



A Moment of Inspiration: Connection Breath to Creativity

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“The space between inhalation and exhalation is a moment of inspiration. If, in the moment where one movement becomes another, we can inhibit any habit of holding our breath, anything is possible.”

- Marsha Paludan, PhD. Emeritus Professor of Theater, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Objectives:

1. Set the Stage
2. Introduce Body Mapping
3. Meet your tribe
4. Common Beliefs of the Tribe
5. What is Balance?
6. Connecting Breath to Creativity

Our brain has 3 areas: The brain stem or reptilian brain, the middle brain, or mammalian brain, and the cortex. The brain stem controls bodily functions, the middle brain processes emotions and controls our panic/safety responses as well as processing experiences into memory, and our cortex controls movement and complex thoughts/consciousness.

The function of our brain is to take information from our senses and compare it to previous experiences to determine our safety. This is called neuroception. It is happening all the time. Your body responds to our determined safety by modulating the nervous system and eventually, we FEEL the changes. We are feeling creatures who think – not thinking creatures who feel!

Safety is the primary responsibility of the brain. Breathing is one of the first bodily functions to respond to safety – thus we cannot have a conversation about breathing and creativity without first talking about safety.

What is a map?

- A representation of one thing in a different medium.
- Maps show specific information at the expense of other information.

What is a body map?

- Also known as the Body Image, your body map is a representation of your body within your nervous system.

- Your body map is informed by your lived experiences, your knowledge, as well as our ideas of “body” informed through our culture, community, society, religion, race, gender, and sexuality.
- Body maps are learned to solve a problem or fulfill a need.
- Because they are learned, they can be changed.

We move according to our body maps.

What is Body Mapping?

The intentional updating of our maps to align with anatomical reality.

The Core Tenants of Body Mapping:

All sound is the result of movement.
The quality of movement is determined by the quality of thinking.
Thus, the quality of thinking determines the quality of sound.

When there is a problem that isn't easily solved pedagogically,
the problem is often at the level of the body map.

Our maps change in response to our growing bodies and the demands we place on them.

Sometimes, these maps do not change and become outdated. Outdated maps can be related to the size, location, and function of something in our body. They can arise from the language that we use – words mean different things to each of us, and sometimes there are 2-3 different meanings, and we may intend a different meaning than our students. They can be from lack of awareness (I didn't know that existed), or from trauma – “I have exiled a part of my body due to injury or something that I have experienced in my life.”

These all can lead to confusion, excessive tension, dis-coordination, and even injury.

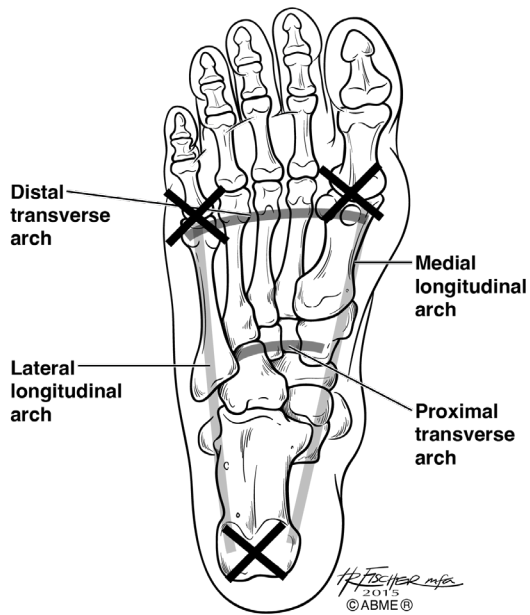
Tribes:

Tribes have conditions of membership – our assimilation to these conditions is essential to our continual BELONGING to the tribe.

Belonging is an inextricable, non-negotiable aspect of our safety.

