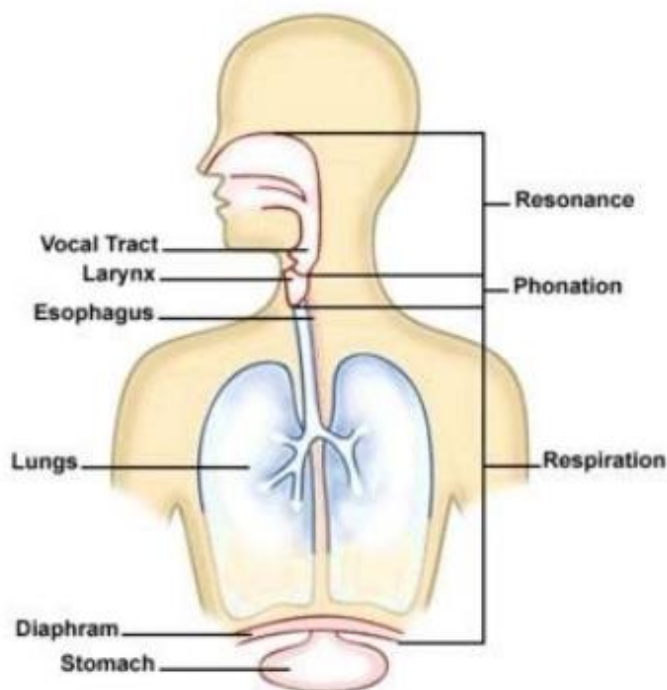

Diaphragmatic Breathing

Diaphragmatic Breathing is a breathing technique involving your diaphragm. It provides more support for your voice, allowing you to speak more loudly with less effort and no strain on the vocal cords.



How do we speak?

Speech and voice production begin with respiration (breathing). As we inhale air (breathe in), the diaphragm (the large muscle below the lungs) lowers and the rib cages rises to create space for incoming air. The lungs expand as air rushes in to fill this space. As we exhale (breathe out), the rib cage lowers and the diaphragm rises to push air out.

Exhaled air then passes up through the windpipe (trachea), and eventually through the vocal cords. The vocal cord starts to vibrate as air passes between them, producing sound (voice). This sound/voice travels through the throat and into the mouth where it is shaped into specific speech sounds by movements of the lips, tongue, palate, and jaw.

Diaphragmatic Breathing:

1. Place the palm of your hand gently just above your 'belly button'.
 - As you breathe in, feel your hand move out.
 - As you breathe out, feel your hand move in.
 - Gradually try to increase the range of these movements.
2. When you are able to feel this movement pattern, add voice to the strategy above. Breathe in, feel your belly expand, and start saying "AHH" as soon as your belly is filled with air.
3. Once you have mastered Step 1 and Step 2, you can incorporate this strategy in your day-to-day conversation by taking a deep breath before speaking.

STOP if you feel pain in your throat or significant shortness of breath