As a vocal coach and drama professor, I know how much professional actors and singers rely on their voices to make a living.

But they aren’t the only people whose voices are an integral part of their life and work. Many others also find themselves speaking to large crowds, or for prolonged periods of time, and having strong, resilient voices can make all the difference in their day-to-day lives.

The revolutionary voice technique I am developing at the University of Alberta uses a small hand-held vibrator applied to specific points on the head and neck to reduce tension associated with vocal stress. The vibrator stimulates vocal-fold vibration and has the ability to enhance resonance—sound becomes easier to produce and is louder and more powerful.

Right now, we are still in the early stages of research. But through a cross-disciplinary partnership between the drama and speech pathology departments at the University of Alberta we are starting to explore ways that this easy-to-apply technique could help to improve the quality of life for people who suffer from vocal fatigue, because of overuse, misuse, age or illness.

David Ley
Professor of Drama
University of Alberta