



Spirit & Truth

Worship Academy

"Developing a heart of worship thru Spirit-led surrender."

Presented by

Ohana Studios

"Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

– John 4:23-24

Melodie Zepeda, Vocal Coach
Sherrie Zepeda, Vocal Coach
Rev. David Zepeda, Consultant

**Ohana Studios
Zepeda Ohana – Bio**

**Melodie Zepeda
909.744.2750; melodie@ohanastudios.com**

Melodie was born to sing. She developed her gift of music at an early age serving in Christian music ministry and performing in musical theater. Melodie received her Bachelor of Arts degree in vocal performance from California Baptist University. She has served on the New Hope Oahu worship team and has written and recorded for the soon to be released Dream Records project, "A Future and a Hope." Currently, Melodie is serving as the Creative Director at New Hope Hawaii Kai and is owner of Ohana Studios where she provides professional vocal coaching.

**Sherrie Zepeda
909.744.2748; sherrie@ohanastudios.com**

Sherrie grew up in a gospel music family and was called into Christian music ministry while in her teens. She has recorded three gospel albums and has served as a vocal coach, choir director, and worship leader. Her goal is to provide students with a skillful understanding of the voice as a musical instrument and to develop a personal style that is unique and complimentary to each student's gifting. Sherrie is co-owner and manager of Ohana Studios and serves as vocal coach to students of all ages.

**David Zepeda
909.744.2439; david@ohanastudios.com**

David became a follower of Christ as teenager and has pursued his calling to Christian ministry for the past forty-five years. Serving as a worship leader, pastor, and Bible teacher, David enjoys serving with his wife, Sherrie, and daughter Melodie, as co-owner and administrator at Ohana Studios.

Contents

Introduction	2
Phase I – Assessment (1 Session)	3
Phase II - Vocal Technique (Three Lessons)	4
Phase III - Vocal Discovery (Three Lessons)	5
Phase IV - Worship Leading and Personal Countenance (Three Lessons)	6
Appendix A – Basic Principles of the Voice	7
Appendix B - Speech-Level Singing	8
Appendix C – The Countenance of the Worship Leader	9
Appendix D – Ministry is...	10

INTRODUCTION

Our Calling:

“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.” – (John 4:23-24)

Our Mission:

"Developing a heart of worship thru Spirit-led surrender."

Our Values:

Spirit and Truth Worship Academy creates a safe place where God-honoring creativity is **Pursued, Practiced, and Performed.**

- **Pursue** – Personal, God-honoring, creativity is an endeavor that must be carefully explored in a loving, safe, environment. **Spirit and Truth Worship Academy** provides a nurturing environment where the only mistake is failing to try.
- **Practice** – Developing the discipline of practicing one’s craft leads to proficiency and opens the door to playful, innovative creativity.
- **Perform** – Transcending the moment in front of spectators by focusing on “an audience of One.”

Targeted Outcomes - Upon completion of the scheduled (10) lessons participants will:

1. Gain knowledge of personal vocal range and capacity.
2. Acquire vocal techniques to enhance performance, maintain vocal health, and improve vocal endurance.
3. Improve capacity to participate/lead in a worship team setting.

Phase I – Assessment: Personal/Private Evaluation

- Voice Evaluation
 - Experience
 - Style
 - Musicianship

- Maximizing Potential
 - Identifying individual goals
 - Recommendations

Phase II - Vocal Technique: Understanding the use of the voice as an instrument and developing proper techniques for the care, use, and expansion of the voice.

Lesson 1 - Breath Support

- Basic principles of the voice
 - Appendix A: "Singing for the Stars" – Seth Riggs (used by permission)

Lesson 2 – Vocal Warm Up Techniques

- Vocal exercises (see handout)
- Pitch control

Lesson 3 – Care of Voice

- Speech-Level Singing
 - Appendix B: "Singing for the Stars" – Seth Riggs (used by permission)

Group Session

- Review Lessons 1-3
- Group singing to apply learned techniques

Phase III - Vocal Discovery: Identifying personal vocal range, proper placement of the voice, and ear training for singing harmony.

Lesson 4 - Vocal Range

- Applying speech-level singing to the discovery and development of one's natural vocal range.
- Utilizing proper vocal techniques to expand one's vocal range.

Lesson 5 - Vocal Placement

- Developing techniques to improve and enhance vocal tone.

Lesson 6 - Vocal Harmony

- Introduction to hearing harmony (soprano, alto, tenor, bass).
- Ear and voice training for the purpose of achieving harmony.

Group Session

- Review lessons 4-6
- Group singing to apply learned techniques.

Phase IV - Worship Leading and Personal Countenance: Exercising musical skill in leading worship and developing awareness of one's presence before the Lord and his people.

