

# Ideas for the coaching session

## Suggestions for the application of NVM principles in coaching

The suggestions below are indicated (more or less) in order of skill acquisition. For your understanding, the principles that are utilized are indicated in the text.

As you use the principles with sensory information and the predictive brain in mind you'll see how they work. This understanding will lead to more agency, artistry, and effectiveness in your coaching/teaching.

- 0 Step Zero: *Guiding awareness*
- 1 Finding the Hunn: *Interoceptive awareness*
- 2 The Hunn-ee: *Harnessing the predictive brain*
- 3 Nasty Triangle: *Register coordination*
- 4 Cartoon Mouse: *M2 for PM + register coordination*
- 5 Dog Mouth: *Vocal tract mods for PM styles*
- 6 Power Breathing: *A powerful sometimes tool*

## Step 0: Before the Hunn

### *Shifting awareness*

If the singer isn't "getting" the *hunn* - if they're not experiencing feelings, go to this step.

- Breathe. Asking them to feel what their body does when they breathe. They can feel movement within their body.
- Hum on an M (teeth slightly apart, tongue forward) or with tongue just outside lips. Focus attention on sensory information from the vibrations.

## The Hunn

### *Shifting awareness*

Ask the singer to hum on an N like (word of your choice). For tongue position:

- Use "hunn" or try the word "tin" or "ten."
- Use concept tools such as Cranky Goose, mimicking another sound (bug, small motor), or having a bad attitude (whiney sound).
- Once they're familiar with this, you can ask them to have their tongue in the N position and blow a bit of air out their nose first.

## Hunn-ee

### *Doing the math*

Remember that the brain will begin to predict for the vowel, which can change the experience of the "hunn." Encourage the singer to *find the feeling of the hunn first*, and then *move the feeling into the vowel*. Thinking of this as a sound with two distinct parts.

- These sounds work well for most people.
- If the long E vowel is not working well, experiment with other vowel sounds. The goal is to experience a the identifiable feeling that accompanies the exaggerated sound.

## Easy, PM M2

### *PM Sounds & Placement*

Address incomplete adduction or tension in M2 with these principles. Help singers feel and accept M2 sound most often used in popular musics (PM).

- For most people, the Cartoon Mouse concept works best **after** accessing M2 via an SOVT such as lip trills, straw phonation, or a "V" sound.
- Accessing the sound works best on a single pitch, or a pattern covering not more than a M3 range.
- Coordinating this M2 dominant phonation can proceed first as a descending M3 that takes the singer just past their need to "break" into M1.
- As the singer has more familiarity, descending patterns can expand to a diatonic P5 or even a P8 on a descending pentatonic pattern or scale.

## Sensory-based registration (yodels)

### *Registration using predictive brain*

Vocal textures emanate from various uses of registration. These principles access useful tools for accessing ease of registration and vocal textures.

- Wiley Coyote is a concept that helps ease a singer into this principle. It's gentle and can be used with humor and very few constraints.
- Octave jumps are easy and demand shifts in registers. Listen for ease and placement.
- As the singer becomes better at coordinating registers, you can create patterns that make separation and coordination more challenging and intentional. (More choices in *Money Notes*.)

## Introducing the Nasty Triangle

### *Raising awareness of the "narrowing"*

Success with the Nasty Triangle concept *is based on the ease and balance* of the "hunn" principle. If your singer is gripping, pushing, or straining as they phonate, please help their brain learn to predict for ease and balance before trying this principle.

- Bright vowels typically work better. So a long E vowel or an EH sound are usually the most successful starting place.
- Begin this process on pitches where the student is most comfortable. Generally the pitch, or a semitone higher than the pitch where they started on the "hunn" exercise.
- The first 1-4 times you try this, you are merely finding the feeling. Stay in a small range (M3-P5)
- Until the singer gets the hang of *guiding the feeling through pitches*, please keep the intervals small. A do-re-do pattern is a great place to start.
- Sliding - or *connecting* - is better than "hitting" the pitches.

## Opening up

### *Introducing "Dog Mouth"*

More space in the vocal tract via a more relaxed mouth and dropped jaw invites a more "sing-y" sound. The predictive brain accommodates more space by predicting for the different air pressure dynamics that are needed to experience the intended feeling. The brain does the math!

- There are exercises you can learn - and subsequently alter as needed - in my book. One is called "Ya-Ya Stretch" and the other is called "Single Note Balance."
- These exercises combine placement, registration, vowel modification, and blending. The singer and coach can place focus on what's desired at any given time.

## Vocal Camouflage

*Reaching for consistent feeling provides continuity in sound*

This process relies on the singer accessing an easy, balanced M1 as well as a forward-feeling, focused M2. This focus allows the singer to familiarize themselves with the ease available in all the "shades of grey" available throughout the vocal textures.

- Bottom-up arpeggios (diatonic or pentatonic) that ask the singer to feel the high pitches go "up & over" rather than "falling back."
- Top-down arpeggios (diatonic or pentatonic) that ask the singer to control the "dumping" into the lower notes.
- Modified register separations as described in Money Notes.

## Power Breathing

*Providing ease in high notes, both M2 and mixed*

You showed the singer how natural, easy inhalation feels, and pointed out that this is something they already know how to do (they just have to learn to do it intentionally!).

Now you show them that the way they exhale when they make "animal sounds" - like laughing, coughing, or yelling in pain or surprise - creates a more energized exhalation and provides a surprising level of ease in phonation.

- Help them find the "right spot" on their bodies; the spot that will provide both resistance and information.
- Help them understand that they need to match the muscle energy they use in laughter - it's more than they think!
- Use the exercises provided in *Money Notes*.

## Blending

### *Nasty Triangle + Power Breathing*

The singer has built on the efficient phonation you introduced at the beginning. They are familiar with both the sound and the feeling. They've used the Nasty Triangle successfully; they've notice and allowed for the "narrowing" that they feel in ascending pitches.

They may be able to Triangle their way all the way through their range. If they're trying to blend their M1 higher than B5 (treble voices) F#4 (some tenors or rock baritones) or C#/D4 (some baritones or bass baritones) they may benefit from accessing their Power Breathing skill.

- Exercise patterns are available in *Money Notes*.
- These are good song coaching techniques as well.

## Blending

### *Slides & Arpeggios*

Slides are a reliable tool for teaching people to coordinate between the registers. The singer will find both information and coordination by focusing on the "face feelings" as they do slide exercises.

- Be sensitive to how big a range they are able to feel at any time.
- Small ranges provide confidence to try bigger ranges.
- Work with the singer to find the vowel that provides the most sensory information for the exercise you're using.

Arpeggios are a brain-prediction demonstration! If the singer has a simple, single objective they will be able to focus on that and let their brain predict for it.

- Arpeggios can use diatonic scales or pentatonic scales.
- Pentatonic scales \*do not\* have to start on the tonic.
- Pentatonic scales can be either major or minor.