

Lesson Two

Italics denote introduction of new material

Supplies needed: Tissue paper, ball, journal, pen/pencil, masking tape or copy of the Stage area diagram

Brief review and warm up

- Break the Ice –see Meeting One
- Particular focus on Challenge I and II
- *Challenge III- Eyes closed and names from memory*
- *Challenge IV- Open eyes, re-arrange, 10-15 seconds to memorize-eyes closed and call names*

Ball Toss- Review journal questions

- Begin with names with particular attention to breath and posture
- *Challenge II- enlarge circle*
- *Challenge III-maintaining the size of the circle, recite an agreed upon well known*

rhyme or poem (Mary had a little lamb, My Country 'Tis of Thee, etc)

Success = maintaining posture, and relaxed breath, and keeping the ball in play until the

recitation is completed. Recitation will begin to take on a normal rhythm and pace

Breathing, posture and your vocal folds

When you sleep, physically exert yourself, when your pet breathes, when a baby cries, the

diaphragm expands and contracts naturally. Re-establishing this breathing pattern keeps your

body and brain flooded with oxygen, encourages your lungs to remain flexible and provides your

voice with the support needed to speak clearly. Many of us (me included!) often speak with

something called a 'glottal fry'. This is the gravel-ly sound you hear when you clear your throat.

Many times, I notice the sound when I am reaching the end of a sentence or thought. If I

habitually rely on a glottal fry (so called because your epiglottis is contracting and causing your

vocal folds to grate against each other without allowing air to flow and creating the "fry") I

become more susceptible to hoarseness, laryngitis and sore throats. Because correct breathing

has so many benefits but is rarely practiced, I have included these exercises in LHTA.

❖ Place straight back chairs (preferably) across from each other with about 5' in between if possible, feet flat on the floor, shoulders, jaw and abdomen relaxed

- Keep your journal and a pen/pencil and small tissue paper close by.
- Place left hand on your chest just below your collarbone.
- Place your right hand on your abdomen below your ribs but above your belly button. This is the general location of your diaphragm, the natural location for your inhale and exhale.
- Seated across from someone inhale through your nose on a count of 3. Exhale through your mouth on a count of 3.

• Repeat on a count of 6

Note any physical changes in yourself and share the observations you have of the other person.

- Did shoulders rise and fall or remain still
- Did hand on abdomen move in and out
- What sensations are noticed in yourself (air flow in nose, sound on exhale, length of time easier or harder on inhale, exhale, both? Are jaw and shoulders still relaxed, feet still flat on the floor? Toes clenched or relaxed? What about the small of your back?)

❖ Add tissue paper prop

• Holding the tissue at arm's length in the left hand and placing your right hand on abdomen over your diaphragm. Imagine you are blowing out a candle. Inhale on a 3 count and exhale in one breath, blowing out the 'flame'. Repeat until you are successful at moving the 'flame' with your breath. Alter the inhale count and take notice of any differences.

• Share observations of the other person (shoulders unnecessarily tensed, neck jutted forward on the exhale, etc.) and note any sensations in yourself or observations by the other in your journal.

Challenge I- seated and facing partner, take turns moving the other person's tissue with one breath

Challenge II-Inhale through nose and exhale 'blowing out the candle' three times in a row

CAUTION: Becoming lightheaded is common when exploring deep breathing; however,

remaining seated and taking a break as necessary is required. Sensitivity and awareness of *your*

own capabilities is one of the benefits of this work; however, ignoring signals from your body WAS a mistake, IS a mistake and WILL BE a mistake!! YOU are your own expert.