Shifting to a balance paradigm:

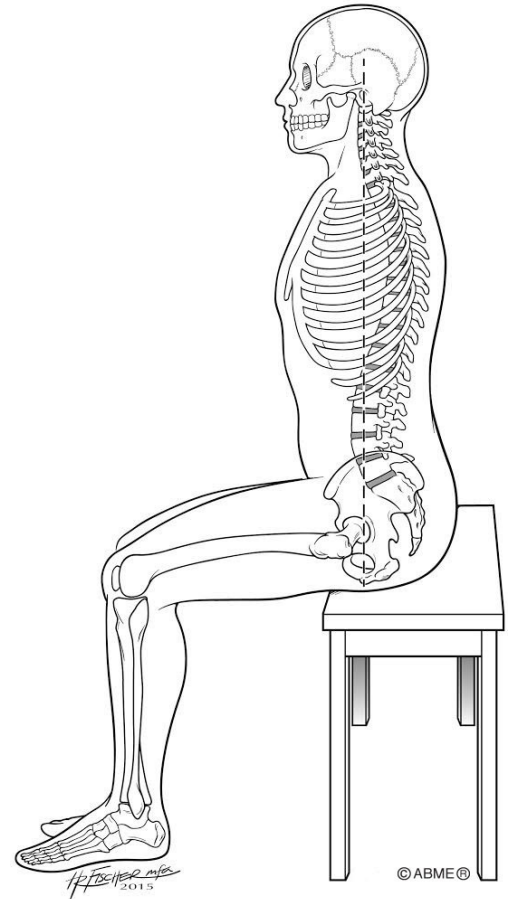
Balance in standing, the Tripods:



Bones, Spaces, and Arches of the Foot

Balance in sitting:

Hips back,
knees
forward

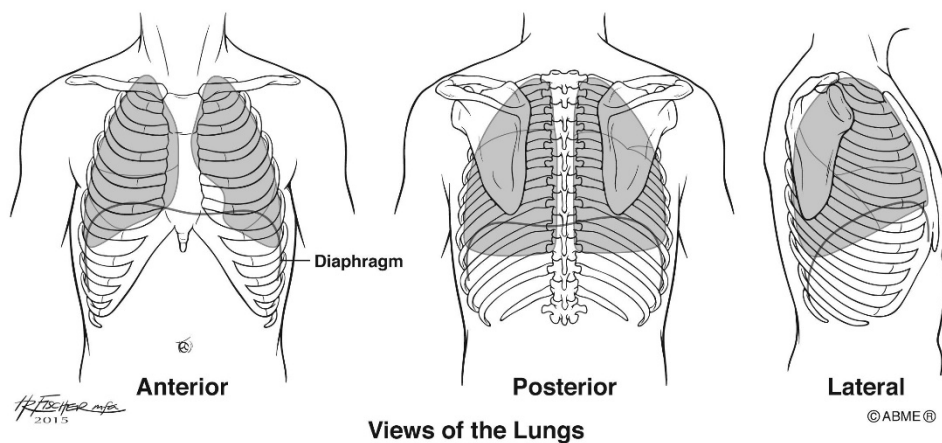


Sitting in Balance Upright

Common Confusions in our Breathing Pedagogy

Lungs:

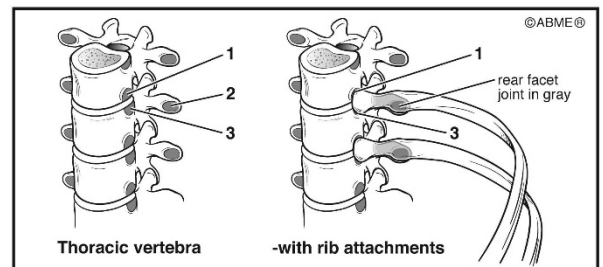
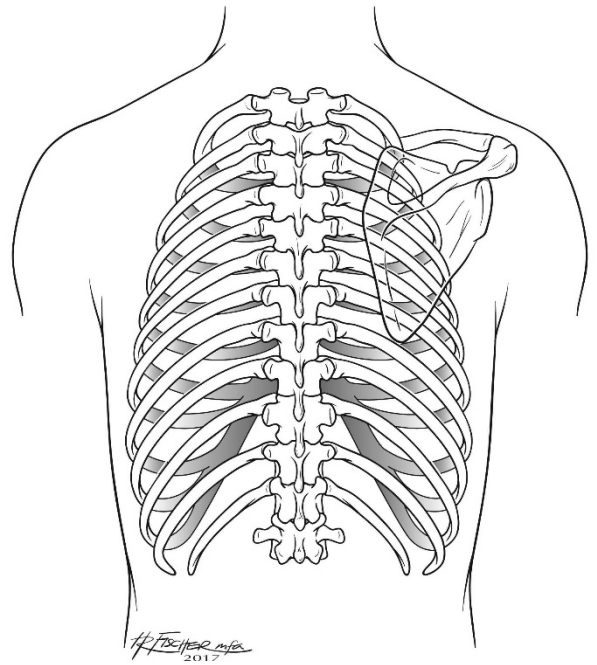
- The lungs start above the collarbone
- The bottom of the lungs is even with the bottom of the sternum
- The lungs are sealed within the airtight rib cavity along with the heart.



