

TRANSPERSONAL IMPLICATIONS OF SINGING:  
AN INTUITIVE INQUIRY

by

Paul Daniel Freinkel

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I certify that I have read and approved the content and presentation of this dissertation:

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Judy Schavrien, Ph.D., Committee Chairperson

---

Date

---

Rosemarie Anderson, Ph.D., Committee Member

---

Date

---

Judith Blackstone, Ph.D., Committee Member

---

Date

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## **Abstract**

### **Transpersonal Implications of Singing: An Intuitive Inquiry**

by

**Paul Daniel Freinkel**

This research used intuitive inquiry to explore the peak experiences, plateau experiences, and consequent transpersonal growth of 9 classically trained singers including the researcher, and 1 advanced practitioner of sacred chant. Participants were exemplars (singers who had had transpersonal experiences through singing). They included 6 adult women and 4 adult men; of whom 6 were professional singers and 4 were well-trained amateurs; 2 were South African, 3 were Dutch, and 5 were U.S. citizens. Participants described rich narratives of transpersonal experiences that they had had while singing, psychological blocks that they confronted through their singing, and consequent transpersonal growth that was catalysed. The researcher's personal journey through singing was reported through narrative, embodied writing, and the researcher's visual art. It was found that singing did indeed catalyse peak spiritual experiences as well as transpersonal growth, and that there were multiple participating loci (mind, body, soul, Spirit, others, and place) in singers' peak experiences and their developmental trajectories (called *events of spiritual knowing and growing* when interpreted through a participatory lens). It showed that freedom from psychological defence and alignment of the physical body through a reflexively coordinated vocal tract correlates with spiritual openness and may lead to transpersonal development. This transpersonal development in singers was found to follow established maps of transpersonal development, and was interpreted using and extending Transpersonal Psychology's participatory paradigm. The narratives in turn provided evidence for the on-going participatory revisioning of transpersonal theory.

## **Dedication**

Dedicated to my father Dr. Alchonon Leib Freinkel, a master of kindness.

## **Acknowledgements**

That which I may understand of singing I have learned from Ms. Hantie Prins, singer, teacher, and scholar. I thank her for her input, wisdom, years of patient teaching, and most importantly her friendship. To my committee chair and mentor Dr. Judy Schavrien, who brings to her teaching a razor sharp mind and the loving care of a Yidische Mama, thank you for your guidance, kindness, and support throughout this process. Thank you to Prof. Rosemarie Anderson who introduced me to the wisdom of the body and transpersonal development. Your sheer delight in discovery is inspiring. Thank you to my friend and teacher Michael Wald whose studio is a creative sanctuary and a place of healing, and to my participants for entrusting me with their stories.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

I have been singing all my life. Ever since I can remember my siblings would complain that I would wake them up with a hearty song. I never believed that I was loud, for my singing was quite unconscious and would arise spontaneously. That is, I never believed them until a neighbor, to my horror and secret delight, placed song requests to accompany his early morning gardening. Thereafter even though I loved my family and harbored no ill intent toward their sleep, I found it difficult to suppress the urge to break out early into song, to exercise my vocal muscle, which after starting formal singing training at the age of 17, was developing most robustly.

In my early 20s, as a self-absorbed philosopher-youth, I perceived that there was no action that could be defined as selfless. As Darwin taught, all human action seemed motivated by some gain—some perceived edge to survival. This bothered me, as I believe it bothers some Darwinists who try to explain self-sacrificing behavior, although even self-sacrificing behavior may be for a selfish gain. I intuitively and paradoxically concluded that the only selfless behavior was behavior that expressed the true self, behavior that was motivated by what is. I was now left with a problem. What then is the true Self, how does one come to know it, and how does it relate? In my personal life I felt inauthentic and disconnected. I often felt a fraud, panicked that my life was not as I wanted, yet I had no idea of what it was I wanted. I felt a nameless yearning, an internal prompting. Dare I name it as my own song—my own song for which I had no voice. I therefore set about to learn my voice, and when courage permits, to sing with it.

I started singing lessons with Hantie Prins, an extraordinary singing teacher then in Johannesburg and now in Stellenbosch, South Africa. Her goal in teaching as she puts it is “to find out how nature intended the human voice to function; to find the parameters of the human



voice and thus stretch human perception of who we truly are” (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 21, 2008). Singing this way, Prins explained to me, is most closely described by one of her teachers, Joseph Klein, as the “Great Natural Way of Singing.” One first builds the voice according to the principle of how nature intended the voice to function (the great natural way) and then one may sing any mode, be it opera, jazz, lieder, or anything else. But in parallel to this, according to Prins, one finds the parameters of the human voice, and this stretches our perception of who we truly are. The embodied physical condition is created for the voice to sing. Then the singer truly singing does not dualistically “play the voice”; rather he or she gets out of the way and the voice sings, and magic happens.

Through singing I began to understand and differentiate self-centered action from action that results through Being. Sometimes when singing I would experience an immanence of Soul; a profound expression of my being that would come through so long as I did not interfere with it. This immanence of Self or Soul I find to be deeply transforming. There is an embodied and powerful presence that enters my space sometimes when I sing in this way—a knowledge or an experience of something ineffable, transpersonal, part of me, yet far wider and inclusive: a voice soaring; sometimes wonderfully alone, sometimes in community; for others whether silently listening, or in song will in some way join in this most powerful singing. Singing has become a way for me to dip into my being, to contact an elementary authenticity and the simple, sometimes paradoxically painful, exhilaration of being alive.

Like many great art forms, truly beautiful singing happens with years of discipline, practice, patience, and surrender. Like many great art forms, this type of full-bodied singing has profound implications for psycho-spiritual development. In over 16 years of learning with Hantie, I am now only beginning to understand this.

Many writers, both ancient and modern, equate the voice with the self or the soul, for example Coenen (1999), Austin (2001), Oddy (2004), Glazerson (1988), Patteson (1999), Schneider (2005), and Ling (1989). It seems singing may provoke Maslow's (1964) peak (mystical, transcendent, or ecstatic) and plateau experiences (in a nut-shell: sustained experience of the miraculous, the sacralized, or union, such that one lives in the world of miracles all the time [Maslow, 1964, pp. 91-96]), and that then working with the voice, one is able to discover deeper parts of the Self and potentially effect psycho-spiritual transformation.

Singing is a finely tuned, whole person, deeply embodied, learned, and ultimately reflexive motor coordination. In my personal experience, it sits at the heart of perhaps *the* age old epistemological and ontological problem: that symbolic knowledge creates a split between the knower and known, subject and object, for one is able to have either a unitive or subject-object relationship with the voice. It makes sense that use of the voice is epistemologically and ontologically so positioned because the vocal tract is used to vocalize deep inner processes or to articulate symbolic knowledge through speech. This seeming paradox is reflected in the neural control of vocalization and the vocal tract physiology. The human brain is able to cognitively regulate articulation, and inhibit spontaneous vocal expression. It thereby is able to divorce what is said or sung from emotion or an inner truth—a subject (brain)-object (voice) relationship. Alternatively the brain is able to refrain from cognitively inhibiting spontaneous vocalization, with vocal expression remaining true to the inner being—a unitive and authentic state. This is an ongoing theme in my literature review. I explore it looking at the physiology of the vocal tract and its neural control, integrating this with the experience of music therapists, singers, singing teachers, and mystics using a framework from integral psychology, and transpersonal developmental theory. Thus my literature review sets the context for my study.

I used intuitive inquiry as my method for conducting this study. Intuitive inquiry is a hermeneutical research method developed by Professor Rosemarie Anderson of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology that joins intuition to intellectual precision through five iterative cycles of interpretation (Anderson, in press). In describing intuitive inquiry, Anderson pointed out that intuitive researchers explore topics that claim their enthusiasm and invite the inquiry to transform both their understanding of the topic and their lives. Singing is a topic that combines many facets of my being for I am at once a medical doctor, singer, and mystic. The topic claimed my enthusiasm and certainly has profound potential for transformation.

When I first conceived of the study, my plan was to understand some of the varieties of peak experiences—defined again: mystical, transcendent, or ecstatic experiences outside the “normal” human experience; and plateau experiences—sustained experience of the miraculous, the sacralized, or union, such that one lives in the world of miracles all the time (Maslow, 1964). I intended to focus on such experiences as they may occur in expert classically trained singers and understand what happens to their awareness and emotion during these experiences. I had wanted to understand singers’ personal psycho-spiritual journey in their learning to sing and their singing. Specifically my goal was to understand if there were any emotional or personal issues that stood in the way or perhaps still stand in the way of their ability to sing freely, and whether singing gained them any deeper understanding of Self and selfhood. I also wanted to understand my own journey into selfhood and singing.

The data sometimes takes you on delightful and surprising turns, which with the clarity of hindsight, should have been predictable. My data, to be sure, gave me insight into what I had originally wanted to understand, but in addition it shed light on the psycho-spiritual journey of the singer, and presented an understanding of how the voice may be linked to transpersonal

development. This has implications for understanding and further investigating singing as an integral transformative practice in which the embodied singer participates in the cocreative unfolding of Spirit. More on this will follow. My research in this way became personally relevant and transformative. My research question then changed from the old formulation of wanting to understand peak and plateau experiences in singing to include how these experiences form part of the psycho-spiritual development of the singer.

My hope is that my research contributes to understanding some of the ways we may connect to (and disconnect from) our Selves and to the Source of all, such that we may live more integrated, meaningful, and fulfilling lives. I also believe that understanding this phenomenology and its relationship to transpersonal development will contribute to a framework for future neuro-phenomenology research.

I am a General Practitioner by both profession and temperament; for instance I am a General Practitioner in medicine, but this carries over into my work in Transpersonal Psychology. It is my nature to draw an interdisciplinary panorama around anything I undertake. In so doing, sometimes resolution gets lost and details get missed that may otherwise have been noticed by a specialist's focused eye. In a world of increasing divergent specialty, there is great value to a panoramic view of an interdisciplinary landscape. In this sense my contribution to the field of singing and transpersonal research promises to be unique. I mention the potential liabilities of this approach so as to welcome constructive critique.

In Transpersonal Psychology (Ferrer, 2002) and transpersonal developmental theory (Anderson, 2008; Ruumet, 2006; Wilber, 2000) we see ever increasing interest in the cocreative participation of all aspects of the human being and his or her environment in the unfolding transpersonal vista. Each aspect of the human being, each feature of the landscape—Body, Mind,

Soul, Spirit, and the land itself—is—a discipline in itself; and I take my reader as my intimate companion in a tour—one which aims to be simultaneously systematic and personal—of the many disciplines that make up the landscape of singing and Transpersonal Psychology.

I start by introducing the philosophical context of subject-object epistemology in which I found myself as a medical student, and how, through singing, I was able explore alternative ways of knowing. I trace how these ways of knowing come about in the historical development of classical singing. I then describe the anatomy, physiology, and neurophysiology of the voice in classical singing (Body), and through sharing my experience and reviewing writings of mystics and psychologists, look at how the voice (Body) influences and is influenced by the psychology (Mind), awareness (Soul), and, in my data, the transpersonal development of the singer. I then re-examine my philosophical assumptions and in so doing examine and offer narrative evidence for the revisioning, as it is currently occurring, of some underlying philosophical assumptions of Transpersonal Psychology.

Intuitive inquiry is an inductive method. The researcher evolves and may end up in a different place from where he or she started. Hence my literature review will show where I started off, and the discussion will show where I ended. There may therefore be some things in the literature review that do not tie up with the discussion, and some things that come up in discussion which were not first addressed in the literature review. The reader should bear this in mind.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

Alfonso Montuori frames the literature review as a way to situate one's self and one's research amongst one's people (Kottler & Carlson, 2009, p. 251). In other words, a literature review should contextualize oneself and one's ideas amongst fellow researchers who care deeply about the research subject. In so doing, it should provide the foundation for understanding the research questions and their relevance, and later, the research findings.

My literature review looks at experience and literature related to singing and how use of the voice may catalyze psycho-spiritual development. In it I introduce and review the following:

1. My personal process as a scientist, medical doctor and singer, and how that journey has integrated and evolved;
2. The anatomy, physiology, neurophysiology, and development of classical singing, and show how these fields relate to the singers' psycho-spiritual growth;
3. Descriptions of singers' peak experiences integrated with relevant philosophical, psychological, and spiritual literature; and
4. Transpersonal and transpersonal developmental theory that is required as a foundation to understand the relevance of my research questions and later to discuss and contextualize my findings.

I start with a personal account. Understanding and deepening the researcher's personal connection to a research undertaking is a feature of intuitive Inquiry.

### **Crossing the Threshold Into Music**

My early academic and medical training gave me a strong basis in empirical science and in retrospect was remarkable. As a student, young doctor, and scientist, I was immersed not only

in the transition of South Africa from Apartheid to democracy but in the scientific and medical issues that went with it. I say, gratefully, that I received an excellent training.

I learned clinical medicine from a group of world class physicians at Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto, South Africa, apparently the biggest hospital in the world, reputed to give students some of the best clinical experience available in the world. I learned research physiology from world leaders in thermal physiology, their research stemming from the need to understand human temperature regulation in South Africa's vast gold mines. My late father was a senior lecturer at the medical school and was a world authority in the histo-pathology of sexually transmitted diseases, so pertinent to the South African AIDS epidemic. My professors taught me to patiently and compassionately observe the world around me, to draw conclusions from what was observed, and to construct theory from my conclusions which I could later test and potentially apply clinically. Mine was an empirical education. I recall my biochemistry professor declaring himself an "empirical reductionist." But I was looking for something more.

I was not a bad student, but my early 20s was a tempestuous time, and I would have learned far more from my father and my professors had I not been struggling with something wholly different from their concerns. I needed desperately to know myself and the world from the innerness out. An inner quest though is an endeavor hardly congruent with the punishing hours and often devastatingly traumatic rigors of medical school and internship. Furthermore, I see in retrospect, I was making (and still make) a fundamental mistake in my search for innerness. I was using the empirical observation based paradigm that I had been so rigorously schooled in to search for an inner something that I could not, would not, and will never find with a subject-object epistemology. Ken Wilber, citing Spencer Brown, explained this mistake:

When the universe as a whole seeks to know itself, through the medium of the human mind, some aspects of that universe must remain unknown. With the awakening of

symbolic knowledge there *seems* to arise a split in the universe between the knower and the known, the thinker and the thought, the *subject and the object*; and our innermost consciousness, as knower and investigator of the external world, ultimately escapes its own grasp and remains as the Unknown, Unshown and Ungraspable, much as your hand can grasp numerous objects but never itself, or your eye can see the world, but not itself. (Wilber, 1993, p. 17)

Here is a deepening of the challenge:

We may take it that the world undoubtedly is itself (i.e., is indistinct from itself), but, in any attempt to see itself as an object, it must, equally undoubtedly act, act so as to make itself distinct from, and therefore false to, itself. In this condition it will always partially elude itself . . . (Spencer-Brown, 1975, pp. 104-105)

Wilber further explains himself:

So just as a knife cannot cut itself, the universe cannot totally see itself as an object without totally mutilating itself. The attempt to know the universe as an object of knowledge is thus profoundly and inextirpably [ineradicably] contradictory; and the more it seems to succeed the more it becomes “false to itself.” (Wilber, 1993, p. 18)

The universe cannot “see itself as an object without totally mutilating itself” (Wilber, 1993, p. 18) because in order to view part of itself as an object it must sever from its wholeness both a viewing subject and a viewed object, and in identifying with and buying into this newly created apparent, but false, dichotomy it becomes “false to itself” (Wilber, 1993, p. 18) and will never truly experience itself as it simply is. Similarly an inner search using a subject-object epistemology will not work because in this paradigm the innermost consciousness “ultimately escapes its own grasp.” Thus my search for authenticity sadly became “false to itself,” and because the search is about authenticity of self-knowledge, authenticity of expression, authenticity of relationship, and authenticity of action, this must have profound consequences.

Dorothy Ling (1989) drew my attention to Mircea Eliade’s teaching: There are two ways of being, one sacred and one profane (Eliade, 1957). The sacred is the manifestation of transcendental being into the world (Ling, 1989). When the *sacred* manifests it is called a hierophany and it reveals an “absolute reality,” a “fixed point,” and a “centre” (Eliade, pp. 20-



21) in what would otherwise be *profane*—a material, homogenous, and illusionary world of objects, persons, and actions. To live in the profane world is to lack imagination to see the world as whole, and in lacking such imagination one totally disconnects from the most profound reality of life and from one's soul. In the sacred world one lives on the level of being, with an ontological anchorage in the immutable being which is not contingent (Ling, p. 88).

Experiencing this hierophany for the first time would be analogous to the “peak-experience” discussed by Maslow (1964, p. xiv), while living ontologically rooted in the sacred world would be analogous to Maslow's “plateau experience.” Einstein is quoted as saying (Judy Schavrien, personal communication, October 27, 2008), “There are only two ways to live your life: as though nothing is a miracle, or as though everything is a miracle.”

In profane “subject-object mode” we treat ourselves and others differently. We dissociate from the body and we lose the immediacy of the “earthly sensuous” that “draws us into relationships fed with curiosity and spiced with danger” (Abram, 1996, p. ix), and that nourishes our collective sensibilities. Our knowing and embracing connection to the world is lost, and with it we lose the sometimes exhilarating, oftentimes poignant and serene feeling of being alive.

The perfect place for the human being is at the primordial crossroads, where with one foot in time and the other in eternity, one is in the position to *become* a hierophany, a channel manifesting reality (Ling, 1989). Appropriately for my own inner quest and the purpose of this study, one touches here on issues of inner authenticity, and according to Ling, one may cross the threshold into music. Here one no longer relates to objects; the ontology and subsequent epistemology is different.

## **The Voice as a Bridge Inwards**

Music has long been used in humanity's quest for the sacred. My focus is on one of the most ancient of musicians, the singer, and one of the most ancient of musical instruments, the human voice. The singer is different from other musicians, for the singer is both the musician and the instrument. Conversely, the voice is both the instrument and the singer, or at least it can be.

The great singing teachers seldom directly address the relationship of Self and voice. Nicola Oddy, a singer and music therapist, has noted that singers who are in training to develop and become "that special voice" need technical expertise, and the academic literature about the voice reflects this focus. The literature seldom addresses the singer's perception of spiritual and emotional qualities of singing with any depth, and, when it does, it is often from the listener's perspective (Oddy, 2004). It does however sometimes hint at this relationship or mention it in passing. For example, although Klein's method is deeply embodied and demonstrates profound understanding of the human condition, the only overt reference to the relationship between singing and Self in his book (Klein, 1967) is an isolated quote from the poet Longfellow on an unnumbered page following the table of contents: "The human voice is the organ of the Soul." I similarly found scant direct reference to psycho-spiritual aspects of singing in the autobiographical literature of great singers.

In the last 20 years, voice teachers, singers, and therapists such as Moon Joyce (1993, 2003), Austin (1986, 1993, 2007), Newham (1998), Linklater (2003, 2006), Oddy (2001, 2004), Smithrim (2003), Schneider (2005), Coenen (1999), and Patteson (1999) have begun to formally explore the relationship of song and Self. Research into song and Self has been taking place in various guises since ancient times, and the mystical literature of diverse spiritual traditions is

filled with references to the relationship between singing and the soul; we see this daily with singing forming an integral part of many spiritual practices. (Incidentally and importantly, Transpersonal Psychology as a discipline, and the discipline nourishing my own research, is one that is uniquely empowering to research this phenomenon, for it encourages the simultaneous exploration of ancient and modern thinking as well as of personal experience.)

Sufi Master Hazrat Inayat Khan (1991) taught that before its incarnation the soul is sound. In the Kabala, according to Rabbi Glazerson (1988, p. 94), we learn that each voice—

**קול** (Kol) is unique and represents the highest part of the individual's soul. Chant has been used in the Roman Catholic Community (and many other spiritual communities around the world) for centuries to induce emotion, reverie, and trance states conducive to contemplation and prayer (Pilch, 2006). Modern voice teacher Kristin Linklater (2003) wrote that “the voice is the instrument that guides us to the Larger self that lurks inside us” (p. 25). The voice is revealing and impossible to dissemble, and for those who can hear with the inner ear, the voice is the faithful reflection of its bearer (Ling, 1989). In this way we may use the voice as a ladder inward (Glazerson, 1988) and in so *being* we may switch off the subject-object epistemology of symbolic or verbal mind. Thus our inner quest may no longer be “false to itself” (Spencer-Brown, 1975, pp. 104-105), for according to Ling, “Song is the Soul and its vehicle” (1989, p. 123).

There are many lessons that the aspiring singer learns along the path. Many are subtractive or supportive in nature; the singer learns not to interfere with the coordination of the voice either mentally or by using muscles of speech or swallowing and must develop correct breathing support for the voice (Klein, 1967). The physical condition is created for the voice to sing. The singer truly singing does not dualistically “play the voice,” rather he or she sings the

soul. In fact there is just singing; the singer, song, and instrument are all one. As with many great art forms, truly beautiful singing happens with years of discipline, practice, patience, and surrender. Giovanni Battista Lamperti (1931), the last great master of the Italian Golden Age of Song summed it up, “When your tone emerges from silence into sound without effort, focused, yet free, with sufficient energy to release, or restrain, you are one of the greatest singers” (p. 28). This type of full bodied singing has profound implications for psycho-spiritual growth.

### **A Brief History of Classical Singing**

A well-trained voice is able to sing many different modes of singing using different acoustic qualities. Western voice training is rooted in the Bel Canto tradition and in explaining Bel Canto, I will simultaneously be explicating features of Klein’s “Great Natural Way.” “Bel Canto” refers to a particular art of singing and vocal training which flourished in Italy throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Bel Canto literally translated from the Italian means beautiful singing. According to the traditional narrative, Bel Canto originated amongst members of the Florentine *Camerata*, an exclusive musical society convened in Florence toward the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the Count of Vernio, Giovanni de Bardi. The Camerata consisted of many celebrated and learned men of music of the time and met regularly for close to 30 years. Their stated goal was to rediscover the ancient Greek usage of voice, movement, and drama.

The voice in ancient Greece was not necessarily musical and served to communicate emotions of extreme magnitude and arouse high emotions in the audience members in order that they ultimately experience catharsis (Newham, 1998; Stanford, 1983). The ancient Greek actors wore masks called *personae* for they had a hole for the mouth, *per* (through which came) *sona* (sound). These masks were later abandoned in order to permit a fuller range of facial expression.

The Camerata and others at the time believed that ancient Greek vocalization was more musical than ordinary speech, but less melodious than contemporaneous church song, and sought some form of synthesis. *Camerati*, including Vincenzo Galilei, father of Galileo Galilei, developed the monody which told a story using a single melodic vocal line accompanied by simple chords from a harpsichord or lute. Another Camerati, Jacopo Peri, composed what many music historians consider to be the first opera, *Dafne* (Sonneck, 1913) although Emilio de' Cavalieri, who was not a member of the Camerata, composed *Satiro* which was performed 8 years prior to Peri's *Dafne*. A plaque on Cavalieri's tomb in the Cavalieri chapel describes him as "a Roman gentleman, innovative and talented composer, creator of the first operas, superintendant of all the musicians and artists at the court of the Medici" (Kirkendale, 2003, p. 631). *Satiro* and later works by Cavalieri were also composed and performed in keeping with what was thought to be the ancient Greek style, which according to reports at the time "moved the spectators to various affects" (Kirkendale, 2003, p. 636).

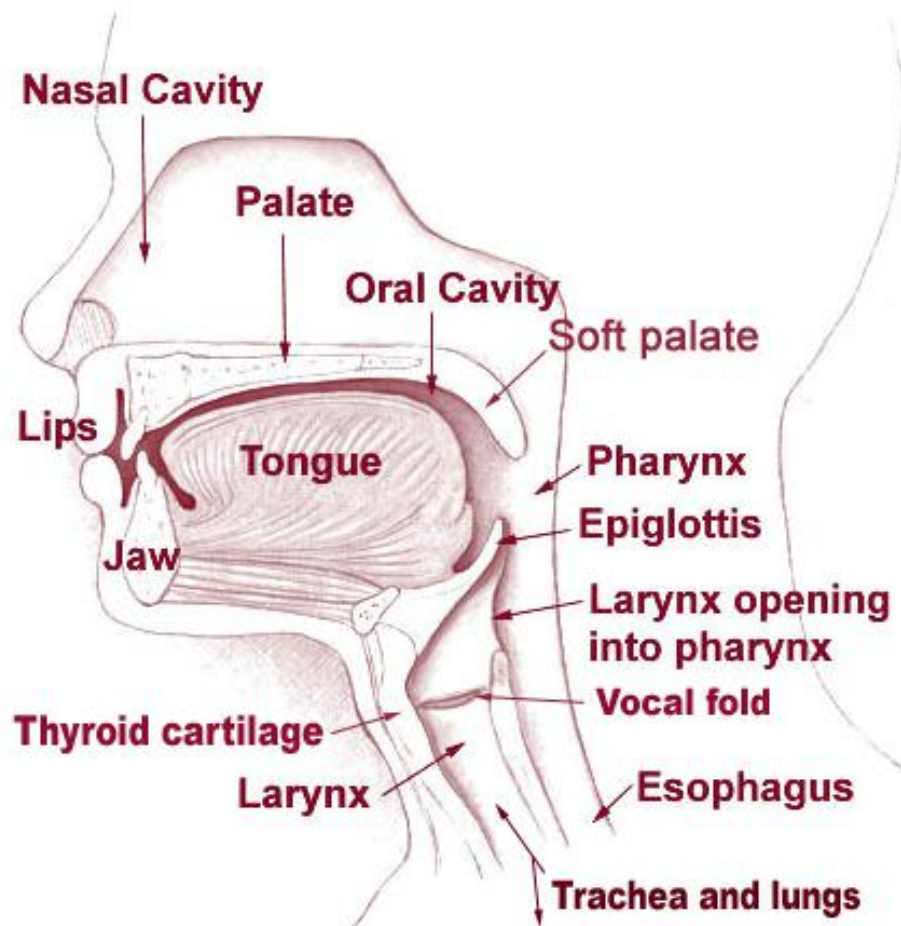
Discussing the historical personalities involved in a story is always interesting, but it is more important to understand the transition that was taking place. The musical accompaniment of the monody was intended to heighten the emotive power of the text. New Italian composers sought to carry the emotion in the music as well. This demanded that the singer, like the actors of ancient Greek theatre, maintain a primal emotive core in the voice fully expressing the range of human emotion, but, unlike his or her ancient counterpart, the singer also had to remain true to verbal diction and the composer's musical score.

The art of combining emotional authenticity with musical precision and vocal virtuosity became the art of Bel Canto singing. The Bel Canto singer's voice spans three octaves and its qualities and timbres emanate from the infinity of authentic human emotional subtleties and

imagistic possibilities (Newham, 1998). The core of the Bel Canto technique lies in the malleability of the resonators of the vocal tract, correct glottal closure, and mastery of the breathing. I briefly describe the anatomy and physiology of the voice because my research later shows that accessing the reflexive neurophysiological coordination of the voice causes the dissolution of an apparent mind-body dualism, and catalyzes transpersonal experience and development—a principle which undergirds my research.

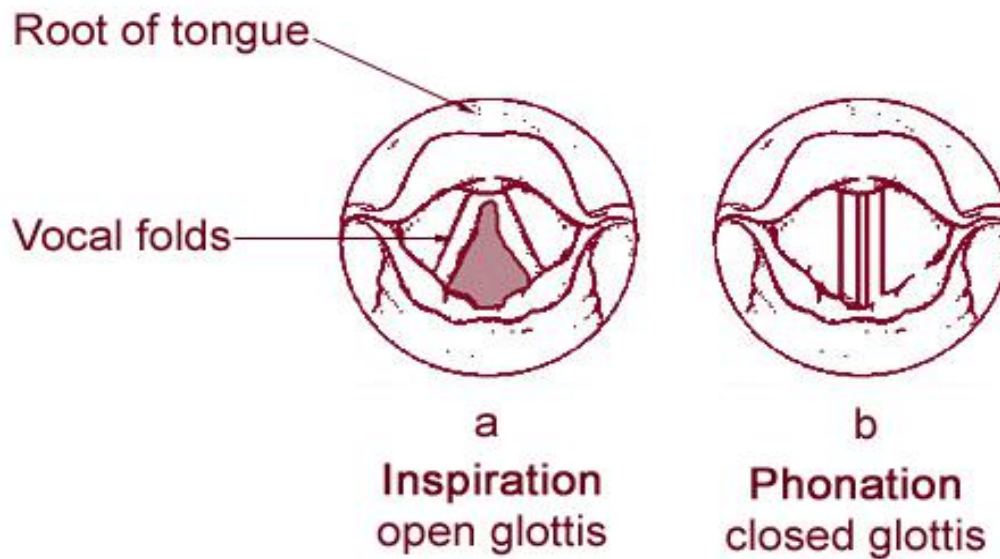
## How the Voice Works

The voice organ (see Figure 1) is an instrument consisting of a power supply (the lungs), an oscillator (the vocal folds), and a variable resonator (the larynx, pharynx, and mouth).



*Figure 1.* The vocal tract in cross section. Adapted from from WikimediaCommons, a freely licensed media file repository, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Illu01\\_head\\_neck.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Illu01_head_neck.jpg). Wikimedia has no peer review, however as a licensed medical doctor, I verify that the diagram is correct.

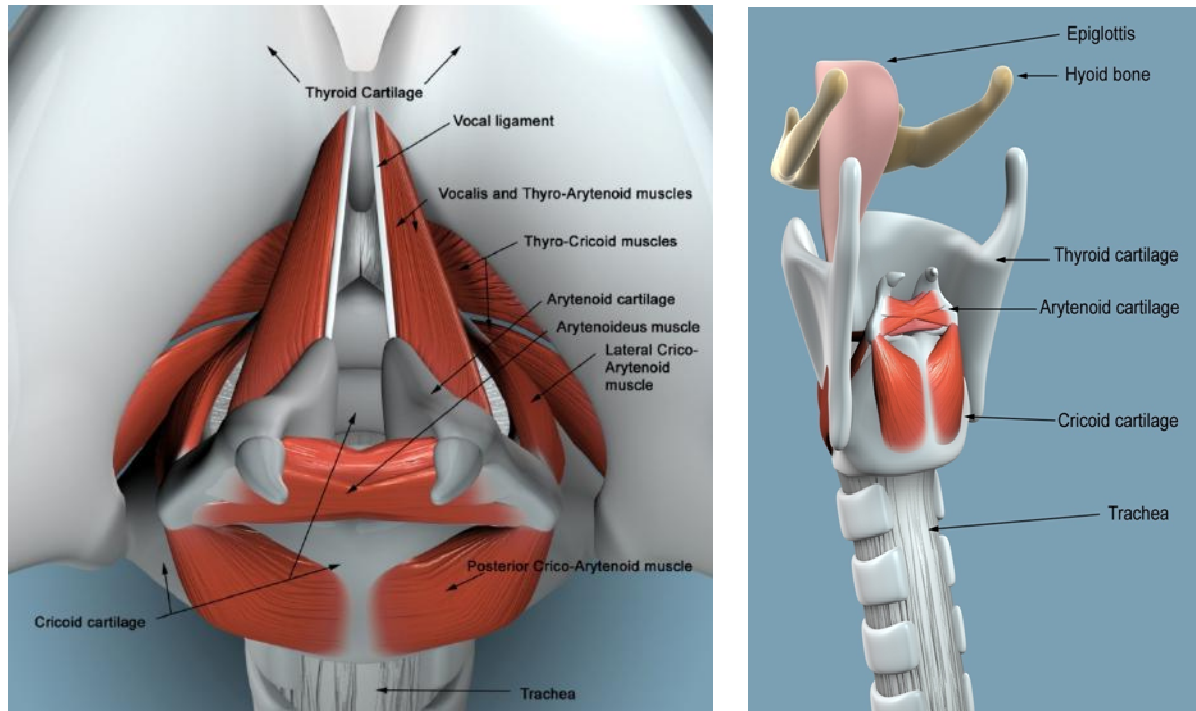
The lungs produce an air stream which passes through the glottis, which is the space at the base of the larynx between the vocal folds or cords (Figure 2).



*Figure 2.* The larynx with the glottis: (a) open during inspiration, and (b) closed during the phonation of singing or speech (Klein, 1967, p. 35). Illustration adapted from Wikimedia Commons, a freely licensed media file repository, [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4c/Illu07\\_larynx02.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4c/Illu07_larynx02.jpg). Again, though Wikimedia lacks peer review, I attest to the accuracy of the diagram.

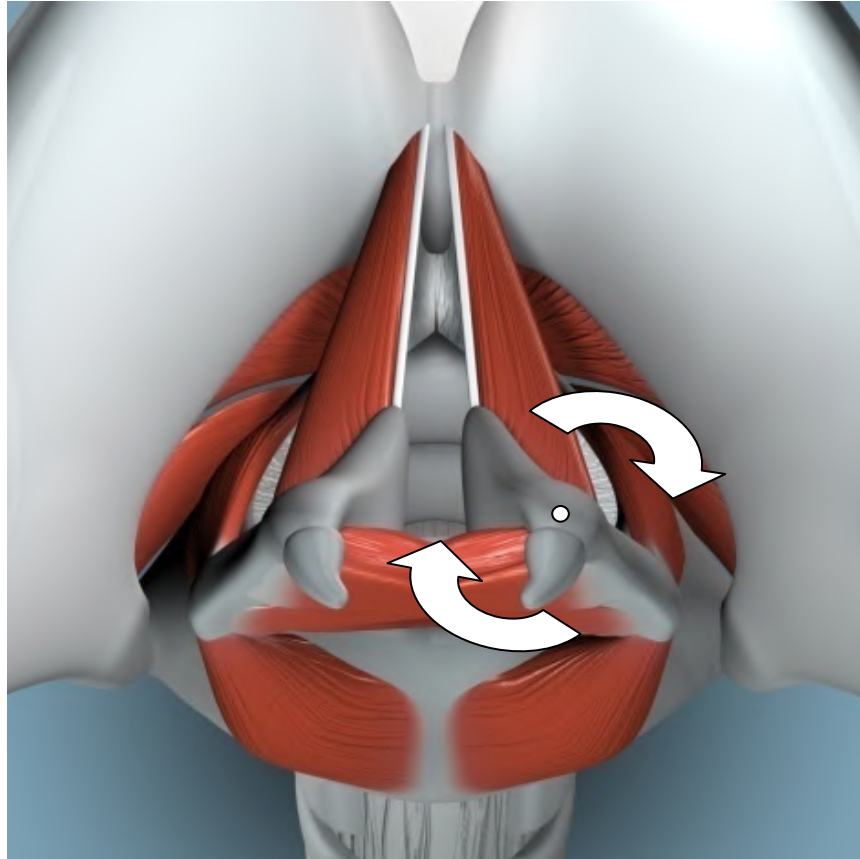
The vocal folds are elastic infoldings of the mucous membrane of the larynx and cover the vocal ligament and attached muscles. The vocal folds attach in front to the thyroid cartilage and at the back to the arytenoid cartilages (Figure 3).





*Figure 3.* Inner structure of the larynx as seen from above and behind. Adapted from “Anatomy of Larynx” by TigerX. Copyright by TigerX / Dreamstime.com. Date of copyright unknown. Adapted with permission.

The arytenoid cartilages are mobile (Figure 2, Figure 3, and Figure 4). This mobility stretches the vocal folds and also enables them to move apart and open the glottis for inspiration, or come together to close the glottis for phonation (sound making), or to protect the lungs from inhaling foreign objects that may be in the air-stream (Sundberg, 1977).



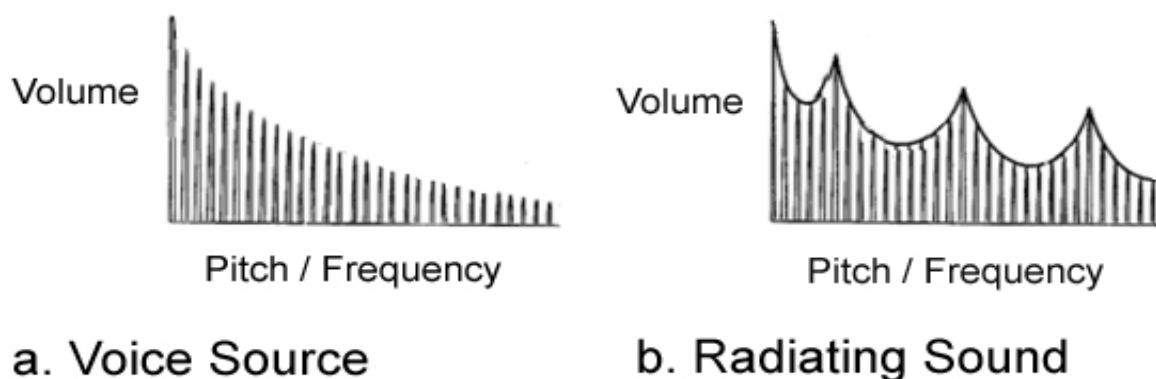
*Figure 4.* Swivel action of arytenoid cartilage opens or closes the glottis as seen in Figure 2. Adapted from “Anatomy of Larynx” by TigerX. Copyright by TigerX / Dreamstime.com. Date of copyright unknown. Adapted with permission.

The larynx, pharynx, and mouth (vocal tract) together constitute a resonant chamber much like a horn or a megaphone (Sundberg, 1977). This chamber is adjustable in shape, for example by moving the tongue or opening the mouth, and therefore so are the resultant acoustic properties. The independence of the vibrating vocal chords and the adjustable resonance of the vocal tract allow for singing and speech through what has been termed the source / voice filter theory.

**Source-Filter theory of voice production.** The vocal folds vibrate in order to produce a sound. This happens when the glottis is closed and air pressure generated by the lungs is applied to force it open. The airstream between the folds creates a Bernoulli force (vacuum effect)

which, together with the mechanical properties of the vocal folds, causes them to come together again. Repeated cycles of opening and closing the glottis feed pulses of air or sonic waves (a sound) into the variable resonating chamber of the larynx, pharynx, and mouth. This sound is called the voice source.

The voice source is a complex sound whose pitch or frequency is determined by the air pressure and the tension of the vocal folds. It is composed of a fundamental frequency (frequency at which the vocal cords vibrate) and a large number of higher harmonic partials or overtones (see Figure 5).



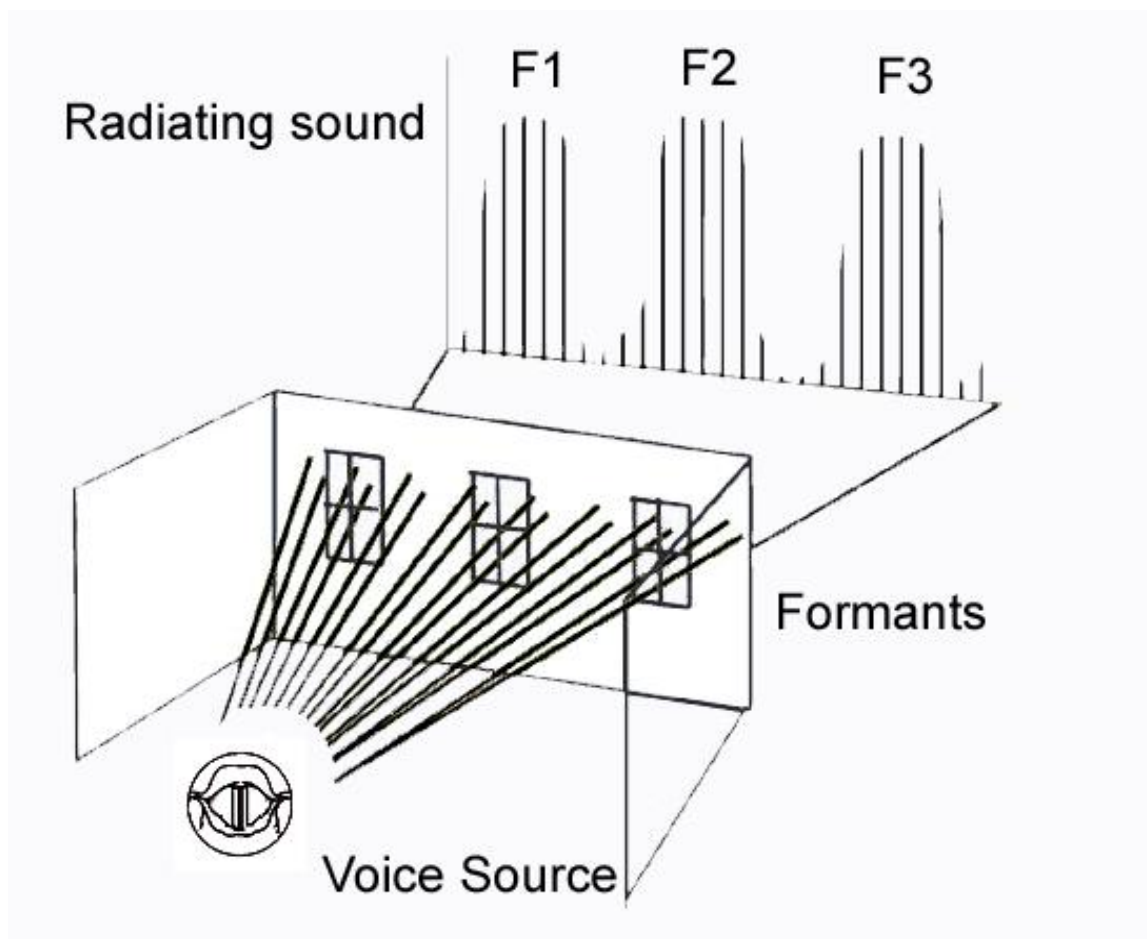
*Figure 5. Voice Source spectrum plot.*

- a. The sound waves of the voice source include the fundamental pitch or frequency at which the vocal cords vibrate as well as harmonic waves or partials which decrease in volume as the frequency increases.
- b. Spectrum plot of sound radiating from vocal tract. Some of the partials of the voice source have been selectively amplified and others attenuated (filtered). Each peak may be considered a formant. Adapted from Sundberg (1977, p. 4).

The voice source projects into the vocal tract, which is a variable resonator. This variable resonator selectively resonates with matching harmonic partials in the voice source and attenuates others. These selective resonators shape or filter the sound wave finally radiating from the vocal tract as shown in Figure 5. Each peak in the spectrum or shaping by the resonator is

called a formant. Combinations of formants make up different vowel sounds. Formants are independent of pitch (Sundberg, 1974) because the resonator functions independently from the voice source. This is why we can talk coherently in a whisper when there is no voice source (Tartter, 1989).

If you the reader want to experiment with your own independent variably resonating vocal tract, sing and hold any note on an aa (as in aha). Then while still holding the note change to ee, and then oo. Notice the movement of your tongue and your lips and how they change the shape of the inside of your mouth. Do the same in a whisper and compare. Notice that the shape remains the same whether you vocalize or whisper. This change of shape of the vocal tract is what changes its resonant properties and consequently the nature of the sound wave it emits. The voice formants can be understood to “filter” or form the voice source into formants and hence is called the source-filter model. The source filter model is conceptually illustrated in Figure 6. There are four formants or anatomical resonators in the human speaking voice; there are five in the classically trained singing voice (Sundberg, 1974, 1977, 2003).



*Figure 6. Voice Filter Model. The voice source is selectively shaped by the formant resonances to form the radiating sound wave. Adapted from Fitch (2000, p. 259).*

**Flow phonation—producing the voice source in singing.** A well-developed voice and vocal technique starts with the way the glottis is closed for making sound. Nothing works before this is correctly achieved (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 21, 2008). Correct glottal closure results in flow phonation.

Phonation occurs when the vocal folds vibrate in the air stream. They minutely open (abduction or open phase) and close (adduction or closed phase) many times per second. In so doing, the vocal folds stop and start the flow of air through the glottis (transglottal air flow) many times per second, and this produces the sound wave spectrum of the voice source (Figure 5a). If they remain open relatively too long in the cycle or there is no clear closure of the glottis,

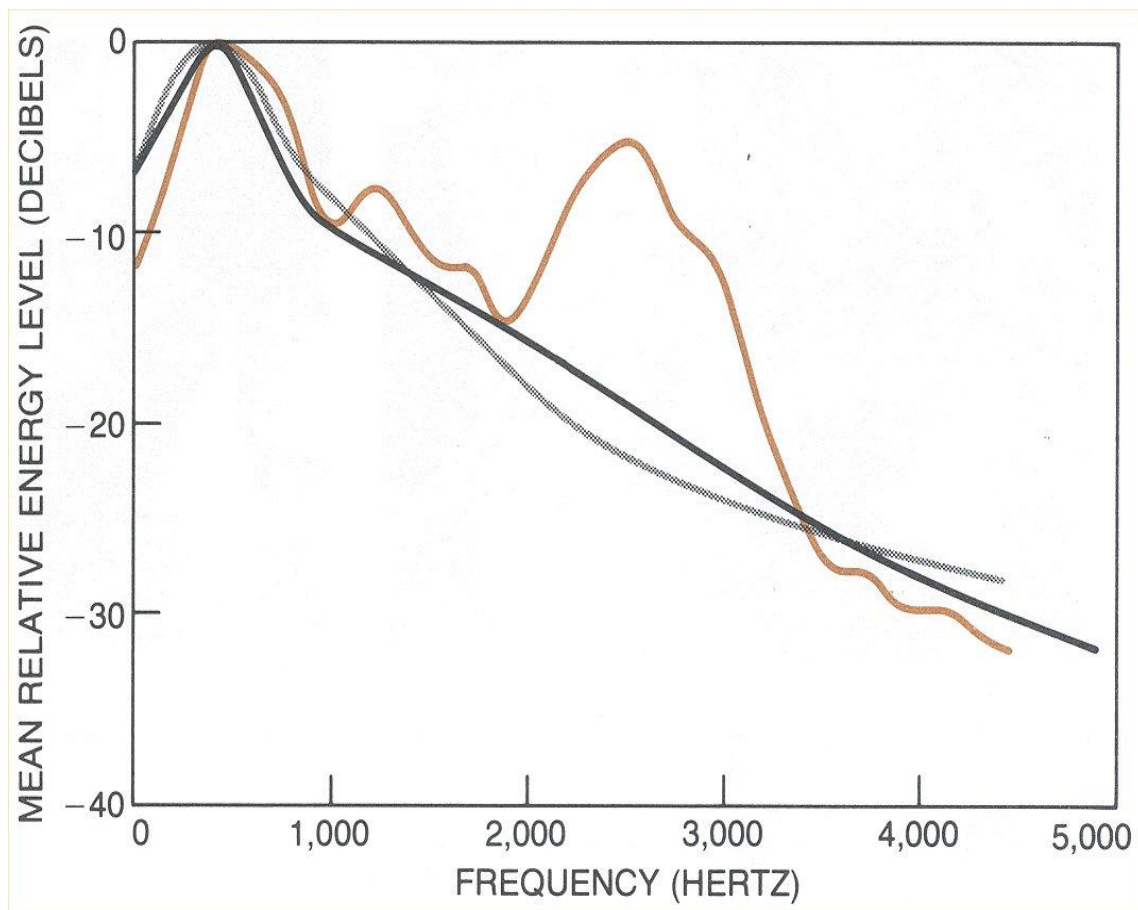
too much air escapes and phonation is breathy or hypofunctional. If adduction is too strong, phonation is hyperfunctional or pressed. The singer however, finely tunes phonation such that glottal adduction is at a minimum, but still enough to produce complete glottal closure. This is called “flow phonation” (Sundberg, 2003, p. 17).

