

Singing for Breathing 6-8 Week Course

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. People wanting to improve voice quality can also benefit. Our courses are suitable for complete beginners and for 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, after refreshments, with relaxation and breathing exercises. 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!

This course was developed through funding from Active Norfolk, Sport England and in collaboration with North Norfolk's Breathe Easy Support Group and Pulmonary Rehabilitation Team (based at Kelling Hospital). The courses use well-established Singing for Health principles, including The Accent Method, and are affiliated to A+L UK. We can deliver these courses thanks to a grant from Awards for All (The National Lottery) and participants' donations.



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 do register your interest (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 encourage anyone you know who might benefit to try it! Conditions like COPD cannot be eradicated with medication but the condition can be managed and qualities of life significantly improved by knowing how to manage and improve breathing habits.

Locations:

Long Stratton: Village Hall, Mondays 2,30-4pm

Sheringham: The Reef, Tuesdays 2:30-4pm

Attleborough: Town Hall, Tuesdays 2:30-4pm

North Walsham: Sports Centre, Fridays 10.30-12

Cost

We request a suggested donation of £5 (or what people can afford) per participant, per session to enable us cover costs and to continue offering the sessions. This includes refreshments. No-one is excluded if unable to pay.

For more information and to check dates:

- See <http://playingforcake.uk/singing-for-breathing-2>
- Contact info@playingforcake.uk / 07792 757474