Views of the Lungs

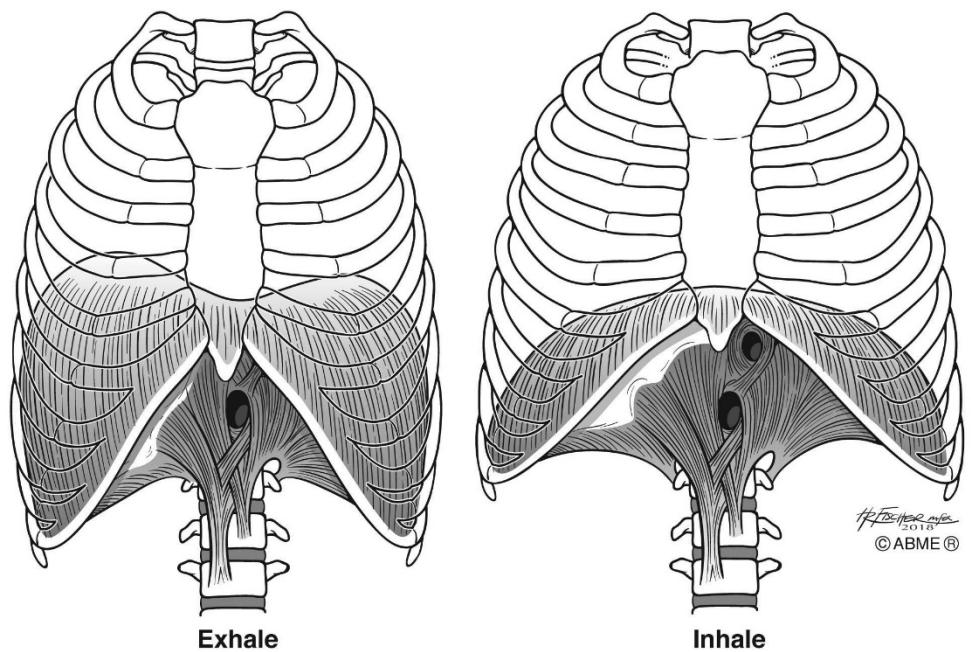
Ribs, not Rib Cage:

- 24 Ribs that move, Not a Rib Cage
- 12 on each side
- There are joints where the ribs meet the spine that result in significant expansion throughout the entire rib cavity.
- The expansion of the ribs cause the arm structure to move.



Diaphragm:

- Dome-shaped muscle
- Primary muscle for **inhalation**
- Contracts on inhalation
- Rests on exhalation



Frontal view of Diaphragm

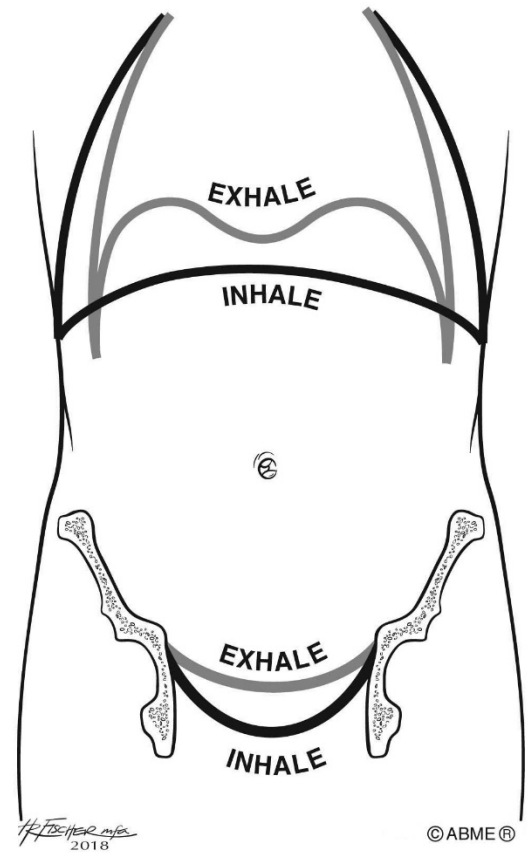
The movement of breathing:

- On inhalation the diaphragm pushes everything in the abdominal cavity down and out
- The pelvic floor can also move
- Air doesn't travel into the abdomen
- While the expansion of the abdomen is essential for a full-capacity breath, freedom and movement of the ribs allow for more expansion of the lungs

Order of Operations:

We move, and thus, our lungs fill with air.

