague recommended that I reach out to John Norris, a director and breathing coach for singers. I had never worked with a coach that focused solely on the breath and body, rather than the voice. I remember my initial session with John; I felt the breath rooted in the pelvic floor and lower abdominals while the rest of the body remained buoyant. This was the first time in my singing career that I had experienced a clear balance of tension and release throughout the whole body. It was an alignment that I had always wanted to experience as a singer, but never knew how to achieve.

I remember leaving the initial breathwork session feeling overjoyed and relieved that after two decades of singing, I had finally experienced what it was like to sing with my whole body. The balance and centering of the breath created such a profound shift in
my emotional breathing body that during the days following my session I was acutely aware of where I was not grounded in my body and of the places in my life that were pulling me out of that center. Being in a new country and culture, I had lost all external means of grounding; the only option was to ground into myself. It may have been the first time in my life where I was forced to look at what was keeping me from coming into relationship with my breath, body, and voice.

Creating a life in Berlin and coming into relationship with my physical and emotional body was a defining moment in my life; for the first time, I realized that there was a heart-breath-body-voice coordination in all these experiences. At the same time, bridging those experiences into my singing was the hardest part of the process, because it required me to track in my day-to-day life where I was disconnecting. I began awakening to where I was not alive in my life and to which relationships were not growing the life I wanted. I had no idea I would create a breathing method; I only knew that I could not go back to living a disconnected life.

At the guidance of John, I enrolled at the Middendorf Institute and began my studies in *The Perceptible Breath* (Erfahrbaren Atem). I started learning and sensing what it meant to truly be in one’s breath and body and how that experience could translate into every aspect of my life and voice. I knew I was being called to share Ilse Middendorf’s method with the broader voice community; her teachings were full of valuable and hidden resources for the performing artist.
It’s a Sunny Day for Traveling

Directly after my time at the Middendorf Institute, I flew back to the United States to take a break from the breath and to examine the method’s applicability to the singer’s breath. However, one week after my being back in the United States, my grandmother and spiritual teacher was diagnosed with esophageal cancer and one month later she passed away. During her last month, I dropped all priorities and concerns around the breath to help her transition into her next journey. The last month of my grandmother’s life was monumental in directing me back on the path of the breath. She graciously let me love her with all that I had learned in Berlin. She gifted me with the experience of resting my hand on her chest as she struggled to breathe, showing me the ways we have to surrender to the breath. I will never forget the lesson she taught me on that last grey and rainy day. Looking outside she said, “It’s a sunny day for traveling!”

She had come into the same place of spiritual wholeness I had felt at the Middendorf Institute.

When you hold someone’s hand as they take their last breath in the physical form, you realize the power of the breath. Our first and last experience in life is to let the breath come and to let it go. Why would we not want to be in relationship with our breath during the time in between?

Back to Berlin

I emerged from the time with my grandmother, both honoring the power of Middendorf’s teachings and concerned that the method’s phenomenological approach would not be sufficient in teaching the singer’s breath. I knew I needed to search for a
method that would address the anatomy of breathing from the singer’s perspective, and so I inquired about other breathing methods that might complement Middendorf’s approach. International vocal pedagogue and mentor David L. Jones suggested I investigate the breathing method of Carl Stough: *Breathing Coordination*. After a weeklong study of *Breathing Coordination* in New York, I knew I had found the perfect match to Middendorf’s *The Perceptible Breath*. I made the decision to fly back home to Berlin to resume private training at the Middendorf Institute, and to continue my studies of *Breathing Coordination* in Lausanne, Switzerland and New York over the next year.

*The Starving Artist*

After two and half years of being immersed in the breath, I had come into alignment with my breath and body, daring to create a space for my authentic voice to be heard. It was time to integrate my breathing experience into a purpose-filled life. I had no idea how hard integration would be, nor did I realize I would be challenged by so many life-long patterns and beliefs waiting in the shadows to sabotage my inner knowing and desires. I will never forget the review of my dissertation prospectus; it is the most defining moment of my career. Dr. Joseph Stemple asked me these three questions, “What do you want? Do you want to write a dissertation on other breathwork methods? Or do you want to write a dissertation on the method you have created?” I heard Catherine of Siena’s words, “Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire.” I had lived my whole life in the mind-set of “the starving artist,” and Dr. Stemple was empowering me to step into the role of “the artist.”
Words have power and are living things, and when they are used to open the “door of possibility” by reflecting one’s gifts, the breath will always meet those gifts at the doorway. And so, as a mother uses her breath to birth her newborn, I too have used mine to birth what I feel is a method that has the possibility of changing lives and voices. It is because of the reflection of my mentors, teachers, and guides that I do so with great honor, integrity, and gratitude. I have created a breathing method that utilizes the greatest strengths of The Perceptible Breath and Breathing Coordination, integrating them with my singing and breathing journey.

Unlock Your Breath® – Performance Breathwork

Unlock Your Breath (UYB) is designed to help voice professionals come into deeper relationship with their individual voice, breath, body, and heart. UYB helps singers to discover where they are not connecting to their authentic Voice and Self. UYB provides the tools to unlock habitual patterns of tension and holding in the breath and body, and to free the natural voice. UYB empowers and teaches how to show up and own your voice with courage and vulnerability.
UYB Principles

Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork is guided by four core principles:

![Figure 3.1. Intersection of breath (1), heart (2), body (3), and voice (4).](image)

Breath (1): The breath is at the core of everything we do in life. It is the one part of us that resides inside and outside the human structure and continuously flows back and forth between our inner and outer world. It is the connector to almost every living thing, and is as individual as our DNA. It is the inspiration for how we move, react, and use our heart, body, and voice in coordination. It is our inner teacher, teaching us how to feel alive in our bodies and to live with an open heart. It is our inner compass, telling us when we are out of alignment and need to come back into balance. The breath has one goal: to center us in our truth.

Heart (2): The heart plays a fundamental role in breathing because of its direct location and relationship to the primary breathing muscles. During respiration, the anatomic rotation of the heart occurs in the frontal plane.\(^1\) If there is any holding, tightening, or constriction in the muscles of the upper torso, the upper ribs will lock and restrict the breathing movement and the optimal rotation of the heart. Current

\(^1\) Guy Shechter et al., "Respiratory Motion of the Heart from Free Breathing Coronary Angiograms," *IEEE Transactions on Medical Imaging* 23, no. 8 (August, 2004).
neuropsychological research shows that the anatomical heart “is a key component of the emotional system, thus providing a physiological basis for the long acknowledged link between our heart and emotional life.”

Creating a breathing relationship with one’s emotional heart and finding the courage to open the heart breathing space (the heart’s relationship with self-compassion and the breath) is the foundation to the method. This requires a safety and vulnerability that is not attached to a particular outcome and challenges you to look at the places in your life where you shut down your emotional heart. When we open the heart, we give ourselves the opportunity to soften those hard edges, and in doing so, the breath, body, and voice will always match in resonance and vibration.

**Body (3):** The body is constantly creating new muscle and breathing patterns, as well as holding onto old habitual patterns of tension that we have collected throughout our lives. As Mable Todd wrote in *The Thinking Body*, “For every thought supported by a feeling, there is a muscle change. Primary muscle patterns being the biological heritage of man, man’s whole body records his emotional thinking.” If we want to change our muscle and breathing patterns, we have to come into relationship with both our emotional and physical body. The negative beliefs and stories that we carry in our day-to-day lives manifest in specific parts of the breath and body, causing structural imbalances and compromising the body’s overall function. The goals for the body are always balance, coordination, and integration, which require us to develop a relationship with the structural, functional, and emotional body.

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Voice (4): The voice is a reflection and manifestation of our current state-of-being, meaning our present relationship with the breath, body, and mind. In speaking or singing, the breath and body are always working in coordination with the vocal folds. The body’s ability to balance respiration, phonation, and resonance is dependent on how the singer balances air pressure and air flow. Realizing that the whole body is a resonator, and understanding the body’s ability to redistribute/balance air pressure and healthy tension is how the singer learns to balance the breath and voice. Part of that process is understanding every muscle’s role in breathing and how they work in coordination to share and balance those tensions and pressures necessary for balanced vocal production.

Becoming an emotionally-defended singer has a direct relationship to the hardening of body tissue and muscle constriction which is mirrored in the quality of voice. However, singers that dare to remain emotionally open are able to soften the structural tissue and create a quality of muscle tone that is flexible and elastic, thus increasing their overall resonance and quality of sound. Being able to diagnose where the absorption is not occurring in the whole body requires targeting where specifically the breath and ribs are locking, as well as locating where in the body muscle tissue is hardening. This ability demands a touch and awareness that is primarily focused on the relationship of breath and body, not the voice. If the job of the singer is to communicate who they are from the depth of their being and in doing so, give the listener a chance to disappear from their day-to-day life and struggles, the voice has to become an integrated voice that is grounded in openness and connection to every living cell of their body.
UYB Breathing Goals

UYB Performance Breathwork is designed to support singers in pursuing three goals:

Wellness: I define wellness as the experience of a deep relationship with the whole body and Self. Wellness plays a crucial role in vocal sustainability and recovery, and creating a career that is based on longevity and understanding, along with talent, absolutely requires this engagement of the whole body and voice.

In my experience, wellness involves a mind-set that views every perceptible object inside and outside the human structure as another living being. For example, I can view the breath as the essential component of respiration or as the essential component of life. This frames two different perspectives: respiration is what we need to stay alive; breathing is what we need to come alive. Wellness is dependent on how one integrates the mind, body, and heart, and how those three relationships work in coordination to create a foundation for the voice and life. In a time where society is being forced into a world of disconnection and technology, a call into relationship is what the voice needs to become resilient and sustainable; and it is the breath which is the key player in creating this relationship.

Empowerment: I define Empowerment as being in relationship with one’s inner teacher, which requires an intuitive voice grounded in knowing one’s worth. Developing self-confidence is the groundwork for learning how to be in one’s body and being able to step into one’s vocal authenticity. Part of the emotional power of opera comes from the singer being able to remain in their center while portraying dramatic and often emotionally challenging roles. Learning how to choose such emotional openness and
vulnerability and let go of the need to impress or gain others’ approval is essential to building resilient muscles of self-worth and vulnerability.

**Vocal Authenticity and Precision:** Vocal Authenticity and Precision is one of the main goals for a singer, requiring an exhalation that utilizes a slow passive release of the diaphragm combined with lower abdominal engagement. Proper and gentle vocal fold closure plays a large role in sustaining the body’s connection to the breath and contributes to optimal vocal resonance; and the synergy of vocal fold closure and breath/body coordination is essential to creating a balanced airflow. This type of coordination requires learning how to balance tension and release simultaneously, while allowing the breath and body to remain buoyant, open, and flexible.

In my experience, many voice professionals are afraid to use the word “tension,” but it is important to note that there is “good” and “bad” tension held in the body. Bad tension results from a muscle being used with force; good tension occurs in any natural movement, and is necessary for the muscle to sustain engagement.

The singer’s goal in breathing is to achieve a coordination that maintains a healthy and consistent engagement of the diaphragm and abdominals without tensing the intercostals, shoulder girdle, and neck.Balancing the breathing coordination with healthy vocal fold closure allows for the diaphragm to passively rise slowly on the exhalation, thus releasing a small amount of air through the vocal folds, equalizing the air stream. The student needs to learn how to achieve this coordination in speech before moving into a sung tone. Helping them to identify their individual patterns of unwanted tension in the breath and body, along with discovering a speaking tone that is created with a healthy
vocal fold closure, is the basis for the method’s approach to the voice and breath-body-voice coordination.

**UYB Methodology (nine-step method)**

*UYB Performance Breathwork* consists of nine carefully designed steps, creating a foundation of awareness that quickly builds a solid functional understanding of the breath-heart-body-voice relationship:

**Step One – Experiencing Breath through Movement:** Experiencing Breath through Movement uses four guiding principles for working with the breath: focusing, sensing, centering, and breathing. These four principles are used to bring the student into relationship with their breathing body and to help them understand the structure and function of individual muscles, joints, and bones through the process of breathing and movement. This stage of the method takes place on a chair or stool as well as standing. The student slowly works through each movement exercise with the breath, starting with the feet and working their way towards the crown of the head. *UYB* stool work is specifically designed to build the body from the ground up, creating a structural realignment breathing process. Through this process each body part finds a freedom of movement, as well as a release of tension that leaves the student feeling buoyant and yet rooted into the earth. The goal is to optimize the structure and function of the body while centering the breath, so that the breathing body can align and integrate itself with gravity.

**Step Two – Experiencing Sound as Vibrations:** Experiencing Sound as Vibrations functions as a bridge, connecting the voice to the breath/body awareness attained in step one. This process takes place lying on the floor, giving the student the opportunity to
relax into the body through the use of gravity. The student is led through a series of vowel exercises that focus on creating relationship with each vowel space (the structural space in the body that changes with each vowel). With and without phonation, the student is introduced to a variety of vowel relationships, inhaling and exhaling on each vowel space, and discerning where in the body they feel each vowel. The goal is to create a breathing experience that frees the voice while focusing on the awareness of where natural vibrations in the body are being restricted or forced. This requires the student to let go of the “right way” of singing and to turn off the inner critic and analytical mind. When the student emotionally opens their body, they allow their voice to find its natural vibration. In doing so, the student is able to integrate an emotional state of freedom and safety while simultaneously increasing their vocal resonance. Once the student understands the relationship between vibration and body resonance, they then are led through an exploration of sound and emotion, investigating different emotional states of defensiveness and openness and the effect on vocal resonance.

*Step Three – Structural Anatomy of Breathing:* Structural Anatomy of Breathing gives a general overview of the primary and secondary breathing muscles, as well as introducing key concepts to understanding the skeletal structure and its relationship to breathing and vocal phonation. The student learns different postural alignments through the use of kinesthetic imagery and movement. By establishing a clear and simple description of the body’s structure and breathing anatomy, the student is able to integrate the anatomical information into their individual breathing, movement, singing, and speaking.
Step Four – Functional Anatomy of Respiration: Functional Anatomy of Respiration guides the student through a detailed description of the diaphragm and its function. The student discovers how every muscle in the thoracic cavity assists in establishing a healthy breathing pattern and coordination. General concepts on airflow, breath compression, and resonance are introduced to help the student understand the relationship between the breath and voice. This step offers a quick review of the concepts taught in structural anatomy and how to bridge those concepts into the functional understanding of the voice and body.

Step Five – Observation and Alignment: Observation and Alignment takes place on the table, looking at the structural alignment of the body and every muscle that contributes to the breathing process. This is an assessment of the emotional and physical breathing body. The goal is to observe and diagnose any abnormalities or common problems while tracking the muscle and breathing patterns. Locating specific tension and constrictions of the primary/secondary breathing muscles is part of the observation process. After the breathing data has been gathered, the limbs and spinal column are slowly adjusted through different alignment techniques. The alignment process allows the student’s breath to relax and the body to settle while simultaneously heightening their breathing awareness.

Step Six – Tension Reduction and Repatterning: Tension Reduction and Repatterning is the primary section of the tablework, addressing specific breathing and muscle patterns that keep the student from coming fully into their breath and body connection. In order to successfully recoordinate any type of breathing or muscle pattern, the body needs to feel safe, which requires the student’s trust. Once trust has been
established through the Observation and Alignment step, the student is ready for the hands-on breathwork. The breathing muscles are released through a variety of tension reduction techniques, using gravity as an essential component in releasing the body and freeing the breath. The placement of the practitioner’s hands and their process in releasing patterns of holding in the body depends on the body’s response and ability to release tension. Helping the student find a connected and natural breath that functions with minimum effort and maximum efficiency is the goal.

*Step Seven – Experiencing Breathing Coordination:* Experiencing Breathing Coordination focuses directly on the voice and its relationship to the diaphragm, creating a slow rise of the diaphragm on the exhalation. On the table, the voice and body are slowly and gently integrated into one unit through a variety of recoordination techniques and speech-level vocal exercises (spoken and sung). As the student begins to coordinate the breath-body-voice relationship, an awareness of how the voice, breath and body work together develops. The end result is a breathing coordination that produces a clear, grounded tone with increased vocal resonance.

*Step Eight – Exploring the Pelvic Floor, Hip Flexors, and Lower Abdominals:* Exploring the Pelvic Floor, Hip Flexors, and Lower Abdominals takes place on the floor and stool. A healthy breath on the table must be established before moving to any lower body engagement exercises; this avoids creating unwanted tension in the breathing mechanism. Having already established a foundation of breathing awareness and how that awareness contributes to a healthy breath-body-voice coordination, the student can successfully experience and understand the lower breath/body relationship in a way that is clear and precise.
The lower body connection required for singing is addressed through various lower-quadrant breathing exercises (unvoiced). It is important to note that all lower quadrant muscles should never be used with force in singing. The job of the lower abdominals is to slowly guide the breath out of the body, not push the breath. The hip flexors are to remain flexible and unlocked, while the pelvic floor responds in coordination to the movement of the diaphragm.

*Step Nine – Inquiry, Discovery, and Goals:* Inquiry, Discovery, and Goals is a review of all observations made on and off of the table: body alignment, specific muscle/breathing patterns, and emotional, situational and physical triggers for habitual breath/muscle constriction. From the student’s awareness and observations, they create their own breathing groundwork. The groundwork is designed to help them implement all the concepts and principles into their daily life and singing. The student must be reminded that the breath is their inner teacher, and has one purpose: to center them in their truth and their singing body. The key for them to successfully integrate all of the breathing data is to remain in relationship with the coordination of their breath, heart, body, and voice.

*Method Design*

The method is designed to keep the singer out of the analytical mind and more in the experience of the breath, heart, body, and voice. The goal is for the student to let go of the “voice of the critic,” to begin focusing on the voice of the “inner teacher,” and to experience how the intuitive Self informs the body and voice to engage without the mind. This process has to begin with general awareness and safety. If the singer moves too
quickly into the specifics of the breath, body, and voice, they will engage the analytical mind and lose presence with their own felt experience; thus the integration of the method into the whole Self (breath, heart, body, voice) will remain fragmented. The method then moves into more specific, individualized awareness; recoordination of the diaphragm and pelvic floor; and finally integration and implementation into performance.

*General Awareness (steps 1-3):* From the experience of breath comes awareness. Because awareness is the primary creative tool of the singer, the method’s foundation is grounded in sensory awareness. The primary goal of increasing one’s awareness involves understanding the somatic process – focusing, sensing, centering, and breathing –and their ability to relax and ground into the breath and body. By focusing the body’s intention, and perceiving and sensing the breath in relationship with the body’s movement and voice, the singer is able to feel what it means to be in one’s whole body.

In *Performance Breathwork*, the singer begins with basic somatic work, discovering the breath and body connection from a non-singing perspective without phonation. This creates a relationship with the breath that is free from impressions of voice and sound, which allows the singer to dive deeper into their often-forgotten senses. From moving on the stool/chair to standing or lying on the floor, the singer begins to feel a breath that is connected to the body’s natural movement and form. The method teaches relationship – relationship with every part of the body – beginning with the feet and slowly working up through the complete body. As the singer learns the general anatomical structure through movement and breathing, they discover a breath and body alignment optimal for singing. Once the singer has an experiential understanding of the
overall body’s relationship to its breath, movement, structure and posture, they can gradually merge that experience into the voice.

It is important for the singer to experience the voice from a perspective of basic sound, using the same tools as a baby would to create sound: body/breath connection, emotion, and phonation. The singer needs to experience what sound feels like in the body without the attachment to words or music, only vowels and emotions. Learning how to play with sound and giving the voice permission to let go of what other people are thinking is one of the first steps to teaching singers how to find their authentic kernel of sound.

*Specific Awareness (steps 4-6):* Now that the singer has developed a relationship with their breath, body, and voice from a non-singing perspective, they are ready to take on basic functional anatomy as it pertains to the singer’s breath. General breath/body awareness combined with correlating anatomical imagery gives the singer the depth of understanding they need to go deeper into their individual awareness. It is important to recognize that only so much anatomical information can be taught before the student disengages from the somatic awareness. For this reason, interactive teaching methods are used to teach the anatomy portions of the method, keeping the student engaged in their awareness.

Building specific awareness uses focusing, perceiving, and sensing to pinpoint specific thoughts, beliefs, and breathing/muscle patterns that affect the breath-heart-body-voice relationship. The goal is to begin filling in the details of awareness and to find where the habitual patterns of tension are locking the breathing mechanism and prohibiting the student from coming into their breath, body, and voice. The amount of
tension reduction a student can experience is dependent on their overall emotional openness and breathing awareness. Because breathing patterns change depending on one’s thoughts and emotions, no treatment or diagnosis is the same, which requires a flexibility and non-attachment to the method design and flow. In order for the singer to let go and trust their own breath, safety and trust must be established.

*Recoordination (steps 7-8):* Recoordination is the process of establishing a healthy and consistent breathing cycle consisting of a balanced engagement of the primary and secondary breathing muscles, combined with a gentle and slow release of the diaphragm. Once breathing/muscle patterns have been addressed and muscle tension reduced through the use of the breath, the spoken voice (speech level) is carefully added into the exhalation process. The goal is for the singer to produce a spoken tone that creates a slow and consistent rise of the diaphragm. As the voice is engaged, unwanted patterns of tension may emerge. This creates vocal awareness of which breathing/muscle patterns are getting in the way of achieving the optimal breathing coordination necessary to producing vocal balance and airflow. If the singer can establish a breathing coordination that balances the air pressure above and below the vocal folds in speech, then they can advance to singing simple vowel and consonant combinations. Once again, this allows the singer to feel the changes in the breathing mechanism when the singing voice is engaged, thus building more awareness.

Once the singer has experienced and understands what a healthy breathing coordination feels like, the lower body connection is introduced into the process. Because engagement of the lower body can create unwanted tension in the throat, neck, shoulders and chest, it is important for the singer to have a clear understanding of the singer’s
breath, as well as heightened breath and body awareness. The goal is for the singer to gently use the lower abdominals in a way that redistributes the breath compression and keeps the pressure consistently engaged at the core of the body. In the lower body breathwork, the singer discovers which muscles need to be released in singing and which need to be engaged. It is important for the singer to create a relationship with every contributing breathing muscle and to be able to differentiate the functional differences between the muscles of the thoracic and abdominal cavity.

Integration and Implementation (step 9): Integration and implementation is dependent on how much time and focus the singer invests in building their breath and body awareness. Awareness is an integrative experience, and the singer must be able to engage the body’s sense memory to successfully bridge the new awareness into their singing. The method creates an integrative breathing vocabulary (non-verbal and verbal), giving the singer key concepts and words to draw upon. Individual groundwork is created by the singer, crafting a strategy that targets specific breathing needs and helps them implement the method into their daily life.

As in singing, learning how to catch muscle and breathing patterns requires the cultivation of awareness. Such patterns go in and out of consciousness; as one develops a relationship with their breath and body, they learn how to track their individual patterns and begin noticing what triggers those patterns. Tracing the trigger back to its origin is how the singer’s breath begins to repattern. This requires a high level of conscious awareness, emotional maturity, and desire for transformation.
Unlock Your Breath® – Performance Breathwork Workshop

Unlock Your Breath (UYB) – Performance Breathwork Workshop was created to offer an alternative approach to the singer’s breath in the university setting. UYB is formatted to compliment any vocal training technique and is designed to address the breath and body and their relationship to the voice. UYB does not substitute for vocal technique; rather, it has been developed to enhance current teaching methods by bridging somatic awareness and conscious breathing into the area of voice. UYB teaches the voice student how to create a breath-body relationship that will support the voice. UYB empowers the singer to stand in their worth, embrace vulnerability, and step into their authenticity as an artist.

Workshop Guidelines

UYB is dedicated to providing quality workshops that provide a safe container for students and teachers to explore the breath-heart-body-voice relationship. Quality assurance and compliance helps to ensure the safety of all participants, while providing a space that fosters creativity and exploration.

Teacher Guidelines: The university workshop requires that all voice professors be present during all steps of the method for four reasons: (1) the voice student needs the emotional presence and support of their voice teacher to build trust with that teacher, (2) new vocabulary and concepts are introduced throughout the workshop and the teacher needs to understand them to help the student integrate the method, (3) specific muscle and breathing patterns are addressed and the voice teacher needs to have a clear
understanding of how to help the student bridge the new breathing awareness into their singing, (4) the method uses hands-on touch; the voice teacher needs to be present to insure the student’s trust and safety.

Student Guidelines: The student is required to sequentially complete the steps of the method. They cannot move onto the private breathwork session without completing steps one through three in the initial group session. If the student cannot make their studio’s workshop time, he or she would need to make arrangements with another voice studio to attend that groupwork.

Workshop Design

The workshop design is tailored specifically for university needs: time availability, room availability, number of students, student schedules, group classes, 1:1 coaching, and masterclasses. Using the four domains of the method design – General Awareness, Specific Awareness, Recoordination, Integration and Implementation – the workshop is formulated to include all steps of the method and still meet university needs. The method benefits of the university workshop are of equal value to studying the method 1:1. Because the voice teacher is present for all nine steps of the method, the UYB concepts and breathing tools can be used in their teaching approach, thereby helping the student to remember and integrate the specifics of the workshop.

General Awareness (steps 1-3): Steps one through three of the method are facilitated during a group session (groupwork). Each university voice studio receives their own group session. This provides a safe container for the voice professor and their voice students to explore the breath and body together.
Specific Awareness (steps 4-6): Steps four through six of the method take place during a 1:1 breathwork session addressing the student’s specific muscle and breathing patterns. During this part of the method the teacher is designated a chair to quietly observe the process. Working with the breath 1:1 is emotionally and physically complex, and any outside interaction will take the student out of their breathing experience. The student’s breath is the teacher and the practitioner is only there to help guide them through the process. This requires a high level of awareness and listening.

Recoordination (steps 7-8): Steps seven through eight of the method are also during the private session. At this point, the voice teacher can slowly begin to bring themselves into the process. The voice is reintroduced into the student’s breathing process, and the input of the voice teacher can provide a positive reflection back to the student. This also serves the purpose of integrating the voice teacher-student relationship into the breathing process, helping the student feel supported by a team.

Integration and Implementation (step 9 and masterclass): Step nine of the method takes place at the end of the 1:1 session. The student is given a strategic breathwork plan to help them integrate the new breathing knowledge and awareness into their singing and daily activities. The masterclass gives them the opportunity to see how the method transfers into singing, and how the concepts can be used to help them unlock the breath and free the voice. The voice teacher chooses which students will sing during the masterclass.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

DATA RESULTS

In consultation with my Breathing Coordination colleagues, categories and subsequent questions were developed for the questionnaire used in the present study (appendix C). The questionnaire investigated the following categories: Self-Rating of Self-Confidence, Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge, Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception, Self-Rating of Self-Awareness, and Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing. The results of the pre- and post-workshop questionnaire are reported below; raw data can be found in appendix G.