According to Klein, reflexive glottal adduction occurs only when the singer stimulates the nerve center of the solar plexus using correct support (Klein, 1967, pp. 27-29). Klein’s teaching is corroborated by Leanderson, Sundberg, and von Euler (1984) who showed that diaphragmatic activation increases and stabilizes flow phonation. The complex neural integration of respiration and vocalization has been demonstrated in animal and human models (Davis, Zhang, Winkworth, & Bandler, 1996), and the physiology has been reviewed by Sundberg (2003). In other words great singing begins and ends with great breathing, and the use of the breathing muscles in achieving glottal closure is paramount (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 21, 2008).

**The singer’s formant.** There is a “ring” or “shimmer” quality to the operatic voice (Hantie Prins, personal communication, 18 April 2006). This ring is a “ping like” quality heard in well-trained voices and constitutes the fifth formant or the singer’s formant.

The fifth formant or singer’s formant is a high spectrum envelope peak in the singing voice spectrum plot between 2000Hz and 3000Hz (see Figure 7); that is, a resonant “shaping” of the partials within the voice source (the original sound produced by the vibrating vocal cords). The singer’s formant may be as much as 20 decibels louder than the corresponding frequencies in the speaking or orchestral spectrum volume plot (Sundberg, 1974, 1977, 2003). Some researchers, for example Weiss, Brown, and Morris (2001), have argued that the shimmer in the

higher female voices is not caused by the fifth formant, but the argument seems to be a matter of definition (Sundberg, 2003).



*Figure 7. Averaged spectral energy distribution illustrating the singer's formant. Adapted from Sundberg (1977, p. 4). Light: ordinary speech. Dark: orchestral accompaniment. Brown: good singer with orchestra, note the envelope peak between 2000Hz and 3000Hz.*

The fifth formant also matches the natural resonant frequency (3000Hz) of the human external auditory canal (Wiener & Ross, 1946). The ear forms a natural amplifier to any sound in the region of its resonant frequency. The singer's formant is therefore amplified by the listener and forms a "carrier wave" enabling the listener to differentiate other nuances within the specific voice. The fifth formant gives the trained voice its beautiful darkness or "cover" and enables a single well-trained singer to be heard above an entire orchestra. It is as if people have been made

to produce and listen to the singer's formant. The singer's formant may also be used, interestingly enough, in speech. Trained singers carry the ability to form the fifth formant into their speaking voices. Measurements suggest that singers show more energy concentration in the singer's formant region in both sung and spoken vowels. When used in speech it is called the speaker's ring (Oliviera Barrichelo, Heuer, Dean, & Sataloff, 2001).

**How the resonator coordination comes about for the singer's formant.** The fifth formant is produced when the larynx tube resonates autonomously from the rest of the vocal tract with a resonance in the vicinity of 3000Hz. The larynx can resonate autonomously when the laryngeal ventricles are large and the ratio between the diameters of the top of the larynx and the bottom of the pharynx is 1:6 or smaller. This ratio occurs when the larynx is lowered using the breathing (support) and the jaw is relaxed (Sundberg, 1974, 2003). Support also dramatically affects the singer's formant (Griffin, Woo, Colton, Casper, & Brewer, 1995).

**Support.** The breathing coordination required for lowering the larynx and closing the glottis for flow phonation is called "support." Support is the controlled interaction of the two opposing sets of breathing muscles that control inhalation and exhalation. Inhalation is controlled by the diaphragm (which affords most of the resistance for support) and the outward pulling intercostal muscles which open the chest cage. Exhalation is controlled by the abdominal muscles (which provide an upward thrust on the diaphragm) and the inward pulling intercostals (Klein, 1967, pp. 9-16).

Try this: Take a deep breath in and hold it just before you start to breathe out. Then, while still holding the breath, pull your belly inwards just hard enough to force some air out. Support according to Klein occurs when the muscles of inhalation and exhalation are applied against each other to produce a continuous state of tension during the act of measured exhalation.



The diaphragm, through pulling on the trachea, pulls the larynx down (Iwarsson, 2001) which positions it for fifth formant formation discussed above. It also increases and stabilizes flow phonation (Leanderson, Sundberg, & von Euler, 1984) and through coactivation of the cricothyroid muscles stabilizes pitch (Sundberg, Leanderson, & von Euler, 1988). Measured exhalation controls subglottal pressure, which pushes just enough air through the vocal cords for flow phonation. Subglottal pressure also correlates to sound volume.

Pavarotti (1991), explaining this particular form of diaphragmatic breathing, told his students to “cry like a baby,” pointing out that a baby can wail through the night without going hoarse. Pavarotti “sobbed” the larynx down and by so engaging the crying mechanism colored a powerful singer’s formant with emotion and a beautiful vibrato. Vibrato (an undulating frequency that approximates the perceived pitch) carries the emotion of the song (Langeheinecke, Schnitzler, Hischer-Buhrmester, & Behne, 1999). Babies add vibrato to their cry when extremely distressed (Vonwiller, 1986). The vibrato is formed by finely pulsing the support mechanism (Klein, 1967, p. 79). Correct support also ensures correct registration. Italian singers refer to the stance as *apoggia* (Hines, 1984, p. 222).

When I am in voice, and well-supported, I experience a belly centered groundedness and an ease of movement in my body, and (incidentally) my chi gong practice becomes beautiful. The embodied groundedness is similar to the “Hara” phenomenon described by von Durckheim (1998, pp. 218-223). The Hara, explained von Durckheim, describes the bodily centre of gravity located in the region of the navel, which affords those who have it tremendous postural stability. The Hara denotes more than a biomechanical fact; it describes a strong, balanced, and embodied mindset.

The combination of lowering the larynx and reflexively closing the glottis to produce sound by means of diaphragmatic support forms the fundamental technique of singing. The singer's skill lies in maintaining the breathing and vocal tract coordination to maintain the vocal system while informing the voice with emotion throughout the range of tone. Maintaining this seamlessness of tonal transition is a physical exercise requiring profound awareness of the inner dynamics of the body.

**Emotion as organizer.** Try the following: Sit quietly and inwardly sob on the breath. If you have problems understanding what to do, quietly and quickly pant like a dog, gently turning the action and emotion inward until you are quietly sobbing. It is a small flicking movement of the diaphragm. You will know that the coordination is in place if you feel a quiet spontaneous emotion on each reflexive diaphragmatic contraction. The same muscle coordination is used for singing and crying and it seems that the muscle coordination can generate the feeling, or the feeling can generate the muscle coordination.

Emotion is the coordinating function that draws the whole singing mechanism together. We know in animals and humans that voice can only be evoked from groups of neurons of the emotional motor system called the periaqueductal grey matter (Davis, Zhang, Winkworth, & Bandler, 1996). The periaqueductal grey matter coordinates appropriate neural and motor function so that emotive vocalization takes place as part of a whole body pattern coordinating the muscles of the diaphragm, abdomen, larynx, pharynx, and face, as well as appropriate autonomic responses. One experiences this coordination in unregulated expression of emotion, such as grief or the deep belly laugh. According to Davis (Chapman & Davis, 1998), animals can only vocalize emotively and cannot control vocalization even to their detriment. Davis further pointed out that humans are unique in that they can voluntarily inhibit emotional expression and are also

able to recreate features of an emotional experience from memory. This opens a whole range of possibilities not only for the stage singer but also for the mystic. Hazarat Inayat Kahn (1991, p. 135) described a Sufi practice of voice cultivation aimed at cultivating emotional expression. Inhibition of emotional vocalization may not always be voluntary and is the root of many problems. I have been through times when I am unable to connect my singing to my emotional world and am then unable to connect to the music. In the absence of emotion, the whole condition of singing falls flat. Singing must come from “the singer’s feeling for the music and what the music is saying” (Pavarotti, 1981, p. 135).

In my own practice, when I am fully present and connect emotionally to the singing, all the vocal coordination and support falls easily into place and singing becomes effortless. Sometimes however, what we voice through our persona (mask we wear through which sound comes) does not reflect our true inner feelings. Then it becomes necessary to reassociate voice to experience. Patteson (1999, pp. 89-96) described how her students in choosing repertoire that reflected their personal experience helped reassociate voice to experience and effected psychological healing.

**Vocalizing voluntarily, separating from emotion, subject-object singing.** Davis (Chapman & Davis, 1998) speculates neurologically that skilled singers and actors are able to voluntarily vocalize yet modify the input from the emotional motor system. This has been partially confirmed by Schulz, Varga, Jeffires, and Ludlow (2005) who found highly coordinated activity in human periaqueductal grey matter during speech as well as concurrent activation and connectivity of neocortical and subcortical motor regions—medial and lateral premotor structures, and elements of basal ganglia thalamocortical circuitry. This concurrent activation and connection suggest a voluntary control mechanism of human vocalization. Additionally

Schultz et al. found that areas in the temporal lobe and cerebellum were selectively activated during phonation. These regions are functionally coupled to both visceromotor and neocortical motor areas during production of voiced speech, suggesting they may play a central role in self-monitoring and feedback regulation of human phonation.

In other words, phylogenetically the voice spontaneously expresses emotion, but humans can inhibit this. We can also initiate voluntary vocalization, which can be dissociated from emotion, and can also remember and vocalize emotional experience and memories. This represents a continuum of voice function from the utterly emotionally involved to purely cognitive, emotiveless speech. It seems the voice may be a way to shift out of subject-object epistemology, but it can also be treated like an object. A subject-object epistemology can take place while singing, and in so doing to varying extent the singer becomes “false to itself” and the voice no longer authentically expresses the being of the singer. In other words the voice may dissociate from the being. This happens for various psychological reasons. One such reason, described by Patteson (1999), is a dissociative split, which is often posttraumatic. This dissociative split is an important and recurrent theme in the literature.

All of the study participants expressed an awareness of a split between what they considered to be their “authentic” voices and the tones and the words that they frequently had to adopt in order to function in an often hostile environment. In my teaching I take into account the existence of such a dissociative split between what a woman feels and thinks, and what she feels free to express; it is a common feature of female experience in our culture. I make it clear to my students that they are free to tell me, if they wish, about their lives and that we will together find a repertoire that fits both their vocal abilities and what they would like to express. Thus, we, in some sense at least, eliminate the dissociation of voice from experience. (Patteson, p. 90)

I learned to dissociate mind from emotion in my early medical training. In sleep-deprived, 36-hour hospital shifts, overloaded with terminally-ill AIDS and other sick patients, one could not stop to honor the pain or grieve the deaths that were happening all around; for

there was simply another in pain needing tending, and another about to die. Often a patient's death was experienced as relief, for it was one less person to tend to. One would want to cry out, raging against the human suffering. But one could only carry on, for professional pressure demanded emotional distance, and the queues of human misery would grow longer through the night. So as a young doctor, I learned to separate my emotion from my intellect and my voice from my experience. This dissociation is a constant struggle in my singing. As soon as I touch something deep, ego defenses come up and vocal coordination falls apart. Singing requires an openness to experience and the strength to be emotionally vulnerable.

Another source of objectification of the voice is working too hard, often to live up to the expectation of oneself and of others. Famous singers are particularly at risk. Famous tenor Giuseppe di Stefano possibly had this in mind when he spoke of his friend and colleague Luciano Pavarotti.

I worry about all this publicity for Luciano . . . . It is very, very difficult to go before an audience and sing. It is hard enough if you are just another distinguished opera singer, but if you are called "greater than Caruso," the "best tenor of the century," and all that, it puts an impossible burden on you. It is an impossible standard to live up to night after night. When we know the public is expecting too much it becomes unbearable. (di Stefano, 1981, p. 270)

Di Stefano continued this theme by commenting on Maria Callas.

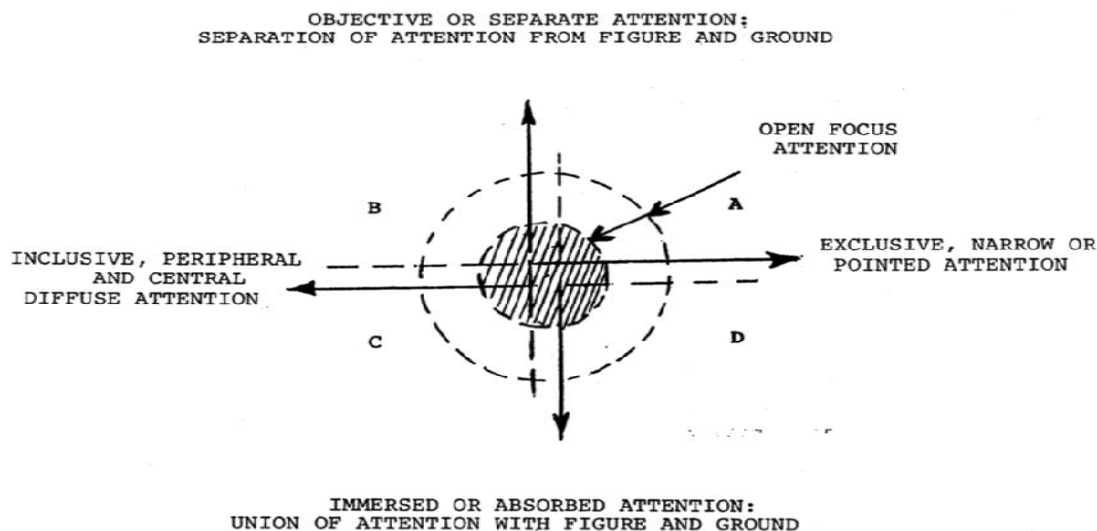
Look at Callas. I am convinced that Maria's troubles began when she started receiving ten thousand dollars a performance. That's when she started buckling under the pressure. I also think it is ambition that killed Maria. She wanted too much. (di Stefano, 1981, p. 270)

### **The Way We Pay Attention**

It seems that there is a continuum of the ways we vocalize or sing, with pure emotion and pure intellect representing the extremes. We can reframe this continuum in terms of how we

relate to the voice. Relationship implies an awareness of self and other, and awareness requires attention. It may be that how we sing depends on how we pay attention.

Fehmi (2003) proposed four general attentional states based on EEG biofeedback (see Figure 8). We may be objective with a narrow focus; objective with an open focus; unitive / immersed with a narrow focus; and unitive / immersed with an open focus. The objective-narrow focus state would represent focused cognition or even neurosis. Increased unity or immersion leads to the loss of self-consciously directed attention; the focus of attention however, may be open or narrow. The flow state described by Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2002, p. 90), Fehmi argued, occurs in the combination of a unitive / immersed self and a narrow focus such as in a game of tennis or squash. Fehmi, however, has shown through EEG measurement that accomplished artists, athletes, and meditators demonstrate flexible control over the dimensions of attention and their associated EEG parameters. They are able to merge with many sensory experiences simultaneously. This immersed or unitive consciousness together with open focus is a very different, possibly mystical experience: a state of selflessness with a wide open beam of awareness. A group of aspiring singers who underwent Fehmi's neuro-feedback training to learn Fehmi's attentional states experienced a greater sense of embodiment, openness of voice, and flow (Tattenbaum, 2001). No specific mystical states were mentioned.



*Figure 8.* Fehmi's model of how we pay attention. Adapted from Fehmi (2003, p. 9).

The left side of the X axis represents a spherical and unlimited diffuse attention with openness to everything; the right side represents a narrow scope with focus on a specific subset of stimuli. The Y axis shows the proximity of the self to the experience. Toward the bottom of the Y axis the self is absorbed or immersed; toward the top, the self is objective or separate.

### **Transpersonal Awakening Through Singing**

This inquiry investigates a synthesis of emotion and awareness in singing, which I believe corresponds to the awakening of Self (capital S) in psychosynthesis (Assagioli, 1977, pp. 18-19; Brown, 2004, p. 17) or Psychic or even Spiritual Transformation in integral psychology (Shirazi, 2005, pp. 246-247), in which there is an expression of the Transpersonal Self acting through the personality structure of the singer. (Unwinding the neuro-phenomenology of this singing Self would be fascinating because, as shown above, singing integrates so many aspects of the whole human being. Delineating the phenomenology would be prerequisite, which is what I begin to do with this research.)

Ideally, said Linklater (2006, p. 20), we sing on a pang, just like the pang of hunger that triggers a baby's reflex wailing. Pangs are not necessarily biological; they may represent the longing of the soul for embodiment or enlightenment. "*Rinah*," or song in Hebrew, explained the

Hasidic master Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1813) quoted in Kaplan (1998), “is the revelation of the Soul’s great yearning, where it longs and pines to attach itself to G-d and to include itself in the Infinite Light—*Ohr Ein Sof*.” *Ranan* (Hebrew verb—to sing) refers to a state of clarified and awakened consciousness (Kaplan, 1998, p. 121). I discuss this in more depth later.

### **An Inner Condition That May Be Broken by Interference**

With time and practice, the coordination for singing becomes a conditioned reflex, the singer is able to sing and maintain the cover effortlessly, and, as for the original Bel Canto singer, or what Klein called the great natural way, wide palettes of sound qualities open. The emphasis must not be on the subjective sound of the voice, rather the inner condition for singing should be correct. The voice must be allowed to sing, and it does if left alone.

When we think about how we want the voice to sound or what emotions we wish to communicate, or get hooked on a specific sound, we inhibit the spontaneous coordination of the breathing and the finely tuned vocal tract coordination falls apart. When I fall apart (more often than not), Hantie shouts, “*Don’t figure it out. Do it!*” She has played me a recording of Klein shouting it at his students.

The famous basso Jerome Hines related a delightful incident that took place during a series of master classes given by Luciano Pavarotti at the Juilliard School of Music in 1979:

Finally Luciano was introduced and, after confiding to the audience that he was scared to death, promptly sat at a large table. There followed a parade of young talented opera aspirants, each of whom sang 2 arias as Luciano conducted with a pencil as a baton. After some excellent singing, punctuated by Luciano’s constructive comments, there came the question and answer session. “Mr. Pavarotti, how do you get your high notes?” The questioner got what he deserved. Luciano promptly sang an ascending scale ending on a beautiful high A-flat. “There!” he said emphatically, closing the subject. (Hines, 1984, p. 214)



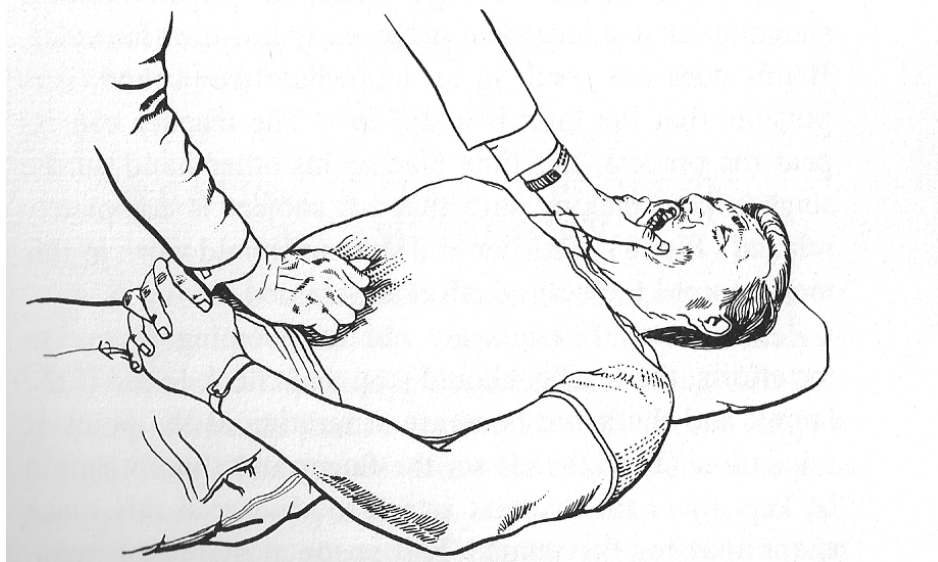
We project parts of ourselves onto the voice (Austin, 1986, pp. 23-30), and sometimes we think about how we want the voice to sound, or speak instead of sing (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 22, 2008). In so doing we interfere with spontaneous vocal coordination. Then glottal closure takes place using “interfering muscles,” that is, muscles used for swallowing (Klein, 1967, p. 15), tension in the larynx results (Jacobson & White, 1994, pp. 320-323), and phonation becomes pressed or breathy. “We may adopt aspects of our parents’ voices or develop a ‘false voice,’ perhaps lovely to listen to but not connected to the core of who we are” (Austin, 2007 ).

Defensive neuromuscular programming develops habits of mind and muscle that cut us off from the instinctual connection between emotion and breath. The voice cannot work to its true potential if its basic energy is not free breath. As long as we are emotionally protective our breathing cannot be free. As long as the breath is not free the voice will depend on compensating strength in the throat and mouth muscles. (Linklater, 2006, pp. 22-23)

In other words, because of deeply held psychological and physiological habits, most people use “acquired voices, not their own” (Ling, 1989, p. 48). We identify with these habits of thought and motor activity because we identify with the aspects of the self or ego we are projecting. These habits or complexes are difficult to eliminate, and there are a number of techniques to get to the “core of the voice.” Some employ honest deception to trick the student into letting go of him/herself (Klein, 1967, p. 27); other methods are more emphatic.

One successful method quite literally shakes the voice out (Klein, 1967, pp. 29-30). The singer lies flat on his back with knees comfortably flexed. The teacher places the heel of her hand on the solar plexus about four inches below the sternum and vibrates the hand up and down four to five times per second as in Figure 9. The singer meanwhile makes a sound on almost any pitch in the early range of the voice. Most times this activates the reflex that closes the glottis resulting in immediate free and un-interfered with sound. Sometimes the larynx and hyoid bone

have to be held apart with fingers and thumb before it happens. According to Klein this experience is like “a light turned on in the darkness” to the singer, and subsequently the singer is never satisfied with anything less.



*Figure 9.* Shaking out the voice. Klein’s method of activating the glottal reflex (Klein, 1967, p. 29).

The teacher, by directly activating the reflex, bypasses the student’s identification with his or her ego representations and projections, and the core of the voice reveals itself. “One stops the student in their doing” (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 31, 2011). The process of training the voice may bypass ego grasping but on a smaller scale may also lead to incremental awareness of, working through, and disidentification from these ego representations (Epstein, 1993), complexes (Austin, 1986; 1993), or, in psychosynthesis terminology, subpersonalities (Brown, 2004, p. 41).

Jorg Schnass (2004), one of the few writers from within the singing establishment to relate voice building to personal and spiritual development, systemized the process thus:

- The aspiring singer must have a *realization of life and art as process ever evolving*, with the *inner necessity* and motivation of the student to follow through no matter what.
- *Parasites of growth—Stereotypes and vocal habits*: Schnass wrote that the sum of life experiences, together with different outside influences and the individual's response to them, creates habits in general and in particular for how the voice is used. Those habits form the "parasites" of the voice and cloud its natural potential. The removal of these parasites or vocal faults becomes the main focus of voice building.
- *Unconscious identification and revelation of the hidden*: A freer sound may be interpreted as a challenge. It may carry a freer statement of emotion. This freer statement, according to Schnass, makes singers suddenly self-conscious because they identify neither with the sound nor with a person who may sing such a free sound. They suddenly see parts of themselves and their souls that have been hidden.
- *Letting go of unreal self-images and masks*: Once singers have been surprised by a freer tone, they have to let go of the old habitual quality if they are to progress. This is threatening and defended against. These ego defenses must become conscious and released.
- *Willfulness vs. Willingness*: Willingness, according to Schnass implies surrendering to the deeper life processes inherent in learning to sing. Willfulness on the other hand is an attempt to set oneself apart, direct and manipulate the natural process of voice building. It results from defensive posture and destroys the natural flow of sound.
- *Progressive discarding of masks*: Each unreal mask the singer is able to shed enables freer tone, and deeper reconciliation with the deeper self and the deeper voice.

Schnass' process probably accounts for much of the growth that takes place through singing that is described by authors such as Schneider (2005), Coenen (1999), Austin (2007), and Patteson (1999).

One may certainly begin singing from a narcissistic place of over identification with one's voice and / or an excessive need to be heard or admired; but as one's psychic wounds heal and one evolves, the voice reflects the transformation. When one is finally able to sing with his or her authentic voice, freely and from the depths of the soul, singing becomes a spiritual experience and the singer can become a channel for divine transpersonal energy. (Austin, 1986, pp. 23-30)

When I first sang on the core of my voice, I felt overwhelmed and wept. Weeping apparently often occurs the first time a singer hears his or her voice (Hantie Prins, personal communication, April 18, 2006). Anderson (1996) described spontaneous weeping as a phenomenon associated with integration of mind, body, and spirit. Integration of body, mind and spirit is part and process of transpersonal development (Anderson, 2008).

Singing brings us firmly into the body and places us in the vital hub of what it is to be human (Loewy, 2004). It becomes the practice of following the inner call and letting it sing you. When the voice is in place and the inner condition consistently coordinated, then (*and only then*; emphasis by Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 22, 2008) singing becomes a hermeneutic of the body. This is a praxis similar to mystical hermeneutics of the Muslim mystic Al-Ghazali (Bruns, 1992, p. 135) in that one simply needs not to get in the way and in so doing, opens a place of intimacy with the Cosmos, with Self, and Spirit. Singing thus becomes a way in which meaning emerges or bubbles up out of living experience. The vocal tract physiology vitally connects to epistemology, or knowing, and ontology, or being. It is a *peak spiritual experience*. My data show later how this plays a role in stabilizing transformations in consciousness and transpersonal development.

The awe and staggering “knowing” when the human voice functions as it was intended to do before cultural preferences, and, you name it, interfered, is truly “Satori.” In Buddhism this moment of AHA! is a moment of Awakening . . . so this is who we truly are!!? Enormous! And once having experienced this, we are never happy to live a diminished existence again. For me this is indeed the crux of my thinking and teaching. (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 21, 2008)

### **Peak Experiences and Transpersonal Development**

All of reality can be thought of as a spectrum of consciousness and developmental space in which we grow in multiple facets or streams and in ever deepening stages (Wilber, 2000). The study of these stages and streams constitutes the field of transpersonal development. A peak experience is a temporary altered state in which a human being, no matter at what stage of development, can experience while awake any part of the general spectrum of consciousness (Wilber, 2000, p. 14). This temporary altered state may result in spiritual experience. All of consciousness may be available to all people, but the way in which this spiritual state is experienced, interpreted, and integrated differs according to one’s developmental stage.

Each peak experience, no matter how profound, is a temporary and transient state, which, for development to occur, must be converted by the self to permanent traits or structures of consciousness. Peak experiences must become *plateaus*—permanent realizations in a person’s makeup. Peak experience may thus function as glimpses or “peeks” into a different and deeper way of being, which with practice may stabilize as permanent structures of consciousness, deepening development.

We each have our own way to wholeness—holiness—our unique way back home in Spirit, which our essence has never left. This journey takes us through the spiraling labyrinth of our individual lives, with many twists and turns and occasional dead ends. (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 2-3)

Herman Coenen, a singer, poet, and sociologist, described his experience when learning to sing.

It was during one of those singing lessons that I suddenly heard a voice coming out of me that I recognized from long ago. It was the voice I had as a boy. The voice came from a period when the weight of everything that had to do with the grownup world, its haste, its pressures, its burdens, were not yet lying on my shoulders. A voice so young and clear, it moved me deeply. And it brought back with it so much that had seemed to have vanished; lost and out of reach. (Coenen, 1999, p. 1)

In so doing Coenen's singing catalyzed a growth and unfolding. He continued:

Now I sensed that something important was taking place in me. And the matter did not rest there. My voice has grown fuller, deeper and more powerful in the meantime. The process has continued; it does not stop. The sound, as well as the use and the awareness of my body are in constant change. With the sometimes overwhelming experience of what I hear singing in myself, it is I, as a whole, as a person, that changes. I enter a different consciousness: more here and now, more earthy. At the same time, during precious moments, lighter, happier, with sparkles of a fire that I would call heavenly. I see how the new use of my voice has integrated into my work and helped directing it towards what I feel is my individual path. (Coenen, pp. 1-2)

Austin (2001, 2007) has formalized singing as a form of psychotherapy, which she calls vocal psychotherapy. Vocal psychotherapy, in her words, is a psychotherapy that uses voice, improvisation, song and dialogue within an analytic orientation to promote intra-psychic and interpersonal change".

### **Participatory Spiritual Knowing vs. Peak Experiences**

Jorge Ferrer in his book *Revisioning Transpersonal Theory* (2002) criticizes what he views as empiricist colonization of spirituality, intrasubjective reductionism, and subtle self-centeredness implicit in Transpersonal Psychology's understanding of the term *spiritual or peak experience* (pp. 22-28). He suggests shifting the transpersonal paradigm from emphasizing intrasubjective experience of spiritual phenomena to an understanding of spiritual knowing as a multilocal participatory event which may not necessarily connote intentionality.

Spiritual knowing is a participatory event: It can involve the creative participation of not only our minds, but our hearts, bodies, souls, and most vital essence. Furthermore, spiritual energies are not confined to our inner world, but flow out of relationships, communities, and even places. (Ferrer, 2002, p. 115)

Ferrer's participatory vision conceives transpersonal phenomena as: "(1) *events*, in contrast to intrasubjective experience" that may

elicit in the individual transpersonal experience; (2) *multilocal*, in that they arise in different loci, such as individuals, relationships, communities or place; and (3) *participatory*, in that they can invite the generative power and dynamism of all dimensions of human nature to interact with a spiritual power in the co-creation of spiritual worlds. (Ferrer, 2002, p. 117)

Participatory events may also drive development.

Individuality and intrasubjective experience is only part of the being; the human being forms part of multiple holistically organized systems such as families, nations, and the cosmos. Just as the individual needs to maintain harmonious intrapsychic dynamics, he or she also needs to maintain harmony and connectedness with others and with nature, and through this participatory interconnectedness spiritual knowing taking place. Singing may involve deep relatedness to others. The founder of Breslav Chasiduth, Rebbe Nachman of Breslav (1991), beautifully described relatedness and uniqueness through song as he writes, "Know that every shepherd has his own special melody; know that every blade of grass has its own special song; and the song of the grass forms the melody of the shepherd" (p. 320).

Group singing allows for synchronization of breathing and movement while sharing emotional expression and affirming shared beliefs (Crowe, 2004, p. 298). I had the following experience while singing in the synagogue this year on Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year. What follows is an extract from my journal.

The second day I was mindful of suitable pitch, the melody lifted the voice and something happened. Nothing huge, but there was a transmission of something, I could see it in the silence of the congregation that actually stopped to listen, I could feel it in the gentle nostalgic smile of an elderly gentleman as he smiled up at me while I sang. But more than anything I felt a sense of belonging and the brief presence of an ancient lineage momentarily echoing its timelessness through the tribe.

It seems that singing may also help relate us to past, present, and future. It may also help us relate to that which is before and outside of time as the intimate instance recorded in my journal illustrates. I am saying at the very least that this was a “true” experience of mine and asserting that it was in fact multilocal and communal. It is perhaps also the case that at that moment, this Jewish community was cocreating with the Divine. Tikkun Olam (the Jewish concept and practice of repairing the world) invites this kind of cocreation.

As mentioned, the singer truly singing does not dualistically “play the voice,” rather the “song is the soul and is its vehicle” (Ling, 1989, p. 123), and the soul, according to Ferrer (2002), is one of the participating loci of spiritual knowing leading to transformation.

### **Singing May Relate to a Kabbalistic Model of Human Development**

It has been vital to my understanding of soul, singing, and spiritual knowing to look into my own wisdom tradition of Judaism. In the Kabbalah the soul is not conceived as a confined essence, rather as continuous spiritual being, stretching from the general Source of all souls to beyond the particular body of a particular person. “The connection between the body and the soul is like what occurs at the end of a line of light, when a dark body is illuminated” (Steinsaltz, 1980, p. 55). There are five levels of this continuous spiritual being as he or she manifests from the Infinite.

The first level, the *Nefesh* (or animal soul) animates existence in terms of life force, movement, and sexuality as well as acting as the source of man’s capacity to think, imagine, dream, and contemplate (Steinsaltz, 1980, pp. 51-65). The *Nefesh* according to Steinsaltz is not only concerned with physicality, rather it is that part of awareness that is aware of itself as concentrated in a particular body. The *Nefesh* is experienced as a “*resting spirit*” because one must rest and quiet the static of physical perception in order to become aware of the body as



being a receptacle for the spiritual (Kaplan, 1990, p. 18). Intriguingly, Schneider (2005), a medical doctor and singer, described being entrained into a “deep state of autonomic quietness” prior to an experience he had while singing in which “infinity opened up” (p. 222). My own experience is that my singing is freer and easier following specific physiotherapy designed to quiet the autonomic nervous system. Schneider described what followed:

Suddenly inner and outer and objective and subjective all became one. I was making the sound and the sound was making me. I was sound. I was vibration. There was no time. The vastness of infinity opened up and was not frightening. I had become a source that needed no mirroring. I realized I had reached a state like none other that I had ever experienced. I had no needs. I felt intimately close to everyone but needed nothing from them. I simply was, a Being possessed of its own justification. Death seemed utterly irrelevant to me, and I was very, very happy. I was blissful and one with bliss, but not dissolved into bliss. I was not ego driven. Yet I was self that possessed identity and will. (Schneider, p. 222)

The next level, the *Ruach* is the “wind blowing down to us from G-d’s breath” (Kaplan, 1990, p. 18). It is the first spark of Divine consciousness beyond the zoological. It manifests as the embodied person’s higher spiritual perceptions and higher spiritual aspirations (Steinsaltz, 1980, p. 56). It is felt as a “moving spirit” rather than a quieting one (Kaplan, 1990, p. 18). In reading Schneider’s description above one has a sense of profound movement in stillness; he “was vibration.” My experience is similar and has impacted my worldview. Below is an extract from my journal:

There is a point of power where the mind stops and one simply engages differently. Where I feel as if a lava churning abyss has opened up in me so controlled, yet so powerful; at once me; and not me; and the voice is free, yet singing from a place that cannot be moved. Hooked anatomically. Grounded and raw; sacred and beautiful; here and now; there is no other heaven.

And this all happened as I sung, and yet it was not me singing. At least not the me I knew. It took all of me, yet it was all of me and everything else. Years of work, confusion, joy and pain. Effortless so long as I was working; and I was hanging on for dear life.

And yet this experience was not in isolation. One could say it was a view from the road. Perhaps part of the road; for if not part of the road, it would be entirely peripheral and distracting. Yet there is something in that road, the sheer hard work of it all, its

exhilarations and its detours that have changed me, brought me together, touched a yearning in me and taught me compassion.

Is this the Ruach at work, is this the process of participatory knowing?

The *Neshama* (level three) holds our unique individual Divine nature. It is experienced as the Divine breath. When awareness is centered in the Neshama, the person is aware not only of spirituality but of its source. Where the Ruach could be likened to a pleasant breeze on a warm day, the experience of the Neshamah is the intimacy of feeling the breath and sensing the presence of a loved one (Kaplan, 1990, p. 19). The Neshama holds our unique, nontemporal, transcendent individual Divine nature. Transcendence takes place as one becomes more aware of the higher reaches of the soul; transformation takes place when higher parts of the soul illumine and permeate lower parts of the person's consciousness (Lancaster, 2006, pp. 39-40). Singing may express our inmost being, our inmost song (Hebrew—*rinah*), which according to Chasidic Master Rebbe Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745-1843) is the revelation of our Soul's deepest yearning to consciously include our whole being in the Infinite Light (Kaplan, 1998, p. 120). The Talmud Masechet Berachot tells us that our prayer should emanate from our place of *rinah* (song) (Talmud\_Bavli, 499/1943, p. 6A), in other words from our inmost being. The Hebrew verb word *ranen*—singing, refers to a state of clarified and awakened being (Kaplan, 1998, p. 121). Singing allows one to awaken to higher realms of being, to express them, and to embody them. *Rinah* can also mean verbal expression of an explosive emotion (Kaplan, 1998, pp. 119-120).

The prophets of the bible used singing techniques such as *rinah* or *higayon* to open their awareness to an existent inner state of inner directed being and prophecy (Kaplan, 1998, pp. 111-123). The *higayon* is a song sung upon a 10-stringed harp as referred to in the book of Psalms (Hirsch, 1882/1997). A *higayon*, explains Hirsch, is a “*vigorous thought or meditation*

*clamoring for expression*” (p. 154). Kaplan explained the *higayon* as a state brought about by *hagah*—meditation, a way of repetitive singing with a harp. Through progressive song, Kaplan explained, the practitioner empties him/herself and reaches a state of pure Being wherein he or she is directed by a higher force: his or her unique highest soul, itself rooted in the Infinite. This higher directed being becomes the song of the Soul, the *higayon* clamoring for expression. The two highest levels of the Soul are as follows: *Chayah*—Living Essence, would, in our allegory, correspond to the very life force of the blower; the breath so to speak that is still in G-d’s lungs. *Yechidah*—Unique Essence, would correspond to the Infinite’s will to create, like a glassblower’s original decision to blow breath to create a unique vessel (Kaplan, 1990, pp. 19-20). Intimate knowledge of these realms is reserved for the advanced mystic. I am repeating what I have read.

“From the midst of thought a desire arose to expand, and it spread from the place where thought is concealed and unknown until it settled in the larynx” (*Zohar* 1:74a). The emergence of the unique human being from the Divine is spoken of in metaphorical terms of the Divine respiratory tract. In human physiology the end part of the respiratory tract is the vocal tract and its resonators. They give form in sound (song or speech) to the otherwise silent and formless breath (Soul).

Below is a description from my journal of the feeling of flow in singing, of what happens to me sometimes.

Singing in its authenticity is an autotelic experience of intense focus. Action and awareness merge and there is a loss of reflective self-consciousness. The experience of time is also distorted, although my experience is not that time speeds past, rather it feels as if one “sits on top” of time and is shaping it. Time itself feels to be generated from the inner beat of the diaphragmatic breath as awareness molds time into emotion and music. Perhaps music is a sculpture formed in time.

I am not pointing to or proposing any particular depth to these particular experiences. Rather I bring this description to show the intriguing parallel of emanating temporal creation from something quite outside of time in both the fields of mysticism and singing. Said Chaudhuri, a scholar from Sri Aurobindo's school of mysticism, "The individual can become his true self only by following the inner rhythm of his own being" (Chaudhuri, 1965, p. 115). In kabalistic word play, a frequently practiced mode of interpretation, if one changes the order of the letters of the Hebrew word for melodious song זמר (*zemer*), one gets *zerem*—current (Glazerson, 1988, p. 94). I have heard this experience referred to as "soaring."

### **Situating My Research in Current Transpersonal Thinking**

Ancient Kabalistic psychology provided a simple and useful developmental framework through which I was able to view human development as it may happen in singing. It is important though to situate my ideas within the modern psychological framework. After I had analyzed my data and reviewed a number of transpersonal developmental theorists, for example Wilber's Integral Psychology (2000) and Spectrum of Consciousness (1993), Anderson's Body Map (2008), and Cook-Greuter's Ego Development Theory (2005), it became clear that Hillevy Ruumet's model of development as outlined in her book *Pathways of the Soul* (2006) would provide an integrated and comprehensive, as well as appropriate modern developmental framework through which to look at my results. I have a great debt to the other theorists, especially to Anderson, who contributes to guiding me personally in this inquiry, yet for the sake of simplicity, I have chosen to use mainly one developmental model, and have looked into incorporating the others into future research projects.

I say Ruumet's model is comprehensive because Ruumet takes into account prepersonal, personal, and transpersonal stages of development, and introduces the concept of the return cycle

or the revisiting of past stage psychological trailers requiring healing prior to forward movement. I say integrated because the model looks at psycho-spiritual development taking into account the whole human being; Body, Mind, Soul, Spirit—in both immanent and transcendent forms, community and the person’s environment. Ruumet’s comprehensive and integrated approach provided me with a framework for my discussion chapter in which I was able to integrate the many disciplines that I have reviewed.

Ruumet’s “messy model” (messy in Ruumet’s own words because it takes into account the nonlinear spiraling nature of development) is a clear and easily understood map of the human path. I briefly review it here and quote appropriate examples of singers from the literature to give a taste of the model’s suitability as a framework for later discussion. I then take it up again and expand on it in the relevant sections of my discussion chapter.

### **Ruumet’s Spiral Pathways of the Soul**

Ruumet (2006) counts seven stages or centers of development (analogous to chakras and fully summarized in Table 1). Stages are fluid and overlap, yet each has a typically distinct worldview and experience of self in relationship (Ruumet, 2006, p. 18). The seven centers span the prepersonal—personal—transpersonal (or preconventional—conventional—postconventional—post-postconventional) spectrum. Each center has healthy and unhealthy modes of expression. Meaning-making, function, knowing, self-expression, mind/body relationship, relationship to others, world and Spirit change with each stage of development.

Each stage has a *forward movement*: a description of the transition to the next stage; and in the later personal and transpersonal stages, a *return cycle*; which is a return to unfinished business from lower stages requiring integration and transformation before higher levels can

stabilize in awareness (Anderson, 2008). Forward movement and return cycles may be provoked through peak experiences or events of spiritual knowing among other factors.

The first three centers, stretching into the fourth, constitute “foundational centers” or “home base” where people operate from a culturally conditioned consensual reality. Ruumet calls these people “in-laws,” corresponding to preconventional and conventional development. People working through Center 4 to Center 7, she calls “out-laws” (postconventional and post-postconventional), as their being is not limited to culturally conditioned reality. The body-mind relationship Ruumet notes evolves with each center.

Centers 1, 2 and 3 are about: (1) Physical survival; (2) Emotional kinship / tribal love and belonging; and (3) Establishment of a healthy functioning ego respectively (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 29-62). Singing behaviors such as song traditions, lullabies, group singing, singing anthems and the like, are likely to nurture development in the early centers. What follows is a brief description of what happens in the first three centers and how the self relates to the body and to Spirit.

In Centers 1 and 2, the self begins to recognize itself as separate from the environment. The body-mind self is at first undifferentiated, with identity vested in the body-self, and responses are uncomplicated and self protective. Later, in Center 2, the self begins to become aware of itself and develops cathectic attachments to those who fulfill its needs. Cathectic attachments extend to the family and tribe through which the self finds its identity. These attachments soften in Center 3, where the ego develops a sense of its own agency as the self strives to play and master a culturally determined role.

The body in Center 2 is called a “reflected body” because the self comes to know itself through being mirrored by others. In Center 3 the body is known as the “instrumental body” as the self relates to it as an instrument of the ego. In Center 2, Spirit is personified as a (tribal)

parent and in Center 3 this identification remains or is replaced by atheism or agnosticism. The ego of Center 3 according to Ruumet always tries to explain the transpersonal in terms of what it knows and so struggles to transcend itself. The ego's difficulty moving beyond its own understanding poses a problem in singing because the singer uses "interfering muscles" discussed above to grasp for a known and culturally acceptable sound. The singer has difficulty transcending him / herself. As to a personal version, when this happens, I feel like a puppy trapped in a paper bag.

Healthy outcomes of the three "in-law" centers are good survival skills, positive relational and sexual self-image, and competence in some productive activity. Unhealthy outcomes result in fearful vigilance, alienation, self-centeredness, and ego inflation.

The transition from Center 3 (Ego) to Center 4 (Aloha or Heart) is a transition from the ego's "love of power" to "power of love" (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 65-84), and takes place with a developing impulse to explore beyond consensus reality. This transition sees the birth of trans-cathetic compassion. The narrow confines of the ego begin to expand, the self senses that it is part of something bigger, and can empathize with other's pain and joy. The self develops the capacity to compassionately witness its behavior and inner process and begins a process of self-deconditioning. The impulse for personal power and achievement lessens and is slowly replaced by inclusive compassion as Spirit is recognized in self and others. The body is affectionate.

Failed 3-4 transitions take place when habit, entropy, and inertia triumph over the heart's pull to wholeness and the ego's primacy remains. Regression to Center 2 takes place when the ego feels threatened by the challenge of unconditional love. A healthy self in the Aloha Center 4 displays empathy and inclusiveness, an unhealthy Center 4 self remains attached to own reference group and rejects others.

The Star / Voice Center (5) emerges in awareness as a yearning for the unique unfolding and realization of its divinely intended being: the self's longing for its true voice (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 85-110). This yearning for authenticity, spontaneity, transcendent connection, and healthy self-expression arises naturally from the experience of being and consequent world view of the Aloha Center rather than from cultural introjections. The (Expressive) body (and therefore so too the singing voice) becomes a natural vehicle for self-expression. Klein's method of tricking the singing student into allowing the free voice (described above in Figure 9) may constitute a peak experience initiating Center 5's opening. It is also an excellent example of how the anatomy, physiology, and neurophysiology combine in a reflex to produce a psychological shift. Coenen's description of his learning to sing would demonstrate the stabilizing of the self in this center through singing.

Now I sensed that something important was taking place in me. And the matter did not rest there. My voice has grown fuller, deeper and more powerful in the meantime. The process has continued; it does not stop. The sound, as well as the use and the awareness of my body are in constant change. With the sometimes overwhelming experience of what I hear singing in myself, it is I, as a whole, as a person, that changes. I enter a different consciousness: more here and now, more earthy. At the same time, during precious moments, lighter, happier, with sparkles of a fire that I would call heavenly. I see how the new use of my voice has integrated into my work and helped directing it towards what I feel is my individual path. (Coenen, 1999, pp. 1-2)

Star centered selves seek community in kindred spirits and express themselves creatively and authentically. Unhealthy Star centered selves indulge in self-display, egoic appropriation of transpersonal experience, and spiritual materialism.

Ruumet calls the return cycle of Center 5 the "5-2 Descent Tango." This return cycle revisits and reintegrates "trailers" from the survival, emotional, and kinship centers (see graphic in Table 1). Cathetic love and cultural introjections are further loosened and released as individuation blossoms, and wisdom becomes increasingly embodied. Inadequate revisiting and



integration during the 5-2 return cycle carries the risk of ego resurgence and spiritual bypass (or pretense of high mindedness as an excuse for bypassing earthly challenges). In my discussion later, I analyze my participants' return cycles that were generated through singing.

