



Ageing
Voices



CREATIVE AGING
INTERNATIONAL
We Celebrate Aging

Clár Éire Ildánach
Creative Ireland
Programme
2017–2022



Singing and Parkinson's

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MUSIC DIRECTOR, MOVE4PARKINSONS VOICES OF HOPE CHOIR, WICKLOW



What is Parkinson's?

- Progressive condition
- Affects brain
- Loss of dopamine
- Chemical messenger: enables brain to communicate and control movements
- Broad spectrum of symptoms
- Huge variety from person to person
- Motor & non-motor symptoms



Treatments

- ▶ Currently no definitive understanding or known cure
- ▶ No 2 neurodegenerative condition worldwide
- ▶ Diagnosis is overwhelming and bewildering
- ▶ Traditionally medical & scientific focus on treatment
- ▶ Medications: benefits and side-effects
- ▶ Growing interest in complementary therapies e.g. singing, Lee Silverman, dancing
- ▶ Focus on the day-to-day experience of living with Parkinson's
- ▶ Find something that you really enjoy doing

Why singing and Parkinson's?

- ▶ Group singing: no singing experience required!
- ▶ Evidence based: research & anecdotal
- ▶ Therapeutic: vocal, physical, cognitive and emotional benefits
- ▶ Communication: improve speech and language, express emotions through song
- ▶ Cognitive: helps memory, concentration, focus
- ▶ Physical benefits: posture, walking pace, breathing, muscle mobility, coordination, stamina
- ▶ Sense of wellbeing, feeling valued, mutual support, relax, fun
- ▶ Sense of ownership, purpose, pride, build confidence & self-belief, reclaim self-identity
- ▶ Relationships: new friends, social life, carers, family & friends are involved
- ▶ Structure: regular routine, social isolation can happen, symptoms are unpredictable
- ▶ Advice and support: Carer's Support group, physiotherapy sessions
- ▶ Connected to the community: valued, supported, collaborations, fundraising, performances

Impact on Speech and Language

- Soft tone, low/fading volume
 - Slurring/indistinct speech
 - Poor variation/expression/monopitch
 - Hoarse/breathy
 - Speaking too quickly
 - Hesitancy, stuttering, stamina
 - Not aware that speaking quietly
 - Difficulty understanding written & spoken language
- ▶ Lack of coordination/reduced muscle mobility in voice box, throat, roof of mouth, tongue, lips, lungs
 - ▶ Negative impact on quality of life
 - ▶ Affects ability to communicate – phone, making conversation, etc
 - ▶ Lose confidence
 - ▶ Loss of facial expressiveness
 - ▶ Singing can help with all of this

How singing helps

Symptoms/issues	Ideas for activities
Lax muscles in voice box, throat, roof of mouth, tongue, lips	targeted exercises
Posture	Seated/standing – strong, tall, stable
Low/fading volume, hoarse	Be loud – speaking/chanting
Breathy	Posture, breathing techniques
Poor variation/expression, monopitch/loudness	Sirens, dynamics
Speaking too quickly	Pulse, rhythm,
Hesitancy, stuttering, vocal freeze	Pulse, rhythm, chant, rhymes, tongue twisters
Soft tone, poor projection	Articulation, consonants, strong beat, resonance
Multi-tasking	Rounds with movement, layering, ostinatos
Lack of facial expression	Have fun, change mood, stretching, articulate words
Walking/balance/freezing/stiffness/dyskinesia/dystonia	Movement, marching, pulse, strong beat, posture
Memory/sequencing	Memorise lyrics/songs, repetition, sequenced phrases/songs, echo

Class structure – face-to-face

- ▶ Length: varies – Wicklow: 60 minutes of singing plus tea break
- ▶ Leader: use the knowledge that you already have
- ▶ Pacing important, warm-ups essential, clear instructions
- ▶ Stay hydrated
- ▶ Maximise movement & actions
- ▶ Vary standing/sitting but be aware of fall risks/fatigue
 - ▶ **Welcome (5 minutes)**
 - ▶ **Warm-ups: targeted, active, fun (15-20 minutes)**
 - ▶ **Songs: basic harmony, canon, partner (10 minutes)**
 - ▶ **General repertoire: new song, old songs (20 minutes)**
 - ▶ **Announcements, general sharing (5 minutes)**
 - ▶ **Cuppa, cake and chat (30 minutes)**
 - ▶ FUN, FUN, FUN

Class structure - online

- ▶ Weekly classes held on Zoom
- ▶ Not the same but still has value
- ▶ Modifications to the class structure depend on the Music Director
- ▶ Length max 60 minutes – screens are tiring!
- ▶ Be aware of safety
- ▶ Repertoire: new v old?
- ▶ Contributions by members: songs, stories, news, chat
- ▶ New members?