We exhale so that we can inhale.



Two Definitions of Support:

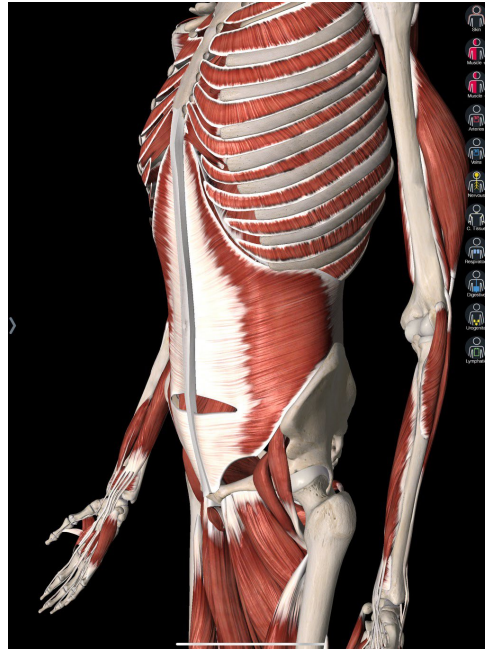
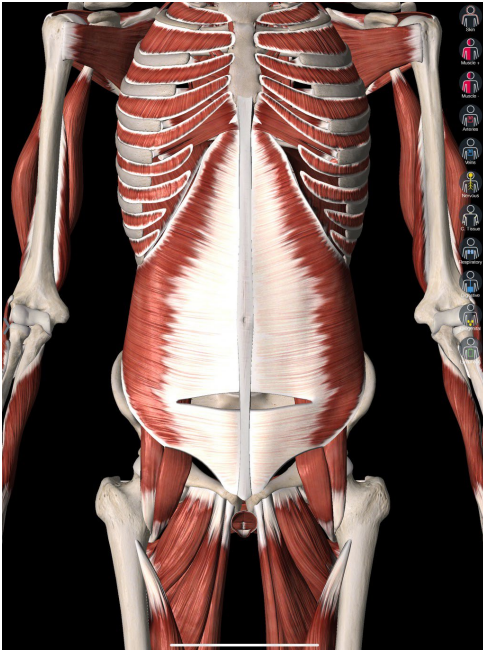
1: to bear the weight of something, to hold something up

2: to provide assistance to

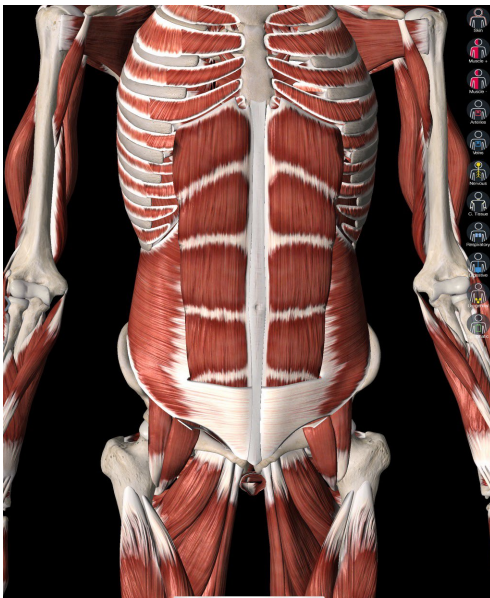
We assist our sound with air. We do not bear the weight of our sound.

Muscles of Support:

Transverse Abdominus



Rectus Abdominus



Our breathing loves to organize around a creative intention if we simply do not interfere with it. Sometimes, often, the conditions of our tribe create this interference. Understanding our need to belong, and shifting from a posture to a balance paradigm is the beginning of this journey to undoing these interferences.