As the self expresses and integrates Being in greater and greater depth, so it begins to embody Spirit as a harmonious, integrated life flow. This embodying of Spirit and Wisdom is called the "Sophia Task" of Center 6 (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 111-128). It brings inner union of opposites as a step towards transcendence into nondual awareness, body / mind / spirit integration; the person learns to live with the paradox of a self-identification that is at once universal, yet grounded in the present. There is recognition of matter as fundamentally spiritual, a melding of ineffability and groundedness, and recognition of the deep wisdom of the body.

Part of the Sophia task is to develop equanimity in face of death. This happens through the 6-1 return cycle wherein unintegrated Center 1 trailers, typically around survival, physicality, sickness, and death, are revisited and integrated. Healthy expression of the Sophia Center (6) results in embodied wisdom, mind / body / spirit harmony and comfort with not knowing. Unhealthy expression of Center 6 results in rigidity, intellectualization, and dogmatism. Schneider's experience quoted above would fit with a Sophia peak experience.


Suddenly inner and outer and objective and subjective all became one. I was making the sound and the sound was making me. I was sound. I was vibration. There was no time. The vastness of infinity opened up and was not frightening. I had become a source that needed no mirroring. I realized I had reached a state like none other that I had ever experienced. I had no needs. I felt intimately close to everyone but needed nothing from them. I simply was, a Being possessed of its own justification. Death seemed utterly irrelevant to me, and I was very, very happy. I was blissful and one with bliss, but not dissolved into bliss. I was not ego driven. Yet I was a self that possessed identity and will. (Schneider, 2005, p. 222)

Center 7 (Nondual Embodied Transcendence) according to Ruumet (2006, pp. 131-137) is not really a center at all but a transpersonal process through which enlightened mind is

expressed by way of wise, compassionate action in the world. The being passes irrevocably from personal to transpersonal consciousness. There is conscious embodied transcendence. As mentioned previously, the Hebrew verb word *ranen*—singing, refers to a state of clarified and awakened being (Kaplan, 1998, p. 121). What does it mean? There are apparently no words to express this center adequately.

A full summary and graphic representation of Ruumet's Spiral Pathway of the Soul appears in Table 1.

Table 1. *Summary of Ruumet's Model of Transpersonal Development (Ruumet, 2006).* Summary is my own.

Center & body-mind (BM) connection		Main Activities	Return Cycle	Healthy Outcome	Unhealthy Outcome
<b>7</b> Nondual Embodied Transcendence <b>BM: Conscious embodied transcendence identifying fully with both body and Spirit</b>	 <p>Centers and Return Cycles Copyright Ruumet 2005</p>	Passing from personal to transpersonal. No words.		Enlightened mind, expressed through wise, compassionate action in the world	Pseudo spirituality, or narrow religiosity and/or ungrounded "transcendence"
<b>6</b> Sophia / Wisdom <b>BM: Integrated bodymind as embodiment of Sophia</b>		Embodying Spirit, harmonious integrated life flow. Brings inner union of opposites as a step to towards transcendence into nondual awareness. Body / mind / spirit integration. Live with paradox, self-identification that is universal yet grounded in the present. Equanimity in face of death. Recognition of matter as fundamentally spiritual – melding of ineffability and groundedness.	<b>6-1</b> Integration of all center's unintegrated trailers especially Center 1. Typically around: Survival, physicality, sickness & death	Embodied Wisdom, mind/body harmony, comfort in living with "I don't know"	Rigidity, intellectualization, dogmatism
<b>5</b> Star / Voice <b>BM: Expressive body</b>		A calling to unique unfolding flowing from the truth of our being arises naturally of experience and world view of Aloha center rather than introjections. Find true voice. Yearning for authenticity, spontaneity, transcendent connection, & community of kindred spirits	<b>5-2 Descent Tango</b> Revisiting and reintegrating survival, emotional & kinship centers - releasing cathetic love and cultural introjections - risk of ego resurfacing & spiritual bypass.	Creative, authentic self-expression	Indulgent self-display. Egoic appropriation of transpersonal experience / spiritual materialism. Spiritual bypass.
<b>4</b> Aloha / Heart <b>BM: Affectionate body</b>		<u>First part:</u> Transition from love of power to power of love. Birth of trans-cathetic compassion Feel part of something bigger <u>Second Part</u> Able to compassionately witness own behavior & de-condition inner process Empathy with other's pain and joy. Personal power and self-achievement less primary. Impulse to inclusive compassion. Recognition of Spirit and Spirit in others.	<u>Failed 3-4 transitions</u> Habit and inertia triumph over pull to wholeness. Ego holds onto primacy. <u>Center 2 regression</u> Avoids challenge to ego of center 4.	Empathy and inclusiveness	Attachment to own reference group, rejection of others
<b>3</b> Ego / Power / Mastery "Me / Mine" "Us / Ours" <b>BM: Instrumental body serving egoic agenda</b>		Development of ego as center of agency and inner experience. Aspiration to "make a (culturally determined) mark" / "play a (culturally determined) role." Softening center 2 cathexis. 2 ways of relating to spirit: atheist / agnostic or Center 2's divine personification. Always tries to explain transpersonal in terms of something known.		Competence and/or mastery in some area of productive activity	Inadequacy, often masked by an inflated ego. Self-centeredness, intolerance, arrogance, and inappropriate competition. Pursuit of power, prestige, possession and control of others. Self-righteousness
<b>2</b> Emotional / Kinship "Fortress We" <b>BM: Reflected body with mirrored self-image</b>		Loved and cared for. Belonging and acceptance by family and tribe. Associated cathetic bonding. Spirit personified as tribal parent / god.		Positive relational / sexual self image	Social and self-alienation
<b>1</b> Physical / Survival <b>BM: Undifferentiated</b>		Basic physical needs. Separation of self from environment. Development of cathexis.		Good survival skills	Fearful vigilance

## **Resting, Summarizing, and Directing the Study**

I have taken my reader on an interdisciplinary tour of singing and emphasize here the fundamental principle that has been established through this tour—vocal tract may mirror psychology. That is the expression of deep, authentic emotion can lead to the emotional motor system reflexively coordinating the vocal tract for singing. Conversely, as described for example in Klein’s manual activation of the glottal reflex, reflexive coordination of the vocal tract in singing leads to the expression and experience of authentic emotion. Said slightly differently—correct vocal tract coordination requires a singer to tap into an inner space, but it may also take a singer to an inner space. It seems that freedom (from psychological defense) and alignment of the physical body (in the vocal tract) correlates with spiritual openness and may lead to transpersonal development.

My intuitive inquiry is aimed at:

1. expanding my understanding of myself and my journey through singing;
2. deepening our understanding of transpersonal development as may happen in singers;  
and
3. deepening our understanding of the interdisciplinary integration that would shed light on the phenomenon. This way my research becomes both personally and generally relevant and potentially transformative. It also delineates peak / plateau experiences or events of spiritual knowing that may take place in singing and shows how they find their context over the lifetime(s).

My hope is that my research contributes to understanding some of the ways we may connect (and disconnect) to our Selves and to the Source of all, so that we may live more integrated, meaningful, and fulfilling lives in “ontological resonance to the sonorous flow of

meaning” (Ling, 1989, p. 82). I also believe that unraveling some of the phenomenology will help build a framework for future neuro-phenomenology research (e.g., where the neural correlates of phenomena occurring while singing are researched through functional magnetic resonance imaging of the brain during the event).

### **Chapter 3: Research Methods**

This chapter comprises the design and rationale of the research methods used in my study of transpersonal experiences in singing. I summarize my literature review and state the aims of my research. I describe intuitive inquiry as it relates to my research project and in the process of describing its five cycles, outline my proposed research methodology. I include a preliminary record of my cycle process that I have undergone and later in Chapter 3 present my Cycle 2 process and an abbreviated set of preliminary lenses. I describe the data gathering and analysis of Cycle 3. This includes a description of the participants, the standards for their selection, how I recruited them, the interview process, and its questions. I then describe the methodology of Cycles 4 and 5 (reported in Chapters 4 and 5), embodied writing, as well as the delimitations, limitations, and threats to validity that I have encountered. The appendixes record the information and consent form (Appendix A), the participant invitation (Appendix B), and a full set of my preliminary lenses (Appendix C).

#### **Background and Overview**

In my literature review I argued that the way we use our vocal tracts to sing has psychological, epistemological, and ontological significance. As discussed at length, singing is a finely tuned, whole person, deeply embodied, learned, and ultimately reflexive motor coordination. It can be psychotherapeutic, and through diligent practice one may come to master emotions and, intriguingly, because the vocal organ is primarily used for speech, through singing one may potentially move beyond verbal and symbolic knowledge into a nondual way of knowing and being. Singing provides a forum for various peak and plateau type experiences, and if we view music as an embodied frame of reference for knowledge and meaning (Walker, 2000), then singing becomes so to speak a “hermeneutic of the body” (my own term), a means of

making meaning of ourselves and our life experience. Singing, as recognized by various religious and therapeutic traditions, becomes a spiritual practice that aids in our True Self development by developing an integral triad of uniqueness, relatedness, and transcendence / transformation, and may correlate to stages described in transpersonal developmental models.

It may be argued and probably demonstrated that some of these effects of singing can happen to anyone, trained singer or not. But if these effects happen in an untrained singer, how stronger and more consistent would be the effect in the “expert” singer where there is a gestalt of music, vocal tract mastery, and a consistently coordinated inner psycho-spiritual condition? I previously quoted Marilyn Horne describing this gestalt in another context.

I sometimes experienced a spiritual, mystical feeling when singing, a feeling that’s difficult to put in words because it was so tied to the music and the text. At those moments, it seemed like a sublime peace enveloped me. Usually it happened in recital. In opera, so much is going on you can’t fully give yourself over to the music, whereas in concerts, one brief song can bring rapture. (Horne, 2004, p. 17)

Thus I studied “expert” classically trained singers and what happens and develops in their experience when they sing.

One of my preliminary lenses (mentioned later) is that a person’s inner state is mirrored in the voice, and it is worth repeating Hantie Prins’ quote:

The awe and staggering “knowing” when the human voice functions as it was intended to do before cultural preferences, and, you name it, interfered, is truly “Satori.” In Buddhism this moment of AHA! is a moment of Awakening so this is who we truly are!!? Enormous! And once having experienced this, we are never happy to live a diminished existence again. For me this is indeed the crux of my thinking and teaching. (Hantie Prins, personal communication, January 21, 2008)

The purpose of my study is therefore the following:

1. To gather descriptions of this “awe and staggering knowing” that seems to happen when the “human voice functions as it was intended” and understand the varieties of peak and plateau experience that may occur in expert classically trained singers.

2. To understand part of their personal psycho-spiritual journey in their learning to sing and their singing as well as my own. I wish further to understand specifically if there was any emotional or personal issue that stood in the way or perhaps still stands in the way of their ability to sing freely.
3. To understand how singing may influence transpersonal development.

### **Intuitive Inquiry**

There is an inner and outer process that takes place in a research study of this kind which makes the use of intuitive inquiry an appropriate research method. Intuitive inquiry is a hermeneutical research method developed by Professor Rosemarie Anderson of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, which she has described as an epistemology of the heart that joins intuition to intellectual precision through five iterative cycles of interpretation (Anderson, 2004). In describing intuitive inquiry, Anderson pointed out that intuitive researchers explore topics that claim their enthusiasm and invite the inquiry to transform both their understanding of the topic and also transforms their lives. Thus the research process and its findings become personally and universally relevant.

### **The Hermeneutical Spiral and the Cycles of Intuitive Inquiry**

Intuitive inquiry places the research process in the context of a personal unfolding. It invites the inner being of the researcher to participate in a hermeneutical process or spiral (Heelan, 1998) by actively seeking to incorporate intuition and communion with the researcher's inner being into the research process. Furthermore, the research process in intuitive inquiry is an iterative and transformative multilogue between (a) the inquirer; (b) the question; (c) the lifeworld, which is the intersubjective world of our immediately lived experience (Abram, 1996, p. 40); and (d) the emergent understanding and meaning.



Put another way, a research project is a complex living system. Each phase and each dissertation draft is a moment of stability in an unfolding process of questions, ideas, discovery of fact, and discovery of personal meaning. To borrow relevant insight from the field of music, musician Daniel Barenboim (Barenboim & Said, 2002) said of music, “It’s about becoming. It’s not the statement of a phrase that is really important, but how you get there, and how you leave it and how you make the transition to the next phrase” (p. 21). The intention of intuitive inquiry is to facilitate discovery, new understanding of the research topic, and ultimately personal transformation. The research process thus becomes a becoming.

Anderson (2004) described six types of intuition that are incorporated into the research process through five cycles of hermeneutical interpretation. These six types of intuition include: (a) unconscious and symbolic processes; (b) psychic or parapsychological experiences; (c) sensory modes of intuition in addition to the five “normal” senses, such as proprioception. (We have six exteroception senses that are external clues to the outside world—the five senses of sight, taste, smell, touch, and hearing—proprioception is the ability to know where the parts of our body are in relationship to each other.); (d) kinesthesia and the felt sense; (e) empathic identification or compassionate knowing through which a researcher may inhabit the lived world of another person or object of study; and (f) through our wounds. Anderson (2004) explained, “wounds are also openings to the world. Explorations along the fault lines of the personality invite change and transformation” (p.313). In my literature review I began to examine the relationship of trauma and song. Understanding wounds may be particularly relevant.

Intuitive inquiry is formalized into five cycles of research and interpretation. In each following section I summarize the method of the cycle and record my relevant research process.

**Cycle 1: Clarifying the research topic.** In Cycle 1, intuitive researchers select a text or image that repeatedly attracts their attention and relates to their area of interest in a general and often unconscious way (Anderson, 2004). Once the text is identified, Cycle 1 interpretation begins by engaging with the text or image daily and recording data both externally verifiable and data based on the researcher's inner perceptions. Repeated engagement with a potential text allows insights to converge into a focused research topic.

My first real engagement with intuitive inquiry was a course on the method given at an Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (ITP) Global Seminar in August 2007. At the time I felt I wanted to understand the mystical way of knowing that was evident in some writing that had spoken to me for some time. The image that came to me was that of a nude female torso with a beautiful flower protecting her modesty. In the course of contemplating and dialoguing with the image, I came to understand that mystical knowledge is mysterious and sensuous and that it somehow involves the body. There is a femininity and fertility about mystical knowing, and it is somehow generative. I realised that in order to honestly engage and explore this way of knowing I would have to explore my own feminine side, and this was related to my own becoming. Furthermore it became apparent that my own becoming was related to an intimate knowing and that I would have to look at that which in me was standing in the way of intimate knowing, for the flower in the image is itself sensuous and fertile and creates and gestates the seeds of new life, of new becoming. As explained (Anderson, 2004), "wounds are also openings to the world" (p. 313), and one of the types of intuition.

Later during the seminar Dr. Mark McCaslin asked us to write down our daimonic imperative. The daimon, according to Hillman (1996, p. 8) is that part of the human being that remembers the individual's purpose for incarnation and thus carries the person's destiny. I

realized and wrote down on a scrap of paper that my daimonic imperative is “To connect and dwell within my authenticity and that of the World Soul, to know It deeply and to help others connect too.” I realized too that singing is one of the ways in which I go about my daemonic imperative and that it formed part of an emergent congruent way of my being and becoming. Singing, mystical knowledge, and intimacy with Self and Source, the themes of my initial Cycle 1 texts, in Anderson’s words appear to be “coming from the same vortex” (Rosemarie Anderson, personal communication, August 15, 2007). The inner process of my dissertation is the exploration of this triad.

The course in intuitive inquiry continued through the (northern hemisphere’s) summer semester of the 2007 Global Doctoral Programme of ITP. In the first week back home, while *davening shacharit* (praying the morning prayers), I asked for a text or an image that would invite my attention to the research topic. A bodily felt sense developed around the solar plexus. It was a simple prompting, a desire to sing that was imbued with deep colors of love, an overflowing. At the same time there was a sense of, “I can’t get it out,” that things (the vocal tract) were not aligned, a combination both of the physical stress of the journey and a mental misalignment too. I felt I was struggling with an inner angel. The difference between daemon and demon is only one letter.

Just prior to the seminar I felt stuck and unable to breathe. I went to a healer friend of mine. In meditation we looked into my solar plexus area (seat of diaphragmatic breathing) and saw a small child completely tied up. I was so angry and tried to untie the child, but I needed to shout that anger and I could not. The healer friend got moving with a drum and rattle and really shook my energy so that I screamed before I even knew what was happening. I untied the child and began to embrace him. He was a pretty ugly newborn. This imagery has been with me too.

The child is now a healthy toddler and comes with me in flights of imagination and journeys.

Why struggle with an angel when you can look at a flower? The biblical Jacob struggled all night with his angel, won, got wounded, and had his name changed to Israel, which Jewish tradition tells us—when we fiddle the order of the letters (a common midrashic practice)—translates to Shir El—the song of G-d.

Practically, I found myself longing to sing, but not being able to. The voice did not happen, and I was not singing. The baby monkey in the photograph “Papaya Hope” captures the feeling (Figure 10). The baby monkey was safely watching the rest of the troupe feed on stolen fruit far away from the action and was too wary of the dominant members of the troupe to participate. Sometimes one must show up to sing.



*Figure 10.* “Papaya Hope.” Photo taken by me at the Lake St. Lucia Reserve, South Africa, June 29, 2007.

I later meditated, repeating the call for a text or image. I found myself singing myself into the meditation using *niggunim* (meditative melodies used in Chasidut). The niggun spirals your consciousness outward and another image came. I was driving in a blue hatchback car. There were two of me driving (I had the sensation that there were two drivers, and both were me). The car suddenly turned into jelly and a voice said, melt the vehicle and walk off in black pants, which we (the two of me) did.

I continued in the meditation and spontaneously began toning. The voice was free and light. Out came poignant melodies I had never heard before, Eastern European Jewish Ashkenazi sounding melodies. A thought came, “I can make these sound bigger,” so I pushed the voice and the little blue car started forming again. “Melt the vehicle” nudged the imperative, “Melt the vehicle.” When one “melts” the vehicle one has constructed in your mind one can walk off and the voice is free. Otherwise you push to “do the voice thing,” knowing that you are doing something you should not but you do it anyway (like the monkey in Figure 11 caught eating stolen fruit).



*Figure 11.* “Caught with the Fruit.” Photo taken by me at Lake St. Lucia Reserve, South Africa, June 29, 2007.

Sometimes you do not realise that you are interfering and can be quite satisfied with the result (see monkey's expression in Figure 12). Cycle 1 showed me that I was interested in exploring the inner, mystical experience of singing and how this was connected to my "daemonic imperative" and personal journey. It also presented clues to what that inner experience of singing and its process might be. Cycle 1 thus has set the context for Cycle 2. In the next section I outline the requirements of Cycle 2 as well as record pertinent parts of my process in order to create a substantiated set of preliminary lenses.





*Figure 12.* “Satisfied.” Photo taken by me at Lake St. Lucia Reserve, South Africa, June 29, 2007.

**Cycle 2: Developing the preliminary lenses.** Cycle 2 requires the researcher to lay bare personal values and assumptions about the research topic prior to collecting original data (Anderson, 2004). These personal values and assumptions are the preliminary lenses, which are developed through reengaging the research topic through a set of theoretical, research, literary, or historical texts describing the topic. Cycle 2 normally happens simultaneously to the writing of the literature review. At the end of the process, the researcher brainstorms a list of interpretative

lenses and then reengages daily with these lenses in order to draw out essential clusters and patterns.

Articulation of Cycle 2 lenses enables the reader and researcher to note changes and transformations that occur through Cycles 3, 4, and 5 of the research project. It is not intended as a means of bracketing the researcher's assumptions in order to limit subjectivity. Researchers instead invite full scrutiny of their assumptions and invite refinement and change.

Selection of Cycle 2 texts requires familiarity with the relevant literature and usually takes place within the context of a meditation (Anderson, 2006). I report on Cycle 2 and list my preliminary lenses at the beginning of the results chapter. I chose for Cycle 1 to mix into this methodology chapter findings that might also have been retained for results. I did this in order to give the reader the real flavor of how the methodology of intuitive inquiry proceeds. By contrast I report the preliminary lenses in the results chapter in order to keep this methodology chapter at a size that affords an overview.

**Cycle 3: Collecting data and preparing summary reports.** In Cycle 3, the researcher identifies the best source of data for the research topic, defines criteria for selecting and excluding participants, recruits participants, and collects textual and original data relevant to the topic (Anderson, 2006, p. 24). The researcher then prepares summary reports in as descriptive a manner as possible and summarizes and analyzes the research using conventional means, such as thematic content analysis and descriptive summaries (Anderson, 2004).

***Finding participants.*** Finding appropriate participants initially proved difficult. Except for Louise (whose name has been changed to maintain confidentiality), whom I had contacted through Hantie Prins (whose real name I use with permission), singers I spoke to were interested in the topic but their answers did not get to the core of what I wanted to understand. They were

not able to articulate at any length or depth. Perhaps this was because I myself was not so clear on what it was I wanted to understand. In fact it was only after speaking to these singers that my own clarity around the research question began to settle. Not finding people in my immediate geography led me to search for participants elsewhere. It had become clear to me after reading published accounts of peak experiences while singing that the participants I now sought were Exemplars, those with a self-knowledge that included a sense of their own holistic development and who could articulate well. This in turn led to me interview singers from South Africa, Holland, and the USA. This internationality of my sample contributes to the generalizability of my research.

Table 2

*Participant Demographics (N = 10)*

Participant	Race	Gender	Country	Profession
Herman	Caucasian	Male	Holland	Retired University Professor
Heleen	Caucasian	Female	Holland	Professional Singer and Singing Teacher
Sandra	Caucasian	Female	Holland	Professional Singer
David	Caucasian	Male	US	Practitioner Sacred Chant, Composer, Performer, and Teacher
Louise	Caucasian	Female	South Africa	Professional Singer and Singing Teacher
Louisa	Caucasian	Female	US	Professional Singer and Singing Teacher
Rebecca	Caucasian	Female	US	Professional Singer and Singing Teacher
Rachel	Caucasian	Female	US	Psychologist
Douglas	Caucasian	Male	US	Pathologist
Paul	Caucasian	Male	South Africa	General Medical Practitioner

I found my participants in the following ways:

- Douglas (real name used with permission) had previously published on the topic and I contacted him directly.
- Herman (real name used with permission) had previously published on the subject. Prof. Anderson had sent me his paper. It had no contact address. A neighbor of mine was Dutch and was returning to Holland. I asked her to look him up in the phone book. Providence had a different idea. Unbeknown to her, she and Herman had

friends in common. She found herself having dinner with him 2 days later, and sent me his email address. Herman introduced me to Heleen and Sandra (real names used with permission).

- Dr. Schavrien introduced me to Rachel (name changed to protect confidentiality). Rachel introduced me to her teacher Louisa (name changed), who in turn introduced me to Rebecca S. (real name used with permission).
- I had long admired the music of David Hykes. I wrote to the publisher of his web site. David responded immediately.

***Selection criteria.*** All participants except David Hykes were singers who had had extensive training in classical singing and who had had, and understood that they had had, peak experiences while singing. They were exemplars, with a self-knowledge that included a sense of their own holistic development and who could articulate their experience well. David Hykes was one of the first Western practitioners of Sacred Harmonic Chant.

***Participants.*** My study included 10 participants, 4 men and 6 women, between the ages of 30 and 64. Six participants were professional singers of whom 4 also taught singing—3 were associated with universities. Three participants were not professional singers, but had received extensive training, had published in the field, and included a pathologist, a psychologist, and a poet who prior to retirement was a professor of sociology. There was 1 South African, 3 from the Netherlands, 4 Americans and 1 American now residing in France. All participants had received extensive classical singing training except for David Hykes (his real name used with his permission) one of the first Western practitioners and teachers of Sacred Harmonic Chant. David waived anonymity and asked me to quote him directly. I weave his insights into the narrative

almost as commentary from a tradition of song dedicated to transformation. Interviews were recorded digitally and took place from January to March 2009.

***The interview.*** My participants knew about my topic from my invitation letter and my letter of consent. The atmosphere of the interview was informal and friendly. Participants shared my love and practice of singing, and were intrigued as to what I was doing and why I was doing it. I was a singer talking to singers. This created a common ground for dialogue which enriched the data collection. The interview generally started with my answering their questions about me and my work. Sometimes I used my photo essay (included later) as part of answering them. This engagement stimulated conversation and the interviews flowed into the informal conversational interview described by Patton (1980) and quoted in Moustakas (1990). This form of interview relies on a “spontaneous generation of questions and conversations in which the co-researcher participates in a natural unfolding dialogue with the primary investigator” (Moustakas, 1990, pp. 197-198). My intention was for insight to emerge spontaneously from the interview process. Before each interview I set my intention to be open to following the spontaneous direction of the intuitive process. Had the informal interview become uncomfortable or “stuck,” I had a set of questions as backup to move the interview along. .

In my first interview I initially misinterpreted the participant’s pause as a signal to direct the interview. I soon realized that the participant’s pause was to gather thought around expressing difficult concepts and feelings. This was a significant learning for me as a researcher. So for the most part I kept silent during the interviews, staying open, and listening to the participant, after all, I had chosen performers, teachers, and scholars to be exemplars; it turned out that they needed less help from me than I had originally imagined. I tried to only direct the conversation when it was clear that the participant was ready.

My backup questions were:

1. Have you ever had a deep or profoundly meaningful experience while singing? Or have you ever experienced a heightened or altered state of consciousness while singing? Could you describe it? Can you describe your experience of self, space, time, and Cosmos? I have specifically left out words that may be loaded from a religious point of view, but feel free to use words like G-d if you like.
2. Could you describe what happened to your awareness and your emotions during the experience? Did they change in any way?
3. Do these experiences happen often? Can you voluntarily initiate them? What contributes and what inhibits these experiences both during the experiences and between them?
4. Have these experiences or the process of learning to sing changed you? Do you feel you've grown from them and in what way? Have they changed your daily life, your relationships, and your relationship to the world / Cosmos? Is there or has there been any emotional or personal experience or inner issue that you had to overcome or "deal with" in order to sing freely or that you consistently have to work on in order to sing freely? In other words what things inside stand in the way of your singing freely? I am not necessarily referring to singing on stage.
5. Do you have a favorite song that has particular meaning for you when you sing it? Can you describe your experience singing it and why it is particularly meaningful?

**Data analysis.** I transcribed the interviews myself and stored them on a password protected hard drive. All participants signed informed consent (see Appendix A). Interview transcriptions were returned to the participants for verification, additions, and feedback with a

proviso that should I not have heard from them for a period of 3 weeks after having sent the transcript, I would assume them to be in agreement with the contents. Participants were also free to alter their thoughts. Four participants acknowledged receipt of transcript and responded. Changes made were minor. Thematic member checks were later sent out. I have reported on this in chapter 5. Original transcripts are available should a researcher wish to see them.

I organized and summarized the data using conventional thematic analysis. I organized themes from the interviews into a large spreadsheet. From it I developed descriptive summaries and portraits (Anderson, 2004; Moustakas, 1990), first working with themes in the data and then showing how these themes played out in the participants' lives by recounting their personal stories and my own as participant researcher.

***Recording my process through art and embodied writing.*** Throughout the research project I sang. I even joined a small group of retired opera singers and sang in a number of public concerts culminating in a recital hosted by the Danish Ambassador to South Africa. I also actively pursued training in music theory and painting, and continued developing my photography. I ultimately held a show in partnership with another artist Michael Smith called *Velocity* and the photographs were set to the music of David Hykes, one of the study's participants. (The show may be seen at [www.resolutiongallery.com](http://www.resolutiongallery.com)). The music and visual art came together as part of my intuitive process with insight that I report on in chapter 4 and discuss in chapter 5. I also recorded my experience in the style of embodied writing.

Embodied writing is a method of writing used to portray embodied experience. It is written from "the inside out," is "true-to-life," sensual, "richly concrete" and specific, and attuned to the living body. It seeks "to reveal the lived experience of the body by portraying in

words the finely textured experience of the body and evoking sympathetic resonance in readers” (Anderson, 2001, p. 83), and works well in recording somatosensory intuitions.

**Cycle 4: Transforming and refining lenses.** In Cycle 4, the researcher revisits the interpretive lenses of Cycle 2 and interprets the collected data in order to modify, refute, reorganize, and expand the understanding of the research topic (Anderson, 2004), and report it in the discussion in chapter 5. In this way intuitive inquiry expands the original understanding of the topic to incorporate the experiences of others and develop new lenses in preparation for integration in Cycle 5 with the literature review. This reorganization and refinement of lenses enabled me and will enable my reader to evaluate change and transformation through the research process.

Contemplative conversation is extremely useful in accessing and verbalizing relevant intuitive insights (Anderson, in press). Cycle 4 took place on two week-long “dissertation retreats” with David Lipschitz (a fellow doctoral student and cohort member) at his home in Boulders, Cape Town. Many walks along the beautiful Cape coastline both alone and in conversation with David about our respective research brought clarity to the data and helped distill developmental lenses in the research. These retreats being near to Hantie Prins, my singing teacher, also gave me the opportunity to discuss my data in depth with her. This further helped me clarify the material and test resonance validity from an expert in the field. Resonance validity relies on experienced readers recognizing an experience spoken by another to be true to their own experience (Anderson, 2004, in press).

**Cycle 5: Integration of findings and literature review—expanding the spiral.** In Cycle 5 the researcher steps back to gain a metaview of the research process to date and, in the context of the study findings and the literature review, draws meaning from and into a larger,



more encompassing hermeneutical, or interpretive circle; looking at the research findings in light of the existing literature and making new meaning from the combination. In chapter 5, I report on the process that I went through as it unfolded in the study, what was discovered, and what still remains uncertain, undiscovered, or mysterious. According to Anderson, in intuitive inquiry, once member checks and resonance validity checks have been performed, the researcher's final interpretation is decisive (Anderson, 2006, p. 33; Anderson, 2004).

### **Challenges and Characteristics of Intuitive Inquiry**

Intuitive inquiry understands the world as being in flux rather than static, with the researcher or perceiver being wholly part of the dynamic rather than separate (Anderson, 2004). This creates a number of challenges, which, according to Anderson, in fact form the characteristics of intuitive inquiry, since the "value and efficacy of an intuitive inquiry belongs to the researcher herself" (Anderson, 2004, p. 333). The researcher must therefore, according to Anderson (2004, 2006), be rigorously subjective, be truthful no matter what, avoid circularity, be open to trickstering (being led to false conclusions) and auspicious bewilderment (confusion, contradiction, and paradox auguring insight), maintain a process oriented and inclusive perspective, write in his or her own voice, favor the particular and personal, imagine what is possible, and risk personal change and transformation.

I "grew up" in the rigorously empirical world of a medical school. These aspects of intuitive inquiry constituted a significant challenge to an ingrown epistemological bias. They also, however, provided an opportunity to integrate and expand my palette of scientific method and personal consciousness. I have also begun to review my own empirical bias which premises a subject/object world, and am grappling with the implications of Ferrer's Participatory Turn (Ferrer, 2002) in regard to my dissertation process and its results.

## **Validity in Intuitive Inquiry**

Intuitive inquiry relies on internal subjective interpretation of internal and external data. As mentioned above, rigor, honesty, avoiding circularity, and writing in your own voice are imperative to the integrity of the study. Integral to the validity of the study is accuracy and honesty in recording, analyzing, and reporting interview data. Verification of data was enhanced by member checks, which I discussed above, for “only the experiencing persons——by looking at their own experiences can validly portray the experience” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26). My report also contains high levels of detail so as to allow readers to judge for themselves the internal validity of my study, that is, whether the procedures and data support the conclusions (Anderson, 2004).

Anderson (2004) has proposed two further criteria of validity applicable to intuitive inquiry: Resonance validity and efficacy validity. For my study to have resonance validity, it means that my findings should produce sympathetic resonance in its readers, that they may, according to Anderson (2004), recognize “an experience spoken by another to be true” for themselves (p. 332). Generalizability and transferability can be evaluated using the principle of sympathetic resonance. I presented my findings to Hantie Prins, my singing teacher, who is a teacher of substantial reputation and over 40 years’ experience, having trained many nationally and internationally acclaimed singers. Hantie felt that the data were true to her experience as a singer and teacher of singing. This was a welcome affirmation of resonance validity. I further presented a draft results chapter to my participants which I discuss in chapter 5.

Efficacy validity refers to the capacity of a study and its report as a whole to give more value to one’s own life. It refers also to whether the researcher and the readers of the research

were somehow changed through the study and its findings. Efficacy validity depends on the following criteria (Anderson, 2004, p. 333-334):

1. The study must have transformed the researcher during the course of the study and the researcher must have learned compassion and gained a depth of understanding about the topic. (I discuss my process in Chapter 5 and invite the reader to judge for themselves whether my study meets this criteria.)
2. The study must have transformed the reader through having read it, and the reader must have gained in compassion and developed some depth of understanding of themselves and the topic.
3. The study should provide a new vision of the topic and a way of going forward.
4. Readers become inspired by the findings and vision of the study and feel they know the researcher personally through the authenticity and clarity of the report.
5. Readers are moved to compassionate action and service.

### **Assumptions**

For the purpose of my study, I have assumed that the “Great Natural Way” of singing, at least in part, equates with the classical European singing pedagogic, and my participants (with the exception of David Hykes) were selected because of their classical Western singing training. It would be conceit to hold only Western voice training traditions valid. The question remains open as to whether other forms of singing, trained or untrained, Western or otherwise, produce similar psycho-spiritual and developmental effects as I have reported. I have assumed however, that the enormous discipline, focus, effort, and expertise of a cultivated artist would produce different and possibly more consistent (psychological) results than the random experience of an unpracticed and untrained singer.

### **Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations**

The study took place in accordance with the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association. The research proposal was submitted to, and approved by, the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology’s Ethics Committee. Informed consent was obtained from

all participants prior to the interviews, and participants' anonymity and confidentiality were appropriately protected.

## Chapter 4: Results

### Poetics

I look for the way  
things will turn  
out spiraling from a center,  
the shape  
things will take to come forth in

so that the birch tree white  
touched black at branches  
will stand out  
wind-glittering  
totally its apparent self:

I look for the forms  
things want to come as

from what black wells of possibility,  
how a thing will  
unfold:

not the shape on paper—though  
that, too—but the  
uninterfering means on paper:

not so much looking for the shape  
as being available  
to any shape that may be  
summoning itself  
through me  
from the self not mine but ours. (Ammons, 1972, p. 199)

My research has coalesced into a study of human development as may happen in singers, an emergent narrative of a Hero's Journey, and what could equally be called the Singer's Journey, the wondrous story of involuted or constricted consciousness singing his or her way Home. The Singer's Journey is a wonderful tale. It is an adventure of becoming, seeded with longing, filled by sacred encounter, eased by friends, teachers, and angels, and sometimes directed by demons. It is another line in the human story, a participatory multilocal happening

(Ferrer, 2002), and in this, as well as in a very practical sense, we are all singers. Yet, there are people, myself included, in whom singing and learning to sing is so meaningful and so deeply intrinsic. These people are singers in a specific sense and it is their stories and their specific experiences that I wish to honor.

There are 5 Cycles to intuitive inquiry. The first Cycle engages intuition in clarifying the research topic. In the second, the researcher forms and lists preliminary lenses—preliminary understanding of the research topic. In Cycles 3, 4 and 5 the researcher collects and analyzes data (Cycle 3), reformulates lenses (Cycle 4), and integrates the findings into the greater circle of knowledge and meaning around the research topic (Cycle 5). As the reader may notice, the spiraling nature of Cycles 1 through 5 of intuitive inquiry does not neatly fit the normal research report format of introduction, literature review, methods, results, and discussion. The Cycles need to be slotted into the standard format as best as can be done without losing narrative flow and meaning. It is not always easy. I have chosen to start my results chapter with a short report of my Cycle 2 process: forming and listing preliminary lenses. Cycle 2 is also often placed at the end of the literature review.

The results chapter then starts in earnest. I introduce my participants and report themes and leitmotifs that weave through their interviews. These themes and leitmotifs are then contextualized through relating 3 participants' narratives and my own. The end of chapter 4 closes Cycle 3 (data collection and analysis), and opens the space for Cycle 4 (reformulating lenses) and 5 (integrating with existing knowledge) in chapter 5. Let me show you how I formed Cycle 2's preliminary lenses.

## Cycle 2: Forming the Preliminary Lenses

I meditated and called for guidance in selecting a Cycle 2 text. There was great clarity in the specificity and detail of the image presented to me. I could sense the texture of the book and saw even the greyed “dog ears” of its soft cover. I could even see where it was on my bookshelf. It was a book called the *Original Art of Music* by Dorothy Ling (1989). There were words too that gently echoed in my awareness: “whether the harp had been Piewoh or Piewoh were the Harp.” These words are the punch-line of the Taoist tale “The Taming of the Harp,” quoted by Ling (1989, pp. 126-127) from Okakura KaKuzo’s *The Book of Tea*.

Once upon a time in the hoary ages, in the ravine of Lungmen stood a Kiri tree, a veritable king of the forest. It raised its head to converse with the stars; its deep roots penetrated deep into the earth, mingling their bronzed coils with those of the silver dragon that slept beneath. And it came to pass that a mighty wizard made of this tree a wondrous harp, whose stubborn spirit could only be tamed by the greatest of musicians.

For a long time the instrument was treasured by the emperor of China, but all in vain were the efforts of those that tried to draw a melody from its strings. The harp refused to recognize a master.

Finally came Piewoh, the prince of harpists. With tender hand he caressed the harp, as one might seek to soothe an unruly horse, and softly touched the chords. He sang and all the memories of the tree awoke. In ecstasy the Celestial monarch asked Piewoh wherein lay the secret of his victory.

“Sire,” he replied, “others have failed because they sang but of themselves. I left the harp to choose its theme, and knew not truly whether the harp had been Piewoh or Piewoh were the harp.” (KaKuzo, 2007, pp. 67-69)

Cycle 2 texts began thematically coalescing with those of Cycle 1. Both were describing a process of “getting out of the way” and surrendering to the process. This is also a constant theme in my singing lessons.

I “dialogued” daily with the *Original Art of Music* from October 24, 2007 to January 27, 2008. Often in my mind I would invite Professor Ling (the author) to sit at the table with me as I

worked. I have continued dialoging with the text, although less intensively, throughout the rest of the process of my literature review, and I came up with a set of preliminary lenses.

- A person's inner state is mirrored in the voice by the way they use the vocal tract.

- Psychological wounds or dissociative splitting inhibit our freedom to sing.

Conversely singing may heal and integrate these wounds.

- Music creates an inner beat, an inner organizing movement. We sing when we listen to the inner beat and resonate with it.

- The deeper and more attentively we are able to listen the deeper we are able to tap into the flow of life. The voice is an anatomical / physiological instrument that enables us to express that which we are tapping into.

- Proper vocal tract coordination requires we tap into this inner space but may also take us to this inner space. It is a "chicken or egg" situation.

- In this inner space, thought and awareness, and self are related "entities" in a different way from discursive thought, awareness, and little self. In my experience discursive thought and little self interrupt both the ontological experience as well as the vocal tract coordination required to sing.

- Singing may lead to growth in all three aspects of the integral triad of essential, inseparable, and interrelated aspects of being human: uniqueness or individuality, universality or relatedness, and the transcendent, and may lead to transformation and our unique unfolding.

A full list of preliminary lenses appears in Appendix C.



## Cycle 4: Reporting Results—Themes, Leitmotifs, and Narratives

**Overview of participants.** As mentioned in chapter 3's methodology, my study included, in addition to myself, 9 participants, 3 men and 6 women, between the ages of 30 and 64. Six participants were professional singers of whom 4 also taught singing—3 were associated with universities. Three participants were not professional singers, but had received extensive training, and had published in the field. The 3 nonprofessional singers included a pathologist, a psychologist, and a poet who, prior to retirement, was a professor of sociology. There was 1 South African, 3 from the Netherlands, 4 Americans, and 1 American now residing in France. All participants had received extensive classical singing training except for David Hykes (his real name) one of the first Western practitioners and teachers of Sacred Harmonic Chant. David waived anonymity and asked me to quote him directly. I weave his insights into the narrative almost as commentary from a tradition of song dedicated to transformation. Interviews took place from January to March 2009.

In this chapter I first quote from participants to establish themes. In a second section of this chapter, I draw portraits of participants in which earlier quoted remarks find an organic context as part of personal life stories.

The following names are pseudonyms: Louise, Louisa Oakley, and Rachel. When I asked other participants for a preferred pseudonym, they all responded to keep their real names. I have used only their first names.

**The natural voice, authenticity, and the body.** A journal entry shows my questions.

*Journal, 23 June, 2008:* I wonder what holds us back so we can't sing or don't want to. Why do we need to be at our source, our core before it comes out, so beautiful and so spontaneous? Why is it we first have to sing to get to our core, but we can only sing if it's from the core?

There is a core to the natural voice which is deeply individual. Finding this natural core, this natural voice is a journey of authenticity inwards and singing from the core in this way, grounds me in the present moment. Participants described the individuality and core of the voice. (Many participants were speaking English as a second language. I have removed from the transcripts all “ums” and “aahs” and other awkward phrases that creep into conversation. I have retained them when the pause is particularly telling.)

*Rebecca S:* I have students come in, and the main goal I have for them is for us to work towards their voice to be as close to their natural instrument, their natural fingerprint. You know the true expression of their instrument as possible. And chipping away all the other layers, getting to that authentic voice.

*Heleen:* What I try to do, when I teach people, is to bring them in themselves and in their own voices. And when that happens it's always moving, it's always beautiful. It's always real; it's always in the moment.

The condition for singing on the core of the natural voice is established through hard work, and can be destroyed by willpower. When this happens the voice is no longer natural.

Herman discusses one such incident:

*Herman:* I wanted to give a good performance and it didn't happen. (Laughs) You want, then your willpower is too much on the front, forefront and I know in the meantime, by my lessons with Heleen, that when there is too much will, there is an effect on the whole body. So the right vibration doesn't come about. It doesn't happen, because I'm pushing. I was pushing.

Hantie tells me not to listen to myself, rather to “imagine you are resonating with the echo of the Big Bang, because you in fact are” (Journal, 23 June 2008). Speaking as a participant in the study, I find that when I listen to myself, I judge myself. When I judge the voice, I want it to be something it is not. When I want it to be something it is not, I try to get it to be the way I want it, so I push it. The Kotske Rebbe said, “Everything in this world can be imitated except truth. For when you imitate it, it is no longer truth” (Buber, 1991, p. 284). Similarly when the

voice is pushed it becomes contrived, something it is not. Better then to sing with the echo of the Big Bang. One does that in the body.

*Sandra:* Presence . . . Presence in your body, but, and in the meantime you're lifted up and you're stronger in your body. It's very curious.

*Rebecca S:* The number one thing is that I really encourage them not to listen to the voices that they sing, but to focus almost exclusively on the on the sensations of the voice, the body. It becomes a very overtly physical process.

Douglas described an experience of his body that occurred with his teacher.

*Douglas:* One day you know I was getting, just singing "awa," on at least two or three or four pitches. I was getting more and more inward and inner . . . All the time you're feeling your instrument activated in different ways. And finally her idea is that everything that resonates is resonating and she has extended this to include every mucous membrane and the air passages in the sinuses and all the way up to the eustachian tubes, the eardrums, everything resonates . . . and there's more of a brilliance coming off these bones, you know. And so the idea is also that bones resonate themselves and so the idea is to engage all that, but by natural instinctive reflex processes. But it also has this effect of accessing deeper and deeper levels of yourself in an inward way.

Louisa describes the early stages of learning to sing and the wonderful feeling of connecting with the breathing mechanism.

*Louisa:* In bad singing we're using our muscles, we're getting in the way, and there's usually this moment when people connect to their breath support. And it's very exciting and wonderful, and it's like learning to fly, then they fall down and they have to remember now how did I do that, and it's not like violin that you can say, OK, now do this with your finger . . .

Louise summed up succinctly what happens as a highly trained singer:

*Louise:* You need to have the correct technique . . . you can't do it without that, but sometimes you have to, at some point you have to let go, and let the body speak, let the being speak actually.

When a singer is sufficiently embodied, has trained diligently and is able to let go, one may infer from these many remarks that something marvelous happens. The voice takes over. It simply knows what to do without any help from the singer.

*Rachel:* . . . my voice seems to have its own consciousness and is just going to all the right notes and landing on all the right steps and little edges and levels and flows . . . I'm . . . like the witness to a vocal consciousness.

There is another theme from participants' remarks. It appears that mystical experiences beyond a flow state may happen.

**Happenings / peak experiences.** Illustrations of these follow.

*Journal entry 24 November 2009:* I'm catching sparks from the Divine Electric and it's setting the room alight!

Participants, including me, described multiple different nonordinary or peak happenings. Almost all of them involve the voice taking on a consciousness of its own after intense work and training. Many contain images of expanded awareness, light, exhilaration, freedom, ecstasy, and oneness. Many contain a simultaneous immanent and transcendent quality. Some report becoming a vessel or vehicle for a higher power. For the sake of avoiding repetition, I include only two descriptions of nonordinary experience in this section. Many more are contained and explored in the biographical narratives that follow.

Louise describes an overwhelming expansion of consciousness, freedom and ecstasy and how, when performing, that may involve her audience.

*Louise:* It's a feeling, it's a feeling of . . . ecstasy. Absolutely huge, free, with no boundaries . . . . It comes from so deep, that emotion, and if the voice works optimally at that point, then, you know it's like a snowball, you can't, once it starts, or an avalanche, once it starts, you can't stop it. So once that emotion starts coming if something doesn't happen to cut that thread, like suddenly, you forget the words, or you trip over the costume or whatever. It's like sex, once it starts happening, there's a point where it can't be stopped; except if your mother-in-law comes into the room.

If this happens, you usually, the audience, something happens with the audience as well. It's, there's that . . . there is an atmosphere of suspension almost. And I think the audience also don't realize what is happening, but there is that (deep inhalation) almost holding of the breath type of atmosphere in the theatre.

And often at the end of it when it stops, you often have that moment of silence, where, you know what I have actually, now that I think of it. It's happened a few times,

that I think, gosh, I wonder if the audience didn't like something or whatever, because they were so quiet, and you know, you almost feel, that they were unresponsive.

But I've talked to many people afterwards, and these were different performances, and they often said to me, but, you know, you don't actually want to break that magic feeling by applauding.

Douglas provides a very rich description of an experience at the Luxemburg Institute.

*Douglas:* I had found that kind of freedom, and then all of a sudden the sound just got better and better and more focused and more there. And everything was vibrating and this is where you lose words for the experience.

I have never quite found the right words because I don't think they exist, you know. Because these are not ordinary experiences and we don't have a good language for them, but everything kind of became one, the unity conscious thing maybe, and exterior-interior were no longer a differential to be made really.

Everything was the same, subject and object. I was making the sound, but somehow the sound was coming from me and was its own thing and I was the sound. It was all in this mix of being basically.