Warm-ups: physical and vocal

- ▶ Posture
- ▶ Stretching
- ▶ Breathing
- ▶ Sirens
- ▶ Vowels and consonants
- ▶ Repeating words loudly and expressively
- ▶ Resonance
- ▶ Articulation
- ▶ Movement and actions
- ▶ Listening
- ▶ Repetition
- ▶ Multi-task

Songs and repertoire

- ▶ Basic harmony songs
- ▶ Canons
- ▶ Partner songs
- ▶ Nursery rhymes
- ▶ Traditional/folk songs
- ▶ Build confidence
- ▶ Multitasking
- ▶ General repertoire
- ▶ Unison/harmony?
- ▶ Familiar & new songs
- ▶ Choose songs carefully: good mix of old and new, easy & challenging
- ▶ Songs that suit the group: memories, themes, preferences
- ▶ Ask for suggestions
- ▶ Lyric books



Move4Parkinson's Wicklow Choir

Move4Parkinsons Wicklow Choir



Wicklow Sings Festival



WICKLOW SINGS
CHORAL FESTIVAL

TEMPLE CARRIG SCHOOL GREYSTONES COUNTY WICKLOW
SATURDAY 6th APRIL 2019
7pm CONCERT with CHOIRS from WICKLOW

*Circle Chamber Choir
Voices of Bray
Unity Gospel Choir
West Wicklow Voices
Garden of Ireland Choir
Bollado Choir
Ficha Perfect Ladies Choir
Temple Carrig School Choir
Wicklow Community Choir
Newell Park Ladies Choir
Newcomers Wicklow Choir
The Sound Group
Amica Valley Singers
Available Voices*

AFTERNOON GROUP SINGING WORKSHOPS with KATHERINE ZESERSON
YOUTH WORKSHOP: 2.15 - 3.45pm Age 8-16 ADULT WORKSHOP: 4.15 - 5.45pm
ALL WELCOME NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

CONCERT: €10 / €5 (adults/16)
ADULT WORKSHOP: €10 or €15 to include Concert
YOUTH WORKSHOP: FREE

BUY TICKETS: Eventbrite / Temple Carrig School Office / Greystones Business Bureau
ENQUIRIES: 056 814 6926 / info@wicklowsings.com WWW.WICKLOWSINGS.COM



Some resources

- ▶ Move4Parkinsons
- ▶ Parkinson's Association of Ireland
- ▶ Sing to Beat Parkinson's (UK)
- ▶ Parkinson's Association (UK)
- ▶ Michael J Fox Foundation
- ▶ Davis Phinney Foundation
- ▶ Lee Silverman Big and Loud
- ▶ PD Avengers
- ▶ Sing Ireland

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Basic harmony songs: rounds, partner songs & more

Simple, familiar, no lyrics, acapella, builds confidence/pitching/ability to harmonise, layer melodies/movement, recite text, add counter melodies, be creative, marching songs, repetition

SOME EXAMPLES

- Frere Jacques
- Row Your Boat
- Three Blind Mice
- Bella Mama
- Nanuma
- Frere Jacques/Row Row/3 Blind Mice
- Tipperary/Pack Up Your Troubles
- When the Saints/Swing Low/I'm Gonna Sing
- Drunken Sailor

Sample Song List

- M4P Wicklow Choir

- Songs to suit the group
- Mix of familiar & new
- Easy & challenging
- Different styles of music
- Care with Inexperienced singers
- Vocal challenges/health
- Watch the range
- Choose correct keys
- Strong unison base
- Adding harmonies
- Not a sing-song
- End on a high/positive note

- Bridge over Troubled Water
- Will Ye Go Lassie Go
- The Voyage
- You've Got a Friend
- Side by Side
- Something Inside So Strong
- Can't Help Falling in Love
- Thank You for the Music
- Hallelujah (Cohen)
- Hallelujah Chorus
- You'll Never Walk Alone
- Three Little Birds
- Any Dream Will Do
- Stand By Your Man
- You Raise Me Up
- Dublin Saunter
- With a Little Help from my Friends
- Oh What a Beautiful Morning
- Black Hills of Dakota

Setting up a group

- ▶ Why? Objectives?
- ▶ Who? Local champion
- ▶ Group leader
- ▶ Venue/location
- ▶ Day/time/length
- ▶ Target group: who?
- ▶ Building Membership
- ▶ Local community links
- ▶ Volunteer helpers
- ▶ Facilities: accessibility, disabled toilet
- ▶ Equipment: suitable chairs, music stands
- ▶ Fees: €5 max recommended
- ▶ Taking attendance
- ▶ Insurance
- ▶ Funding sources
- ▶ Health and Safety/First Aid
- ▶ Sing Ireland resources on website

Observations

- ▶ Community connection essential e.g. parish/school/health centre/community centre/local newspapers/social media
- ▶ Collaborations e.g.
 - Lions Club
 - Local choirs
 - Local schools
 - Bealtaine
 - National Grandparents Day
 - Transition Year student
 - Wicklow Sings Festival
 - Lyric FM
 - Open rehearsals
- ▶ To perform or not to perform?
- ▶ Accompaniment
- ▶ Link with a researcher
- ▶ Evaluation sheets
- ▶ Find a mentor, buddy with colleagues
- ▶ Be paid a professional fee
- ▶ Role will involve other tasks like promotion, organizing events, fundraising, apply for grants
- ▶ Training
- ▶ Be ambitious, brave, creative, empathetic



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