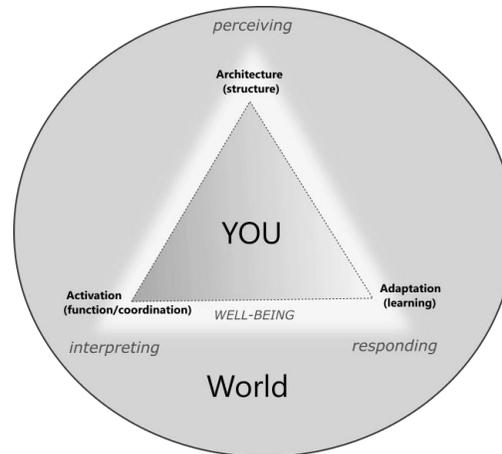




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Babette Lightner



As we consider vocal pedagogy it is important to look at the various levels of the human being we are addressing. Levels of working from broadest to the smallest.

- Whole person relating in the world level--the person's understanding of how the world works.
- The 'Body' the architecture/balance/mapping.
- The vocal instrument, the skill of singing.
- The cellular/molecular level.

Much of music education works at the vocal instrument and the body level. This is the territory of teaching breathing, posture, onsets etc. These levels of functioning are important. But, they are not primary. How the body functions to sing is determined by how a person conceives her relationship in the world at any given moment. How she conceives:

- Human structural design
- How singing, movement is activated or coordinated
- How learning/adaptation works.
- How time works.
- How assessment works.
- How sound and dynamics are ignited.

The list is endless.

The *person-in-the-world* level, the *state of being* of the person level is primary. This is a primary level because:

- Belief about self and the world determine one's perspective and strategies.
- One's state of being is determined by one's interpretation of the moment.
- State of being coordinates the functioning of the body and voice.
- One's belief/understanding overrules reality. The human system will attempt to make one's idea true even if it is not how the world actually works.



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Clearing up a problem on this level often takes care of the trouble you see on the body/voice level. Conversely if you start at the body/voice without seeing this broader perspective you are likely to create misconceptions.

When there is an interference at the body/voice level it is often based on a misconception of how the world works. This conception/belief is the person's current operating system determining how the architecture functions.

Habit is an embodied or internalized conception. If you don't like the habit, change the underlying conception.