Lesson 7 – Leading and blending with your vocal team

- Review previous lessons
- Blending with your vocal team (group harmony exercises)
- Personal awareness of countenance
 - Appendix C: The Countenance of the Worship Leader

Lesson 8 – Working with your tech team

- Review previous lessons
- Understanding audio basics
 - Importance of the sound check
 - Use of microphone

Lesson 9 – Serving with your Pastor

- Review previous lessons
- Alignment with pastoral vision for ministry
 - Defining Ministry – Appendix D: Ministry is...
- Cooperating with pastoral direction for the worship service

Group Session

- Conduct a worship service (with audio) implementing all concepts with all participants.
- Final Assessment

APPENDIX A

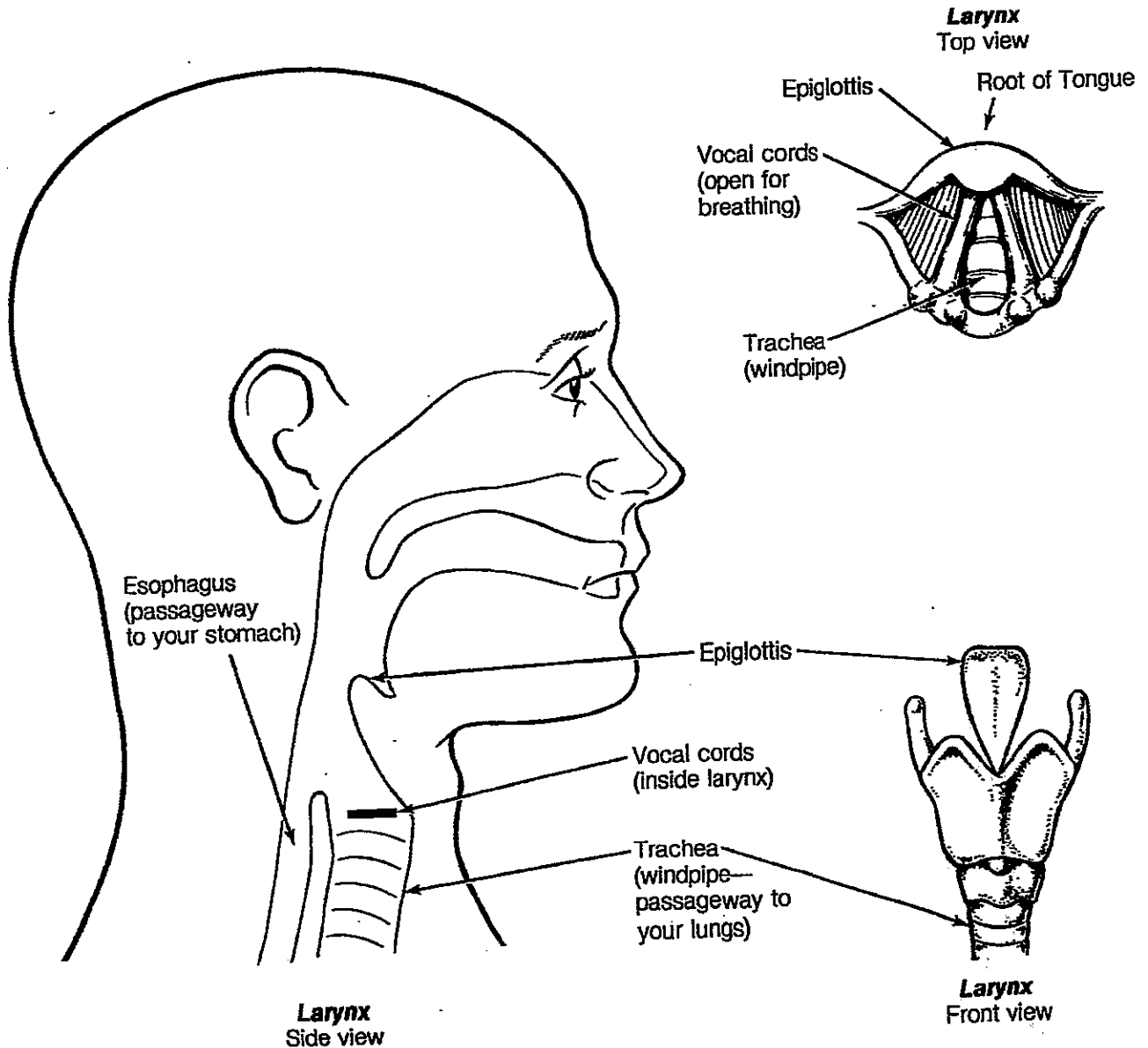
BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE VOICE

“Singing for the Stars” – Seth Riggs (used by permission)

Vocal cord vibration—where your voice begins

Located at the top of your windpipe (trachea—pronounced tráy-key-uh) is a group of cartilages, ligaments, and muscles that functions as a single unit. This unit known commonly as your voicebox, is your *larynx* (pronounced lá [as in cat] -rinks). Inside your larynx, attached from front to back, are the main muscles of your larynx—your *vocal cords*.

