

# TEN TIPS FOR SINGING FOR EVERYBODY ESPECIALLY BEGINNERS WHO ALWAYS WANTED TO...!

Pan Morigan

## TIP ONE: YOUR WHOLE BODY IS YOUR VOICE, YOUR VOICE IS YOU

Your voice is not *only* a sound that comes out of your mouth... it is the relationship of your feet to the earth, the strength and flexibility of your legs and hips, the openness of your pelvic floor, the mobility of your ribs, the strength and responsiveness of your diaphragm, the aliveness and softness of your throat, the springy excitability of your soft palate, the articulate relaxation of your tongue and jaw and the resonant capability of your skull, nasal cavities, chest, etc... All this is your voice, your instrument. And... your voice is your thoughts, your emotions, your dreams, your hopes – it is your values, your beliefs, what you care about, what you love. Your voice is your imagination. Your voice is YOU.

So, learn everything you can about the country of your body, and you will find your voice waiting for you there...

## TIP TWO: IF YOU CAN TALK YOU CAN SING

Even if you think you're tone deaf, you can learn to feel the vibration of pitches in your body. Everybody can sing. Everybody has a unique, valuable instrument. No two are alike. It's about getting to know your voice.

*You can get to know it, starting right now, by exploring.* Take a breath. Where do you feel yourself move and expand when breathing? Give a gentle sigh. Where do you feel it?

## TIP THREE: YOUR VOICE RUNS ON BREATHING

Pay attention to your breathing and get to know how breathing works, for you, right now. Do you feel breath movement in your chest? In your belly? In your lower back? In your side ribs? In your sternum? Nowhere at all? Is your breathing deep, shallow, fast, slow, loud, inaudible? Does breathing feel good, or does it feel difficult? How does your breathing change throughout the day?

Embark upon an adventure in breathing – learn all you can about how you breathe, or don't... Don't worry about right breathing or wrong breathing. Just notice yourself. There are many ways to breathe, depending on what you need. The thing is to be aware. See if you can deepen and relax your breathing just by tuning into it, right now.

**TIP FOUR: LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN! LISTEN TO ALL KINDS OF  
MUSIC ALL THE TIME**

Of course, listen to what you like. But don't stop there! Go in search of new music, daily. This should include styles and performers you would not normally listen to or even expect yourself to like. Expand and liberate your ears and your musical tastes as a way to stimulate your imagination. Notice how singers in different genres of music use their voices in different ways. No way is wrong or right, they're just different. Can you describe the sound of a singer's voice? Pick two different voices and try. You may have to discover new words. That's good!

**TIP FIVE: COPY, COPY, COPY! LISTEN TO THOSE TWO SINGERS  
AGAIN, AND NOW, COPY THEM**

Try anything you can, vocally, to copy. Have no fear. Approximate what you hear. (That is how children learn.) Be a child for a moment and have fun! No fear or judgment. Drive and sing. Shower and sing. Cook and sing. Garden and sing. Work and sing. Baby-sit and sing. (The kids will love it.)

**TIP SIX: IN OTHER WORDS, LEARN BY TRYING NEW SOUNDS...**

You don't need a teacher to do this, and you have the intelligence to do it right now. Our brains are made to learn. After you've tried your first two singers, pick another and another. Try a different style each day or week. This will make you use different parts of your mind, breath, body, and voice. By doing this, you will create new nerve pathways in your brain.

If you do this each day, something amazing will happen. I can't tell you what that will be – but you will find out! Try. It is never too late to grow and learn a new thing. Our brains are flexible. Grow your voice to grow your imagination to grow your brain... Just open your mouth and explore sound.

**TIP SEVEN: LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN! BUT NOT WITH YOUR EARS!  
LISTEN TO YOUR OWN VOICE BY FEELING IT**

Feel the vibrations, the movement of breath, and all your singer anatomy – the ribs, tongue, soft and hard palates, (the roof of your mouth, your throat,) your jaw... Don't judge, just be with your voice. Feel it in your throat, in your chest, in your mouth, in

your back. Don't say, I sound awful. Instead say: "Curious, I feel a vibration in my chest, or in my nose! My breath is in my belly..." Like that...

Notice where your own voice vibrates and reverberates when you speak or sing. Notice what sorts of pitches you are drawn to, what sorts of expressive sounds you are able to make *right now*... Be curious instead of judgmental. *Feel*, instead of listening, for a while.

#### TIP EIGHT: NOTICE AND FEEL

#### WHAT DOES YOUR VOICE DO, AND FEEL LIKE, WHEN YOU ARE HAPPY, MAD, EXCITED, SAD, RIGHT NOW?

What does your voice feel like when you make noise, or laugh or cry? It is an amazing instrument *right now*. Explore and play!

Appreciate what you know and can do *right now*, and let that be the basis for further learning. Your voice can do a lot! Check it out!

#### TIP NINE: ROLL DOWN YOUR SPINE AND TOUCH YOUR TOES EVERY DAY

A flexible spine will help you with your breathing. Notice your breathing every day. Shake out your jaw every day. Jaws can be tight and they can block sound. Grab, with your thumb under your chin and your index finger across the bottom of your chin, shake your jaw up and down very gently. Be easy. Let your hand do the work, while your jaw goes on a vacation.

When the jaw is tight it gets in the way of vocal freedom. So it's important to get to know your jaw tension, and work to release it. Don't worry. This takes time. Most of us start with jaw tension. Life can be stressful! Just be patient and move slowly.

#### TIP TEN: ABOVE ALL, LOVE YOUR VOICE

Love it *right now*, no matter how it sounds or feels. If you love your voice, you will find it easy to be curious about it, instead of judgmental, nervous, or embarrassed. If you love your voice, you will feel more relaxed about using it... and so it will work better for you.

Enjoy. Have fun! Explore the country of your body/voice and you will find something amazing waiting for you there... the essence of yourself. The sound of your own heart... beautiful...

#### ABOUT PAN MORIGAN

Pan Morigan is an award-winning songwriter, vocalist, & teacher. Her new album of

original, genre-defying songs is called Wild Blue, & mixes the musical influences of Pan's childhood; Jazz, Blues, & Irish, North American, & Greek folk sounds. She's music director of Chrysalis theater, & teaches Voice for Theater at Smith College.

<http://www.panmorigan.com>

New album, Wild Blue, at: <http://www.panmorigan.com/2011/03/wild-blue/>



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