Finding a Voice & Social Connection through Singing

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Haere mai!
Everything is ka pai!
You're here at last,
You're really here at last.

Haere mai!
Not a cloud in the sky
To coin a phrase,
It is the “day of days”.
You’re welcome as the sunshine,
You’re welcome as a king,
Pai kare! This is one day
We’ll really have a fling!
Haere mai!
Everything is ka pai!
Throughout the land
We want to shake your hand.

Haere mai!
We’re proud of you, that’s why.
Haere mai,
Haere mai.
Presentation Overview

• Choral Singing Therapy in NZ
• Research
• So you want to set up a choir…
• Questions
Warm up the body

Posture

Shoulders

Head and neck
Exaggerated movements

Jaw
Open mouth.
Drop jaw down

Lips
Horse’s sneeze.
“Eee” - “Ooo”

Face
Sour lemon.
Tiger face.

Tongue
Ti - Kuh
Ka - La

Soft palate
Yawn and stretch.
Warm up the fuel tank
Warm up the voice box
The teeth, the tongue and the lips…

- Pitch glides / sirening / humming
- Lip / tongue trills (br / r / z)
- Tongue twisters – rhythmic speech & consonant articulation
- Scale-based exercises – pitch accuracy
- Vowel / syllable discrimination & accuracy
Peace, salaam, shalom
Bella mama, bella mama e
Banuwa banuwa
Banuwa yo
Oh when the saints, oh when the saints,
Oh when the saints go marching in,
Lord, I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in.

Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home,
Swing low, sweet chariot,
Coming for to carry me home.

She’ll be coming round the mountain when she comes,
She’ll be coming round the mountain when she comes,
She’ll be coming round the mountain,
Coming round the mountain,
Coming round the mountain when she comes.
Therapeutic Choirs in New Zealand

- **CeleBRation Choir (Auckland)**
  - Website: [http://www.chr.auckland.ac.nz/choir](http://www.chr.auckland.ac.nz/choir)
  - Facebook: [https://www.facebook.com/CeleBRationChoirNZ](https://www.facebook.com/CeleBRationChoirNZ)
  - Email: chechoir@auckland.ac.nz

- **Cantabainers Choir (Christchurch)**
  - Website: [www.therapyprofessionals.co.nz/cantabainers-choir](http://www.therapyprofessionals.co.nz/cantabainers-choir)
  - Email: therapyprofessionals@clear.net.nz

- **Sounds Well Singers (Wellington)**
  - Email: megan.glass92@clear.net.nz
  - Penny Warren (SLT): penny.warren@clear.net.nz
  - Naomi Scoff (SLT): naomi.scoff@clear.net.nz

- **The BrainWave Singers**
  - Email: robin.matthews@enactus.org.nz

- **Music Moves Me**
  - Brainwave Singers (Tauranga)
  - Email: roxy17@agc.auckland.ac.nz
CeleBRation Choir

Established: 2009

Context: The University of Auckland - Centre for Brain Research, Dept. of Speech Science,

Participants: Approx. 40 adults (mainly 65+, some younger) living with neurological conditions (50% stroke), carers, volunteers

Therapists: Alison Talmage RMTh and Shari Storie RMTh (job share), advisors and researchers from the Centre for Brain Research

Researchers: Prof. Suzanne Purdy and multidisciplinary SPICCATO research team

Funding: Free to participants.
Established: 2012 by TPL, Kimberley Wade (RMTh) & Susan McDonald (SLT)
Participants: Approx. 35 adults with neurological conditions esp. stroke, brain injury & Parkinson’s disease
Other attendees: Carers, volunteers, SLT students
Therapists: Kimberley Wade (RMTh) and Danielle Waterhouse (SLT)
Professional links: University of Canterbury
Funding: Therapy Professionals Ltd, NZBRI, NZ Music Foundation, Canterbury Community Trust, $10 entry fee for members.
Aphasia: Why might singing help?