Participants’ Quantitative Results

*Ordinal Data Results from Selected Likert-type Scale Pre- and Post-Workshop Questions*

Study participants (N=29) completed pre- and post-workshop questionnaires containing 23 questions answered using a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). Each scale item pertained to one of five categories of investigation:

- Self-Rating of Self-Confidence
- Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge
- Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception
- Self-Rating of Self-Awareness
- Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing
Participants’ responses to the items in each category were averaged to create overall pre- and post-workshop rating scores for each participant in each category.

Using a paired samples $t$ test to compare participants’ pre- and post-workshop rating scores in each category, the investigator was able to determine the probability ($p$) value. The $p$ value was used to determine whether there was statistical significance in the difference between the pre- and post-workshop scores in each category. In this study, the results yielding a $p$ value of .05 is considered on the borderline of statistical significance, under .01 is considered statistically significant, and under .005 is considered highly statistically significant.

The study compares the frequency ($f$), the number of times an observation occurs in data, of specific pre- and post-workshop responses within the five categories of investigation. The study also shows the Pearson correlation between scores of Self-Rating of Voice Likability and Self-Rating of Body Likability, measuring the strength of the linear association between the two variables. A strong positive correlation is any correlation value ($r$) that ranges from .70 to 1.0. A moderately strong positive correlation is any value between .50 and .70. A $p$ value is given to show the statistical significance between the pre- and post-workshop scores.

*Self-Rating of Self-Confidence*

A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ *Self-Rating of Self-Confidence* from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Six questions were combined to create an overall rating: “Rate your confidence within your breath, body, and voice,” “Rate your self-confidence,” “What potential do you feel you
have as a professional singer?,” “How well do you like your voice?,” “How well do you like your body?,” and “What is your self-confidence level?” There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($\alpha = .80, M = 6.3678, SD = 1.47036$) and post-test ($\alpha = .91, M = 7.4856, SD = 1.51023$) conditions; $t(28) = (-4.252), p < .001$.

Four questions within the larger category of self-confidence were of particular note: Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence, Self-Rating of Voice Likability, Self-Rating of Body Likability, and Self-Rating of Career Potential.

*Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence:* A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 5.4655, SD = 1.94537$) and post-test ($M = 7.6552, SD = 1.26140$) conditions; $t(28) = (-5.366), p < .001$.

*Self-Rating of Voice Likability:* A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Voice Likability from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was no statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 7.7414, SD = 1.29987$) and post-test ($M = 7.8276, SD = 1.56568$) conditions; $t(28) = (-.305), p = .763$.

*Self-Rating of Body Likability:* A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Body Likability from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 5.6379, SD = 2.76747$) and post-test ($M = 6.7931, SD = 2.30495$) conditions; $t(28) = (-3.403), p = .002$. 

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**Self-Rating of Career Potential:** A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Career Potential from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 7.8621, SD = 1.50533$) and post-test ($M = 8.5172, SD = 1.18384$) conditions; $t(28) = (-3.088), p = .005$. An average score of 8 or above was reported by 58.5% of study participants pre-workshop and 86.2% post-workshop.

**Correlation Between Voice Likability and Breath-Body-Voice Confidence:** A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Self-Rating of Voice Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence (post-workshop); a moderately strong positive correlation of $r(27) = .511$, was found with a high level of significance ($p = .005$), suggesting that participants’ perception of their voice was highly correlated with their breath-body-voice confidence.

**Correlation Between Voice Likability and Self-Confidence:** A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Self-Rating of Voice Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Rating of Self-Confidence (the two post-workshop questions specifically rating self-confidence); a moderately strong positive correlation of $r(27) = .543$ was found with a high level of significance ($p = .002$), suggesting that participants’ perception of their voice was highly correlated with their perception of their self-confidence.

**Correlation Between Body Likability and Self-Confidence:** A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Self-Rating of Body Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Rating of Self-Confidence (the two post-workshop questions specifically rating self-confidence); a strong positive correlation of $r(27) = .884$ was found with a high level
of significance \( (p < .001) \), suggesting that participants’ perception of their body was highly correlated with their perception of their self-confidence.

*Correlation Between Body Likability and Voice Likability:* A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Self-Rating of Voice Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Rating of Body Likability (post-workshop); a moderately strong positive correlation of \( r(27) = .529 \) was found with a high level of significance \( (p = .003) \), suggesting that participants’ perception of their voice was highly correlated with their perception of their body.

*Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge*

A paired samples \( t \) test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Six questions were combined to create an overall rating: “Rate how well you understand your relationship with your ribs and diaphragm,” “How well do you understand your body and its function?,” “How well do you understand vocal resonance and production?,” “Rate your understanding of the engagement of the pelvic floor,” “Rate your understanding of the structure and function of the breathing mechanism,” and “Rate your understanding of the breathing cycle.” There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test \( (\alpha = .90, M = 5.7874, SD = 1.66839) \) and post-test \( (\alpha = .78, M = 7.9914, SD = .80744) \) conditions; \( t(28) = (-6.828), p < .001 \).
Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception

A paired samples t test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-rating of Concern with Others’ Perception from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Two questions were combined to create an overall rating: “How much do you care what others think of your singing?” and “How much do you care what other people think?” There was no significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($\alpha = .80$, $M = 6.7414$, $SD = 2.41875$) and post-test ($\alpha = .93$, $M = 6.3103$, $SD = 2.41429$) conditions; $t(28) = (.990)$, $p = .331$.

Self-Rating of Self-Awareness

A paired samples t test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Self-Awareness from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Four questions were combined to create an overall rating: “Rate your breath/body awareness within normal daily activity,” “Rate your awareness of where your center of breath is located,” “Rate your awareness of your body’s weight/gravity as related to breathing and singing,” and “Rate your breath/body awareness within your singing.” There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($\alpha = .78$, $M = 5.3448$, $SD = 1.67760$) and post-test ($\alpha = .85$, $M = 7.8836$, $SD = .97624$) conditions; $t(28) = (-7.987)$, $p < .001$.

Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing

A paired samples t test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-rating of Breathing from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. Three questions
were combined to create an overall rating: “Rate your breath control within singing,” “Rate your breathing recovery time in singing,” and “Rate the ease and comfort in which you are able to direct the breath.” There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($\alpha = .89, M = 5.4138, SD = 1.44105$) and post-test ($\alpha = .81, M = 7.1839, SD = 1.09684$) conditions; $t(28) = (-7.364), p < .001$.

The three questions alone were also of particular note: Self-Rating of Breath Control in Singing, Self-Rating of Breathing Recovery Time in Singing, and Self-Rating of Ease of Breathing in Singing.

*Self-Rating of Breath Control in Singing:* A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Breath Control in Singing from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 5.9655, SD = 1.63626$) and post-test ($M = 7.1034, SD = 1.08050$) conditions; $t(28) = (-4.521), p < .001$. An average score of 8 or above was reported by 13.8% of study participants pre-workshop and 37.9% post-workshop.

*Self-Rating of Breathing Recovery Time in Singing:* A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Breathing Recovery in Singing from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 5.2414, SD = 1.57333$) and post-test ($M = 6.4483, SD = 1.68154$) conditions; $t(28) = (-3.780), p = .001$. An average score of 8 or above was reported by 0% of study participants pre-workshop and 31% post-workshop.
Self-Rating of Ease of Breathing in Singing: A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Ease of Breathing in Singing from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 5.0345, SD = 1.54649$) and post-test ($M = 8.0000, SD = 1.06904$) conditions; $t(28) = (-9.391), p < .001$. An average score of 8 or above was reported by 0% of study participants pre-workshop and 72.4% post-workshop.

Additional Question of Interest: Self-Rating of Feeling Judged by Colleagues

A paired samples $t$ test was conducted to compare the study participants’ Self-Rating of Feeling Judged by Colleagues from their pre- and post-workshop questionnaires. There was a moderate statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 7.1207, SD = 2.38917$) and post-test ($M = 5.9828, SD = 2.85508$) conditions; $t(28) = (2.639), p = .013$.

True and False Data Results

The number of correct answers in the 29 True/False questions (pre- and post-workshop) was calculated for each study participant. The results for each of the 29 participants were then combined to compute a total T/F score for the collective study participants, creating means for both the collective pre- and post-workshop T/F questions. A paired samples $t$ test was then conducted to compare the study participants’ Total T/F scores from the pre- and post-workshop questionnaire. There was a highly statistically significant difference in the scores for the pre-test ($M = 20.3793, SD = 4.14396$) and
post-test \((M = 23.8621, SD = 2.70877)\) conditions; \(t(28) = (-6.261), p < .001\). Out of 29 True/False Questions, 17.2\% of the study participants scored a 24 (number of correct responses) or above on the pre-workshop T/F Questionnaire, and 68.8\% scored a 24 or above on the post-workshop T/F Questionnaire.

Participants’ Qualitative Results

Response Frequencies from Selected Pre- and Post-Workshop Short Answer Questions

Responses to pre-workshop questionnaire items “Describe your emotional relationship with your voice” and “What is your perception of your voice?” (items 9 and 14 of the personal history section):

- 45\% of participants reported positive, un-ambivalent relationships with their voices.
- 55\% of participants reported concerned, ambivalent relationships with their voices.

Of participants reporting concern:
- 93\% of these participants reported significant ambivalence around their voices.
- 37\% of these participants reported difficulty controlling their voices.
- 6\% of these participants reported worry around their voices.
Responses to pre-workshop questionnaire items, “What is your perception of your body?” and “Do you like your body?” (item 11 of the personal history section):

- 31% of participants reported positive, un-ambivalent relationships with their bodies.
- 69% of participants reported concerned, ambivalent relationships with their bodies.

A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Relationship/Perception of Voice and Relationship/Perception of Body; a high positive correlation of $r(27) = .744$ was found with a high level of significance ($p < .001$), suggesting that participants’ perceptions of their voices were highly correlated with their perceptions of their bodies.

Responses to pre-workshop questionnaire item, “Do you deal with stage fright? If so, how do you deal with it?” (item 10 of the personal history section):

- 14% of participants reported that they do not deal with stage fright.
- 86% of participants reported that they do deal with stage fright.

Of those reporting stage fright,

- 28% of these participants stated that preparation for performance helps them to manage stage fright.
- 68% of these participants stated that specific coping strategies (e.g. breathing, meditation or prayer) help them to manage stage fright.
- 14% of these participants reported that their stage fright is unmanaged.
Responses to questionnaire item “Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to who you truly are as a person?” (item 19 (post-workshop item 8) of the personal history section):

- Before the workshop, 86% of participants reported that their breath has the ability to connect them to whom they truly are as a person.
- After the workshop, 96% of participants reported that their breath has the ability to connect them to whom they truly are as a person.

Responses to questionnaire item “Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?” (item 20 (post-workshop item 9) of the personal history section):

- Before the workshop, 69% of participants reported that trying to impress others takes them out of their breath and body.
- After the workshop, 83% of participants reported that trying to impress others takes them out of their breath and body.

Responses to post-workshop questionnaire item, “Has the UYB Workshop helped you as a singer? If so, how has your singing or breath changed?” (item 11 of the personal history section):

- 100% of participants reported that the UYB Workshop helped them as a singer.

Responses to post-workshop questionnaire item, “Would you recommend this type of work to singers? If so, why do you think this type of work is valuable?” (item 13 of the personal history section):

- 100% of participants reported that they would recommend this type of work to singers.
Responses to post-workshop questionnaire item, “Do you feel more confident with yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship? If so, what aspects of the workshop created a shift in perspective?” (item 14 of the personal history section):

- 97% of participants reported that they feel more confident with themselves and the mind-body-voice relationship after the workshop.
- The 3% (one participant) that reported not being sure of increased confidence said it was due to sickness after the workshop and not having the chance to sing.

Responses to post-workshop questionnaire item, “Do you feel that you have usable tools to maintain this heightened awareness of the breath and body? If so, what breathing tools will you take with you into your daily life, the practice room, and onto the stage?” (item 15 of the personal history section):

- 100% of participants reported that they acquired usable tools from the workshop to maintain the heightened breath and body awareness.

In responses to post-workshop questionnaire items 10, 11, 12, and 13 from the personal history section: “What did you learn about yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship during the workshop,”? Has the UYB Workshop helped you as a singer?,” “If so, how has your singing or breath changed?” “What did you find most helpful about the process?” and “Would you recommend this type of work to singers? If so, why do you think this type of work is valuable?,” the following themes were consistently cited by workshop participants as an important benefit of the workshop:
• 73% of participants identified “awareness” or “connection” to body as an important benefit of the workshop
• 52% of participants identified personal/emotional insight as an important benefit of the workshop
• 45% of participants identified release of “tension” as an important benefit of the workshop
• 24% of participants identified “techniques” or “tools” as an important benefit of the workshop
• 24% of participants identified experiencing “centering” as an important benefit of the workshop
• 17% of participants identified experiencing “opening” as an important benefit of the workshop

*Faculty Interviews*

During analysis of the post-workshop faculty interviews, the following response frequencies were identified from selected interview questions. 100% of the faculty reported:

• they believed the method and workshop was helpful
• they would recommend the workshop to other universities
• they would repeat the workshop
• they observed an improvement of vocal tone and quality
• they observed an improvement in the singers’ breathing
• they observed an increase of breath and body awareness
• they observed an increase of awareness and connection to the pelvic floor and lower abdominals
• they observed increase of self-confidence
• they believe emotion is connected to breath

During analysis of the post-workshop faculty interviews, the following themes were consistently cited as important benefits of the workshop by 100% of the faculty:

• experiencing physical/emotional “openness” and vocal “freedom”
• feeling “grounded” and increasing “resonance”
• increasing “awareness”
• experiencing “focusing”
• experiencing physical and emotional “changes”
• “emotional” connectedness
• “self-confidence”
DATA INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to discover what is missing in today’s approach to the singer’s breath and to provide an alternative method that complements vocal training techniques. The data clearly suggests that breath is the connecting force between the body, mind, and voice, and that the voice is a reflection and manifestation of our current state-of-being and its relationship with Self (i.e. the present relationship with the breath, body, heart and mind). Some overall themes emerged from the quantitative and qualitative data, including: clear support for the value and nature of the benefits derived from the workshop; significant impact ratings of voice/breath control; significant increases in self-confidence; significant increases of body/breathing knowledge, significant impacts on relationship with Self; and significant increases in coping with vulnerability.

Measures of Workshop Value

Participants’ Quantitative and Qualitative Results

As the research findings show, all of the study participants reported that the UYB Workshop helped them as a singer, that they would recommend this type of work to singers, and that they acquired usable tools from the workshop to maintain the heightened awareness of the breath and body. All participants but one felt more confident with themselves and with the mind-body-voice relationship after the workshop. The one participant who was not sure of the increase in confidence reported, “I haven’t sung yet since I am sick, but my breathing feels more global, more grounded and relaxed. I need to try it out.”
In the qualitative evaluations of workshop value, the study participants reported the following key benefits of the workshop, in order of descending frequency: awareness/connection, personal/emotional insight, release of tension, techniques/tools, centering, and opening.

*Awareness/Connection:* “Awareness” or “connection” to the body was reported as the strongest benefit of the workshop by the study participants. Awareness is the primary creative tool for the singer, and the method engages three somatic processes for developing the singer’s awareness: breathing, movement, and speaking. Participant #8 gives an example for how the workshop uses one’s individual breathing experience to build awareness. They write, “The private session was a physical and mental breakthrough,” and “the feeling of the breath in my body will always remind me when it is not present.” Once the participant had experienced the feeling of the breath, they could recognize when the breath was not there. Awareness is as individual as one’s voice; one person might say they feel connected, another person might see an image or a color, and the next person might experience an emotion. Participant #26 writes, “My breath is more consistent and connected to my whole body.” Participant #26 achieved more of a general awareness from the breathwork, whereas Participant #8 was focused on the details of awareness and its relationship to presence. Awareness has many degrees and paths: some are quicker than others, some may be more detailed and personal, but they all lead to a greater degree of connection.

*Personal/Emotional Insight:* Personal and emotional insight was reported as one of the key benefits of the workshop by the study participants. When participant #8 was asked if the workshop created a shift in perspective, the response was, “I have begun a
journey.” This answer suggests a direct relationship between the breath and gaining personal insight. Participant #8’s individual experience of the workshop made a profound shift in their ability to focus and their inner listening skills. Participant #15 writes, “I learned I can love myself; it is okay to cry, and that release is an amazing feeling. I learned that breathing can change your life.” They go on to say, “The one-on-one time really was life changing. It provided me with confidence in my voice, body, mind, and everything.” Participant 15’s workshop experience suggests that breathing can help one to embrace self-love and self-confidence, to release emotions, and has the possibility to change one’s life.

Release of Tension: The release of “tension” was reported as a key benefit of the workshop by the study participants. Participant #15 writes that “the release” was the most helpful part of the process. In my experience, when one releases patterns of tension and holding in the body through conscious breathing, the outcome is often a deeper connection with Self. Participant #15 goes on to say, “When I could release the pain and baggage that I had been building up for 18 years, I could finally see my inner self.” In my experience, participant #15 was one of the most influential participants of the research. They presented in the tablework session with a significant pattern of holding around the heart area. The participant had undergone heart surgery at 9-months of age, in which the sternum was split and the heart temporarily removed. After the 1:1 tablework session, the patterns of holding were completely released and the participant was flooded with emotions, suggesting that when the participant experienced a dramatic shift in consciousness, there was a correlated repatterning of muscle and breathing patterns related to the area of the body that had experienced severe trauma.
While participant #15’s experience was more emotionally profound than many of the other participants, learning where tension was held was a significant step to building awareness in most participants. Participant #13 writes, “I learned where I hold my tension and how to find my center.” In my experience of working with the breath, learning how to track individual muscle and breathing patterns is one of the primary tools to releasing unwanted tension.

*Techniques/Tools:* “Techniques” or “tools” was reported as a key benefit of the workshop by the study participants. They found great value in having ways to work with the breath outside of the voice studio. Participant #28 writes, “Bradley gave me the tools to do the breathwork in my own practice.” Being able to implement and integrate the workshop material into daily practice and performance is a key component of the method. Participant #19 writes, “I have learned new techniques to implement in practice and performance that help to balance the breath and unlock my voice.”

*Centering:* “Centering” was reported as one of the key benefits of the workshop by the study participants. The method and workshop leads the participants through a variety of exercises that focuses on helping the singer to discover their breathing center (i.e. a specific location of awareness in the body where the breath feels centered and the body feels balanced and aligned). Participant #18 writes, “The stool work was incredibly helpful as a way of centering and aligning the body for singing. And from the private session, I am finding a new resonance that is less in the mouth.” Participant 18’s response suggests that by centering the breath and aligning the body, the participant is able to discover new vocal resonance that is no longer being held in the mouth area, thus producing a freer and resonant tone.
Opening: “Opening” was reported as one of the key benefits of the workshop by the study participants. In my experience of working with the breath, when the breath and body work in coordination with the voice, there is a distinct opening that occurs in the physical, structural, and emotional body. Participant #28’s response suggests an opening of all three, “I felt so open and aware of my body after the workshop. Everyone needs to understand how the breath works, and it will open you up in many ways.” The majority of the participants verbally reported feeling open after the individual table sessions. They also reported that being open felt vulnerable, but at the same time very grounded and connected.

The qualitative evaluations of the workshop participants consistently show their recognition of the significant value they received from the workshop, including beneficial tools and skills for working with their individual breath, body, and voice. The research data shows that every participant processed the method and workshop in their own way, which is a direct reflection of the process of sensory awareness and how our relationship with our physical, structural, and emotional body influences our ability to become aware. The workshop offers key benefits to singers in becoming aware, connected, centered, and open while providing techniques and tools to release unwanted tension, all of which offer personal and emotional insight.

Faculty Interview Results

Based on the post-workshop faculty interviews (appendix E), all voice faculty members believed the method and workshop was helpful, and would recommend the workshop to other universities as well as repeat the workshop.
Faculty member #1 addresses the method’s methodology and how the breath is taught from a place of focus and clarity, while addressing specific breathing goals.

It is a very organized method and it has clear goals. That is why it is worthwhile. It is focused. There is a lot that comes out of it, and it doesn’t try to do everything within vocal production. It is about something that is primary to singing and foundational.

The method was specifically designed not to address the singer from the perspective of the voice because it does not substitute for vocal technique. As Faculty member #1 suggested, the method leaves a space for the voice to be taught by the voice teacher, which in turn makes a space for the breath to be taught from a non-singing perspective.

Faculty member #2 talks about the method and workshop as becoming an essential tool to the singer’s training and career sustainability:

If I were going to write something on the back cover of your book, I would probably say: there isn't a singer working today that should not be reading this; and there isn't a singer who wants to work tomorrow that should not commit this to memory because this is really a way of healing the singer. You are getting back to the basics of breath …. I really do believe that if there is a working singer who doesn't know this, or someone who thinks they're going to have a career in singing and doesn't know this, hasn't had a workshop, hasn't done a real breakdown of this information, how can they possibly expect to go out there and do this day after day.

Faculty member #2 calls the method “a way of healing the singer,” which suggests that coming into relationship with our breath is how we heal not only the body, but also the voice. The method goes back to the basics of breath, teaching the students how to embrace breath and sound with joy and curiosity as if it were their first experience meeting the breath.

Faculty member #3 said they would absolutely recommend the workshop to other universities because it effectively teaches the singer’s breath and improves the voice.
Absolutely! I am so appreciative of you coming to do the workshop, and the
tablework really does help everyone discover the singer’s breath. I think it is so
opening. Students come out of the table session sounding better, and the teacher
needs to be there to know how it happened…. It would have been entirely a
different workshop for me if I had not been there. What I was able to learn and
apply, being in the room and learning more about my students, and being able to
observe without doing the work was invaluable. I would not understand the
session and the emotional openings without being there. You provide a safe
environment, and the teacher is the second safe person.

Faculty member #3 also addressed the value of learning more about their students,
suggesting that the workshop brought them into deeper relationship with their students
that in turn benefited their teaching.

The faculty members also reported observing the following key benefits for their
students: physical/emotional openness, vocal freedom, an increase of resonance,
awareness and focus, feeling grounded in their body, experiencing emotional
connectedness and physical/emotional changes, and increasing self-confidence. The
above benefits will be addressed in specific examples throughout the following sections
of the discussion: Measures of Breathing in Singing, Measures of Self-Confidence,
Measures of Relationship with Self, and Measures of Vulnerability.

Measures of Breathing in Singing

*Participants’ Quantitative and Qualitative Results*

Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates that there was a highly
statistically significant increase in the participants’ overall Self-Rating of Breathing in
Singing, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ breathing
in singing. The overall category was also broken down into three subcategories: Breath
Control, Breathing Recovery Time, and Ease of Breathing. All three subcategories
independently show a highly statistically significant increase, indicating that the participants would have had to integrate the understanding of the structure and function of the breathing body into their individual breathing process. This would have required them to maintain their body/breathing awareness throughout the workshop, to utilize the workshop tools that addressed their alignment and specific patterns of tension, and to integrate the method into their practice of singing.

*Faculty Interview Results*

Every faculty member reported an improvement of the participants’ breathing in singing which had a direct effect on the workshop participants’ vocal tone and quality. In the breathing assessment of participant #25, who was a tall, slim and athletic high coloratura soprano (graduate student), the participant struggled with connecting to the lower abdominals, but had a very good understanding of the structure and function of the breath and body. She possessed a significant amount of lower abdominal tension, which made it difficult for her to find a released breath that was grounded and also buoyant. The stool work showed her how to open her individual body by using movement and breathing to release the habitual patterns of tension and holding, especially in the pelvic floor region.

Faculty member #3 reported on their experience of hearing participant #25’s performance in the vocal masterclass, and was impressed by how the student was able to sing from a place of deep artistry, rather than their usual technical approach to singing.

To observe one of my singers who is new to my studio, get up and sing with exactly the balance of forward resonance, relaxed larynx, and open body – the sound that I consider to be well-balanced – to see her get up and sing with that,
without having to over-think, and without having to put her mind in a technical mode; the sound just occurred!

From my observation of participant #25, because she went directly into the masterclass from the group stool work session, her breath and body was already centered and optimally aligned for singing, which allowed her to be consciously present, to move the breath naturally, and to keep the body open.

In my experience, the majority of the graduate voice students had defined ideas as to how their breath and body worked in singing. Their personal goals in the workshop were more defined and focused in comparison to the undergraduates. They very much wanted to find a more open and expansive breath, to be shown where they were holding tension, and to discover a breath/body alignment that was optimal for singing. In participant #25’s case, the data suggests that the participant was able to achieve those goals and implement the method into her breathing and singing. However, I did find the undergraduates to be more vulnerable, open, and willing to explore new relationships with themselves and others, which had a positive effect on their singing; these differences might be a fruitful area for continuing research.

Measures of Self-Confidence

Participants’ Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The Combined Measures of Self-Confidence category was constituted from seven items: Self-Rating of Self-Confidence, Relationship/Perception of Voice, Relationship/Perception of Body, Breath/Body/Voice Confidence, Self-Rating of Voice Likability, Self-Rating of Body Likability, and Self-Rating of Career Potential. The seven
items were selected to represent the overall self-confidence of the singer, and to investigate its relationship and effect on the singer’s voice and body.

**Self-rating of Self-Confidence:** Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Self-Confidence, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ self-confidence.

One of the core teaching principles taught in the workshop was the elimination of roles: the student, the teacher, the master, the amateur, the expert. The only master allowed in the room was the breath, body, and voice. The participants learned from their individual relationship with the breath, which required them to be fully present, focused and attentive to their individual breath and body. This encouraged the participants to discover their inner teacher and to develop the skill of inner listening (i.e. listening to the body for inner knowledge and direction). By doing this, the participants were able to embrace mistakes because there was no longer an outside source telling them what was wrong or how to fix it. In my experience, because they were learning to trust themselves and their intuitive bodies, their self-confidence began to reflect that inner strength and knowledge.

Participant #20 reported struggling with weight issues and experiencing physical/emotional abuse during childhood and adolescence. During the private tablework session, the participant reported a correlation between the shoulder girdle and abuse. From years of being picked up from behind by the shoulders and lifted into the air, there was an emotional/physical patterning of bracing in the affected muscles. Based on my experience, the participant was able to successfully release the patterns of holding
during the tablework by slowly integrating a healthy breathing pattern into the secondary breathing muscles. Once the repatterning and integration was stable, the participant was able to reintroduce a voice that could stand up to their abuser without locking the primary and secondary breathing muscles.

In my perception of participant #20, the voice sounded much more rooted in the whole body after the tablework session, especially the solar plexus and lower abdominal regions. There was a richness in vocal tone that was coupled with a shimmer that the voice did not have before the tablework. There was an inner joy and confidence coming forth through the body and voice, almost as if the Self had made some resolution with the past. When participant #20 was asked in their post-workshop questionnaire, “What did you learn about yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship during the workshop?” they answered, “Command my space – self-motto.” They went on to write that the most helpful part of the process was the “release of upper body tension around the shoulders and upper back.”