And it got just more luminous in a sense and it was wonderful! It was a wonderful feeling and it didn't destroy itself. It was not like a manic high. I was very calm but very ecstatic, expansive, a luminous, and a state of being that seemed to totally justify itself.

It was sort of like . . . you know we talk about unconditional love, kind of a rare thing that sometimes people experience and this was kind of a feeling of unconditional being. We are ordinarily conditioned by everything. We are in bodies that condition us somehow our self-image and our experience of ourselves and so I think we tend to always think our existence is very or maybe totally conditioned and dependent upon the conditions. And this was a feeling of being that was just itself. And it needed no justification, no defensive posturing. I just was.

But I wasn't alone. It was not an isolated . . . I was not isolated you know. I was definitely in a very empathic relationship with her (his teacher) during this process.

It wasn't like narcissistic and, "Oh isn't this great, I'm having this experience." It was not about a "me" thing and yet I felt more myself than I ever have and it made me extremely happy. I was very happy. I didn't know it's possible to feel that way. And I also had the feeling that to have this 30 minutes of feeling this way was worth everything I had gone through in my life if it indeed had set me up for this. Every misery, every problem you know, every challenge and every sorrow was sort of just, given its reason by this experience.

I asked my participants if these experiences had changed them in any way. For the most part, they did not want to make too much of these experiences. When gently pushed, they described their effects as subtle and grounding.

*Louise:* I think my whole career has made me even more down to earth because the more I am in the bright lights and in costumes, and in whatever, the more I want . . . I need to be able to stay at home and have my house and have stability in my life and have my garden and stuff like that. But on the other hand, I think, having these things also enhances my work, because it becomes more and more honest.

*Douglas:* It was subtle. This is not like, an instant conversion kind of experience, and it's kind of the same way with this. It did integrate into my being and gave me a sense of greater dimensionality about the self, the individual self. That it's not just . . . I remember this whenever the world gets to me and I feel constricted and pressured and stressed, and I realize that's not the natural state of myself.

Louisa Oakley described these as moments of affirmation and nourishment that kept her going in the very difficult financial circumstance of singing professionally. Heleen amplified this point, and I explore it in detail later in the biography section, by saying these experiences “opened me for me.”

David was uncomfortable with the direction of the discussion. In an email (6 February, 2009) he warned of the potential for egoic appropriation and identification with the contents of awareness:

*David:* A frequent modern Western misunderstanding is in how easily we become identified with these moments or glimpses and how easily they become just a louder version of “I this, I that . . .”

The antidote from the authentic traditions is in the area of the deeper practices which honor silence and listening/awareness as equally essential “notes” in the chord of Being besides just sound or vibration; that being identified with the sound stream without a firm grounding in the equally essential other practices which alone make this path a truly balanced and helpful one, can actually increase egotism and delusion.

The aim of the work is to hear the truth, to hear the truth of oneself. That includes learning to listen to the entire scale of being, of vibratory manifestation— thought, feeling, and sensation, our basic human triad.

That includes hearing the particularities of my “deafness,” for example the more

subtle, silent patterns of thought, perception, judgment, which can cloud potentially pure experience—especially that of the primordial, uncreated sound of reality—with various distorted or falsely spiritualized interpretations.

So the center of the practice needs to be on the idea of “work on listening,” and the transformational attunement to the truth is the main result.

In the interview David reiterated this position by saying, “So I think the most important thing just to sum up, is that the whole center of gravity should be on awareness and not on what comes up in awareness.” I invite my reader to explore the relationship of voice to peak happenings and the effect on self, identity, and life trajectories in the biographies following later.

**Blocks and devils.** Rebecca S. describes chipping away at layers to get to the authentic voice; Heleen describes being forced to “look under the carpet.” They refer to becoming aware of longstanding inner or shadow dynamics that stand in the way of their inner freedom, growth, and consequently ability to sing freely. In the process of learning to sing, they reported integrating these aspects of themselves which, over time, profoundly affected their lives.

*Herman:* It’s a search of the deeper layers which are personal and nonpersonal at the same time. That mysterious soil of existence. You find blockades, personal blockades that prevent you from digging. Then you first have to work it away.

*Heleen:* In singing, that’s why I like to teach, to reveal the things, the way people . . . aspects of themselves that they don’t know yet.

When I look at someone or I listen to them I try to feel for even that moment where is the greatest thing that obstructs the openness or the wholeness.

*Rebecca S:* I just feel that I can’t keep; I can’t keep the vocal process separate from my spiritual process. It doesn’t work. It always gets right in there. So whatever is happening for me or my students shows up in the voice.

*Douglas:* It’s so clear to me that the act of singing and especially learning to sing, is so central, it’s central on the psyche. I see; I watch from the outside and I watch singers’ blocks come up and they’re obviously so related to inner issues and over times early traumas that there is a big problem with giving expression to things, but they don’t go there cognitively. It’s about technique overriding that block and so forth.

*Louise:* You have to manage the instrument, but you are the instrument.

**The guilty schoolboy.** Herman describes recognizing blocks or devils during a singing lesson. He calls them “shields” that affect his body attitude and posture. He talks of how through the gentle skill of his teacher he is able to feel them, recognize and observe them, disidentify from them, and heal.

*Herman:* There are moments when I suddenly realize, “Oh there is that old nasty point again.” (Chuckles)

It’s not nice! But sometimes I’m very moved, really, that I suddenly see it in a full light. And I know at that moment that I’m also already overcoming it. Partly. It will come back, but these are those moments where you feel you are going through a gate. There is this. But now I see it and I know “This is not me.” It’s a shield I’m holding before me. And it’s not necessary. And these are really discoveries. We’ve had plenty of moments of that. And that is to me the enriching thing of the singing lessons. Well singing as a lesson.

Herman recognizes that these shields or defensive postures are based on neurosis which he calls *duiweltjes* or devils which Heleen is able to skillfully guide him through.

*Herman:* That’s your talent (addressing Heleen). That you can put your finger, very softly on it, and if you would do it too hard, putting your finger on it, it would, give fear maybe. Or I would feel guilty, or to put it in my own terms, I always have something of a young pupil at school in me. And that sometimes is being touched upon. And I know it in the meantime, so well, it’s getting and coming easier and easier to deal with it. But it’s one of those *duiweltjes*—devils in your life. It’s one of those devils. And they can put you in . . . in an attitude and a posture also that you don’t want to be in. But you’re fixed in it suddenly. You’re trapped, and my development is that I’m well, less and less trapped. I see it as an observer. I can see it happen.

Herman described his main devil: a guilty, unworthy schoolboy who is always doing wrong.

*Herman:* Being the young pupil who is doing things wrong and who is very, feeling very guilty and is feeling very, very unworthy. That’s my, that’s my devil. And in the singing lessons, but not only, I sometimes meet him, and the nice thing about your way of teaching is that you well, you don’t point to it, but it comes about that I feel it. And then it’s easier to deal with it.

It appears that correcting the posture and the singing technique is part of the process of working through the neurosis.

*Herman:* Maybe you (Heleen) ask, “Did you think of dropping your jaw?” or you just show it to me, how you would do it, and what I do is imitate, I imitate. I see you, and



immediately my body is doing it also. For me that's a very intriguing thing about how you learn things. You learn things often by imitating. By, and then, by feeling the same background feeling that you probably have.

*Heleen:* I try to lead you to something new. Something you haven't experienced yet.

**Simultaneous sound, silence, and listening.** In sacred chant, David describes a simultaneity in the relationship of sound, silence, and listening: three independent yet simultaneous "activities" or vibrations of which the practitioner is aware. This awareness leads to less identification and more freedom.

*David:* When I'm identified with the sound as an object, then I'm neither silent nor listening. I'm basically just you know, kind of wrapped up in that.

When there's less identification, less glue between the sound and the listening, and less glue between the sound and the listening and the silence, then there's much more space in the whole experience; and much more possibility for freedom from identification. And less identification is freedom.

It appears this is a template for working with blocks and identifications that come up while singing. One makes sound, listens, but does not judge, rather remaining silent and aware.

*David:* If I'm judgmental I'll probably make it worse, you know. So in other words, I can't be deaf to it. That doesn't work, I need to hear it. But then not identify with it either. So it's a very subtle adjustment to, you know, to make it actually feel like it's got the right relationship with what's going on. You don't want to indulge in it. You shouldn't either indulge in the demonic vibration or deny it, just be aware of it. Then if I can let be with the awareness, it will dissolve, because it's not a natural manifestation. It's an aberration.

**Vulnerability and the need to be heard.** Singers described feeling extremely vulnerable and exposed while singing. They also described a need to be so and also to be so safely. To sing, be vulnerable, and accepted creates a safe space for the singer who has a need to be heard. To sing, be vulnerable, and rejected is devastating. Some singers report a profound sense of shame regarding rejection or the potential for it.

*Rebecca S:* I find singing to be incredibly emotional and as a teacher very much so. It's like a therapy session. People cry all the time in voice lessons, because it's so vulnerable. How vulnerable is it to stand in a space and sing? That is so scary.

*Herman:* And also there were moments when I felt, "I'd like to sing a bit in it." And then at this occasion when I was on stage, afterwards, he said that. OK, and there was something that I had had from youth on that I cannot sing so I dare not sing, and I should not sing. And whenever also in my home with my parents, I was really shy to let them hear my voice, my singing. Although I liked to sing, but if I felt / sensed that someone in an area of 2 km could hear me . . . silent, silence . . .

That's one of my wounded points. That is, that I'm visible for others but they do not value it. Something like that. What they see of me is not, they deny it or they reject it. What is visible of me is being rejected. I think that's what, that's the touchy point.

And it is like using my voice in singing that I'm, I feel fragile. You're so nude. It's a pure skin that is in the open air. And it feels like they can hurt. I think that's the fear. They can hurt me because I'm so, naked.

*Heleen:* I think that it's for me very difficult. It's very difficult for me to feel that there's place for me to sing. I have to have permission of someone. And when I don't get it I'm very nervous, I'm very . . . I look at everyone and see everything, every person who has like that or that's in my mind. I know it's in my mind, I know it's not real, not as real as I think it is anyway. But I haven't overcome it yet.

I'm still afraid what people think of me, what they think and what they feel about me and they may find I'm ridiculous or idiot or stupid, funny, unreal. (Pause)

I always have to look to make a step in myself before I'm able to sing. I have to go stand there and open my mouth and do it . . .

*Heleen:* Even with you (addressing Herman) at my birthday last year. I've never told you, but the reason I sang there. One of the main reasons, the main reason was to let you hear me.

*Rebecca S:* We've all had criticism of our voices . . . And they're the most horrible experiences that you carry for years and years and years . . . partners that I've had that didn't understand the kind of musical tradition that I came from . . . wanting so much for a romantic partner to hear me sing.

Sandra and Louise, both very experienced professional singers, reported being able to switch off the fear of being vulnerable.

*Louise:* When I have to go on stage, there's a little button that I can press, and you go into performance mode.

*Sandra:* And when I started to get nervous about it then I start to get a very nervous person, so I grabbed it by its neck and . . . cut off its head and put it back, because I choose not to be.

**Making home—opening space to be vulnerable.** We spoke of singing creating a yearning in the heart. Herman described this yearning as a longing for home. A place where he feels safe, accepted, and loved. Sandra described the reciprocal connection between longing for home and longing to sing.

*Herman:* Singing has something, something I love. It has to do with being in music, and music is like, like a warm bath, and when you sing, you're in it. You're in that warm bath, so it's really a longing for being, or jumping into something that is good altogether.

It has to do with a longing for, a longing for home. But home that is much larger and purer and fuller than all the homes we can have in the world.

Ja, homesickness, but I think it's homesickness for the big home. Last night you were leafing through the collection of poetry, Afrikaans poetry, and you found a song and you started Sarie Marais, and you started singing it and I recognized the melody and I had learnt that in primary school when I was 8 years old or something. And I suddenly felt wow, like at home. Being at home. And we were singing the two of us and it felt great.

This singing together felt being at home, and being safe, and where everything is good and where all the pains of this world are not present. And maybe singing has to do with that. And when you hear someone sing in an authentic way, you also feel...

*Sandra:* . . . the longing . . .

*Herman:* . . . the longing, you feel at home, or the longing for home.

*Sandra:* And the longing to sing.

*Herman:* And to sing and to be in that same space. That space feels like home.

*Sandra:* Ja. Maybe.

A side note from my life as the researcher: I was singing the Largo of Dvorjak's New World Symphony "Going Home" approximately 3 months before my Dad died, he was not sick, but was tortured by arthritis.

*Journal entry 12 June 2008:* Instead of thinking about what the words meant, my mind drifts to images of Mom and Dad. He sits smiling, without pain. I even see those who have passed on: Uncle Tolly, Auntie Naomi and others; sitting with those who are still living. All my “folks gathered there.” They’re the music of home. They’re what home is; and what home may never be again.

Herman extended the idea of home and described how his singing and performing is an act of hospitality and community; how it is about opening up his personal space for people to feel at home with him. When that happens, he feels he becomes a channel for something more than him. He is able to engage with the innerness (and perhaps vulnerability) of the people around him and help to inspire them.

*Herman:* Something happens and that is I feel the attention comes to me and step into it. I step into a sort of position or place where I feel now my personal space opens up to invite everyone. It’s like you’re welcome to come into my house. And it’s good there. And then I feel also how can, like I’m doing it, I’m doing it in a very personal way and yet at the same time something comes through me.

. . . performing is also a sort of a conversation I like to have with people and with their inner freedom and with their inner power. And to help the fire in them burn.

*Sandra:* I hope that with the singing that there becomes a sort of silence or inspirement of people. Or power. For me singing is also to have power.

**Singing in relationship.** Singing is not necessarily something you do to another. Yes, one may sing to another, or perform for another, but singing, even on stage, is something that happens between people and is a behavior in which people participate. Several participants came up with descriptions that suggested this. In my discussion, I explore correlations with developmental theory and Ferrer’s transpersonal ontology.

In a discussion between Herman and Sandra, Herman describes Sandra singing in a theatre foyer with her band. They were the entertainment during intermission drinks, a pause number in between a large performance.

*Herman:* You started to sing with the group and play, and people were coming between out of the theatre. And they stood still and then gradually you could see that the attention

was taking them. And then more and more people were coming. No one was going to the bar.

*Sandra:* No.

*Herman:* And they were so focused really. Also you say you're being lifted up. They were being lifted up also. Because, I just saw happiness in those faces. They were silent. They were so silent. They were shaking with the rhythm, so they were being taken into that atmosphere that you were giving.

*Sandra:* Ja absolutely. . . . And now I have to . . . to receive it back is for me a little bit a problem. You give to the audience, and then to receive it back, for me it's difficult. But now I know, now it's better because I give it back (to the atmosphere).

*Herman:* There . . .

*Sandra:* So it comes from there (motions above), and they are applauding and I didn't know what to do. Oh . . . Now I do this (motions from imaginary audience in front of her, giving it back upwards.) And I feel . . . er . . . (that it's being) received again, there.

This "singing in relationship happening" also takes place between singer, place, and space. It is a participatory multilocal happening (Ferrer, 2002) which I introduced in the literature review and discuss further in chapter 5. The acoustic quality of a space is critical.

**Place, space, and friendly acoustics.** Place and space is important in singing, and affects what happens. Many peak experiences happen during recitals in churches. Here Louisa makes the point of the importance of interacting with acoustically friendly places.

*Louisa:* I find that space, the performance space is really important to me, which when I see this with the different elements, you know, once you bring the trees in you know the wood, and the windows and the light and all of that, is very much a part of what I enjoy sometimes about singing. This interacting with the space. And it does seem that some spaces are more friendly than others, more welcoming, and more supportive.

*Journal entry 17 January 2007:* I will sing with anything or anyone who will sing with me. During an obstetrics rotation while running tests on newly delivered mothers, I find myself singing major and minor arpeggios with the laboratory centrifuges. Sometimes when the call is late, I hum with the fridge in the blood bank.

Who can resist the joy of a resonant stairwell? They'll sing with you if you patiently probe them. You can tell a lot about the building by its resonance. Caves are my favorite, and I love the infinitely resonating bowels of man-sized storm-water drains.

**The journeys of four singers.** I now invite you, my reader, to explore the unfolding of singing in relationship: self / body—other—immanent—transcendent—place—space manifesting in the singer’s life paths.

These are the songs of Heleen, Rachel, Sandra, and me. I chose to use these four songs because I was able to construct comprehensive narratives from the interview data. Note the vulnerability of the nascent singer; and the importance of being recognized as singer and so named in love. Note too the hopes, dreams, loves, blocks, and disappointments; and the surprised shift in identity when the voice takes over; how the themes and leitmotifs described earlier come together over time to make the Singer’s Journey. Later, in my discussion chapter I propose that the Singer’s Journey is a multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening and once again explore it using Ferrer’s transpersonal theory (Ferrer, 2002) as well as the transpersonal developmental theory discussed in my literature review.

***Heleen.*** Heleen is a singing teacher, conductress, and soloist who lives and works in Holland. Heleen and 2 other participants from Holland very graciously accepted to be interviewed. This grace was amplified by the fact that the interviews were conducted in English and not their native Dutch. Heleen’s interview was actually a three-way conversation between Heleen, myself, and Herman, her singing student and friend. The conversation took place around Herman’s dining room table, and not in the usual “neutral meeting place.” Herman had arranged the interviews and I was grateful to go along with his arrangements. The comfortable warmth of his home facilitated a safe and informal sharing of experience.

Singing is Heleen’s life’s work, and the quest for authenticity lies behind it. She is currently studying a 3-year course in reading and healing human energy systems. Developing

and using her intuition has become something important for her further self-development as well as development in singing. I will use this as a point of entry into her story and her life as a singer.

Heleen describes learning about and living with her intuition as “a way of being,” (Line 43), and in a way something she has had to come to terms with in herself, something difficult about herself that has caused her suffering, and something inside her that she is forced to confront and accept when she sings. Singing for Heleen requires great personal courage and vulnerability, as she explains about her intuition and how it comes together with her singing.

*Heleen:* Yes, it's a way of being, or a quality that has not always been so handy in my life. It makes things difficult. Other people think you're a little funny, or they don't understand you, or, it's a bit painful, so it has been an area that I “whew” (motions hand sideways), let's not talk about it, or let's not do something with it. And you can't keep . . . you can't keep . . . going on like that. Not when you're trying to learn to sing because (deep sigh) everything you put in the way of it. So I for example . . . I don't like that of myself . . . I don't like that of myself . . . I don't want to talk about that . . .

You walk across it when you try to sing. You can't, I think you can't, you can't be a singer on the one hand and someone who puts everything under the carpet on the other hand. So to be a singer, in my case, it means that I have to be prepared and to (sigh) to lift the carpet up and look for everything that is under there and ja . . .

That's my way as a singer. And I knew that from the early start. That's also why I started with singing seriously. I had been busy with singing as a conductress, as I told you in the kitchen, and at some point I didn't want to be a person who tells other people you have to do it like this, and you have to feel that . . . and you have to do such and so. I wanted to do it myself and I knew I couldn't. I was at that point in my life not a person who was able to do it.

*Paul:* Not able to sing?

*Heleen:* No.

*Paul:* OK.

*Heleen:* I wanted it. I liked it. I knew I had some voice let's say. Other people had said it also. And the voice, yes I knew, but I wasn't a person who could use it, who could be a singer . . . . So I had to be prepared to . . . to . . . to see myself in that process learning how to sing. Do you understand?

One sees the young singer's song bubbling through her memories of her early childhood.

*Heleen:* Um . . . I always liked singing. As a child, already, and my mother told me someday that I was teaching the little children in the street the songs I learnt at kindergarden.

So when I came home and I had learnt a new song, I had to teach it to the other kids in the street. So singing always was something that belonged to me. Not that . . . in a private way with children . . . Not in a greater world or something. I was very shy as a girl.

But I knew that, I couldn't see myself as a singer. Perhaps there's always that little bit that knows you can. But there was a lot that was not ready for that. I was a scientist also at the time.

So I couldn't see myself as a singer. And it took someone that really loved me, who pointed me that, who said to me, "You are a singer. You are a singer!" So and then I believed . . . And that relationship didn't . . . ended very uh, whew. And the only thing I could do was take that one thing that he had said and really touched me. Take that seriously, and start to be serious about my own singing.

It is not by accident that the words courage and encouragement are related. It takes great courage to accept a life's calling and often takes another to recognize a greatness, and to name it in love.

I asked Heleen about any transcendent or spiritual experiences she may have had. These experiences happened early in her career.

*Heleen:* The first occasion was when I have first, my first recital. It was in a very large church and there was very good acoustics. And I had to sing there. We had prepared it. I had done my best at it. I wasn't a very good singer, but I did my best. And at the moment when the first moment came when I had to open my mouth and had to start to sing. It was as if something came over me. As if my body and everything knew what I had to do. Not with my brain, it was faster than that. And I opened my mouth and there came a sound that I was self . . . er . . . My God what is this?!? It was much bigger and much larger and much more dramatic than I had ever sung 'til then. And at the same moment came the fear. I've started this way how am I going to go on? Because I had never sung like that. So, it was not a great part that I had to sing. So I could go on with it, so I sung the whole concert like that. A few little pieces. After that, my father, I still see him coming, walking through the aisle to me. And he was quite pale, and he looked at me as if he had never seen me before. And that was very . . . ja. I think at that moment deep in myself I realized I am a singer. And it took me over by surprise. I wasn't expecting it. I wasn't doing anything for it.



Two other experiences, in Heleen's words, "opened me for me," and helped her take ownership and embody her calling. These experiences also demonstrate important themes of reciprocity, relationship and, perhaps prophecy, that weave their way through the stories of other participants.

*Heleen:* And a few years later I sang a much too difficult piece. "Rejoice" from the Messiah by Handel. And it was just, idiotic. But you do that when you are just starting to sing. You think you can do anything. You can read the notes. You can sing it. It's not true but you don't know that at the time.

And I wanted to sing that so much, that I didn't care less as if it was the last piece I would ever sing, even if it would ruin my vocal chords. Just whatever. And I studied and studied and studied and in 6 weeks I, nothing else. No it was not with that piece, but that didn't lead to something special. But with "Rejoice" with rehearsals it went terrible, and I almost lost my voice before the concert. Just before the . . . because the conductor let me sing it too often, because he was self so inexperienced that he didn't know how to put all things right.

And so I had sung it already six times because it was too heavy. But then came the concert, and I stood there. The orchestra began (banged table with hand) and I had to think, "Now I'm going to do it." And it was as if I expanded. It wasn't a very large church, but I became as big as the church. I felt it that way. And time went slower. Much slower. The orchestra played and I started to sing. And I knew I filled the space. That I was really there in that moment. And I felt that people in the church felt it also. And that made me very happy. Ja . . .

And there's one other occasion. It was in reunion of . . . I'll tell it because it had to do with why I started singing, personally why I started singing. We were in the same group of conductors where I had a course conducting. And the person I'm talking about was in that group also. The person that I said he said to me, "you can sing, you're a singer." And we had the last meeting of that group. And we had studied some act, some nice little thing to . . . as a finishing. We would all do something nice. And he and I and another person did something.

And I sang there at that moment. We had made an act as if a corpse was being buried in a grave. So we had made a stone with the years and all of that. And I started to sing. And at that moment and I didn't know yet what was to come for me and him and what would end of it and not. It was the most profound and difficult things in my life. I didn't know that at that point, but I started to sing.

And it happened the same thing with my voice as had happened in that little church, or in that first big church. That my voice expanded and became something I didn't know. And even the people I had sung all those years, 3 years, I had sit in that

choir, people next to me, said, “Where did that come from? We have never heard from you before like that.” And I didn’t know it either. But it was as if I felt all what was about to come. And that, lived that already in my voice. In who I was.

That’s another moment that that comes up immediately, when you ask about those things.

I asked Heleen what these experiences meant for her. She answered.

(Pause) I think it showed me, it opened me for me. For myself. I don’t know if I have changed because of those experiences. I think I have . . . It’s like you take the lid off something. They were moments that let me feel who I am, myself. And I couldn’t reach that at that point with the singing and the opening in that it give me a little peek. So, do you change because of that? Perhaps because there’s something become conscious what wasn’t conscious before.

She also noted that these experiences happened early in her career and that subsequently “singing has become more of a struggle and a technical thing,” so much of a struggle in fact that she has often considered quitting. She described a dream of a visit from a dead teacher keeps her going and offers an insight into Helen’s personal journey and the universal quest of singing.

Dreams of visits from guides and teachers are reported by other participants.

*Heleen:* After I had my first concert, I had a dream. And there came someone on the phone in that dream and I knew she was already dead a few years. And it was a teacher of a teacher of me. And she spoke on the phone. And I had something like, “This isn’t possible, you’re dead. You can’t speak to me.” And we didn’t have a very close connection, or very personal understanding. She was just someone I knew. She . . . training of the ear, that I had done with her. And she was very, how do you say?

*Herman:* Stern?

*Heleen:* Firm. Convincing . . . “This concert has gone well and you feel very good about yourself right now, but I want to say this to you. Go on with studying singing. Just keep going. How difficult it sometimes will be. Because when you don’t you will be on your death bed, you will regret that you haven’t gone through.”

And I’ve always remembered it and I thought everything went well at that moment. I thought I could climb the world or climb the highest mountain. I had for the first time felt a little bit satisfied with my own singing so whatever. But it kept in my mind. So now, 25 years later I know what she is talking about and when it’s very difficult, sometimes I remember that. And I think how will I feel on my deathbed, when I think now pff don’t do it anymore, I’m going to paint . . . or bicycle, or whatever, but no

singing anymore. And I've felt that especially the last years, I've thought that a lot. I've told you, that sometimes I don't know why I am doing it. I don't feel. Because I'm not at the point that I would like to be. What can I tell you?

Heleen mentioned that singing requires looking under the psyche's carpet to see what is there. In an email to me (July 23, 2010) she described what she meant. It involved for her a past-life experience of killing in self-defence. This experience trailed deep unexplained guilt and unworthiness into her present life, and interfered with her ability to sing. When it was brought to consciousness and healed, her way forward in singing opened. I bring it to demonstrate the implications of psychological trauma for the developing singer. Furthermore, the potential of past life experience to affect a singer's development adds the powerful dimension of the Singer's Journey unfolding over multiple life-times to my trans-temporal argument.

*Heleen:* After the interview I realized there was something of great importance (at least for me) that I had not mentioned to you. I will tell you now. It occurred during a period of years that I had no singing lessons. I already had studied with several teachers, but somehow it all didn't come together for me. I was very disappointed that seemingly there was no teacher for me who could guide me in my singing. So I studied on my own for a few years, but not with very good result. I was just stuck where I was.

Then in 1995, during a meditation class (during a visualization to relax the body) completely "out of the blue" a very strong image popped up in my mind. I experienced myself as a male soldier carrying a weapon. I found myself in a landscape with bushes here and there. Suddenly an armed enemy soldier turned up before my eyes and in self-defense I killed him.

Later I told my husband and I cried as I never cried before. So real it felt. I didn't see more than this single image, but somehow I knew I participated in that war very much against my will. There was heavy social pressure to "fight for your country." For me it all felt very wrong, but I didn't have the guts to withdraw from it. The moment I shot this man, something snapped in my soul.

I was depressed for months, because I had to come to terms with what I had remembered: being able to kill another human being and on top of that being a coward who didn't stand up for what he believed in. A few years later I felt I had to do something with this memory and for the evening of All Souls' Day 1 November in 1997 I hired an auditorium in a little theatre and made a program for family and friends.

With the help and cooperation of some friends (singers, a flutist, a dancer, an elocutionist) I made a show about war, being a soldier, and the cycle of life and death. The most important part in that show for me personally was me reading out aloud a poem written by me. This was like a public confession. You (talking to me, the researcher) find the poem in translation:

Ballad of Heleen  
November 1997

Back in time  
Time of war  
I think of you  
You from one camp  
and I from the other

Back in time  
Time of war  
Did you also keep on thinking:  
who's idea is this ?  
what am I doing here ?  
This isn't **my** war !

Back in time  
Time of war  
You were not **my** enemy  
I didn't even know you  
But: I looked at you as if you were and you saw me the same way  
When you suddenly appeared in front of me

Back in time  
Time of war  
Kill or be killed  
I was the first to act  
But along with your body my soul died  
The guilt  
And all shattered illusions  
Too heavy  
To bear

Back in time  
into **this** time  
this day  
All Souls' Day  
I commemorate  
*Unchain and let go*

When I spoke those words it felt as if I was “multidimensional.” I felt connected with the soldier I once had been, with the soul of the person I had killed and with the “here and now.” And all of that seemed to resonate in my voice. At the same time it freed me of the past that had weighed so heavily on me, because I always felt “guilty” and “unworthy” in a way that didn’t seem logical when related to my daily life.

After that “show” I heard myself say to someone (to my own surprise): NOW I am finally ready for the teacher that can tell me what I am doing wrong in singing. And within a month that teacher came into my life without me searching for it at all! I studied with her for 9 years and she has been a very good teacher for me especially in the technique of singing. She died in August 2008.

Since then I feel I have moved on and other aspects of singing have become more important to me. That reflects itself also in the approach of the teacher I am now studying with.

Singing is self-revealing and requires great vulnerability and trust. Heleen is not yet comfortable with her singing or with herself as a singer.

*Heleen:* I think that it’s for me very difficult. It’s very difficult for me to feel that there’s place for me to sing. I have to have permission of someone. And when I don’t get it I’m very nervous, I’m very . . . I look at everyone and see everything, every person who has like that or that’s in my mind. I know it’s in my mind, I know it’s not real, not as real as I think it is anyway. But I haven’t overcome it yet. I’m still afraid what people think of me, what they think and what they feel about me and they may find I’m ridiculous or idiot or stupid, funny, unreal. (Pause)

I always have to look to make a step in myself before I’m able to sing. I have to go stand there and open my mouth and do it . . .

Heleen feels very vulnerable and exposed. Needing permission and safety to sing comes through too in interviews with other singers, and is something I often also feel I need. Exacting standards of performance are also very common. Heleen was concerned that I would ask her to sing as part of the interview process and nearly cancelled the interview.

*Heleen:* I still haven’t found it yet I think for myself . . . How to sing exactly, or how to be comfortable in it. I’ve been told that . . . Sandra (whose story I tell later) will sing. Hah, please no! Not me!

Heleen describes above personal difficulties and insecurities around wholeness, authenticity, self-acceptance and confidence in her own journey. The very wholeness,

authenticity, and confidence that she personally seeks, she is successfully instilling in her students. This poignant realization about herself and the depth of her commitment to, and understanding of her art and her teaching, unfolded through the conversation. Herman, her friend and student, gently and with moving sincerity spoke about his experience and growth as her student. I include it because it demonstrates principles of teaching and singing as well as how Heleen may have integrated her own experience through the interview process. Stories like Heleen's made me realize I was pursuing, not only peak experience in singing, but also the organic transpersonal development process that takes place when singing and teaching singing is pursued as a practice and a path. These stories are not just stories, they are wisdom stories.

Heleen's way as a teacher is to draw out the natural voice and she is guided intuitively in the process. This part of the conversation began generally. Helen spoke of her approach to teaching and brought an example of a student she is struggling with. Herman then spoke.

*Herman:* It's the direction in which you go, the wholeness?

*Heleen:* Ja, Ja,

*Herman:* You never reach it.

*Heleen:* No.

*Herman:* That's what you want to say?

*Heleen:* But you, just as my way is a discovery of what is in the way of my own singing, so I see that when I look at other people, there are also things in the way.

And sometimes it's just a minor physical thing that you can address easily. And sometimes it's a very, very fundamental personal way of doing things that, when you see it you will know immediately that this is going to take years, if it's going to work, because not always someone is prepared, or ready to go that way.

(Pause) I have one student at the moment who is an elder, elder man, elderly man. He's 65 I think. And he has had a shop his whole life. A drug store. And he has always been very (Dutch discussion with Herman)

*Herman:* Polite?

*Heleen:* Very polite and very, ja . . .

*Herman:* Always at the service . . .

*Heleen:* Yes. Pleasing, very very pleasing. And in his attitude, in his posture . . . Always very alert on the outside and it's very difficult to bring that man inside himself.

For him singing is just something you do. Like a trick. I don't think it's a trick. It can be a trick. You can do it as a trick. It can be much more than that. I don't think he's going to do the work that is necessary on himself that would enrich himself as a person. Not only as a singer, but as a person. I think I'm always looking for that aspect.

In singing, that's why I like to teach, to reveal the things, the way people . . . aspects of themselves that they don't know yet.

*Herman:* That's my experience with our, uh, interaction. That there are moments when I suddenly realize, "Oh there is that old nasty point again" Hee Hee.

*Heleen:* It's not nice sometimes . . .

*Herman:* It's not nice! But sometimes I'm very moved, really, that I suddenly see it in a full light. And I know at that moment that I'm also already overcoming it . . . And that is to me the enriching thing of uh, the singing lessons. Well singing as a lesson.

*Heleen:* Hmm. It's for me what I like to do most.

*Herman:* Ja, and I see that. That's your talent. That you can put your finger, very softly on it . . .

*Heleen:* I think that when you want to learn something you have to ask questions. To who you are and "I think I am this way . . .? But perhaps I can always just or so . . .?"

I felt very comfortable and was made to feel very welcome by my Dutch participants and the interview space was intimate and safe. I learned to keep silent, open, and to wait for the participant to talk. This in turn opened a space of introspection and insight. With Heleen a metaprocess of self-realization occurred in which she recognized how she was integrating her experiences, her singing, teaching, healing, and intuition through a process of self-recognition. This correlates with the intuitive inquiry goal of catalyzing personal transformation in the researcher and participants.

*Heleen:* I was thinking that why I am doing that course now of reading and healing, is proof that I have integrated those experiences. Because they also put me on another level of experiencing, of feeling. It's as if I expanded and knew more and saw more than I could know at that moment. And now I've taken that so seriously that I have taken a

course to do something with it, to become more conscious of those things that before I always just thought, “Oh no.” I didn’t recognize it as belonging to me, to who I am and now I do.

I don’t run away from it anymore and I don’t know where it comes together, if it will come together somehow, the singing and those things, we’ll see.

I asked Heleen what she feels comes next for her in her development as a singer. She answered with a description of a powerfully embodied experience in which her mind stilled and her body and voice took over.

*Heleen:* I had an experience once, I was very focused on my feet and on my legs to stand, really on the ground. And that made me quieter than I usually am. And just before I had to start, I felt my body taking a breath. And it wasn’t at the moment that I consciously would have taken that breath, so I, I something like, what’s going on? It was much earlier than I would normally have taken that breath. And then at the same time I could let it go, and I sung that piece then very well. But my body took over. And I didn’t do it anymore. But I still feel . . . for me it’s still very difficult to come in the state of mind or the state of being that that can happen. That my body takes over, that my body can benefit from all it has learnt.

Her direction now is to trust and to let go.

*Heleen:* What I search . . . I trust my voice, I trust myself that I have enough confidence to stand there and tell something about what I’m going to do. In the meantime I’ve learnt to do that, but it doesn’t say that is the essence of what I would like to do. Will I have the courage to be so relaxed and so me and so authentic to let that happen? I don’t know.

**Rachel.** Rachel is a psychologist and coloratura soprano who lives and works in California. Singing has always been a part of her life in an “on again, off again” fashion. Singing reflects and now actively facilitates her psycho-spiritual journey and healing. As she said, “When I’m going through the singing process, which to me is a life process, it’s not just singing and performing.” Hers is a journey of self-acceptance, of finding and accepting her authentic voice, and sharing it with others. At the start of the interview I noticed that she had injured her neck. Her neck injury is pertinent to her narrative as will be seen later.



Rachel was born into a household traumatized by her father's alcoholism. She believes, as does her mother, that she was affected already in utero by the emotional violence occurring in her home. Rachel's mother featured prominently in her narrative. The maternal archetype and an associated shame theme recurred throughout her interview. Shame and her relationship to her mother, mother figures, and what she eventually names in saying, "my body is mother . . . the universe is mother," all these relationships are integrated and transformed, as she later describes, through her participation through singing in simultaneous transcendent and immanent / embodied spirituality.

Rachel described herself as having been "extraordinarily sensitive" and "crippled with shyness, anxiety and social phobias." She hardly ever spoke. As a young child, she thought she was invisible.

*Rachel:* I actually believed I had the power to sit in a room and not be seen . . . literally. Because I could go into a room, my mom would have friends over, I'd sit down in a chair in the corner and no one acknowledged me, and no one would stop talking . . .

One of her earliest experiences relates to one of the first times she used her voice. This is a very graphic example of how a developing voice gets shamed and wounded, in this case inadvertently by her mother.

*Rachel:* I was taken to the church nursery school. It was shortly after my father had left. And somehow my brother had, my older brother had explained the word "adoption" to me. Somewhere around that time, and when my mom took me to the church nursery school, I thought I was being left off at an adoption center.

So this very shy little girl who never spoke . . . what did I do? Screamed! And I still remember to this day I'll never forget the bright lights and these creatures, loud noisy creatures doing all these things. Well it was children playing, but I'd been so isolated, that I did not know, this environment was so unfamiliar to me. And I went into a primal scream, primal screaming, it was coming from such a primitive place of abandonment. And my mother came in to the room. They had called from the church. She sang in the church choir, and then she had to leave the church. And my mom's a minister's daughter OK, so a lot of the stuff there.

But I never forget, my mom denies it today, but I very much trust my memory, her coming into the room, sitting down at the table and telling me that this couldn't possibly be her daughter. And I was a good girl and how ashamed she was of me. And the shaming I felt I think attached, somehow associated that, I've never thought about this much, just thinking about it right now, that that is the first experience I have of trying to get my voice out through that primal scream and immediately being shamed.

Not having the need recognized. My true terror recognized. That primitive abandonment recognized and my mom shaming me through her own . . . her own woundedness is of course where it came from. That she was unable to mother me.

Nevertheless her mother did provide a safe refuge for her. Her home environment in her words was "very scary." She would hide in the closet waiting for her mother to get home out of fear of her father's drinking. Music making also provided a needed opportunity for family connection. Rachel sang from an early age in spite of the family trauma.

*Rachel:* But even then what I would do is sing. And my first memory is the Beatles "Help" album. That's the first music I remember hearing with voices singing. My dad played a lot of jazz and my family played a lot of classical music. We had a piano and those are some of the only good memories I have is music. My dad playing guitar. He had all those amputated fingers from different accidents, but he could play guitar and banjo. So the, experiences of having that happy family connected feeling were only in relation to music because it's something we all shared as a family.

We're all musicians in my family. So my first music I heard was classical, jazz and um, then the Beatles, just fooom went right into my consciousness, that Help album when I was 4. And ironically, Help being the first song I remember hearing. Help! Which is what I needed. I need somebody.

And I would get lids to pots and pans, and I'd put on classical music, even when I was 4, I learned how to work the record player, and I'd get the pots and pans and bang them as cymbals, so that whole part of my personality would come out, and I'd walk around the house and pretend I was in a parade and go BOOM BOOM. And then I'd get out one of our music stands and chopsticks and I'd be the conductor. Very impassioned. And then I would go along with the opera singers and I'd sing opera.

So 4 / 5 years old, I was doing this. So my first vocalizing was more singing than words. And I sang so much through school, that I would get teased because I would just sing.

It was through singing in church, as she describes below, that Rachel first developed a sense of transcendent and immanent spirituality. Singing became a way out of a traumatic situation and opened a space of safety.

*Rachel:* And then I got into the church choir, and that sense of elevation and transcendence . . . my voice became like a vehicle.

It was that trajectory for me. My voice became a trajectory I could ride like a rocket. Pum! Out beyond my personal everyday egoic reality. And I would have, I could have through this connection of the immanent and transcendent, my voice as the vehicle connecting me within without, and this transmission from these composers you know that was so um, um . . . you know I could just be in that . . . in this other place, very different from my little suburban home where there was a lot of trauma.

In 1991 Rachel began what she describes as an 18-year process of Kundalini awakening. She dreamt of a woman who appeared in her dream as an angel who had come to wake her up and work on her heart chakra. Dreams feature prominently in Rachel's narrative.

*Rachel:* She said, "Wake up!" It was time to wake up. She did all this heart chakra work with me in the dream.

She dreamed of the same woman as her singing teacher 18 years later. I will relate the details in context shortly.

Rachel sang with the San Jose symphony orchestra under the direction of Maestro Leonid Grin. She had had no formal voice training. It was during the performance as supporting soprano of Mahler's 2nd symphony that she had a prescient dream and nondual experience that demonstrates a participatory, multilocal, and trans-temporal nature of the singer's experience. At the time, Rachel had no knowledge of the meaning and geographical / historical context of the symphony which is of the death and resurrection of an Austrian folk hero.

*Rachel:* I had a dream that I was standing inexplicably on a mountain top. I sensed I was in the Swiss Alps or Austrian Alps, or Austria Germany. And I'm on this mountain top with my other singers who were doing the second symphony with me . . . and Leonid Grin's there.

And in (waking) reality we knew his wife was dying of cancer, and we knew this was a, it's hard to (sob), the last performance she would ever see him conduct.

(In the dream) We all had medieval clothes on. And I'm thinking why do we all have medieval clothes on? (Laughter) and then in the dream, the two soloists came in. They had medieval clothes on. And we all started singing the second symphony. And then I looked down and then I see way way down there what looked like a castle, but it also was the performing arts center in San Jose where I was going to be singing. And um, so I was in this double time zone, because I was in medieval time and I could see the current modern day performing arts center, but it looked like a castle. So we're doing the end of the symphony. We're singing "zu Gott, zu Gott" (to God, to God), and right towards the end in the dream, Leonid stopped conducting, and he threw his arms up, like this, and I heard him whispering in my ear, "This is for God. This is for God."

And then suddenly I was out of my body going fwch, faster and faster out into space. Now I'm seeing the mountain, the performing arts center, I'm out of body and I see the planet earth . . .

*Paul:* Was this in your dream?

*Rachel:* In my dream. I'm seeing the planet earth, then I'm in space and then I'm in the galaxy milky way, back back back . . . But I'm also still on the mountain top, and still down in the performing arts center all at once.

And then we have the actual performance, OK, and this is real life. In real life the soloists come out and they're wearing medieval clothing, exactly like in my dream. And I start to get very disoriented and when I get into certain states when I'm singing, and I'm having this transcendent / immanent peak, it's hard to explain, or when I'm just very connected, um, my hands vibrate so much that I can hardly hold my music.

So my hands start to vibrate, right? And I'm remembering the dream. And I'm thinking I've got to keep present, because I'm here to serve the performance, and be present. But everything started to get very confusing for me when I saw the soloists come out in medieval clothing because I'd recently had that dream. So then we get to the part in my dream where we're singing "zu Gott, zu Gott" it's the resurrection. "Rise up, lift up!" It's beautiful.

And we get to that same part in the dream where he had stopped conducting. And we know his wife's out there, and we know he knows it's the last time she'll be seeing him conduct. And right, exactly like in my dream, Leonid, Maestro Grin stopped conducting . . .

And there's a lot going on in that symphony. You need your conductor. It's a huge ending. And he went like this (threw arms up), exactly like in my dream, and I heard his voice, "This is for God."

And we (the choir and orchestra), like one unit, just somehow, we did the last 5 minutes, because he was in some other state, like my dream. And almost because of the dream I was almost expecting and prepared . . . but I was also having that same experience of being out of my body, and I was feeling complete unity consciousness with the audience, us, Mahler, the transmission, the spiritual transmission, for G-d, for God, and the timelessness in that eternal moment. And my hands were vibrating so much I don't know how I held the music. And there's Leonid going exactly like this.

The symphony encouraged her to take singing lessons with a teacher from the New York Metropolitan Opera. The arrangement did not work out. The teacher had felt pressured to take her as a student and treated her with contempt. She felt shamed and in the interview realized that she associated this shaming of her voice with the original shame she felt as a child in the incident at nursery school with her mother. She stopped singing for 11 years.

*Rachel:* And he didn't ever really want to take me. And you know they always have their little students that they're focused on. And I was this gal who he felt pressure to take. And from day 1, from the minute I opened my mouth, he was shaming me (clicked fingers in emphasis) and making me feel not good enough. And, um, that and then work obligations and different reasons and excuses that I made, I stopped singing for 11 years. Even humming along to the radio. Any kind of singing, and I used to sing every day all day.

As with Heleen, it took recognition as a singer by another to get Rachel to sing again. In her case it was recognition by a psychiatrist colleague at a drug-alcohol treatment center where she worked at the time.

*Rachel:* He looked at me and he said, "I know I'm going to know your voice. I know I'm going to know your voice. And I want to hear you sing again. It's like I've heard you, I have to hear your voice again." And I said, "Oh Rick, I haven't sung in 11 years." And he said, "You're going to sing again. You have to sing again. I have to hear you."

Her colleague arranged for her to sing for his partner who was a musical and choir director. He introduced her to her current singing teacher Louisa Oakley, who recognized and further encouraged her. Louisa started to put in place the structures for the voice to remain healthy. Initially Rachel was scared to return to singing, but soon found the process empowering and fun. Rachel finds Louisa's teaching very nurturing and calls her her "Voice Whisperer."

*Rachel:* She (Louisa) said, “I hear that underneath the scared little feral kitten, there’s a lion. You know just waiting, waiting, but we need to be really gentle, and really create an environment where that little scared kitten can become it’s true self. And by the third lesson she was having to hold me back. She said, “There’s a racehorse in there that wants to run!” And I get it, but we need to rein it in, and get you properly prepared because we don’t want to blow your voice out. And my head would even go. She would just stop the lesson, she’d be laughing. In a nice way she said, “Your nostrils are flaring and your head’s going like that. I could just see this stallion . . . ”

Within a few months of being with Louisa, Rachel’s voice became spontaneous and free and displayed an innate musical knowing. She had tuned into an innate wisdom in her body and reported that her voice knew what to do by itself without her interference. She also started singing again in public.

*Rachel:* I don’t have to think about it. I don’t have to think about . . . my voice does it. And I’m back here. My ego itself is like, “How the hell are you doing that?” It already knows all the notes and it’s just, and it’s just doing. And I’m just watching. I know I’m involved somehow and participating, but it knows how to land.

I asked Rachel how singing changed her. She answered that she has developed a strong inner authority and has taken ownership of her own voice and the profound emotional impact it has on people.

*Rachel:* For me it’s been a lot of process of not just singing, but finding my voice in general and being able to communicate. And even though I seem very assertive, you know students would never guess that I was crippled with, you know, with shyness when I was young, and I am now able to perform, you know, with all of these things.

For me there’s still a whole process, a lot of anxiety that I work through. It’s better now around putting my voice out there and having my ground in that way. And especially being young and a people pleaser, and afraid to say no, and afraid to have my voice. It’s not for me just getting my voice back as a singer, as that was going on, I find I’ve been able to voice myself in new ways and renewed ways. And frankly in more assertive ways within my different roles.