The location of your vocal cords



Basic Principles

Before you begin your training program, we should first go over some basic principles about how your voice works, how it works best, and then finally, how you will get it to work for you.

How Your Voice Works: The Creation of Vocal Tone

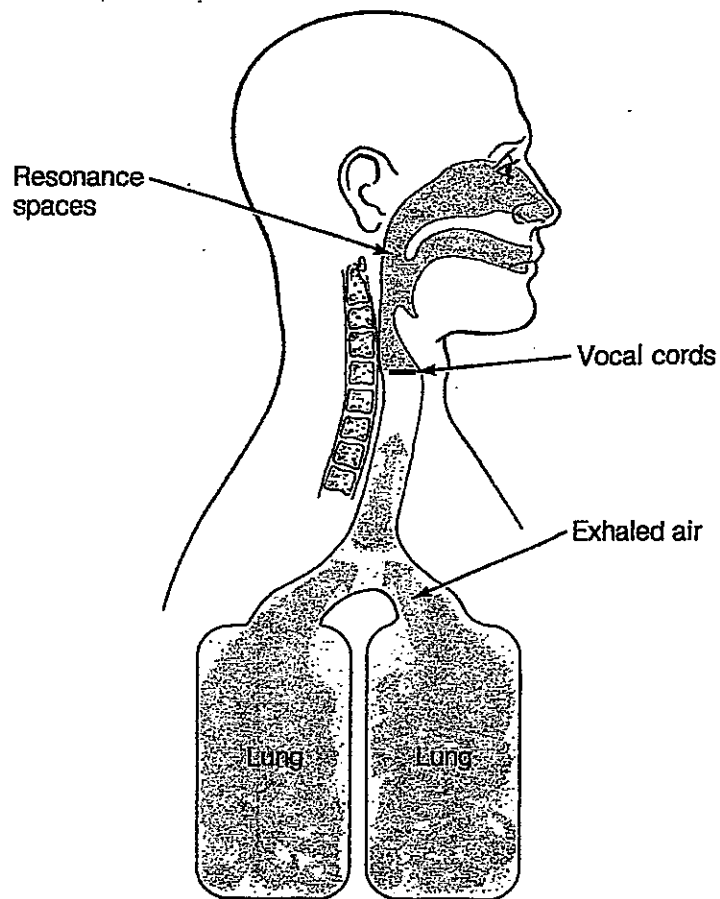
There are two factors involved in making vocal tone—*vocal cord vibration* and *resonance*.

1. Vocal cord vibration

The air you exhale from your lungs works with your vocal cords to create an initial tone.

2. Resonance

That tone is then modified and amplified as it travels through the spaces above your vocal cords before leaving your mouth.



Let's examine these factors more closely.

