

at a point of little exertion. Singing in a lower range doesn't develop your voice. Vocal chords must be explored, used, toned, pushed a little, and exercised like any other muscle in your body.

Sing where your voice stretches a little.

Take it easy, however. Don't overdo it at first. Ease into your voice. If you treat your voice well, it will shape up for you, but this doesn't happen overnight. Like learning to play the dulcimer, it takes time. You have to teach your voice, and the more you use it, the more you'll learn about its use.

Don't worry about pitch, and key, and carrying a tune. It's nice if you can carry a tune, but there's already been a Caruso and a Jenny Lind, and Ma Nature doesn't duplicate herself. So be what you are, and let that raucous sound roll out of your mouth.

If your voice always sounds like you are singing the dirty blues with a big rumbling sound—well, great! Sing the dirty rumbling blues.

Singing is a real joy, and anyone can do it. It's time to take the shower room into the streets. If, at first, you feel uncomfortable without your shower, then sing in the rain. But sing...outside, inside, on street corners, everywhere and anywhere.

Just sing.

## SONGSMITHING

The prose-poem "Desiderata" says that "You are a child of the universe and have as much right to be here as anything else." If that's not a qualification for songsmithing, then we don't know what is.

Write what you feel, or think, or would like to feel or think; or think you'll feel if you like, or what you'll like if you feel you think...Put words to your melodies if you feel the need, and don't worry about making it all rhyme—work your words into the melody so it comes out, or work the melody into the words.

All you have to do is throw off a few paranoias.