And to be able to say, “No, I’m not able to do that.” Without the guilt and the shame and the you know without letting people down, or you know. And just being able to be clear and have my own inner authority. And my own sense of self efficacy and self-direction, and owning my voice.

And that my voice can be shared with the world. And be a vehicle. Something happens, for me for whatever reason when I sing, and I even used to sing at nursing homes, I used to volunteer. There's something I think in my voice in the vibration, something about whatever in me with my voice, and probably I could tie it into music therapists and music teacher, people will just start weeping. I mean I did this little, you know, Mahler *lied*, and I had men and women, my friends weeping up there in the kitchen. Just tears pouring out. Friends that aren't that emotive. And I'm kind of sitting there confused, but I seem to evoke a lot of emotion.

Rachel reported often having exceptional experiences while she sang. I asked her to describe them.

*Rachel:* From a bodily level as the container, um, when I'm in that state which is not intentionally self-induced, but is some kind of altered state, the hands are vibrating. And I have an image that everything is like pixels of light. And that for whatever reason for me it's the hands. And I don't know even if I'm not holding music it's uh, something's happening with that. And this might be more information than you want, but I think the only other time I have that is in an orgasmic state during certain kinds of intentional intense sexual connecting going on. So there's something, it's important to know because there's something going on. 'Cause that can be its own kind of unity experience, its timelessness and all that. So there's the vibration, so it's this, I'm aware of my matter, and now I'm a container of light, and my body is somehow transformed into light. And so in a way it's trans-material, it's beyond material, and yet I'm still in this physical matter body. And holding that. Both are true at once. I am the container, it's a vessel, it's clay, but it's also light. It's paradoxical. It's a light vessel.

I have the awareness that especially in that state, my voice seems to have its own consciousness and is just going to all the right notes and landing on all the right steps and little edges and levels and flows without me having at all to do any egoic conscious thinking. It's just doing it and I'm almost like the egoic observer, like the witness to a vocal consciousness that I'm just, kind of just, "Wow!"

Louisa's even asked me. She says, "Do you feel you're leading it, or you're following it, or you're with it?" And I said, "Honestly, it's in front of me and I'm holding on like a chariot."

There is a sense of elation and gratitude. Most of all gratitude. That I can give in that way and there people receiving it and I'm receiving that from them. And this whole reciprocity of emotional connection and weeping and of course you know, I can't give in to the weeping or I'll lose the performance, but there's, did you ever read William Braud's wonder tears article? I can feel there's wonder tears in me, but for the sake of the art I need to hold back.

Rachel ended by speaking of her current neck injury, how because of it she had stopped her voice training and performance. She feels that the injury of her neck, not only anatomically relates by proximity to her voice, but that it is connected to energy movement and clearing of her voice chakra, a continuation of what she describes as a Kundalini awakening that began 18 years previously. She said she sees it as a “call from my body” to adjust and realign at a family systems level with her fiancé as well as with her work; even a call to sing differently with more support, less pushing, more power and paradoxically more gentleness.

Within a few weeks of having stopped voice training Rachel was visited in a dream by the same dream lady who had visited her as an angel and had told her to wake up at the onset of her Kundalini process in 1991.

*Rachel:* I had a dream that my voice teacher came over, but it wasn't Louisa in my dream, it was a woman that showed up one other time, when I started what I think was a Kundalini awakening back in '91.

So she comes in and she says, “Rachel, I want you to sing. But you're going to need to sing differently. And you can sing anything you want.”

So I was kind of confused because I thought, “Hmm, my voice teacher is Louisa, but it's this woman again who I dreamed about before.” And it's interesting because I did it now, I've had all the fear again. I said, “I can't sing, I'm injured. She says, “No you can sing, “I'm inviting you to sing differently and sing anything you want.”

And I didn't know what to sing. Suddenly out of me, without conscious thought, you know what I started to sing (in the dream)? I started to sing the Gounod version of *Ave Maria*. And I was weeping.

You know, I was singing to the mother, and I am not raised Catholic, but I understand the *Ave Maria* now in a way, and our body is matter or mother, my body is mother, the universe is mother; myself mothering the wounded kind of the little girl in me that's so afraid and ashamed and so afraid to have her voice out there.

So I know I've been in a whole process of being able to express myself more authentically and speak my truth without feeling on an unconscious level some core shame that used to keep me from using my voice, because I was shamed so much in my family when I told the truth, because I was kind of the truth teller in my family. So



moving through that I think has done a lot of fifth chakra work, and of course it's all connected, but the blockage has been clearing out.

Rachel had recently restarted voice training, initially lying on the ground and vocalizing, and then simply having fun singing standards. She found the experience very emotional.

*Rachel:* When I went back for my first lesson, and I started to sing, I just started weeping. I just I cried. And then I'd sing. And I was singing standards. You know, but I . . . but it was just that I was singing again. I was having wonder tears. And grief and joy.

She has found after this process that she is able to sing in a "whole new way."

Well, when I went back to sing, my voice was different, in a good way. Because of the pain I have had to keep very relaxed up here, more power from the diaphragm. And my voice opened up more. I'm at a whole new level now and the voice is more open and clear.

As with Heleen, Rachel's story is one of healing and development: the Singer's Journey.

**Sandra.** Sandra is a professional musician, singer, and songwriter who lives and works in Holland. She has university level education in art and has studied music and singing for many years. As with Heleen, Sandra's interview was an informal three-way conversation between Sandra, myself, and Herman. It also took place around Herman's dining room table rather than the normal "neutral meeting place." I had met Sandra the previous evening over dinner with her and Herman. The three of us had sung, and made music together late into the night. Her singing is mesmerizing.

As with Heleen, Sandra is deeply inwardly connected and strongly intuitive. Her intuition feeds into her music and her music feeds her intuition. She describes two related processes: song-writing where she stands "totally open" to what comes through her intuitive vision, and singing, which is her way of "putting it (her vision) on earth," of grounding it, and embodying it through being with it in the "here and now," either alone, or sharing with others. I asked her to explain what she meant. As a concrete example she described the process of writing

and performing a song of her mourning the death of her beloved pet cat. She pointed out that in the creative process of writing and then sharing the song with others, her personal grief becomes an expression of a universal experience. The transcript excerpt that follows shows the easy flow of conversation between the 2 participants and me, and how Herman helped Sandra find the English where appropriate.

*Sandra:* Ah . . . I don't know (chuckles) I really don't know. I think I have a certain feeling about things in my life. In my little life and then I have a *beeld*, an image. And then I start and I don't know what I do.

My cat died a few months ago and that impressed me very much. And I saw her back. I saw her walking . . . drinking, but also on herself, on her body. She came up and she smelt, sniffing on her own body. And she walked.

*Herman:* She was lying outside with her dead body. You had put her dead body outside for a few days.

*Paul:* Oh, OK.

*Herman:* And then you saw her

*Sandra:* I saw her.

*Herman:* Looking at her own body.

*Sandra:* Ja.

*Herman:* And sniffing at it. You say sniffing? (makes sounds of sniffing)

*Paul:* Ja.

*Herman:* That's what you described to me.

*Sandra:* Ja, and that sort of things impressed me so much, and then I start to create. And then I don't want to say it in (words), just like I do now, but I want to say it in images. Poetic images. And then I just starting a process, that's beginning to search for . . . for . . . klank . . .

*Paul:* Sounds

*Sandra:* Sounds and rhythm and to make that clear. That process is a form of to be open. To stand totally open for it. Ja. For what comes.

*Herman:* You describe in that song that she comes through the door. So the door is closed.

*Sandra:* She scratches on the door. And then I say to her, “You can do it, you can come in without opening, so come in.” And she does. It succeeded. And then she springs on the . . .

*Herman:* . . . the kitchen sink, she jumps on the kitchen sink . . .

*Sandra:* Ja, and I give her water, like always. And I see her drinking, and that sort of images I put in my song.

*Paul:* And then when you sing the song, could you describe that.

*Sandra:* Then I try to image it again, and I make the feeling, I try to feel it again. And then I start to sing. What’s happening then I don’t know. Sometimes it just is like that. I, it’s a way to put it on earth for me. Singing is a way for me to put it on earth. Ja, I pick it from there (motions with hand in air above head) the creative process, I pick it from, I don’t know where, and I put it on earth.

*Herman:* You take it from the atmosphere?

*Sandra:* Yeah, I take it from the atmosphere and I put it on earth. Ja, with my own personal little things. With my own personal images and my own personal life and my own personal pain, but maybe it’s also the pain of another person, who in this case is losing an animal. A very dear animal, so that’s maybe it. You make it universal. (Chuckles) I hope I do.

Sandra started singing as a child and has worked hard to consciously develop her skill.

*Sandra:* It’s a, it’s a development, so it goes further and further and further. So it’s not a talent. “Oh, so you’re talented” Oh, you’re talented. You have talent, well that’s easy. I’m talented and I have to work for it, and then it starts to grow and also you become conscious, more conscious of it what you are doing. What happens in myself.

For Sandra, singing equates with freedom. It takes on a life of its own and connects her with the spiritual world.

*Sandra:* But your voice is in your body, but when you use your voice it is away before. It’s away before . . . it’s only a moment and then it’s away. So that’s transparent . . . Very transparent. It connects your body with more spiritual things. It’s a connection. I think. Singing is connecting the body with the, I can’t find the words, maybe you understand? You (Herman) understand.

In the two previous narratives of Rachel and Heleen, they had discussed inner psychological issues that stand in the way of their singing freely. Herman in his interview had gently termed them “little devils” that “hinder” him from “being in contact with the best of” himself. I had asked Sandra about her “little devils.” She said she had made a decision not to have any. She had made a decision for freedom.

*Sandra:* It was a year and a half ago I started to feel nervous, nervous nervous and I put it . . . (motioned like she took something around its neck and twisted its head off).

Ja, because then I’m not free anymore, because singing for me is to be free, more free. And when I started to get nervous about it then I start to get a very nervous person, so I grabbed it by its neck and . . . cut off its head and put it back, because I choose not to be.

She does however have many anxieties around marketing her work, and after the interview, like all the professional singers participating, spoke of the financial struggle involved in being a professional musician, as well as how singing has benefited her psychologically.

*Sandra:* There are very many devils when I’m putting it into the world. To put my thing in the world, this is enough and this is good enough to have a place, there, there are devils.

So the inner there are no, and singing only singing . . . no problem . . . but to put it in . . . the next step is to put it in the world, like you have your (medical) practice is to put it in the world . . . to give it a form . . . for that there are many devils in my head.

The problem of not having enough confidence . . . yip . . . . But it becomes better, I’ve found. But maybe it’s too late. That’s devil 2: Maybe it’s too late. I’m too old—Devil 3 (Laughs).

*Herman:* It’s nice to laugh about devils.

*Sandra:* Then the angels are very, they like that sort of humor. When you’re laughing about your devils, they like it. (Laughs)

When I started to sing, I was very, I became stronger, more conscious, more happy, more open, much more courage. Ja, sensitive, I was already sensitive, but when I started to sing . . . Ja . . . It’s a way to open also. Ja? Singing is also doing it with a person to overcome the difficulties. And it’s a way of giving. It’s a way to give to people.

Sandra described feeling very present in her body and at the same time uplifted when she sings. She also spoke of being able to hold her center and simultaneously interact rapidly with multiple parties on multiple levels.

*Sandra:* I can switch better. I mean with the audience but also without. You have the communication with yourself and with the band leader and the band, the group and the audience and out of the building, the universal, and you can, I can switch, I can communicate very fast while I'm singing. When talking not, but in singing, it goes very fast and in a very pure way and energy. And I can feel all the energies around and it doesn't hurt me.

She spoke of uplifting people through her singing and participating in and mediating a creative unfolding from "there" (the spiritual world), through herself to her audience and then giving the audience's applause back again to the universe. The intuitive image of prophecy came into my mind.

*Sandra:* So it comes from there (motions above), and they are applauding and I didn't know what to do. Oh . . . Now I do this (motions from imaginary audience in front of her, giving it back upwards.) And I feel . . . er . . .

*Herman:* That it's being...

*Sandra:* . . . received again, there.

*Herman:* Up in heaven . . .

*Sandra:* And that's a big present for me. That's a good feeling that what you're given, you can give back . . . You understand? (Chuckles).

And that's new. That's also when I play alone and in my room. Then I feel that I've something with me, ja, I feel a presence, and I give that back. It's like a conversation.

Sandra's description of singing in relationship is an ongoing theme through the participants' interviews. In chapter 5, I demonstrate that Ferrer's multilocal participatory paradigm functions well as an interpretative framework for it.

Sandra felt her next stage in her musical development is to remove her personal interpretation and intentionality from her singing and to become a clear channel for the music.

*Sandra:* My development now in singing is to do nothing . . . at all. I don't have my willpower in it anymore. Power but not will power. This is also where I am moving. To do nothing . . . . Nothing on purpose, but to be . . . . Only to be.

It's a movement, now when you sing it always was this. But now it's more this, to do nothing, to lie back and to rest in it without any will power. And it can be very wow! That also can be very powerful, when you do nothing. This is my next step.

I hear it on my voice also when it happens, I hear more softness in my voice, more . . . Ja . . . Like yourself are . . . surrender. Ja, surrender is . . .

You have made, I have made a song, and that song is no longer of me. . . . And I sing it like it is a song, like it's a song, (tone softens), [I think what she means is that she sings it like a song like any other.] And I don't need to do my whole emotional life in it. No, it's just a song and I sing it without over, without drama.

And that's a new step, because you have to dare that also. Because I'm used to the audience saying, "Ah you have a very emotional and passionate . . ." and they like that to hear. And now there's a little bit of difference. So it's a little bit a devil too. To make that step from, "No I'm not passionate." . . . I do nothing, Ja . . . I don't give it an extra impulse to interpretate how dramatic it is or how . . .

For me it will be a long way. And sometimes I feel it, and then I feel that I surrender. And then I feel, Ja . . . It opens more and more. You understand me?

Sandra had been reluctant to be interviewed and towards the end of the conversation explained about wanting to keep her experience ordinary, and the pitfalls of putting words to spiritual matters.

*Sandra:* I'm afraid to make it bigger than it is. Ja, I'm a little bit afraid also to talk about spirituality. I'm a little bit afraid of it because when you put it in words, then it is dead, but it's not the words, it's the feeling, it's the experience.

*Herman:* The experience is much larger than the words . . .

*Sandra:* . . . or much thinner, and much transparent and full of doubts and full of (sighs) and tuning and searching, and when you put words to it, something goes away.

**The researcher and his process.** In Cycle 1, to recap, the intuitive image that came to me was that of a nude female torso with a beautiful flower protecting her modesty. I also wrote down what I want to do with my life, my daemonic imperative (Hillman, 1996) or, in simple language, what my soul feels called to as a life task. It is “to connect and dwell within my authenticity and that of the World Soul, to know It deeply and to help others connect too.” I realized too that singing is one of the ways in which I go about my daemonic imperative and that it formed part of an emergent congruent way of my being and becoming. I identified something amorphous in my solar plexus region preventing me from singing, something blocking.

Cycle 2, brought the message to “get out of the way” and surrender to the process of singing. *But what did this mean practically?* In answering this question lies the process of my inner dissertation, the transformation that takes place within the researcher through the dissertation process, the researcher’s story of individuation, which in intuitive inquiry is a marker of efficacy validity (Anderson, 2006).

Together with my singing, psychology, and medicine, I study art. I have noticed an integral unfolding. If singing and working with my voice opens me, my art provides a visual record of the inner process. I have always loved the work of Rodin. In May 2007 I painted his Thinker and Prodigal Son (Figure 13). I put it on the wall above my desk. I wrote to my committee chair Dr. Schavrien (2 July 2008), “to me this picture represents the brooding male mental sort of energy tying up in mind-strings an otherwise exultant worshipful inner feminine (being).”



*Figure 13. Interpretation of Rodin's Thinker and Prodigal Son. Oil on canvas.*

In my art and in my person I am blessed with a quick intuition and depth of feeling. This has enabled me often to “do things on the fly,” to produce acceptable work of apparent depth quickly, but often with a complete disregard for structure, thought, and discipline. In singing, I never bothered to learn the score so as to remain loyal to the compositional structure of the song. I preferred to sing as I felt, or as I intuited the music. In academics, my ability to intuitively grasp a topic meant I could get away without necessarily mastering the body of work that substantiates a topic. In painting I could produce a picture filled with feeling, but never had the patience to think about how it was structured, resulting in work of emotional appeal, but lacking structure and of inconsistent quality, frankly often amateurish. This is partly luck, partly laziness, and partly personality. Whenever I do Jungian Typology tests I score predominantly as Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling and Perceiving, which means as an introverted (I) intuitive (N) and introverted feeling (I F) type, I am prone to inferior extroverted sensation and inferior extroverted thinking. It is one of the reasons I like photography, it translates vision into image without my having to think much.



I get nervous to sing. It is a bit like diving from a high board. If you think about what you are doing you cannot dive. You do not even know how to dive if you think about it. Nevertheless there comes a time when you leave thought behind and just dive. It is the same with singing. Before you start singing you have no idea how to sing and you are scared. This means for me that I am still in the verbal realm. This makes me anxious because I cannot think how to sing. I cannot figure it out; just like I cannot think of how I will dive. So I think about it some more, how it should sound, and then I am lost. But there is a momentary shift, maybe, when you just dive. Why could I not just dive?

My father died in August 2008. He had been relatively healthy until collapsing one morning and then, following a partly successful resuscitation, had lain for a month, brain dead in a decorticate coma, his body posturing reflexively, his stare penetrating and blind. His deep blue eyes empty. I was desperate to connect with him, but couldn't talk to him. I sang to him in his ICU bed. I sang all the songs we had sung together: Friday nights, in shul, around the table, in the choir on festivals, the prayer of Rebbe Akiva: "*Avinu Malkeinu chaneinu va aneinu ki ein banu ma'asim.*"—"Our Father our King be gracious and answer us, for we have no actions." We could only weep.

*Journal 18 August 2008:* Somehow I've discovered when you don't know what to do, but you want to stay present, sing. Song fills where words are hollow.

My father developed a multiple resistant staphylococcal pneumonia. The attending physician wanted guidance on whether to treat him or to let him move on peacefully. The question is stark and simplifying. There can be no selfishness, and no illusions. As a family we decided to treat what we could.

*Baruch atah Hashem Elokeinu melech haolam, asher bidvaro maariv aravim, bechachma poteach shearim, uvitvunah meshaneh itim, umachlif et hazmanim, umesader et hachochavim bemishmeroteyhem berakiah kirtsonoh . . .*

Blessed are you Oh Lord our God King of the Universe, who with His word brings on the evening, with wisdom opens gates, and with understanding changes the times, and changes the seasons, and orders the stars in their orbits according to His will. He creates day and night, makes light disappear in the face of darkness and darkness in the face of light. He causes day to pass and he brings on night, and separates between day and night, the Lord of Hosts is his name. (Jewish Evening Prayer Service.)

That Thursday afternoon I was late leaving my patients and hurried to get to the hospital from work. Every car I overtook was maddeningly slow, every traffic light I skipped was red. My brother phoned, “We’ve lost Daddy.” The phone went dead. Everything stopped. There was no meaning, nowhere to go, nothing to do. Just stark, unadorned isness. His funeral is an empty hole in my memory.

Family systems readjust and identities are shaken when a center moves. For me, first came sadness then came insight. My grief management regime included sessions of loosely guided meditation. In one of them (Journal, 02 February 2009) I had a vision of two rocks glowing with light, one was me, one was my mom. My mother’s light was shining bright as her remarkable light does. I was transparent, transmitting only her light. What then of my light, my identity? What of me is conditioned? What of me is authentically me? Is there such a thing? Does it make a difference? Why these issues now? I had moved out of home in my 20s. All these questions, and a realization: No matter your age, you only grow up when you lose a parent.

When my energy blocks, it blocks at my solar plexus. This impacts singing deeply: the diaphragm jams and support goes out the window. I was blocked, 20 kg overweight, on Nexium daily for gastric reflux; and raised liver enzymes from a fatty liver were telling me I was just too fat. Another part of my grief management regimen was weekly cranial-sacral and psychotherapy. My therapist and I were working on unblocking and releasing the solar plexus area (Journal entry 9 May 2009. I was in a deeply meditative space and had the sense of recently having had an

umbilical cord. I was a baby in a glass cage floating freely in space. I became aware of the sensation of missing the bubbling presence of my twin brother. “Where’s Allan?” I wondered. There was such childlike innocence in the feeling of missing him. Then back in the present, I felt myself building up to scream, but I couldn’t, then I did, a big primal roar.

Not to make too much of the symbolism here: Allan and I were born 6 weeks early, our lungs had collapsed and we were in separate incubators for weeks. The cranial sacral work on the solar plexus may have triggered a regression which enabled voicing of deep emotion. The glass cage / incubator imagery however also mirrors the trapped feelings and imagery of my Thinker / Prodigal Son painting. There was however movement in the symbolic imagery. The mind-strings of the prodigal son completely entangle and restrain, an incubator contains in order to maintain a safe environment for an incubating newborn.

I am in Stellenbosch singing with my teacher, Hantie Prins.

*Journal entry 6 September 2009:* This trip I’m having problems letting go and singing. Hantie keeps saying, “The music is out there in the ether. All you have to do is resonate with it.” Well I can’t. There is something in the way.

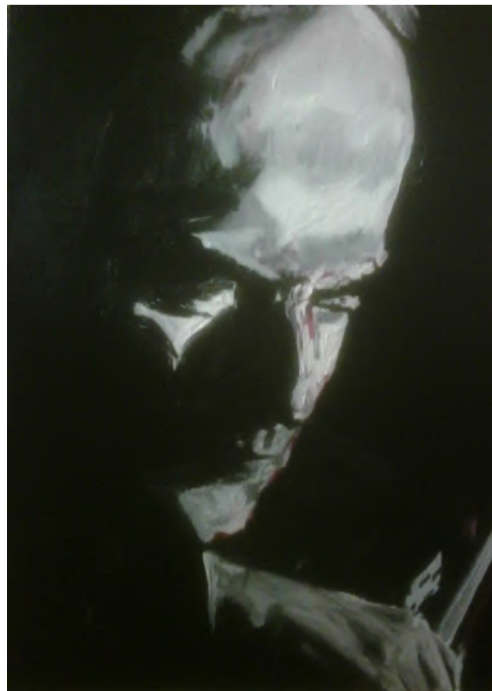
Last night I had a peculiar dream: I am in a fight. It’s between two shuls. It’s to the death. I’ve laid an ambush. Two mounds of snow my opponent must go between. I hide behind, ready for attack. I jump. In my hand is a bag full of iron. I must swing it and hit my opponent hard on the head. I can’t.

Was my fear of hurting my opponent? Not entirely. My primary fear in the dream was “putting myself out there,” claiming my power. It is scary owning who you are. And singing thus, can be terrifying.

There is more symbolism too—the fight between two shuls—two sanctuaries, the paradigms of identity, two images of myself. The old must die if the new is to grow. Creativity, said David Bohm (1998) is “what victory an artist can snatch from the intimate struggle between self and inspiration” (p. 41).

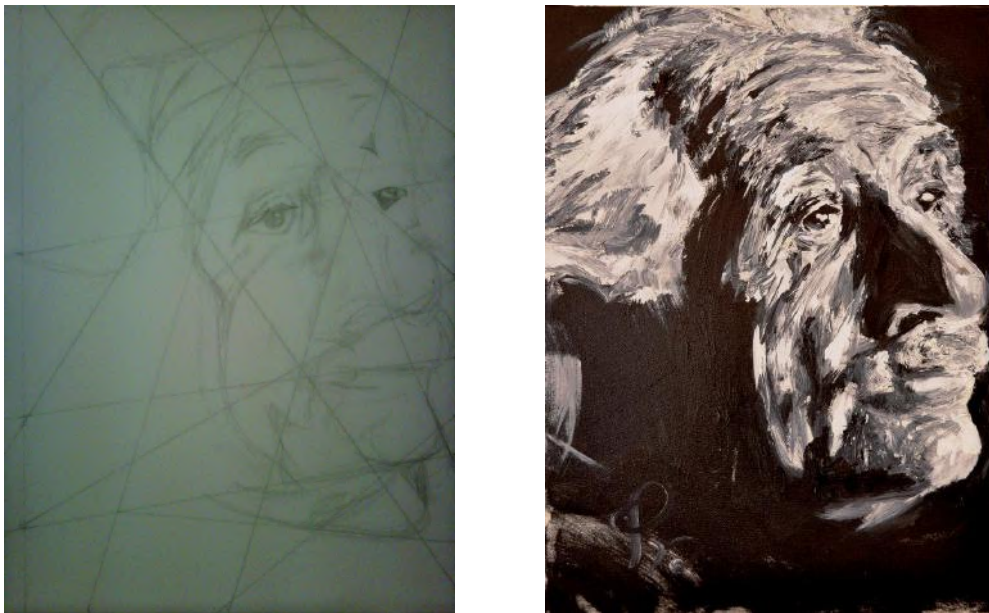
My art teacher Michael Wald has been trying for years to get me to slow down and learn to structure a painting. I'd balked at the thought; an hour per painting maximum is all my attention would permit. Towards the end of 2008 we made a deal, I would spend at least a month on a painting. I was eager to learn portraiture. I found a book of famous people of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and started to paint those I admired. At the same time Hantie had wanted me to learn music formally. I started lessons with Evelyn Green, a well-known music teacher, accompanist, and conductor in Johannesburg. Although perhaps I present it as a rapid "aaha" experience, learning the patience to slow down and think is a slow process.

Painting Yehudi Menuhin towards the end of 2009 proved to be a turning point (Figure 14). I worked and reworked his face and then struggled with his hand and bow. They felt cramped and stiff. My art teacher helped me out by extrapolating the line of the fingers to different parts of the face. It was fascinating suddenly seeing the hand structured in relation to the whole picture. I had been working on it in isolation.



*Figure 14. Yehudi Menuhin. Oil on canvas.*

The idea fascinated me, how do the different parts of a picture relate to each other? Could I build up a face purely by understanding the relationship of the parts? I started working on Albert Einstein. I spent two whole evenings thinking about, measuring, and plotting positions (Figure 15). Structure was becoming fun, and splashing in the feeling guided by the lines was easy and joyful.



*Figure 15. Albert Einstein. Pencil construction on canvas and final oil on canvas.*

I realized I had begun to use a similar thinking in my approach to life. The picture became a metaphor, a way of explaining to myself that I was trying to understand the relationships between different dynamics and patterns, and how they were playing out in my life and my identity, that there was also a bigger picture beyond just me. David Bohm (1998) remarked that “by becoming aware of preconceptions that have been conditioning us unconsciously we are able to perceive and understand the world in a fresh way. One can then

‘feel out’ and explore what is unknown” (p. 48). This way of looking at the world was bringing insight, empathy, and compassion. It was helping me better establish personal boundaries.

At the same time in my music lessons I was learning to read music, count, and feel the written rhythms. Remaining true to the score enabled me to comfortably sing with accompaniment and actually make music, something that previously was somewhat haphazard. I was learning how music fits together. We worked on some of the Lieder repertoire, Mozart and Puccini.

We were working on Schubert’s *An die Musik*. Evelyn was accompanying me, I was singing. I was used to relying on her for the tempo and would follow her. I was singing, she was slowing down. I would slow down to match her speed, and she would slow down even more. I relate a transition:

*Journal entry 15 October 2009:* She’s slowing down interminably. I stop singing. “What are you doing?” I ask. “I’m following you.” Evelyn replies, “I’m switching roles from teacher to accompanist. You, the soloist, lead. The music is in place. Let go and sing freely. Remember, the music is master of us all. You’re not a big ego singing out there. Do that and you’ll ruin it. We’re here to serve the music.”

Last week, I had a singing lesson with Hantie. We’re working on bringing out the tenor quality in my voice. It was a whole different experience knowing the music. Much of the anxiety was gone, and with it the constant thinking, “How to do this.” The voice was so much freer and we were able to concentrate on working with it. The music was in place and was supportive. Structured thought was replacing the mental paralysis I had painted in the *Thinker and Prodigal Son*, and not at the expense of, but enabling feeling, passion, and surrender. Heart and mind are coming together as Maestro Lamperti (1931, p. 7) said, “Beginners often make the mistake of ‘letting themselves go’ while singing because they believe it achieves good results; that is untrue. The head must always be cool, only the heart should be warm.” The week before last I finished

my first joyful painting I have painted in many years—Two Hasidim dancing over a fire—a dance of the creative fusion of the heart and mind—it becomes an effortless effort.

In terms of the Jungian personality typology mentioned above, through developing and integrating the inferior personality function, one

transmits the feeling of life into an inner center, and the four functions remain only as instruments which can be used at will. The functions do not act automatically anymore... after this happens, another kind of development begins. (von Franz & Hillman, 1986, p. 78)

I describe this development through the photo-essay in the next section on synesthesia. I describe the moment of stillness in singing at which the heart opens to perceive the inner light of creation and cocreatively participate in its unfolding.

As an aside, in my last singing lesson I struggled to support the high C. The vocal position requires the witch's cackle, an ugly twang. With all my notions of politeness, beauty, and shyness, I cannot do it. And I will never sing high C if I do not get over myself. Similarly, I recently entered the Johannesburg Music Teachers annual competition. I told Hantie that it's just for fun. She said, "No, you have to dominate that stage. You need a killer instinct. You have one, but you're too nice." So I need to learn to swing that bag of iron still. There is always more work; and more effort; to arrive at effortless effort.

**Synaesthesia—Singing and light.** The Spiritual knowing that takes place when singing is synesthetic combines kinaesthetic and auditory modalities with vision and prescience. For example Rachel described becoming a "vessel for light," Heleen described "seeing all that was to come," and Louisa described repeated experiences in which everything "got sort of shimmery." In my methodology I made provision for recording my process through photography and embodied writing. I now present further results of that process to give an insight into the

synaesthesia that takes place when singing merges with the mystical. I also take the opportunity to report on my intuitive process.

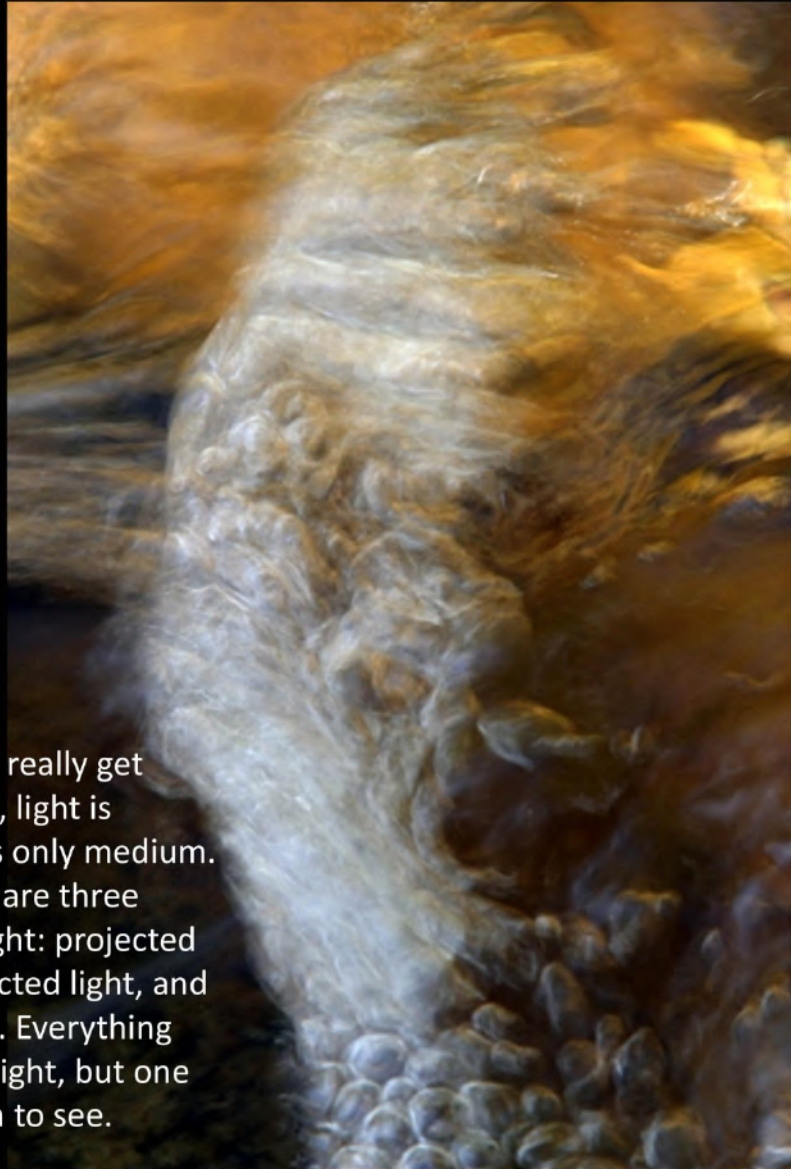
Intuitive inquiry (Anderson, in press) requires that the researcher report on their intuitive process. The cyclical nature of intuitive inquiry makes it difficult to place this analysis in the traditional five chapter dissertation format without disturbing the flows and contours of the argument. I place it here because the placement furthers best the rhythms of my argument as a whole. My intention with the following photo essay is to:

1. Catalyze in the reader, within the confines of the printed page, an intuitive synesthetic understanding of the deeper and participatory nature of singing.
2. Set the foundation for explaining my intuitive process.
3. Demonstrate the synesthesia of singing and light as happened in my process.
4. Synthesize and summarize my dissertation through creative expression—a device I am borrowing from heuristic research, as described by Moustakas (1990).

In the following pages, except where otherwise indicated, both images and words are my own. Full color images are available on [www.paulfreinkel.com](http://www.paulfreinkel.com).



When you really get down to it, light is the artist's only medium. And there are three kinds of light: projected light, reflected light, and inner light. Everything has inner light, but one must learn to see.





Stillness is key, but  
stillness and motion are  
really the same.  
I must be still to  
perceive motion, and in  
motion, I often find my  
stillness.

How magical it is when  
all is still, even when in  
motion. Sometimes  
when I realise this, this  
stillness in motion, I  
think to myself, "Why is  
it that I don't see it all  
the time?"



But I know that I am learning to see.



And if I'm lucky, my heart and eyes become one, and I fall in love, again and again.



And when I fall in love, I sing.















But most times I must sing to fall in love.

Eventually we learn that in the beginning the Blessed Holy One is creating light. It is not light as any we know. Rather it is an inner light, by which those who merit can see from one end of the world to the other. G-d hides the light. Sows it like a seed. It gives birth to seeds and fruit, and sustains the world (Zohar, Genesis 1:3).

And then He also creates the sun, and moon, and stars: Outer light. This He gives to painters, artists and photographers - interior decorators of all descript.

But what of this inner light? This too He gives, but to a few, the Rembrandts and Monets, who see; and love. And yes, he gives it too to singers. It is not by accident the Hebrew chazan, one who sings, has chazon - vision - inner sight of inner light.



But to say one thus possesses vision is to miss the point.

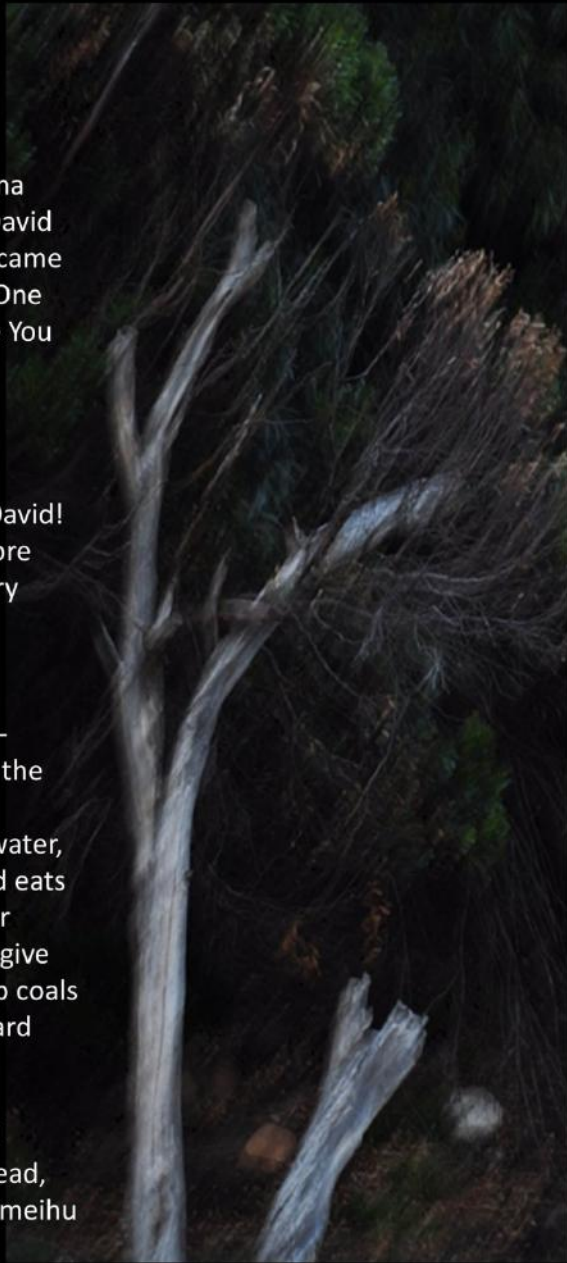


The sages of the Talmud (Hakdama to Perek Shira) said that when King David completed the book of Psalms he became very proud. He said before the Holy One Blessed be He, "Is there any creature You have created that sings more songs and praises than I?"

At that moment a frog happened across his path, and it said to him, "David! Do not become proud, for I recite more songs and praises than you. And every song I say contains three thousand parables...

And I am busy with a great deed – there is a certain type of creature by the edge of the sea whose sustenance is entirely from creatures living in the water, and when it is hungry it takes me and eats me, so I fulfill that which says, 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him, if thirsty, give him water to drink, for you shall heap coals of fire on his head and G-d shall reward you.'

Said the sages, 'Do not read 'shall reward you (yishaleim lach)' rather read, 'shall make him complete you (yashlimeihu lach). '



I sing, yet to say I sing alone is to miss the point.



**Reporting on my intuitive process.** My intuitive process is largely visual and kinesthetic. I *see* how things fit together and, when writing, my body tells me whether a word sits true or not. There is a similar inner sight when shooting pictures. I, my body, sense the composition through comfortable “Yes,” or dissonant “No” sensations.

The photographs above were taken throughout the dissertation process, largely concurrent to singing. I find myself (still) contemplating and enjoying the photographs, and often there emerges a confluence of meaning between the photographic imagery, my experience singing, what I am reading at the time, my life, and consequently my inner dissertation process. What follows is a snapshot in time, a record of that confluence of meaning and an unraveling of the intuitive process that came together in my creative synthesis.

The wording came to me in two spurts. The first section was written just prior to setting out on my trip to interview participants. I was home alone one evening and sensed the presence of my late father with me. I set a place at the table for him and sat down to eat dinner. I felt him hold my hand during the meal and for a full hour beyond. I got up from the table and in the space of a few minutes wrote the section “When you get really down to it . . .” to “But most times I must sing to fall in love.” I selected some photographs and put the first part of the creative synthesis together. The next week I set off for London, Amsterdam, New York, and San Francisco to start the interview process.

After the interviews, over the course of the next year, I puzzled over the relationship between singing, light, and vision. Rachel had described becoming a vessel for light, Ruth described everything’s becoming “shimmery,” and Heleen described an act of deep inner knowing of her future. During the interview process I had showed my photographs and light text to my participants. Rachel identified a maternal / material earthiness in them. Louisa

immediately spoke of the Lion of Narnia singing the world into being. This last remark gave, I can say in retrospect, a surprising clue to the puzzle. (Looking now at the photographs, I see I have ordered them more or less in the basic sequence of the biblical creation narrative.)

In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing . . . . Sometimes it seemed to be coming from all directions at once. Its lower notes were deep enough to be of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly even a tune . . . . The voice was suddenly joined by other voices; more voices than you could possibly count. They were in harmony with it, but far higher up the scale: cold, tingling, silvery voices . . . the blackness overhead, all at once, was blazing with stars . . . .

The lion was pacing to and fro about that empty land and singing his new song. It was softer and more lilting than the song by which he had called up the stars and the sun . . . a gentle rippling music. And as he walked and sang, the valley grew green with grass. (Lewis, 1983, p. 112)

Singing, light, vision, and creation felt connected somehow. I started looking into this in my spiritual tradition. Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler, a teacher from within the *Mussar* movement taught the following of creation. (The Mussar movement was founded and formalized by the sage Rabbi Yisrael Salanter, 1810–1883. Its adherents seek spiritual enlightenment through the perfection of character traits.)

If we may be permitted to imagine for a moment that God's perfect being must encompass a joy which is infinite and forever beyond our grasp, then we can understand that the creation of the world is for the purpose of *chesed*, kindness. It is this joy which overflows and brings in its trail universes of kindness. (Dessler, 1978, p. 212)

Creation, in Dessler's cosmology, is the embodiment of the spilling over of God's joy and desire to give to another. This joy is the secret basis of the universe. Joy in Hebrew, as mentioned before, is *rina*, the same word for song. But not any song; *rina* is a state in which strong feelings of emotion, exultation and ecstasy, or lamentation build up and explode into expression. This song was a meditation technique used by the biblical prophets in prophesying. The prophets would contemplate God's greatness and sing songs of praise, building up ecstasy and explosive emotions (*Rinah*) until their souls broke free to commune with God. *Rinah* may

then have been followed by Hagah meditation, a way of repetitive singing or chanting with a harp. In the Hagah meditation, the practitioner emptied him/herself to reach a state of pure Being. This would then arouse higher emotion and ecstasy (Rinah) and ultimately result in the prophet attaching to God, a state called *deveikut* (Kaplan, 1998, pp. 111-123).

Other voices in the Jewish tradition and many other spiritual traditions have experienced sound and song at the basis of creation and the human being. Rebbe Nachman of Breslav, the 17<sup>th</sup> century founder of Breslaver Hasiduth, speaks of a person's very life force consisting of 10 rhythms incorporating 10 melodies played on 10 strings made of pure joy, the individual being the expression (the singing) of these melodies (Nachman of Breslav, 1991).

My tradition's connection between light, singing, vision, creation, and now the human being was becoming clearer and informing my understanding of my experience. This emerging understanding is not only a science of the brain. This is a different *way* of research—when the heart and eyes become one. This is, I believe, what Anderson means when she says, “Intuitive inquiry is an epistemology of the heart” (Anderson, in press, p. 18).

Whenever I am in London I meet a friend at the National Portrait Gallery. We go to stand in awe of the Rembrandts. The feeling is akin to worship. While in San Francisco there was an exhibition of Monet. I had never seen original Monets. His work did the same heart stopping soul bursting as had Rembrandt's. It is the same embodied rooting that takes place sometimes when I sing, or when I hear deep singing. The eminent sage Rabbi Avraham Kook may have had a similar experience. He writes of Rembrandt:

When I lived in London I used to visit the National Gallery and my favorite pictures were those of Rembrandt. I really think that Rembrandt was a *Tzadik* (a righteous person). Do you know that when I first saw Rembrandt's works, they reminded me of the legend about the creation of light? We are told that when God created light it was so strong and pellucid, that one could see from one end of the world to the other, but God was afraid that the wicked might abuse it. What did He do? He reserved that light for the righteous

when the Messiah should come. But now and then there are great men who are blessed and privileged to see it. I think that Rembrandt was one of them, and the light in his pictures is the very light that was originally created by God Almighty.

(Jewish Chronicle of London, September 13, 1935)

Recently, after I had finished writing up my results of Cycle 3, something clicked. I was ready for bed and the impulse to write came to me (as did the simultaneous impulse to curl up and forget about writing, which fortunately I ignored.) The second section of the creative synthesis combining singing, light, creation, and human development appeared whole in my consciousness:

Eventually we learn that in the beginning the Blessed Holy One is creating light. It is not light as any we know. Rather it is an inner light, by which those who merit can see from one end of the world to the other. G-d hides the light. Sows it like a seed. It gives birth to seeds and fruit, and sustains the world (Zohar, Genesis 1:3).

And then He also creates the sun, and moon, and stars: Outer light. This He gives to painters, artists and photographers—interior decorators of all descript.

But what of this inner light? This too He gives, but to a few, the Rembrandts and Monets, who see; and love. And he gives it too to singers. It is not by accident the Hebrew chazan—one who sings; has chazon—vision—Inner sight of inner light.

There was more though that I felt I needed to say. A question had nagged at me since interviewing David Hykes in New York. New York is a city of contrasts. The night before interviewing him, David had invited me to a demonstration of sacred chant being given in aid of charity. It took place in a crowded private apartment. The hosts struggled to hush the crowd for the demonstration. I noticed David chanting in complete stillness despite the noise of the crowd, many of whom were avidly videoing the demonstration with cell phones and the like. I was struck by the contrast of noise and silence and people's need to record, to *have*, rather than simply *being* with the beauty of the happening of sacred chant.

The stark realization of this acquisitive ontology and then finding it in myself made me question my photography and singing. The language of photography is unambiguous, "I *take* a



picture.” But taking a photograph in the appropriating ego sense does not fit my experience. I set in place the appropriate conditions for the meeting of subject, and camera, and emerging image. In photography it is fairly easy to do because I am not overly identified with the process or result. Singing is different. It is not easy to trust in the process. I have a lot of me invested in my voice. The ego grasps for the security of known sound; rather than free sound. This makes the ontological shift from “having” to “being” in singing a lot more difficult. Cycle 1 brought the message to “dissolve the vehicle” and brought images of monkeys stealing fruit. Here I was being presented with the ego grasping for the safety of a secure and known sound. .

I grappled for over a year with how to include this idea into my creative synthesis. The morning after writing the second section above, it came to me, and I added, “But to say one thus possesses vision is to miss the point.”

If true to this formula, I do not take a picture, in a sense the picture ultimately takes me (Hanoach Abelman, personal communication, 30 May 2009). Art and art-making become captivating. Art’s process unfolds as an ever fresh participatory happening: not for a moment stripped of individuation; yet continuing beyond even the lifetime of the artist. The same is true for singing.

But what of the process of development? There is no such thing as a self-made man or woman, and this fallacy is not solely a modern Western invention. The Rabbis of the Talmud taught that David, king of biblical Israel approximately 3000 years ago, made the mistake of egoic appropriation of his song. In their allegory he was corrected by a frog that rebuked him, instructed him in humility and in the nature of participatory development.

Transpersonal development is a participatory unfolding. A person authentically singing his or her life-song sings with the creative participation of many others. The hidden generative light of creation flows through many to bring about their unique participatory development.

The synesthetic intuitive insight described above informed the process of refining my lenses. In chapter 5, following, I continue reporting on that process as well as integrating my research findings with the literature.