Inhalation: Singing

1. Signal

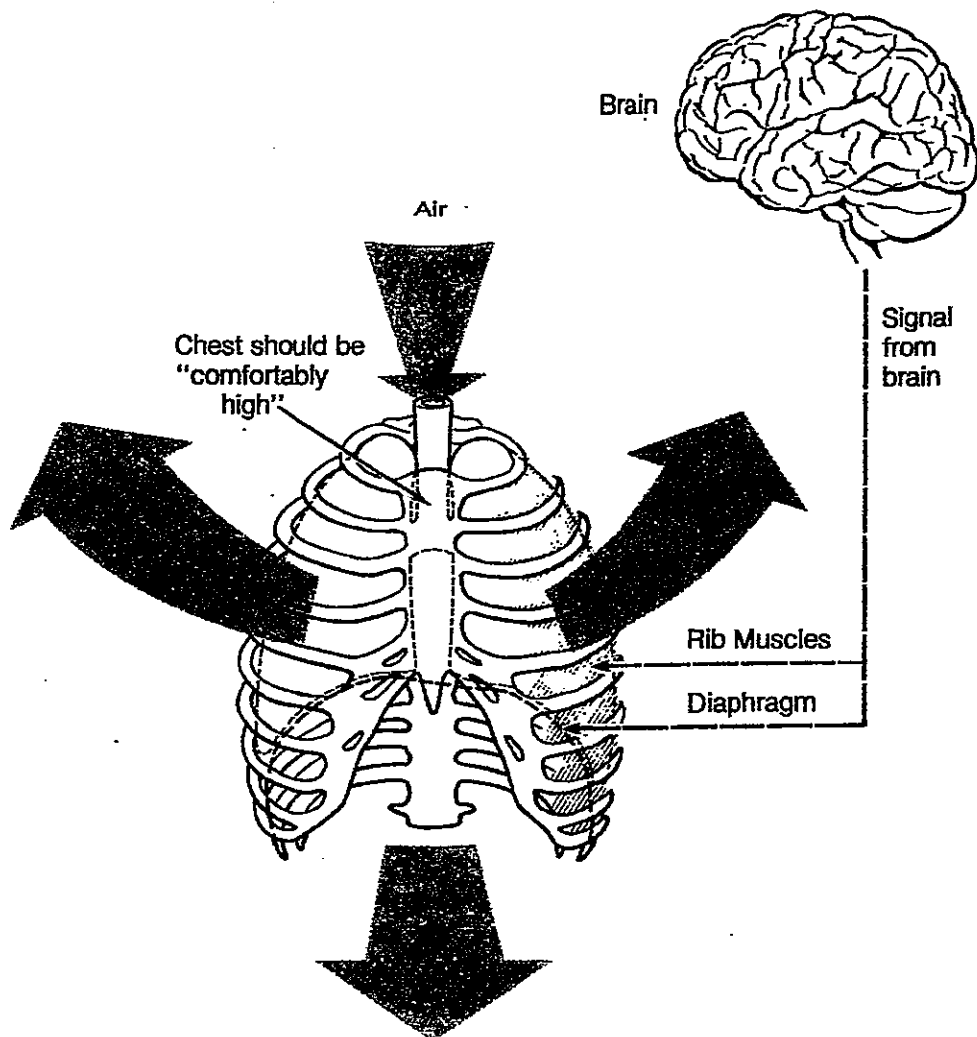
Your brain signals your breathing muscles that you need a supply of air to make sound.

2. Action

Same as normal inhalation, except you *regulate* how much air you need and at what rate you will take it in. Be sure your chest remains "comfortably high" (see p. 132) and that your abdominal (stomach) muscles are relaxed to let your diaphragm descend easily, without any resistance.

3. Result

Air fills your lungs.



You can also regulate exhalation.

Exhalation: Singing

1. Singing

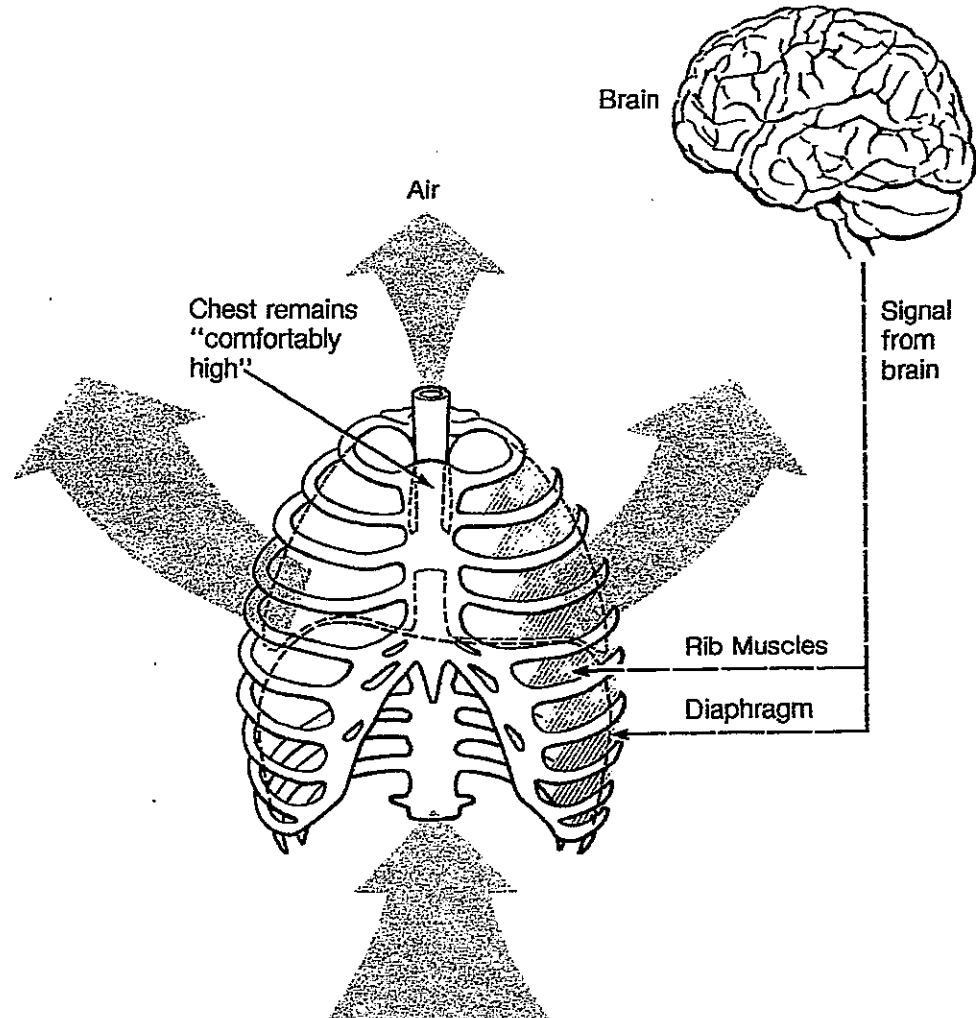
Your brain signals your breathing muscles that you need to send air to your vocal cords.