In the ordinal scales section of the pre- and post-workshop questionnaire, participant #20’s data mirrors the new self-motto. Participant #20’s ratings “confidence within your breath, body, and voice” were 1.0 pre-workshop and 10.0 post-workshop. Ratings of “self-confidence” were: 2.5 pre-workshop and 8.5 post-workshop. Ratings of “how much do you care what others think about you or your singing?” were 10.0 pre-workshop and 1.0 post-workshop. The data suggests that by being connected to one’s conscious breathing while simultaneously attempting to repattern old beliefs, stories, and muscle/breathing patterns, the participant has the possibility of significantly improving their self-confidence and perception/relationship with Self.
Relationship/Perception of Voice (pre-workshop): When the workshop participants were asked, “Describe your emotional relationship with their voice. What is your perception of your voice?,” 45% reported a positive or un-ambivalent relationship with the voice, while the other 55% reported concern or ambivalence. Participant #19 writes, “I often feel stressed and unhappy with it.” Participant #20 writes, “I have a love-hate relationship with voice.” Participant #25 writes, “It’s different on a daily basis, like emotions.” Participant #28 writes, “I sometimes treat it badly with harsh criticism.” Of the participants reporting concern with their voice, that majority reported significant ambivalence around the voice, followed by concern with difficulty controlling the voice and general feelings of worry.

Relationship/Perception of Body (pre-workshop): When the workshop participants were asked, “What is your body perception? Do you like your body?,” 31% reported a positive or un-ambivalent relationship with their bodies, while 69% reported concern or ambivalence. Participant #20 writes, “I feel better now that I have lost weight, but I still see myself as fat and unattractive.” Participant #26 writes, “Love/hate relationship.” Participant #7 writes, “I feel mostly overweight and despise my physical appearance.” Participant #29 writes, “I do not like my body. I sometimes have trouble looking at it.” A large percentage of the reported “concerned or un-ambivalent participants” noted that they did not like their bodies, but they were working on them.

The data suggests that the hate-love relationship with the body is being mirrored in the hate-love relationship with the voice. A correlation analysis was performed between Relationship/Perception of Voice and Relationship/Perception of Body, reporting a strong positive correlation with a high level of statistical significance. The
correlation result suggests that how we feel about our body or voice has a direct influence on how the other responds.

*Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence:* Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ confidence in all three aspects of the singer’s breath-body-voice relationship.

*Self-Rating of Voice Likability:* Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates no statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Voice Likability. However, the significant increase of the participants’ Self-Rating of Breath-Body-Voice Confidence suggests that when the voice is included in the breath and body relationship, there is a significant improvement in the perception of the voice.

A correlation analysis was conducted between Voice Likability (post-workshop) and Breath-Body-Voice Confidence (post-workshop), reporting a moderately strong positive correlation with a high level of statistical significance. The data suggests that the participants’ perception of voice is not separate from their perception of the breath-body-voice relationship.

A correlation analysis between Voice Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Confidence (post-workshop) was also conducted, reporting a moderately strong positive correlation with a high level of statistical significance. The data suggests that the participants’ perception of voice is interrelated with their self-confidence.

*Self-Rating of Body Likability:* Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-
Rating of Body Likability, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ body perception. A correlation analysis was conducted between the participants’ Body Likability (post-workshop) and Self-Confidence (post-workshop), reporting a strong positive correlation with a high level of statistical significance. The data suggests that the participants’ body perception is very much connected to their self-confidence.

A correlation analysis was conducted between Body Likability (post-workshop) and Voice Likability (post-workshop), reporting a moderately strong positive correlation with a high level of statistical significance. These results indicate a strong relationship between the participants’ voice and body likability, and suggests that when one perception increases or decreases, the corresponding relationship moves in the same direction.

In my experience, that data suggests that how the singer feels about their body will influence how they feel about their voice and vice versa. Compartmentalizing or separating the voice and body does not benefit the singer; it only masks the cracks in the singer’s foundation and disconnects the breath. If the singer integrates the voice, breath, and body into one functional and balanced relationship, the implications are that the voice self-confidence will improve. Learning how to sing is about coming into relationship with the whole Self, which means the singer must open themselves up to the places that need healing.

*Self-Rating of Career Potential:* Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Career Potential, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the
participants’ perception of being able to have a career as a singer. The frequencies show that a significant number of participants started the workshop with a moderate belief that they would have a career as a singer. After completing the workshop, the majority of the participants increased their self-rating from moderate potential to significant potential.

Faculty Interview Results

Every faculty member reported an increase in the participants’ self-confidence. When faculty member #2 was asked if they could sense a difference in the self-confidence levels of the participants, she answered,

I can say that it increased ten-fold…. There was a big confidence jump; that's a big deal! You can't underestimate that for young singers, that's 90% of it. Trying to give yourself a healthy singer ego is hard when you're starting and everybody else is better than you, and you're just overwhelmed.

Faculty member #2 addresses a topic that has not been mentioned in the method or study, but is of great importance in teaching the twenty-first century voice student: teaching young singers how to have a healthy ego. In my experience, because the method is teaching the participant how to have a relationship with themselves, they walk away feeling more secure in who they are, which allows the breath to grow from a place of openness rather than from a place of fear or protection.

Faculty member #1 responded to the same question regarding the participants’ self-confidence saying, “Absolutely. I can give you a really good example, participant #8 really opened up. I think it was a really transformative experience for her. She looks different, her face looks different, and she feels much more confident.” Participant #8’s experience suggests that the power of the breath cannot only change one’s inner
relationship, but points to how the inner relationship with Self can transform one’s outer relationship with others as well as the body’s physical structure and appearance.

In my experience, the faculty members created deeper connections with their students throughout the workshop because they were present to see the shifts in their students’ awareness, consciousness, and physical bodies. By watching their students work through challenging emotions and dive deeper into themselves, the faculty members left the workshop with a deeper understanding and appreciation of the teacher-student relationship.

Measures of Relationship with Self

Participants’ Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The Combined Measures of Relationship with Self category was constituted from three items: Self-Rating of Self-Awareness, Self-Rating of Breath/Body Knowledge, and Breath Connection to Self. The three items were selected to represent the three growth areas that would benefit the development of the singer’s Self (i.e. the interior moment-to-moment relationship with the singer’s breath, body, and voice: structural, functional, and emotional).

Self-Rating of Self-Awareness: Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Self-Awareness, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ breath and body awareness. The Self-Rating of Self-Awareness included the following areas of awareness: breath/body awareness in normal daily activity, awareness of center of breath, awareness of body’s relationship with gravity, and breath/body
awareness in singing. Out of the workshop participants, 73% identified with “awareness” or “connection” as an important benefit of the workshop.

Participant #8 reported on their experience with awareness (post-workshop), “The feeling of it in my body will always remind me when it is not present.” The two most important words when teaching awareness are in participant #8’s response: “feeling” and “present.” The number one question the participants were repeatedly asked during the facilitation of the workshop was “How does it feel?” The reason behind this question is because it requires focusing, sensing, perceiving, and feeling; all of which take place in the present moment.

Based on my experience, the participants needed to be reminded to breathe and to come back to the conscious breathing cycle. From my observation, there appeared to be a correlation between the participants’ patterns of holding in the breathing mechanism and their mental processing skills; however, this would require further investigation to confirm the relationship.

*Self-Rating of Body/Breath Knowledge: Comparison of pre- and post-workshop data indicates a highly statistically significant increase in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Body/Breath Knowledge, suggesting that the workshop significantly improved the participants’ structural and functional understanding of the singer’s breath and body. The responses to the True/False questionnaire show a highly statistically significant difference between pre- and post-workshop scores, suggesting that the workshop significantly increased the participants’ body/breath knowledge base.*

The participants learned structural/functional anatomy through experiencing their individual breath and body through movement and breathing. In my experience, this type
of teaching approach kept the participants interested and engaged. Participant #9 writes (post-workshop), “I can take the knowledge of the human anatomy and the knowledge specific to my own voice into the practice room to create a consistently natural breath.” The workshop’s goal was to provide participants with an experiential process that would include the often-complicated anatomical information, which could effectively and easily be integrated into their practice of singing.

_Breath Connection to Self:_ In both questionnaires, workshop participants were asked, “Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to who you truly are as a person?” The post-workshop results indicate a 10% increase, suggesting that the workshop increased the participants’ belief that the breath had the ability to connect them to who they truly are. Participant #12 writes (post-workshop), “Absolutely. The true breath and mindfulness only helps you realize yourself.” Participant #13 writes (post-workshop), “I do now.” In my experience, participant #13 was able to discover a different relationship with the breath by the end of the workshop, a relationship that defines the breath as a connector.

_Faculty Interview Results_

Every faculty member reported an increase in the participants’ breath and body awareness as well as overall connection to the body. In my experience, part of the increase of awareness and body/breath knowledge was specifically related to the presence of the faculty members. As part of the workshop protocol, all voice faculty members were required to participate in every aspect of the workshop. This allowed the faculty to learn about the breath from the method’s perspective, to learn the tools that were being
taught to the participants, and to learn specific key words that worked for their individual students.

Faculty member #2 addresses how being present to watch the student come into relationship with their individual breath plays a very important part in how she teaches the student after the workshop.

The students and I were able to talk about it in masterclasses and lessons after the workshop. We could talk about, what did you feel? And when you were on the stool I saw you noticing your shoulders. What was going on there? So we were able to take in those moments that were not always openly discussed…. And I think that brought it even more home. Because it wasn't that I did a workshop and it led me over here. No, I did a workshop and we talked about it, and we tried to apply those things, and my teacher looked at their notes, and used some of the same words, and some of the same key phrases that would recreate that moment of internal knowledge.

Based on Faculty member #2’s teaching experience, they understand the value of recreating “that moment of internal knowledge” and how bringing the learned sensory awareness back into the voice studio can greatly influence their students’ learning process.

The faculty members played an important role in the workshop process for two primary reasons: (1) to provide safety and support for their students, and (2) to learn the breathing vocabulary/tools to help integrate the workshop material into their students’ singing. In my experience, the participants’ data is a result of the safety created by the workshop, and of how creating a learning environment where both the teacher and student are the knower and seeker opens everyone to new discoveries and knowledge.
Measures of Vulnerability

Participants’ Quantitative and Qualitative Results

The Combined Measures of Vulnerability category was constituted from four items: Self-Rating of Feeling Judged by Colleagues, Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception, Managing Stage Fright, and Effects of Impressing Others, in combination with additional themes of vulnerability. These four items were selected to represent the four aspects of the process of singing that challenges the singer’s vulnerability and willingness to stay open.

*Self-Rating of Feeling Judged by Colleagues:* Comparison of the pre- and post-workshop responses indicates a statistically significant decrease in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Feeling Judged by Colleagues, suggesting that the workshop significantly decreased the participants’ feelings of judgement. Based on my experience, the workshop created a learning environment that was inclusive and made space for every participant to be heard, appreciated, and supported, which was reflected in participants feeling less judged by their colleagues after the workshop.

*Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception:* Comparison of responses to the pre- and post-workshop questionnaire ordinal questions, “How much do you care what others think about you or your singing?” and “How much do you care what other people think?,” did not indicate a statistically significant change in the workshop participants’ Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception. The results suggest that the workshop did not have a significant effect on participants’ concerns about how others were perceiving them.
Managing Stage Fright: Responses to the pre-workshop questionnaire short answer question, “Do you deal with stage fright? If so, how do you deal with it?,” indicate that 86% of the workshop participants deal with stage fright. Of those participants, 14% noted that their stage fright is unmanaged. Some of the coping strategies noted were divided into two coping skills: performance preparation and mind/body centering practice (e.g. meditation, breathing, or prayer). The data suggests that stage fright is a significant concern for the participants and learning how to manage it is of great benefit.

Effects of Impressing Others: Comparison of responses to the pre- and post-workshop questionnaire short answer question, “Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?,” the qualitative results suggest a significant increase in breath/body awareness and its relationship to interpersonal skills. Based on my experience of the workshop, some of the participants had never thought of the concept that trying to impress others was a disconnecting action rather than a connecting action. The increase of breath/body awareness suggests that the participant began to notice what their breath and body was feeling in social interaction, rather than keeping their attention of what the people around them were feeling.

Additional Themes of Vulnerability: During review of the post-workshop questionnaire short answer questions, the following themes of vulnerability emerged from the data: personal/emotional insight, release of “tension,” and “opening.” Participant #15 reported an emotional insight that suggests a love for the inner soul and how that love transpires into loving one’s body.

Now, I love the inner soul in my body, so I love my body. Yes, I have imperfections, but now I can look past them and become focused on the beautiful
person inside…. I love my voice. It provides a gateway between who I am as a person and my emotions. When I open my mouth, sound comes out and allows me to speak my inner feelings.

Participant #15’s data suggests that the relationship between the soul, body and voice are directly influenced by their relationship with the breath. In my interpretation of participant #15’s data, when the relationship with the breath is formed from a space of openness and love, that love is then breathed into the body, voice and Self, transforming sound into an expression of inner feeling.

Faculty Interview Results

Themes of vulnerability reported during faculty interviews were: “openness” and “vulnerability” in singing, and “emotion” is not independent from singing.

Faculty member #3 talks about the breath’s relationship with emotion and vulnerability, and how opening the body produces emotional connection.

We build forts and develop our defenses over time, and we are not aware we are doing that; it is just the reaction to the situation we don’t like. How to balance it? I think first of all; you have to understand what opening the body in this way can do. I have seen it so many times; not just in others, but in myself. I was with a coach once, who was empathetic, and he was trying to impart some tones to me, just tones. As I was coaching with him, that tone struck a cell somewhere in my being and I had to stop because it brought me to tears. That was just a tone…. After my table session with you, I thought I have not been this open in a very long time.

Faculty member #3 continues by addressing how does one stay open as a singer without the old patterns of holding reemerging and how this type of work is an investment for the university and singer.

Where you had us after a session, I don’t know if any of us can get to that place on our own. It won’t be the same for the students because they are doing it for themselves. Because of the gentle touching in some areas that we cannot reach,
there are lots of reasons why one will not duplicate that. You have to know that and go with the bits of information that help you become more open.

Faculty member #3 understands the value of hands-on work and that as a university teacher, it is about finding the tools and information that you can take away and apply to your students. Building awareness is not the easy way out – it takes much more time and patience because it is a process of coming into relationship with one's Self.

In Faculty member #2’s interview, they address the emotional body from the voice teacher’s perspective and how it cannot be separated from the singer.

I've never seen emotion not be connected to the breath. And that's because in 25 years of teaching there are too many times when I've got my hand on their sternum and my hand on their lower back. And I'm talking about feeling their breath in this column and out of the blue, I will get these statements that are... of great physical and emotional pain.

Faculty member #2 goes further by addressing a particular breathwork session in which the workshop participant experienced a dramatic release of emotion and how that release changed the student’s voice in the same day.

I saw what [participant] #15 did the same night of her tablework session…. We don't always get to do that though. We don't always get to see that follow up right away, and in this situation, it was one of those rare wonderful moments where she worked with you and had that emotional release. I don't know that I could have surpassed that and come back and sung that same night. And instead, she was the best she's ever been in performance; it was the most free.... the tone was rounder, it was fuller, it was more rooted in her body, the vibrato was more consistent. I mean it was really quite a dramatic change vocally from what I've been hearing.

Participant #15’s experience is of particular importance because it is representative of not just the breath and body, but how the voice responds to an emotional shift that is deeply rooted in the breathing mechanism.

The workshop challenged the participants to embrace themselves and their relationship with vulnerability and to become comfortable with the idea of making
mistakes. In my experience, the workshop participants needed to be confident enough in
themselves to be vulnerable. This is why the method begins with getting to know the
body and breath without the voice. The participants needed to feel the naturalness of
sitting, standing, lying down, moving, and breathing. This is how we developed our
relationship with our bodies as a baby; the workshop was about coming back to the
awareness of that moment and integrating those initial movements and sounds. By
gradually adding the voice with no association to words or music, the participants were
able to walk away from the first session with a felt sense of who they were and what their
breath/body/voice/self feels like as one. By creating a solid foundation grounded in
experiential knowledge and somatic awareness, the workshop participants were able to
open themselves in ways that made vulnerability easy and made growing their self-
confidence natural, while simultaneously increasing their understanding of their breath,
body, voice, and Self.

Supporting Literature

The supporting literature suggests that the findings of the workshop are reflective
of the research and personal experiences of the pioneers in the areas of psychology, social
science, neuroscience, somatic awareness, and fine arts. Based on my experience and
research findings, I believe there are three foundational elements of the singer’s breath
that need to be developed if the singer wants to connect to their breath and body, and
discover their authentic voice: Relationship with Self (structural, functional, emotional),
Self-Worth, and Vulnerability.
**Relationship with Self**

Relationship with Self is foundational to the singer. It is the place inside themselves where they learn how to connect to the breath and how that connection influences their voice. It is also the vestibule where the technique of singing meets the artistry of singing. In conductor James Jordan’s book *The Musician’s Breath*, he talks about two types of artistry: *technical artistry* and *deep artistry*.

While there is no magic potion, deep artistry (or any artistry, for that matter) lies in the breath. But the breath can only carry what we will it to carry in our musicing. And without the breath, the musicing will only be a technical representation, a vague outline of the expression of a musical idea that demands more of us as teachers, conductors, and performing artists.¹

In my experience, the breath that Jordan is referring to is the breath that connects the artist to Self. It is the place inside every human being where creativity and authenticity thrive. If the responsibility of teaching this type of artistry lies in the hands of singers, teachers, conductors, and other performing artists, then the field of voice may need to embrace new methods and approaches that can complement the respected tradition of classical vocal technique. The method and workshop utilized in this research is one of those methods that can effectively guide the singer, connecting them to their deeper Self and the quality of breath referenced by Jordan.

The authentic voice is a key component of the singer coming into relationship with Self. In my experience and reflected in the data, it is the voice that the singer recognizes as their own, and the voice that connects them to their inner Self. Voice teacher and previous Juilliard faculty member W. Stephen Smith writes in his book *The Naked Voice: A Wholistic Approach to Singing*.

Breathing and speaking are the two active ingredients in singing, and it is in the process of understanding the essence of those two ingredients – getting them to function in coordination and alignment with each other – that we find our authentic, naked voice.²

The “naked voice” that Smith is referring to is the voice that the method and workshop was designed to discover. It is why “breathing and speaking” are the pillars to the method, and it is through the recoordination of the breath and body that the singer discovers their authentic voice.

The workshop was taught from a place of integrity, integration of the method into my own body-breath-voice-Self relationship. My teaching philosophy teaches singers how to learn with self-compassion and how to embrace making mistakes as something to get excited about, rather than as a source of shame. In a field that is based on critique, it was important that the workshop provided a safe container for the participants to explore and discover their breath, body, and voice. Pianist and author William Westney in his book The Perfect Wrong Note: Learning to Trust your Musical Self talks about the student-teacher relationship, and how the teaching environment can either encourage the singer or control the singer: “Much music teaching seems more concerned with controlling the student than with encouraging the student’s own impulses. Constant controlling dampens vitality.”³ Westney goes on to quote singer and author of Soprano on her Head, Eloise Ristad, “Music lessons – or lessons in anything – can be dangerous to us, for the weekly guilt can become addictive. We can come to believe that we deserve scorn, and that we really can profit from being told repeatedly how to do it, from being

given the ‘right’ answers.” Encouraging the singer to find their “own impulses” creates the intuitive artist. The workshop teaches that the breath is the way to discover the intuitive singer, and that listening deeply to one’s own breath and body can translate into experiential knowledge that teaches one to understand one’s Self.

The workshop introduced participants to key method concepts that brought them into the experience of breath and conscious breathing: learning how to feel the breath, how to listen to the breath, how to allow the breath, and how to learn from the breath. In my experience, if the singer is not in relationship with their breath and body, they are not in relationship with themselves. Author and expert in the field of Conscious Breathing Dennis Lewis addresses the relationship with the breath and how it influences our inner and outer lives:

Since most of us are almost totally unaware of our breathing, conscious breathing should be the first step in any self-directed program of breathing work. By learning to be aware of our breath, by learning to follow the movements of our out-breath and in-breath consciously in ourselves without any kind of interference or manipulation, we can gain many new insights into the relationship of breathing to our own inner and outer lives.

Teaching relationship is one of the method’s foundational keys: relationship with every muscle, every bone, every joint, every movement, every breath, and every sound. By the end of the first session, the method’s objective is that the singer understands their inner and outer relationship with the breath and how every part of the human structure is there to help them come into wholeness.

The research strongly suggests that emotions cannot be separated from the breath, and if the breath is the foundation to singing, I would dare to say that emotions cannot be

4 Ibid., 45.
Ruth Baer, Ph.D. writes,

Breathing is sensitive to thought, emotions, and physical states. When we feel angry, anxious, tired, interested, or excited, our breathing changes. Depending on the situation, it becomes slower and faster, deeper or shallower, or more regular or uneven. If we consistently observe our breathing, we learn about our internal patterns of thinking, feeling, and reacting. Our self-understanding and insight improve.6

Dr. Baer’s description of how we observe our breath and our internal patterns is at the core of the method’s structure. Tracking patterns is how we learn about ourselves, it is how we learn to change the patterns that keep us from being who we are meant to be. The workshop participants were taught that part of being a singer is catching the habitual of patterns of tension that occur in the breath and body. The majority of the participants were able to understand their individual patterns of tension and release them during the 1:1 session, and a few of the participants experienced emotional patterns shift with their breathing, which provided emotional insight and self-understanding. In my experience of working with the breath, when the conscious breath shifts into the emotional body, the body begins to breathe itself and the participant begins to discover the places in the Self that have yet to be found or have been pushed away.

As the data suggests, we cannot separate emotions from the breath, nor can we separate the voice from our emotions. Speech and language therapist Dr. Daphne J. Pearce, a contributing author to the book Behavioral and Psychological Approaches to Breathing Disorders, addresses the voice and its relationship with emotion in her chapter

Breathing and Vocal Dysfunction.

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The larynx can be affected by external factors, such as dust and fumes, and by the most powerful internal force – emotion. From the infant’s scream, to the quavering of senescence, the voice reflects feelings and well-being; it betrays fears and doubts, and proclaims intentions. Professionals working with voice problems must consider all factors in relationship to one another; a disturbance in one area will upset the balance necessary to healthy phonation appropriate to the speakers and acceptable to the audience.7

Dr. Pearce’s experience and findings support the theory that emotions cannot be separated from the breath or voice and that the voice is a reflection of our internal state-of-being. As voice professionals, learning how to find an internal alignment with Self and how that integrates into balanced vocal production can only benefit the twenty-first century voice student. In my experience, the singer must be open to integrating the emotional breathing body into the voice in order for the voice to proclaim its intentions and overcome its fears and doubts. As the data shows, 86% of the workshop participants struggled with stage-fright and they wanted tools to help them handle the stresses and obstacles that they face as a singer. In my interpretation of the data, the area of voice must consider all the factors (breath, body, voice, Self) that are needed for balanced vocal production and wholeness of Self.

The cultivation of authentic Self-Worth is essential in the development of the singer’s authentic and creative relationship with Self. Without a compassionate and honest sense of self-worth, the singer’s foundation cannot be accurately developed. As Lisa Firestone, Ph.D. writes,

Vanity is a fantasized image of the self that is formed when parents substitute empty praise and a false buildup for the real love and acknowledgment they have failed to provide to their child.” Such parents leave their children feeling unseen and with a sense of pressure to be someone they aren’t. On the other hand, parents who are attuned to their children and genuinely responsive to them leave their offspring feeling seen and validated. These children grow up with an accurate sense of who they are and with healthy self-esteem … feeling good about yourself as a person and acceptable for who you are allows you to move through your life with a sense of purpose, meaning, and value.8

In my understanding of the findings found in this study, the sense of purpose, meaning, and value referenced by Firestone is crucial to the development of the singer’s breath and voice.

Cultivating a sense of self-worth also requires the skillful management of the inner critic. Part of learning how to sing is learning how to handle and process vocal instruction, and in my experience, singers often take vocal instruction as something that is wrong or bad, that needs to be fixed. If I teach the breath from the perspective of what the student is doing wrong rather than telling the student what I am looking for in their breathing, I disempower the student and engage their inner critic. Young singers need to be empowered and supported within vocal instruction, that is how they grow self-confidence.

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With that said, the singer also needs a strong inner teacher that has a voice of clarity, self-compassion, and discernment. Expert and researcher in the field of Psychology/Self-Compassion Kristen Neff, Ph.D. writes,

When faced with our human imperfections, we can either respond with kindness or care, or with judgment or criticism. An important question to ask is, what qualities of heart and mind do we want to encourage in ourselves? We can’t stop our judgmental thoughts, but we don’t have to encourage or believe them either. If we hold our self-judgments with gentleness and understanding, the force of self-contempt will eventually fade and wither, deprived of the sustenance needed to survive.9

In my experience, the workshop participants were well aware of the not-so-friendly critic’s voice in their head, and the voice teacher’s voice – as well as friends and colleagues – must not add to its arsenal. Rather, as Dr. Christina Hibbert writes, we must look deeper:

The basic premise … of Self-Worth is this: Instead of creating our sense of self by what we think, or how we look, or what we do—self-esteem—we must build our sense of self-worth by going deep inside, into our soul. As we do this, we stop basing our worth on a “persona,” false self, or ego. Rather, we build our sense of self-worth from the inside … . This process begins with self-awareness, to see all of who we are; then, self-acceptance, to accept what we see, and finally, self-love, or learning to truly cherish and appreciate who we are and who we have the potential to become.10

The reports of my study participants highlight these essential points again and again: an aware, self-compassionate, and worthy sense of Self is essential to the training of the singer’s breath and voice.

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Vulnerability

Vulnerability is the third essential element to the foundation of the Singer’s Breath, for it is only in a state of courageous vulnerability that the singer can truly vibrate All of who they are and express that wholeness through their voice. Researcher and expert in the field of Social Science and Vulnerability Brené Brown, Ph.D. writes,

Vulnerability is the core of all emotions and feelings. To feel is to be vulnerable…. Our rejection from vulnerability often stems from our associating it with dark emotions like fear, shame, grief, sadness, and disappointment – emotions that we don’t want to discuss, even when they profoundly affect the way we live, love, work, and even lead. What most of us fail to understand and what took me a decade of research to learn is that vulnerability is also the cradle of the emotions and experiences that we crave. Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path…. To put our art, our writing, our photography, our ideas out into the world with no assurance of acceptance or appreciation – that’s also vulnerability.11

In my experience, I found that the workshop participants craved the same emotional experiences and connections that Brown discusses. A large percentage of the participants remarked how they felt emotionally open after the tablework and how that type of openness felt vulnerable, but exciting. If “vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity,” is it possible that the breath is the birthplace of vulnerability?

