

Typical Vocal Problems.

Critical vocal issues that I have observed .

- **Singing with TOO much breath pressure: cause/ singing in many different acoustical environments that create a subconscious desire to ‘hear’ the voice instead of feel for proper sensations. This invites the singer to push the voice to try and achieve a bigger sound. Collapsing of the rib cage or loss of proper postural alignment can also contribute to this problem.**
- **Registration problems: causes/ too much breath pressure resulting in the vocal folds employing the thicker mass rather than the thin edges. This can cause the singer to use too much chest register too high in the scale. (This problem is often accompanied by a flat or retracted tongue posture.)**
- **Forcing the jaw forward which creates a gag reflex at the tongue root: cause/ attempt to hear one’s own sound (a singer hears more inside when the jaw is forward). This jaw issue can also result from forcing too much breath pressure in a dry acoustical environment. A forward jaw position does not allow for a healthy adduction of the vocal cords.**
- **Shaking diaphragm on high sustained notes: causes: lack of focus in tone, going for too much inner sound, singing the upper passaggio too wide open (voce aperto) causing the larynx to rise, locking of the solar plexus (not allowing for a smooth turning motion of the solar plexus).**
- **Loss of higher overtones: causes/ pulling down on the facial posture which lowers the soft palate or results in a flat or retracted tongue. Low soft palate can also contribute to tuning problems and loss of upper range.**
- **Low soft palate accompanied by a pushed and harsh sound: cause/ dropped facial posture or too much push of breath pressure.**
- **Thin tonal quality: cause/ singing without enough focus, forcing the singer to push too much breath pressure or force the sensation of ring by tightening the root of the tongue.**

As one can see from reading the list above, most vocal problems are interconnected. If the tongue is flat or retracted, then often the soft palate drops. However, it is critical for any serious singer to observe that ALL of these vocal problems listed above are directly related to pushing too much breath pressure through the vocal folds.

Balanced Teaching.

- **Low breath/Tall spine.**
- **High and wide soft palate/Low larynx.**
- **Laryngeal tilt in the middle register/ Lifting of the soft palate.**
- **Open back wall of the pharynx/ Tongue.**
- **Antagonistic pull between upper and lower abdominal muscles/Solar Plexis gently turns as lower abdominal muscles slightly resist, coming in only toward the end of the phrase.**
- **Feeling overtones in the head (forehead) and lower body (chest) simultaneously.**
- **Vowels altering in the throat but keeping pure vowel sound with the tongue position!!**
- **Appoggio (leaning of the body)/ opening of the lower back**
- **Sternum resists forward at the onset or attack/ Back muscles expand slightly down and out to hold back the breath pressure.**
- **Loose jaw/ Engaged soft palate.**
- **Open throat.**