

Joyful Singing – Tony Pryor

by Barbara Lynn Silberg

Just hearing Tony Pryor's voice lets you know he's born singer. But that's only part of what he does. Tony opened up workshops and classes called Joyful Singing for voice and healing only a few years ago, but already has plans to expand his life-mission and to bring his healing music methods to a wider audience.

Barbara: How would you describe yourself?

Tony: I'm a seeker. I'm also believer in the power of music. At age 5, I began learning piano. I now play the piano, organ, synthesizer, and the harpsichord. By day, I'm an energy trading attorney. But I do that part time so I can grow Joyful Singing.

Barbara: How did you get started?

Tony: A while ago a friend introduced me to the idea that we are all on a spiritual path. I got interested in music, sound and healing and wondered how that fit into my path.

I've always liked singing, but didn't do much until I got into comedy improv. In 2005, I worked with Glennie Scott, a talented voice coach and entertainer, on a one-man show I performed at Ovations. I've also studied voice with Randolph Lacy and Charles Dotson, learning their different techniques. (One size does not fit all when it comes to vocal technique.) I also attended two workshops lead by Claude Stein, a voice coach who conducts The Natural Singer workshops. He uses techniques that enable people to overcome performance anxiety, or anything else that silences them. After discovering that one can access the deepest part of the self by singing, I expanded his concept to develop my own workshops and classes.

I learned from Michael Vaughn, my life coach, that people can conquer anything that gets in the way of having their life like they want, if they are listened to, thought well of, and supported in a safe place.

My workshops and classes incorporate vocal technique, as well as processes to heal negative emotions—fears, self-criticism, and so forth—through singing through any distress. A person can conquer anything with the light of positive attention on them. In a safe, supportive environment, there's no limit to what they can do.

And when one overcomes one's fears and negative feelings, pushing through them rather than simply ignoring them or singing despite them, one's singing becomes powerful and joyful. The singer is then able to claim that power in other

areas in his or her life.

Barbara: Who does your business help or serve?

Tony: Well, of course, performers are interested in my courses—since I teach vocal technique.

But inexperienced singers come also. Anyone can sing; I truly believe that. And when my students learn to sing through their fears and come out the other side, why, I just see them blossom!

Barbara: What are your short- and long-term goals for your business?

Tony: Short-term, I hope to do this full-time soon. I would like to set up workshops with hospitals to support patients and their caregivers.

Long-term, I'd like to take this idea to other cities, nationwide. In addition to the Joyful Singing 101 workshop, I have two other classes: Joyful Singing 102, where prepare to sing a solo at a party and invite friends and family to hear them sing; and Joyful Singing 103, for continuing the deep healing work. In Joyful Singing 104, to begin this summer, students will plan and perform a full-length cabaret show at a professional venue, sell tickets and split the profits.

I also envision a class in Joyful Public Speaking, where students can learn to enjoy public speaking—using the same singing techniques.

Barbara: Who are some of your favorite heroes? Why?

Tony: Mother Teresa; Nelson Mandela; Barack Obama; Michael Piazza and Dawson Taylor, who are pastors for the Cathedral of Hope, where I'm Music Director; and Michael Vaughn and his wife Linda Bedre-Vaughn. Michael taught me never to settle for anything less than absolutely everything. All of these people have brought hope to the world.

Barbara: How would you sum up your philosophy?

Tony: Everybody has the right to have joy in his or her life.



Age: 60 - Partnered with Greg Chapman almost 10 years.

Cat, Buster, 9 years old. He's grey and has a white bib, tummy and feet. Buster carries on a running dialog—talks a blue streak in gurgles and chirps.

Tony Pryor of Joyful Singing can be reached at 713-826-9814. Please see his ad, page 10.