Performers and singers deal with all of the dark emotions that Brown describes, especially disappointment. In my experience, it is in the shutting down of vulnerability that we shut down the Self, and stop our voices from being heard. When we can, instead, be vulnerable in the presence of empathically attuned others – those who have earned the

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right to our vulnerability – we cultivate a more resilient sense of Self. As Linda Graham, MFT, writes,

> Our prefrontal cortex first learns …. regulating the ANS (autonomic nervous system), quelling the fear response, and regulating emotions – in large part by being in relationship with caregivers who can do that for us …. (children) can regulate, soothe and comfort themselves; they can re-group and go out to play or deal again. They are becoming resilient. The attunement of early attachment builds a healthy resonance circuit in our brains …. So there are many opportunities for the brains of others – including relative, teachers, coaches, peers, and partners – to help the prefrontal cortex of the child’s brain mature the resonance circuit that supports the capacities of resilience …. It’s the plasticity of the brain and the ongoing experiences of “feeling felt” that help us continue to mature, or recover in the first place, these attuning capacities of the prefrontal cortex well into adulthood.12

As teachers of the breath and voice, we have the capacity to provide these empathically attuned relational experiences to our students, so they can be prepared for the extraordinary demands of a voice career, and capable of bringing a resilient, powerful and connected voice-breath-body relationship into every performance.

**Summary**

It is through the relationship with Self that one builds self-worth, and it is through the relationship with self-worth that one learns to be vulnerable. These are the necessities of feeling alive in one’s body and courageously choosing to share one’s gifts with the world. The voice needs a body that believes in its strength to be heard, and the body needs a Self that believes it is possible. In my experience, when the breath is experientially taught from the perspective of life, it becomes an effective foundation for the singer’s voice. Breath is the foundation of life, and it is the foundation in singing.

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Summary of Significant Results

The study findings suggest the following significant results:

**Workshop Benefits:**

- Improved self-confidence
- Improved self-awareness
- Improved body and breathing knowledge
- Improved breathing in singing
- Decreased concern of others’ perception

**Three Developmental Areas of Significant Importance for the Singer:**

- Relationship with Self
- Self-worth
- Vulnerability

**Suggested Conclusions**

- The breath is the connecting force between the body, mind and voice.
- The voice is the reflection and manifestation of our present relationship with the breath, body, and mind.
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Conclusions

This project was a personal journey of both an esoteric and a scientific nature. The overarching goal was to examine whether a field defined by its century-old techniques and teachings could be stretched and expanded to include the cultivation of a symbiotic relationship with the breath, body, and Self. The project reviewed the contributions of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough’s works with the breath and body and outlined a new method, *Unlock Your Breath (UYB) – Performance Breathwork*, which integrates the greatest strengths of those methods. *UYB – Performance Breathwork* was developed to teach “the singer’s breath” as a way towards deeper embodiment of Self (mind-body-voice relationship), while creating a stronger breath-body-voice connection with minimum effort and maximum efficiency. The purpose of this project was to investigate the value of the created method as an alternative/complementary approach to the singer’s breath and its potential benefit to vocal performance.

Results of this research demonstrated the efficacy of the *UYB* method as taught through a breathwork workshop delivered to study participants at the University of North Carolina School for the Arts. The study incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research methods consisting of a pre- and post-workshop questionnaire completed by each participant and interviews with voice faculty. The study findings included discovery of three major obstacles that precluded singers from connecting to their breath and body and discovering their authentic voice: (1) absence of relationship with Self, (2) lack of
self-worth, and (3) fear of vulnerability. The data also revealed that participation in the workshop significantly improved participants’ self-confidence, self-awareness, body and breathing knowledge, and self-rating of breathing in singing, while decreasing participants’ concerns around others’ perceptions of them. The data further suggests that understanding the breath is the connecting force between the body, mind, and voice, and that the voice is a reflection and manifestation of our current state-of-being, meaning our present relationship with the breath, body, and mind. The research findings are consistent with previous research in the areas of psychology, social science, neuroscience, and somatic awareness. This study is one of the few research projects in the area of vocal performance to empirically connect its findings on the breath with other scientific research outside the area of fine arts.

It is my belief that the findings of this study are representative of our current state of human connection, demonstrating that as a technological society, we are slowly losing our ability to be in deep relationship with others as well as ourselves. My hands-on experience working with the workshop participants clearly demonstrated a great desire for connection, but also a tremendous lack of understanding as to how to connect. The workshop appeared to have given study participants an effective means of doing so.

The findings further suggest that when we choose to come into relationship with our breath, we choose relationship with Self. If breath is the foundation to the voice, is it possible that vocal resonance, pitch, and quality of tone in speaking reflects one’s connection or disconnection to Self? My experience and the findings of this study emphatically support this relationship. If that is, in fact, true, how does that change the field’s approach to vocal instruction? If one of the primary goals of vocal instruction is
for voice students to leave university training feeling confident and connected to their breath and body, the findings of this study strongly suggest that we must go back to the basics: creating a relationship with the breath, body, and voice from a non-singing perspective.

The findings of my study are limited primarily by the research setting. They are based on data gathered from an existing student body, so the number of students enrolled in the voice program – a sample of convenience – determined sample size and demographics. Also, the sample size was limited by the requirement that study participants complete all consecutive steps of the method before completing the post-workshop questionnaire. Unfortunately, seven students had to withdraw from the study due to schedule conflicts, decreasing the sample size to twenty-nine study participants and three faculty members.

My study offers statistical evidence that the UYB method and workshop applied to this sample significantly benefited these singers, suggesting that it may prove to be a complementary addition to existing university training programs. The research demonstrated the effectiveness of the method, showing how somatic awareness techniques integrating breathing, movement, and speaking can systematically guide the singer into a deeper relationship with individual breath, body, and Self. At the same time, these techniques helped participants discover a breath/body connection that functions in coordination with the voice.

The reported benefits from the participants’ post-workshop and faculty interviews include: an increase of overall awareness and connection to the body; personal and emotional insight; release of tension; useful techniques and tools; ability to center and
open the breath/body; an increase of body/breath knowledge; improvement in breath control; improvement in breathing recovery time; a developed ease of breathing; a balance in resonance and singing tone; a decrease of feeling judged by colleagues; an increase of one’s ability to succeed; and an increase in overall self-confidence and body perception. These findings offer the area of vocal performance some possible insight into the struggles and needs of the twenty-first century voice student and how, as an area, we must expand our approach to the human voice and its relationship to the breath. This expanded approach requires openness to new research and a willingness to draw upon alternative ways of teaching as well as outside research.

Future research will benefit greatly from a larger sample size compiled of a diverse representation of socioeconomic status, race, and gender, and from the use of randomization to further increase the statistical significance of the results. Due to the typical enrollment numbers of university voice programs, a larger study would also most likely involve the participation of voice training programs in multiple universities.

This study also suggests several important areas for future inquiry. One area of particular interest that emerges from the findings of this study as an area for future investigation is the relationship between the singer’s breath flow, flow of consciousness, and vocal quality in performing (i.e. technical artistry versus deep artistry). Such a study might further explore the correlations between the singer’s voice quality and breath connection and between the singer’s breathing patterns and mental processing skills. Another area of important investigation suggested by the current findings concerns the powerful impact of the workshop on teacher-student relationships that was revealed in the qualitative data from both the teacher interviews and student reports. Future research
could explore the workshop’s value in enhancing the teacher-student relationship, as well as explore correlations between perceived attunement, compassion, and encouragement in that relationship with the same measures in the student’s internal relationship with Self.

The future direction of *Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork* is to take the method and study results into the marketplace to benefit the singer, speaker, and leader. Informal marketing research that I have conducted shows two primary questions in the marketplace from the perspective of the voice teacher: “Why do I need someone to come teach my students how to breathe?” and “What if the workshop discredits my diagnostic skills as a teacher?” These are valid concerns that I recognize and honor. It is my goal as the creator and founder of the method to bring unity to the area of voice and to show voice students that they have a team of educators willing to support them through collaborative efforts of teaching. While it is true that voice educators teach students how to mechanically breathe as part of learning how to sing, the *UYB* method builds upon this by teaching the student how to be in relationship with their individual breath from a non-singing perspective and how that relationship can improve their breathing and relationship with Self. The method teaches aspects of the breath that are not possible to teach in the voice studio. It gives the student an inside look at their individual history with their muscle and breathing patterns and how to take that new awareness into their daily life and singing. It teaches the often-complicated structural and functional anatomy through somatic awareness and movement, making the subject matter exciting and applicable. It teaches a breathing coordination that brings them into greater awareness as a person, helping them build self-worth and healthy vulnerability. These are the reasons
why the method and workshop could greatly benefit university voice training programs as a complement to classical vocal technique. As we watch other areas grow, such as somatic awareness, psychology, social science, and neuroscience, we too have to open ourselves to new ways of thinking that have been scientifically and skillfully researched.

This research study has been a significant part of my breathing journey and has shown me that growing one’s skills and becoming an expert means looking at every area of one’s life that needs relationship and development. It was of great importance for me to write the dissertation not from the thinking mind, but from a place of deep embodiment. If the breath has taught me one thing, it is that we learn from experiencing. Presenting a study that was not representative of my personal experience would have meant going against everything the breath and research has taught me. The breath has one goal: to center us in our truth. In order for that truth to be heard, we must listen. Reflecting back on my life’s journey and seeing how the breath has always been present in my life – from being born two-months premature with a collapsed right lung to becoming an opera singer – I sit with great gratitude and humbleness for having this opportunity to work with the breath.
PART II
DOCTORAL RECITALS
The University of Kentucky School of Music
Presents

Bradley Williard
Bass

Nan McSwain
Pianist

January 18, 2007
Singletary Recital Hall
7:30 PM

Program

Un bacio di mano, K.541
Mentre ti lascio, K.513

W.A. Mozart
(1756-1791)

Winterreise (selections)

Gefrorne Tränen
Erstarrung
Der Lindenbaum
Der Wegweiser

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

INTERMISSION

Chanson de Don Quichotte

Chanson du départ
Chanson du Dulcinée
Chanson du duc
Chanson de la mort

Jacques Ibert
(1890-1962)

Let us Garlands Bring

Come away, come away death
Who is Silvia?
Fear no more the heat o’ the sun
O mistress mine
It was a lover and his lass

Gerald Finzi
(1901-1956)
W.A. Mozart composed a number of insert or replacement arias as well as concert arias for the soprano, tenor, alto, and bass voice. It is believed that Mozart composed about fifty-seven concert arias during the period of 1765-1791. There is some discrepancy as to whether Mozart composed five or ten arias for the bass voice.\textsuperscript{1} However, the majority of the bass arias were composed in the later part of his life (1783-1791). Mozart was known for his adoration of the authentic artistry, which greatly influenced his composition style and ornamentation. Mozart’s concert arias were often composed for specific singers, which influenced how he used the orchestration as a collaborative partner with the voice. The two arias represented in the recital represents Mozart’s ability for comic humor as well as his ability to touch the deepest part of one’s longing for emotional connection.

The buffo aria \textit{Un bacio di mano} was written to be inserted into Francesco Albertarelli’s \textit{Le geloise fortunare}, which premiered in Vienna on June 2, 1788. There were a total of sixteen performances of \textit{Le geloise fortunare}.\textsuperscript{2} This particular aria had become famous because of its reference to the third theme in Mozart’s \textit{Jupiter Symphony}. The aria is a profound representation of Mozart mastery of play, wit, and comic timing. The text was most likely written by De Ponte and the aria plot consists of a crafty Frenchman, Monsieur Giraud, who gives mocking advice to a love-struck young man.\textsuperscript{3}

\textsuperscript{1} F. O. Souper, “Visions: A Few of Mozart's Concert Arias,” \textit{The Monthly Musical Record} LVIII, no. 37 (February 1, 1928).
\textsuperscript{3} Jerry Wayne Thompson, "A Study of the Concert Arias for Bass by W.A. Mozart" (Master's Thesis, Ouachita Baptist University, 1968).
The aria *Mentre ti lascio* was composed in March of 1787 for bass Gottfried von Jacquin. There is no record of this particular aria being performed under the direction of Mozart. However, the text can be found in an aria from *La disfatta di Dario*, an opera libretto set by Giovanni Paisiello and Tommaso Traetta in Venice. In the aria, the character Darius bids farewell to his daughter. Pages five and six were lost and later rewritten by an anonymous composer; the additional pages maintain an honest reflection of Mozart’s finesse and stylistic elements. This aria in particular represents Mozart’s understanding and knowledge of the human voice and gives the bass voice the opportunity to express its lyrical qualities rather than the typical rhythmic buffo style.

**Franz Schubert’s** *Winterreise* is a song cycle consisting of twenty-four poems by Wilhelm Müller that convey a lover's own torment and inner journey as he finds his way through heartbreak. The four song selections represent some of the most emotionally connected text in the cycle. In Ian Bostridge’s book, *Schubert’s Winter Journey: Anatomy of an Obsession*, he eludes to the fact that Müllers poems greatly appealed to Schubert and that there was a possible personal connection and resonance to the inner journey represented in *Winterreise*. The cycle was written in two parts, the first in February, 1827 and the second in October of 1827. Müller died in 1827 and most likely did not hear Schubert’s composition of the cycle.

**Jacques Ibert’s** *Quatre Chansons de Don Quichotte* (1932) is Ibert's only work that appears with any regularity on the concert stage. Ibert’s cycle is often compared to

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4 Ibid.
5 Pajot, "Mozart Insert Arias of 1788-1790".
6 Thompson, "A Study of the Concert Arias for Bass by W.A. Mozart."
Ravel’s *Don Quichotte* and has the distinction of being chosen for the 1933 film *Don Quixote* starring Feodor Chaliapin. Ravel’s *Don Quichotte* tends to be favored over the Ibert, but Ibert’s interpretation and use of different poetry (written by Ronsard and Alexandre Arnoux) adds a great deal to the French repertoire.\(^8\)

This differentiation has given singers a larger range of freedom and interpretation with the Ibert songs which is represented in a number of the unaccompanied or free recitative passages. In the last and most famous song of the cycle, “Chanson de la mort,” *Don Quichotte* is able to maintain such noble integrity while accessing an emotional vulnerability that is often not heard in other interpretations of *Don Quichotte*.

**Gerald Finzi** was a great admirer of Ralph Vaughan Williams and was a very gifted composer “[who] remained unaffected by passing fashions in music.” *Let Us Garlands Bring* was a birthday gift (October 12, 1942) for Vaughan Williams, who was a close friend and fellow Briton colleague.\(^9\) This particular setting of Shakespeare’s poetry was probably one of Finzi’s most popular works and is often compared to Roger Quilter’s setting of the same words which was written twenty years earlier. The composition is quite conservative and almost reactionary in style, perhaps more indicative of the mid-nineteenth century than the mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, the songs’ beauty and lyricism have earned them a secure place in the modern repertoire.

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Translation

W.A. Mozart

Un bacio di mano, K.541

A Kiss on the Hand

A hand kiss seems shocking to you,
And you would marry a beautiful maiden,
You are rather foolish, my dear Pompeo,
Go out and learn the ways of the world,
A man, when he marries a charming maiden,
Will have to renounce some caprices at first,
And liberties he must grant to his wife,
And always permit the doors be left open,
He must close his eyes, his ears, his mouth,
If the king of dunces he would not resemble,
You are rather foolish, my dear Pompeo,
Go out and learn the ways of the world...

Mentre ti lascio, K.513

As I Leave You

As I leave you, my love,
In my bosom trembles my heart,
Oh, what a bitter parting,
I feel in my sorrow frenzy and terror...
I depart. You weep? Oh God!
I ask of you one moment only, My love,
I leave you. Oh God, what a cruel torment
Oh, my heart is breaking,
I leave, Goodbye. You weep?
Oh, what a bitter parting!

Franz Schubert
Winterreise (selections)

Gefrorne Tränen

Frozen Tears

Frozen tears fall
from my cheek:
is it possible that I did not notice
that I have not been weeping?

Ah tears, my tears,
are you really so very tepid
that you congeal to ice,
like cool morning dew?
Und dringt doch aus der Quelle
der Brust so glühend heiß,
as wolltet ihr zerschmelzen
des ganzen Winters Eis!

Erstarrung

Ich such'" im Schnee vergebens
Nach ihrer Tritte Spur,
Wo sie an meinem
Arme durchstrich die grüne Flur.

Ich will den Boden küssen,
durchdringen Eis und Schnee
mit meinen heißen Tränen,
bis ich die Erde seh.

Wo find ich eine Blüte,
wo find ich grünes Gras?
Die Blumen sind erstarben,
der Rasen sieht so bläß.

Soll denn kein Angedenken
ich nehmen mit von hier?
Wenn meine Schmerzen schweigen,
wer sagt mir dann von ihr?

Mein Herz ist wie erstarben,
kalt starrt ihr Bild darin:
schmilzt je das Herz mir wieder,
fließt auch ihr Bild dahin!

Der Lindenbaum

Am Brunnen vor dem Tore
da steht ein Lindenbaum;
ich träumt in seinem Schatten
so manchen süßen Traum.
Ich schnitt in seine Rinde
So manches liebe Wort;
es zog in Freud und Leide
zu ihm mich immer fort.

Ich muß auch heute wandern
vorbei in tiefer Nacht,
da hab' ich noch im Dunkel
die Augen zugemacht.
Und seine Zweige rauschten,

And yet you gush from your source
in my breast, so burning hot,
as if you wanted to melt
all the ice of the entire winter!

Numbness

I search in the Snow in vain
for the trace of her steps,
where she on my arm used to
roam through the green meadow.

I want to kiss the ground,
to penetrate the ice and snow
with my hot tears,
till I can see the earth.

Where shall I find a blossom,
where shall I find green grass?
the flowers have died,
the turf looks so pale.

Should I then take no keep sake
away with me from here?
If my pains are silent,
who will speak to me of her?

My heart is as if dead,
coldly her image congeals inside it:
if my heart ever thaws again,
her image will melt and flow away.

The Linden-Tree

By the well in front of the gate
there stands a linden-tree;
I dreamt in its shade
so many a sweet dream.
I carved into its bark
so many a word of love
in joy and sorrow, I was
continually drawn to that tree.

Today I had to pass by that tree
in the dead of the night,
as I did, even in the dark,
I kept my eyes closed,
and its branches rustled.
als riefen sie mir zu:
komm her zu mir, Geselle,
hier find'est du deine Ruh!

Die kalten Winde bliesen
mir grad ins Angesicht;
der Hut flog mir vom Kopfe,
ich wendete mich nicht.

Nun bin ich manche Stunde
entfernt von jenem Ort,
und immer hör ich's rauschen:
du fändest Ruhe dort!

Der Wegweiser

Was vermeid ich denn die Wege,
wo die ander'n Wand'rer gehn,
suche mir versteckte Stege
durch verschneite Felsenhöh'n?

Habe ja doch nichts begangen,
daß ich Menschen sollte scheu'n,
welch ein törichtes Verlangen
Treibt mich in die Wüsteneien?

Weiser stehen auf den wegen,
weisen auf die Städte zu,
und ich wand're sonder Maßen
ohne Ruh' und suche Ruh.

Einen Weiser seh ich stehen
unverrückt vor meinem Blick;
eine Straße muß ich gehen,
die noch keiner ging zurück.

The Signpost

Why do I avoid the roads,
where other wanderers are walking?
Why do I seek out hidden foot paths
through rocky, snow-covered heights?

I have not committed any crime, after all;
why should I shun my fellow man?
What sort of foolish longing
drives me into wilderness?

There are signposts by the roads, pointing
the way into various towns, and I wander on
with no measure of the distance, no
moderation, without rest, and seeking rest.

I see a standing signpost that is
fixed in front of my gaze;
I must take a road on which
no one as yet has ever come back.

Jacques Ibert
Quatre Chansons De Don Quichotte

Chanson du depart de Don Quichotte

Ce château neuf, ce nouvel édifice
Tout enrichi de marbre et de porphire
Qu'amour bâtit château de son empire
où tout le ciel a mis son artifice,
Est un rempart, un fort contre le vice,
Où la vertueuse maîtresse se retire,
Que l'œil regarde et que l'esprit admire
Forçant les cœurs à lui faire service.

The song of Don Quixote's parting

This new castle, this new building,
enriched with marble and porphyry,
where love built a castle for his empire
and all of heaven added their skills,
a rampart, a fortress against vice,
whose virtuous mistress hides herself away,
that the eye beholds and the spirit admires,
forcing hearts to her service.
C'est un château, fait de telle sorte
Que nul ne peut approcher de la porte
Si des grands rois il n'a sauvé sa race
Victorieux, vaillant et amoureux.
Nul chevalier tant soit aventureux
Sans être tel ne peut gagner la place.

Chanson à Dulcinée

Un an me dure la journée
Si je ne vois ma Dulcinée.
Mais amour a peint son visage,
Afin d'adoucir ma langueur,
Dans la fontaine et le nuage,
Dans chaque aurora et chaque fleur.

Un an me dure la journée
Si je ne vois ma Dulcinée.

Chanson du duc

Je veux chanter ici la dame de mes songes Qui m'exalte au-dessus de ce siècle de boue.
Son cœur de diamant est vierge de mensonges,
La rose s'obscurcit au regard de sa joue.
Pour elle j'ai tenté les hautes aventures:
Mon bras a délivré la princesse en servage,
J'ai vaincu l'enchanter, confondu les parjures
Et ployé l'univers à lui rendre l'hommage.
Dame par qui je vais, seul dessus cette terre,
Qui ne soit prisonnier de la fausse apparence,
Je soutiens contre tout chevalier téméraire
Votre éclat non pareil et votre précellence.

It is a castle, made in such a way that none
may approach its door unless he has saved
his people from the Great Kings,
victorious, valiant and loving. No knight, no
matter how adventurous, can enter without
being such a person.

Song of Dulcinea

A day lasts a year
if I don't see my Dulcinea.

But Love, to sweeten my languishing,
has painted her face
in the fountain and the cloud,
in each dawn and each flower.

A day lasts a year
if I don't see my Dulcinea.

Ever near and ever far,
star of my long journeys.
The wind brings me her breath
when it blows over the jasmine flowers.

A day lasts a year
if I don't see my Dulcinea.

The Duke's Song

Here let me sing the lady of my dreams,
who raises me above this muddy century.
Her diamond heart has never known a lie.
The rose hides at the sight of her cheek,
It is for her that I attempted high adventures.
My arm freed the princess from servitude.
I defeated the enchanter and the forsworn.
I bent the universe to pay her homage.
Lady for whom I roam alone on this earth,
the only one not a prisoner of appearances,
I maintain before any foolhardy knight
your peerless brilliance and excellence.
Chanson de la mort de Don Quichotte

Ne pleure pas, Sancho,
Ne pleure pas, mon bon,
Ton maître n’est pas mort,
Il n’est pas loin de toi,
Il vit dans une île heureuse
Où tout est pur et sans mensonge,
Dans l’île enfin trouvée
Où tout viendras un jour,
Dans l’île désirée,
Ô mon ami Sancho.

Les livre sont brûlés
Et font un tas de cendres,
Si tous les livres m’ont tué,
Il suffit d’un pour que je vive;
Fantôme dans la vie
Et réel dans la mort
Tel est l’étrange sort
Du pauvre Don Quichotte. Ah!

Song of Don Quixote's death

Don't cry, Sancho.
Don't cry, my good fellow.
Your master isn't dead,
he is not far from you,
he lives on a happy island
where all is pure and truthful,
he has found his island at last,
where you shall also come one day,
on this long-desired island
O Sancho, my friend.

Books have been burned
To a heap of ashes,
If all those books have caused my death,
it will take but one to make me live
a phantom in my life
and real in death.
Such is the strange fate of poor Don Quixote. Ah!
The University of Kentucky School of Music
Presents

Bradley Williard
Bass

Nan McSwain
Pianist

Nathan Jesinski
Cellist

February 26, 2010
Singletary Recital Hall
7:30 PM

Program

Five Arias from Solo Cantatas

Antonio Vivaldi
(1678-1741)

Piango gemo sospiro
Pur ch’ a te grata
Ingrata si mi svena
O di tua man mi svena
Filli di gioia vuoi farmi morir

Amore traditore (Cantata No. 203)

J. S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Aria: Amore traditore
Recit: Voglio provar
Aria: Chi in amore

INTERMISSION

Sì, tra i ceppi
from Berenice

G. F. Handel
(1685-1759)

Va tacito e nascosto
from Giulio Cesare

Verdi prati
from Alcina
Antonio Vivaldi’s five arias from solo cantatas were transcribed from a manuscript in the library of the Conservatorio di Musica Luigi Cherubini in Florence, Italy with a realization of the bass by John Edmunds (b San Francisco, CA, 10 June 1913). Edmunds was educated at the University of California, the Curtis Institute under Scalero, Columbia University, and Harvard (MA 1941); subsequently he studied privately in England with Arnold Goldsbrough and Thurston Dart. Among his awards are Joseph H. Bearns Prize (1937), a Fulbright scholarship (1951), a grant from the Italian government (1954-6), a Folger Shakespeare Library grant (1967), a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies (1968), and a Guggenheim Fellowship (1969). He taught briefly at Syracuse University and at the University of California, Berkeley. From 1957 to 1961, he was in charge of the Americana collection in the New York Public Library. From 1968 to 1976, he worked in England, returning to San Francisco in 1977. He has concentrated on arranging and transcribing English song and poetry of the 17th century.¹

The collection of five arias was chosen from three of Vivaldi's cantatas (RV 672, 673 and 675). In the standard Vivaldi catalogue by Peter Ryom, these solo cantatas run from RV 649 to RV 686. However, RV 672, 673 and 675 have been omitted from the


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collection because most experts consider that these three cantatas are not authentic.

Vivaldi’s solo cantatas are written in the style often misleadingly termed “Neapolitan” after Alessandro Scarlatti. Their backbone is a series of two or more da capo arias with which recitatives alternate. Over three-quarters of his cantatas are for solo voice (soprano or alto) and continuo alone, the preferred combination of the time. They constitute the least innovatory portion of his compositions, but by no means the least expertly written. It is suspected that Vivaldi wrote his own text and prided himself on his ability as a poet.²

John Edmunds chose to use *Piango gemo sospiro*, Cantata RV 675 as bookends to this particular collection setting a very colorful, but yet somber mood. The internal parts (arias from RV 672 and 673) have joyful components, but with an underlying intention of death. Edmunds' arrangement evokes creativity and is a brilliant marriage of Vivaldi's text and simplicity of chord progression.³

**J.S. Bach**’s *Amore traditore, BWV 203* is one of two surviving cantatas with Italian texts that are attributed to Bach. It is scored for a dramatic bass with harpsichord accompaniment – the only one in Bach's catalogue for such a combination – and consists of two da capo arias separated by a recitative. Its authenticity has been a topic of conversation amongst many scholars.⁴

Cantata No. 203 *Amore traditore* (BWV 203) probably dates from before 1723 and would belong to Bach's Cöthen years, but the loss of many of his works during this

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³ Ibid.
period makes it impossible to place the context and actual date of composition. There are no known authors of the text and no information regarding its first performance. The autograph is missing and the oldest original copy of the score no longer exists. All that is known for certain is that the oldest copy bore the words “Cantata a Voce solo e Cembalo obbligato di Giov. Seb. Bach.” In the first aria, the harpsichord is provided with continuo bass, but the second aria is a fully written-out obbligato part of a virtuoso nature which has no equal in the vast literature of the cantata da camera.\textsuperscript{5} \textit{Amore traditore} is a reflection of a disastrous love affair. The opening movement is a sprightly and spiteful minor-keyed da capo aria in 12/8. The central movement is a dramatic secco recitative. The closing movement is an energetic piece of advice to the scorned lover.