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

The essence of this chapter is that I have built on the nascent use of intuitive inquiry to evolve inductively based theory (Anderson, in press, p. 35). This led to my calling in concepts in Ferrer's participatory revisioning of transpersonal theory (Ferrer, 2002), as well as concepts from transpersonal developmental theory. I did not start from Ferrer, nor the developmental theory; rather my data led me to a revisioning that confirmed Ferrer's own, and in contradiction to Ferrer's work, described developmental trajectories. In this chapter I have elaborated on Ferrer's more general work with variant specifics from the fields of singing and of human development; differed from Ferrer by retaining human development facets of interpretation which he renounced; and proposed how my data may be used to form the basis of research explicating the synthesis of various developmental models. Furthermore, Anderson (in press) wrote of proprioception and kinesthesia as two modalities of intuition; I am proposing the importance of synesthesia at the singer's mystical "higher reaches" of human nature as another modality of intuition that may be incorporated into intuitive inquiry's methodology.

In chapter 4, I described the process of data collection and reported the preliminary lenses through which I was viewing the subject developed in Cycle 2. I also presented my findings after having collected, engaged with, and analyzed the data of Cycle 3. Chapter 5, the chapter that follows, records cycles 4 and 5 of my intuitive inquiry.

In Cycle 4, I work with transforming and refining the preliminary lenses developed in Cycle 2 by my first brainstorming a list of final lenses (Appendix D), and then creating a final set of expanded interpretative lenses.

In Cycle 5, I integrate my experience and my new set of lenses with my literature review, and propose future research.

## Cycle 4—My Process of Transforming and Refining Lenses

**Brainstorming lenses.** Intuitive inquiry’s fourth cycle requires reworking, refining, and reintegrating lenses arrived at the end of Cycle 2 in light of discoveries and happenings of Cycle 3’s data collection and analysis. This section contains many lists of lenses. To the reader who wants to read ahead, I recommend skipping ahead to the section entitled, “**Main outcomes of Cycle 4: Shifting to participatory and developmental paradigms.**”

To briefly recap, at the end of Cycle 2, I formulated the following selection of preliminary lenses (Appendix C contains the full list):

- A person’s inner state is mirrored in the voice by the way they use the vocal tract.
- Psychological wounds or dissociative splitting inhibit our freedom to sing.  
Conversely, singing may heal and integrate these wounds.
- Music creates an inner beat, an inner organizing movement. We sing when we listen to the inner beat and resonate with it.
- The deeper and more attentively we are able to listen the deeper we are able to tap into the flow of life. The voice is an anatomical / physiological instrument that enables us to express that which we are tapping into.
- Proper vocal tract coordination requires we tap into this inner space but may also take us to this inner space. It is a “chicken or egg” situation.
- In this inner space, thought and awareness, and self are related “entities” in a different way from discursive thought, awareness, and little self. In my experience discursive thought and little-self interrupt both the ontological experience as well as the vocal tract coordination required to sing.

- Singing may lead to growth in all three aspects of the integral triad of essential, inseparable, and interrelated aspects of being human: uniqueness or individuality, universality or relatedness, and the transcendent, and may lead to transformation and our unique unfolding.

The job of Cycle 4: Stating and reformulating lenses has proved to be a difficult process. I dragged myself to my computer for 2 weeks and ended up staring blankly at the screen, only to give up and distract myself with the daily internet news. Eventually I unplugged my internet, “hid” the modem in a drawer, turned off all telephones and forced myself to brainstorm a new list of interpretative lenses which are found in Appendix . I have listed key new lenses, then refined, categorised and presented the Cycle 2 to Cycle 4 developments of key areas in the following section. My resistance to the process surprised me.

**Selection of brainstormed final lenses.** These are the lenses that emerged next.

- Singing is a multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening, which in turn is part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding.
- It happens in relationship:
  - with people
  - with place and space
  - across time
- Enables individuation
- Enables a shift in identity
- Plays a role in embodiment and changes the embodied experience

- Brings to consciousness and enables working through developmental trailers (psychological baggage which inhibits further development) and plays a role in return cycles

**Lens development from Cycle 2 to Cycle 4: New, Seed, and Change lenses.** As mentioned before, I struggled with the process of refining lenses, and then struggled with their articulation. Many lenses lay nascent in Cycle 2, some changed significantly and some remained unexplicated, neither changed, refuted, nor developed. New lenses also came to light.

Esjborn (2003) recognised this and in her study categorised her lenses as New, Change, and Seed lenses. New Lenses signify breakthroughs in understanding which were entirely new and unexpected. Change lenses signify a significant progression of change from the lenses of Cycle 2. Seed lenses signify lenses which were nascent in Cycle 2 but which developed and acquired nuance through the intuitive inquiry (Anderson, in press). I have formulated my lenses according to Esjborn's formulation, giving a Cycle 2 to Cycle 4 comparison.

I originally added a fourth category of lens: Unexplicated Lenses: lenses of Cycle 2 which were unexplicated or minimally explicated by the study and would remain as questions for further research. Through the course of writing my discussion, the meaning of these "unexplicated" lenses came to the fore. I removed the section.

The biggest transformation in my thinking reflected in the transformation of my lenses is that it has taken both a developmental and participatory turn. This becomes clear in the way I have presented the Cycle 2 to Cycle 4 lens progression.

**Change lenses.** These were the *Preliminary Cycle 2 lenses*.

1. Singing can lead to exceptional experiences or peak experiences as well as be transformative, leading therefore to potentially exceptional human experiences or plateau experiences.
2. In fact, singing may lead to growth in all three aspects of the integral triad of essential, inseparable, and interrelated aspects of being human: uniqueness or individuality, universality or relatedness, and transcendence, and may lead to transformation.
3. An act of singing may be a hierophany.

**Related Change lenses.** These were the related lenses.

1. Singing is a multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening, which in turn is part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding of individuating spirit.
2. This multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening happens in relationship with people, place and space, and across time, manifesting as the Singer's Journey, a journey of transpersonal development.

**Preliminary Cycle 2 lenses.** These were the early lenses for Cycle 2.

1. Music creates an inner beat, an inner organizing movement. We sing when we listen to the inner beat and resonate with it.
2. The deeper and more attentively we are able to listen the deeper we are able to tap into the flow of life. The voice is an anatomical / physiological instrument that enables us to express that which we are tapping into.
3. Proper vocal tract coordination requires we tap into this inner space but may also take us to this inner space. It is a "chicken or egg" situation.

4. Singing helps us to stay rooted in our core, our voice, and our power. It connects us to our past and our present and may alter our future. It is a way in which we connect to our inner selves and the transcendental.
5. It seems that there is a continuum in the way we vocalize or sing: with pure emotion and pure intellect representing the extremes. There is probably a point at which awareness changes and a synthesis of emotion and awareness takes place, which may correspond to the awakening of Self (capital S) in psychosynthesis.

***Related Change lenses.*** These were lenses related to change.

1. Singing is embodying and changes the embodied experience and embodied stance enabling the simultaneous experience of immanent and transcendent spirit.
2. Singing opens heart, creates mind-body awareness, and heart-mind integration which leads us deeper into our authentic selves.

***Preliminary Cycle 2 lens.*** This emerged as I was underway.

1. Vocal tract alignment mirrors psychology.

***Related Change lenses.*** This is what followed.

1. Vocal tract alignment may mirror psychology.
2. The way we use and relate to our vocal tract while singing may reflect developmental stages and may drive development.
3. The happening or peak experience while singing may relate to higher stages of development, requiring metabolism by the self and stabilising this higher stage in consciousness; it may give insight into and experience of deeper, authentic aspects of self.



***Preliminary Cycle 2 lenses.*** These were also in the mix.

1. Psychological wounds or dissociative splitting inhibit our freedom to sing.

Conversely, singing may heal and integrate these wounds.

2. Difficulty in singing may point us to wounds that need healing.

***Related Change lenses.*** These were other lenses related to change, at this point.

1. Singing not only presents and helps to heal psycho-spiritual wounds, but enables return cycles and forward movement through developmental stages.
2. These return cycles may involve revisiting and transmuting relationships both to parental archetypes and to the way the singer relates to physicality and matter.

***Seed lenses.*** These literally held the essence of what emerged next.

1. Singing may lead us to our inner uniqueness and aid in our unique unfolding.
2. Singing “shakes you up” causing shifts in self-identity.
3. There is a “vocal consciousness,” an embodied consciousness parallel to egoic consciousness that knows how to sing.
4. In this inner space (when one is singing), thought, awareness, and self are related “entities” in a different way to discursive thought, awareness, and little self. In my experience discursive thought and “little self” interrupt both the ontological experience as well as the vocal tract coordination required to sing.
5. It seems that there is a continuum in the way we vocalize or sing: with pure emotion and pure intellect representing the extremes. There is probably a point where awareness changes and a synthesis of emotion and awareness takes place, which may correspond to the awakening of Self (capital S) in psychosynthesis.

6. The peak experience or participatory happening in singing involves an ontological shift to this vocal consciousness and opens awareness to a greater dimensionality of Self.

***New lenses.*** These offered a fresh perspective on what was emerging.

1. Singing may be an integral transformative practice.
2. Singing relates to the exposing of Self which requires vulnerability. This vulnerability, though initially frightening, is required for the vulnerable self to gather in strength and inner power as the impetus to deeper embodiment unfolds and defences are released.
3. Singing opens the heart and facilitates mind-body awareness, heart-mind integration, and simultaneous experience of immanent and transcendent spirituality.
4. Singing makes “Home” and yearning for home.
5. The Singer’s Journey happens in relationship. The nascent singer requires recognition, nurturing, and encouragement. This comes through loving recognition and naming by another, whether teachers, friends and family, dream guides, audience. It also comes through peak experiences.
6. Singing sometimes is an act of participatory knowing in which subject and object, knowing, and being, epistemology, and ontology, are all brought together.

**Main outcomes of Cycle 4: Shifting to participatory and developmental paradigms.**

The most important shift in my understanding of the inner experience of singing that came to the fore in Cycle 4 was my shift to participatory and developmental paradigms. I explore this in depth in Cycle 5. In summary:

1. Singing is a multilocal participatory happening, which in turn is part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding supporting the individuating spirit.
2. This multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening-and-unfolding occurs in relationship with people, place, space, and across time. It shifts identity, opens and deepens self-awareness and unfolds as the Singer's Journey: a journey of transpersonal development, a journey of individuating consciousness singing its way Home.
3. This Singer's Journey seems to follow the maps of established theories of transpersonal development. It follows stages, return cycles, and forward movements.

### **Cycle 5—Expanding the Hermeneutic Spiral**

**Integrating findings and literature review.** In Cycle 5, as outlined by intuitive inquiry (Anderson, in press), I have stepped back (literally, by filling a wall with a map of my dissertation process, Figure 16) to gain a metaview of the research process to date. I have physically cut and pasted relevant results and literature to this map, have contextualised the study findings and the literature review, and have drawn meaning from, and into, a larger, more encompassing, hermeneutical or interpretive circle.

I have previously reported what was discovered in the study as well as recorded and reported the process that I went through as it unfolded. In the sections that follow, I integrate my process and lenses with my literature review and report on what still remains uncertain, undiscovered, or mysterious (Anderson, 2004, 2006, in press).



Figure 16. Wall map of dissertation process. I hung the completed picture of Albert Einstein as an inspiration to clear thinking.

**Singing is a multilocal participatory happening.** I start by proposing that singing is a multilocal participatory happening which in turn is part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding supporting the individuating spirit. I have called this the Singer's Journey and use Ferrer's participatory paradigm of spiritual knowing (Ferrer, 2002) as a framework for analyzing it.

I first review Ferrer's participatory turn; I then explain the *multilocal* nature of the peak experience or spiritual knowing that takes place while singing—it often happens in the individual, or in relationship with others, community, space, and place. This singing is also *participatory*—it involves the creative participation of our minds, hearts, bodies, souls, our most vital essence, and multiloci as mentioned above.

I then frame these “happenings” in terms of the developmental paradigms summarized in my literature review, and contextualize these landmark happenings in the Singer’s Journey as part of a multilocal trans-temporal participatory developmental unfolding.

I have added the word *trans-temporal* to Ferrer’s participatory glossary as it appears that the spiritual knowing taking place through singing takes place across time—it may involve prescience, it may happen in various participatory ways over a lifetime, and in some cases even over what appears to be multiple lifetimes. I have also looked at the implications of the participatory paradigm on the paradigm of development.

This participatory shift in my understanding of what happens on the Singer’s Journey to some extent mirrors shifts in my journey as a researcher. My toolbox now includes both the medical empirical research tools of my earlier education as well as transpersonal research methods that honor participatory knowing. The hard boundary of my former dualistic paradigm of subject vs. object based research has become more permeable, and has opened to one that is more nondual, at once unitive and differentiating.

**The participatory turn.** As discussed in my literature review, an argument exists among contemporary transpersonal theorists as to the nature of spiritual experience and how it drives development. Traditionally, as discussed, spiritual knowledge has been viewed through the paradigm of spiritual *experience*. This paradigm of spiritual knowing as experience has a subject *experiencing* the experience, a subject in which the experience takes place. It further emphasizes two types of experience—peaks and plateaus. Peak experiences are temporary altered states which a human being, while awake, can experience any part of the general spectrum of consciousness no matter what stage their development. Plateaus occur when peak experiences

become permanent realizations in a person's makeup and transform the person. Peaks and plateaus drive development (Wilber, 2000, p. 14).

This model of spiritual knowing as spiritual experience works, yet, as with all good models, it has its limitations, and gets contextualized in the evolution of subsequent paradigms. It has been criticized for containing subtle empirical, intrasubjective reductionist, and self-centered qualities in the very term *spiritual experience*. Theorists like Jorge Ferrer shift the center of gravity from a self *having* a spiritual experience to suggest rather that spiritual knowing involves a knowing subject being a part of a greater spiritual happening which may bring about transpersonal experience and transformation in the individual and the world. Ferrer called this shift *participatory spiritual knowing* (Ferrer, 2002, pp. 22-28). He emphasized that spiritual knowing is not seen as a “mere change in our individual experience of a pre-given world, but as the emergence of an ontological event in reality in which our consciousness creatively participates” in communion, cotransformation, and cotransfiguration with the world (p. 118).

This *Participatory Turn* is not uncontroversial. Nor have the participatory turn's implications for research methodology been fully unraveled. (It has been useful to approach research as a reporting of my, the researcher's, coparticipation in the research happening). Nevertheless the participatory turn is a very significant insight and rearrangement of the philosophical basis of Transpersonal Psychology and its proposition of participatory knowing is supported and extended by the narratives of my research. For this I use it.

In this discussion, I replace the terms *peak and plateau experience*, which I originally used in my literature review, with the participatory language: *events or happenings of spiritual knowing*, and show how these events drive the Singer's Journey of transpersonal development.

**Transpersonal phenomena as multilocal participatory events.** Ferrer's participatory vision conceives transpersonal phenomena as: "(1) *events*, in contrast to intrasubjective experience" that may

elicit in the individual transpersonal experience; (2) *multilocal*, in that they arise in different loci, such as individuals, relationships, communities or place; and (3) *participatory*, in that they can invite the generative power and dynamism of all dimensions of human nature to interact with a spiritual power in the co-creation of spiritual worlds. (Ferrer, 2002, p. 117)

**The meaning of participatory.** Ferrer (2002, p. 121) clarifies three ways in which he uses the word participatory in the context of transpersonal events.

1. Transpersonal events engage human beings in a *participatory*, connected, and often passionate knowing that can involve not only the opening of the mind, but also of the body, heart, and soul. All dimensions of human nature can *participate* in the knowing.
2. Participatory refers to the role that individual consciousness plays during the transpersonal event. It is not one of appropriation, possession, or passive representation, but of communion and cocreation.
3. Whether consciously or unconsciously, human beings are always participating in the self-disclosure of spirit by virtue of their very existence.

Simply, in Ferrer's thought, participation means:

1. All parts of the whole human being participate in the event;
2. The spiritual event is not located inside the individual consciousness, but rather the individual consciousness participates in the event in relationship with other participants, be they spiritual energies, human, animal, or place; and
3. The individual participates with Spirit in its Self-disclosure through the event.

4. Spiritual knowing is thus reframed as a multilocal, participatory happening.

To again quote Ferrer:

Spiritual knowing is a participatory event: It can involve the creative participation of not only our minds, but our hearts, bodies, souls, and most vital essence. Furthermore, spiritual energies are not confined to our inner world, but flow out of relationships, communities, and even places. (Ferrer, 2002, p. 115)

**Participatory knowing—Its meaning and qualities.** Ferrer describes it thus:

Participatory knowing refers to a multidimensional access to reality that includes not only the intellectual knowing of the mind, but also the emotional and empathic knowing of the heart, the sensual and somatic knowing of the body, the visionary and intuitive knowing of the soul, as well as any other way of knowing available to human beings. (Ferrer, 2002, p. 121)

Ferrer further outlines three qualities of participatory knowing:

1. Participatory knowing is presential, or knowing by presence or identity.
2. Participatory knowing is enactive (i.e., not a mental representation of pre-given, independent spiritual objects, but an enaction, a “bringing forth of a world or domain of distinctions co-created by the different elements involved in the participatory event.”
3. Participatory knowing is transformative. Participation in a transpersonal event transforms self and the world. At the same time, transformation of self is normally required to participate in transpersonal knowing, and the knowing in turn draws the self through its own transformative processes in order to further facilitate participation (pp. 123-124).

It could be said that subject and object, knowing, and being, epistemology, and ontology, are all brought together in the act of participatory knowing (Ferrer, 2002, p. 123).

In the next section I look at what I would have formerly called peak experiences in the Singer’s Journey and show how they are in fact multilocal participatory events of spiritual



knowing. I will then look at how these events drive development—what I call trans-temporal participatory unfolding. I not only use the participatory turn to structure my research, but bring my research as narrative evidence supporting the participatory turn.

**Singing as multilocal participatory event or happening.** There is no question that an opera or a concert is an event—a happening. When done well, it is something sumptuous, gorgeous, and timeless. (When done badly, other words describe it.) The singing is mostly thought of as a one way performance, involving an active singer and a passive audience. Often this is the case. However my research shows the following: (a) There are times when singing is *enactive*, becoming an act of multilocal participatory spiritual knowing—a happening that is cocreated in relationship with people, place, space, and Spirit; (b) this knowing is *participatory and presential*, wholly involving the singer’s presence, mind, soul, and body in its wholeness; and (c) this spiritual knowing is *transformative*. It shifts identity, opens and deepens self-awareness and engenders transformation in the singer. In other words it fits all Ferrer’s criteria mentioned above for a transpersonal multilocal participatory event. I will now show how this is the case, and discuss how these multilocal participatory processes come together to effect transformation.

**Participation of the body, and the body as a locus of spiritual knowing.** We refer to ourselves as incarnate beings; our lives are centered in embodied experience (Anderson, 2008). The body’s intelligence and intuitions are portals to healing. At the end of my literature review I suggested that freedom (from psychological defense) and alignment of the physical body (in the vocal tract) correlates with spiritual openness and may lead to transpersonal development. Two of my participants, teachers of singing, describe the body as a key participant to accessing the individual’s voice and their uniqueness. Rebecca’s description describes the “overt physicality”

of the process. Heleen's description begins to introduce the idea of *presential* knowing or knowing through being which I will expand later.

*Rebecca S:* I have students come in, and the main goal I have for them is for us to work towards their voice to be as close to their natural instrument, their natural fingerprint—you know the true expression of their instrument as possible. . . . The number one thing is not to listen to the voices that they sing, but to focus almost exclusively on the sensations of the voice, the body. It becomes a very overtly physical process.

*Heleen:* What I try to do, when I teach people, is to bring them in themselves and in their own voices. And when that happens it's always moving, it's always beautiful. It's always real; it's always in the moment.

Embodied participation in spiritual knowing gets deeper. In the Buddhist tradition, awareness of the fundamental consciousness pervading the body is vital to the enlightenment process (Blackstone, 2008), and in the Jewish mystical tradition, the un-interfered with expression of the voice, an organ of the body, in song has this effect of awakening and expanding consciousness (Kaplan, 1998, p. 121). This expansion of consciousness in song through the body's participation is presential knowing (i.e., it involves knowing through being). The participant narratives below demonstrate this, that the body, its voice, and innate embodied intelligence are necessary and willing participants in, and potential loci of, the participatory event of presential spiritual knowing and cocreation that takes place in singing.

Sandra describes her sensation of strength and elevation in embodiment, Heleen and Rachel describe the body's innate knowing "taking over" while they sing, and Douglas and Louise describe accessing deeper parts of themselves through their deeply embodied singing. Douglas further describes a profound expansion of consciousness.

*Sandra:* Presence . . . Presence in your body, but, and in the meantime you're lifted up and you're stronger in your body. It's very curious.

*Heleen:* I was very focused on my feet and on my legs to stand, really on the ground. And that made me quieter than I usually am. And just before I had to start, I felt my body taking a breath. And it wasn't at the moment that I consciously would have taken that

breath, so I, I something like, what's going on? It was much earlier than I would normally have taken that breath. And then at the same time I could let it go, and I sung that piece then very well. But my body took over. And I didn't do it anymore.

*Rachel:* I don't have to think about it. I don't have to think about . . . my voice does it. And I'm back here. My ego itself is like, "How the hell are you doing that?" It already knows all the notes and it's just, and it's just doing. And I'm just watching. I know I'm involved somehow and participating, but it knows how to land.

*Louise:* You need to have the correct technique . . . you can't do it without that, but sometimes you have to, at some point you have to let go, and let the body speak, let the being speak actually.

*Douglas:* One day you know I was getting, just singing "awa," on at least two or three or four pitches. I was getting more and more inward and inner . . . All the time you're feeling your instrument activated in different ways. And finally her idea is that everything that resonates is resonating and she has extended this to include every mucous membrane and the air passages in the sinuses and all the way up to the Eustachian tubes, the eardrums, everything resonates . . . and there's more of a brilliance coming off these bones, you know. And so the idea is also that bones resonate themselves and so the idea is to engage all that, but by natural instinctive reflex processes. But it also has this effect of accessing deeper and deeper levels of yourself in an inward way.

*Douglas:* I had found that kind of freedom, and then all of a sudden the sound just got better and better and more focused and more there. And everything was vibrating and this is where you lose words for the experience.

I have never quite found the right words because I don't think they exist, you know. Because these are not ordinary experiences and we don't have a good language for them, but everything kind of became one, the unity conscious thing maybe, and exterior-interior were no longer a differential to be made really.

Everything was the same, subject and object. I was making the sound, but somehow the sound was coming from me and was its own thing and I was the sound. It was all in this mix of being basically.

And it got just more luminous in a sense and it was wonderful! It was a wonderful feeling and it didn't destroy itself. It was not like a manic high. I was very calm but very ecstatic, expansive, a luminous, and a state of being that seemed to totally justify itself.

It was sort of like . . . you know we talk about unconditional love, kind of a rare thing that sometimes people experience and this was kind of a feeling of unconditional being. We are ordinarily conditioned by everything. We are in bodies that condition us somehow, our self-image and our experience of ourselves, and so I think we tend to always think our existence is very or maybe totally conditioned and dependent upon the conditions. And this was a feeling of being that was just itself. And it needed no justification, no defensive posturing. I just was.

But I wasn't alone. It was not an isolated . . . I was not isolated you know. I was definitely in a very empathic relationship with her (his teacher) during this process.

It wasn't like narcissistic and, "Oh isn't this great, I'm having this experience." It was not about a "me" thing and yet I felt more myself than I ever have and it made me extremely happy. I was very happy. I didn't know it's possible to feel that way. And I also had the feeling that to have this 30 minutes of feeling this way was worth everything I had gone through in my life if it indeed had set me up for this. Every misery, every problem you know, every challenge and every sorrow was sort of just given its reason by this experience.

The testimonies above demonstrate the participation of the body in this musical spiritual happening, and that freedom from psychological defense and alignment of the physical body through the alignment of the vocal tract correlates with deepening spiritual openness. They also support Ferrer's argument for the participatory turn. Douglas's testimony however also supports Ferrer's critique of intrasubjective reductionism and subtle self-centeredness inherent in the term "spiritual experience."

Douglas does not make himself the center of this happening. He emphasizes that it was not narcissistic, nor was he alone in this "experience." He was in a deep empathic relationship with his teacher, a cocreative participant and another locus in this multilocal, participatory, presential transpersonal knowing that took place while he was singing, and she, his teacher, was teaching. Douglas and his teacher's *happening in relationship* demonstrates another important point in the multilocal participatory knowing of singing—it happens in community.

**Singing in community—Participation of others in the spiritual knowing.** When I first started singing in public, I was disturbed by the idea of performing. I felt self-conscious and on display. Hantie pointed out that I should forget about myself; I had a job to do. My job was to inspire the audience to sing, even if only in their heads. This subtle reframing of musical performance shifted me out of self-conscious vulnerability and into relationship. It also helped

me understand the enactive nature of performance singing. The audience is not a passive recipient. There is an enactive, presential, participatory knowing that takes place with the members of the audience. Sandra describes her ability to hold her center and interact rapidly with with multiple parties on multiple levels. Rachel describes this interaction on an emotional level.

*Sandra:* I can switch better. I mean with the audience but also without. You have the communication with yourself and with the band leader and the band, the group and the audience and out of the building, the universal, and you can, I can switch, I can communicate very fast while I'm singing.

*Rachel:* There's something I think in my voice in the vibration . . . people will just start weeping. I mean I did this little Mahler *lied*, and I had men and women, my friends weeping up there in the kitchen. Just tears pouring out.

Performing singers sing in relationship and the individuals in the audience participate and form loci for the cocreative emergence of spiritual knowing that sometimes takes place. This participatory knowing is enactive in that it brings forth a world or domain of distinctions cocreated by the participant elements in the event (Ferrer, 2002, p. 123). Often the singer is not aware of this as Louise describes in the excerpt that follows, and sometimes he or she is, as Sandra describes. Nevertheless the knowing that takes place is enactive and involves the coparticipation of singer and audience, and as in Sandra's description, Spirit.

*Louise:* It's a feeling, it's a feeling of . . . ecstasy. Absolutely huge, free, with no boundaries . . . . It comes from so deep, that emotion, and if the voice works optimally at that point, then, you know it's like a snowball, you can't, once it starts, or an avalanche, once it starts, you can't stop it. So once that emotion starts coming if something doesn't happen to cut that thread, like suddenly, you forget the words, or you trip over the costume or whatever. It's like sex, once it starts happening, there's a point where it can't be stopped; except if your mother-in-law comes into the room.

If this happens, you usually, the audience, something happens with the audience as well. It's, there's that . . . there is an atmosphere of suspension almost. And I think the audience also don't realize what is happening, but there is that (deep inhalation) almost holding of the breath type of atmosphere in the theatre.

And often at the end of it when it stops, you often have that moment of silence, where, you know what I have actually, now that I think of it. It's happened a few times,

that I think, gosh, I wonder if the audience didn't like something or whatever, because they were so quiet, and you know, you almost feel, that they were unresponsive.

But I've talked to many people afterwards, and these were different performances, and they often said to me, but, you know, you don't actually want to break that magic feeling by applauding.

In a discussion between Herman and Sandra, Herman describes Sandra singing in a theatre foyer with her band. They were the entertainment during intermission drinks, a pause number in between a large performance. I use the whole description because it describes a complete discrete event portrayed from both the perspective of the singer (Sandra), and the perspective of a compassionately observing, yet participating member of the audience (Herman). At the end of her description, Sandra very poignantly shows the singer's sense of being an active participant in Spirit's unfolding in the world.

*Herman:* You started to sing with the group and play, and people were coming between out of the theatre. And they stood still and then gradually you could see that the attention was taking them. And then more and more people were coming. No one was going to the bar.

*Sandra:* No.

*Herman:* And they were so focused really. Also you say you're being lifted up. They were being lifted up also. Because, I just saw happiness in those faces. They were silent. They were so silent. They were shaking with the rhythm, so they were being taken into that atmosphere that you were giving.

*Sandra:* Ja absolutely. . . . And now I have to . . . to receive it back is for me a little bit a problem. You give to the audience, and then to receive it back, for me it's difficult. But now I know, now it's better because I give it back (to the atmosphere).

*Herman:* There . . .

*Sandra:* So it comes from there (motions above), and they are applauding and I didn't know what to do. Oh . . . Now I do this (motions from imaginary audience in front of her, giving it back upwards.) And I feel . . . er . . . (that it's being) received again, there.

*Herman:* That it's being . . .

*Sandra:* . . . received again, there.

*Herman:* Up in heaven . . .

*Sandra:* And that's a big present for me. That's a good feeling that what you're given, you can give back . . . . You understand? (Chuckles).

And that's new. That's also when I play alone and in my room. Then I feel that I've something with me, ja, I feel a presence, and I give that back. It's like a conversation.

Herman described how his singing and performing is an act of hospitality and community; how it is about opening up his personal space for people to feel at home with him. When that happens, he feels he becomes a channel for something more than him. He is able to engage with the innerness (and perhaps vulnerability) of the people around him and help to inspire them.

*Herman:* Something happens and that is I feel the attention comes to me and step into it. I step into a sort of position or place where I feel now my personal space opens up to invite everyone. It's like you're welcome to come into my house. And it's good there. And then I feel also how can, like I'm doing it, I'm doing it in a very personal way and yet at the same time something comes through me.

. . . performing is also a sort of a conversation I like to have with people and with their inner freedom and with their inner power. And to help the fire in them burn.

As with Douglas, Herman, Sandra, and Louise's interpretations of the spiritual knowing are not self-centered or narcissistic. They show little or no egoic appropriation of the experience, but do not negate their co-creative participation in the event. This again affirms Ferrer's turn from intrasubjective reductionism to participation. Their descriptions competently demonstrate that the spiritual knowing taking place while singing happens in community and is presential, enactive, multilocal, and participatory.

Moreover, Herman's description of opening his personal space to others, and Louise's description of boundary-less space bring us to another important node and relationship in the

understanding of the participatory multilocal nature of the spiritual knowing that takes place while singing—the loci of space and place.

**Place, space, and friendly acoustics.** Let us recall Ferrer’s definition of spiritual knowing (Ferrer, 2002, p. 117). It is an *event* that elicits in the individual transpersonal experience. It is *multilocal* in that it arises in different loci, such as individuals, relationships, communities or place; and it is *participatory* involving potentially the participants’ whole being in cocreative, generative communion with other participants, loci, and Spirit. If the spiritual knowing taking place while singing is a multilocal, participatory event, then space and place at some time must play a role.

Space, place, and its acoustic properties are very important in singing. They affect what happens. They change the singer’s sense of his or her personal space, and it shifts from a sense of separateness to continuity with the environment. This is a fundamental shift in identity which has implications which I will explore. Further, this movement from a fragmented self-environment relationship to a sense of continuity and unity is part of the unfolding of self (Blackstone, 2008). In the following section I will strengthen my argument for singing being multilocal and participatory, and show that spiritual knowing while singing happens in relationship with the space and place.

This discussion on place and its acoustics also affords me the opportunity to build on the vocal physiology summarised in my literature review to propose a “psycho-acoustic” theory explaining some of the spiritual knowing and shifts in identity that occur. I start the argument on the simple physical level to demonstrate the multilocal nature of sound and how the singer participates in an acoustic game which might shift his or her spatial sense and identity. I then expand the argument to demonstrate events of spiritual knowing and transformation that arise in



participation with place. I then come back to the fact that this spiritual knowing is a multilocal participatory event.

My journal entry (17 January 2007) demonstrates my participation in a *multilocal* acoustic game. I sing with stairwells, centrifuges, fridges and storm-water drains, in fact, to my poor wife's consternation, anything that will make a noise or bounce sound.

I will sing with anything or anyone who will sing with me. During an obstetrics rotation while running tests on newly delivered mothers, I find myself singing major and minor arpeggios with the laboratory centrifuges. Sometimes when the call is late, I hum with the fridge in the blood bank.

Who can resist the joy of a resonant stairwell? They'll sing with you if you patiently probe them. You can tell a lot about the building by its resonance. Caves are my favorite, and I love the infinitely resonating bowels of man sized storm-water drains.

Louisa's description that follows adds the component of acoustic intentionality of a performance space to my happenchance multilocal acoustic interactions and sound bouncing. She makes the point of the importance of interacting with acoustically friendly places. We will notice later, in particular in Heleen's narrative, that many events of spiritual knowing took place while singing in churches and music halls, places designed with acoustic intent. I am building to the fact that place and its acoustics is one of the loci of this transpersonal happening.

*Louisa:* I find that space, the performance space is really important to me . . . . This interacting with the space. And it does seem that some spaces are more friendly than others, more welcoming, and more supportive.

Now here comes a description of a shift in identity when the whole singer (body, mind, and soul), acoustics, audience, and place come together in a multilocal, participatory moment of expanded self-realisation. Note that the spiritual knowing taking place fulfils Ferrer's three qualities of participatory spiritual knowing mentioned above. The knowing is presential for both the singer, Heleen; her audience; and her father; they know through their being. It is enactive and cocreated by the different elements involved in the participatory event—Heleen, her body, the

music, the church, and its acoustics. It is also deeply transformative—Heleen deeply realises that she is a singer. I will come back to this later.

*Heleen:* The first occasion was when I have first, my first recital. It was in a very large church and there was very good acoustics. . . . And at the moment when the first moment came when I had to open my mouth and had to start to sing. It was as if something came over me. As if my body and everything knew what I had to do. Not with my brain, it was faster than that. And I opened my mouth and there came a sound that I was self . . . er . . . My God what is this?!? It was much bigger and much larger and much more dramatic than I had ever sung 'til then. . . . I sung the whole concert like that. . . . After that, my father, I still see him coming, walking through the aisle to me. And he was quite pale, and he looked at me as if he had never seen me before. And that was very . . . ja. I think at that moment deep in myself I realized I am a singer. And it took me over by surprise.

**Shifting identity, shifting space.** Here are two more of Heleen's descriptions of multilocal (church, orchestra, audience, singer, etc.), participatory (body, mind, soul; communion, cocreation, participation in particularised disclosure of Spirit, prescience), presential, enactive, and transformative spiritual knowing that took place while she was singing. I emphasise that these narratives include all the elements of multilocal, participatory transpersonal knowing. They also demonstrate shifts in the singer's sense of space.

*Heleen:* The orchestra began (banged table with hand) and I had to think, "Now I'm going to do it." And it was as if I expanded. It wasn't a very large church, but I became as big as the church. I felt it that way. And time went slower. Much slower. The orchestra played and I started to sing. And I knew I filled the space. That I was really there in that moment. And I felt that people in the church felt it also.

*Heleen:* And I started to sing. And at that moment and I didn't know yet what was to come for me and him and what would end of it and not. It was the most profound and difficult things in my life. I didn't know that at that point, but I started to sing. And it happened the same thing with my voice as had happened in that little church, or in that first big church. That my voice expanded and became something I didn't know. And even the people I had sung all those years, 3 years, . . . people next to me, said, "Where did that come from? We have never heard from you before like that." And I didn't know it either. But it was as if I felt all what was about to come. And that, lived that already in my voice. In who I was.

Even internally the singer interacts with space. I established in my literature review that voice and identity are intimately connected. I further established that through habits of

psychology, thought, and physiological motor activity we project parts of ourselves onto the voice (Austin, 1986, pp. 23-30; Austin, 2007; Ling, 1989, p. 48). We identify with the sound produced (Schnass, 2004), and implicitly, with the organ making the sound—the vocal tract—a resonating *space*.

Let us revisit Sundberg's description of the voice organ with which singers identify (Sundberg, 1977). The voice organ, drawn in Figure 17 consists of a power supply (the lungs), pushing air through an oscillator (the vocal folds). The vocal folds oscillate and cause the air to vibrate. This forms a sound wave that passes through a variable resonator (the larynx, pharynx, and mouth).

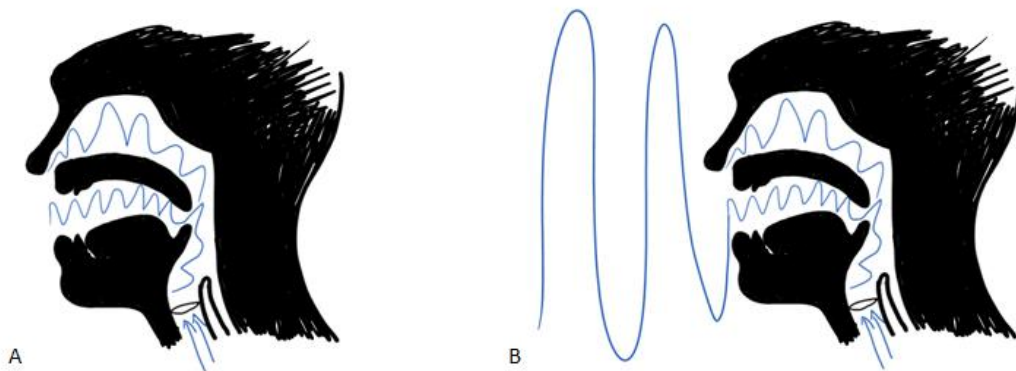


Figure 17. The sound wave as it is formed by the voice organ.

The question is, where does the vocal tract end? Some would say at the lips and nostrils as in Figure 17A. I would argue that it does not. The acoustic environment is not discrete, it is continuous and interactive. The sound wave emanating from the vocal chords and being shaped by the resonator of the inner *space* of the vocal tract continues to be shaped by the singer's acoustic environment (Figure 17B). The sound wave is continuous, much as the air inside the singer's lungs is continuous with the atmosphere. The singer's vocal tract as an isolated entity of self does not exist. When a place provides the right acoustic support, the singer's sense of

identification with a discrete vocal tract shifts such that the sense of self expands with the voice to fill the entire acoustic space.

A similar acoustic communion and unity must take place when singing with others, instrument, or orchestra. The acoustics of the participating vocal tracts and instruments are not discretely limited, but cojoin in a unified, participatory, cocreated acoustic space. Similarly participating is the acoustic space of the ears and eardrums of the audience. Remember that the singer's formant also matches the natural resonant frequency (3000Hz) of the human external auditory canal (Wiener & Ross, 1946), and that the ear naturally amplifies the singer over other sounds in the acoustic environment.

If propitious, and the participants are sensitive, all these participating loci through sharing and cocreating an acoustic space, come together to shift identity. Thus the act of singing becomes a cocreated presential, enactive, and, in Heleen's case above, transformative event of spiritual knowing.

**Shifts in awareness.** What we also see in this psycho-acoustic-spatial relationship is that singers relate to their voices spatially. In realising this, we can understand Rachel's spatial description of her voice as a "trajectory," a "rocket" on which she was able to ride out beyond her "personal, every day, egoic reality." We can also understand Rachel's sense of her voice riding out in front of her and her holding on "like a chariot." Her identification and awareness shifted and she is describing her awareness of this fact.

This shift in awareness helps singers to develop a cool-headed awareness of themselves and their ego-defences—Schnass' "parasites of the voice" — and remove these parasites as part of their voice building (Schnass, 2004). Herman described this well.

*Herman:* It's a search of the deeper layers which are personal and nonpersonal at the same time. That mysterious soil of existence. You find blockades, personal blockades that prevent you from digging. Then you first have to work it away.

*Herman:* There are moments when I suddenly realize, "Oh there is that old nasty point again." (Chuckles)

It's not nice! But sometimes I'm very moved, really, that I suddenly see it in a full light. And I know at that moment that I'm also already overcoming it. Partly. It will come back . . . But now I see it and I know, "This is not me." It's a shield I'm holding before me. And it's not necessary. And these are really discoveries.

It is important to remember that singing freely is not the expression of an unrepressed Freudian *Id*. Remember Maestro Lamperti, "Beginners often make the mistake of 'letting themselves go' while singing because they believe it achieves good results; that is untrue" (Lamperti, 1931, p. 7). Singing is a cultivated, embodied art of Self-awareness. This development of embodied awareness is what Maestro Lamperti meant when he taught his students that, "the head must always be cool, only the heart should be warm" (1931, p. 7).

This understanding of the development of awareness in singers helps explicate how singing becomes both a tool for psychotherapy and an integral spiritual practice. I will expand this later in my discussion on return cycles and development.

**Attention to attention in participatory knowing.** The head being cool and the heart being warm is not a reinforcement of a mind-body dualism. On the contrary, this way of singing reflects a cultivated, mind-body integration, both mind and body *cultivated* and *participating* naturally in the organic act of singing and Self-expression.

In my literature review I referred to what I called *subject-object* singing. I pointed out that in *subject-object* singing, psychologically voice can be separated from experience; and neurologically, unlike in animals, voice can be driven cognitively and separated from emotion. I

argued that subject-object singing follows a traumatic dissociative split and constitutes a mind-body split.

I also cited Fehmi's model based on EEG biofeedback of four general attentional states (Fehmi, 2003)—objective with a narrow focus; objective with an open focus; unitive / immersed with a narrow focus; and unitive / immersed with an open focus. Fehmi showed that accomplished artists, athletes, and meditators demonstrate flexible control over the dimensions of attention and their associated EEG parameters. They are able to merge with many sensory experiences simultaneously. Being able to participate selflessly with full embodied awareness of multiple experiential loci must be a necessary prerequisite for participating with awareness in a multilocal, participatory event of spiritual knowing. Sandra's description of being able to "switch better" bears this out and merits rereading with Fehmi's open focus attention in mind.

*Sandra:* I can switch better. I mean with the audience but also without. You have the communication with yourself and with the band leader and the band, the group and the audience and out of the building, the universal, and you can, I can switch, I can communicate very fast while I'm singing. When talking not, but in singing, it goes very fast and in a very pure way and energy. And I can feel all the energies around and it doesn't hurt me.

I also speculated in my literature review, without realizing the implications, that there is probably a synthesis of emotion and awareness in singing. I realize now that I was describing part of what happens to awareness in a multilocal, participatory event of spiritual knowing. My experience recorded in my journal and quoted in my literature review corroborates:

There is a point of power where the mind stops and one simply engages differently. Where I feel as if a lava churning abyss has opened up in me so controlled, yet so powerful; at once me; and not me; and the voice is free, yet singing from a place that cannot be moved. Hooked anatomically. Grounded and raw; sacred and beautiful; here and now; there is no other heaven.

And this all happened as I sung, and yet it was not me singing. At least not the me I knew. It took all of me, yet it was all of me and everything else. Years of work,

confusion, joy and pain. Effortless so long as I was working; and I was hanging on for dear life.

Alignment of the vocal tract is part of the integration of emotion and awareness, which in turn is part of a bigger event of participatory knowing. To quote Ferrer, “It could be said that subject and object, knowing, and being, epistemology, and ontology, are all brought together in the act of participatory knowing” (2002, p. 123). This happens in singing as is demonstrated by my data.

### **The Singer’s Journey: A Multilocal Trans-temporal Participatory Unfolding**

I have established above that singing is a multilocal, participatory happening. I will now unpack further: Singing takes part in a multilocal, participatory, trans-temporal, developmental unfolding.

My journal extract above regarding the lava churning abyss continued, and contextualized the event of spiritual knowing within the framework of personal development:

And yet this experience was not in isolation. One could say it was a view from the road. Perhaps part of the road; for if not part of the road, it would be entirely peripheral and distracting. Yet there is something in that road, the sheer hard work of it all, its exhilarations and its detours that have changed me, brought me together, touched a yearning in me and taught me compassion.

This journal extract contains the seeds of some deep personal and philosophical realizations: (a) that these events of transpersonal knowing were not isolated, nor appropriate for egoic appropriation; (b) that the intrasubjective reductionist paradigm for understanding these events as only *spiritual experience* only partly encompassed their wholeness; and (c) how intimately connected singing was to my developmental journey, and that these events were part of a *trans-temporal* developmental unfolding. The journal entry continues to draw on my inner research process as required by intuitive inquiry.

Using the idea of (c) above, and corroborating it with my data, I propose adding the term *trans-temporal* to the participatory glossary, and frame human development and consequently the Singer's Journey as a *multilocal, trans-temporal, participatory unfolding* supporting the individuating spirit. In the sections that follow, I integrate and demonstrate this understanding in my analysis of my own and my participants' narratives. I will use the developmental models brought in my literature review as an aid to describing and classifying what I have found.

In other words, I have already demonstrated that the spiritual knowing through singing is a multilocal participatory happening. I will now show the following:

1. Singing as a multilocal participatory happening is in turn part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding supporting the individuating spirit.
2. This multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening and this unfolding happen in relationship with people, place, space, and across time. It involves teachers, friends and family, dream guides, audiences, and events of spiritual knowing which shift identity, open and deepen self-awareness, and unfold as the Singer's Journey—a journey of transpersonal development, a journey of individuating consciousness singing its way Home.
3. All dimensions of the human being (body, heart, mind, and soul) may participate and grow in the unfolding.
4. This Singer's Journey is described by the maps of established theories of transpersonal development. My data demonstrate stages, return cycles, and forward movements.

(It is important when considering developmental models to understand that Ferrer objects to developmental hierarchies saying that “growth that is grounded in our most unique potentials



rarely follows a pre-given path already traveled by others, nor can it be directed by external standards” (Ferrer, 2003, pp. 21-42). I find developmental models useful and, when viewed as descriptive rather than prescriptive (Schavrien’s caveat, personal communication, November 23, 2010), see no contradiction with the participatory paradigm (my own conclusion).

**Ferrer’s perspective on participatory growing.** After I formulated my ideas on participatory growth, I discovered that Ferrer, in a paper entitled “Integral Transformative Practice: A Participatory Perspective” (2003), used the term integral growth to offer the following participatory perspective on transpersonal development:

1. Growth is co-created by all dimensions of human nature. According to Ferrer, a genuine process of growth cannot be exclusively directed by the mind, but emerges from the collaborative participation and creative power of all human dimensions: body, instincts, heart, mind, and consciousness.
2. Transpersonal growth unfolds from within, grounded in our most vital potentials. When the various human dimensions mature and co-creatively participate in a developmental path, growth organically unfolds from within.
3. This growth, according to Ferrer, is grounded in our most unique potentials. It rarely follows a pre-given path already traveled by others, nor can it be directed by external standards. As stated above, I find the description of developmental trajectories useful, so long as they are viewed as open and descriptive maps of what may happen to people as they grow, rather than becoming pre-given, exclusive, prescriptive spiritual hierarchies.
4. External sources of guidance can be essential reference points at certain junctures of the journey, but the path towards the emergence of our most unique qualities cannot

be directed from outside of us. (My data however demonstrate the essentialness of external sources of guidance and participants in the journey, and the interconnected multilocal participatory nature of human journeys should not be discounted.)

5. Transpersonal growth, according to Ferrer (2003), balances the feminine and the masculine.

**Glossary: Multilocal, trans-temporal, participatory, unfolding, Spirit.** I will be analyzing the interweaving processes of transpersonal development as they occur inter and intra personally over time, and calling these processes multilocal, participatory, and trans-temporal. Building from Ferrer (2002, 2003), I provide a short glossary of terms as I will be using them.

