

AUTUMN 2019

turningpoint

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The Honourable Gaston Browne



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MERRILL OSMOND FROM LEGENDARY GROUP THE OSMONDS

talks about Life and his UK 2019 Christmas Tour

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HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SINGING OUR WAY WELL BY KATIE ROSE

For more information visit: www.therosewindow.org

Throughout time, people have sung for many reasons along our way through the seasons of life. From our first cry and the lullabies that soothe us as babies, to birthdays, weddings, funerals, there is a soundtrack running through our every moment and milestone. When we tune into the currents of this ever-flowing river of song, we tap into a natural source of wellbeing. No pills, no gadgets, no gizmos required, just our own voice - a personal instrument of transformation, resonating in the very heart of us.

I realised that my calling was to sing and help others sing at the tender age of 15. My journey of song has included performing, composing, leading singing groups in hospitals, hospices and festival fields and conducting mass choral fundraisers for global charities. I've seen repeatedly that the transformative effect of just one voice, just one song can ripple out from within the innermost chambers of our bodies, to touch our lives and others across the planet.

Singing is a whole body, whole person experience which affirms the interconnectedness of all aspects of our wellbeing. Modern scientific research now backs up what artists and sages have known forever - singing can positively impact our wellbeing at multiple levels.

1. Physical Well-being – In some cultures, there is only one word for dancing, singing and music. Singing is a full body experience which gets toes tapping and fingers clicking. Studies show that as a gentle form of cardio-vascular exercise, singing deepens and regulates our breath cycle and heart rate. Like all good workouts, it burns calories and results in a mood-boosting endorphin rush.

2. Emotional Well-being – There's a song for every feeling in our human experience. Whether we are bouncing around to Pharrell's Happy or belting out I Will Survive after a break up, singing gives us safe, stress relieving expression of the full spectrum of our True Colours.

3. Confident Well-being – For many people, the thought of singing is scary because it can be seen as vulnerable making to express ourselves in front of others. However, when we take the brave step of breaking through our inhibitions, we experience enormous growth in our confidence. Singing can build resilience and strength during times of great challenge – spirituals helped people survive the horrors of slavery and formed the basis of much modern R&B, gospel, jazz and soul music.

4. Social Well-being – As babies we babble away with those around us in a form of singing-speaking, learning by call and response from those coo-ing and ahing around us. Melodic patterns remain in the intonation of our adult conversations. In singing this is heightened and we can experience a powerful sense of bonding as we build a sound together- whether that's with our choir/ band/ karaoke buddies/ entourage/ massive stadium audience. Songs also enable us to mark and process the stories of our communities and many artists are activists, who use songs to raise awareness of social issues. Choirs are a huge force for fundraising and members are statistically more likely to volunteer, give to charity and participate in other activities.

5. Creative Well-being – Singing is fun – it connects us with the playful, curious, imaginative part of us that wants to learn, grow, explore and express ourselves.

6. Mental Well-being – Becoming absorbed in the creative process of learning melodies takes our mind off day to day worries, alleviating mental stress. Singing is great brain gym which lights up numerous areas of our grey matter. We form new neural pathways as we learn new songs and we reinforce long-term memory by recalling old favourites - dementia patients can still sing songs from their childhood even when they have forgotten how to speak.

7. Spiritual Well-being – Singing connects us with the innate witnessing part of ourselves that observes and processes our thoughts, feelings and sensations as we pass through life. Connecting with this essential part of ourselves – call it what you will - our spirit, soul, consciousness, inner self - makes us more self-aware and self-reflective. Singing in this way becomes a meditative process which takes us beyond our daily circumstances to a place where we can take new perspectives. There is also a healthy dose of mystery about singing – it's a magical experience, where imagination and inspiration can lift us up again and return us to life renewed and refreshed.

All this and more singing can do so next time you are feeling a bit shy about letting rip in the shower or joining a choir– just go for it.