\textbf{G. F. Handel’s} \textit{Si, tra i ceppi} from \textit{Berenice}, HWV 38 is from his opera \textit{Berenice}, set in around 81 BC and based on the life of Cleopatra Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy IX. It was the third new opera produced by Handel for the 1736-1737 opera season at Covent Garden Theatre. All three operas had the castrato Conti as the lead man and all three were failures. Opera of the Nobility had collapsed by the end of its season and was further in debt, and Handel's season was not a success either which made him physically ill from exhaustion. Before the premiere of \textit{Berenice}, Handel suffered from his first "paralytic stroke.” He was forced to watch his opera from the seats, rather than conducting from the harpsichord. The libretto for \textit{Berenice} was by Antonio Salvi and is based on the story of Berenice, the Queen of Egypt, and her husband-to-be Alessandro.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.}
The love story that envelops the cast of characters is complicated, confusing, and elaborate, but intricately woven together to produce the required happy ending.\textsuperscript{6}

The aria *Va tacito e nascosto* is from Handel’s *Giulio Cesare* and takes place in Act I of the opera, in which Caesar voices his disapproval of Pompey's murder to Ptolemy. Left alone, he reflects of the cunning hunter moving silently and invisible throughout the palace. *Giulio Cesare* is one of Handel's greatest and most successful operas. It was first performed at the King's Theatre in London on February 20, 1724 and ran for 13 performances. Handel subsequently revived the work on three occasions, the last in 1732. It was composed for the Italian opera season of the Royal Academy, the organization formed by a group of noblemen under Handel's musical direction in 1719. From its beginning, the Academy had sought to present some of the greatest singers of the day to London audiences; the original cast of Giulio Cesare was no exception; the great castrato Senesino (Caesar) and one of the leading prima donnas of the day Francesca Cuzzoni (Cleopatra) took the stage to premiere Handel's work.\textsuperscript{7}

Ruggiero’s aria *Verdi prati* is from Handel’s opera *Alcina*, HWV 34, which premiered on April 26, 1735. *Verdi prati* is one the most peaceful arias of the entire opera and acts as a dramatic halt to the furry of the sorceress's aria. Like Handel’s’ *Orlando*, the opera is based on cantos from Ariosto's Orlando Furioso and has a fairy-tale aspect. Highly popular during the Baroque era, these operas called for elaborate stage machinery capable of operating rapid and sensational set design changes. Handel turned the character Alcina, a siren who disposes of her ex-lovers by turning them into all kinds of

\textsuperscript{7} George Frideric Handel, "Giulio Cesare in Egitto, HWV 17 (Opera)," http://www.classicalarchives.com/work/11788.html.
objects, into a powerful and evil sorceress who defeats the despairing queen. The hero Ruggiero begins the opera under Alcina's spell, completely unmanly and petty. However, as the drama progresses, he grows into his heroic stature and breaks the spells that bind Alcina's victims. *Alcina* was heavily influenced by the French trends of the time. It shows Handel's knowledge of Rameau and his ability to write a ballet spectacle (French influence), utilizing large chorus scenes that successfully integrated the dramatic plot.8

Zoroastro’s aria *Sorge infausta una procella* is from Handel’s *Orlando*, and the opera is based on Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. Orlando, a heroic soldier in Charlemagne's army falls desperately in love with the pagan princess Angelica, who is in turn in love with another man, Medoro. Orlando cannot accept this and is driven to the edge of insanity; the noble magician Zoroastro saves him from complete madness. The musical forms used in the opera are developed to suit the dramatic and emotional situations. Rigid adherence to da capo forms and the exit convention is dispensed with entirely. The dramatic scenic construction and visual spectacle combined with the musical elements of the opera – ariosos, modified da capo forms, interrupted arias, elaborately orchestrated recitatives – helped to transcend the opera from the restricted opera seria style.9

Robert X. Rodríguez received his early musical education in his native San Antonio and in Austin (University of Texas at Austin), Los Angeles (University of Southern California), Lenox (Tanglewood), Fontainebleau (Conservatoire Americain) and Paris. His teachers have included Nadia Boulanger, Jacob Druckman, Bruno Maderna, and Elliott Carter. Rodríguez first gained international recognition in 1971,

8 Dean, *Handel’s Operas, 1726-1741*, 312-34.
9 Ibid., 235-55.
when he was awarded the Prix de Composition Musicale Prince Pierre de Monaco by Prince Rainier and Princess Grace at the Palais Princier in Monte Carlo. Other honors include the Prix Lili Boulanger, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the Goddard Lieberson Award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. Rodriguez has served as Composer-in-Residence with the San Antonio Symphony (1996-99) and the Dallas Symphony (1982, Meet the Composer Orchestra Residency Program). He currently holds the Endowed Chair of University Professor of Music at the University of Texas at Dallas.¹⁰

Rodriguez has composed works for opera, theatre, dance, and orchestra. His work has received orchestral and operatic performances in recent seasons by such organizations as the Vienna Schauspielhaus; The National Opera of Mexico; New York City Opera; Brooklyn Academy of Music; Boston Repertory Theater; American Music Theater Festival (now Prince Music Theater); Dallas Opera; Houston Grand Opera; Pennsylvania Opera Theater; Michigan Opera Theatre; Orlando Opera; The Aspen Music Festival; The Juilliard Focus Series; The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra; Mexico City Philharmonic; Toronto Radio Orchestra; The Baltimore, Dallas, Houston, San Antonio, Knoxville, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Milwaukee, Boston and Chicago Symphonies; The Los Angeles Philharmonic; National Symphony; Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra; Louisville Orchestra; and Cleveland Orchestra.¹¹

¹¹ Ibid.
Translations

Antonio Vivaldi

Five Arias from Solo Cantatas

Piango, gemo
(Piango gemo sospiro, RV675)

Piango, gemo, sospiro e peno,
E la piaga rinchiusa è nel cor.
Solo chiedo per pace del seno,
Che m'uccida più fiero dolor.

I Weep, I groan

I weep, I groan, I sigh, I suffer,
And the wound confined within my heart.
I only ask for the sake of my heart's peace
That an even more fierce pain should kill me

Ingrata si mi svena from
(Ingrata Lidia, RV673)

Ingrata, si mi svena,
lacera si quel core in cui lo strali d’amore,
la tua vezzosa
e bella immagine scolpi.

I Faint at My Ungratefulness

I faint at my ungratefulness,
I tear at the images of love,
You are charming and attractive,
This image that you have so sculpted.

O di tua man mi svena
(Ingrata Lidia, RV 673)

O di tua man mi Svena
o con un guardo il mio morir consola,
o’ alma senza pena
con tal merced, ai rai del di s’invola.

Oh, I Faint Upon His Presence

Oh, I faint upon his presence,
Oh, with a look I see my death.
I dream of little reward for I am without penance.

Filli di gioia vuoi farmi morir
(Filli di gioia vuoi farmi morir, RV672)

Filli di gioia vuoi farmi morir,
Edio di pena mi sent languir
di gioia vii farmi langir,
di pena vii farmi moror
Donar vii un ben che non puoi,
E ch’io posso gia mai conseguir.

Take Happiness in the Healing of Death

Take happiness in the healing of death.
I feel compassion and languish, and I give myself to you, which is not my future,
I can never conquer for I’m not strong.
I want to give what you cannot,
And I cannot order you so.

Purch’ à te grata
(Piango gemo sospiro, RV 675)

Purch’ à te grata sia la mia morte
Ancotacendo godro morir.
Se non puo farsi mi gior mia sorte
che per lumi fe del languir

Providing You Are Grateful of My Death

Providing you are grateful of my death,
Again sweetly enjoying death.
For if I have not done my best,
let me see the light and I will languish.
J.S. Bach

*Amore traditore* (BWV 203)

Amore traditore,
Tu non m'inganni più.
Non voglio più catene,
Non voglio affanni, pene,
Cordoglio e servitù.

*Voglio provar* (recitative)

Voglio provar,
Se posso sanar
L'anima mia dalla piaga fatale,
E viver si può senza il tuo strale;
Non sia più la speranza
Lusinga del dolore,
E la gioja nel mio core,
Più tuo scherzo sarà nella mia costanza.

*Chi in amore* (aria)

Chi in amore ha nemica la sorte,
È follia, se non lascia d'amar.
Sprezzi l'alta le crude ritorte,
Se non trova mercede al penar.

O Love, Thou Art a Traitor

O Love, thou art a traitor.
Thou shalt not cheat me more.
I want no more thy fetters,
I want no anguish, sorrow,
No grief and servitude.

I wish to test,
if I now may cure,
My spirit of the wounding that's fatal,
whether one can live without thine arrows.
Let no more expectations,
Allurements with their sorrow,
And their pleasures fill my bosom,
Nor fickle ways confront my steadfastness.

G.F. Handel

*Four Arias*

*Si, tra i ceppi* (Bernice)

Si, tra i ceppi e le ritorte
La mia fe risplenderà.
Nò, nè pur la stessa morte
Il mio foco estinguerà.

Yes, Even in Chains

Yes, even in chains and bonds
My faith will be resplendent.
No, not even Death itself
will put out my fire.
**Va tacito e nascosto** (Giulio Cesare)

Va tacito e nascosto,  
quand'avidò è di preda,  
l'astuto cacciator.  
E chi è mal far disposto,  
non brama che si veda  
l'inganno del suo cor.

**Verdi prati** (Alcina)

Verdi prati, selle amene,  
Perderete la beltà.  
Vaghi fior, correnti rivi,  
La vaghezza, la bellezza  
Presto in voi si cangerà.  
E cangiato il vago oggetto  
All'orror del primo aspetto  
Tutto in voi ritornerà.

**Sorge infausta una procella** (Orlando)

Sorge infausta una procella  
che oscurar fa il cielo e il mare  
sorge fausta poi la stella  
che ogni cor ne fà goder.  
Può talor il forte errare  
ma risorto dall'errore  
quel che prià gli diè dolore  
cusa immenso il suo piacer.

**All Silent and in Hidden**

All silent and hidden,  
When avid is the prey,  
The cunning huntsman goes,  
And who is evil will be arranged  
It is not the lust that one sees,  
Rather the deception of his heart.

**Green Meadows**

Green meadows, lovely woods,  
You will lose your beauty,  
Pretty flowers, rapid brooks,  
Your charm and beauty  
Will soon change.  
The beautiful object has changed,  
To the dismay of the first glance,  
Then everything will return in you.

**A Dismal Tempest is Brewing**

A dismal tempest is brewing  
Which darkness the sky and the sea,  
Then a brilliant star shines  
Bringing cheer to every heart,  
Even a strong person may err,  
But delivered of his error,  
That which formerly gave him pain  
Now brings him great joy.
The University of Kentucky School of Music
Presents

DMA Lecture Recital

**Bradley Williard**
Bass

Nan McSwain
Pianist

March 26, 2015
Schmidt Vocal Arts Center
6:00pm

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO THE SINGER’S BREATH

Introduction – Discovering the Breath

Method Background – *The Perceptible Breath* and *Breathing Coordination*

Workshop and Method Design – *Unlock Your Breath* (9-step methodology)

Begin the *UYB* Method (Group Work)

- Breath through Movement (Stool Work)
- Introduction of Terminology and Location
- Understanding of Structure and Function

The Method and the Singer

Implement Method with Student on the Table (Steps 5-9)
Choosing Vocal Literature from a Breathing Perspective

Beginner Song – *Der Leiermann* from Franz Schubert's *Winterreise*

Intermediate Song – *Fühlte meine Seele* from Hugo Wolf’s *Michelangelo Lieder*

Advance Song – *Im Dorfe* from Franz Schubert's *Winterreise*

Inquiry, Discovery, and Goals of *UYB* Method

Conclusion – Review of Method, Q & A

Extended Monograph of Lecture Recital

*Discovering the Breath*

My study and work within the field of breathing began in October of 2011 when I moved to Berlin in pursuit of acquiring German management. Looking back, I had no idea that I would be conducting workshops, researching and writing, about the singer’s breath.

During my time in Berlin, I had sung for a few different agencies, and the common critique was I was not singing with the whole body and, when that work was done, to come back and sing for them. A colleague of mine had mentioned the name of John Norris. He said John worked with singers to help strengthen the breath and body connection while working on operatic repertoire. I started studying with John, which opened other doors into different breathing methods. I found myself enrolled in the training program of the Middendorf Institute in Berlin, founded by Ilse Middendorf, who was one of the most influential teachers of the Breath in the world. During my training in Berlin, I was inspired to travel to Lausanne, Switzerland, where I met the *Breathing*
Coordination team that had founded a training program on the breathing method of Carl Stough. These two methods are the main methods that have inspired my work and the creation of the method on which I am lecturing on today. For me, both Middendorf and Stough’s methods are deeply grounded in one’s ability to connect to Self. The methods combined form a solid masculine and feminine approach to the breath. Middendorf dominates the art of perceiving, while Stough leans more towards the art of thinking. When both methods are blended, a greater knowledge of knowing rises out of the somatic experience and the intellectual understanding of how the breathing mechanism works in coordination with the voice.

If you had heard my speaking voice four years ago, it would have sounded about an octave higher because I would have wanted you to like the information I’m presenting here today and I would have wanted you to like me. This brings me to one word that has been present in my life since starting this work, embodiment. There are numerous examples within the research that offers compelling data that when we let go and let the breath breathe us, when we allow the voice to sing on the breath, rather than the body trying to make sound, there is a natural resonance that has the ability to vibrate every cell in the body. The data shows that if we get out of our own way, surrender to the breath, and believe we are worthy, then the body and breathing coordination will support the voice.

Ilse Middendorf: The Perceptible Breath

The experience of breath was Middendorf’s purpose for living. As a young adult in Germany during World War II, she lived through significant challenges and difficult
times, but she believed it was also a great time for creative explorations. As Middendorf pursued studies in dance and gymnastics, she found that her purpose was to develop a healthy body education, to create an authentic unity of human expression by means of movement, breathing, and meditation, and to define the breath as oneness of body, mind, and spirit.

The central point of working with the breath within the Middendorf method is to become present and to remain present. There are three ways to work with the breath: to leave it in the unconscious mind, to use it at will, or to admit the breath is present and become consciously aware of it. The conscious awareness of Self has to become the fundamental ground for everything that comes into being. Within the Middendorf method, focusing, perceiving, and breathing are used to build one’s sensory awareness. (Lead the audience in a focus exercise.)

Middendorf’s core belief was that by going beyond the mind, breathing could open up a completely new foundation for your life. Often within the Middendorf training, my teachers would say, "let the breath come, let it go, and wait until it returns on its own." What they meant was to let the breath go and listen while you wait for the breath; listen to what your body is trying to tell you during the silence. (Lead audience in breathing cycle exercise.)

The Perceptible Breath is the foundation to the method I have created. As singers, we have to learn how to intuit what is working and not working for our body. Building a relationship with our breath and body is the doorway into intuition, freedom, and knowledge of Self. Before I started this work, my voice was very disconnected from who I had become as a person. I would describe my voice and my Self as being manufactured,
trying to be what I wanted people to perceive and what I perceived people wanted.

(Demonstrate audition setting and wanting acceptance and to be liked.)

It was not until I experienced the breath from a non-singing perspective, that I allowed myself to let go of caring what others thought, that I began to feel how the breath could free us in our lives and in doing so, freeing the natural voice to sing from a place of clarity, ease, strength, and authenticity.

Towards the end of my time at the Middendorf Institute, I was concerned that the voice had never been technically addressed. It was used as a means to experience the breath, but no one wanted to talk about body alignment and phonation? As a singer, I knew that one of the primary functions of the respiratory system was to produce tone. Experientially, I could feel a shift in the body-voice relationship, but how could I conduct research based on the experience of breath alone? Furthermore, how could I teach singers about the breath without addressing the mechanics of breathing and body alignment? The desire to understand the relationship and coordination between the voice, body, and breath is what inspired me to look to other methods of breathing.

Carl Stough: Breathing Coordination

The foundation of the work of Carl Stough began with the voice and its coordination with the diaphragm. Carl Stough started out as a singer and choral conductor, a graduate of the West Minister Choir College. In 1958, due to his notoriety within his work as a choral conductor, the Musicians Emergency Fund of New Jersey, which sponsored music therapy for veterans, recommended Stough to work with the emphysema patients of a veterans’ hospital in East Orange, New Jersey. Emphysema is
an extremely debilitating and progressive lung disease that causes shortness of breath and
difficulty breathing. The pulmonary doctors thought because of Stough’s success, he
must know a great deal about breathing.

The inquiry that drove the work of Carl Stough was whether it was possible to
develop the diaphragm to rise high enough within the thoracic cavity to release the ribs
and support the pressure needed to produce a spoken tone. He soon realized the
requirements for this type of coordination were balance and how much air one could
release without locking up the breathing mechanism. Stough knew that all infection in the
lungs started in the residual volume of air, meaning the dead spaces. If the diaphragm is
not strong enough to rise up to get the air out of the lungs, you just get one infection after
the other. Stough’s method was able to redevelop the diaphragm and decrease the volume
in the lungs more than any pulmonary doctor would say was possible.

Because of Stough’s background in voice, he knew that vocal production
developed the diaphragm and its motion was a result of its strength. The goal within the
method became to obtain the maximum excursion of the diaphragm.

Stough’s work with opera singers such as Lauren Flanigan of the Metropolitan
Opera proved to be beneficial to the singing voice. Stough believed the abdominal and
intercostal muscles needed to work in coordination when singing with the full-voice, but
should be exercised separately. He goes on to say that singers need to develop the
abdominals, but no muscle should be used with force. The minute you engage any
primary or secondary breathing muscle with force, you are creating pressure, which in
turn cuts some of the top out of the voice and diminishes the frequency of sound.
Overtime, this type of extreme air pressure on the vocal cords could lead to vocal damage.

Stough states that sound is the result of how the air pressure is made in the lungs to pass air over the glottis. He felt that everything in life was sound, frequency, and balance, whether it was the Universe or you as an individual. Have you ever watched a baby breathe? This was Stough’s goal, to return to a breathing coordination that had not been interrupted. (Yelling at Child example.)

*Unlock Your Breath® – Performance Breathwork*

Breathwork is a way of helping to establish healthy posture and to release muscle and breath patterns that have develop in everyday life. Breathwork prepares the body with proper alignment for singing on the breath more efficiently, but it cannot be used as a substitute for vocal technique. We want our body to be as free as possible when we sing, but we also want healthy engagement of muscles that work in the body as in the coughing or sneezing functions.

When a singer produces a sustained high pitch, he/she cannot be too relaxed, as the compression function must be increased to achieve higher pitches. This kind of compression is directly related to the Italian *appoggio*, where the intercostal muscles are elastically engaged, the solar plexus is stretched in an east-west position, and the lower abdominals are resisting forward, wide, and moving directionally upward on the exhale. There is an antagonistic pull between the upper and lower abdominals during exhalation, which is not addressed in either of the above methods.
Some of the major contributions that breathwork can offer is a stronger sense of breath/body awareness and the experience of feeling the balance of air pressure and muscle coordination. What role does the body support or breath connection play in helping the singer find their fullest potential as a singer? What do the lower abdominal muscles do in relation to the upper abdominal muscles? Do the back ribs release on an inhale? How much is a full breath as opposed to over-breathing or taking too much air? What posture is correct for fullest vocal efficiency? These are all questions that inspired me to create that worked for singers.

Typical issues that a lot of young singers struggle with are: (1) hyper-extension of the chest (pulling it too high and arching the back), (2) locking the hip sockets, which does not allow for the singer to access the pelvic floor, (3) leaning backwards, which locks the abdominal function, making it difficult to move the small air stream, (4) collapsing the ribcage, which tends to invite the singer to over-blow the voice when singing a musical phrase, (5) a thrusting forward of the jaw, which raises the larynx position, and is related to incorrect posture, often a problem originating in the lower back and hip area, (6) a thrusting forward of the head posture, which is also related to the lower body and locking the hip flexors, and (7) tension in the back of the neck, which usually pulls or retracts the tongue. All of these challenges can be related to a lower body issue and postural imbalances.

We are all looking for an understanding of the body that makes sense to the voice, but without exploring alternative approaches to the body and breath, we can often stay locked without any solutions. If the body is locked, the breath stream is locked. If the body is under-engaged, then singers over-blow the voice because they cannot create
enough sub-glottic compression and breath release. By understanding the structure and function of the breathing mechanism, combined with the experience of the breath, we have a better chance of discovering the tiny stream of air needed to produce a singing tone that is made easily and freely. (Balloon example.)

I would love to go into more depth regarding cord close and the difference between breath flow and breath pressure, but we are limited on time. We might be able to address some of these topics during the table work, but for now, let’s move onto the stool work, which is the first step in my methodology.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Demographics

Below are the workshop’s demographics and histograms for the study participants. The reported demographics are: age, gender, race, and voice type.

Figure A.1. Histogram of demographics of study participants by age

Figure A.2. Frequency chart of demographics of study participants by gender
Figure A.3. Histogram of demographics of male study participants by age

Figure A.4. Histogram of demographics of female study participants by age
Figure A.5. Frequency chart of demographics of study participants by race

Figure A.6. Frequency chart of demographics of study participants by voice type
APPENDIX B

Study Recruitment Dialogue

Over the next few weeks, you will be participating in a university breathwork workshop that I have devised from the breathing methods of Ilse Middendorf and Carl Stough. The connection to the breath and body is essential to the foundation of singing and technical development. Throughout my vocal studies, I found the vocal instruction to be concrete and pedagogically correct. However, the breath and body connection was often taught from the teacher’s vocal experience, which varied from teacher to teacher. My goal over the past three years has been to find a simple, clear, and concrete explanation for how the breath and body needs to function in coordination with the voice to produce a clear and grounded tone. Because of the gap between knowledge and experience, this method and workshop was created to provide a resource for teachers and universities that are looking for an alternative approach to teaching the structure and function of the breathing mechanism through sensory awareness.

You are being invited to participate in a research study evaluating your experience and knowledge acquired from being part of the breathwork workshop. The objective of the study is to provide data showing that the created method and university breathwork workshop can aid in simplifying the singer’s breath while providing practical knowledge as to how the breath and body function in coordination. The study design will consist of a pre- and post-workshop questionnaire containing short-answer, true/false, and 1-10 rating scale questions. These questionnaires will be completed before and after the workshop. You must be an undergraduate or graduate degree pursuing student and 18 years of age or older to participate in the study. If you are under 18 or pursuing a post-graduate degree,
i.e. Performance Certificate, you are excused from the recruitment meeting and I will look forward to seeing you at the workshop.

You are being handed the consent form to participate in the study. I would like to read aloud the consent form as you follow along. After I have finished reading the form, you will have the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the study. (Refer to the Student Consent Form.)

Do you have any questions regarding the study? Once you have signed the consent form, please bring it to the front of the room for me to check. If you do not wish to participate in the study, please bring the unsigned consent form to the front of the room at this time. (Wait until all consent forms have been returned to the front of the room.)

Because of the busy class and performance schedule, we will proceed to filling out the pre-workshop questionnaire. Those who have signed the consent form, if you need to use the bathroom, now is the time to do so. Once the questionnaires have been handed out, you may not leave the room to go to the bathroom until the form has been completed. The projected time needed to complete the form is 45 minutes to an hour. (Wait for everyone to return from the bathroom before handing out forms.)

Please be seated as I hand out the pre-workshop questionnaires and pencils. If you have any questions during the hour, please feel free to ask. Once you have completed the form, please bring it to the front of the room to be checked by the private investigator, myself. Once the questionnaire has been checked, you are free to leave the classroom and I will look forward to seeing you at the workshop.
APPENDIX C

Data Questionnaires

*Pre-Workshop Questionnaire/Data Form*

The pre-workshop questionnaire, approved by the University of Kentucky Institutional Review Board (IRB), was presented to the study participants at an initial meeting with investigator Bradley Williard during which participants were asked to sign the IRB-approved “Consent to Participate in a Research Study” form and complete the pre-workshop questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions designed to establish a baseline of each study participant’s breathing knowledge and personal relationship with the breath-body-voice.

The comprehensive pre-workshop questionnaire consisted of seven demographic questions; twenty personal history questions; twenty-three 10-point Likert-type scale questions ranging from one (lowest) to ten (highest), covering participants’ self-ratings of self-confidence, body, and breath knowledge, concern with others’ perception, self-awareness, and vocal skill; twenty-nine true-false questions testing breath-body knowledge; and twenty-five short-answer questions covering the same five domains as the ordinal scale questions.
Breathwork Workshop Pre-Workshop Data Form

Demographics:

Gender: __________
Age: __________
Height: __________
Average Weight: __________
Voice Type: __________
Year/Degree: __________
Race: __________

Personal History:

Please answer to the best of your ability.

1. Have you had any injuries or surgeries? If so, please describe.

2. Do you have a breathing disorder, such as Asthma?

3. Have you experienced any trauma that has affected your body or breath?

4. Did you, or do you, currently play a musical instrument? If so, which instrument and for how long?

5. Did you, or do you, currently play any sports? If so, which sport and for how long?

6. Do you currently workout? If so, what is your workout routine?

7. How long have you been studying voice?

8. At what age did you decide you wanted to be a singer and why?

9. Describe your emotional relationship with your voice.

10. Do you deal with stage fright? If so, how do you manage it?
11. What is your perception of your body? Do you like your body?

12. Would you describe yourself as self-critical or critical of others? If so, what are you critical about?

13. How do you feel others perceive you?

14. What is your perception of your voice? Do you like your voice?

15. Describe your childhood. Did you grow up in a supportive environment?

16. Are there any outside factors that affect your body-mind-voice relationship? If so, what are they and how do you handle them?

17. Do you see yourself singing professionally?

18. What genre of music do you see yourself singing?

19. Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to whom you truly are as a person?

20. Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?

**Ordinal Scales (levels of measurement):**

Note that this is a 1-10 measurement scale, *ten* being the *highest or the most important* and *one* being the *lowest*. Please circle.

