

SINGER-SONGWRITER JUDY FJELL

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PHARYNX STRETCHES

(Taught to me by Jan Gist of the Old Globe Theater San Diego, CA)

1. Stand tall but relax your body.
2. Put fingers under ears and jaw and locate "soft" or "tender" spot
3. Relax your mouth and tongue and body (especially knees)
4. Lower hands.
5. Stick out tongue and attempt to touch chin.
6. Lean head back as far as you can and count to fifteen in your head.
7. Bring head forward, and relax tongue.
8. Repeat steps 1-7.
9. Repeat steps 1-7 except attempt to touch your nose (do twice)
10. Repeat steps 1-7 except attempt to touch your right cheek (do twice)
11. Repeat steps 1-7 except attempt to touch your left cheek (do twice)
12. Relax your body, shake it out, letting hands and cheeks go loose.
13. Finally, pretend you are at an art exhibit and your hands and arms won't move. Use your chin to point out works of art and features of the room. (tremendous pharynx stretcher)

BODY AND BRAIN WARMUPS

(Concepts taught by Anne Green Gilbert of creativitydance.org Seattle, WA)

BRAINDANCE ACTIVITIES COVERED IN SONG (this version developed by Judy Fjell):

Breath (Opening)

Tactile (verses 1-3)

Core-Distal (verse 4)

Head-Tail (verse 5)

Upper-Lower (verses 6-7)

Body-Side (verses 8-9)

Cross Lateral (verses 10-11)

Vestibular (verse 12)

0. *Before singing, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth 5 times.*
1. This is the way we tap ourselves . . . (*tap all over the whole body with fingers*)
2. This is the way we brush ourselves . . . (*brush the whole body with hands*)
3. This is the way we squeeze ourselves . . . (*squeeze all over the body with hands*)
4. This is the way we make x's and o's . . . (repeat) (*crouch, then expand arms and legs*)
5. This is the way we go head to tail . . . (repeat) (*bend head forward and back to torso*)
6. This is the way we dance our uppers . . . (*dance arms, head, shoulders only*)
7. This is the way we dance our lowers . . . (*dance legs, hips, knees only*)
8. This is the way we dance our left sides . . . (*keep right side still*)
9. This is the way we dance our right sides . . . (*keep left side still*)
10. This is the way we cross the line . . . (repeat) (*follow arms/legs with eyes side to side*)
11. This is the way we climb a tree . . . (repeat) (*scan up and down with eyes*)
12. This is the way we spin around . . . (*sing twice - stop halfway through second time to recover, then spin the other way, stopping halfway through second time to recover*)

OTHER GENERALLY GOOD VOICE ACTIVITIES

1. Use the Mm-hhhhm activity to find your speaking and singing voice. Begin to shift your speaking voice to be more of a singing voice in your daily speech. This will take stress off it.
2. Use tongue-rolling (TR), motor-boating (MB), or deedle-deeing(DD) many times a day simply to strengthen and build flexibility in the muscles in your vocal folds and your pharynx. A very good exercise which also engages all the muscles of the controlled exhale involved in singing is to TR, MB, or DD your way through "Yankee Doodle" as many times as you can on one breath. Do not take a breath until you are completely out of air (this happens long after you have quit making sounds).
3. Use the snake-hiss or irritating mosquito sounds while following your finger(s). Do not take a breath until you are completely out of air (this happens long after you have quit making sounds).
4. Relax your body at regular intervals during singing. Horse wiggles, "Give yourselves a hand" pats, cheek blubbers, shoulder rolls, etc. are all helpful
5. If you're able to do vocal play with a group, use non-verbal mirroring to increase your vocal repertoire by imitating another person's gestures. You can also use sound transformations (sound ball) to enhance your sound and movement vocabulary.
6. Shoulder rubs from are generally relaxing for the group and help singers to feel emotionally bonded. Group backrubs create a sense of humor and a sense of being in a group. (Remember, however, that not everyone likes to do this. Anyone should be able to say no *without comment* from the group. "No" is a good thing for the voice to be able to say.)
7. Use "Laughing Is Contagious" song to build general singing strength
8. Use solfeggio vowels and hand signs for body/ear/voice coordination. ("Solfa Dreaming and Devil's Dream" and modal rounds from *You Can Sight Sing*)
9. Use Sinus Rinse (sinusrinse.com or from your local drugstore) to minimize post-nasal drip and its negative effects on voice.

RECOMMENDED READING AND RESOURCES

Voice Care Network - voicecarenetwork.org offers summer classes - THE BEST!!

Music EdVentures - musicedventures.org presents annual conference

The Singing Cure by Paul Newham, Shambala Books

Bodymind and Voice: Foundations of Voice Education Ed. Leon Thurman/Graham Welch

You Can Sight Sing Judy Fjell, Honey Pie Music

STAY IN TOUCH!

Judy offers workshops, retreats and is available to lead Music Empowerment experiences in your community, your schools, and your congregations. Just give her a call, or email her! Also, she and her website designer are working to make www.judyfjell.com more interactive. Soon you will be able to order and/or download recorded music, sheet music (including choral arrangements), voice and guitar lessons online. She also intends to post articles of interest about voice and music empowerment.

SING LIGHTLY! KEEP SINGING! KEEP LISTENING TO EACH OTHER!