



Your Voice is an Instrument

Enhancing Communication Skills with Acting Philosophy and Exercises

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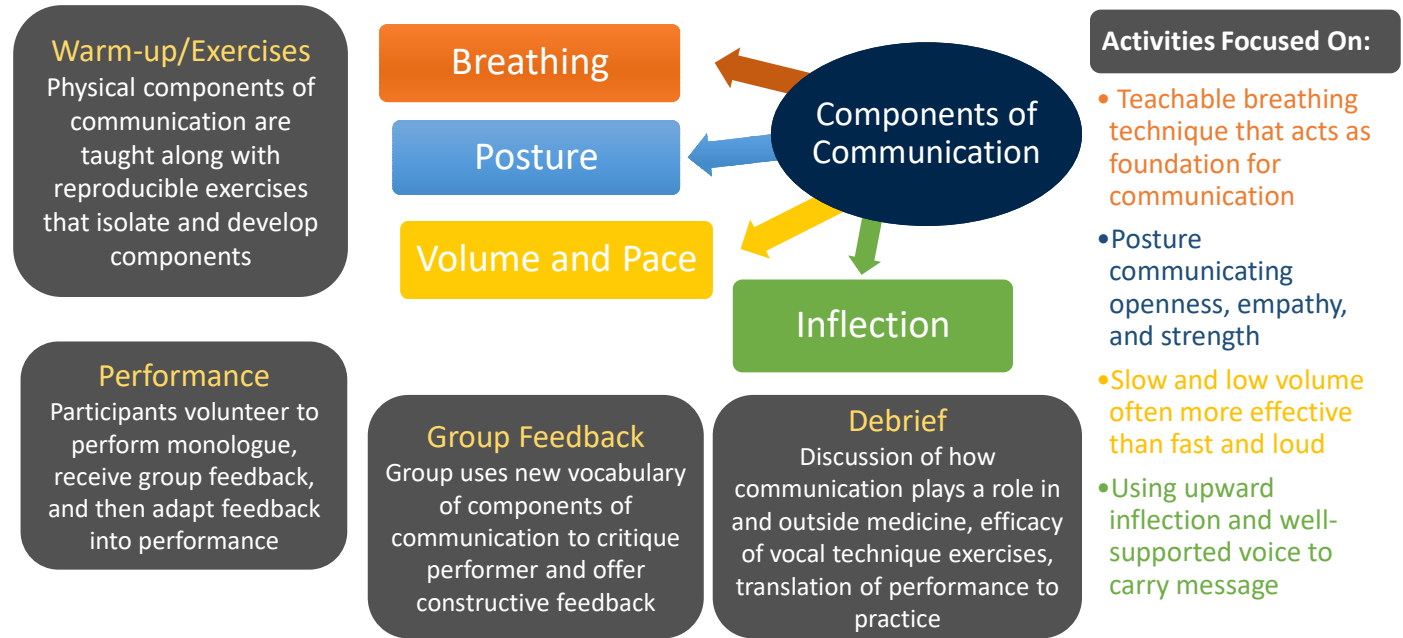
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BACKGROUND

- Medical professionals require advanced communication skills on a daily basis
 - How to best teach these skills remains unclear
- Vocal Technique: practice-based method initially developed for actors that teaches communication skills to clinical and pre-clinical medical students using exercises, performance, and group feedback
- Vocal Technique is adapted for a medical context by:
 - Introducing reproducible exercises that isolate and improve physical components of communication
 - Offering safe space to practice communication skills with performance of a monologue
 - Allowing constructive group feedback that increases performer and audience understanding and reinforces components of communication
 - Debrief exploring relevancy to clinical experience

VOCAL TECHNIQUE TEACHING APPROACH



METHODS

- We offered four 1 ½ hour vocal technique workshops to pre-clinical medical students
- Sessions facilitated by a medical student with theater background
- In the third and fourth workshops, participants were encouraged to present and receive feedback on a 100-word monologue
- Sessions had between six and twenty-three participants

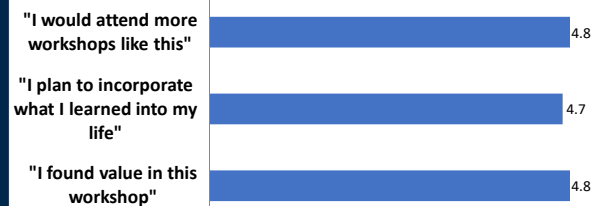
MONOLOGUE

I'm like a student and this is the final exam and I don't know what to put down because I don't understand the question and I'm running out of time.
 Susie says that I need to begin aggressive pain management if I am going to stand it. "It": such a little word. In this case, I think "it" signifies "being alive."
 They have to do something. I'm in terrible pain. Say it, Vivian. It hurts like hell.
 It really does.

- Wit, Margaret Edson

POST COURSE FEEDBACK

Post-Course Survey Data with 5-point Likert Scale (n=14)



- Narrative comments were broadly positive identifying the course as effective in "[increasing] awareness of what my voice conveys," "[offering] tools to improve to how I communicate," and a "safe space to get advice on becoming a better public speaker."

NEXT STEPS

- Develop quantitative and qualitative metrics of communication skills targeted by Vocal Technique
- Expand workshop offerings to clinical students and residents
- Offer workshops at national conferences
- Increase facilitators comfortable leading workshops

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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