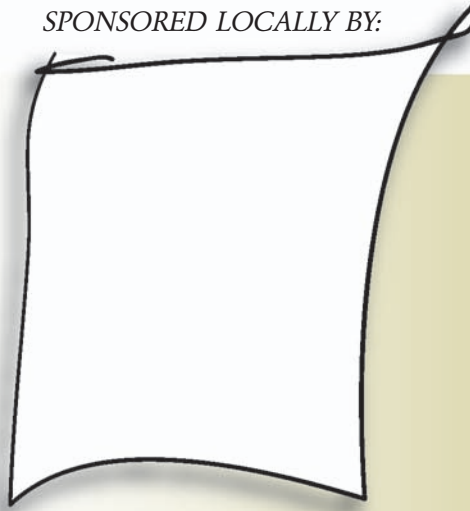


*“It’s
never
too
late to
learn
to
sing.”*

WHY SING?

Many studies done over a number of years have focused on the health benefits of singing, and the evidence is overwhelming – singing is good for you! It releases endorphins into your system and makes you feel energized and uplifted. Think about singing in the shower – how much better do you feel facing the day after humming a few bars of *You Lift Me Up*?

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People who sing are healthier than people who don't. Singing gives the lungs a workout, tones abdominal and intercostal muscles and the diaphragm, and stimulates circulation. It makes us breathe more deeply than many forms of strenuous exercise, so we take in more oxygen, improve aerobic capacity and experience a release of muscle tension as well.”

– Professor Graham Welch,
Director of Educational Research,
University of Surrey, Roehampton, UK

“Whether you’re Pavarotti or your voice scares the cat, singing can be good for your physical and mental health.”

— Ruth Rosselson,
The London Mirror

Not only does singing promote well-being, it can also help to prolong life. Graham Welch, director for advanced music education at London’s Roehampton Institute, states, “Singing exercises the vocal cords and keeps them youthful, even in old age. The less age-battered your voice sounds, the more you will feel, and seem, younger.” He says that when you break into song, your chest expands and your back and shoulders straighten, thus

improving your posture. Singing lifts moods and clears the “blues” by taking your mind off the stresses of the day, as well as releasing pain-relieving endorphins. As you sing along, the professor adds, your circulation is improved, which in turn oxygenates the cells and boosts the body’s immune system to ward off minor infections. And “it provides some aerobic exercise for the elderly or disabled,” Welch says.

A recent study has shown that active amateur group singing can lead to significant increases in the production of a protein considered as the first line of defense against respiratory infections, and also can lead to positive emotional changes.

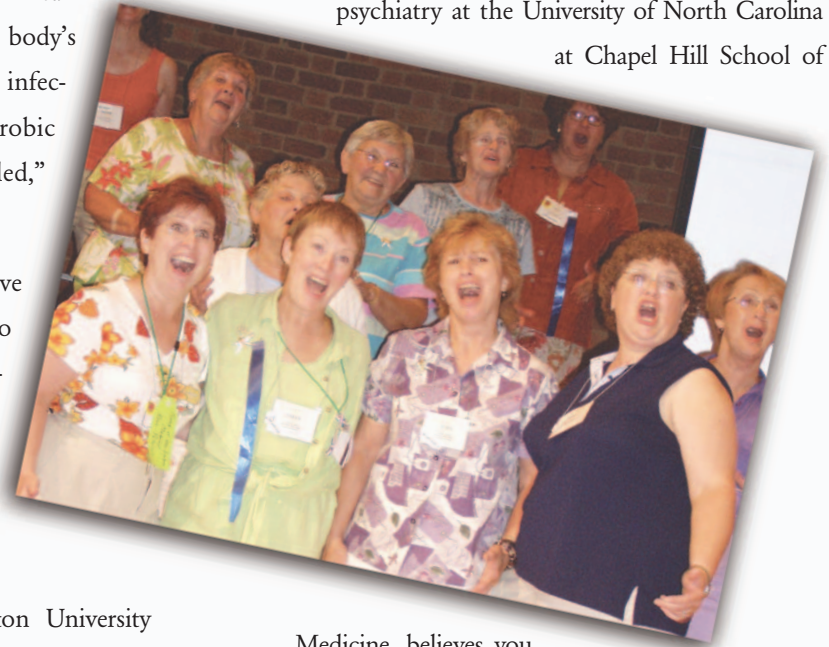
Greg Cohen of George Washington University tracked a Senior Singers Chorale in Arlington, Va. The chorale singers’ average age is 80 — the youngest is 65 and the oldest 96. Preliminary data shows the singers suffer less depression, make fewer doctor visits a year, take fewer medications and have increased their other activities.

“What prevents us from singing?”

It could be as simple as someone who told us that it was something we shouldn’t do because it wasn’t pleasant to listen to or the self-talk that says it doesn’t sound good enough, so don’t do it. Lennon asks, “Is the logic that if one ‘sounds better’

one ‘enjoys’ it more? Do we sing primarily to sound better? It is a coveted fringe benefit, but hardly the primary reason why we sing.”

Reid Wilson, Ph.D., associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of



Medicine, believes you can “sing away your woes” by setting your troubles to music. For example, instead of crooning the traditional words to *Mary Had A Little Lamb*, sing it with your own ‘worry’ words out loud for a few minutes, until you feel less anxious. It works because “the singing makes you feel ridiculous,” says Wilson. “And it’s very hard to maintain your distress when you’re doing something foolish. You step back from the worry and put it in perspective.”

Want to start feeling better now?

Go to www.sweetadelineintl.org and start living!