

Sing your own song

BY DEVA PREMAL

*Sing your own song
Beat your own drum
Fly on the wind, it'll carry you
Dance your own dance
It's a beautiful chance
Fly on the wind, it'll carry you...
Why hesitate
When there's nothing to fear
Why do we wait
With the moment right here
Be your own light
Keep your heart strong
And sing your own song.*

THESE ARE THE WORDS OF A SONG WRITTEN BY MITEN, MY PARTNER IN LIFE, LOVE AND MUSIC. AS SIMPLE AS THEY MAY SEEM, THEY CONTAIN A PROFOUND TRUTH, ONE THAT I CERTAINLY RELATE TO.

My whole life started to blossom when I discovered my own song. It seems to me that first we need the courage to sing it, and through that courage, an affirmation arises which gives us the trust to own, and to honour our song. Song is a metaphor for our own creativity, our unique gift to the world. It manifests itself in countless ways, and the good thing

is—we know we've found it when we find ourselves having fun singing it!

The ego is so ready to acknowledge only the difficult tasks as valuable.

"...If I can do it so easily, it isn't worthwhile..."

That's a concept I see many of us carrying around, and it's such a huge burden to bear. The ego is always ready to whisper in our ears: "...it's nothing...anyone can do that..."

I think our greatest challenge is to go ahead and share our gifts, regardless of what our minds say! The animals and plants give us such a great example...each one seems perfectly content with their own particular gift. I've never seen a bird striving to be more beautiful, or trying to sing a more challenging song than the one it's been blessed with. To me, creativity always comes naturally, when there are no mind trips around whether or not it will turn out to be profitable, in terms of worldly recognition and success.

Another misconception of the Western mind is to limit the term creative to acts such as painting, singing and poetry... Everything we do has the potential to be a creative act...it just depends on how one approaches it: Cleaning a room in a loving and prayerful way, is a work of art.

In my case, my song is singing mantras... I grew up with music. It played a big part in my family life, and in my school educa-

tion. I had some talent for it, and a good ear when I played violin or sang, but even so, it always felt like a task to practise every day. I never thought to make music my life, nor did I have any aspirations in that direction.

Later, during my years in India, at the ashram of my spiritual master, Osho, I discovered the bliss of participating in the sacred music that was so the central to the meditations there. I especially loved the singing of devotional songs that graced the evening meditations. I cherished those evenings...and still do. For the first time I had no musical score to follow, and consequently could make no mistakes! Or, conversely, I was free to make as many mistakes as I dared! Just to sing amongst a group of people in a meditative way gave me the greatest joy. I began to relish the freedom of expression and rejoiced in my 'free floating voice'.

Life, then, brought Miten and me together, and 'coincidentally' he was one of the musicians creating this amazing music every night. So we naturally began singing together, and within a year I found myself singing harmony with him, and playing keyboards in some of the meditations.

Now my education in music theory and my trained ear began to serve me well. I discovered I was a natural harmony singer, inventing my own lines, and surprising myself and even my mentor. For a few years,

I was his apprentice, still very shy of my own voice and never daring to sing solo, but secretly waiting for the time when I would 'come out' and reverse the roles: him singing harmony to my lead. But it never happened. Whenever I tried to sing solo, I just sounded weak and insecure, no matter how much he encouraged me. And then, one day, out of the blue, the mantras came back into my life (ironically they had been a big part of my childhood, and had become too close for me to appreciate in my teenage years).

I came upon the Gayatri mantra again, which had been 'my mantra' as a child. As soon as I began to sing it, there was, miraculously, no trace of shyness or self-consciousness. My voice simply sounded 'right'. I felt like I'd arrived home, and after a while I saw that my song was even touching other people! This was a most unexpected gift, one I'd not anticipated, at all.

But even now, after receiving so much loving feedback from so many people, and seeing that my offering is being received and honoured, the ego still creeps in occasionally, attempting to devalue everything, by saying that it all came 'too easy'. Now I'm learning to smile at this little 'monster' and keep singing regardless. It works!

Singing is such a great way for us all to open the channel to God. Our voices are healing instruments, often ignored, taken for granted, and much suppressed. This is the result of our 21st century techno society, where everyone flicks a switch, but no one participates.

On a physical level, singing vibrates all our bodily cells, charging them up with chi, creating a deep and relaxing healing. For me, it's the purest form of prayer, because it is giving and receiving at the same time. It is the bridge to the Divine – our sacred tool.



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