2. Action

Not the same as normal exhalation. To be able to *regulate* the amount of air you send to your vocal cords, you must be able to control your rate of exhalation. Your rib muscles, therefore, continue to keep your ribcage (thus your lungs) expanded, while your abdominal muscles take over control. Your abdominal muscles push your diaphragm (in a state of flexible tension) up steadily and slowly against your lungs.

3. Result

Air is released to your vocal cords as needed.



BREATHING FOR SINGING

- 1) Use all your senses to practice breathing.
- 2) Keep good posture; do not slouch or lean on one leg.
- 3) Stay relaxed by deep breathing. Stretching exercises will help promote blood circulation and eliminate nervous tension.
- 4) Practice "silent breathing" (like a yawn).
- 5) Keep your hand on abdomen to check your breath.
 - a. As you inhale: Stomach goes forward, rib cage sideways.
 - b. As you exhale: Stomach goes in (contracts), rib cage (sides) relax.
- 6) Watch yourself in a mirror whenever possible.
- 7) Lie on a hard surface to help observe abdominal breathing.
- 8) Practice frequently! 20 times a day for 1-2 minutes is better than 10 minutes once a day.
- 9) ***When and when not to breathe:***
 - a. NEVER in the middle of a word.
 - b. ALWAYS breathe at a rest or phrase break.
 - c. Take the fullest breath possible by not waiting until the last minute.

***"Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!"
(Psalms 150:6)***

APPENDIX B

SPEECH-LEVEL
SINGING

“Singing for the Stars” – Seth Riggs (used by permission)

How Your Voice Works Best: The Natural Technique of Speech-Level Singing

Most singers use excessive muscular effort when they sing. Muscles the body normally uses to chew and swallow food, as well as open the throat wider when it needs to get oxygen into the lungs quickly, are used to manipulate the larynx—forcing it up or down. This is done to accomplish a difficult pitch, increase intensity, or “improve” the quality of one’s tone. We call these muscles the *outer muscles*, because they are located outside the larynx.



Wrong:
Reaching for high notes



Wrong:
Reaching for low notes



Right:
Speech level

Whenever you use your outer muscles to control your voice in any way, however, you prevent the free vibration of your vocal cords inside your larynx, and alter the relationship (and the over-all condition) of the resonance spaces above your larynx. The result is a labored and unbalanced sound.

Only when your larynx is in a relaxed, stable position can your vocal cords adjust easily with your breath flow, to create the pitch and intensity of your initial tone. And, only when your larynx is in a relaxed, stable position will your final tone contain a balance of top, middle, and bottom harmonic qualities—like a good stereo system—so you never sound “muddy” on low notes or “splatty” on high ones.

Yet, there’s another important reason why your larynx must be kept free of outer-muscle interference. Many of these muscles are involved in the production of speech sounds, and their interference in the tone-making process inevitably disrupts the word-making process as well. It’s hard to form vowels and make consonants when the muscles controlling the movement of your tongue and jaw, for instance, are also trying to control your tone. Hence, voice production using the muscles outside your larynx is a hopeless battle in which both your tone *and* your words become the casualties.

