

# TRANS VOICE 101 GUIDE

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UNDEAD VOICE



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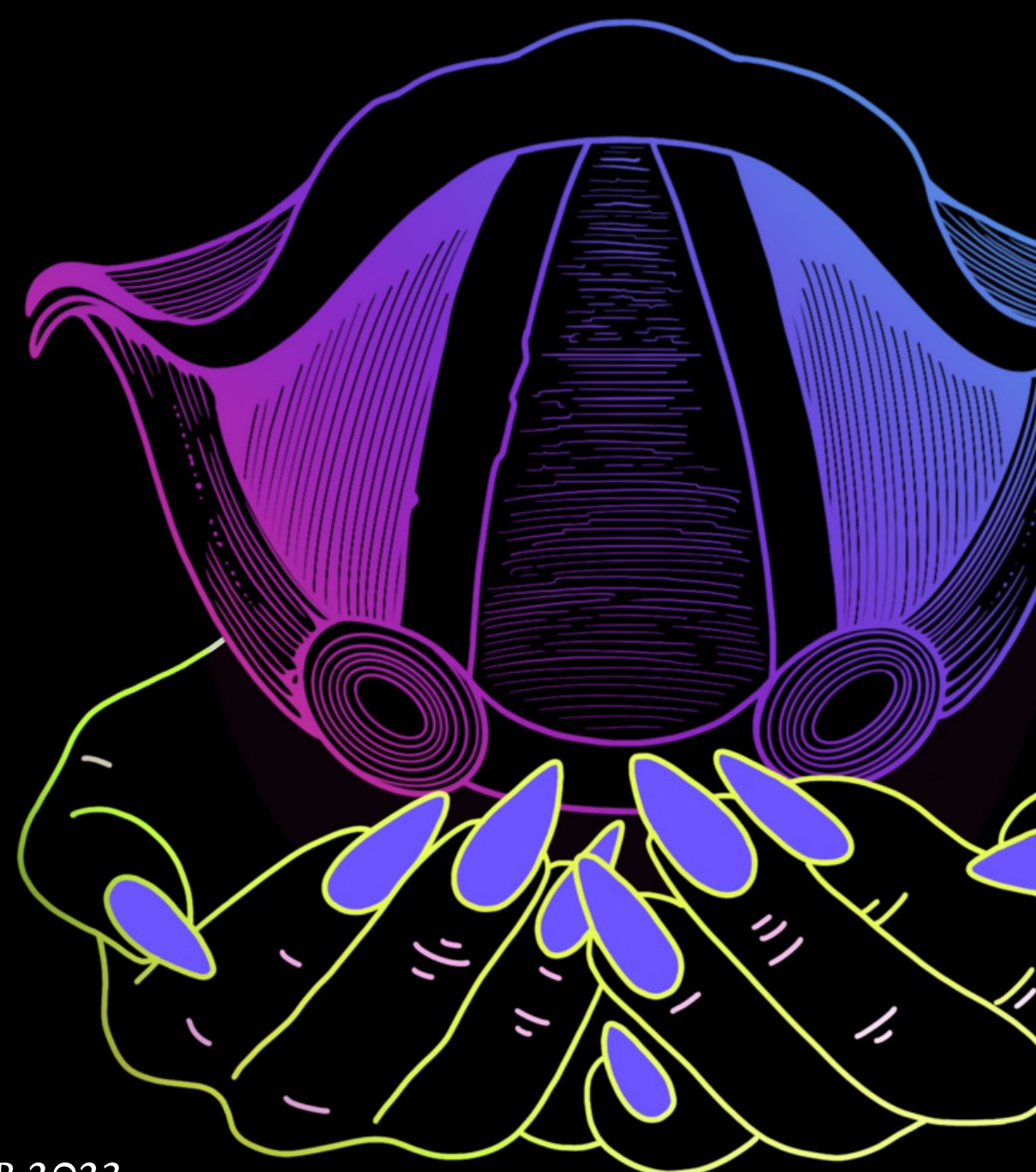
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## NEXT STEPS

Take Undead Voice Lab's Quiz to learn if you're ready to transition your voice, and what resource we have that's the best fit to get you there!

