

What is Voice?

When you speak, sound vibrates throughout your body. Whatever your body is doing affects how you sound. The more vibrations you create, the more voice you have.

Sound waves are conducted well by less dense substances. Air, for example, is a great conductor of sound. Wood is pretty good too. But concrete is not. The human body is made up of a huge variety of substances, some of them better conductors of your sound than others.

Bone is a good conductor, but tensely constricted muscle is very bad. Floppy muscles aren't very good conductors, but engaged muscles are. The more flexible your muscles are, the more space they can create inside your body, and the more full-bodied you will sound. So it is important to understand, and to be responsible for what is going on inside your body.

Tense, or constricted muscles not only limit the vibrations that you can create, and therefore share, they also limit the amount of space you can create in your body. For example, a tense, tight jaw keeps your mouth cavity small, and stops your sound vibrations from flowing freely out into the room to be shared with your listeners. Tense shoulders, neck and abdomen all contribute to limiting the volume and the quality of the sound.

Your spinal column needs to flow through the centre of your back in its natural curves – but not overly curved – so that your rib cage has maximum potential for movement as your lungs expand and contract, and so that your core muscles have optimum room for maneuverability.

Practise the posture exercise whenever you can. Do it with awareness, so that you notice whether or not you have your knees soft or locked, whether you have your weight more on one foot than the other. Notice if your shoulders are slumped forwards, or tightened back, and relax them. Make sure your head can move easily from side to side as you gaze out towards the horizon.

THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG. THERE IS ONLY WHAT YOU NOTICE. IT IS THE NOTICING THAT IS IMPORTANT. WHEN YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING, YOU CAN LEAVE IT ALONE, OR CHANGE IT. YOU HAVE A CHOICE.

When you have trained yourself to notice any unnecessary tensions in your body, you are in a position to relax them away. When you know, from the inside out, what it feels like to stand well, balanced and centred, you are able to take that feeling with you into sitting, walking, running, dancing – living your life.