

“The Path to Expressive Artistic Singing”



In order to sing truly

“Expressively” = effectively conveying meaning or feeling.

You must first master the art of singing

“Effortlessly” = creating and experiencing a weightless sound and delivery across the register.

The two go hand in hand. You will be amazed at the amount of expressiveness that soars out of you once you have learned to let go of the tension you hold in all parts of your vocal mechanism.

Singing effortlessly means without any vocal bumps in the road and this includes the relaxation of all little muscles in and around the face, mouth, throat and breathing apparatus.

We have created much tension in trying to “make” the sound. Most of us are not aware of this tension however because we have not learned what effortless singing is all about. If you have not experienced this effortlessness then you would not be aware of the even seemingly small amounts of tension that trap us as we flow across our register especially in our mouths and tongues.

Overachievers anonymous are we all! We have tried so hard to **make** it happen instead of **allowing it to** happen.

This tension inhibits our expression, ring and spin.

The tension we create is the result of two things:

1. **Improper breath**, which results in...
2. **Improper phonation**: the production of vocal sounds especially in speech and singing.

Singing on the breath is the key to everything you will do. What does that mean? It seems to be the biggest mystery of all time doesn't it. It is the singers Holy Grail we spend countless hours searching for.

When you learn that this grail is **within you and you truly spend time developing it**, your voice will make miraculous changes. All you need to do is give it **time and intention**.

The ribs are the initial key to this search.

Without the proper use of the ribs, the diaphragm cannot work effortlessly. In turn we use our abdominal muscles in a way that causes much tension to rise up the entire vocal mechanism. This in turn causes us to use tension in the throat to produce a sound that can't be produced due to the lack of proper air supply. Then of course we run into those bad habits we have created with phonation in order to create those words around this column of tension we are singing on.

This results in ever-popular phrases such as:

“But it squeaks when I do that!”

“I can't sing that high”

“Those big leaps are killer”

“I can't sing over my register break”

“I don't have enough breathe to do that.” and my favorite

“My voice is killing me after rehearsal”

This is your body telling you...”YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING WRONG”

We should listen to our bodies more often because they never lie!

The Ribs - Key #1

Floating up and out when you are singing. **Floating up and out** when you are singing. **Floating up and out** when you are singing.

If you do this in your daily existence when you are speaking you will train them to stay up and out effortlessly. There should never be a feeling that you are forcing them to be held out.

If you have that feeling then your body is telling you it needs to be trained daily with proper posture and lift of the rib cage.

You can also lie on the bed or floor and practice speaking with them lifted out.

You speak all day long...this is where you will begin using your **time and intention** to gain the skills you will need when singing. The air should flow the same way whether you are speaking or singing.

The throat is relaxed and the ribs are **floating up and out**.

We are just generally very lazy in this aspect or give in to gravity too easily ;).

Remember **time and intention**.

Wordless Vocal- Eases (using the voice with ease)

Focus on creating and experiencing a weightless sound and delivery across the register with proper use of the ribs, lips and tongue.

This focus will result in good resonance, accuracy, tuning, natural coning from high to low and weightless sound and delivery no matter the register you sing in.

I use “WAH” because it causes the lips to relax forward with each initiation. It encourages relaxation over and over again in the lips and mouth.

Getting to Know Your Stradivarius – The Lips and the Tongue – Key #2

(Exploring the connection of the weightless sound and its emersion into the lyrics)

This exploration enables the singer to know his or her own instrument intimately.

This is where you learn to play especially with the lips and the tongue.

Playtime is so important! Remember **time and intention**.

If you do this consistently you will soon erase your coning issues, register breaks and continually produce an overtone rich sound. Focus on the **extremes in your range** in the path of a song. What are your ribs, lips and tongue doing at those crucial moments?

Expanded Singing - Key #3

(Maintaining connection to your vocal freedom while being an open channel with other voices)

“I think I can do it but when I go to chorus I can’t maintain it”

We all experience this on some level when singing with others. If you truly know your Stradivarius then you will be able to maintain your freedom even if other voices that don’t maintain this are pulling on you. And that is exactly the way it feels.... pulling.

You must know where this space lives in you and be centered in it all the time.

If you can maintain your vocal freedom, ring and spin then you in turn will be a catalyst for those around you! YEAH!!!!!!! Expand into this place created by the voices and experience a new level of sound emanating from this synergy manifested by your joint voices.

Vibrato is merely the way we learned to “stylize” as a child/adolescent singer. You probably developed your vibrato by listening to someone you idolized or copying them.

If you can’t sing without vibrato it is because it is entrenched in the way you produce sound and is usually the result of tension somewhere. You are using muscles to create it.

I am continually amazed that when I work with singers their vibrato disappears when they sing on “WAH” and reappears when they start to use words again.

Hummmmm.... why do you think that is happening???? Did you guess **tension**? Tension is the result of?

Vibrato should add sparkle at the right moment not drag you from word to word and everyone next to you!

Don't catch other singers in your web of vibrato... “Lift them on little velvet pillows” D.K.S.