**TAKE THE QUIZ**



# BASICS OF TRANS VOICE

**YOU'LL  
LEARN**

**01**

**How Hormones Affect the Voice**

**02**

**How Anatomy Affects the Voice**

**03**

**What Influences a Voice**

**04**

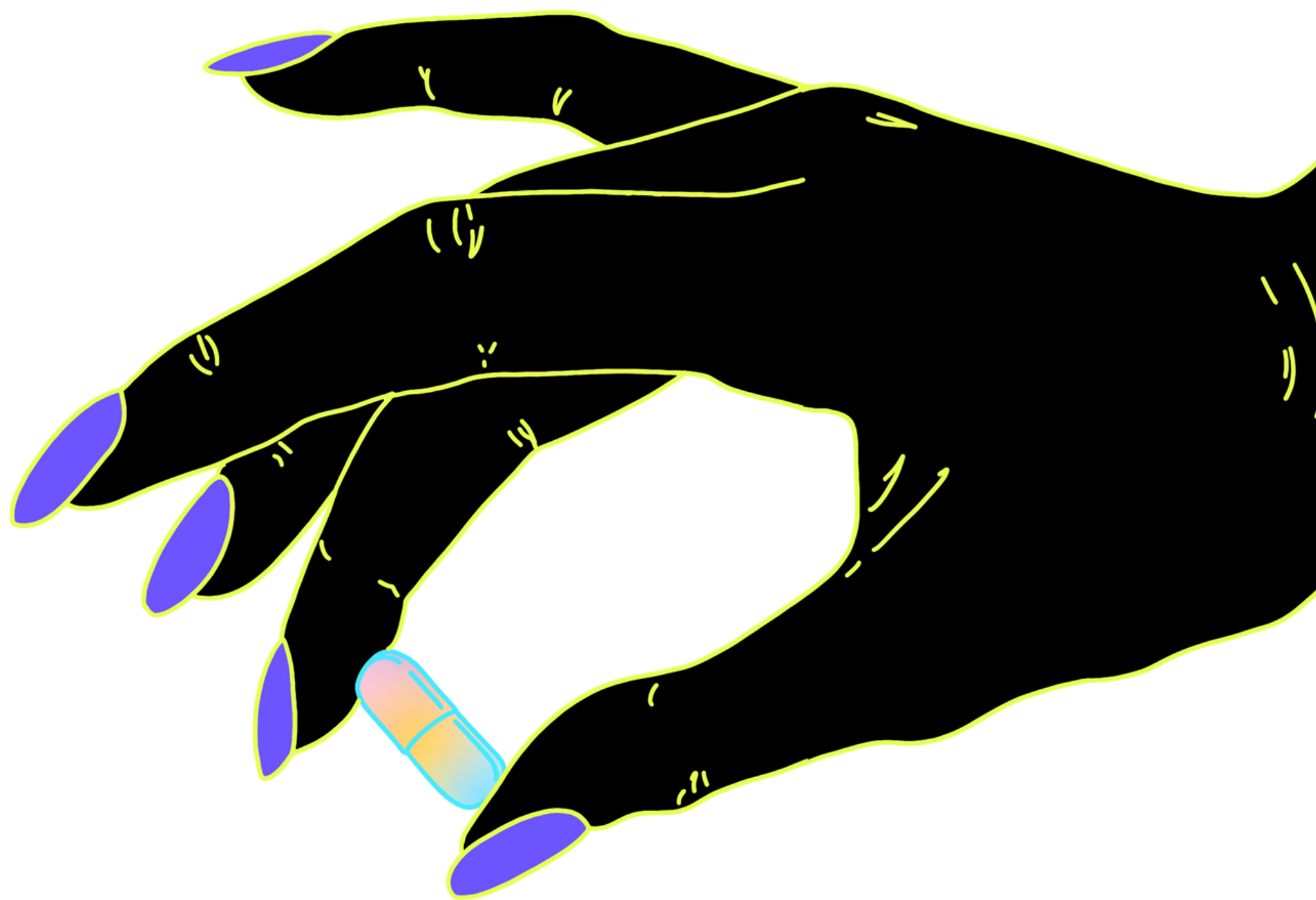
**What Voice Dysphoria Is**

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# 1

# THE BASICS OF VOICE TRANSITION



## INTRODUCTION

The voice is a crucial aspect of our communication and self-expression, and for transgender individuals, the voice can be a significant source of dysphoria. Hormones and anatomy play a vital role in how our voices sound and can impact how society codes gender in the voice. Understanding how hormones and anatomy affect the voice is essential for anyone considering voice transition.

