

Why Do We Sing?

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WHY DO WE SING?

- Singing increases our self-awareness
- Singing increases our self-confidence
- Singing increases our ability to communicate with others
- Singing decreases stress
- Singing provides comfort to us
- Singing helps us forge our identity
- Singing helps us influence our world
- Singing helps us say the things we don't have the words to say



THE IMPORTANCE OF PITCH

- Babies cry in tones that tell us what they need
- We have non-word communication sounds that are universal in their meaning
 - Yes. No. Yummy. Pain. Happy and Sad.
- Singing is a neurological function – harmony and perfect pitch can be taught
- Worshipers in the ancient temples of India, China and Tibet chanted to awaken chakras
- The Greek philosopher Pythagoras encouraged his students to sing each day to overcome fear, anger, worry and sorrow
- Whales, wolves, dogs and monkeys make noises that cover a variety of pitches, but only humans have fully developed speaking apparatus and a crucial speech center in the brain.

FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH

- When we sing, our neurotransmitters fire up the right temporal lobe.
- Singing releases endorphins, which make us smarter, healthier, happier and more creative
- Singing releases oxytocin, which effects our bonding, trust, pleasure and love
- When we sing, learning and language skills improve
- Singing is used as a treatment for depression, strokes and language abnormalities
- When we sing as a group, our hearts begin to beat together
- Singing is used to rehabilitate people who have lost the ability to speak
- Singing is used to wake people from comas
- Premature babies respond faster when recordings of their mothers' voices are played in their incubators
- Associating speech with singing is a treatment for stuttering and lisps
- Singing taps deep into the memories of Alzheimer's and dementia patients
- Singing helps children with Down's Syndrome find a path to talking and communication

FOR MENTAL HEALTH

- Singing provides an emotional release
- It's a way to express our thoughts and feelings
- Our voice is our unique fingerprint. When we are told not to sing, it can cause deep emotional pain
- Singing is used in Yoga because the vibrations we create through vocalization help us get in touch with a deeper part of our subconscious
- Chanting is used in religious ceremonies to take us to a deeper spiritual place
- Singing connects us with our essence, our soul, our own personal understanding of the Divine
- More than just notes on a page, singing gives us clarity, confidence and peace.



CLINICAL AMUSIA (Tone Deafness)

- Clinical Amusia is a musical disorder which effects processing pitch and musical memory
- It is rare in humans – only about 4%
- Tone deafness seems to be more of a conditioning rather than an actual condition
- In other words, those who were initially told that they couldn't sing, probably can – but think they cannot
- If you can recognize “Happy Birthday” or other songs, you do not have tone deafness
- If you speak with rising and falling tones, you do not have toe deafness

GROUP SINGING BENEFITS

- Group singing provides a means for approval
- Group singing activates the right side of the brain
- Group singing meets the need for human connection, acceptance and belonging
- Group singing provides a safe place to gain respect, self-esteem, recognition, strength and freedom
- Because it is education and promotes creativity, group singing fulfills the desire to become the most you can be
- Group singing helps achieve self-actualization
- It teaches critical thinking skills
- It teaches us there is no such thing as perfection – but the pursuit of perfection is a great motivation
- We learn to value and be compassionate toward others
- Group singing helps us find our “inner-voice”
- Group singing therapeutically helps us unburden psychological baggage

- When we come together as a community, we can lean on each others’ hearts and spirits
- It is comforting to sing with a friend or loved one
- As we become stronger in spirit, we then find our own voice and take that chance of being heard above the din of apathy and despair
- Each of us has something to sing about – some tragedy and loss which need to be heard, and some have joys they must share.

METAPHYSICAL EXCERSIZE

- Put your right hand over your heart chakra
- Put your left hand over your right hand
- Visualize a peaceful setting – or physically go to a peaceful setting
- Connect with others in your world
- Close your eyes and breathe through your nose. Feel your breath go into your body
- Exhale allowing the stress and negativity of the day to escape
- “Hummmmm” your mantra on the note of your choice

WHY DO WE SING?

- Singing is a basic human experience
- Our voice is oftentimes the first voice we hear – and the last voice we hear
- Our voice carries emotion, pitch and inflection
- Singing is a highly personal experience – it’s as unique as our fingerprint (that’s why there is voice recognition software)
- We sing to live – And for many of us, we live to sing!

If you can walk you
can dance, if you can
talk you can sing.

Zimbabwean proverb



Video Portions of this class were excerpted from:

Finding Your Voice – The Necessity of Singing by Katie Kat at TEDx Jersey City
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8rmKXbYljw&t=127s>

How Choirs Have the Capacity to Change Lives by Arreon Harley at TEDxWilmington
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-heVqNNqI_w&t=19s

How Singing Together Changes the Brain by Tania DeJong at TEDx Melbourne
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_HOBr8H9EM&t=230s

Therapeutic Benefits of Singing by Elisa S. Keeler
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6O8qCwIH7o>

Perfect Pitch Lesson 1 with Adam Bendorf
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dAsXCvrwN6U&t=15s>

Sound Healing – The Power of Your Own Voice by Anja Sofia Yoga
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hTd0yevtx5c&t=111s>

So You Think You Can’t Sing by Deke Sharon
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrjZtmd55ZY>

Why We Sing, by Greg Gilpin. Hal Leonard Preview A Cappella Choral Series
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j8oH7GKFsB0>

Books to Read: Healing Sounds - The Power of Harmonics by Jonathan Goldman