1. Rate how well you understand your relationship between your ribs and the diaphragm.
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Rate your breath/body awareness within normal daily activities.
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Rate your confidence within your breath, body, and voice.
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Rate your self-confidence.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What potential do you feel you have as a professional singer?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. How much do you care what others think about you or your singing?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. How well do you like your voice?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. How well do you feel supported by your colleagues?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

9. How often do you feel judged by your colleagues?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

10. Rate your breath control within singing.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11. Rate your breathing recovery time within singing.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. How well do you understand your body and its function?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

13. How well do you understand vocal resonance and production?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Rate your understanding of the engagement of the pelvic floor.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
15. Rate your understanding of the structure and function of the breathing mechanism.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16. Rate your awareness of where your center of breath is located.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17. Rate your understanding of the breathing cycle.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

18. Rate the ease and comfort in which you are able to direct your breath.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

19. Rate your awareness of your body’s weight/gravity as related to breathing and singing.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

20. Rate your breath/body awareness within your singing.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

21. How well do you like your body?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

22. What is your self-confidence level?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

23. How much do you care what other people think?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
**True/False (inferential statistics):**

Please circle true or false as it applies to your experience or knowledge base.

1. True/False: The diaphragm consists of a large double-domed structure, the sides of which fit into the circumference of the lower ribs.
2. True/False: The fibers of the dome join a triangular tendon at the top of the dome.
3. True/False: The two phrenic nerves transmit messages to the lungs, after receiving information regarding the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide from the brain stem.
4. True/False: The three-dimensional shape change that occurs in the thorax creates a space in the lungs, which is filled by the in-coming air.
5. True/False: The shoulders and the sternum should raise upward for the inhale.
6. True/False: The diaphragm’s main action is to hold air in the body.
7. No question.
8. True/False: The diaphragm is anchored to the lumbar spine by two long tendons called the crura.
9. True/False: The diaphragm moves down on the exhale and up on the inhale.
10. True/False: The diaphragm’s shortening contraction occurs on the inhalation phase of breathing.
11. True/False: The diaphragm’s lengthening contraction occurs on the inhalation phase of breathing.
12. True/False: The duration of the inhale is much longer than the duration of the exhale.
13. True/False: Postural imbalances and poor breathing habits allow for more movement in the back area and posterior ribs.
14. True/False: If the diaphragm does not work efficiently, there may be a high residual volume of air in the lungs on a regular basis.

15. True/False: It is desirable that action be distributed evenly and equally throughout all parts of the diaphragm.

16. True/False: The support/breath should to be engaged before the onset of tone.

17. True/False: The ribcage is made up of twelve pairs of ribs and a bony part called the sternum at the front.

18. True/False: The total number of ribs making up the thorax is 26.

19. True/False: The total number of floating ribs is 4.

20. True/False: The six floating ribs attach only at the back and do not come all the way around to the front of the ribcage.

21. True/False: At the front of the ribcage, ribs 1 through 10 are connected to the sternum through cartilage attachments.

22. True/False: The intercostal muscles interconnect and move the ribs during breathing.

23. True/False: Numerous long layers of muscles are overlaid on top of the ribs and shape the external contours of the back.

24. True/False: The ribs lift up for the exhale.

25. True/False: There are approximately 100 articulations in the ribcage.

26. True/False: No one muscle ever acts alone in joint movement.

27. True/False: After you have exhaled, there is no more residual air left in the lungs.

28. True/False: In eccentric contraction, the muscle shortens as it contracts.

29. True/False: The diaphragm movement consists of both, concentric and eccentric contractions.
30. True/False: The shoulder blades (scapula) should not be able to glide against the back of the ribs.

**Breathing – Written Section:**

Please answer to the best of your ability.

1. Define your concepts and ideas of the breathing mechanism and its function.

2. Do you think you are able to produce a powerful sound by forcing the breath? If so, define forcing the breath.

3. In your singing and breathing experience, where do you hold tension and where do you feel a release?

4. Is there good tension and bad tension? If so, could you describe the two?

5. Describe the difference between inhalation and exhalation.

6. Is the inhalation determined by the length of the phrase you are to sing or are all breaths consistently the same each time?

7. What muscles are involved in breathing?

8. How aware are you of your breath and body during your singing versus daily activities?

9. When you are practicing, what are you thinking about in regards to the breath and body relationship?

10. Do you feel that confidence affects your breath? If so, describe your relationship with your internal voice that is sometimes critical.

11. Define and describe the diaphragm?

12. Define stacking the breath. Do you often stack your breath when singing?
13. Describe the direction of the breath flow.

14. Do you think you need to connect to the pelvic area to maintain good breath and body support? If so, what are your sensations around the hips and pelvis?

15. What is the structure and function of the shoulder blades (scapula) during breathing?

16. Is gravity important in breathing and creating body/breath awareness? If so, how is it used?

17. Do you feel centered when you breathe? If so, describe what does that sensation feels like.

18. What role does the sit bones play in body alignment and finding your breath center?

19. Do you think you have enough knowledge to fix your own breath and body alignment? If so, how would you fix it?

20. Why do you need a relaxed inhalation?

21. Why do you need an elongated exhalation?

22. Do you use breathing exercises to focus before you perform? If so, what are they?

23. Do you think breathing consist of taking a 360° breath? If so, describe a 360° breath.

24. What do the ribs do on the inhale and exhale?

25. If you had to describe the pelvic floor as a shape, what shape or object would it be?
Post-Workshop Questionnaire/Data Form

The post-workshop questionnaire, approved by the University of Kentucky Institutional Review Board (IRB), was presented to the study participants at the end of the workshop by investigator Bradley Williard. The questionnaire consisted of qualitative and quantitative questions designed to determine if the workshop had any effects on the study participant’s breathing knowledge and their personal relationship with the breath-body-voice and to inquire about workshop benefits.

The comprehensive post-workshop questionnaire consisted of seven demographic questions; fifteen personal history questions; thirty-one 10-point Likert-type scale questions ranging from one (lowest) to ten (highest), covering participants’ self-ratings of self-confidence, body, and breath knowledge, concern with others’ perception, self-awareness, and vocal skill; twenty-nine true-false questions testing breath-body knowledge; and twenty-five short-answer questions covering the same five domains as the ordinal scale questions.
Breathwork Workshop Post-Workshop Data Form

Demographics:

Gender: 

Age: 

Height: 

Average Weight: 

Voice Type: 

Year/Degree: 

Race: 

Personal History:

Please answer to the best of your ability.

1. Describe your emotional relationship with your voice.

2. If you had or have stage fright, how do you manage it?

3. What is your perception of your body? Do you like your body?

4. Would you describe yourself as self-critical or critical of others? If so, what are you critical about?

5. How do you feel others perceive you?

6. What is your perception of your voice? Do you like your voice?

7. Are there any outside factors that affect your body-mind-voice relationship? If so, what are they and how do you handle them?

8. Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to whom you truly are as a person?
9. Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?

10. What did you learn about yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship during the workshop?

11. Has the *Unlock Your Breath* Workshop helped you as a singer? If so, how has your singing or breath changed?

12. What did you find most helpful about the process?

13. Would you recommend this type of work to singers? If so, why do you think this type of work is valuable?

14. Do you feel more confident with yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship? If so, what aspects of the workshop created the shift in perspective?

15. Do you feel that you have usable tools to maintain this heightened awareness of the breath and body? If so, what breathing tools will you take with you into your daily life, the practice room, and onto the stage?

**Ordinal Scales (levels of measurement):**

Note that this is a 1-10 measurement scale, *ten* being the *highest* or the *most important* and *one* being the *lowest*. Please circle.

1. Rate how well you understand your relationship between your ribs and the diaphragm.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

2. Rate your breath/body awareness within normal daily activities.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Rate your confidence within your breath, body, and voice.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Rate your self-confidence.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. What potential do you feel you have as a professional singer?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. How much do you care what others think about you or your singing?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. How well do you like your voice?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8. How well do you feel supported by your colleagues?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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10. Rate your breath control within singing.
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11. Rate your breathing recovery time within singing.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

12. How well do you understand your body and its function?
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13. How well do you understand vocal resonance and production?
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

14. Rate your understanding of the engagement of the pelvic floor.
    1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
15. Rate your understanding of the structure and function of the breathing mechanism.
   
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

16. Rate your awareness of where your center of breath is located.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

17. Rate your understanding of the breathing cycle.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

18. Rate the ease and comfort in which you are able to direct your breath.

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20. Rate your breath/body awareness within your singing.

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

21. How well do you like your body?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

22. What is your self-confidence level?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

23. How much do you care what other people think?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

24. Did the *Unlock Your Breath* Workshop make sense to you?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
25. The breathwork has given you useful breathing tools that apply to your own vocal technique.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
26. You can apply what you have learned within the workshop to your own singing.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
27. Your awareness of your breath/body changed after each exercise or series of treatment.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
28. The workshop and experience of breath has helped your own breathing process.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
29. After the workshop, you perceive your singing breath differently.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
30. After the workshop, you sing with less effort and from a place of ease and freedom.
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
31. After the workshop, you feel more grounded in your singing and the breath flow seems more consistent and balanced?
   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

**True/False (inferential statistics):**

Please circle true or false as it applies to your experience or knowledge base.

1. True/False: The diaphragm consists of a large double-domed structure, the sides of which fit into the circumference of the lower ribs.
2. True/False: The fibers of the dome join a triangular tendon at the top of the dome.
3. True/False: The two phrenic nerves transmit messages to the lungs, after receiving information regarding the balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide from the brain stem.

4. True/False: The three-dimensional shape change that occurs in the thorax creates a space in the lungs, which is filled by the in-coming air.

5. True/False: The shoulders and the sternum should raise upward for the inhale.

6. True/False: The diaphragm’s main action is to hold air in the body.

7. No question

8. True/False: The diaphragm is anchored to the lumbar spine by two long tendons called the crura.

9. True/False: The diaphragm moves down on the exhale and up on the inhale.

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11. True/False: The diaphragm’s lengthening contraction occurs on the inhalation phase of breathing.

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19. True/False: The total number of floating ribs is 4.

20. True/False: The six floating ribs attach only at the back and do not come all the way around to the front of the ribcage.

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23. True/False: Numerous long layers of muscles are overlaid on top of the ribs and shape the external contours of the back.

24. True/False: The ribs lift up for the exhale.

25. True/False: There are approximately 100 articulations in the ribcage.

26. True/False: No one muscle ever acts alone in joint movement.

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Please answer to the best of your ability.

1. Define your concepts and ideas of the breathing mechanism and its function.

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3. In your singing and breathing experience, where do you hold tension and where do you

4. Is there good tension and bad tension? If so, could you describe the two?

5. Describe the difference between inhalation and exhalation.

6. Is the inhalation determined by the length of the phrase you are to sing or are all
   breaths consistently the same each time?

7. What muscles are involved in breathing?

8. How aware are you of your breath and body during your singing versus daily
   activities?

9. When you are practicing, what are you thinking about in regards to the breath and body
   relationship?

10. Do you feel that confidence affects your breath? If so, describe your relationship with
    your internal voice that is sometimes critical.

11. Define and describe the diaphragm?

12. Define stacking the breath. Do you often stack your breath when singing?

13. Describe the direction of the breath flow.

14. Do you think you need to connect to the pelvic area to maintain good breath and body
    support? If so, what are your sensations around the hips and pelvis?

15. What is the structure and function of the shoulder blades (scapula) during breathing?
16. Is gravity important in breathing and creating body/breath awareness? If so, how is it used?

17. Do you feel centered when you breathe? If so, describe the sensation of feeling centered in the breath.

18. What role does the sit bones play in body alignment and finding your breath center?

19. Do you think you have enough knowledge to fix your own breath and body alignment? If so, how would you fix it?

20. Why do you need a relaxed inhalation?

21. Why do you need an elongated exhalation?

22. Do you use breathing exercises to focus before you perform? If so, what are they?

23. Do you think breathing consist of taking a 360° breath? If so, describe a 360° breath.

24. What do the ribs do on the inhale and exhale?

25. If you had to describe the pelvic floor as a shape, what shape or object would it be?
APPENDIX D

Procedures

The study procedures included an initial screening where investigator, Bradley Williard, read the IRB approved recruitment dialogue and presented the consent forms. A faculty member was present for the initial screening and all parts of the workshop.

Study participants then experienced the workshop procedure, consisting of an hour and a half group breathwork session; a one-hour documentary featuring Carl Stough and a fifteen-minute breathing animation by Jessica Wolf; a one-hour private breathwork session including table, stool, and floor work; a one-hour group session revisiting the initial stool work; and a one-hour masterclass. The procedure was spread over a five-day period.

The post-workshop questionnaire was given in a one-hour period at the end of the workshop, asking the same questions of the pre-workshop form as well as questions regarding the participant’s workshop experience.

Data Collection and Workshop Procedures

Initial screening (pre-workshop form): Participants of the study filled out consent or assent forms and the pre-workshop questionnaire during the initial screening (18 and older, undergraduate and graduate degree student). *1-hour duration.*

Stage 1 - Breath through Movement: This stage took place during the first group breathwork session. The focus was directed towards listening to breath in relationship to the body through movement. *1 hour and 30-minute duration.*
Stage 2 – Sound as Vibration: This stage took place during the first group breathwork session, lying on a yoga mat. The focus was on the vibrations of sound in the body. 30-minute duration.

Stage 3 – Structural Anatomy of Breathing: This stage consisted of applying the pedagogical principles to the experience of breath, looking at the skeletal muscular structure, and discovering the skeleton. This step of the method was blended throughout stages one and two of the workshop procedure.

Stage 4 – Documentary Featuring Carl Stough: This stage took place at the end of the first group session. 1-hour duration.

Stage 5 – Functional Anatomy of Breathing: This stage consisted of viewing the animations by Breathing Coordination and Jessica Wolf’s The Art of Breathing, understanding the diaphragmatic function and coordination. 15-minute duration.

Stage 6 – Alignment and Observation: This stage consisted of reducing tension in the muscles that support movement and alignment. 10-minute duration.

Stage 7 – Tension Reduction and Repatterning: This stage consisted of using the UYB method’s tension release and conscious breathing techniques to repattern the muscle and breathing patterns. 20-minute duration.

Stage 8 – Experiencing Breathing Coordination: This stage slowly introduces the voice into the new breathing coordination without tension and old muscle patterns; moving from laying, to sitting, to standing. 15-minute duration.

Stage 9 – Discovering the Pelvic Floor, Hip Flexors, and Lower Abdominals: This stage focused on which muscles to engage and release within the lower abdomen which took place sitting and on the floor. 10-minute duration.
Stage 10 – Inquiry, Discovery and Goals: This stage reviewed the observations made, reinforced new discoveries, and created an individual breath and body plan. 5-minute duration.

Stage 11 – Stool work Review and Masterclass: This stage consisted of three sections: stool work, Q & A, and masterclass. 2-hour duration.

- The stool work was revisited from the first day of the workshop, allowing the students to evaluate and assess their own progression of awareness. 45-minute duration.

- Q & A regarding the method. 15-minute duration.

- Singing Masterclass with four to five students chosen by voice professor. This allowed the students to see the workshop concepts put into the practice of singing. 1-hour duration.

Post-workshop Form: Post-workshop questionnaires were given to the participants to complete. 1-hour duration.

Unlock Your Breath – Performance Breathwork Workbook and Exercises.

The UYB Performance Breathwork workbook and exercises as well as other course materials are proprietary and will not be included in the dissertation.
APPENDIX E

Guided Interviews

Interview Guide

I will give you time to read and sign the consent form before we begin the interview. If you have any questions or concerns regarding participating in the research, please feel free to ask at this time. You are in no way obligated to participate in the study. Once you have signed the consent form, we will begin the interview process. The projected length of the interview is 30 minutes.

The interview will be recorded for quality assurance. You will also receive a transcript of the recording and will have the opportunity to correct any portion of the interview that you see fit.

- Did you find the workshop and method created helpful? If so, can you be specific?
- Did you see a body alignment shift in yourself or students after the stool work? If so, what were the most significant changes with the posture and breath?
- Could you see a difference as to how your students were carrying themselves? Do you feel they were able to maintain the awareness?
- Could you sense a difference in the self-confidence of the students?
- Did you find your students to be more focused on the breath and body connection and its relationship to the voice?
- What did you find valuable about the table work?
- Did you hear any specific changes in the voice after the table work?
• Were there any specific elements in the table work that you felt worked to achieve a true breath and body connection for your students?
• Did the pelvic floor work help your students become more aware of the lower engagement that is required for singing?
• Did your students gain a clearer idea as to how the breath flow functions within the compression of breath required for singing?
• Do you think your students’ knowledge on the mind-body-voice relationship has increased? If so, can you be specific as to which aspect have improved?
• Can you hear an improvement in the individual students and the voice studio as a whole? If so, can you be specific in the qualities of improvement?
• Is there one part of the workshop and method that you like best?
• Did you find that the workshop created a sense of unity, belonging, and bond within the voice studio?
• Would you recommend this workshop to other universities? If so, why?
• Are there any changes that you would make to the workshop format?

_Guided Interviews Data_

This appendix contains three interviews conducted by principle investigator Bradley Williard (PI). These are transcriptions from recorded interviews of UNCSA voice faculty. The faculty members have been assigned a number to protect their confidentiality (F1, F2, and F3). A significant value of the recorded interviews was having access to the exact words spoken by the interviewees. The names of the
participants discussed in the interviews have been changed to participant numbers or random initials to protect the confidentiality of the study participants.

Transcription of Recorded Interview with Voice Faculty Member #1

PI: Did you find the workshop and created method helpful? And if so, can you be specific?

F1: Yes, extremely helpful. Working with undergraduate student in particular, especially ones that are starting off, but all through their careers as undergraduates at this school, we work a lot with trying to make them aware of body awareness. Your method really helps them start thinking about that, that it dovetails nicely into lessons that I've been applying it and will continue to apply it in their lessons.

PI: Did you see anybody alignment shift in the students or yourself after the stool work? And if so, what were the most significant changes with the posture and breath?

F1: I think with a number of students, I did see an awareness and shift of really thinking about how to use it, and some are having more difficulties than others.

PI: Why do you think that is? Because they are younger or...

F1: Yes. I think just because who they are... so they need to be constantly reminded that they need to think about it, and they have to practice it. They have the tools, so... it's not that the don't have the information and they can't do it, it's that they need to take the time to do it and they needed to be reminded to do it. But there are people who have really taken it on immediately. I have one example, PK, he is walking around touching his chest, rubbing his shoulder. It's really helped him
tremendously. But then there is somebody like participant #9, who just had a
lesson. He informed me that he had one-hour of sleep last night. So I think that
may have had something to do with the fact that he wasn't really showing me that.
Although, I did remind him to stay open, don't collapse your chest, and all of that.
So, there you go... it depends on the individual whether or not they are going to
take it on and really think about it. But it is certainly something we are going to
incorporate all the time.

PI: Could you see a difference in how they were carry themselves throughout the day
or when you would see them?

F1: Yes. They were aware of it; they were consciously thinking about it. Again, I
think it is really the individual. It's not the information or the method, it's the
individual who really has to incorporate it. I think that is pretty obvious.

PI: Did you see a sense of difference in the students' self-confidence level within the
workshop?

F1: Absolutely. Yeah. I can give you a really good example that is participant #8, who
really opened up. I think it was a really transformative experience for her. She
looks different, her face looks different, and she feels much more confident.

PI: That's great!

F1: It is great!

PI: Did you find your students to be more focused on the breath and body connection,
and its relationship to the voice? Or was it disconnected?

F1: Yes, that is absolutely a true statement that they are focused on that connection
and relationship. Here's the thing. If someone asks you a question about vocal
technique, the answer is always 'breath'. No matter what, the answer is 'breath'. So, they constantly need to be reminded that breath is to me, the pillar holding up the temple, it's the foundation to everything. Any kind of technique that makes them more aware of it is great.

PI: Knowing how to put the parts together?

F1: Well, a lot of the students really got this idea that it's managing the breath that we are learning how to do. I have been asking all my students, what's the take-away from the breathing seminars? And everyone really has an opinion about it, and this one particular student. It was participant #7, who sang in the last class, freshman soprano, just really lovely voice. She said, "Really, what I'm learning is that it is really, you breathe. But it's a natural act of breathing, it's managing the breath, being aware of it." You're gonna breathe, but it's teaching you how to manage it. I thought that was really precise and exactly right. You know there's a lot of implication with that.

PI: And a lot of managing that exhale and the recovery.

F1: Yes, everything about it. What I teach too often and probably is very much what you are focusing on too, is that it's really the exhale and the next breath. It's the end of the phrase ending right, taking the right breath, starting the next phrase, going all the way through, taking the right breath, attacking the right way...

PI: It's also that you don't lock up on the inhale.

F1: Exactly, it's releasing.

PI: We all know that whatever you set up in that inhale is what's gonna happen on the exhale.
F1: That's right. I spent a lot of time telling them that, is that, to not seize up at the
next entrance, the exhalation. And then trying to teach them once they get tight,
how to release it as they are singing. Which is kind of a good thing to learn, but
it's a little bit late once the tension starts.

PI: I had a great coach tell me one time that the thing he found the most exciting was
when the great singers got in trouble and how they got out of it. Because that's
really what made great singing was to see if they could get out of trouble, and end
up signing the amazing high "C." And that they were able to get back into the
voice and breath while still singing. In his opinion, that's what great singing is.

F1: I totally agree, that's good technique. But also, what you're talking about is that
it's not just the exhalation, that it is the inhalation; the in and out.

PI: And that we have the opportunity to reset at any point.

F1: That's right.

PI: And we have to not go to that place of feeling.... oh no, I messed up, it's all over
and done with now.

F1: Right. Yes! What I find really interesting too is that I always tell my students,
there is always time to breathe, no matter how fast the phrase is. You always have
to take the time to breathe right. Otherwise, it's not going to work. Even fast,
especially, fast passage work. You got to take the time to set the breath up right.
Otherwise, you are going to be tight like I said. It's important.

PI: What did you find valuable about the table work?

F1: That by you touching them, really gave them more awareness of the specific parts
of the body. I think that's what the best thing was for them, to relax and to realize
what parts of their body they needed to focus in on, where the issues were. That was really interesting to me is that they would say, "Oh, my left shoulder is higher than my right shoulder, really? Wow, that is weird." That was the best part of it for me.

PI: The thing that I see most of the time is that once you get them released, it's obvious the little parts that aren't releasing and it's usually one or two parts.

F1: Right, but it's a huge impact. It amazes me, I've been thinking about this, in relationship to that table work in particular.... how these young kids are so knotted up. And it is nerves, self-confidence, it's emotion. That's what I think is doing it to them. For me to hear a student when they move their head over this way and it's goes crack. What the heck? You are too young for that.... what is going on? You're bound up.

PI: I was speaking with Dr. Taylor about this. We were watching one of the old game shows with Doris Day, it may have been "What's your line?" People never spoke like this then, no one ever had this disconnect. I don't know where we've gone within society and what factors are affecting everyone's self-confidence.

F1: Closing up and opening up, you mean?

PI: Everyone was open during that period of time, and everyone spoke on their breath and body. And now we have come to an age where everybody is so in their phone. I don't know.

F1: Could be? I mean it may also be that people were taught elocution. What do you think of vocal fry? Especially, as it had increased over the last five years. That's the first thing I talk to them about because they are not on their breath and they
are not open. You know everything is... (Siebert demonstrates vocal fry). It's all very closed; it's very strange to me.

PI: Did you hear any specific changes after the tablework?

F1: Freedom, openness. Less tension, especially in the throat. I think the tension starts at the solar plexus and rises up.

PI: Were there any specific elements of the table work that you felt worked to achieve a true breath and body connection for the students?

F1: Yeah, the same things... building body awareness and being able to release in the pelvic region, release low, and not hold things high.

PI: The biggest thing I have seen that really works is working and stretching the pelvic area, for them to feel/sense into that specific region of the body. I have seen them really register was it is like to connect to the pelvic floor. And they said, "Oh, that's what it feels like to be that low."

F1: Some people mentioned that, how low it was for them. They said it wasn't weird, but it was much lower than they thought.

PI: The tablework was so successful with engaging the pelvic floor, that we didn't have to do much floor work. Did your students get a clear understanding as to how the breath flow functions with the compression of breath that is required for singing?

F1: Yes, I think probably that was the best thing for me to see them understanding that function. I think that particularly helped.

PI: Getting the cord closure to help with the compression?
F1: Yes, and making sure that they were phonating on a voiced vowel helped them to get started.

PI: Yes, because they could feel that resistance in the lower ribs.

F1: Yes, right. There were a couple of students who likes to push; he's a physical guy. I told him, it's about relaxing and using the compression of air, rather that pushing the air.

PI: Could you tell a difference in his tone quality afterwards?

F1: Absolutely, he still needs to release when he gets on the very top of the voice, but he knows what he's doing.

PI: That's huge.

F1: It is huge. He has gone through a huge change. He's had his adenoids and his tonsils removed. And he's a happy guy now that he's able to have space and progress. And I myself have had that problem.

PI: Do you think your students' knowledge of the mind-body-voice relationship has increased? If so, can you be specific as to which aspects have improved? Are they not thinking as much?

F1: They are thinking more about their body. Again, that's the biggest thing. I often talk them about practicing includes walking around and having awareness about how you breathe, with how you stand, how you feel your head is relaxed, and how you breathe. This really enforced that a lot. Getting that information re enforced... They're thinking about it, which is what they should do all the time. They have to practice that all they time, they have to be aware of that all of their waking moments. You did it when you were a singer. You didn't really have the tools to
think about it as much, you just thought about it by yourself. But now they're thinking about it in terms of physiology and in terms of the things you spoke about to them, and working on the table, feeling their body. I think they absolutely thinking about their body.

PI: Do you think they walked away thinking that if I don’t understand this, it may affect how I function in the career?

F1: I think that’s true. They do see the primary importance of that, I do think that is true. Again, you are dealing with some people that don’t have the ability to do that.

PI: I know when I was an undergraduate, I might not have thought this work mattered in terms of the real world.

F1: I have to say there is not one student who has that attitude. I think partly because we all here, the faculty are pushing that awareness. So, there is a culture of this is what you’ve got to do. There is no one saying this is worthless. Everyone is saying this is important. I think there is a real culture of that.

PI: So they are finding this is my job to do every day, to have this awareness?

F1: Yes, I mean it is. Again, there are some students who aren’t going to do it because they are going to fail, but very few.

PI: Can you hear an improvement in the voice student and voice studio as a whole: voice and body wise?

F1: Yes, I can hear a difference.

PI: Is there one part of the method and workshop that you liked best?
F1: There are actually several: the feeling of the pelvic, feeling that they are grounded, and they don’t have to support high or tighten up high; the idea of east and west in the pharyngeal area. This is all things that we work on, but seizing the moment when they are getting it from other places, from you, hearing it in different language and incorporating it. I think what happens when you open the pharyngeal space east and west is that you really think about that concept with the resonance above the palate, so what happens is it frees everything up, and the throat does not constrict the support.

PI: That was the biggest thing for me working with your students is that the breath seemed to kick in once the pharynx opened. And if the pharynx is not open, then the breath remains constricted. But once the pharynx is open, we come move on to working with the breath flow, resonance, and finding the thin edge vocal cord approximation.

