



## FINDING YOUR FAMILIAR EVENT

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This experience will take you on a journey allowing you to connect you to different emotions and characterizations by using a 'familiar event'. Arthur Lessac, internationally known for his work in theatre and voice, defines a familiar event as a "natural instinctive experience that encourages a correct and proper movement for the body". It is not something you imitate. For example, instead of telling yourself to take a 'good' breath you can think of 'smelling' a very fragrant flower OR 'smelling' the aroma of fresh ground coffee OR chocolate brownies cooking in the oven. With those smelling experiences in mind your body will inhale more deeply and fully accompanied by a sense of pleasure and perhaps some salivating as you anticipate what the taste might be. Ask yourself is it easy? Does it feel good? Because these experiences are organic they are not in competition with the body. You are not giving the body commands and direction.

Compare that experience to smells of leaking gas OR smells at a fish market OR varnish being painted on cabinets. This kind of smelling or breathing will most likely be shallow, quick, and perhaps repetitive with facial grimacing. Arthur Lessac calls these types of experiences behavior – affective breathing which can increase your awareness and interpretation for emotion and expression. For example, there are types of shiver-breathing. There's mild shivering like when you get out the pool on a cool day and you feel the breeze blowing on your body. There's also a more intense shivering-breathing that occurs when the temperature difference is more drastic and uncomfortable bringing a change of rhythm to your breathing with teeth chattering. Be sensitive to how your breathing may change when you're crying, sniffing, or sobbing as well as when you laugh, giggle or laugh so hard you cry? Other types of behavior-affective breathing are different sighs such as a 'sigh' of sadness or a 'sigh' of deep contentment, doubt or disappointment. We can call up these behaviors for connections to an emotion or a character. The pleasure 'sigh' is a positive familiar event because it's instinctive and encourages correct natural movement in the body.

How can you find YOUR familiar event? Tune in, be aware. It is there. Do you have a special talent that you are so good at that it takes very little effort, almost instinctive? Would you say it feels organic? Did you do it as a child? Does it feel natural? Does it feel good?, How can I use this?, Does it feel instinctive? As you experience the event let yourself feel it and be aware of that 'feeling'. You are letting your body receive information from a feeling sense and not from 'thinking' the feeling. It will become part of your natural feeling memory. Because there is less conflict and less competition within you emotion and character behavior will be easier.



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Voice Improvement ~ Diction/Clarity  
Accent Reduction ~ Singing Voice