For individuals experiencing voice dysphoria and considering voice transition, the main options are typically voice training, vocal fold surgery, or hormones. In the following sections, we will discuss the effects of testosterone and anatomy on the voice and how they play a role in your voice transition journey.

# HORMONES AND THE VOICE



## TESTOSTERONE

When most of us think about changing the gender perception of a voice, the first thing that often comes to mind is pitch. Hormone therapy with testosterone primarily alters the pitch of the voice, thickening the vocal cords and resulting in a deeper voice. However, when it comes to how we code gender perception in a voice, pitch doesn't even make the top 3 in terms of what's most important. So while hormone therapy with testosterone affects change by lowering the pitch of the voice, those with a goal voice of darker and deeper will need to address the other crucial aspects of voice transition beyond just pitch.

## ESTROGEN

Estrogen hormone therapy given to individuals who are seeking a higher or lighter voice will not have any effect on the vocal cords or the vocal tract. This can be disappointing for some, as they might hope that hormone therapy would help make their voice higher or lighter.

# ANATOMY AND THE VOICE

The anatomy of the vocal cords also plays a crucial role in determining one's voice. The vocal cords are located in the larynx or voice box and are made up of muscle and soft tissue. People assigned male at birth or with a testosterone-based puberty tend to have larger, thicker vocal cords than those assigned female at birth or with an estrogen-based puberty, which is why their voices are typically deeper. The shape and size of the larynx also affect the voice. The larynx in people assigned male at birth or with a testosterone-based puberty is generally more prominent than in those assigned female at birth or with an estrogen-based puberty, giving their voices a deeper quality. Understanding one's vocal anatomy is essential when considering voice transition, as it can help identify which areas need to be worked on to achieve the desired voice changes.



# WHAT INFLUENCES A VOICE?

If you're seeking to transition your voice to one that's more affirming, that requires exploration and self-reflection. Your voice is shaped by a variety of factors, including physical characteristics, cultural influences, and environmental factors, making voice therapy and training an essential part of the transition process.

In this guide, we'll explore the physical, cultural, and environmental factors that shape the way you sound, specifically in the context of gender-affirming voice therapy. We will also discuss the benefits of understanding these influences and how this exercise can help you develop an authentic voice that aligns with your gender identity.

## PHYSICAL

Let's take a look at the physical factors. The size and shape of your vocal tract can have a significant impact on the way you sound, but it's important to remember that these are also manipulable and changeable to a large degree. With focus, commitment, and repetition, you can strengthen the muscles and structures that control your voice and explore different sounds.

We believe in empowering the community with complete agency over their voice. That's why we don't ascribe to stereotypical, cultural, heteronormative binary expectations of what a "femme" or "masc" voice should sound like. Instead, The Undead Voice Lab curriculum teaches an isolation method where you learn to control each individual part of your voice one-by-one so you end up with a veritable sound board of different knobs and sliders that you can adjust to find the combination that creates the sound that aligns with your unique individual identity.



## **CULTURAL**

Cultural influences play a significant role in shaping the way you speak, from intonation and musicality to the words you choose. For trans individuals, cultural expectations can feel particularly confining, making it important to reflect on the cultural norms that influence your voice. Understanding these cultural influences can help you decide which elements of your voice align with your identity and which ones you may want to leave behind.

We guide our members through taking an in depth look at the cultural influences that have shaped their baseline voice. This awareness empowers them with the ability to CHOOSE how their voice is shaped, instead of wasting time, energy, and resources on gender affirming voice training only to end up with a voice that's not affirming.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL**

Environmental factors on your voice are different than cultural influences, because they're more fluid. If you move to another part of the country or live abroad for a few years you may start to adopt an accent that's influenced by the environment. OR you may have a new friend group that uses specific phrases like "rad" or "like" a lot which start to impact the way you sound as well. It's important to be aware of and consider how your environment may have shaped your voice.

We encourage our members to reflect on their environmental influences and how they have shaped their voice as part of their voice transition journey so they can have full control over their sound.