F1: Right. One student in particular that I continue working on this with, the thing I need to keep working on with her as well is that she needs to combine this work. Because she is going to take this and then go too broad, she needs to slim down the sound especially in certain registers. But she is very smart, and she is going to get it. Explaining to her to add on to what she is doing, rather than replace.

PI: Learning to keep the throat open, and to realize the sound comes from the resonators and a thin amount of air that is passing through the cords. It took me a long time to figure that out as a singer. This coordination takes a long time to learn how to coordinate.

F1: If it would be easy, then everyone would be doing it.
PI: Yes, then we all would have had career at 18 and 19 years of age.

F1: Right. Those things in particular, the feeling of low pelvic breath and releasing the tension in the pharyngeal space, and all over. But in particular, that seemed to help!

PI: Did you feel that the workshop provided a sense of unity or bonding in the voice studio and students?

F1: Yes, I think so. I mean they have ideas about it, and they have all experienced it, so they talk about it.

PI: It is interesting to see the improvement of self-confidence and a decrease of what people thought about them, and how they started to like their bodies.

F1: That makes total sense.

PI: The perception of that you might be able to have a career is important.

F1: Involving themselves in something as serious as this is good, it is not a place. It is focused work on something that is serious that relates to their career.

PI: The student that was thinking about going into Drama, how was that transition for her after the breathwork?

F1: She is a very interesting student; participant #8 you are talking about. She has been having difficulties with basic musicianship, but vocally she is quite spectacular. It’s very strange. She has the absolutely gorgeous voice, but she has some issues with rhythm, pitches, and hearing harmony. She can’t sing the 7th of a minor chord, she just can’t hear it. I think it is genetic. However, today’s lesson was great. She might need more time to learn this stuff. She is very happy with the results. You got some data to her about self-confidence, not caring what others
think, and being who she is. It helped her actually concentrate better on the things she needs to concentrate on. Her last lessons have been better because she is focusing in on what she has to do, not about letting her mind wander to self-criticism or comments from others, letting her mind cycle through all that stuff. So, she is better focused. That was really interesting with her, I would like to see how that actually goes. Because her last lesson, I have been encouraging her to take this other path because I don’t think she is going to be successful, she may flunk out. But, she was so much in her lesson with her focus!

PI: Based on her lessons, do you think, maybe she does have the potential?

F1: Yes. Yes. It was like a different person walked in the room. It will be interesting to see if she can actually stay there, and I think she can. Looking at her now after the breathwork, her face just opened up. And in speaking with her, she is not all over the place. You can see, looking at her, she is just there in front of me now, rather than trying to run away or disappear somehow.

PI: From what I saw within the session with her, when some experiences what she experienced on the table of being fully present, it was very emotional for her. To really be fully in that moment is such an extreme for her.

F1: She was experiencing an awareness of her body, awareness of how she breathed.

PI: It is weird, some people in the sessions do experience the body vibrating from the head down.

F1: That was her.

PI: On a medical level blood and oxygen levels are changing, and they are feeling every tissue being alive in a way that is unusual compared to everyday life. And
so what that does is it brings you into the now. And also, I had guided her as she went into the thinking mind to come back to her breath, and these are obviously also techniques within meditation to keep you present.

F1: My wife and I have been working on meditation and breathing. She is more focused in it than I am, and has been talking about it a lot. We have been talking a lot about the breath, and how breath impacts your perception of what’s going on around you, and slowing down, taking the entire world in.

PI: I know within my own personal work with the breath, that I am able to be fully present with someone in conversation and really be there. Before, I was a little all over the place because I had a lot of stories. But now I don’t really hear them, and I can be present because of the breath. So, I understood what participant #8 was talking about in that moment, that she was really just there. And so it is interesting to see that how she has brought that into her lesson, and hopefully she will stay there.

F1: When she does that, when she is there, she can concentrate so much better and is not making those basic mistakes. It’s not perfect, but the “flow” is there, and it doesn’t fall apart. That is really very good for her.

PI: It is a good thing. I had some students this week that got a little emotional. They say, “It feels so open.” And I say, “Good, it’s what it is supposed to feel like.” And, it is hard to maintain that.

F1: Yeah. But you are supposed to be an opera singer, you’re an artist.
And I am amazed at some singers that can get up and turn it on, and then they get off the stage and they are not open, they are closed. They know how to get in there and channel something higher than themselves.

That’s who they are. Right. Actors do that. It is interesting.

Would you recommend this workshop to other Universities, and if so, why?

Yes. Because it works. It is a very organized method and it has clear goals. That is why it is worthwhile. It is focuses. There is a lot that comes out of it, and it doesn’t try to do everything within vocal production. It is about something that is primary to singing and foundational. So, that is great. I think if you can get them around the time that you are talking about, age 18, that’s the time for them really hang on to this. I think those are the ones, 18, 19, 20 year olds… they are still at that very pliable age. To see how far people come in the first two vocally, it seems those first two years in college can really make a huge difference. So, if you’ve got that basic foundation and are thinking about your body awareness and breath, you’re in really good shape. To me it is really all about body awareness, that’s all I talk about. I have a hard time understanding people that don’t think in those terms because it is how I think. Although, I did have to start thinking about it when I was a freshman in college. So, it started for them too, so if you can get them when they are walking down the hallway to think about how they are carrying their body and taking their breath, it impacts how the sing so much. To me that is practice, so you can practice eight hours a day. I want you to be concentrating in German class, but think how you are sitting, think how you are breathing.
PI: Are there any changes that you would make to the workshop?

F1: I don’t think so. I would say that I was very open to doing this, so I had no judgement. I came to it with an open mind, and I have come away being a huge advocate. I am big advocate and would recommend it to anybody if they can afford it in the future.

PI: Who knows?

F1: Let’s hope it is a lot.

PI: Thank you!
Transcription of Recorded Interview with Voice Faculty Member #2

PI: Did you find the workshop and method created to be helpful? And if so, could you be specific?

F2: Yes, I can. We had people of very different bodies and voices, and very different backgrounds and ages. From students who have very little knowledge, from just barely reading music to upperclassmen that pretty much think they have it all together. What I found that was across the board, was that everyone came away with something.

F2: I work in partners a lot, so having them partner up a little bit (sometimes it is easier to see on someone else rather than yourself). So again, I thought that was brilliant.

PI: You mean within the group session with the vibrations of sound and movement?

F2: Right, right. I like when you talk about breath, I like the way you describe things. That it isn't just about the body, but the way the breath is drawn in and the way it leaves the body. And there was that one particular moment when you showed exactly where the breath goes and how your body changes, and you had to exaggerate it (that flow). All the workshops and all the things I am seeing, I have never seen anybody do that. It just hit me really strongly, I thought... "I never think about that?" So, I think as a teacher, it certainly brings to mind and refreshes a lot of things you may have forgotten. It brings some of the basics right 'clearly' into focus which has to be done. And I think again, to know that across the board everybody gains something in a group; that's very rare, you know that doesn't happen. Somebody gets something and maybe something, and that's about it. But
to see everybody come to a new light, even as they were leaving, they were still talking. They were fired up about talking about the breath, which again, making them understand that this is your life's work and not only how you sing. Yeah, I thought there were things that were taught in the workshop that are life affirming things that they just need to know in order to sing period, and to speak and carry on. I thought the workshop was very helpful, I would do that often. If it were up to me, I would have it every year.

PI: Did you see a body alignment shift within the students after the stool work? And if so, what were some of the things about the stool work that helped and what are the significant changes within the posture and breath that you saw throughout that section of the workshop and method?

F2: I remember particularly when you were demonstrating and you would talk about the sit muscles about being the basis of the entire torso structure. And that, when they started to experiment with their own…

PI: Of rocking back and forth between the two sit bones?

F2: Yes, of rocking back and forth, and moving around... Even people like CK for example, who had a lot of shoulder stuff. He immediately was able to sense that and know that there was some pain in his shoulder. So, he saw that immediately, there was something wrong here, and he knew he was doing something to make that wrong here. And again, I am thinking of the ones that are the tough ones, the ones who are withdrawn and very quiet; to watch them come into that understanding was wonderful. Whereas, to be specific, TL, didn't really understand until she was able to work with you one-on-one. She understood that
there was something going on, but she couldn't find center by herself because she is never there, she's just not in that center. Again, there were people that had serious issues that knew something had to change, didn't always know exactly what, but because of the stool work, they were aware of other things, other pains, other things that they shouldn't have, certainly not at their age.

PI: I never get to see them around campus, I wonder if the workshop has changed how they walk?

F2: I think so, I think it changes everything. It doesn't always stick and that's why it's so important for the teachers to see the private sessions.

PI: If this workshop and method was offered at other schools, do you feel the faculty members really need to be present for the private sessions?

F2: I think so. If I am going to encourage all of the awareness to continue, then I've got to use some of the language, some of the...

PI: ...key words?

F2: Yes, exactly, exactly! Those key phrases that make them think internally, and find that center again.

PI: For me, you saw that every private session is different because I am diagnosing each student as I'm going. One student may need an emotional word to help them, and another student might need a more technical word. For the practitioner, it's how many ways can you say the same thing.

F2: Exactly! Again, it's very much like teaching voice. But in watching you work with them, I'm looking for that specific phrase that works for them in the session. For me, that is the goal, it's writing that down and knowing specifically. Like with
Scott, specifically what you worked with, what words you said to him to try to release his shoulder. I mean I am hoping I don't have the emotional breakdown that you had to experience, but at the same time.... I saw what Alexandra Church did the same night of her tablework session. We don't always get to do that though. We don't always get to see that follow up right away, and in this situation, it was one of those rare wonderful moments where she worked with you and had that emotional release. If I had had that emotional release, I don't know if I would have been able to sing that night.

PI: We are talking about participant #15, age 18, female, she had open heart surgery at 9-months old where they cracked her sternum for the surgery. What we did during her private session was to get the breath to go into those places that it has not been, in my opinion, since the surgery at 9-months old.

F2: Yes, and she had been protecting it, holding it, protecting it, not allowing anything to go in there. But that emotional release, I don't know that I could have surpassed that and come back and sung that same night. And instead, she was the best she's ever been in performance; it was the most free.

PI: And how would you say that change the tone? What changed about it?

F2: That's what was amazing, the tone was rounder, it was fuller, it was more rooted in her body, the vibrato was more consistent. I mean it was really quite a dramatic change vocally from what I've been hearing, which was a little thin and a little unsupported. And seeing how emotionally and how structurally she was expressing stuff, but not with her breath. And saying, okay this is gonna be a
problem because obviously, this is a very emotionally present person who really wants to say something, but it wasn't happening with the breath.

PI: And so the private session really helped her?

F2: I don't think she could have done that without it. She wasn't going to find that in a classroom or workshop setting. She needed the safety of that one-on-one.

PI: And the private session was a very emotional session with tears.

F2: And you recognized that emotionally, as well as physically, and she felt safe. She was much lighter. And even that night, even though there was a seriousness about her singing in front of her peers; she really wanted to do a good job, I could tell. She was still breathing into that place.

PI: Did she still have her hand over her heart?

F2: She still had her hand there and she was really breathing into that place before she got up. I mean I saw... it was pretty dramatic, there's no two ways about that, that was life and death. And to have found that in her first semester Freshman year. Boy that's going to make everything easier from here on out, so that was huge!

PI: Let's just talk about that really quick, the emotional link that is with the breath. How do you work with students who can go there emotionally versus students who can't?

F2: It's really funny, I've never seen emotion not be connected to the breath. And that's because in 25 years of teaching there are too many times when I've got my hand on their sternum and my hand on their lower back. And I'm talking about feeling their breath in this column and out of the blue, I will get these statements that are... of great physical and emotional pain.
PI: And what do you do with that emotional information?

F2: Yeah, and it happens a lot. It is in my philosophy of teaching that if you don't create a safe place, you never get to know the real singer. And if you don't understand that singers are affected by their emotions. So, if you have a singer who has gone through a recent loss, or a divorce, or... chances are they're flating. Chances are they are not singing on their breath, their energy is not up. You can tell when someone has a broken heart and they're singing, the joy of singing is not there. They are not able to get their body to do what's supposed to do. To see someone that emotionally distraught and have her release that, and watch the effects of that healing in the same day, that was a therapist's fee. And that's something that I don't think that non-singers get.

PI: The workshop is about creating a safe container for emotions and it's hard sometimes. And how do you statistically rate emotion? But it has to be addressed, and it has to be talked about within our area.

F2: It has to. For instance, the one young man who did not participate in the study has so many issues with learning, learning disabled, and Asperger’s, not liking to be touched, and all those other things. So many issues there that literally crippled him from even being able to try to do this and that saddens me so much. And I saw him today for a lesson, and I said, "You know, the reality is you missed this opportunity and it would have served you well for the next four years. And I am a very cheap comparison compared to what he could do. I don't have that knowledge or those skills, my knowledge is different. And I can say things to you and I can encourage you, but I can't lead your body to it like he can."
PI: Obviously, anyone reading this can't see the table work, but if you could describe the table work and the hand movements, would you say that it is leading the singer through the breath? How would you describe it?

F2: I like the way you said that it recoordinates, you're recoordinating those muscles to provide what you need. Cause you may be breathing fine, but you're not letting the air out, or you may not be taking in a full breath, or you can't get it out. Most of the time you can't get it out, or you are closing down on the way out. I am always saying they are getting in the way of that freedom. In the table session, I would say you are actually recoordinating those breath efforts, so that you're leading the body into its natural path. And trying to find that natural path, when you had all the emotions or the scarring of bad teachers, or... yeah, all of that is in that person. You cannot not run into that along the way.

PI: We just had a session with someone that had shoulder surgery three months ago, so you could tell that his whole side was locking up. And to recoordinate that breath in the whole injured area, obviously was big for him.

F2: And to encourage to direct the breath into that area, no... heal that area, bring it oxygen, give it some love.

PI: Can you sense a difference is the self-confidence level? Because that's one of the things I was looking at within the study, did the self-confidence level increase?

F2: Well I can say that it increased ten-fold. For the first time, participant #12, instead of us struggling so hard to create a new torso, a new way of standing that was just against everything in his body, and we kept saying, "Why does this feel so weird, why does this look so funny on you? Even when you do get your shoulders back,
the whole the looks funny on you." And his body is so slim and so small from back-to-back. I kept thinking this is going to be the most lyric baritone I'm ever gonna find, but I saw an immediate change in him after the workshop. And after yesterday, I know he's just gone bazonkers because he immediately texted me and said, "Best year." So, that meant he got so excited…

PI: He was ecstatic from the private session.

F2: He was beside himself, so he immediately went and started working on what he considers the next challenge to him vocally.

PI: So the information in the private session was the thing that put him over into the next level?

F2: Right. So now he will be totally focused for the next year because I have new tools that I feel confident in using.

PI: Do you feel that the way the workshop and method is presented that... (Of course, I know I diagnose within each person, but there is a unified knowledge that comes with that) ...you can see an improvement rate within the studio? Or how does that transfer into the studio?

F2: What I found was... the students and I were able to talk about it in masterclasses and lessons after the workshop. We could talk about what did you feel. And when you were on the stool, I saw you noticing your shoulders. What was going on there? So, we were able to take in those moments that were not always openly discussed. Although we did discuss CK’s shoulder because I could see it. And I think that brought it even more home. Because it wasn't that I did a workshop and it led me over here. No, I did a workshop and we talked about it, and we tried to
apply those things, and my teacher looked at their notes and used some of the same words and some of the same key phrases that would recreate that moment of internal knowledge.

PI: Bringing them back to that awareness?

F2: Yes, yes.

PI: Did the students seem more focused with the breath and body, or in their singing? I know Glenn Siebert said, "This person came in more focused and that she was always all over the place, and all of a sudden she's coming in focused after this workshop. And how long would that last?" I hope it continues. But I wonder, does it improve focus? Because we all know the breath is centering.

F2: I think if they did some of the things they're supposed to do before they walk in the lesson, but the reality is that they're coming right from another class. It takes about 10 minutes to get in the room. But in those 10 minutes; if I'm employing some of the things we talked about and using some of those keywords, it seems to come more quickly and then they are focused. I have to say most of my kids are pretty focused with their lessons.

PI: Part of the dissertation is acknowledging, not really defending, but acknowledging that we learn through experiences, that singers learn through experiences. So, it's not about putting the information first, but it's about putting the experience first. Could you say what you think on that?

F2: I think that is exactly what you do. You let them experience it without saying, “I’m gonna do this, I'm gonna do this, I'm gonna do this..." No, the only "reason"
I'm gonna do is this, this, and this... That's it. That's so you know something is coming.

PI: Now for Universities that's a little... UNCSA functions more as a conservatory, in that aspect.

F2: Right. But it is about finding that base zero, okay let's find zero if that makes any sense. Because they're coming in here at a negative. Let's find zero and then we can build from there. But let's find the zero homeostasis where everything is just functioning, not excelling, but just functioning at its proper place.

PI: Now were there any specific things about the tablework that you thought was helpful? We have the Breathing Coordination section which is the numbers...

F2: I think that's incredibly important. Because again as a voice teacher sitting here, you can tell when everything is lined up. As you said the thin cords, you can hear when that approximation is nice and clean and the breath is actually right there where it should be. Yeah, I don't think it makes much sense without adding voice to it. For a singer, it just has to be... You can't just do the bodywork and then okay, go sing. Cause I'll separate them; I won't necessarily put them together.

PI: And for me, designing the table work, I'm obviously combining methods. I'm using a little bit of Ilse Middendorf and John Norris which came out of Berlin, and then I move into Breathing Coordination. I felt that those tension release methods were so important to implement before coordinating the voice.

F2: Right. That's the negative. You are coming in at that negative, I've got to get you to zero before you can grow anywhere.
PI: Yes, I have to get you to zero before we can go to the voice. So from a design standpoint, not trying to offend any of the methods I studied because I respect all of my teachers and mentors, but I felt that some led into others better than others. I could see that one method could actually make the other method stronger. Not that it was weak to begin with, but we can just build on it. And somebody will take the work that I do, and they will build onto it, as they should. That's the whole point of having a method. I think when people get locked into a method, their method can implode. So, it's about… 'Okay, I have Alexander, I have Feldenkrais, I have Breathing Coordination, I have Unlock Your Breath. All these things. We have to be creative. As you said, many times, we are moving to an era of a holistic approach to the voice.

F2: Right. Oh yes. I think the holistic musician is exactly where we're moving, for the holistic musician. You think about all the repetitive injuries that comes out of other music studios, never mind voice. You know what I mean? It's like... what, we don't have repetitive injuries, we can do it to. Oh yeah, we can really repeat and hurt those muscles. Yeah, I thought the moving into the voice as the final is exactly where it should have been.

PI: Within the pelvic, I was able to relieve quite a bit in the pelvis area on the table, and did not have to do so much floor work with it. And I thought that worked successful.

F2: I did too. Only with someone like MX which was an extreme case of non-movement, that it's like.... okay, we’ve got to try something here so we can get the bottom part of the body to engage.
PI: I have decided that maybe less is more, if they can feel the breath without building so much pressure in the pelvic area. But can still feel the pelvic area and let it gently guide the air versus using force.

F2: Yep, yep. Exactly.

PI: Like you said, we used it with ZL today and that worked on the table. So we used the Pilates ring on the table and combining some of the numbers. Did the students get a clear idea of how the 'breath flow' functions within the compression of breath required for singing? So again, that cord closure.

F2: Yeah. Yeah, it worked tremendously.

PI: Do you think the student's knowledge of the mind-body-voice relationship has increased?

F2: Absolutely.

PI: Can you hear an improvement in individual students and the voice studio as a whole? So, sound improvements, vocal improvements?

F2: Oh yes, absolutely.

PI: If you had to describe the resonance of the tones, what would...

F2: If I had to describe it, I would say deeper and rounder, even for the high soprani. Just because they now vibrating through that chest area rather than pass it or having to squeeze some around that area. I heard an improvement within consistency of vibrato, in the warmth of the tone, in the roundness of the instrument itself. I felt like it was coming from their core. And there was a big confidence jump; that's a big deal! You can't underestimate that for young singers,
that's 90% of it. Trying to give yourself a healthy singer ego is hard when you're starting and everybody else is better than you, and you're just overwhelmed.

PI: That's huge! I think have covered most of it... We have talked about the sense of unity within the studio by just having the conversations. Would you recommend this workshop to other Universities?

F2: Absolutely! In fact, I can't imagine having a music program and not using it.

PI: If you were to say a testimonial about the workshop... because you mentioned "The Singer's Healer." What would that testimonial be?

F2: I would say, if I were gonna write something on the back cover of your book, I would probably say, "There isn't a singer working today that shouldn't be reading this. And there isn't a singer who wants to work tomorrow that should not commit this to memory because this is really a way of healing the singer." You are getting back to the basics of breath which everybody knows. Especially opera singers, we get it, we get it, we get it. The first thing I say to every student is, "I'm gonna be really about breath a lot and I'm gonna drive you crazy, but that's because I was an opera singer and it just doesn't work unless you can breathe. And if you can't breathe, you just can't sing. So that's where it comes from. But I really do believe that if there is a working singer who doesn't know this, or someone who thinks they're gonna have a career singing, and doesn't know this, hasn't had a workshop, hasn't done a real breakdown of this information... How can you possibly expect to go out there and do this day after day? It takes so much reinforcement. Boy...
PI: And vulnerability... If there was one word that was spoken throughout the whole
breathwork workshop, that kept coming up was "Well, this feels
vulnerable." Welcome to singing.

F2: Yeah, and you would think you would feel more powerful, but it's your so open
and you feel open. You're like... uh oh.

PI: Yeah, and that would always happen after the table session. (But I'm so open...)

F2: And so different when they would say things like... I feel buoyant, but I feel
grounded. I feel light, but I feel heavy. There were these opposites, but they
would say them in the same phrase and I thought... isn't that funny. And you
really do feel more grounded here, but you feel lighter here because you're not
working so hard, you're not…

PI: I think that's it, unless there's anything else you want to add.

F2: No. Everything was successful and I can't wait for the masterclass.
PI: Did you find the method and workshop created helpful? And if so, what are the specifics?

F3: I found it to be very helpful. We teachers on occasion also need to be taught, and it's wonderful to be able to sit back and observe. Not just other languages, but more physiological languages; to be able to observe students as they are on table or receiving an individual breathing session and noting where their natural tensions lie gives us more conduits for understanding and unlocking the instrument, each individual instrument. To relate the breathwork to phonation: also helpful because Bradley is and was a singer. To observe students in the group workshop where they’re all doing their stretches simultaneously, and then observe one of my singers, participant #25, who is new to my studio, get up and sing with exactly the balance of forward resonance and relaxed larynx and open body - the sound that I consider to be well balance - to see her get up and sing with that, without having to over-think, without having to put her mind in a technical mode; the sound just occurred. So, that allowed me to tell her, yep, that is the path we are looking for and also help broaden her basis for understanding what she can do on her own to get the body to that position and open breathing.

PI: In the private session with participant #25, she is very athletic and has very little fat. And so, to get her into her lower abdominals, she was trying to understand how that works for someone of her nature. Where does she push, or pull from? And is she seeing her whole body as one unit? I think in the stool work, it opened her up in every direction, so she couldn’t push or pull on anything. It just worked.
F3: The realization of her letting go of her jaw for example, even in a private breathing session to release that many of the things that she fights in her singing to release, she also fights in her life, she is an achiever, she is a doer, she is a smart girl, she wants to do it correctly now, she wants the right buttons to push to make that happen. So, that was also helpful that it was confirmation from another area. The stool work was most helpful for her. One of the exercises we repeated in her lesson because I have been asking all my students, “From the stool work, what one or two of the exercises was your favorite? Which did you feel the most released or opening in which area?” The answers varied, and for her it was the standing and the scooping up the breath from the flow and pressing the palms together while that opened her lower back where she has had a lot of constriction. And also opened her pelvic floor.

PI: And what other exercises did you see as a theme?

F3: Not all liked the same thing. For example, the freshman male, participant #29, that I have with the lower voice has scoliosis, and as you were working with him, we discovered that that particular chair work with the bending or rocking side-to-side with the sit bones was not good for him. So, sitting upright and moving the arms perhaps, that work was better for him.

PI: Yes, he expressed the foot stuff really grounded him and all the way up to the hip joint. That was very good knowledge for me going forward, to be able to be clear about injuries and scoliosis.

F3: There is a tenor graduate student that you worked with in a private session. And as a youngster and as a teenager he played saxophone, he carried lots of
instruments around on his back as he was walking to and fro from classes in university. That is PS. He talked about a place closer to the middle of his back, upper and closer to the shoulder blade, where was always in pain and it always hurt, etc. And in that private breathing session, that area released for him. He was astounded by it, it was so open, an openness that he hadn’t felt in a long time. Many times, you don’t realize that you’re not open, or that you have been rigid or in pain until it is gone. So, he felt that instant flood of gratitude, and so your breathwork opens up cells to memories they haven’t experienced in a while. He was a little emotional, but got right past it. And that is something that has hung on. I saw him for a lesson yesterday, and he said “It is completely free. It is the same. It’s gone, it is just gone.” He is overjoyed!

F3: The face that you could identify so well with the young bass, participant #13, that I had that came from an acting background. This is the beginning of his third year studying with me. He is quiet the tai chi man. Very active, well put together, acting instincts like nobody’s business. Your work with him, not just only on the breathing, but because you are a singer and you’re a bass, that 20 minutes of work you did with him are similar things I would have done, but I could not sound like you if I tried. For him not only to have the cord closure exercise, but to a method and the means for accomplishing it. And to hear you say, “no, you are doing this, no, you are doing that.” And to hear you demonstrate even though you didn’t feel that you were at your best, in such a manner that the air is not pushing against the cords so hard, there is a lot of empathy that comes from demonstration. Both the description and the demonstration were helpful for him.
PI: Obviously, awareness is built over time. When you are doing a workshop like this, when do you start to see the awareness fade?

F3: The memories, etc.…

PI: Are there ways to give the keywords to get back to it?

F3: The openness accompanied with, let’s say since you have had similar training to Dalora Zajick. The discovery of that masterclass and the videos that I have taken of you working with the students, as well as the camera work, that helps. It is not the same as having you here, but that is something that I will need to tap into periodically to remind myself. I remind myself of the verbiage, but also the sensations of what I was experiencing in a room. Those are what fade, those acute images. They are so tactful at the time and so vibrant. And you're right, in terms of a time frame. Participant #13 sang in Masterclass, he saw you a week ago and retained a good bit of it. After a few weeks, he has lost just a little bit of the openness.

F3: I learn from my students, and I learn from others around me. They used to make me feel inadequate, quite frankly, and now I realize that’s just life and that’s how it goes. And nobody can be all things to all people. If you block that energy, then you can’t think anyway.

