

Polyvagal Theory and the Alba Method

Enhancing Mental Wellness Through Emotional Effector Patterns

Kate Glasheen, AEA, SAG-AFTRA, VASTA & Matt McAllister, Ph.D., Health & Human Performance

Alba method

“...a means for identifying, inducing and regulating genuine emotion through conscious application of patterns of breath and muscle tension organic to basic emotions”

Dr. Susannah Bloch

Experimental Psychologist

Vagus Nerve

- Longest of 12 cranial nerves
- Sympathetic (SNS)
“Gas” – fight or flight, freeze
- Parasympathetic (PNS)
“Brakes” – rest, digest

Polyvagal Theory

- Developed: Dr. Steven Porges
- Link between nervous system & emotional expression

The Alba Patterns



The Study

- 14 subjects
- Age 19-21
- Students in Alba Course
- No Previous Alba experience

Measures

- Heart Rate
- Heart Rate Variability
- Salivary α -amylase (stress)

Results

Heart Rate Measures avg. values:

- Highest = Joy
- Slightly Lower = Sadness
- Lowest = Fear, Erotic Love, Tenderness

Salivary α -Amylase values:

- Highest = Joy
- Fairly Low = Erotic Love, Sad.
- Lowest = Tenderness

Pre- to Post-Test

(4 weeks Alba training)

- Heart Rate Variability Increase
- Salivary α -Amylase Lower

Conclusion: Practicing Alba has favorable impact on nervous system and warrants further study.