*Unfolding*—This is the transpersonal developmental journey of individuation and deepening participation.

*Multilocal*—Development happens in and through multiple loci: individuals and intra-individually (such as in body, mind, and soul), relationships, communities, circumstance, or place. The *drivers* of development also originate from multiple loci: people and their inner worlds, communities, relationships, and place, touch. Their lives and presence interweave and in so doing mutually support, facilitate and catalyze their respective unfoldings, hence the words *multilocal* and *participatory*.

*Participatory*—I focus on three aspects of participatory development: (a) The whole being (e.g., body, mind, soul) potentially participates and evolves in the unfolding; (b) The individual consciousness participates, but is not the sole originator, driver or “subject” of the unfolding; and (c) Development happens in participation with the unfolding and Self-disclosure of Spirit in the world.

*Trans-temporal*—Participation in events in the unfolding, seminal events of transpersonal knowing, and the unfolding itself take place between these multiple loci interconnecting and evolving across historical time. They happen over an individual's lifetime, and sometimes the narrative can even be traced over what participants interpret as multiple incarnations. Furthermore, the spiritual knowing may be prescient of events to come. The process is hence *trans-temporal*.

*Spirit*—God, or the Mystery. Spirit according to Ferrer (2002, p. 157) is the Source of everything and is indeterminate until cocreative collaboration brings about manifest specificity.

**Further unpacking the meaning of participatory unfolding.** Ferrer (2002, p. 121) was quoted above clarifying three ways in which he uses the word participatory in the context of transpersonal events. I expand and paraphrase these three ways to explain the word *participatory* in the context of the developmental unfolding and hence the Singer's Journey.

1. Transpersonal unfolding engages human beings in a *participatory*, connected, and often passionate evolution that can involve not only the development of the mind, but also of the body, heart, and soul. All dimensions of human nature can *participate* and grow *in* the unfolding.
2. Participatory refers to the role that individual consciousnesses play during the transpersonal unfolding. It is not one of appropriation, possession, and controlling direction of the process. (Belying the ego's myth of the self-made individual—a project and the people involved create you as much as you create a project). Nor is it passive obedience to an external set of rules of spiritual engagement. Rather participatory development can be one of communion and cocreation of each other.

Furthermore, while the inner origin of the creative imperative to growth in the individual consciousness is centrally important, this creative imperative towards growth and the stimulation of development originates in multiple loci. Development then happens through an individual's discerning, and sometimes undiscerning, participation. In other words, the spiritual drivers of development and developmental process itself are not purely intrasubjective. We live and grow together.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, human beings are always participating in the ongoing self-disclosure of Spirit in and through themselves, others, and the world by virtue of their very existence.

**Qualities of participatory unfolding.** Ferrer (2002, 2003) outlined three qualities of participatory knowing. By subtle extension of these three qualities to participatory unfolding, one can say that:

1. Participatory unfolding is presential, the spiritual knowing and growth happens by and in presence or identity.
2. Participatory unfolding is enactive and emergent (i.e., not the sequential appropriation of pre-given, independent spiritual levels, nor a static achievement of "spirituality," but an ongoing enaction), a "bringing forth" of transformational processes co-created by the different elements involved in the participatory unfolding.
3. Participatory unfolding is transformative and describes the on-going process of transformation. Participation and transformation are on-going and the emergent transformations and evolution in the participating consciousnesses may follow developmental schemata (as they do in my data).

I will now demonstrate the Singer's Journey as a multilocal, trans-temporal, participatory unfolding. This will also provide narrative evidence substantiating the use of the participatory turn in developmental thinking.

**Participating multilocally in the Singer's Journey.** Development happens in and through multiple loci: individuals and intra-individually (such as in body, mind, and soul), relationships, communities, or place. The *drivers* of development also originate from multiple loci: people and their inner worlds, communities, relationships, and place, touch. People's lives and presence interweave and in so doing mutually support, facilitate, and catalyze their respective unfoldings. Much as my soul may have chosen my body, my parents, relationships, communities, and circumstance; so too those with whom I am in relationship have chosen to be with me; hence the words *multilocal* and *participatory*.

**The singer's daemon—An inner participating locus driving development.** I make a developmental hypothesis. Yet it is one that illumines the data I have presented. There is in each of us, however buried, a part that yearns for wholeness and unique purpose. Different traditions call this part by different names—divine image, soul, genius, calling, destiny, fate, higher Self. Here I use the word daemon (Hillman, 1996, p. 10). Whatever the name, this daemon (as Hillman calls it, taking his cue from Plato's Myth of Er in *The Republic*) carries a person's purpose for incarnation and personal destiny. As said, the daemon is often deeply buried. It remains "shadowy, revealing itself mainly in hints, intuitions, whispers, and the sudden urges and oddities that disturb your life" (Hillman, 1996, p. 10). In my study, the nascent singer's daemon revealed itself in childhood through the love of noise and spontaneous impassioned singing. This singer's daemon or Soul unfolding is one of the multiple participating loci driving development. I quote myself from my introduction, thereafter Rachel and Heleen.

*Paul:* Ever since I can remember my siblings would complain that I would wake them up with a hearty song. I never believed that I was loud, for my singing was quite unconscious and would arise spontaneously. That is, I never believed them until a neighbor, to my horror and secret delight, placed song requests to accompany his early morning gardening. Thereafter even though I loved my family and harbored no ill intent toward their sleep, I found it difficult to suppress the urge to break out early into song.

*Rachel:* And I would get lids to pots and pans, and I'd put on classical music, even when I was 4, I learned how to work the record player, and I'd get the pots and pans and bang them as symbols, so that whole part of my personality would come out, and I'd walk around the house and pretend I was in a parade and go BOOM BOOM. And then I'd get out one of our music stands and chopsticks and I'd be the conductor. Very impassioned! And then I would go along with the opera singers and I'd sing opera.

So 4 / 5 years old, I was doing this. So my first vocalizing was more singing than words. And I sang so much through school, that I would get teased because I would just sing.

Heleen's early daemonic whisperings were more subtle and augured her future teaching.

Singing was part of her childhood world, and she would teach her friends the songs she had learnt at nursery school.

*Heleen:* I always liked singing. As a child, already, and my mother told me someday that I was teaching the little children in the street the songs I learnt at kindergarden.

So when I came home and I had learnt a new song, I had to teach it to the other kids in the street. So singing always was something that belonged to me.

As noisy as the singer's daemon may be, the singer is extremely vulnerable. Heleen and Rachel above described getting teased for singing and being extremely shy as children. This vulnerability, teasing, criticism, and being unacknowledged continue well into adulthood, and often cripple the emergent singer.

*Herman:* There was something that I had had from youth on that I cannot sing so I dare not sing, and I should not sing. And whenever also in my home with my parents, I was really shy to let them hear my voice, my singing. Although I liked to sing, but if I felt / sensed that someone in an area of 2 km could hear me . . . silent, silence . . .

And it is like using my voice in singing that I'm, I feel fragile. You're so nude. It's a pure skin that is in the open air. And it feels like they can hurt. I think that's the fear. They can hurt me because I'm so, naked.

*Rebecca S:* We've all had criticism of our voices . . . . And they're the most horrible experiences that you carry for years and years and years . . . partners that I've had that didn't understand the kind of musical tradition that I came from . . . wanting so much for a romantic partner to hear me sing.

*Rachel:* And he didn't ever really want to take me. . . . And I was this gal who he felt pressure to take. And from day 1, from the minute I opened my mouth, he was shaming me (clicked fingers in emphasis) and making me feel not good enough. And, um, that and then work obligations and different reasons and excuses that I made, I stopped singing for 11 years. Even humming along to the radio. Any kind of singing, and I used to sing every day all day.

It must be remembered that the teasers, the criticizers, and the acknowledging loved ones, even though they may intentionally or unintentionally suppress the singer's daemon are also participating loci in the Singer's Journey. Fortunately there are others who support the unfolding.

***Believing and nurturing others—Outer participating loci driving the Singer's Journey.***

*“Esse is percipi—To be is to be perceived”* (Hillman, 1996, p. 113). It takes others who believe in the singer's potential to nurture the emerging singer. The participation of these others is presential, enactive, and mutually transformative. These others include teachers, colleagues, friends, family, strangers, and sometimes nonphysical entities. The recognition and ongoing development of the nascent singer's potential is seminal to the Singer's Journey. I argue that the drivers of development also originate from multiple participating loci and are not purely intrasubjective. Furthermore, the ongoing participation of others takes place over life-times and perhaps multiple life-times, and later I argue that participatory development is therefore trans-temporal. Let us examine this in more detail.

***To be is to be perceived.*** It takes someone who loves you to see your potential. At the same time there seems to be a point of realization that one is in fact a singer; that what one has is something special. This realization often happens by surprise and in community. There is

recognition, naming, and encouragement. A transmission of this knowing another's being through love. Note also the simultaneity of true identity realization with events of spiritual knowing.

*Heleen:* But I knew that, I couldn't see myself as a singer. Perhaps there's always that little bit that knows you can. But there was a lot that was not ready for that. . . . And it took someone that really loved me, who pointed me that, who said to me, "You are a singer. You are a singer!" So and then I believed . . . . And that relationship didn't . . . ended very uh, whew. And the only thing I could do was take that one thing that he had said and really touched me. Take that seriously, and start to be serious about my own singing.

*Heleen:* And at the moment when the first moment came when I had to open my mouth and had to start to sing. It was as if something came over me. As if my body and everything knew what I had to do. Not with my brain, it was faster than that. And I opened my mouth and there came a sound that I was self . . . er . . . My God what is this?!? It was much bigger and much larger and much more dramatic than I had ever sung 'til then. . . . After that, my father, I still see him coming, walking through the aisle to me. And he was quite pale, and he looked at me as if he had never seen me before. And that was very . . . ja. I think at that moment deep in myself I realized I am a singer. And it took me over by surprise. I wasn't expecting it. I wasn't doing anything for it.

Rachel's participating mirror was a psychiatrist colleague at a drug-alcohol treatment center where she worked at the time.

*Rachel:* He looked at me and he said, "I know I'm going to know your voice. I know I'm going to know your voice. And I want to hear you sing again. It's like I've heard you, I have to hear your voice again." And I said, "Oh Rick, I haven't sung in 11 years." And he said, "You're going to sing again. You have to sing again. I have to hear you."

Recognition by another, and deeply realizing who one is, involves at least four participating loci in the journey of unfolding (self, Self / Daemon, believing other, Spirit). The excerpts brought above demonstrate that this participation is: (a) *presential*—it takes place by virtue of being; (b) *enactive*—the recognition and naming of the singer brings forth the nascent singer's potential; (c) *transformative*—the singers realize their identities. It also clearly demonstrates that the call to development is not purely intrasubjective.



***Teachers—Physical and nonphysical loci participating across time.*** The voice, like the soul, is at once fragile and robust, and to blossom requires the proper care of competent, nurturing guidance. Teachers are critical participating loci driving development. Their presence further demonstrates that the drivers of development are not purely intrasubjective. Teachers appear when the individual consciousness is ready. This appearance which is synchronous (a meaningful coincidence which can lead the participant to experience the sense that a design is at work) demonstrates the cocreative, enactive, trans-temporal participation of Spirit.

Rachel, for example, described three teachers in her journey. Two physical teachers, the first was the teacher who shamed her (cruel experience is also part of the journey), and the second, Louisa Oakley whom she calls her “Voice Whisperer.” Of her two physical teachers, one participated by inhibiting her growth, and the other, Louisa Oakley was a participating driver both psychologically, and practically.

*Rachel:* She (Louisa Oakley) said, “I hear that underneath the scared little feral kitten, there’s a lion. You know just waiting, waiting, but we need to be really gentle, and really create an environment where that little scared kitten can become it’s true self. And by the third lesson she was having to hold me back. She said, “There’s a racehorse in there that wants to run!”

The third participating teacher was a dream figure, a spirit guide, who came to her on two occasions 18 years apart. Her participation catalyzed what Rachel described as a Kundalini awakening, opening first her heart chakra in 1991.

*Rachel:* She said, “Wake up!” It was time to wake up. She did all this heart chakra work with me in the dream.

Then 18 years later, opened her voice chakra.

*Rachel:* I had a dream that my voice teacher came over, but it wasn’t Louisa in my dream, it was a woman that showed up one other time, when I started what I think was a Kundalini awakening back in ‘91.

So she comes in and she says, “Rachel, I want you to sing.” But you’re going to need to sing differently. And you can sing anything you want.

Heleen described three participating physical teachers, one of who appeared to her in a dream after having passed away (This teacher participated from beyond the grave—arguably a trans-temporal event).

*Heleen:* After I had my first concert, I had a dream. And there came someone on the phone in that dream and I knew she was already dead a few years. And it was a teacher of a teacher of me. And she spoke on the phone. And I had something like, “This isn’t possible, you’re dead. You can’t speak to me.”

(But she said) “This concert has gone well and you feel very good about yourself right now, but I want to say this to you. Go on with studying singing. Just keep going. How difficult it sometimes will be. Because when you don’t you will be on your death bed, you will regret that you haven’t gone through.”

This message from a dead teacher kept Heleen singing and she has carried the lesson for over 25 years (further evidence that multilocal participatory unfolding is trans-temporal).

*Heleen:* So now, 25 years later I know what she is talking about and when it’s very difficult, sometimes I remember that.

Different events and people lead to the right teacher weaving into the tapestry of the singer’s participatory unfolding. A singer’s participating “recognizer” mentioned above is often also pivotal in the singer’s finding appropriate teachers. This strengthens my argument drivers of development is a cocreative, multilocal, and participatory happening.

*Rachel:* And (after Rick said, “I have to hear you sing.”) it got me thinking, well his partner is a well-known music director. They said, “We have a couple of people we think that could train you. Give them a call.” And my intuition said, “Louisa.” And she couldn’t take students for 3 months, but I just knew to wait for her.

*Heleen:* We didn’t have contact for more than 25 years, but since about 4 years we mail occasionally. And again he played a vital role in my singing recently: without intentionally doing he brought me in contact with my current singing-teacher Esther. I am very happy with her lessons.

**Trans-temporal cycles of participatory knowing that lead to transformations that lead to further participatory unfolding.** Ferrer (2002, p. 123) notes that “transformation of self is usually necessary to participate in transpersonal knowing, and this knowing, in turn, draws forth the self through its transformative process in order to make possible this participation.” He is describing a process of ongoing participatory transformation in which one transformation opens the way for the next one. Heleen’s process demonstrates a cycle of multilocal participatory knowing leading to transformation leading to further knowing and transformation. This cycle is trans-temporal—it happens across her life time and life-times.

In a body-based meditation (participating locus: body) Heleen realized (participating locus: mind) that her nagging inexplicable guilt and feelings of unworthiness (participating loci: body and heart) were rooted in a past life. In this event of transpersonal knowing, she experienced herself as an unwilling soldier who had killed another.

*Heleen:* In 1995, during a meditation class (during a visualization to relax the body) completely “out of the blue” a very strong image popped up in my mind. I experienced myself as a male soldier carrying a weapon. I found myself in a landscape with bushes here and there. Suddenly an armed enemy soldier turned up before my eyes and in self-defense I killed him.

Later I told my husband and I cried as I never cried before. So real it felt. I didn’t see more than this single image, but somehow I knew I participated in that war very much against my will. There was heavy social pressure to “fight for your country.” For me it all felt very wrong, but I didn’t have the guts to withdraw from it. The moment I shot this man, something snapped in my soul.

This event led to grief and mourning (participating locus: heart) and to her processing and integrating the incident, through creative catharsis (participating loci: body, heart, mind) cocreated and facilitated by friends and family (participating locus: nurturing others) on All Souls Day in 1997.

*Heleen:* I was depressed for months, because I had to come to terms with what I had remembered: being able to kill another human being and on top of that being a coward

who didn't stand up for what he believed in. A few years later I felt I had to do something with this memory and for the evening of All Souls' Day 1 November in 1997 I hired an auditorium in a little theatre and made a program for family and friends.

With the help and cooperation of some friends (singers, a flutist, a dancer, an elocutionist) I made a show about war, being a soldier and the cycle of life and death. The most important part in that show for me personally was me reading out aloud a poem written by me. This was like a public confession.

In the past life she denied her voice, her opposition to participating in the war; in this life she reclaimed it. This catharsis led to another event of spiritual knowing in which she transcended the boundaries of her present and past egoic incarnations (participating locus: soul), this knowing resonated in her voice (participating locus: body), and she felt freed of her past life trailers (participating loci: body, heart, mind, soul).

*Heleen:* When I spoke those words it felt as if I was "multidimensional." I felt connected with the soldier I once had been, with the soul of the person I had killed and with the "here and now." And all of that seemed to resonate in my voice. At the same time it freed me of the past that had weighed so heavily on me, because I always felt "guilty" and "unworthy" in a way that didn't seem logical when related to my daily life.

Further, this catharsis, knowing, and the reclaiming of her voice opened the way for her to meet her voice teacher (participating locus: nurturing other) and develop in her singing (participating locus: daemon).

*Heleen:* After that "show" I heard myself say to someone (to my own surprise): NOW I am finally ready for the teacher that can tell me what I am doing wrong in singing. And within a month that teacher came into my life without me searching for it at all! I studied with her for 9 years and she has been a very good teacher for me especially in the technique of singing. She died in August 2008.

Since then I feel I have moved on and other aspects of singing have become more important to me. That reflects itself also in the approach of the teacher I am now studying with.

I previously quoted Ferrer (2003, pp. 21-42) saying that "external sources of guidance can be essential reference points at certain junctures of the journey, but the path towards the emergence of our most unique qualities cannot be directed from outside of us." Heleen's journey

shows the nuanced flow of spiritual growth that is directed from inside of her but at the same time is catalyzed by participating with the people and the world around her. In this case, her healing past life trailers in participation with her whole being and nurturing others opened the way to finding a teacher and further emergence of her singer's daemon. These cycles of participatory spiritual knowing and transformative processes demonstrate multilocal, cocreated, participatory, and trans-temporal aspects of Heleen's developmental tapestry. These cycles happen across time and life-times. They are trans-temporal.

**Trans-temporality demonstrated through prescience.** There are two examples of prescience in my data which demonstrate participatory trans-temporality. The first example involved Heleen's knowing "all what was to come" between herself the person who recognized her as a singer during a state of embodied expanded awareness during singing. The second example in the data was described by Rachel in very specific detail.

*Rachel:* I had a dream that I was standing inexplicably on a mountain top. I sensed I was in the Swiss Alps or Austrian Alps, or Austria Germany. And I'm on this mountain top with my other singers who were doing the second symphony with me . . . and Leonid Grin's there.

And in (waking) reality we knew his wife was dying of cancer, and we knew this was a, it's hard to (sobs), the last performance she would ever see him conduct.

(In the dream) We all had medieval clothes on. And I'm thinking why do we all have medieval clothes on? (Laughter) and then in the dream, the two soloists came in. They had medieval clothes on. And we all started singing the second symphony. And then I looked down and then I see way way down there what looked like a castle, but it also was the performing arts center in San Jose where I was going to be singing. And um, so I was in this double time zone, because I was in medieval time and I could see the current modern day performing arts center, but it looked like a castle. So we're doing the end of the symphony. We're singing "zu Gott, zu Gott" (to God, to God), and right towards the end in the dream, Leonid stopped conducting, and he threw his arms up, like this, and I heard him whispering in my ear, "This is for God. This is for God."

And then suddenly I was out of my body going fwweh, faster and faster out into space. Now I'm seeing the mountain, the performing arts center, I'm out of body and I see the planet earth . . .

*Paul:* Was this in your dream?

*Rachel:* In my dream. I'm seeing the planet earth, then I'm in space and then I'm in the galaxy milky way, back back back . . . But I'm also still on the mountain top, and still down in the performing arts center all at once.

And then we have the actual performance, OK, and this is real life. In real life the soloists come out and they're wearing medieval clothing, exactly like in my dream. And I start to get very disoriented and when I get into certain states when I'm singing, and I'm having this transcendent / immanent peak, it's hard to explain, or when I'm just very connected, um, my hands vibrate so much that I can hardly hold my music.

So my hands start to vibrate, right? And I'm remembering the dream. And I'm thinking I've got to keep present, because I'm here to serve the performance, and be present. But everything started to get very confusing for me when I saw the soloists come out in medieval clothing because I'd recently had that dream. So then we get to the part in my dream where we're singing "zu Gott, zu Gott" it's the resurrection. "Rise up, lift up!" It's beautiful.

And we get to that same part in the dream where he had stopped conducting. And we know his wife's out there, and we know he knows it's the last time she'll be seeing him conduct. And right, exactly like in my dream, Leonid, Maestro Grin stopped conducting . . .

And there's a lot going on in that symphony. You need your conductor. It's a huge ending. And he went like this (threw arms up), exactly like in my dream, and I heard his voice, "This is for God."

And we (the choir and orchestra), like one unit, just somehow, we did the last 5 minutes, because he was in some other state, like my dream. And almost because of the dream I was almost expecting and prepared . . . but I was also having that same experience of being out of my body, and I was feeling complete unity consciousness with the audience, us, Mahler, the transmission, the spiritual transmission, for G-d, for G-d, and the timelessness in that eternal moment. And my hands were vibrating so much I don't know how I held the music. And there's Leonid going exactly like this.

**Metatapestries of participatory unfolding.** Participating others in my participants' journeys brought about my participants' individual growth, but in participating, the "other" grew as well. This supports the understanding that participatory unfolding is not purely intrasubjective or a "one way street"—there is a metatapestry of transpersonal unfolding woven through intersecting life trajectories. I bring two (seemingly obvious) examples in my research to show

that there is a metatapestry of enactive, cocreative, presential, transformative, participatory development. The first example shows how Heleen, the teacher, grows from Herman, the student; as much as Herman, the student, grows from his teacher Heleen. The second example shows how Heleen's participation in my research process has not only led to my growth, but also to hers.

Teachers grow from the relationship with their students. Often deep friendships develop, as between me and Hantie, and as between Heleen and Herman. These friendships catalyze growth in both student and teacher. I was humbled by being party to the open intimacy between Heleen and Herman. The following glimpse into their lives shows how Heleen, as teacher, needed to be seen, heard, and accepted by Herman, her student.

*Heleen:* At my birthday last year. I've never told you, but the reason I sang there. One of the main reasons, the main reason was to let you hear me. We were friends already and you hadn't heard me sing.

*Herman:* I had never heard you sing.

*Heleen:* No and I didn't know how (to have you hear me). I had to do that was comfortable for me. I couldn't let you come to a concert. . . . So we did two of those pieces.

*Herman:* And may I say now, "Thank you."

*Heleen:* Because you didn't react on it.

*Herman:* Yeah . . .

*Heleen:* And it was very . . . besides other things that happened that day, very difficult.

Herman described and gave examples of how he had grown by discovering his "devils" through Heleen's teaching and friendship.

*Herman:* That's your talent (addressing Heleen). That you can put your finger, very softly on it, and if you would do it too hard, putting your finger on it, it would, give fear maybe.

Heleen was in turn affirmed through Herman's recognition of her, realizing that the wholeness, authenticity, and confidence that she personally seeks, she is successfully instilling in her students.

*Heleen:* I try to lead you to something new. Something you haven't experienced yet.

A further poignant realization about herself and the depth of her commitment to, and understanding of, her art and her teaching, and an integration of her life experience unfolded through her journey intersecting with mine in the research process. Heleen said to me in an email (16 August 2010):

*Heleen:* The interview and your account of it do not only refer to my Singer's Journey, but also have become part of it. Because they have made a difference: they influenced my Journey by offering the opportunity to become more aware of patterns and developments. In musical terms: you and your research are now "notes" in my Song.

My participation in Heleen's journey is in turn her participation in my life journey. This constitutes an interweaving metatapestry of unfolding which has catalyzed the ongoing emergence of my daemon that I articulated in Cycle 1, "to connect and dwell within my authenticity and that of the World Soul, to know It deeply and to help others connect too." The mutual participation in each other's growth demonstrates presential, multilocal, participatory, cocreative, and transformative unfolding.

**Stages in the singer's multilocal, participatory, cocreative unfolding.** I have previously shown that the Singer's Journey is a transpersonal journey of individuation and deepening participation in the ongoing unfolding of Spirit in Its multitudinous individualized forms. I now show that this multilocal, participatory, trans-temporal unfolding may follow patterns of recognized stages of development. I will be looking at four participant narratives



using Hillevi Ruumet's (2006) developmental model as a lens. This model has been discussed in depth in the literature review, and I refer the reader to Table 1 at the end of chapter 2.

The reader should know that the participatory movement objects to viewing development as pre-given path(s) already traveled by others and to judging a person's development through external standards of hierarchical models of development (Ferrer, 2003). I however find stage models of development useful, so long as they remain descriptive of what may occur, and not prescriptive of what should occur. I address the data in this spirit.

I also wish to point out that my study was not designed to comprehensively delineate developmental trajectories in singers. Rather it was late in the study that the congruency between the narratives and parts of developmental pathways became evident. My intention is to use these four examples to briefly demonstrate these congruencies, and to leave the rest of the data for future writing and research.

***Rachel.*** Rachel's journey demonstrates movement between Center's 4, 5, and 6 of Ruumet's model. Her narrative describes: (a) an open Center 4 (Aloha / Heart), (b) a journey opening Center 5 (Star / Voice), and (c) a successful 5-2 (Star / Voice—Emotional / Kinship) return cycle and the resulting opening of Center 6 (Sophia / Wisdom).

The process is catalyzed through her singing, and intuitively fits with someone like Rachel who has "found" her voice. Rachel describes an 18-year awakening that began in 1991. She had a dream in which an angel appeared to her and called on her to "wake up," and worked on opening her heart chakra (Center 4—Aloha / Heart).

*Rachel:* She said, "Wake up!" It was time to wake up. She did all this heart chakra work with me in the dream.

Waking up of the Aloha / Heart Center is the birth of trans-cathectic compassion, an impulse to explore reality beyond consensus, and a process of self-deconditioning that happens

with the developing capacity to compassionately witness self-behavior and inner processes (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 65-84). Rachel demonstrated the ability to compassionately witness her inner processes (e.g., during the interview she was able to compassionately recognize how being shamed by her mother for her terror as a young child associated with her voice).

*Rachel:* And the shaming I felt I think attached, somehow associated that, I've never thought about this much, just thinking about it right now, that that is the first experience I have of trying to get my voice out through that primal scream and immediately being shamed.

Shame constituted a large component of the developmental trailers that required healing for the emergence of Center 5 and Center 6 awareness. Further shaming by a teacher at the Metropolitan Opera, combined with the shaming as a child, stopped her singing for 11 years. It was in finding a home for her singing, in participation with nurturing friends and teacher that she was able to decondition her response to this shame that enabled her to sing again. Her singer's daemon was thus able to bloom, a characteristic of the emergence of Center 5 (Star / Voice) awareness which urges the tangible manifesting of the particular gifts of a person's unique embodiment. As Ruumet points out, this unique unfolding and realization of a person's divinely intended being arises naturally from the experience of being and the consequent world view of the Aloha Center, rather than from cultural introjections (2006, pp. 85-108).

*Rachel:* And that my voice can be shared with the world. And be a vehicle. Something happens, people will just start weeping.

With the emergence of her Star / Voice Center and her singing voice, Rachel described developing a strong inner authority and has taken ownership of her own voice and the profound emotional impact it has on people.

*Rachel:* For me it's been a lot of process of not just singing, but finding my voice in general and being able to communicate. And even though I seem very assertive, you know students would never guess that I was crippled with, you know, with shyness when I was young, and I am now able to perform, you know, with all of these things.

As mentioned the expression of Self of Center 5 is deconditioned. Its emergence must necessarily be accompanied by a process of deconditioning. This return cycle, Ruumet's 5-2 descent tango, forces a person to revisit cathectic (Center 2—Kinship) and survival (Center 1) trailers. In Rachel's case it took place through her singing.

*Rachel:* For me there's still a whole process, a lot of anxiety that I work through. It's better now around putting my voice out there and having my ground in that way. And especially being young and a people pleaser, and afraid to say no, and afraid to have my voice. It's not for me just getting my voice back as a singer, as that was going on, I find I've been able to voice myself in new ways and renewed ways. And frankly in more assertive ways within my different roles.

And to be able to say, "No, I'm not able to do that." Without the guilt and the shame and the you know without letting people down, or you know. And just being able to be clear and have my own inner authority. And my own sense of self efficacy and self direction, and owning my voice.

Rachel had a dream which shows the integration of her 5-2 return cycle and the emergence of Center 6 (Sophia Center) awareness of the immanence of Spirit in matter. This dream was the culmination of a process in which her relationship to the mother is transformed, and she is able to see Spirit in the materiality of the world. This process was accompanied by a neck injury (Voice chakra) which she saw as a "call from my body" to adjust and realign at a family systems level with her fiancé as well as with her work (5-2 descent tango return cycle work); even a call to sing differently with more support, less pushing, more power, and paradoxically more gentleness (maturation of Center 5).

*Rachel:* I had a dream that my voice teacher came over, but it wasn't Louisa in my dream, it was a woman that showed up one other time, when I started what I think was a Kundalini awakening back in '91.

So she comes in and she says, "Rachel, I want you to sing." But you're going to need to sing differently. And you can sing anything you want.

So I was kind of confused because I thought, "Hmm, my voice teacher is Louisa, but it's this woman again who I dreamed about before." And it's interesting because I did

it now, I've had all the fear again. I said, "I can't sing, I'm injured. She says, "No you can sing, "I'm inviting you to sing differently and sing anything you want."

And I didn't know what to sing. Suddenly out of me, without conscious thought, you know what I started to sing (in the dream)? I started to sing the Gounod version of *Ave Maria*. And I was weeping.

You know I was singing to the mother, and I am not raised Catholic, but I understand the *Ave Maria* now in a way, and our body is mother or mother, my body is mother, the universe is mother; myself mothering the wounded kind of the little girl in me that's so afraid and ashamed and so afraid to have her voice out there.

So I know I've been in a whole process of being able to express myself more authentically and speak my truth without feeling on an unconscious level some core shame that used to keep me from using my voice, because I was shamed so much in my family when I told the truth, because I was kind of the truth teller in my family. So moving through that I think has done a lot of fifth chakra work, and of course it's all connected, but the blockage has been clearing out.

**Heleen.** Heleen's narrative, beautiful its particularized uniqueness, showed a trajectory similar to Rachel's when tracked with the Ruumet model. Her narrative showed a process of Center 4 (Heart / Aloha) deconditioning, stabilization of Center 5 (Star / Heart), a 5-2 return cycle, and the blossoming of Center 6's Sophia (wisdom) task.

Two aspects of deconditioning stand out in Heleen's narrative. The first is the trained, yet unconditioned, emergence of her natural voice in the peak experiences. The second is what she finds when she "looks under the carpet." Examples of both have been discussed in depth previously.

Spiritually, Center 5 is the Center of the "Seeker" (Ruumet, 2006, p. 99). There is a yearning for authenticity, spontaneity, and transcendent connection.

*Heleen:* What I search . . . I trust my voice; I trust myself that I have enough confidence to stand there and tell something about what I'm going to do. In the meantime I've learnt to do that, but it doesn't say that the essence of what I would like to do. Will I have the courage to be so relaxed and so me and so authentic to let that happen? I don't know.

In Center 5 there is also a yearning for a community of kindred spirits. As with Rachel, her initiation to Center 5 work came through her being recognized by such a kindred spirit, and as discussed above the ongoing need for recognition by peers is a theme that recurs and recurs in narratives from Center 5 consciousness.

*Heleen:* At my birthday last year. I've never told you, but the reason I sang there. One of the main reasons, the main reason was to let you hear me. We were friends already and you hadn't heard me sing.

Heleen's 5-2 descent tango, return cycle to Centers 1 and 2 (Survival and Kinship) is clearly demonstrated in the surfacing and the integration of her past life experience as a soldier whom heavy social pressure to "fight for his country" (Center 2—Kinship) placed in a position of having to kill in self-defense (Center 1—Survival). In her narrative of the incident it is clear that in the past life, the young soldier was undergoing early deconditioning of the cathexis associated with Centers 1 and 2. Her killing in self-defense seemed to block development of Heleen's singing in a subsequent life. Furthermore, the ongoing awareness and loosening of these cathectic bonds and the trailing guilt continued into subsequent life-times as the return cycle under discussion.

*Heleen:* I knew I participated in that war very much against my will. There was heavy social pressure to "fight for your country." For me it all felt very wrong, but I didn't have the guts to withdraw from it. The moment I shot this man, something snapped in my soul.

Integration of this return cycle led to Heleen's being open to finding a teacher. It also led to further mind / body / spirit integration which at the time of interview seemed to be setting the foundation for further Center 5 expression and the embodiment of the wisdom of Center 6.

*Heleen:* My journey as a human being and as a singer has been a continuous quest to entrust myself more and more to the nonrational, the intuitive.

Now it's time to really "entrust myself to myself," to surrender to the "me" deep within. And the singing will continue to reveal where there is more work or more growing to do! (Personal communication, September 06, 2010)

**Sandra.** Regarding Center 6, the Sophia Center, Ruumet wrote:

The ultimate gift of this Center is embodied wisdom. At the Star Center, we may have become focused on our creative activities in a way that narrowed the scope of our overall perspective and this could have led to an imbalance in favor of doing at the expense of being. The focus on doing may have been constructive and even necessary in order to accomplish the tasks we set for ourselves, but now, to fully secure our home base at Center 5, we need enough psycho-spiritual balance to discourage Ego from trying to rebuild its castle around our creative work. This means persevering in our creative path once found, with integrity and without being swayed by or attached to projected results and other people's acclaim or disdain. (Ruumet, 2006, pp. 112-113)

Sandra appears to have stabilized Center 5 in her singing saying, "So (regarding the expression of) the inner there are no (blocks), and singing only singing . . . no problem . . ." and appears to be working towards integrating Center 6 in her consciousness. She describes that her further work is to remove her personal interpretation and intentionality from her singing in order to become a clear channel for music.

*Sandra:* My development now in singing is to do nothing . . . at all. I don't have my willpower in it anymore. Power but not will power. This is also where I am moving. To do nothing . . . . Nothing on purpose, but to be . . . . Only to be.

It's a movement, now when you sing it always was this. But now it's more this, to do nothing, to lie back and to rest in it without any will power. And it can be very wow! That also can be very powerful, when you do nothing. This is my next step.

I hear it on my voice also when it happens, I hear more softness in my voice, more . . . Ja . . . Like yourself are . . . surrender. Ja, surrender is . . .

You have made, I have made a song, and that song is no longer of me . . . . And I sing it like it is a song, like it's a song, (tone softens), [I think what she means is that she sings it like a song like any other.] And I don't need to do my whole emotional life in it. No, it's just a song and I sing it without over, without drama.

And that's a new step, because you have to dare that also. Because I'm used to the audience saying, "Ah you have a very emotional and passionate . . ." and they like that to hear. And now there's a little bit of difference. So it's a little bit a devil too. To make that step from, "No I'm not passionate." . . . I do nothing, Ja . . . I don't give it an extra impulse to interpretate how dramatic it is or how . . .

For me it will be a long way. And sometimes I feel it, and then I feel that I surrender. And then I feel, Ja . . . It opens more and more. You understand me?

**Douglas.** Ruumet continues regarding Center 6:

It is the nature of Spirit to move into form: to person-ify. What we speak of as Soul—personified Spirit—is our name for that which holds the tension of matter, having the ability to be either and both. Soul is experienced as personal, while Spirit is transpersonal. When Soul loses itself in Spirit, it becomes ungrounded and out of touch with the total person's legitimate earthly needs. While losing itself in matter and those same needs, it separates itself from its ultimate nature as spirit. Soul thrives on the balancing point where the two polarities meet, in what is truly the transcendent dance of Sophia. (Ruumet, 2006, p. 115)

Douglas, through the event of spiritual knowing described below, experienced a taste of Sophia's transcendent dance. Ruumet calls these events "previews of coming attractions" (Ruumet, 2006, p. 115). It is worth rereading Douglas' narrative with Ruumet's words in mind.

*Douglas:* Everything kind of became one, the unity conscious thing maybe, and exterior-interior were no longer a differential to be made really.

Everything was the same, subject and object. I was making the sound, but somehow the sound was coming from me and was its own thing and I was the sound. It was all in this mix of being basically.

And it got just more luminous in a sense and it was wonderful! It was a wonderful feeling and it didn't destroy itself. It was not like a manic high. I was very calm but very ecstatic, expansive, a luminous, and a state of being that seemed to totally justify itself.

It was sort of like . . . you know we talk about unconditional love, kind of a rare thing that sometimes people experience and this was kind of a feeling of unconditional being. We are ordinarily conditioned by everything. We are in bodies that condition us somehow our self-image and our experience of ourselves and so I think we tend to always think our existence is very or maybe totally conditioned and dependent upon the conditions. And this was a feeling of being that was just itself. And it needed no justification, no defensive posturing. I just was.

Before inhabiting Center 6, one must reintegrate Center 1 and all trailers from other Centers (Ruumet, 2006, p. 117). Douglas points to this when he says, "Every misery, every problem, every challenge, and every sorrow was given its reason by this experience."

**Transformations in the body.** As described above, the body is a key locus of participatory spiritual knowing, and in singing is key to authentic expression of the natural voice. Ruumet (2006) begins to explore the progressive integration of mind-body-spirit as people grow and develop (see Table 3). My participants are mostly centered at the Star / Voice Center 5 and, as they learn to sing, some (e.g., Herman) describe learning to shift their bodies from being an instrument of the ego—the Instrumental Body (Ruumet, 2006, p. 14), to the body as an instrument of authentic expression—the Expressive Body. Some (e.g., Sandra and Louise—both professional singers) have deeply stabilized this integration and further recognize the body’s deep wisdom and capacity for guidance and discipline. Singing in this state is characteristic of Center 6’s integrated body-mind embodying Spirit / Sophia (Ruumet, 2006, p. 148).

*Herman:* I wanted to give a good performance and it didn’t happen. (Laughs)  
You want, then your willpower is too much on the front, forefront and I know in the meantime, by my lessons with Heleen, that when there is too much will, there is an effect on the whole body. So the right vibration doesn’t come about. It doesn’t happen, because I’m pushing. I was pushing.

*Louise:* You need to have the correct technique . . . you can’t do it without that, but sometimes you have to, at some point you have to let go, and let the body speak, let the being speak actually.



Table 3

*Summary of the Body-Mind Relationship Corresponding to Each Developmental Center*

Center	Body-Mind Relationship
7 Nondual embodied transcendence	Conscious embodied transcendence identifying fully with both body and Spirit
6 Sophia / Wisdom	Integrated bodymind as embodiment of Sophia
5 Star / Voice	Expressive body
4 Aloha / Heart	Affectionate body
3 Ego / Power / Mastery "Me / Mine" "Us / Ours"	Instrumental body serving egoic agenda
2 Emotional / Kinship "Fortress We"	Reflected Body with mirrored self image
1 Physical / Survival	Undifferentiated

*Note.* From Ruumet, 2006, pp. 147-149.

**My evolution: One more developmental trajectory.** Images haunt a growing soul. My intuitive inquiry is a chronicle of the evolution of image. These images or intuitive "texts" I have included before, but one I recount now, as the significance of tracing the evolution of image to my earliest memory is salient to tracking my spiral pathway through Ruumet's model.

One of my earliest memories (probably aged 3 or 4) is lying on the grass in my parents' garden one evening looking at the sky. I remember wondering how far the stars were and then wondering where the sky ended. Then I saw it in my mind's eye; a red-brick wall ending the universe. This red brick answer satisfied me until, very soon, I started wondering what lay

behind that brick wall. As I grew, I was confronted by another red brick wall that blocked an equal vastness—the inner infinity of self—which I could neither reach nor see. So there I was, looking inwards and outwards towards Infinity, vision blocked by a big brick wall.

Believing it a path through the brick wall, I went through the normal Center 2 (Emotional / Kinship / Fortress We). I deepened my religious and national identity through studying in Yeshiva and adopting the symbols, songs, and ways of life of Zionist Orthodox Judaism. Religion and national identification inevitably set up their own brick walls, yet the shul (synagogue) grounded me in an ancient heritage of scholarship and *menschlichkeit* (*being a real and decent person*), and gave me a safe forum to sing.

My path to a competence through Center 3 (Ego / Power / Mastery), took me through the tortuous paths of medical school, science, medical school again, business, and internship. Here I became a brick wall. I struggled with the dominant empirical paradigm enshrining subject/object consciousness, and the quest for dominance over nature (science), disease (medicine), and other people and resources (business). The brick wall was reinforced by the ongoing sleep-deprived trauma of tending to the dead and dying of the South African AIDS pandemic. Slowly as mentioned, I learned to dissociate mind from emotion, and my voice from my experience in an ongoing process of medical professionalization.

But professionalization (Center 3) brings gifts. Traumatic though it was, my experience in the hospitals and in business opened me to others: the depth of their experience, their pain, and their joy. In coming to terms with my experience and my reasons for entering the profession the doors of compassion opened inwards and outwards. It brought me friends and a sense of belonging. As I mastered my profession, my heart was opening. I journeyed into Center 4 (Aloha / Heart) awareness. All through this, my singing lessons continued. Hantie, gently, and

sometimes not so gently, would help me chip away at that wall. I was starting a process of deconditioning in my life and in my singing.

When I completed my internship and fully qualified as a doctor, a yearning to see beyond the inner and outer brick walls stirred again. The established and normative career paths held no interest for me and I regretted ever having studied medicine. I entertained thoughts of studying physics or returning to Yeshiva. No academic programs fitted my needs. I was looking to return to my original voice, the emergence of Center 5 (Star / Voice) consciousness. In my singing I yearned for authenticity and spontaneity, but was confronted again and again by the ongoing need for doing: a characteristic of 4 - 3 transitions and ego trailing into Center 5.

I called a rabbi with whom I studied as a teenager, Rabbi Dr David Zeller. Rabbi Zeller had been part of founding the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (ITP), and recommended the program. I signed up. ITP gave me the tools for further self-insight, authenticity, spontaneity and transcendent and immanent connection, and a community of kindred spirits, all of which are yearned for in Star Center 5 consciousness. I was to realize the inner and outer brick walls were really one. Cycle 1 of my intuitive inquiry brought the sumptuous image of a nude female torso with a beautiful flower protecting her modesty rather than the image of a thick wall blocking inner and outer knowledge.

Through the process of the PhD and the intuitive inquiry, I have learned to integrate disciplined thought with my often unsettling intuition. As I demonstrated in my results chapter through art and photography, this integration of “masculine” and “feminine” has impacted deeply on my singing, my art, and my being. The stabilization of disciplined, structured thought in my consciousness provided a consistent basis upon which to rely, thereby opening both creative choice and the freedom to enjoy the process.

Also I discussed in my results chapter how the death of my father in the context of this threw me into a 5-2 descent tango. In this return cycle I have been addressing deep issues of stabilizing Center 5 Self and working with earlier selves developed through my parents, siblings, tribe, religion, and profession in the earlier “in-law” centers.

The Sophia task is to recognize wisdom in all manifest form (Ruumet, 2006, p. 112). My sense is of early opening of my Sophia Center 6. Rather than seeing a brick wall, or even a flower blocking knowledge, I am learning to see vistas of inner light. This light flows through the flower of Cycle 1’s text, through the images of trees and water in my photo essay, through academic and Torah learning, and when I remember to be open, through the people and creatures I encounter on a daily basis. Together we weave our lights into the vast participatory tapestry of Spirit’s unfolding. I am looking forward to seeing what the future holds and how my singing moves.

## **Future Research**

**Research into transformations in the body.** I demonstrated correspondence in body-mind integration as happens in singing with Ruumet’s developing mind-body relationship in her model (2006, pp. 147-148). My sample was relatively small, but yielding thick, rich, data; participants mainly gravitated around Center 5 plus or minus 1. Ruumet’s analysis, while sketching the foundations of the processes of the transforming body, is very brief. A more detailed and appropriate model for the exploration of the *transforming body* as happens in singing would be Rosemarie Anderson’s Body Map (Anderson, 2008), because the body map is premised on development being centered in embodied experience, and change being sited in the human body throughout the lifespan. Future research into the transformations of the body in singing using the body map would be useful. The body map is summarized in Appendix E.

**Explicating return cycles.** Anderson, in writing on the Body Map, states that she is not so concerned with unraveling hierarchical stages of development. She believes, despite differences among theorists, that they are well-established and explicated. Her interest is in the return cycle (Anderson, 2008, p. 3). Correlations exist between narratives in my study and the Axes of the Body Map. These narratives delineate details of the return cycles which demonstrate both return cycle complexity and the fact that they are enacted in every day interactions. I bring an example in to show that further research examining the relationship of singing to the return cycles of the Body Map would make fascinating and important research.

**Research into Cook-Greuter's ego development theory in singing.** Suzanne Cook-Greuter (2005), another researcher in transpersonal development, describes “nine levels of increasing embrace” in her Ego Development Theory (EDT). EDT demonstrates a progression of evolving mental models; each is a synthesis of evolving behavioral, cognitive, and affective dimensions (ways of doing, thinking, and being) that cohere into more and more complex meaning systems. I have summarized Cook-Greuter's Ego Development Theory in Appendix G.

Cook-Greuter provides a psychometric tool for assessing stages in her theory. It makes sense to delineate the development catalyzed by singing that I have described in my research using established psychometrics. It would also lay the groundwork for research into showing how different developmental streams potentiate each other. I explain what I mean next (using an example from my data in Appendix H).

**Research into integrating developmental models.** Different developmental streams described by different theorists potentiate each other's unfolding. Anderson compares Cook-Greuter's Ego Development to the Body Map (Anderson, 2008) showing that EDT develops roughly in synchrony with her staged understanding of embodiment (Table G5 of Appendix G).

Important for the point I wish to make is that each stage in EDT is able to more deeply appreciate and integrate perspectives other than those of one's own ego. This ability to integrate higher and higher perspectives is crucial to the ability to undergo return cycles at each stage in the Body Map. I argue this point provisionally in Appendix I, and bring an example from my narrative data in Appendix H. Future research, using the appropriate psychometric tools, could explicate this, as well as examine the role of Cook-Greuter's developmental work in the developing singer. This would also be useful in the teaching of singing.

**Research into neurophenomenology of singing.** My research has provided evidence of altered states of consciousness that occur in singers. It would be useful to delineate their neurophenomenology in order to see using functional magnetic resonance imaging of the brain what is happening neurologically when these states of consciousness occur.

### **Implications of Research and Its Contribution to the Transpersonal Field**

**Synesthesia as a modality of intuition.** I further explored synesthesia as a modality of intuition. Synesthetic intuition is not a new phenomenon (Root-Bernstein & Root-Bernstein, 2001, pp. 296-315), but has not, so far as I am aware, been explicated as an intuitive modality in intuitive inquiry. Its inclusion may well be worthwhile.

