

## **Breathing and the Voice**

**Instructor: Dr. Theodore Dimon, Ed.D**

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**Teaching Assistants: James French and Brandt Kempin**

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**Class dates: Tuesday 1/17 - Wednesday, 3/1**

**Class schedule: Monday - Wednesday/Thursday, 12:00-1:00PM ET**

### **Course Description**

The human voice is a marvel of engineering and design. This course explores the remarkably subtle and intricate design of the human voice and how it serves as an instrument of expression. Traditional methods for training and freeing the voice for singing, acting, and public speaking tend to focus on vocal exercises, but few people fully appreciate the functional design of the voice and its basic systems. In this course we will break down some of the key vocal systems, making sense of how they work and demystifying what can seem, to non-vocalists, to be a daunting and complex topic.

Students will be guided through both theoretical content and experimental self-study to explore how the voice works. Course topics will include: the anatomy and mechanics of breathing; the design and function of the larynx; the muscles of the throat; and the relation of the voice to posture and overall coordination. We will focus on how to produce sound effortlessly, and explore the role of inhibition in speaking and vocalizing. The course will pay special attention to the "whispered 'ah'" as a central element in learning to use the voice in a coordinated way.

### **Learning & Teaching Activities**

#### **1. Online Lectures**

Dr. Theodore Dimon will present content through a series of 20 live online lectures with experimental content, 60 minutes in duration. There will be brief Q & A sessions dispersed throughout the lecture hour. Lectures will be recorded and made available to all students for review.

#### **2. Thursday Practicum**

Teaching Assistants James French and Brandt Kempin will lead sessions of guided lie-downs, with a special emphasis on controlled exhalations and whispered ah's. These will be held on the Thursdays with no scheduled lectures, weeks 2, 4, and 6.

### **Course Readings:**

1. **[Your Body, Your Voice by Ted Dimon](#)**
2. **[Anatomy of the Voice by Ted Dimon](#)**
3. **[Breathing and the Voice: A practical guide to the whispered "ah" by Ted Dimon\\*](#)**
4. **[Anatomy in Action by Ted Dimon](#)**

For your convenience, we have included direct links to Amazon Marketplace where you can purchase new or used copies of the first three listed works.

If you would prefer not to order through Amazon Marketplace, Ted Dimon's books can also be purchased directly through [Penguin Random House](#).

\*Breathing and the Voice: A practical guide to the whispered "Ah" by Ted Dimon is available for purchase on the Dimon Institute website as a Kindle ebook.

## **Course Syllabus**

### **Week 1: January 17-19**

How we breathe

How we interfere with breathing

The importance of nostril breathing

The controlled exhalation

*Reading: Anatomy in Action, Chapter 7, Breathing*

*Anatomy of the Voice, Chapter 1, The Anatomy of Breathing*

### **Week 2: January 23-25**

The larynx and vocal tract

The open throat

The mouth and jaw

The importance of vowels

*Reading: Anatomy of the Voice, Chapter 4. The Mouth and Pharynx; Your Body, Your Voice, Chapter 7, The Singer's Throat*

### **Week 3: January 30—February 2**

The whispered 'ah' and what it's for

Elements of the whispered 'ah'

Whispering and the larynx

Whispering and monkey position

*Reading: Breathing and the Voice, Chapter 3, "Elements of the Whispered 'Ah'"*

### **Break: February 3—12**

### **Week 4: February 13-15**

The larynx and how it works

Intrinsic muscles of the larynx

The larynx and phonation

The larynx and the whispered 'ah'

*Reading: Anatomy of the Voice, Chapter 2. The Larynx; Your Body, Your Voice, Chapter 3, The Larynx*

### **Week 5. February 20-23**

What are vocal registers?

Vocal registers and the throat

Exploring the falsetto register

*Readings: Your Body, Your Voice, Chapter 6, Vocal Registers*

**Week 6. February 27-March 1**

Vocalizing and inhibition

Speech and nostril breathing

The whispered 'ah' and reciting text

The building blocks of speech

*Reading: Breathing and the Voice, Chapter 4, "Inhibition in Speech"*