

## Singing for Breathing 6-8 Week Courses

### Who can benefit?

Anyone, for improved general health, wellbeing and fitness but particularly those who experience breathlessness due to a diagnosed lung condition or other illness/reason such as stress, anxiety or depression. Also, people wanting to improve voice quality can also benefit. Our courses are suitable for complete beginners and returners who want to continue or improve their practice.

### Course Aims & Outcomes

- Learn techniques to manage breathlessness
- Understand breathing habits and adopt better breathing habits for everyday life
- Exercise and strengthen muscles that support breathing
- Increase physical activity (it's aerobic!)
- Better health and wellbeing generally (become more relaxed, improve oxygen levels in the blood, improve energy levels, stamina and boost immunity!)
- Meet new people and improve confidence
- Enjoy singing with others and feel uplifted!

### What happens in a session?

A Singing for Breathing session typically starts with after refreshments with a relaxation and breathing exercise. This is designed to help you:

- Learn about *your* breathing
- Begin warming-up and 'opening up' around the ribs to make space for the breath
- Set up fundamental techniques for better breathing

This is followed by physical and vocal warm-ups then songs to work with the underlying exercises/techniques (thus exercising primary and supporting respiratory muscles and building good practice for everyday life) and help make exercising enjoyable!

*Our courses have been developed via support from participants' donations, Active Norfolk (Sport England), Awards for All (National Lottery) and the Geoffrey Watling Foundation. They have been designed in collaboration with North Norfolk's Breathe Easy Support Group, the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Team (based at Kelling Hospital), A+L UK and 'The Musical Breath'. Techniques taught include established Singing for Health principles such as 'The Accent Method'.*



## How is Singing for Breathing different from a general singing group?

Singing for Breathing sessions are structured around a few key principles, some of which are different from a general singing group because they focus on core exercises that build better breathing habits and healthier, stronger muscles for better breathing control and management. The key principles are:

- Good posture - *making space for the breath*
- Songs are designed to promote *full, complete breaths using primary respiratory muscles* (intercostal muscles and diaphragm) and support muscles in the abdomen
- *REDUCING/ERADICATING shallow, top-up breaths*
- Controlling and slowing down exhalation for better quality, deeper inhalation
- Repetition and practice - participants *learn and adopt better breathing habits and techniques for everyday life* including other physical activities or when singing generally/with other groups

## How do people benefit?

Published research, feedback and assessments tell us that participants:

- Learn about their breathing and *adopt new ways to control and manage breathlessness*
- *Replace dysfunctional breathing with better breathing habits for better general health and wellbeing*
- Increase physical activity and stamina
- Relax and manage everyday challenges
- Improve voice quality/aid speech and communication
- Meet new people and improve confidence to join other community groups/activities

## How can I get involved?

Just come along to a group near you (starting dates and locations below). No need to book but it is helpful for us to know numbers so register your interest/book a place (contact details below)

## What should I wear/bring with me?

Wear comfortable, loose clothing (wearing layers is helpful!). Bring a bottle of water to help keep hydrated.

## How can I help?

Help us spread the word, refer people and/or encourage anyone you know who might benefit to try it! Conditions like COPD cannot be cured by medication but they can be managed, and qualities of life significantly improved, by knowing how to improve breathing habits.

## Locations:

'The Reef' Leisure Centre, Weybourne Road, Sheringham (led by Tina) and North Walsham Sports Centre (led by Nicky). Nicky is also setting up groups in South Norfolk. Please check website or get in touch for details, current dates/times.

## Cost

We request a donation of £5 (or what people can afford) per participant, per session (includes refreshments). This enables us cover costs and enable us to continue offering the sessions.

## For more information and to check dates:

- <http://playingforcake.uk/singing-for-breathing-2>
- [info@playingforcake.uk](mailto:info@playingforcake.uk) / 07771 605 188 (Tina) / 07792 757474 (Nicky)