Vocal Painting

(Maintain connection to your vocal freedom and expansion while exploring new characters in your voice and you)

Once you have gained the skills and created the habits we have discussed above. Expressiveness will fly out of you. Your intentions now have wings to fly on! What you wish to express within will appear in your voice because there is nothing holding the sound back. No corners for your voice to get stuck in and if you do get stuck you have the skills to explore and play your way back out to the place of freedom.

Trust me. You don't just open your mouth and soar. It takes **time and intention**, lots of **time and intention**. It does not happen over night. Patience and attentiveness must prevail!

This is definitely a lesson in patience time and intention

A Great Singer / Performer

Uses her body properly to give her sound wings

Uses her internal focus

Explores freedom from thinking while performing

Allows herself to experience what is becoming natural

Sings from her soul

Isn't afraid to let the world inside

Is open to change

Explores new ways of thinking and doing

Knows that she is always in the process of growing

-CharlaEsser



“CONCIEVE – CREATE – EXPERIENCE”

“The only difference between Reactive and Creative is the “C”.
When you “C” things correctly, you become Creative, rather than Reactive”

**In other words,
“What you conceive you create.
What you create you experience.
What you experience you conceive.
The circle is complete.”**

-N. Donald Walsh

Thoughts from Charla

Sing every day!

Get to know your instrument intimately as a violinist does. Virtuosos are not born over night. Be patient and loving with yourself and enjoy the process. The process is where the memories are made and the canvas is painted.

Create a personal collection of music that moves your soul and makes your voice soar!

Do something often that goes beyond your personal boundaries and releases a tether.

Everything is within you. Truly spend time developing it, your voice will make miraculous changes. All you need to do is give it **time and intention**.

Let your voice, body and soul play without judging it...
Release the committee in your head!

Performing is **not** the act of presenting a false reality to the audience...**it is the act of opening your reality for them to enter.**

Remember...exploring performing doesn't always mean while you are singing...life gives you lots of opportunities to play.

The “technique” of singing your part should enable your voice to artistically create the barbershop sound (e.g., color, texture, balance, and blend). It does not change the essence of your voice.

You are already perfect...stop trying to be... just “Be”.

Let your true self speak through your music.
Release your tethers, release your judgments & ego
Allow the **muse-i.c.**
to take you there
let go and enjoy the ride.



Suggested Songs for Vocal Exploration



People

People, people who need people
Are the luckiest people in the world.
We're children, needing other children
And yet letting our grown-up pride
Hide all the need inside,
Acting more like children than children.
Lovers are very special people,
They're the luckiest people in the world.
With one person, one very special person,
A feeling deep in your soul
Says you were half, now you're whole.
No more hunger and thirst,
But first, be a person who needs people.
People who need people.... are the
Luckiest people in the world.

Somewhere Over the Rainbow

Somewhere, over the rainbow, way up high.
There's a land that I heard of Once in a lullaby.
Somewhere, over the rainbow, skies are blue.
And the dreams that you dare to dream
Really do come true.
Someday I'll wish upon a star and wake up where the clouds are far behind me.
Where troubles melt like lemon drops, Away above the chimney tops.
That's where you'll find me.
Somewhere, over the rainbow, bluebirds fly. Birds fly over the rainbow,
Why then - oh, why can't I?
If happy little bluebirds fly beyond the rainbow,
why, oh, why can't I?

Softly, As I Leave You

Softly, I will leave you softly
For my heart would break
If you should wake and see me go
So I leave you softly,
Long before you miss me
Long before your arms can beg me stay
For one more hour or one more day
After all the years,
I can't bear the tears to fall
So, softly as I leave you there
(Softly, long before you kiss me)
(Long before your arms can beg me stay)
(For one more hour) or one more day
After all the years, I can't bear the tears to fall
So, softly as I leave you there
As I leave I you there, As I leave I you there

Final Thoughts from Charla

We need to take risks with ourselves...
We cannot access the magic unless we have risked everything ourselves
to access the magic first.

Challenge ourselves to go deeper, to reach further...
to find our courage and bring it to the stage.

“Intimacy on the most connected level.
Today is only the beginning of your greatest potential.
Today’s 100 % is tomorrows memory.
What 100 % are you going to choose?
Technique will only take you so far.
Finding your self in your voice...
That is where the heart lies and freedom lives.
Where is it...the Core Space”
(thoughts from...Mo Field, Director, Stockholm City Chorus)

Knowing your voice intimately will change your sound forever.

Like a flower that is forever opening
You will constantly be experiencing a new beauty
Allow your self a shift in perception.
We often sing for approval
Sing for LOVE...with an open hand.
~ Love Without Measure ~

With every veil you remove from your perception
You experience a shift in your energy
Energy is vibration
Vibration is sound
These shifts will be heard and perceived by all- especially you!

Singing is sharing these internal vibrations that form
the most intimate part of our souls
~ Our eternal voice ~

Knowing your voice inside and out will give your voice the wings to fly!
~ C.E.

Explore more of these Great Voices on line on Rhapsody & Itunes:

Eva Cassidy, The Real Group, Nancy La Mott, Maureen McGovern, Loreena McKinnett
Celtic Women, vocalist names: Chloë Agnew, Lisa Kelly, Méav Ní Mhaolchatha and Orlagh Fallon

Come for a Visit and Listen to

AngeliX, featuring the voice of Charla Esser.

Original music created and composed by Charla Esser and Fab Soutus

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