

A Singing Journey:

In my younger years I always loved singing and the feeling of vibrancy that came from singing, despite often being told that I wasn't good enough by those with the power (*music teachers peers etc*).

Somehow I gained the confidence to keep going.

In my twenties I had some amazing community music training with [Frankie Armstrong](#) who trained my own **self judgement** out of me and taught me that what some may perceive as 'incorrect' might actually be 'interesting' and relevant to my musical journey. This, of course, helped me to see clearly my role within community music and how I could help others to find their voices.

Being told we are not good enough to sing is an all too common experience for many of us. Somehow, in our society it is deemed ok to laugh at or criticise someone's voice or way of singing. This can potentially lead to us suppressing our voices in other ways.

A teacher wouldn't tell a pupil to pretend to do eg. math's, but many of us may have been asked to pretend to sing.

We all know that we **learn** by actually **doing**.

To be most effective, the **doing** must be in a positive and encouraging environment.

So... please DO sing!

You will be setting a great example to those around you, just in the act of singing.

Also....

Find a group of people you can sing with.

To sing in a group amplifies the feel good factor and sensation of *release* further.

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Useful links.

The Natural Voice Network (NVN) is an amazing resource of different singing / wellbeing groups around Wales, the UK and beyond. The philosophy is that all are welcome, regardless of ability/ background etc in our singing groups.

<https://naturalvoice.net/>

In fact all the singing leaders in the NVN are aiming to encourage the general public to reclaim their 'birth right to sing'.

The President of the NVN is renowned folk singer Frankie Armstrong and she continues to guide the organisation and it's members into her 80s. She launched her album Cats of Coven Lawn with Frankie and Friends in January 2021 where it became the Guardian folk album of the month. I'm privileged to sing as one of Frankie's friends on this album with the trio Bread and Roses (Frankie herself, Pauline Down and me)

My YouTube Channel has an array of short song and round ideas as well as some singing workshop sessions.

Just Give Me The Freedom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rnd6oXPWbs&feature=youtu.be>

Wales Shanty Down Down The Land To The Sea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHEmY0UTeYs&feature=youtu.be>

It also shows some songs created with some of the community singing projects I have the honour to work with.

Eg. Oasis One World Choir <https://oneworldchoir.co.uk/>

I have a fascination for creating short achievable songs (eg the "Free Your Mind" Song in the video) and have written a book of [All Year Rounds](#)

Jon Ratigan Age Cymru [Tell Me More](#) project [Website](#)

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