- Music exists in all cultures
- Group singing boosts mood and improves quality of life
- Positive changes in the body
- Holistic, strengths-based, patient-led
- Speech and singing areas of the brain overlap
- Singing may be preserved when speech is impaired
Thoughts from the Cantabrainers Choir
Choirs and Neurorehabilitation

• Neuroplasticity: “the capacity for neurons to structurally and functionally adapt.” (Kleim, 2011)

• Applying this to a therapeutic choir
  • repetition matters
  • intensity matters
  • time matters
  • salience matters
Singing and word finding

When singing, word retrieval facilitated by

- both sides of brain used (Ozdemir, Norton & Schlaug, 2006)
- decreased speed (Stahl & Kotz, 2014)
- rhythm (Stahl & Kotz, 2014)
- useful phrases (Stahl & Kotz, 2014)
- use of familiar, repetitive songs
Increasing participation in life

- new friendships and sense of community
- a new hobby
- practice communicating with others
- supporting others, contributing to the group
- autonomy within the group
- opportunities for new roles
The Choir Environment

- wheelchair friendly
- aphasia friendly instructions and information
- trained support staff and volunteers
- good time of day
- no/low cost
- song choice (simple, repetitive, familiar)
- positive attitudes of others
- access to RMTh and SLT
Helping People Grow

• encouragement to take risks (solos, duets)
• challenging unhelpful personal beliefs
• feelings of independence and efficacy
• increased confidence
• increased motivation
• increased knowledge about aphasia
SPICCATO Feasibility Study (2011)

Stroke & Parkinson’s: Investigating Community Choirs and Therapeutic Outcomes

Convenience sample – CeleBRation Choir members and carers

Prof. Suzanne Purdy and multi-disciplinary research team

Mixed methods – voice measures, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups

Supported communication
Needs

Social connection
“Anything that takes them [people with stroke] out of their comfort zone is a really good thing. Anything, like the choir. I can just think of so many people that should’ve been going to that choir and they probably wouldn’t leave the house.”
(Stroke significant other)

Musicality
“Even though she can’t speak, she could sing every song played.”
(Stroke significant other)

Recovery of abilities
Researcher (R): So when you first went to choir, why were you going?
Stroke participant, male, 43y: Basically I just wanted to, talking [gestures to do more of it]
R: So you thought it would be like a therapy?
SP: Yeah.
R: Therapy or just opportunity to talk?
SP: No, no therapy. Because you guys [therapists] are here so you know what to talk.
R: So you thought the singing would help your talking?
SP: Yeah. And I didn't worry if my singing was crap [sic] or good.

(Fogg Rogers et al., 2015)
Choir Experience

- Group singing
- Session environment
- Song choice
- Mixed neurological conditions
- Music therapist interaction
- Barriers and access

(Fogg Rogers et al., 2015; Talmage et al., 2013)
Benefits, new abilities, connections

**Mood**

R: So what do you enjoy?
SP: Singing, and, “Hi, how are you?” and everything.
R: So meeting people?
SP: Yes. And singing and laugh sometimes.
(Stroke participant, female, age 65):

**Voice, breathing, language**

SP: And sometimes, [participant uses gaze, alternating between two people, to convey the importance of watching the music therapist]
R: If you watch her?
SP: Yes, and sometimes... [indicates words or song coming out of her mouth]
(Stroke participant, female, age 65):

**Shared fun interest**

It’s lovely just to sit in there singing away too, and just to look around and watch everybody participating at their own level, in their own way, with no pressure. They don’t have to do 10 of those or eight of those. And it’s such a level playing field. It’s a joy to behold, honestly.
(Stroke significant other, female, 66y)

(Fogg Rogers et al., 2015; Talmage et al., 2013)
The Music Therapist’s Role

• Musical leadership
• Balancing group and individual needs
• Multi-disciplinary collaboration
• Personal qualities
• Promoting the special nature of the choir
The SLT’s Role

• 1:1 support (Cantabrainers Choir)
• Advice and research (CeleBRation Choir)
• Liaising with the MTh
• Education
• Learning from the MTh
• Holistic approach
So you want to set up a therapeutic choir…

- Research and theory
- Identified demand and referral system
- Local expertise – participants and carers, RMThs, SLTs, admin
- Networking and support
- Funding and resources
- Organisation: venue, access, frequency, time, volunteers…
- Evaluation and research
Contact us

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References


Questions
Celebrating Music Therapy
21-29 May
2016

Brain Day
12 March
2016
NOW IS THE HOUR

Pō atarau e moea iho nei
E haere ana koe ki pāmamao
Haere rā ka hoki mai anō
Ki i te tau e tangi atu nei

Now is the hour when we must say goodbye. Soon you’ll be sailing far across the sea. While you’re away, oh, please, remember me. When you return, you’ll find me waiting here.