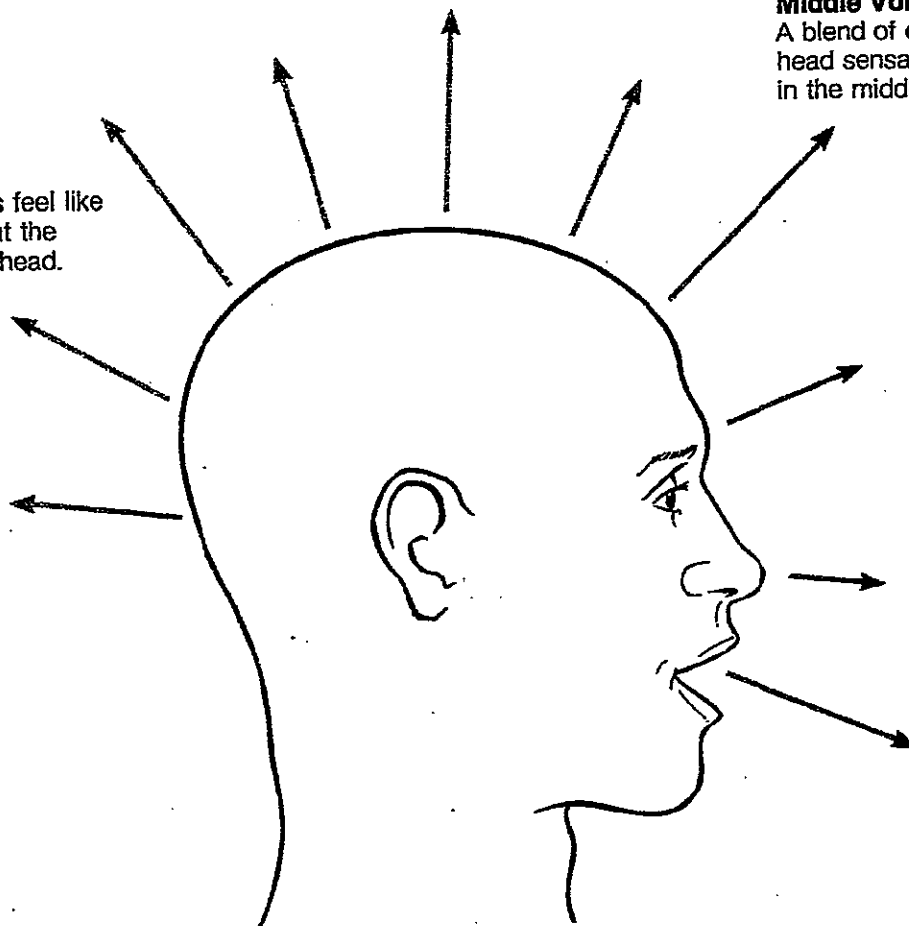
Physical sensations

A by-product of resonance activity, as we have already mentioned, is the creation of physical sensations in the singer. Low tones feel like they are in your throat and mouth and, at times, can even be felt in your chest—thus the term *chest voice*. As you sing higher, your voice (if you are singing correctly) feels like it leaves your throat and mouth and goes more and more behind your soft palate until, finally, it feels like it goes out the back of your head—thus the term *head voice*.

But the physical sensations you experience have nothing to do with what the listener actually hears. What these sensations *can* do, however, is help guide you in the correct and consistent use of your voice. There will be more about this in the training program itself.

Physical sensations of the singer's voice

Head Voice
Highest tones feel like they travel out the back of your head.



Middle Voice
A blend of chest and head sensations. It's in the middle.

Chest Voice
Lowest tones feel like they travel out of your mouth.

Health and Care of the Singer's Voice

Your voice is not something isolated from the rest of your body. Singing involves the coordination of many muscles—whether it's the muscles of breathing, or the muscles in your larynx. These muscles can get tired, weak, and out of condition from lack of general physical exercise and/or poor nutritional maintenance.



The overall health of your body is always the primary consideration for good vocal health. To give your voice the best opportunity to function at its maximum level of efficiency, your body must always be functioning at its maximum level of efficiency.

As a singer, you should maintain a daily program that not only conditions your voice, but also helps to keep your body fit, rested, and well nourished, for both your health and physical appearance.

You must also use good posture, avoid bad vocal habits, and be aware of any other factors that may affect the well-being of your voice.

A word of advice from Sherrie:

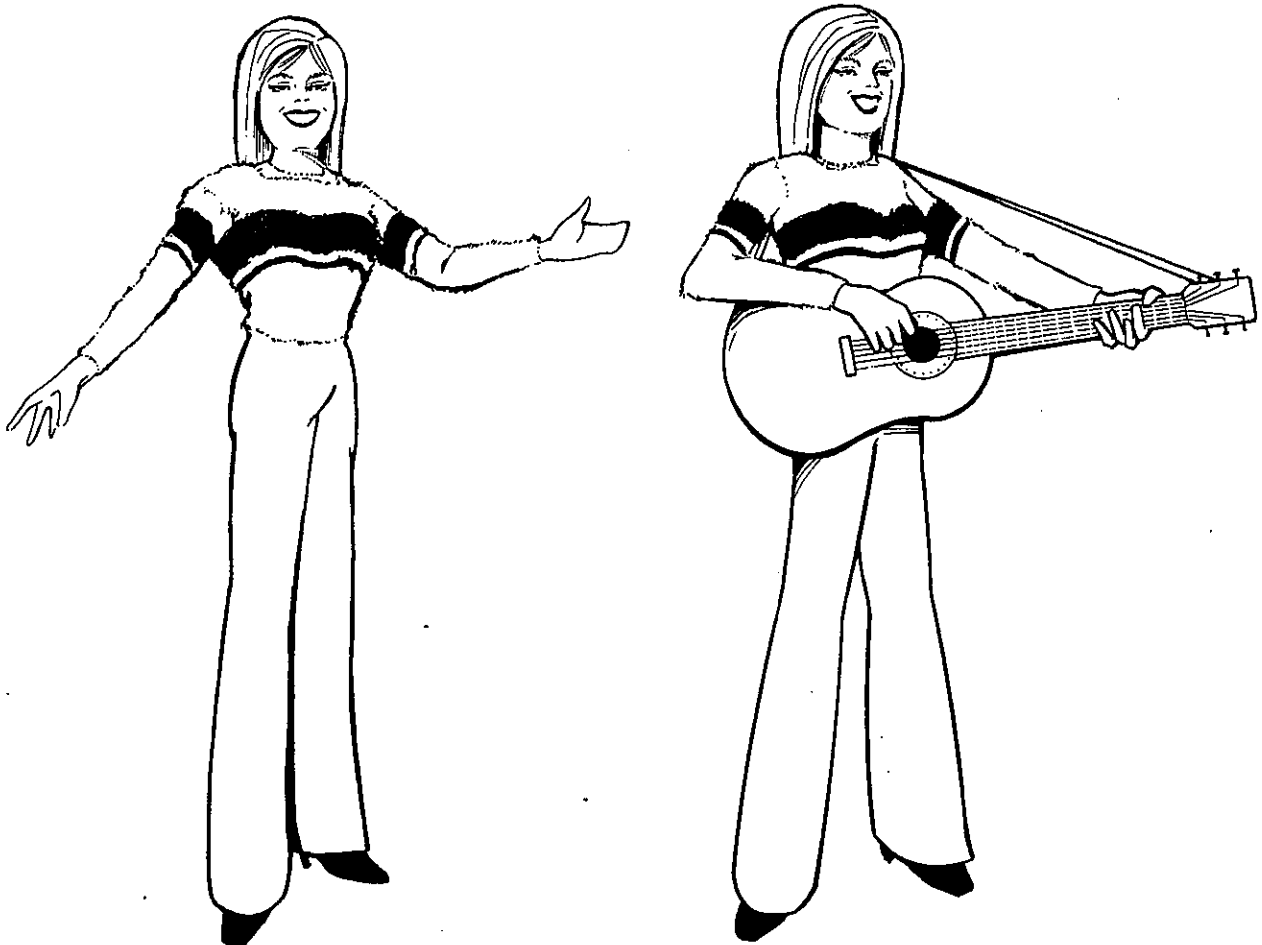
"Guard your voice carefully. Do all that is possible to keep it in the best condition at all times. Refrain from excessive yelling, straining, cold drafts, undue physical fatigue, or heavy eating before singing."

"Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy" (Psalm 33:3).

Your Posture

Your spine contains your body's primary network of nerves—the spinal cord. The nerves for every limb and organ in your body are connected to your brain by this one network, which runs through the center of your spine. This main nerve cable branches out into smaller nerves, and then into still smaller nerves, until they reach out into every part of your body, including your larynx.

The function of your nerves is to pass along signals from your brain to other parts of your body. When your body is not aligned correctly, these signals become weakened or interrupted, because abnormal pressure is placed on your nerves as they pass through the openings in your spine. Poor posture inhibits not only the physical movement of your breathing muscles, which affects the air supply to your vocal cords, but also the nerve signals from your brain.