F3: You started me on a road to become more anatomically minded, to realize that my teacher did all these things, but didn’t necessarily need to put them into words or couldn’t put them into words exactly. Is that for us, in order to make it more of a process and less of an arrival.

PI: Did you see a difference in the way students were carrying themselves?
F3: That’s tougher because you have to ride them all the time, and remind them.

PI: I saw a student today and had to point out that she was slouching.

F3: With the speaking voice, the bass that I talked about, you have helped him find this other resonance. He now pays attention when I mention his speaking voice. Because it is not natural, it is hard for him to employ it regularly.

PI: Could you see a difference in the participants’ self-confidence level?

F3: I think so, for sure. Now many of them, to be able to refer to the openness that they found in the workshop, and helping them find it again is challenging. Half the time I have to go to their back and place my hands close to where you had your hands. I used the elastic belt on participant #15 the other day, and it gave her a place to feel where the breath needed to happen, something to resist back at her.

PI: I remember using an elastic belt when I was studying with Dr. Everett McCorvey because I just didn’t feel anything.

F3: When you’re slender it is difficult. I am reminded that pretty much many male singers in the early 20th century used some kind of mechanism to remind him until it became habit.

PI: Did you find the students to be more focused on the breath and body, and its relationship to the voice?

F3: I found them to be open to reminders, and to want to go there, to have that relationship, and to be able to go a back. I am sure they all walked into their choir rehearsals wanting to maintain that.

F3: Participant #20 was able to vocalize with an open breath and tell this particular emotional problem where to go and to get away from him in the table session.
PI: Yes, he experienced abuse as a child, and was grabbed from behind many times on the shoulders. During the table session, it was discovered that he wanted to lock in the shoulder girdle. He mentioned that he was locking in that area out of experiencing the trauma in his childhood. I directed him to give that little boy a voice, and he walked away with a mantra of “I am commanding my space.” That is a wonderful thing to walk away with.

F3: Him in particular, I see more self-confidence in him and he is carrying it into his lessons because he is not defeated by what he can’t do yet. He understands and he is able to grasp the concepts more easily, and he is good with it not being perfect; as opposed to feeling beaten down. I hope he can hang on to it, and I think he will.

PI: There is an emotional aspect to the breath. How do we measure emotion? How do we talk about the experience, and how do we carry it through as an aspect of the breath? Sometimes we are being locked in areas of the body that are from an emotional cause.

F3: Unknowingly, that’s the thing. We build forts and develop our defenses over time, and we are not aware we are doing that, it is just the reaction to the situation we don’t like. How to balance it? I think first of all; you have to understand what opening the body in this way can do. I have seen it so many times, not just in others, but in myself. I was with a coach once, who was empathetic, and he was trying to impart some tones to me, just tones. As I was coaching with him, that tone struck a cell somewhere in my and I had to stop because it brought me to tears. That was just a tone.
PI: So we need that safe container. Do you feel overall there was a very good safe container for the students?

F3: Oh yes. Absolutely, and very professional. You did not approach these issues yourself. For example, participant #20 brought it up when you noticed tension in his shoulders. He then produced this is why I think it has happened, and was obviously ready to release it. It was very safe, and I was in the room for all those private sessions.

PI: It is my rule that I don’t bring anything up, unless they bring it up. I will go there if they want, but there are also boundaries as to how far I will go. I will only go as far as the breath allows. Even when I am pressing in on a muscle, I only go as far as the breath allows me to. The breath will show you its limitation. I believe the breath shows you not only the physical limitations, but also the emotional limitations. And to be able to sense that is very important.

PI: Did you hear any specific changes in the voice after the table work? Was it resonance?

F3: Oh yes. It was resonance, openness; all the terms we would apply in freedom of singing. Let’s say for example, PS. After the table session, he was able to vocalize to a similar tone that he wanted to apply anyway, but without the accompanying body tensions that usually preceded the tones. Pretty much every vocalist, felt more open and the singing was easy.

F3: After my table session with you, I thought I have not been this open in a very long time.
PI: It’s a very vulnerable feeling, and that came up with everyone. Being open is vulnerable.

F3: That’s true, but also wonderfully calm for most of us, and a control in a difference sense and way.

PI: Other words that came up were, I feel grounded, but buoyant. These opposite words.

F3: Where you had us after a session, I don’t know if any of us can get to that place on our own. It won’t be the same because they are doing it for themselves. Because the gentle touching in some areas that we cannot reach, there are lots of reasons why one will not duplicate that. You have to know that and go with the bits of information that help you become more open. You will see some singers and they know what to do. By this time in their careers, they may be holding something else in order to stay open, but they know that is where they are supposed to be. That that is the objective, and they know how to compensate or manage that in the moment until it is more open.

PI: Do you feel that the method or workshop is valuable for undergraduate or professionals?

F3: I believe with the 18 year olds, it depends on how much mentally agile they are and how much they can grasp physiological concepts.

PI: Do you feel that after the workshop, the students know what a low breath is?

F3: I think they do know, and I think it is not reflexive for them. The value of the workshop is that even though it is not necessarily present in their minds, when they get up to sing as young singers, I’m gonna get up and sing now…. Yikes.
But in sessions, we have to go to where is the breath happening for you, what are your knees doing, etc. Then they remember, oh I did do that. It’s about helping them get back there. And because they have experienced it once, you go back to add building blocks to put it back in. You have to insist.

PI: Once you have experienced something, it is your knowledge. As a singer, it does bring them back. They may not know all the details, but they know the experience. Being able to recall it is the key.

PI: Do you feel like the format of the workshop worked?

F3: A group session everyday with the basics would be great: stool and toning. Developing a process that they repeat constantly everyday would help them. Giving them three things to do every day would be great.

PI: Where do you see the method going?

F3: You cannot limit the method to one group of people. I think instrumentalists would really benefit especially if they need to be open. Singers of course need this because they have to be open. Anybody in life could use this method. You are going to find a market for those people that need more confidence or have been locked away. You could also work with high end business corporations. I know with your work, I am going to be more released and open then I have ever been in my life.

PI: Were there elements of the tablework that you liked?

F3: The Ted Puffer exercises that you used at the end of the table session really worked well. The east and west breath also worked really well.
PI: Do you feel the mind-body-voice relationship came to one in the workshop process?

F3: I think it was demonstrated for it all to come together. And now they have the awareness there.

PI: Were you able to see any improvement in tone, grounding, resonance?

F3: Yes. There were a few better than others. Having that first morning session as part of a daily process for a voice program would set them up well for the day.

PI: How important is it that the voice teacher be present to help integrate that material?

F3: It would have been entirely a different workshop for me if I had not been there. What I was able to learn and apply, being in the room and learning more about my students, and being able to observe without doing the work was invaluable. I would not understand the session and the emotional openings without being there. You provide a safe environment, and the teacher is the second safe person.

PI: The voice teacher is a mentor, but also a parental figure in many ways. Would you recommend the workshop and method to other universities?

F3: Are you kidding, absolutely! I am so appreciative of you coming to do the workshop, and the tablework really does help everyone discover the singer’s breath. I think it is so opening. Students come out of the table session sounding better, and the teacher needs to be there to know how it happened, and so they don’t feel like chopped liver when the student comes back to their studio. Plus, they need to be in their student’s session to get to know their student, and to get to know their breathing system.
APPENDIX F

Notes and Memos

The following are notes and memos taken during the workshop. Participants’ names have been removed and given random letters as initials to maintain confidentiality.

Investigator’s Notes and Memos

PK:  Biking accident from this summer and pulling on the left shoulder girdle/scapula area. Previous sport background is football. He has a muscle memory of locking the pectoral muscles on the onset of the breath and tone, especially the right pectoral muscle. It is my opinion that the right pectoral muscle is also compensating for the pain and tension coming from the left shoulder area. We worked on opening up the chest area and releasing around the upper ribs/cartilage. The neck muscles on the left side are also tight because of the pain in the left shoulder area. We tried breathing into the soreness to open the tissue and expand the area; this was somewhat successful. Within the voice, we explored for resonance and the concept of the voice going out the ears. We also worked on finding a more consistent airflow and diaphragm coordination.

FA:  Participant’s body posture and breath connection is very much influenced to her self-confidence and being an introvert. She is very intuitive and sensitive to people around her. She had a previous horseback riding accident, breaking off one of the wings of the bone on L3. We worked on realigning the body and the upper back/chest/shoulder girdle area. She had mentioned that she holds the upper part of the back to compensate for the injury. Because of her horseback riding
experience and training, we did not work on the pelvic floor. We used a lot of the horseback riding technique to relate to her singing and to her power/energy within daily life. We worked on the voice and bringing that energy of riding the horse into her speech. Therefore, we were able to engage the solar plexus with the idea of the horse. The narrowing of the pelvis on the exhale and releasing on the inhale is very natural to her because of her riding training. The goal was for her to feel her strength and alignment, to not only sense the physical, but to link the emotional into the experience. She looked like a different person when she left and was radiant with joy.

MD: Participant was locked in upper ribs and not getting hardly in movement in the upper torso. We worked on opening the cartilage in order to find more movement in the top of the rib cage. After getting the upper ribs to expand on the inhale, we worked on releasing them on the exhale. When working on the voice, we addressed the cord closure and breath compression coordination. We worked on not letting the compression come up into the chest level, but utilizing the abdominals to strengthen the solar plexus. We worked on engaging the lower abdominals before introducing the voice, making sure he was in the body and on his support.

CK: Participant showed little movement in the upper torso and the right side of the rib cage was about an inch shorter than the left. We worked on opening the rib cartilage while releasing the articulators in the spinal regions. Once we were able to release the muscles holding the right side, we then brought the right ribs into
balance with the left. We were able to gain about an inch on the right side to balance out the mechanism.

RS: Participant has bursitis in her left upper scapula/shoulder area. We worked on relieving the chest/pectoral area, which was over compensating for the bursitis. In addition, the left side of the neck was tight and causing some pulling to the left. We worked very much on getting the upper torso to release and balance. When moving into the voice, we worked on cord closure and letting the sound go out her ears. We did some warm ups, really finding the east-west stretch in the palate as she ascended into her top. In order to balance or transfer the pressure back down to the lower abdomen, I had her stand in the genie pose.

PM: Participant presented very closed in and compacted with the whole upper torso, major pulling in the scapula to the extent that he almost looked like an emphysema patient. We worked on opening the chest area once the shoulders/scapulae were positioned and stretched to the aligned position. The entire upper torso looked as if it had changed shape. We then went into the voice; too much pressure was being placed under the cords. We balanced out the air pressure above and below the cords by having the participant open the larynx east and west on the inhalation. This allowed for the larynx to tilt without sub glottal pressure being used to depress the larynx. We also spoke about engaging the abdominals before the voice started. Participant is very skinny and needs to work on strengthening the abdominal muscles to help feed and support the breath. By the end, the tone was more balanced, sounding with more sparkle with the naturalness of the bass voice.
WK: Participant presented with only a slight lower abdominal engagement. We worked on opening the chest area and cartilage. She carries tension in the chest and shoulder area. Her pattern is to lock and load with the upper torso rather than using the lower abdominals. Participant mentioned that she felt she was finding she could push past her body’s uncomfortability level and find a lower breath. It is my opinion that because the participant is over-weight, there is a body image issue with letting it all hang out. We spoke briefly about this and her need to use humor to make herself feel comfortable socially. We discussed maintaining her energy and not sending it out to others, breaking old patterns of using humor, and channeling the breath to find comfort with herself. We then moved into the voice; participant’s tone was airy because of the lack of abdominal support. We worked on some cord closure exercises, but brought more attention to the lower abdominals. This was successful in helping the cords speak on the fine edges.

RS: Participant seems very self-confident. Shoulders/scapula/chest was pulled up; we worked on releasing and finding the east-west stretch. We were really about to get a nice width and show the contrast between the two states. Participant seems to have good body awareness. When we went to work on the voice, a lot of air was coming through. We worked on the numbers, but it was not as successful as I would have liked. We then used some of Ted Puffer’s exercises, which did help to find the cord closer. We then tried to engage the lower abdominals to help with the support. We spoke a lot about her speaking voice as by shying away from being too loud, she is then coming off her support and building a muscle memory of her cords not approximating during speech. We were successful, but more
work could be done to help her find the thin fine edge cord approximation needed for singing. Without that type of cord closure and body support, it is very hard to hear the kernel of sound.

MP: Participant was completely locked and had a very hard time releasing the tension during the first part of the table work. After really working the ribcage, shoulder girdle, and pectoral region, the participant was able to find a good expansion. This would definitely be beginner work and allowing the participant to learn through contrast. Because there was so much upper body tension, we were unable to explore the pelvic floor as much as I would have preferred. During the voice work, we really worked on trying to get the air out of the vocal production and focusing on thin cord approximation. We were somewhat successful and the participant began to feel the compression in the ribcage. As we moved into speaking, we covered the east-west stretch that is needed in the pharyngeal area and palatal region.

CN: Amazing session! Participant was able to reach a state within the breath that was not attached to the past or future. She actually said she felt like a child again and laughed. We were very successful opening the body. Participant mentioned that she was vibrating from the pelvic region to the top of the head, even her teeth were vibrating. We then worked on the voice and engaging the lower abdominal, bringing forth the true kernel of sound. Solar plexus region was able to kick-in and sustain the tone. As the participant sat up and felt the inner/outer alignment, she was overcome with tears of joy. She said it was like meeting herself in a way
that it was just her, and she had no cares of people’s opinion regarding her. She was feeling what it was like to truly be herself and to like it.

GD: Very successful session. Participant was very constricted in the upper torso, shoulders rounded and dropped, tense in the shoulder blade and pectoral region. Once we were able to get the participant open and breathing into place never before felt, the breath, ribcage, and shoulder girdle was able to move freely. Participant also was able to reach a state of awareness where he mentioned that he was vibrating from the pelvic region to the head. We worked a little of the pelvic floors and the concepts involved in the singer’s breath. When working with the voice, we tried to get him to actively engage the mechanism. Because he is an introvert, it appeared difficult for him to engage his full-voice with the lower abdominal/solar plexus connection. However, once he felt the engagement and had the awareness, he was enthusiastic to recreate the sensation. Once we moved to sitting and standing position with the vocal production, the participant verbalized that he felt very vulnerable being that open. We addressed vulnerability within singing, speaking, and being in our body versus pulling back from interaction with others and engagement of Self.
APPENDIX G

Raw Data, Variables, and Statistical Results from
Pre- and Post-Workshop Ordinal Data

Quantitative Data Results

The quantitative data is in the same consecutive order that is found in Chapter 4 (Results/Discussion). Tables G.1 through G.5 contain the reliability statistics for the five category scales: Self-Rating of Self-Confidence, Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge, Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception, Self-Rating of Self-Awareness, and Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing.

Table G.1. Reliability of Self-Rating of Self-Confidence Scale (pre-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha</td>
<td>.805</td>
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<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your confidence within your breath, body, and voice.</td>
<td>32.741</td>
<td>62.190</td>
<td>.366</td>
<td>.334</td>
<td>.811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your self-confidence</td>
<td>32.483</td>
<td>49.169</td>
<td>.813</td>
<td>.815</td>
<td>.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: What potential do you feel you have as a professional singer?</td>
<td>30.345</td>
<td>64.716</td>
<td>.448</td>
<td>.557</td>
<td>.799</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How well do you like your voice?</td>
<td>30.466</td>
<td>68.731</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>.815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How well do you like your body?</td>
<td>32.569</td>
<td>46.834</td>
<td>.616</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>.770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: What is your self-confidence level?</td>
<td>32.431</td>
<td>45.317</td>
<td>.830</td>
<td>.839</td>
<td>.701</td>
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Table G.2. Reliability of Self-Rating of Self-Confidence Scale (post-workshop)

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<td>post: Rate your confidence within your breath, body, and voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your self-confidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: What potential do you feel you have as a professional singer?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: How well do you like your voice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: How well do you like your body?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: What is your self-confidence level?</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Table G.3. Reliability of Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge Scale (pre-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
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<tr>
<td>.897</td>
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<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate how well you understand your relationship between your ribs and the diaphragm.</td>
<td>28.172</td>
<td>73.791</td>
<td>.689</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.883</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How well do you understand your body and its function?</td>
<td>28.414</td>
<td>72.537</td>
<td>.811</td>
<td>.703</td>
<td>.868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How well do you understand vocal resonance and production?</td>
<td>27.931</td>
<td>76.495</td>
<td>.712</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your understanding of the engagement of the pelvic floor.</td>
<td>30.759</td>
<td>71.904</td>
<td>.605</td>
<td>.534</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your understanding of the structure and function of the breathing mechanism.</td>
<td>28.793</td>
<td>67.099</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td>.761</td>
<td>.861</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your understanding of the breathing cycle.</td>
<td>29.552</td>
<td>64.328</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.629</td>
<td>.877</td>
</tr>
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Table G.4. Reliability of Self-Rating of Body/Breathing Knowledge Scale (post-workshop)

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<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate how well you understand your relationship between your ribs and the diaphragm.</td>
<td>31.483</td>
<td>11.330</td>
<td>.537</td>
<td>.507</td>
<td>.742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: How well do you understand vocal resonance and production?</td>
<td>32.224</td>
<td>11.493</td>
<td>.421</td>
<td>.307</td>
<td>.783</td>
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<tr>
<td>post: Rate your understanding of the engagement of the pelvic floor.</td>
<td>32.224</td>
<td>8.957</td>
<td>.750</td>
<td>.585</td>
<td>.659</td>
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<tr>
<td>post: Rate your understanding of the breathing cycle</td>
<td>31.362</td>
<td>12.409</td>
<td>.471</td>
<td>.357</td>
<td>.763</td>
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252
Table G.5. Reliability of Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception Scale (pre-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.795</td>
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<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</td>
<td>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How much do you care what others think about you or your singing?</td>
<td>6.241</td>
<td>8.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: How much do you care what other people think?</td>
<td>7.241</td>
<td>5.904</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table G.6. Reliability results for Self-Rating of Concern with Others’ Perception Scale (post-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.925</td>
<td>.928</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</td>
<td>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: How much do you care what others think about you or your singing?</td>
<td>6.121</td>
<td>6.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: How much do you care what other people think?</td>
<td>6.500</td>
<td>5.607</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table G.7. Reliability of Self-Rating of Self-Awareness Scale (pre-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliability Statistics</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach's Alpha</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td>.775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Based on Standardized Items</td>
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<table>
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<th>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</th>
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<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your breath/body awareness within normal daily activities.</td>
<td>16.224</td>
<td>30.493</td>
<td>.574</td>
<td>.362</td>
<td>.729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your awareness of where your center of breath is located.</td>
<td>15.810</td>
<td>31.150</td>
<td>.426</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.792</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your awareness of your body's weight/gravity as related to breathing and singing.</td>
<td>16.483</td>
<td>19.759</td>
<td>.747</td>
<td>.606</td>
<td>.622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your breath/body awareness within your singing.</td>
<td>15.621</td>
<td>27.530</td>
<td>.620</td>
<td>.480</td>
<td>.700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table G.8. Reliability of Self-Rating of Self-Awareness Scale (post-workshop)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Totat Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your breath/body awareness within normal daily activities.</td>
<td>24.034</td>
<td>10.534</td>
<td>.572</td>
<td>.338</td>
<td>.849</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your awareness of where your center of breath is located post: Rate your awareness of your body’s weight/gravity as related to breathing and singing.</td>
<td>23.259</td>
<td>8.904</td>
<td>.692</td>
<td>.495</td>
<td>.801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your breath/body awareness within your singing.</td>
<td>23.638</td>
<td>8.087</td>
<td>.748</td>
<td>.588</td>
<td>.776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table G.9. Reliability of Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing Scale (pre-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Totat Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your breath control within singing.</td>
<td>10.276</td>
<td>8.207</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>.694</td>
<td>.814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate your breathing recovery time within singing.</td>
<td>11.000</td>
<td>9.000</td>
<td>.764</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>.874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre: Rate the ease and comfort in which you are able to direct your breath.</td>
<td>11.207</td>
<td>9.027</td>
<td>.782</td>
<td>.627</td>
<td>.858</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table G.10. Reliability of Self-Rating of Breathing in Singing Scale (post-workshop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items</th>
<th>N of Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.788</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>3</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item-TOTAL STATISTICS</th>
<th>Scale Mean if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Scale Variance if Item Deleted</th>
<th>Corrected Item-Total Correlation</th>
<th>Squared Multiple Correlation</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your breath control within singing.</td>
<td>14.448</td>
<td>6.113</td>
<td>.664</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate your breathing recovery time within singing.</td>
<td>15.103</td>
<td>3.453</td>
<td>.728</td>
<td>.533</td>
<td>.662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post: Rate the ease and comfort in which you are able to direct your breath.</td>
<td>13.552</td>
<td>6.399</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>.373</td>
<td>.751</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Quantitative Categories from Ordinal Data Results:

Pair 1: Self-Confidence (general): Questions 3, 4, 5, 7, 21, 22
Pair 2: Self-Confidence (targeted): Questions 4, 22
Pair 3: Breath-Body-Voice Confidence: Question 3
Pair 4: Voice Likability: Question 7
Pair 5: Body Likability: Question 21
Pair 6: Career Potential: Question 5
Pair 7: Body/Breath Knowledge: Questions 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17
Pair 8: Self-Perception: Questions 6, 23
Pair 9: Self-Awareness: Questions 2, 16, 19, 20
Pair 10: Self-Rating of Breathing: Questions 10, 11, 18
Pair 11: Breath Control: Question 10
Pair 12: Breathing Recovery Time: Question 11
Pair 13: Ease of Breathing: Question 18
Pair 14: Perception of Judgement: Question 9
Pair 15: Total True/False Correct: all 29 T/F questions

Table G.11 shows the means and standard deviations of the pre- and post-workshop data for each of the following categories: Self-Confidence; Breath-Body-Voice Confidence; Voice Likability; Body Likability; Career Potential; Body/Breath.
Knowledge; Self-Perception; Self-Awareness; Self-Rating of Breathing; Breath Control; Breathing Recovery Time; Ease of Breathing; Perception of Judgement; and Total True/False Correct.

*Table G.11. Means and standard deviations of the ordinal scale categories.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pair</th>
<th>Pre_Confidence</th>
<th>Post_Confidence</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Table G.12 shows the paired samples *t* tests results and the significance between the pre- and post-workshop category scores.

**Table G.12. Paired samples *t* test results.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th><em>t</em></th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Pair 1 Pre_Confidence - Post_Confidence</td>
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<td>Pair 10 Pre_Breathing_Rating Post_Breathing_Rating</td>
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**Pearson Correlations**

The Pearson correlations are discussed in Chapter 4 (Results/Discussion) and are in the same consecutive order. The four correlations reveal the post-workshop relationship between Voice and Breath-Body-Voice Confidence; Voice Likability and Self-Confidence; Body-Likability and Self-Confidence; and Voice Likability and Body Likability (G.13, G.14, G.15, G.16).
Table G.13. Correlation between Voice and Breath-Body-Voice Confidence.

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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table G.14. Correlation between Voice Likability and Self-Confidence.

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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table G.15. Correlation between Body-Likability and Self-Confidence.

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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Table G.16. Correlation between Voice Likability and Body Likability.

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**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Response Frequencies Pre- and Post-Workshop

The following frequencies are located in Chapter 4 (Results/Discussion) and are in the same consecutive order. The frequencies looked at in the data are: Career Potential; Breath Control; Breathing Recover Time; and Ease of Breathing (G.17, G.18, G.19, G.20).

Table G.17. Frequencies of Career Potential responses.
Table G.18. Frequencies of Breath Control responses.

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<th>Pre_B_Control</th>
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Table G.19. Frequencies of Breathing Recover Time responses.

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Table G.20. Frequencies of Ease of Breathing responses.

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</table>

Raw Data for Response Frequencies from
Selected Pre- and Post-Workshop Short Answer Questions

Pre 9/14 Post 1/6: Relationship/Perception of Voice

All items coded: 1 (positive, unambivalent relationship reported) or 0 (concerned, ambivalent relationship reported)

1 (positive, unambivalent): 13 (45%) of 29 participants

0 (ambivalent): 16 (55%) of 29 participants
Pre 9/14 Post 1/6: Relationship with Voice/Like Your Voice

- Significant Ambivalence: 15 (52%) of 29 participants
- Control Issues: 6 (21%) of 29 participants
- Worry: 1 (3%) of 29 participants

Pre 11 Perception of Body:

All items coded: 1 (positive, unambivalent relationship reported) or 0 (concerned, ambivalent relationship reported)

1 (positive, unambivalent): 9 (31%) of 29 participants
0 (ambivalent): 20 (69%) of 29 participants

Pre 9/14 Relationship/Perception of Voice Correlation w/ Pre 11 Perception of Body

A correlation analysis was performed between the variables of Relationship/Perception of Voice and Perception of Body; a positive correlation of r(27)=.744 was found, suggesting that participants’ perceptions of their voices were highly correlated with their perceptions of their bodies.

Pre 10 Post 2: Do You Deal with Stage Fright?

Yes: 25 (86%) of 29 participants
No: 4 (14%) of 29 participants
Pre 10 Post 2: If so, what helps to manage it?

Preparation: 8 (28%) of 25 participants

Strategies/Tools: 17 (68%) of 25 participants

Unmanaged: 4 (14%) of 25 participants

Pre 19: Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to who you truly are as a person?

Yes: 25 (86%) of 29 participants

Post 8: Do you feel your breath has the ability to connect you to who you truly are as a person?

Yes: 28 (96%) of 29 participants

Pre 20: Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?

Yes: 20 (69%) of 29 participants

Post 9: Does trying to impress others take you out of your breath and body?

Yes 24 (83%) of 29 participants

Post 11: Has the UYB Workshop helped you as a singer?

Yes: 29 (100%) of 29 participants
Post 13: Would you recommend this type of work to singers?

Yes: 29 (100%) of 29 participants

Post 14: Do you feel more confident with yourself and the mind-body-voice relationship?

Yes: 28 (97%) of 29; one wasn’t sure b/c he got sick before singing

Post 15: Do you feel that you have usable tools to maintain this heightened awareness of the breath and body?

Yes: 29 (100%) of 29 participants

Post 10, 11, 12, and 13: What did you learn, how has your singing or breath changed, what was most helpful, if you would recommend this, why?

Themes Cited:

- “Awareness” and “Connection” to Body: 21 (73%) of 29 participants
- Personal/Emotional Insight: 15 of 29 (52%) participants
- Release of “Tension”: 13 (45%) of 29 participants
- “Techniques” and “Tools”: 7 (24%) of 29 participants
- Experiencing “Centering”: 7 (24%) of 29 participants
- Experiencing “Opening”: 5 (17%) of 29 participants
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*Recital Sources*


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Performance Experience
Sarasota Opera  2002
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Des Moines Metro Opera  2003, 2004
Pensacola Opera  2004
Piedmont Opera  2005
Opera Southwest  2009
Sioux City Opera  2011

Breathwork Experience
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Middendorf Institute  2012-2013
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