

Aspects

The lifestyle page

Sing away the blues!



WHEN we were youngsters we loved the sound of our own voices.

We screamed in our prams, sang in assembly and wailed if we fell over and hurt ourselves.

But as we grow older we turn into shrinking violets and often hide our voices.

A workshop is being held at the Harmony Country Lodge in Burniston this weekend to encourage people to "discover the power of their natural voices" and sing their way out of the blues.

Susan Lever, who is running the workshop, says singing is a simple, free and easy way to release stress, improve our moods and even heal ourselves.



"If you feel low and you make happy sounds, it will, without a doubt, lift you," she said.

"At one time singing was a natural part of our daily life. Our ancestors sang in the fields as they worked, sang to worship and for pleasure but sadly this tradition has been lost."

Nowadays, with personal stereos, television and dwindling congregations in church, we've become passive listeners instead of active participants.

"It's a great shame because making sound can really change your mood," said Susan.

"Your breathing will automatically change and so will your physiological state.

"You'll find you have a lot more energy, a lot more confidence and a lot less stress."

In her workshops, Susan, who lives in Guisborough, wants people to discover their true voices.

"People take on the voices of other people and often have telephone voices," she said.

"I have had professional singers come on my courses who

have modelled their voices on someone who influenced them and they want to discover their own voice.

"We want to hear it in its purest form."

And don't worry if you think you're tone deaf - Susan says that's a fallacy.

"If you can speak, you can sing. It's all to do with listening and they can't hear the notes when they are copying the music," she said.

"Sometimes it can stem from childhood when they try to copy an adult sound and they might have been told they were tone deaf.

"It might take some work to get right but it just takes a bit of listening."

Using singing as a form of healing dates back to ancient times.

"The mystery schools of Egypt, Greece and Rome developed specific chants and tones for healing and today's techniques are based on these ancient traditions.

"Every organ, bone, tissue and other part of the body has a healing frequency.

"Disease can be described as part of the body vibrating out of tune and everyone has the ability to learn how to heal themselves through sound once their natural voice is released."

Susan's workshops attract people of all ages and all walks of life.

"They've ranged from children to people in their 80s and everyone from actors, musicians and housewives to builders,"



SUSAN LEVER ...
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she said.

The workshop will be held at the Harmony Country Lodge in Burniston on Sunday from 10am-4pm at a cost of £25.

To make a booking, call Sue Hewitt at the Harmony Country

Lodge on (01723) 870276 or for more information about her workshops or her healing tapes, call Susan on (01287) 636350.

Just enjoy belting it out . . .

● Humming is a good way of calming yourself. If you're feeling stressed, anxious or nervous, just sit quietly and hum very gently. Feel the hum resonating through your body.

● Exaggerated yawning is ideal if you're feeling tired. We hold a lot of tension in our jaws and mouths and stretching the mouth releases tension. Give a good stretch as well to really wake up the whole body.

● If you're feeling irritable and tense, try an

elongated, noisy sigh. The key is to forget about being polite and English and really let go.

● Try singing the vowel sounds - uuuh, ooo, oooh, aaah, eehh, iii.

● Take every opportunity to sing. Sing with the radio, while you're doing the housework, while you're in the bath, or even better, while you're driving in your car. Don't worry about what your voice sounds like, just enjoy belting it out.

● Try singing positive statements, repeating them with different tunes. If you're feeling tense, sing: "I'm calm, I'm calm". If you need to feel more assertive, try: "I've got a right to be heard".

● Experiment by listening to different music and work out what effect it has on your moods. Try listening to some of the sacred chants available on tape for deep relaxation and a profound sense of peace.

This week we look at how to care for your hands and nails.

HOW many times have you been ashamed to show your hands because of unsightly nails?

This time of year both the hands and nails are prone to drying out. This allows them to become dehydrated and flaky. But all is not lost.

It only takes half an hour once a week to rehydrate your hands to give a more youthful appearance. The nails will eventually grow and look stronger.

Aspects of health and beauty

This is a guide to your home manicure treatment. Follow these steps and with perseverance your hands and nails will take on new life.

STEP 1: Using an emery board, file the nails, from side to centre. Using light strokes downwards, bevel the nails to avoid the nail layers splitting apart.

STEP 2: Massage cuticle cream or oil into the fold and surround-

A monthly feature by Elaine Sollitt



ing skin near the nail and soak the nails in warm water for a few minutes. This allows the cuticles to be gently pushed back.

STEP 3: Apply a hand lotion or oil and gently massage into the hands. Leave to soak for a while or those with very dry skin can place a warm towel over the hands to allow deeper penetration. The oil can be left overnight to soak in using cotton gloves to protect the hands.

STEP 4: There are various nail strengtheners that can be used but ideally nails that are weak or

brittle need time to be nourished by the body.

STEP 5: It is best to avoid using nail polishes at this stage, as they can be very drying. Ideally keep the nails short for a while. This will stop them from splitting or flaking.

STEP 6: General good health, a balanced diet and exposure to sunlight appear to improve the condition of nails but some people will always have frail nails, due to genetic factors. These tips however will help to keep the nails in good condition.