Smoking

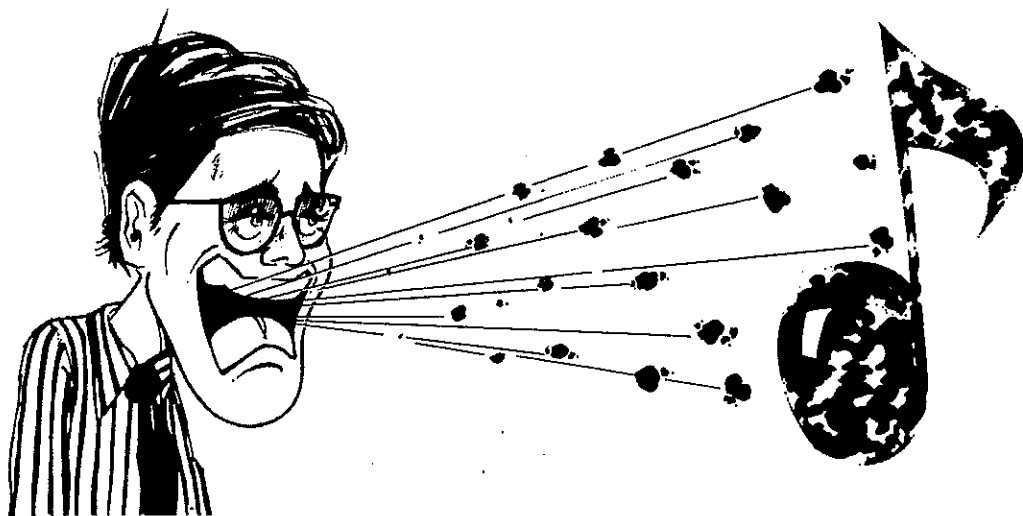
Besides containing chemicals that can cause muscle and nerve problems, smoking dries out the mucous lining of your vocal cords. Without this natural lubrication, the edges of your cords can swell, making vibration very difficult and allowing air to escape unused. And it doesn't matter whether it's your smoke or someone else's.

Eating before singing

It is suggested that you don't eat before you sing. After a meal, your body tends to slow down, because the body's energies are directed toward digestion. This inhibits your mental alertness and the vocal coordination you require during a rehearsal or performance. Also, the excess mucous that secretes onto your vocal cords can interfere with the vibration process itself.

Shocking your cords

Excessive coughing, sneezing, forced throat-clearing, and starting your tone with a sudden burst of air can strain or even damage the delicate muscle tissue of your vocal cords.



Using excessive volume

When you can't hear yourself sing—or talk for that matter—there is a tendency to overcompensate by using more muscle to control your larynx, which in turn requires that you use more air to move your cords. A muscular "battle" soon begins to take place between your vocal muscles (in your larynx) and your outer muscles to resist the escalating air pressure. This leads to hoarseness and added tensions that cause the muscles in and around your larynx to become sore and painful.

Other Factors

Imitation of other singers

Often singers try to imitate the voice or singing style of a famous entertainer or other person they admire. A sound that's appropriate for one person's voice, however, is not necessarily good for another's. When you try to adopt vocal qualities that your own vocal equipment is not designed to handle, you only abuse your voice.



Remedies that don't work

Sprays, lozenges, hot tea, etc., do not help you sing better. They only soothe irritated membranes when you have a sore or irritated throat. Most of them have no effect on the vocal cords themselves, because your vocal cords are located below the point where most of these preparations can reach. But even when they do reach your vocal cords, these "remedies" do *nothing* to correct the problems that put your voice in the condition that prompted their use.

**Unnecessary
vocal rest**

It isn't natural for your voice to become hoarse or tired with normal (optimal) usage. However, if you abuse your voice, either through poor vocal technique or anything else, it will not work its best for you. When you find that your voice becomes hoarse, weak, or too painful to use, vocal rest may eliminate these symptoms temporarily. But don't think *all* you need is vocal rest. Eventually the problems will return unless you eliminate the cause—vocal abuse.

**Emotional stress
and fatigue**

When you are tired or your body is under emotional stress, your neuromuscular system can't function properly. Under such conditions, you run the risk of overexerting your vocal muscles and using the muscles outside your larynx for assistance.

Hormones

For women, natural changes in your body's chemistry, during pregnancy, menopause, and even menstrual cycles, will cause your body's tissues to thicken—even your vocal cords. Be careful at these times, because your cords will not respond or move as quickly as they do when they are thinner.

Your environment

There are a great variety of environmental factors that can affect your voice (not to mention your general health). Dust, fumes, smog, smoke, or any foreign substances you come into contact with can affect the muscular tissue of your vocal cords directly, or indirectly by affecting your neuromuscular system.

APPENDIX C

THE COUNTENANCE OF THE WORSHIP LEADER

The person leading the congregation in praise to God carries the weight of responsibility to do so in an encouraging and inspiring manner. Developing an awareness of one's presence and demeanor before the Lord and his people is essential to fulfilling this goal. Here are some biblical references on this topic:

“Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God” (Psalm 42:5).

“You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand” (Psalm 16:11).

“A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit” (Proverbs 15:13).

APPENDIX D

MINISTRY IS...

The foundation of ministry is character

The nature of ministry is service

The motive for ministry is love

The measure of ministry is sacrifice

The authority of ministry is submission

The purpose of ministry is the Glory of God

The tools of ministry are the Word of God and prayer

The privilege of ministry growth

The power of ministry is the Holy Spirit

The model for ministry is Jesus Christ