HOW TO GIVE YOURSELF A PVI – YOU **CAN** MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Thank you for attending our session and for your participation, focus and stamina! We have enjoyed putting together this class and hope that you will have picked up some useful tips to help you make the most of your beautiful voices.

Here are some of the points we explored plus a quick reminder of some of the exercises to help you conduct your own singing lessons! Enjoy learning about your voice and listening to the great sounds you are capable of producing.

As always we are here to help. Please get in touch if you have any further questions. Our details are below.

Aly and Harriet

1. **What is a PVI?**

* Stands for Personal Vocal Instruction (aka singing lesson)
* Focuses on individual singer’s needs
* Gives practical help and tips to support the singer’s development
* Encourages the singer to take personal responsibility
* Encourages the singer to be curious about their voice
* Is ***always*** positive and supportive

1. **Our focus today was ……..**

* Alignment
* Breathing
* SOVT
* Vocal Function
* Passaggio / transition

1. **Alignment**

We are all experts in the way we ***should*** align our bodies to help our singing technique. The problem is doing it consistently. Remember ***some*** of these little tips :

Neat feet / Ease in the knees / Elvis pelvis / Unpack the back / shoulder tip over hip / check the neck / jaw to the floor / un-“grip” the lips / un-“bung” the tongue / maintain the brain (!)

Applying even **just one** of these tips can help us achieve that freely produced sound which is what we strive for above all else. In the “Alphabet” map of singing A is for alignment and awareness.

Aligning well is perhaps the most important single aspect of singing. Here’s how aligning well improves :

* How we breathe for singing including how we manage our ribs, diaphragm and abdominal muscles.
* How freely we can move and vibrate our vocal folds, and access our full range of pitch and volume.
* How effectively we can manipulate our resonators, and create rich, powerful and varied vocal sounds.
* How free and balanced we are emotionally and psychologically, including how alert and aware we are.

1. **Breathing**

Breath is the ***fuel for singing***. The tone we produce for singing rests on a cushion of air so the breath is the fuel for the sounds we produce. The more control you have over your breath, the more control you will have over your singing tone. Remember that ***breathing is movement*** : movement of air, movement of muscles and organs, movement of energy. A healthy voice means free movement of air and all the muscles involved in breathing, and free movement of the vocal folds.

Here are some of the exercises we explored today, which reinforce the three simple concepts of successful breathing for singers which are **CAPACITY, SUPPORT and MANAGEMENT** :

* Pint of air visualisation (illustrates correct breathing technique)
* KIte visualisation (helps to maintain steady stream of airflow)
* Bubbling without pitch / inhale, suspend and exhale / hissing to 20 then double (or even quadruple! ) time / rhymical hissing 3-5-7-13 using SSS and SHH / dynamic contrasts with ssssSSSSSsssss and reverse SSSSSsssssSSSSS

1. **SOVT - Semi Occluded Vocal Tract exercises : the best therapy for your voice!**

* SOVT (Semi-occluded vocal tract) is a fancy way to say that the mouth is partially closed. You’ve all used SOVT exercises in your chorus : **humming, NG, VVVV, ZZZZZ, bubbling, straw phonation** – these are all examples of SOVT exercises.
* The benefits of SOVT are HUGE! When the mouth is partially closed, increased back pressure reflects at the lips back to the vocal folds. This pressure helps the folds vibrate with more ease and less effort. Using SOVT exercises will also help reduce vocal fatigue.
* But don’t just take our word for it! The website VoiceScienceWorks has a whole raft of really useful exercises and advice for you to try. Click on the link below.

[SOVT Exercises - VoiceScienceWorks](https://www.voicescienceworks.org/sovt-exercises.html)

* Here are some of the exercises we explored today :
  + NG sirens
  + Humming 1-5-1
  + 5-4-3-2-1-5-1 bubbling, VVVV or ZZZZZ (helps with breath flow too)
  + Bubbling into vowels EE EH AH OH OO
  + Patterns include 1515151 then ascending or descending – or make up your own patterns!
  + Straw phonation with or without water
  + Cup phonation – all the benefits of straw phonation but using words instead of sounds.
* When would be a good time to use SOVT?
  + If you hear a ***breathy*** sound (back pressure created allows vocal folds to come together more efficiently and prevent air from escaping)
  + If you hear a ***disconnected*** sound (sliding encourages a more legato sound)
  + To help with the ***passaggio*** or break in your voice (back pressure helps the folds to line up during transitions in the voice)
  + If you hear a ***pressed*** or ***forced*** sound (back pressure reduces the muscular effort so vocal folds can vibrate more effortlessly. )
  + If your voice sounds ***tired*** : SOVT helps because it reduces the stress on the vocal folds.
  + Make SOVT your ***first and last*** sound of the day!

1. **Vocal Function exercises**

* Originally designed by speech pathologists to heal a damaged voice.
* Great for vocal rehab after illness or misuse
* Designed to strengthen your vocal system and make it more efficient

What we practised :

* Using the vowel EE on F above middle C (or if you’re a bass the F below middle C). Produce with good respiratory support and resonant focus.
* Stretch – glide from lowest to highest note on O vowel (use “knoll”)
* Contract – glide from highest to lowest note on O vowel ( use “knoll”)
* **All of the above exercises should be achieved on as soft a dynamic as you can manage. Keep the air flowing steadily thoughout.**

Follow this link for more information **:** [**Vocal+Function+Exercises.pdf**](file:///C:\Users\alyso\Downloads\Vocal+Function+Exercises.pdf)

1. **The dreaded passaggio!**

* Flip your thinking! It’s quite normal!
* The basic essentials to help with the passaggio are :
  + A healthy alignment
  + Good breathing techniques
  + Good support on sung notes
* What we explored – speed bumps visualisation – takes weight out of the sound / Yoo-hoo 1-5, 1-6, 1-7, 1-8 / Singing is easy but frankly I’d rather sell shoes 1-3-5-8-10-12-11-9-7-5-4-2-1 (plus all vocalises which straddle transition from one register to another like Bella Mama)

**EXTRA RESOURCES for you to explore :**

* Sing Baby Sing (SA members only) [Sing Baby Sing Downloads | Sweet Adelines](https://sweetadelines.com/sing-baby-sing-downloads)
* Kim Newcomb : [NewVoice Studio – YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbGx5NcIi3GYU87NFcSPKiA/videos) – lots of short snippets addressing various issues eg. high notes, low notes, passaggio, resonance, breathing…….
* Kathleen Hansen (plus cat!) – has lots of short vocal lessons on youtube – here’s one demonstrating vocal function [REVIVE your VOICE! Vocal Function Exercises (Stemple) - Bing video](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Kathleen+Hanson+Warm-Ups&ru=%2fvideos%2fsearch%3fq%3dKathleen%2bHanson%2bWarm-Ups%26FORM%3dVDMHRS&view=detail&mid=0D658C5DFF878437571F0D658C5DFF878437571F&rvsmid=765A23B6AD3DBA2B91B3765A23B6AD3DBA2B91B3&FORM=VDRVRV)

Our contact details : Alyson [alysonchaney@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alysonchaney@yahoo.co.uk) ; Harriet [jandhadamson@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jandhadamson@yahoo.co.uk)

Thank you!