

There is an African proverb that says if you can walk you can dance, if you can talk you can sing. Do you agree?

As children, we learned to walk. We crawled, we stumbled, lost our balance, got up and did it again. And again and again. Until we got better at it. We did the same with the voice. We played with sound, we hummed, we yelled, we imitated and marveled as we began to discover the many things we could do with this powerful instrument inside of us. We got better at it, and eventually learned to speak.

People often say, "I can't sing, my voice isn't good enough." Thank goodness they don't say that about speaking, otherwise we'd

never hear from them! Others believe they are tone deaf, or cannot carry a tune. Unfortunately, many seem to believe this is irreversible. Are you one of them?

Everyone can sing. Yes, it's possible your voice may have dimmed from lack of use however, as Hazrat Inayat Khan says, "The voice is a light. If the light becomes dim, it has not gone out, it is there. It is the same with the voice. If it does not shine, it only means that it has not been cultivated and you must cultivate it again and it will shine once more." It is possible to improve ability through practice, just as regular exercise strengthens and tones the body..

Why sing? Because the benefits are all encompassing and enhance every part of our lives. Singing helps us:

- . Reduce stress
- . Increase energy
- . Encourage self expression
- . Improve articulation
- . Strengthen brain and language development
- . Learn phrasing, patterning, rhythm and rhyme
- . Express emotions
- . To breathe deeply
- . Strengthen memory

- . Increase endorphins
- . Reduce depression
- . Develop listening skills
- . Move
- . Be heard
- . Get inspired
- . Increase concentration
- . Be in community

- . To tell stories
- . Harmonize
- . Connect with spirit
- . Give thanks
- . Be passionate
- . Laugh
- . Be a soprano, alto, tenor or bass or all four
- . Experiment with sound and
- . Travel (yes! You can travel the world through singing songs from other cultures)

In other words, singing is good for the body, mind and spirit. To sing is to grow. It is a marvelous opportunity for self development. As we reconnect with voice through song we become more confident in expressing ourselves, enrich our self confidence and empower ourselves for life.

Go for it. Cultivate a singing practice and see what happens. The next time you want to burst into song, do! Sing dramatically. Sing like Pavarotti. Sing like Bob Dylan. Try out your country and western voice. Make up a song. Let it out, whether you are in the car, in the shower (check out the great acoustics), with your children, or in a group. Feel your sound reverberate throughout your body. Make friends with your voice and rediscover what we so innately knew as children: singing is fun! Express yourself!

Sylvia Wende is choir leader of the Get Inspired Choir in Nanaimo, a playful, non-audition singing group based on the model of the highly successful Gettin' Higher Choir in Victoria. She can be reached at (250) 751-7873 or for more information.

Do You Love to Sing?

Enjoy songs from all over the world?

Join the
Get Inspired Choir
as we begin our 5th session
No auditions, simply a
playful spirit and desire to sing

Call Sylvia Wende (250) 751-7873
or email swende@shaw.ca

Dr. Paulette Roscoe



- Complete Health Services
- Healthy Aging • PMS
- Menopause • Allergies
- Digestive Disorders

754-1733

Free
Candida
Testing

NATUROPATHIC PHYSICIAN
210 Milton Street, Nanaimo, B.C.