**The participatory turn.** I built on the nascent use of intuitive inquiry for inductively constructing theory (Anderson, in press, p. 35). This led me to call in concepts in Ferrer's revisioning of transpersonal theory. But I did not start from Ferrer; I rather arrived at revisioning that confirmed his own, elaborated on his more general work with variant specifics from the fields of singing and of human development; and differed by retaining human development facets of interpretation which Ferrer renounced. Ferrer's revisioning and rejection of

developmental hierarchies is a fiercely debated topic in transpersonal circles. My research adds fuel to the fires. It is my hope that it also brings new evidence to bear.

### **Practical Applications of the Research—Singing as Integral Practice and Training**

Ferrer (2003) defines integral growth as a developmental process in which all human dimensions collaboratively and co-creatively participate as equals in the Multidimensional unfolding of the human being. Integral growth requires both integral practice (which engenders new qualities and ways of being) and integral training (which strengthens and exercises qualities that emerge from integral practice). My research provides evidence that singing can be very practically used as both integral practice and integral training which can bring about integral growth.

### **Validity**

Intuitive inquiry relies on internal subjective interpretation of internal and external data. Rigor, honesty, avoiding circularity, and writing in your own voice are imperative to the integrity of the study. Integral to the validity of the study is accuracy and honesty in recording, analyzing, and reporting interview data, all of which I have done to the best of my ability. Furthermore my report also contains high levels of detail so as to allow readers to judge for themselves the internal validity of my study, that is, whether the procedures and data support the conclusions (Anderson, 2004).

Verification of data was enhanced by member checks, for “only the experiencing persons by looking at their own experiences can validly portray the experience” (Moustakas, 1990, p. 26). I sent the interview transcripts and a draft copy of my results chapter to all 9 of my participants, 8 acknowledged receipt, 1 (Rachel) did not. Of the 8 participants acknowledging receipt, 4 did not comment on the transcripts or data, 3 responded with minor corrections (e.g.,

requests to leave out discussion around third parties that occurred in the interview), and 1 (Heleen) responded with in depth commentary and additional information which I added to my results chapter.

Anderson (2004) has proposed two further criteria of validity applicable to intuitive inquiry: Resonance validity and efficacy validity. For my study to have resonance validity, it means that my findings should produce sympathetic resonance in its readers, that they may, according to Anderson (2004, p. 332), recognize “an experience spoken by another to be true for them.” Generalizability and transferability can be evaluated using the principle of sympathetic resonance. I presented my findings to Hantie Prins, my singing teacher, who is a teacher of substantial reputation and over 40 years experience, having trained many nationally and internationally acclaimed singers. Hantie felt that the data were true to her experience as a singer and teacher of singing. This was a welcome affirmation of resonance validity. Heleen spoke of deeply resonating with the data. Nobody objected to the data.

Efficacy validity refers to the capacity of a study and its report as a whole to give more value to one’s own life. It refers also to whether the researcher and the readers of the research were somehow changed through the study and its findings. Efficacy validity depends on the following criteria (Anderson, 2004). Criteria 1 and 2 I have fulfilled. Regarding Criteria 3, 4, and 5, I invite the reader to gauge and to provide me with feedback.

1. The study must have transformed the researcher during the course of the study and the researcher must have learned compassion and gained a depth of understanding about the topic. I have provided ample evidence of my transformation and understanding in my discussion, and my study meets this criterion.



2. The study should provide a new vision of the topic and a way of going forward. To the best of my awareness no previous work has delineated transpersonal growth in singers, nor looked at it through the participatory paradigm. Furthermore I have not only provided a new way of looking at development in singers, I have demonstrated a way forward looking at research into creative expression through singing as a way of explicating the interaction of developmental theories.
3. The study must have transformed the reader through having read it, and the reader must have gained in compassion and developed some depth of understanding of themselves and the topic.
4. Readers become inspired by the findings and vision of the study and feel they know the researcher personally through the authenticity and clarity of the report.
5. Readers are moved to compassionate action and service.

### **Delimitations**

The study was an exemplar study. I had preliminarily polled a number of singers in Johannesburg. All had expressed interest in the topic, but none really quite understood what it was that I was looking for. This led me to search for exemplar participants able to articulate and make meaning from their experience, in other words, singers who had the verbal ability to describe their emotions and integrate their physical experience of singing with the emotional experience of their everyday life. My selection criteria privileged verbal ability, biases the data toward the mind side of the mind-body axis, and emphasizes Cartesian dualism. However, searching for exemplar participants also led me to interview a wide international, yet exemplar sample. The internationality of the group, despite its small size, nevertheless facilitated the collecting of thick, rich data, which improves the transferability of that data.

## **Limitations**

It was difficult working professionally and conducting the research. Running a medical practice limits time, energy, and focus. I was fortunate to be able to keep most of my mornings free for study and writing, but dealing with people and their illness in the afternoon interrupted the spontaneous fermenting of ideas during downtime. This gave the project a “stop-start” feel and prolonged the agony of finishing.

Time constraints and professional responsibilities mentioned above, combined with a predisposition to multiple exciting and demanding projects made the level of rigor and discipline required for intuitive inquiry daunting. Nevertheless I was able to (mostly) remain inspired to maintain steady attention to the project and keep proper record of intuition and experiences as they happened.

Dealing rigorously and articulating the ineffable proved difficult. Participants were initially reluctant to speak, and often had difficulty putting words to their experience. Their descriptions, however, proved in the end to be articulate, pertinent, and thorough.

A number of premises about Spirit are not provable; also not provable are those premises about the trajectory of soul life. For instance, in the citing of previous life-times the reports are verifiable, but the actualities are neither provable nor disprovable.

## **Conclusion**

The Singer’s Journey is a multilocal participatory trans-temporal unfolding that I have synthesised using multiple disciplines and chronicled through my own experience and those of my participants. I have built on the nascent use of intuitive inquiry to evolve inductively based theory. This led to narrative evidence for Ferrer’s participatory revisioning of transpersonal theory. The narratives were further well-framed in Ruumet’s spiral model of human

development. I elaborated on Ferrer's more general work with variant specifics from the fields of singing and of human development; differed from Ferrer by retaining human development facets of interpretation which he renounced; and proposed how my data might be used to form the basis of research explicating the synthesis of various developmental models. I further proposed synesthesia as another potential modality of intuition that may be incorporated into intuitive inquiry's methodology.

My hope and prayer is that these stories and the theory developed from them inspire others to sing. In so doing, we may probe and creatively participate in our wondrous and mysterious universe.

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## Appendix A: Information and Informed Consent Forms

Dear <<NAME>>

<<DATE>>

I am a researcher from the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology in California USA. I am interested in understanding any psycho-spiritual experiences and personal development that may have taken place through the act of singing and learning to sing. I feel this research may help us understand singing as a methodology for self-development as well as document milestones along the path of a singer's development. Through participating, I hope you too will benefit. I anticipate these benefits to be a deeper understanding of your own personal journey and a deeper understanding of how the inner experience of singing may relate to both your singing and your inner development.

The study will consist of individual interviews with a number of singers. If you decide to participate in the study we will schedule a time for a private interview at a mutually agreed upon neutral location at which I will ask you to share your experience. I may also ask you to depict creatively in some way your experience. After I have synthesized the information from your interview I will share this with you and ask you for feedback as to its accuracy and completeness. I will also ask you to fill in any spaces or gaps in my depiction of your experience. Participation will require one interview of approximately 1 hour. After the interview I will send you a transcript of the interview for you to verify for accuracy and truth. Your feedback on my understanding of your experience will require approximately an hour of your time. Should I not hear from you for 3 weeks after having sent you the transcript, I will assume that the transcript is accurate. At the end of the study I will send you a copy of my dissertation manuscript.

You do not necessarily need to give me your name except on the consent form. Your signed consent form, interview transcript, and synthesized depiction of your experience will be filed separately and the file names will be coded. Transcription of the interview will be done by me and also partly by a paid transcriber who will have signed a confidentiality agreement. The source of all information will remain strictly confidential unless you give me specific written permission otherwise. In order to protect your confidentiality, your name will not be mentioned at all in the research project, and data will be reported using pseudonyms. The original transcripts will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and all data files will be kept on a password secured hard drive.

I anticipate no risks to you by your participation in the study. In the event of your feeling any unease or discomfort during the study, you may elect to discuss it with me or a therapist (I have a number of references available). You may also withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or prejudice.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research project, or feel that there is additional information you would like to add, please contact me. My contact details appear below. I welcome any suggestions or questions you may have.

At the end of the study I will contact you as well as send to you a copy of my research findings.

If you have any questions regarding your rights regarding participating in this study, please contact my research committee chairperson, Dr. Judy Schavrien, Ph.D., at jschavrien@itp.edu or the chairperson of the ITP Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Frederic Luskin, Ph.D., at fl---@itp.edu.

Please sign the informed consent below. Thank you for you help and participation.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Paul Freinkel, MBBCh  
Researcher

### Informed Consent Form

The study has been explained to me and I have read and understood this form and had any questions about this research answered to my satisfaction. My participating in this research is entirely voluntary and no pressure has been applied to encourage participation. My signature indicates my willingness to be a participant in this research and to allow the researcher to include data collected from me in the research project and its publication.

Participant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Freinkel (Researcher)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Participant Invitation

Dear <<NAME>>

<<DATE>>

### Re: Research Into the Inner Experience of Singing

I am researching the inner experience of singing as part of a doctorate in psychology. I am particularly interested in experiences you may have had while singing that may be described as “spiritual” or “transcendent” where you feel that through singing you may have let go of yourself, or have contacted something higher, more expanded, or different than your everyday self and experience. This may be something that happened once or something that is ongoing in your life. The following descriptions serve as an example:

I was making the sound and the sound was making me. I was sound. I was vibration. There was no time. The vastness of infinity opened up and was not frightening. I had become a Source that needed no mirroring. I realized I had reached a state like none other than I had ever experienced.

(Schneider, 2005, A personal experience of unfolding self through singing.)

The sound, as well as the use and the awareness of my body are in constant change. With the sometimes overwhelming experience of what I hear singing in myself, it is I, as a whole, as a person, that changes. I enter a different consciousness: more here and now, more earthy. At the same time, during precious moments, lighter, happier, with sparkles of a fire that I would call heavenly. I see how the new use of my voice has integrated into my work and helped directing it towards what I feel is my individual path.

(Coenen, 1999, Singing from within.)

If you identify with the descriptions above or feel you have had an experience which you feel is important and relevant to singing as a source of personal, psychological, or spiritual growth, I would love to interview you and have you participate in my study.

Participation would require approximately an hour of your time on two occasions. The first hour would be an interview at a quiet place convenient for you, in which I would ask you to share your experience. The second hour would be in your own time to review your interview transcript in order to make sure I have correctly recorded what you have said. During this time you could also add any further insights you feel are relevant. Your participation and the source of all my research data would remain strictly confidential.

If you would like to participate, or would like more information about the study, please contact me at paul.freinkel@gmail.com, or on my cell phone, +27 (0) -- --- ----. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Paul Freinkel, Ph.D candidate, Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, Palo Alto, CA

### **Appendix C: Preliminary Lenses**

- Music creates an inner beat, an inner organizing movement. We sing when we listen to the inner beat and resonate with it.
- The deeper and more attentively we are able to listen the deeper we are able to tap into the flow of life. The voice is an anatomical / physiological instrument that enables us to express that which we are tapping into.
- Proper vocal tract coordination requires we tap into this inner space but may also take us to this inner space. It is a “chicken or egg” situation.
- In this inner space, thought and awareness, and self are related “entities” in a different way to discursive thought, awareness and little self. In my experience discursive thought and little self interrupt both the ontological experience as well as the vocal tract coordination required to sing.
- In order to sing one needs to put one’s little self aside and become one with the music. It is not that there is no experience of self, rather the experience of self is different.
- Singing can lead to exceptional experiences or peak experiences as well as be transformative, leading therefore to potentially exceptional human experiences or plateau experiences.
- Singing may be a tool for psychosynthesis that may help the singer disidentify with subpersonalities or selves s/he may have projected on the voice and may lead to the Experience of Self.
- Singing may lead us to our inner uniqueness and aid in our unique unfolding.

- In fact, singing may lead to growth in all three aspects of the integral triad of essential, inseparable, and interrelated aspects of being human: uniqueness or individuality, universality or relatedness, and transcendence, and may lead to transformation.
- Vocal tract alignment mirrors psychology.
- It seems that there is a continuum in the way we vocalize or sing: with pure emotion and pure intellect representing the extremes. There is probably a point where awareness changes and a synthesis of emotion and awareness takes place, which may correspond to the awakening of Self (capital S) in psychosynthesis.
- Speech and discursive thought interrupt singing physiology.
- Singing is an exercise in mindfulness and meditative practice.
- Psychological wounds or dissociative splitting inhibit our freedom to sing.  
Conversely, singing may heal and integrate these wounds.
- Difficulty in singing may point us to wounds that need healing.
- Singing is a direct experience of feeling and of feeling alive and of life.
- An act of singing may be a hierophany.
- Singing helps us to stay rooted in our core, our voice, and our power. It connects us to our past and our present and may alter our future. It is a way in which we connect to our inner selves and the transcendental.

### **Appendix D: Brainstormed Final Lenses**

- Singing is a multilocal trans-temporal participatory happening, which in turn is part of a greater multilocal trans-temporal participatory unfolding.
- It happens in relationship:
  - with people
  - with place and space
  - across time
- Enables individuation
- Enables movement inwards
- Moves one out of self-centeredness
- Enables transition from instrumental body through compassion through expressive body
- Enables changes in stance
- Plays a role in embodiment and changes the embodied experience
- Plays a role in combined immanent and transcendent experience
- Reworking of parental archetype and relationship to matter and earthliness: Father, mother, materiality, home, and belonging.
- Brings to consciousness and enables working through developmental trailers and plays a role in return cycles
- Enables a shift in identity
- This shift in identity enables a developmental component
- Shifts cathectic love to unconditional love
- Opens heart creates mind-body awareness and heart mind integration
- Awareness of greater dimensionality of self



- Voice develops a consciousness of its own
- Authentic expression of emotion
- Related to feelings of freedom, ecstasy, pain as well as seemingly simultaneous contradictory feelings
- Enables disidentifying
- Through disidentifying, brings freedom from identification
- Involved in releasing ego defenses
- Enables release of subject object dichotomy
- Requires vulnerability
- Vulnerability unfolds in conjunction with development in singing
- Vulnerability becomes strength, power in vulnerability
- Peak experiences in singing shake you up
- Brings about yearning and longing, longing for home
- Facilitates relationship and community
- Journey requires naming in love, being seen, vulnerability
- Daemon, opens me for me, enables vision
- Change in sense of self, change in sense of space
- Unfolding of self-knowledge
- Requires trust
- Related to developmental unfolding
- Wounding shuts the singer up
- Nonthreatening observation of self
- Elation and fun

- Transmuting maternal identification
- Transition from expressive to presence
- Singers need permission and acceptance to sing, and the ability to sing is related to the ability and permission to be authentic, vulnerable, and wholly yourself.

### **Appendix E: Anderson's Body Map**

Anderson's Body Map is premised on development being centered in embodied experience, and "change being sited in the human body (2008) throughout the lifespan. The Body Map emphasizes the biological urgency of life, that physical life force that propels us forward until that life force ends (Anderson, 2008). Its 10 Axes or stages segment an organic process moving towards wholeness and (body-mind-spirit) integration. Each axis represents a forward movement portrayed from the perspective of the body.

Return cycles are integral to the latter five axes which, as discussed by Ruumet (2006 pp. 19-22), require an integration and transformation of lower levels of development before higher levels of development can be stabilized in awareness". The earlier axes involve somatic and sensorial enmeshment, increasing body / mind /spirit / differentiation follow, while later axes reflect increasing integration and unification of body / mind /spirit in awakened consciousness. Each body has an Embodiment Stance, the way it stands to do what it does in the world.

I find the easiest way to understand the axes, forward movements, and return cycles of the Body Map is diagrammatically. I have drawn the entire organic embodied process as a U-shaped trajectory in the flow chart of Figure E1. It is fairly self-explanatory. Each axis is introduced and its primary activity and stance summarized. The eddy currents of return cycles are represented by the bidirectional arrows between the related later and early axes pairs, and the return activity required to stabilize the later axis is noted on it. The activities required for forward movement from axis to axis are summarized on the forward moving arrows on the outer edge of the U. I will explain by way of example the Axis 5—Competence and Axis 6—Compassion cycle (bottom of Figure E1).

As a person grows into adulthood they are in the process of acquiring skill, mastery and competence (Axis 5—Competence body). Their *stance* reflects a tendency to appear invulnerable. Once they have achieved a certain mastery and competence they start, in the *forward movement*, to explore ways to use this competence for their own unique and personal meaning. If successful, they begin to develop a genuine care and concern for the world (Axis 6—Compassion body). Their heart begins to open as their *stance* reflects their emerging mind-body awareness. In the 6-5 *return cycle* they work on overcoming their absorption in the tasks of competence, mastery, and control. In so doing they learn that they cannot fix the world (*forward movement* from Axis 6 to Axis 7) and begin to express their personal uniqueness embodying Presence (Axis 7) such that their *stance* becomes one of flow and being present in the moment.

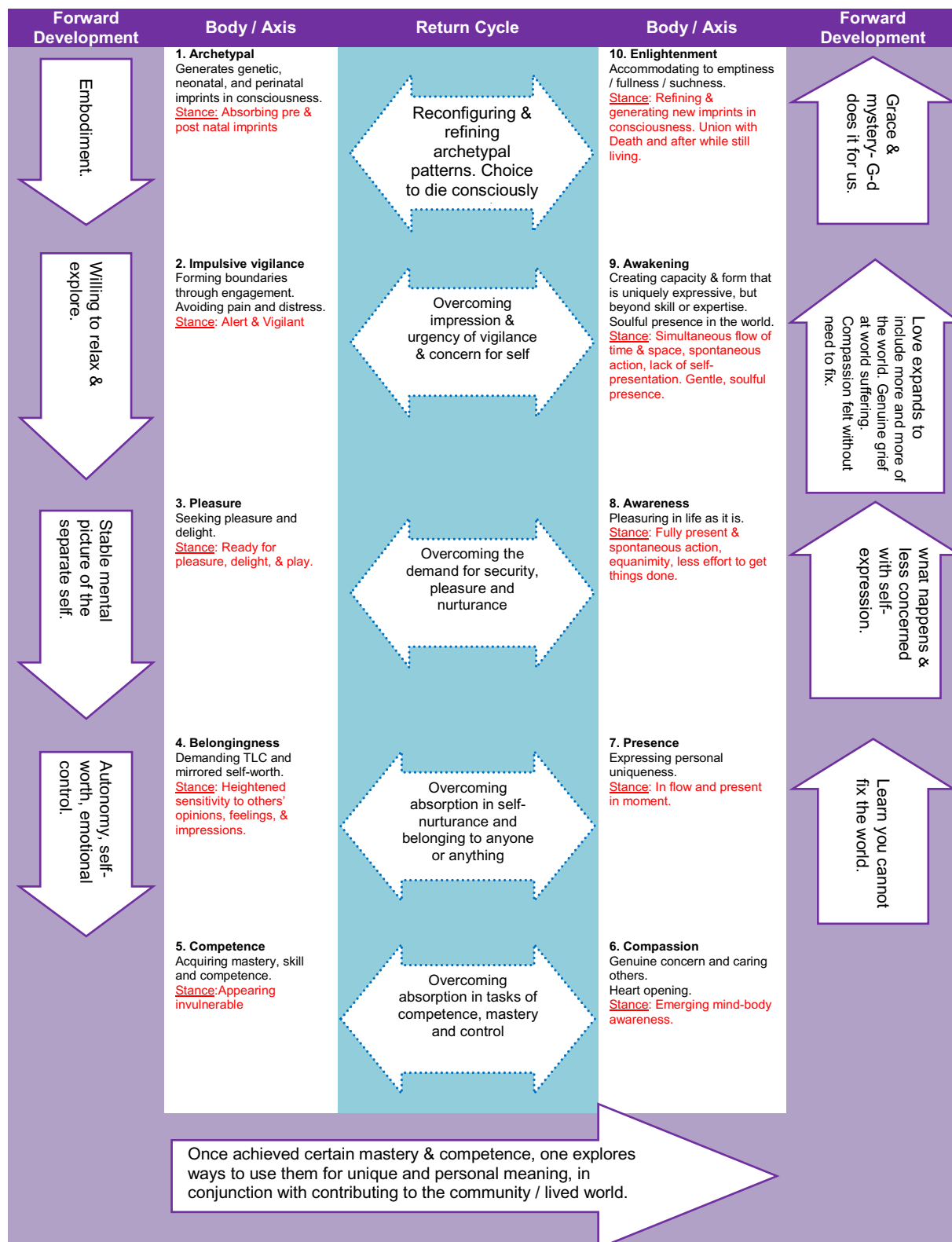
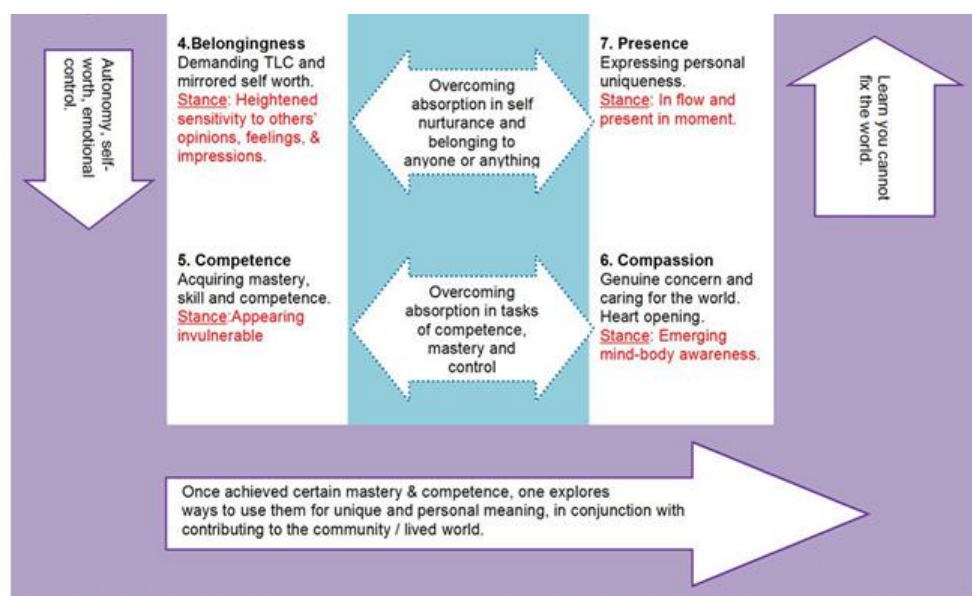


Figure E1. Anderson's Body Map.

## Appendix F: An Example of Singing Facilitating Return Cycles

Herman had a problem with “pushing” the voice because he wanted to perform and found that the result was unfortunate. For simplicity I repeat the narrative here and show the relevant parts of the body map in Figure F1.

*Herman:* I wanted to give a good performance and it didn’t happen. (Laughs)  
You want, then your willpower is too much on the front, forefront and I know in the meantime, by my lessons with Heleen, that when there is too much will, there is an effect on the whole body. So the right vibration doesn’t come about. It doesn’t happen, because I’m pushing. I was pushing.



*Figure F1.* Body Map Axes 4-7. Return cycles in double headed arrows. Forward movements in single headed arrows.

Ultimately Herman sought to express his personal uniqueness of the Presence body of Axis 7, but his need to perform constituted a developmental trailer from the Belongingness body of Axis 4. Overcoming this need for mirrored self-worth would constitute part of the 7-4 return cycle. Interesting to note is that his “pushing” and inability in the moment to overcome his need to perform blocked his competence in singing (Axis 5), which inhibited the expression through singing of his personal uniqueness (Presence body Axis 7).

“Pushing” is a common problem in learning to sing, Herman was able to realize what motivated it, and it was thereby part of catalyzing a return cycle. Many participants underwent return cycles through their singing, and future research could fruitfully investigate this. Furthermore, Herman was not a professional singer and came to singing later in his life. In addition to explicating the depth of return cycles, future research should consider: (a) whether this return cycle is specific to learning a new art, or (b) whether it is generalized to the whole life activity.

## Appendix G: Suzanne Cook-Greuter's Ego Development Theory

Cook-Greuter (2005) describes nine levels of increasing embrace in her Ego Development Theory. These nine levels are listed in Figure G1. Each level is seen as part of a progression of evolving mental models. Each is a synthesis of evolving behavioral, cognitive, and affective dimensions (ways of doing, thinking, and being). These mental models cohere into more and more complex meaning systems, each able to more deeply appreciate and integrate perspectives other than those of one's own ego (Wilber, 2005, p. 33).

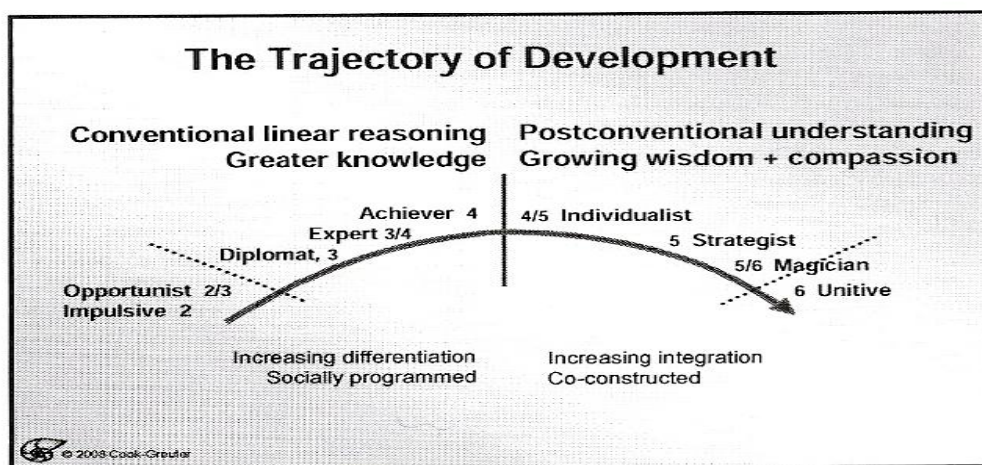


Figure G1. Cook-Greuter's trajectory of development.

Stages alternate between differentiation and integration. With each of Cook Greuter's stages, awareness of another's humanity, self-awareness and ego transparency deepen, while simultaneously historical and temporal perspectives widen. The self gains perspectives into its own interactions as if standing on a balcony watching itself. Each higher perspective represents a higher balcony from which it watches itself. As the self watches from higher balconies, its perspective of time broadens. The graphics in Table G1, Table G2, Table G3, and Table G4 represent the self's identity, its relations to others and the role others play in the self's identity formation, as well as the balconies of perspective upon which the self is able to stand. The text in

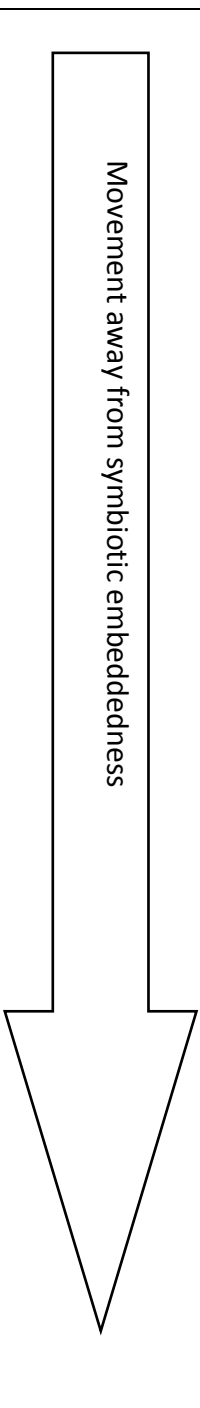

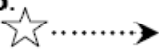

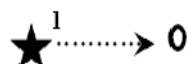
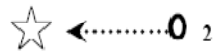


the tables summarizes the typical world view, cognition, perspective and preoccupation of each stage.

Stage 2—Impulsive, by way of example, is one of early childhood. There is a very rudimentary impulsive self that manifests as self-labeling such as “Me!” or “Mine!” A person at this stage has no empathic ability and another person is seen solely as a source for fulfilling one’s own needs on demand. The next stage—Opportunistic 2/3 is self-serving and describes itself in terms of own wishes. It begins to develop a sense of others having own wants and will for acquisition and as such views the world as a space to compete for goods, dominance, space, and power. Stage Δ/3—Rule oriented develops a 2<sup>nd</sup> person perspective where the self begins to understand the other also as a person who can view it, and begins to explore ways to make itself appealing in order to get what it needs. The more mature self-conscious stage 3 / 4 has developed a 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective that is able to watch its interactions and sees self and others as separate individuals with unique differences. Perspectives develop, and self-transparency deepens as described in the table. For a more thorough understanding of Ego Development Theory please refer to Cook-Greuter (2005).

Table G1

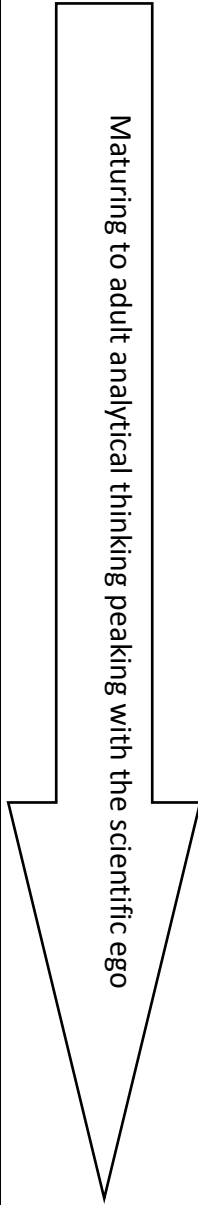
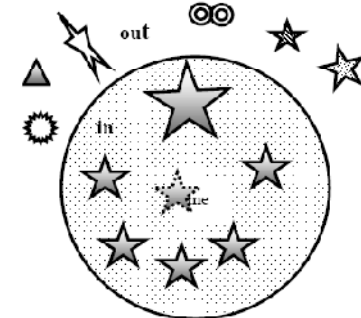
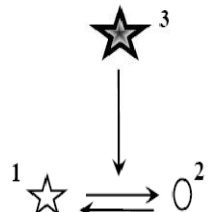
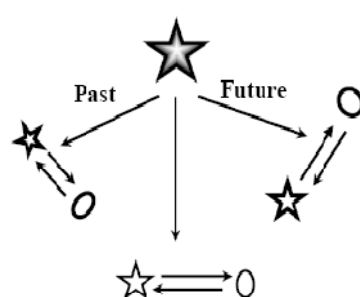
*Earlier Stages of Ego Development*

	Cook-Greuter's Stages of Ego Development	Key Processes and Their Development at Each Stage
	<b>Infant State, 1</b> Symbiotic: E1  Con-fused, autistic; preverbal	<u>Cognition</u> : Nominal Actions <u>Self</u> : Confused, confounded, undifferentiated <u>Other</u> : Not distinct, source of survival
	<b>Impulsive, Stage 2</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> p. p.  1 <sup>st</sup> person perspective Rudimentary, physical self-labeling, basic dichotomies	<u>Cognition</u> : Primary actions <u>Self</u> : Rudimentary physical self-labeling "me, mine!" <u>Differentiation</u> : Crude dichotomies <u>Other</u> : Fulfillment of needs on demand
	<b>Opportunist, Stage 2/3</b> (Self-protective: Δ  Self-description in terms of own wishes; dichotomous thinking, self-serving	<u>Cognition</u> : Preoperational actions <u>Self</u> : Single concrete features, minimal self-description which is action based and framed in terms of desire <u>Differentiation</u> : Competing for goods, space, dominance, power <u>Other</u> : Beginning sense of others having own wants and will to get something
	<b>Rule oriented (Δ/3); not in LDF</b>   2 <sup>nd</sup> person perspective Single visible external feature, Beginning comparisons	<u>Cognition</u> : Primary actions <u>Self</u> : Single external features, beginning of comparisons one variable at a time <u>Other</u> : Others see me also and notice how I am and what I do. Beginning to recognize that if I want something from other I have to make myself appealing.

*Note.* Graphics from Cook-Greuter, 2005, pp. 6-7.

Table G2

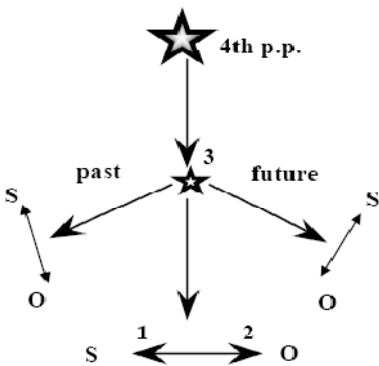
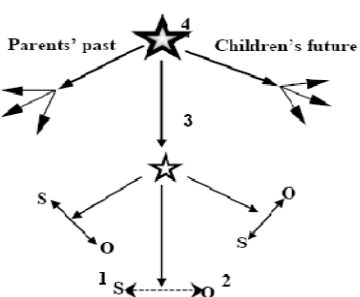
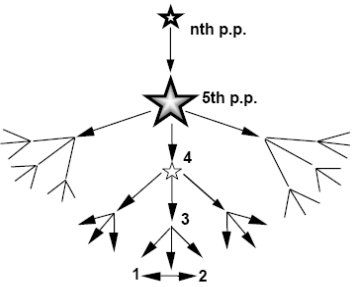
*Middle Stages of Ego Development*

	Cook-Greuter's Stages of Ego Development	Key Processes and Their Development at Each Stage
	<p><u>The Conformist Stage 3 (Diplomat)</u></p> 	<p><u>Cognition</u>: Concrete operations  <u>Self</u>: Several external features; vital statistics given, rudimentary awareness of internal states and the negative is avoided or suppressed  <u>Other</u>: Two types</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Own family, tribe, group, or nation. This provides identity values and protection. Boundaries between self and in-group confused and there is over identification.</li> <li>2. Everyone else who is different or outside of own group is "out-group them" of "them vs. us."</li> </ol>
	<p>The Self-Conscious Stage 3/4 (Expert)</p>  <p>Third person perspective: Self and others as separate persons with unique differences</p>	<p><u>Cognition</u>: Abstract operations: Beginning ability to take a 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective and look at oneself objectively.  <u>Self</u>: Separate and self-differentiated from others: there is a sense of uniqueness  Identity formed by clusters of external attributes and conventional traits.  Self-conscious also in the sense of readily feeling uneasy.  <u>Other</u>: Others are seen as separate persons different to me. There is a need for constant comparison and measuring. Do others measure up to my ideas and standards?</p>
	<p>Conscientious Stage 4 (Achiever)</p>  <p>Expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective:  Able to see self and others both backwards and forward in time → patterns of behavior</p>	<p><u>Cognition</u>: Formal operations, clear separation between subject and object, knower and known. Expanded 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective enables an understanding of time in relation to past and future.  <u>Time frame</u>: Self as it is (traits and competences), self as it should be (goals and ideals).  <u>Realm</u>: Self in society. Mixes with others with similar goals and aspirations.  <u>Preoccupation</u>: Reasons, causes, goals, achievement, effectiveness, contractual relationships.  <u>Positive Equilibration</u>: Rational, analytical, conscientious, fair, successful, and competent with high self esteem.  <u>Truth</u>: Can be found through appropriate scientific methods even though those methods may not yet exist. Compare to Ruumet—the ego of center 3 explains things only in terms of what it knows.</p>

Note. Graphics from Cook-Greuter, 2005, pp.6-7.

Table G3

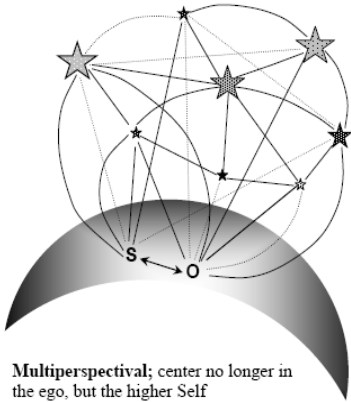
*Later Stages of Ego Development*

	Cook-Greuter's Stages of Ego Development	Key Processes and Their Development at Each Stage
<div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">           Assimilation and integration towards conscious sense of belonging &amp; unity with the ground.         </div>	<b>Individualist or Pluralist Stage 4/5</b>  <p>4th person perspective: Standing outside the system</p>	<u>Cognition</u> : Able to understand systems. Developing 4 <sup>th</sup> person perspective enables greater ego transparency. <u>Relativism</u> : Discovery of personal and cultural conditioning and defensive self deception. <u>Positive Equilibration</u> : Vivid individualism concentrating on relishing the experience of the here and now <u>Truth</u> : Can never be found because everything is relative and therefore no fixed point from which to judge (deconstructive post modernism). Meaning determined by position of observer.
	<b>The Autonomous Stage 5</b>  <p>Expanded 4<sup>th</sup> person perspective: Self in embedded in history and multiple cultural contexts.</p>	<u>Cognition</u> : Metasystematic operations; General Systems thinker. 4 <sup>th</sup> person's perspective expands to include generational past and future. <u>Time frame</u> : Own history and lifetime <u>Realm</u> : Society and others with similar convictions and principles. <u>Preoccupation</u> : Own development, self-actualization, self-fulfillment, processes. <u>Positive Equilibration</u> : Well-balanced body/mind integration, autonomous, tolerant, insightful, growth oriented, high self-esteem, overarching principles. <u>Truth</u> : Can be approximated: higher development is better because more complex arguments carry more weight than feeble ones. Higher is more adequate for functioning in an ever more complex global theatre. As opposed to the absolute relativism of the post modern individualist, there are qualitative differences by which discernment may take place.
	<b>Construct-aware Stage 5/6 (Alchemist)</b>  <p>The 5<sup>th</sup> person perspective etc. → nth person perspective</p>	<u>Cognition</u> : Unitive concepts perceived. Cross paradigmatic systems understood. <u>Time frame</u> : Beyond Self and lifetime: Global-historical perspective develops <u>Realm</u> : Beyond own culture. <u>Preoccupation</u> : Inner conflict around existential paradoxes and intrinsic problems of language and meaning making. <u>Positive Equilibration</u> : Acceptance of tension and paradox, committed to service of self and others. Sense of humility. <u>Truth</u> : No matter how advanced the thinking, abstraction, or cognitive insight. One is always separate from the underlying nondual reality.

Note. Graphics from Cook-Greuter, 2005, pp. 6-7.

Table G4

*Unitive Stage of Ego Development*

	<b>Cook-Greuter's Stages of Ego Development</b>	<b>Key Processes and Their Development at Each Stage</b>
	<p>The Unitive Stage 6</p>  <p>Multiperspectival; center no longer in the ego, but the higher Self</p>	<p><u>Cognition</u>: Unitive concepts embraced</p> <p><u>Time frame</u>: Eternity</p> <p><u>Realm</u>: Universe as a space time continuum</p> <p><u>Preoccupation</u>: Being, noncontrolling consciousness, witnessing of flux of experience and states of mind.</p> <p><u>Positive Equilibration</u>: Accepting unassuming presence; fully empathic; noninterfering ability to be with whatever is.</p> <p><u>Truth</u>: Immanent experiential truth of interconnectedness and non separateness. Experiences existence as changing states of awareness within timelessness.</p>

*Note.* Graphics from Cook-Greuter, 2005, p. 7.

Cook-Greuter's Ego Development develops roughly in synchrony with Anderson's staged understanding of embodiment (Anderson, 2008). I have included Anderson's approximate comparisons of the Body Map Axes and Ego Development Theory stages in Table G5. Just as there appears to be a correlate between singing and embodiment, so too there may also exist a singing correlate to Cook-Greuter's stages of ego development.

Table G5

*Anderson's Comparison of Body Map & Ego Development Theory*

Anderson's Body Map Axes	Cook-Greuter's Ego Development Stages
Axis 1: Archetypal Body	n/a
Axis 2: Vigilance Body	Stage 1 / 2, Infant & Impulsive
Axis 3: Pleasure Body	Stage 2 / 3, Self-defensive
Axis 4: Belongingness Body	Stage 3, Conformist
Axis 5: Competence Body	Stage 3 / 4, Self-conscious
Axis 6: Compassion Body	Stage 4, Conscientious
Axis 7: Presence Body	Stage 4 / 5, Individualistic
Axis 8: Awareness Body	Stage 5, Autonomous
Axis 9: Awakening Body	Stage 5 / 6, Construct aware
Axis 10: Enlightenment Body	Stage 6, Unitive

*Note.* From Anderson, 2008, p. 2.

## Appendix H: Narrative Example Integrating Developmental Models

Heleen is learning to be fully present and spontaneous in her singing and less concerned with her self-expression. This constitutes the Awareness Body of Axis 8 in the Body Map (Relevant aspects of the body map in Figure H1).

*Heleen:* I had an experience once, I was very focused on my feet and on my legs to stand, really on the ground. And that made me quieter than I usually am. And just before I had to start, I felt my body taking a breath. And it wasn't at the moment that I consciously would have taken that breath, so I, I something like, what's going on? It was much earlier than I would normally have taken that breath. And then at the same time I could let it go, and I sung that piece then very well. But my body took over. And I didn't do it anymore.

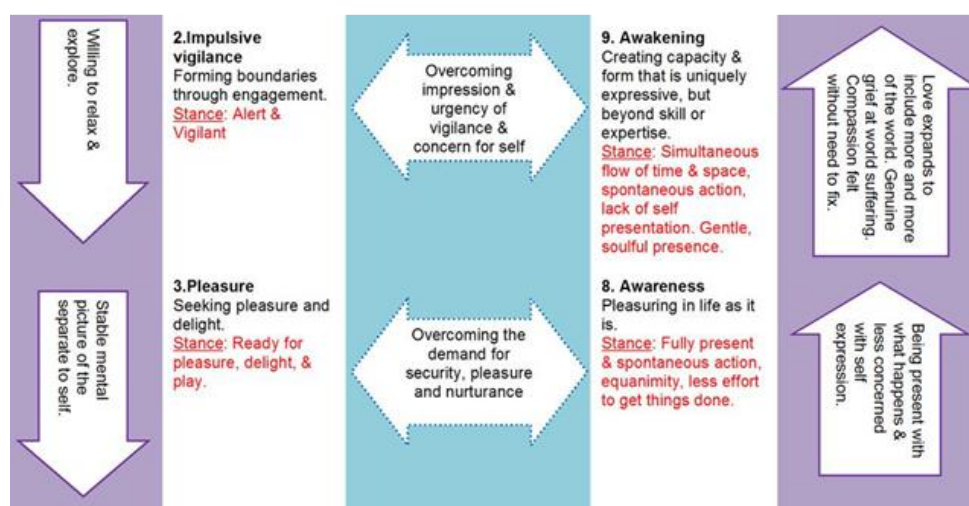


Figure H1. Body Map Axes 2, 3, 8, and 9. Return cycles in double headed arrows. Forward movements in single headed arrows.

Heleen's return cycle to Axis 3 (Pleasure Body) requires overcoming the demand for security, pleasure, and nurturance. It requires an ability to compassionately recognize patterns in her behavior over her lifetime. Heleen clearly demonstrated this ability in her interview.

Cook-Greuter (2005) would call Heleen's stage "Autonomous" and the associated cognition "metasystematic" wherein a person's perspective expands to include generational past and future. Anderson (2008) draws a parallel between Body Map Axis 8 and Cook-Greuter's

Autonomous individual. My argument, evidenced by Heleen's narrative, is that Cook-Greuter is describing the cognitive maturity required for the return cycle of the Body Map. Future research, using the appropriate psychometric tools, could explicate this, as well as examine the role of Cook-Greuter's developmental work in the developing singer. This would also be useful in the teaching of singing.



### **Appendix I: Integrating Anderson and Cook-Greuter**

When comparing Anderson (A) and Cook-Greuter (CG), I believe we are seeing different facets of the same process. Cook-Greuter is looking at self-concept and the expansion of cognition to include wider and deeper perspectives, and Anderson is looking at the embodied experience of Evolution in consciousness. It appears to me that Cook-Greuter describes the mental model associated with each body, and Anderson describes the felt sense of the body embodying that mental model, and that the cognitive development described by Cook-Greuter enables forward movement and return cycle processing in Anderson's model. I shall look at the four return cycles briefly to illustrate this point. The argument is provisional and requires deeper research.

**Forward movement: Competence (5) to compassion (6) and (6)—(5) return cycle.** In Anderson Axis 5, one is acquiring mastery skill and competence. In CG, there is developing self-consciousness and 3rd person perspective where one sees self and others as separate with unique differences. The self-conscious person's need for comparison will help them hone their skills and mastery, which with a developing awareness of time, and patterns of behavior, can begin to explore how to use this mastery and competence for unique meaning. Furthermore, with an understanding of past, present, and future selves, and an opening of the heart towards others, the perspective is gained to deal with the 6—5 return cycle of overcoming absorption in the tasks of mastery and control.

**Return cycle: Presence (7)—belongingness (4).** With the developing 4th Person perspective, one is able to stand outside the system and discover personal and cultural conditioning as well as the associated defensive self-deceptions. This allows one to overcome absorption in self-nurturance, and through understanding conditioning, one can overcome the

need to belong to anyone or anything. This understanding then enables a growing awareness and perhaps acceptance of the shadow as well as repressed bodily impulses.

**Return cycle: Awareness (8)—Pleasure (3) CG's autonomous (5).** Autonomous persons can perceive systemic patterns and long term trends. They are also able to own and integrate many disparate parts of themselves including many compartmentalized subidentities. They are also able to generate meaning and tell a new story. This insight enables them to address the 8—3 return cycle demands for security pleasure and nurturance that may be surfacing and enable them to take pleasure in life as it is by reframing their personal meaning narratives. With deeper perspective into time and context, existential awareness probably begins to surface.

**Return cycle: Awakening (9) to impulsive / vigilant (2) CG's construct aware (5/6).** In CG 5/6 (Construct aware) the ego is becoming more transparent to itself, and people realize their fundamental “ego-centricity,” that is that the ego has functioned as a central processing point for all stimuli and as a central reference point of self-identity. With this growing awareness one becomes aware of the ego's impression and urgency of vigilance and concern for itself (9—2 Return Cycle). The person at this stage thus becomes equipped to address the issues of this return cycle. Further, linguistic splitting can become conscious and one may learn to kick the “verbal” habit. Thus one may develop an embodied awareness of the linguistic basis of subject / object and begin to heal the dualism.

**Return cycle: Enlightenment (10)—Archetypal (1) CG's unitive (6).** CG summarises the unitive adult as someone likely to have a balanced integrated sense of both belongingness and separateness, because he or she feels part of the ongoing evolution of the universe in all its aspects and cycles of creation, destruction, and recreation. I do not know how this would facilitate the return cycle.