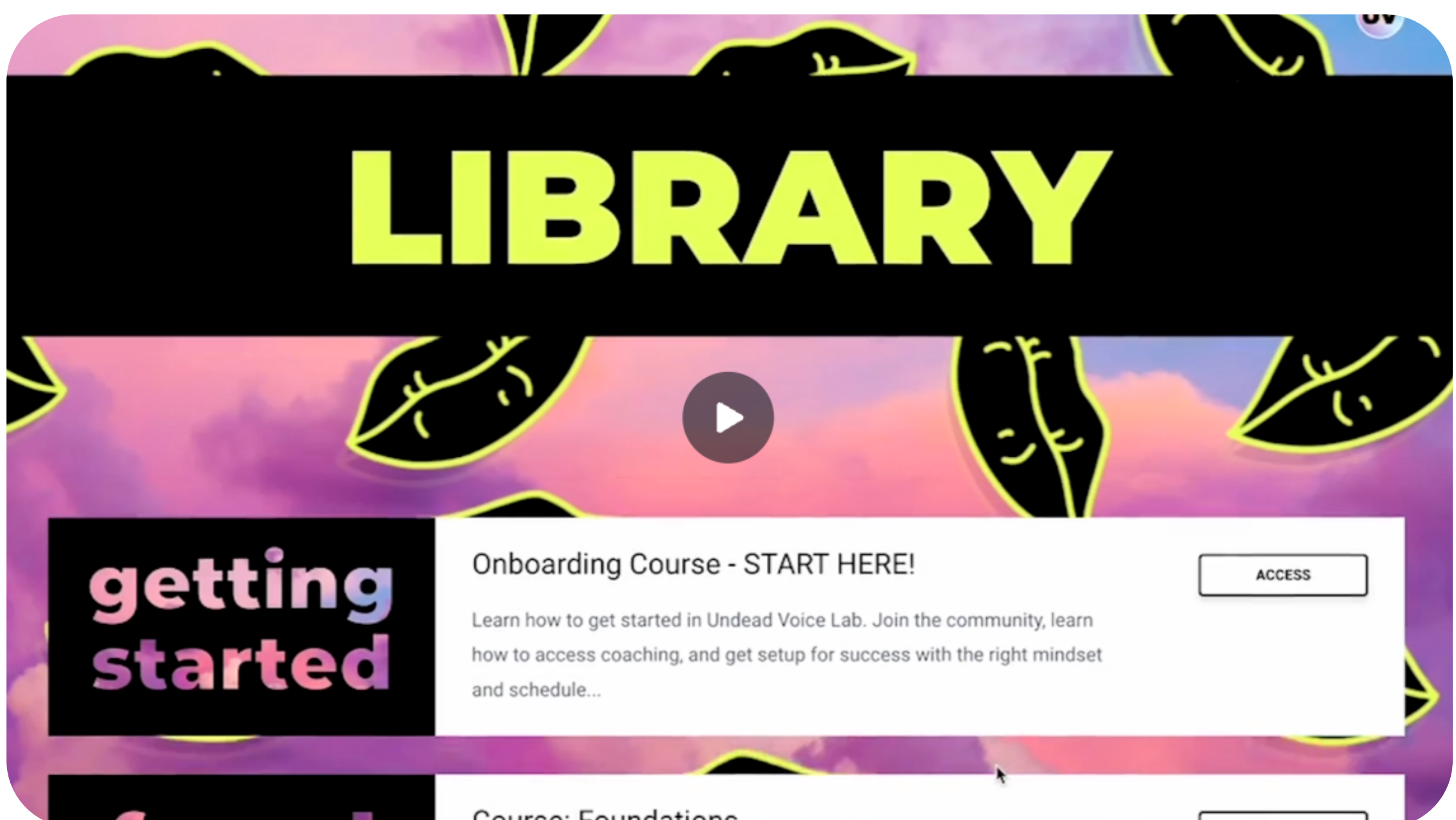
## WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Voice has long been an overlooked part of the transition journey by medical institutions and traditional approaches to gender affirming voice therapy. Often, working with a speech-language pathologist or traditionally trained voice coach entails focusing solely on the sound of the voice.

At Undead Voice we recognize and celebrate that no two voices are alike, and no two voice journeys are alike. We believe in giving you full agency over how you sound and that means going beyond just pitch (looking at you speech-therapists) and taking into account the whole self. If you're unaware of the influences that have shaped your voice so far, you don't have full agency to choose whether they shape your voice in the future. In Undead Voice Lab, we will empower you to make conscious choices about how you want to express your gender identity through your voice, and ensure you don't erode your personality while doing it.

## WANNA KNOW HOW IT WORKS?

Watch this behind the scenes walk through of Undead Voice Lab.





# PLAN YOUR VOICE TRANSITION

**YOU'LL  
LEARN**

**01**

**Setting Voice Goals**

**02**

**Setting Realistic Expectations**

**03**

**How to Plan Your Budget**

**04**

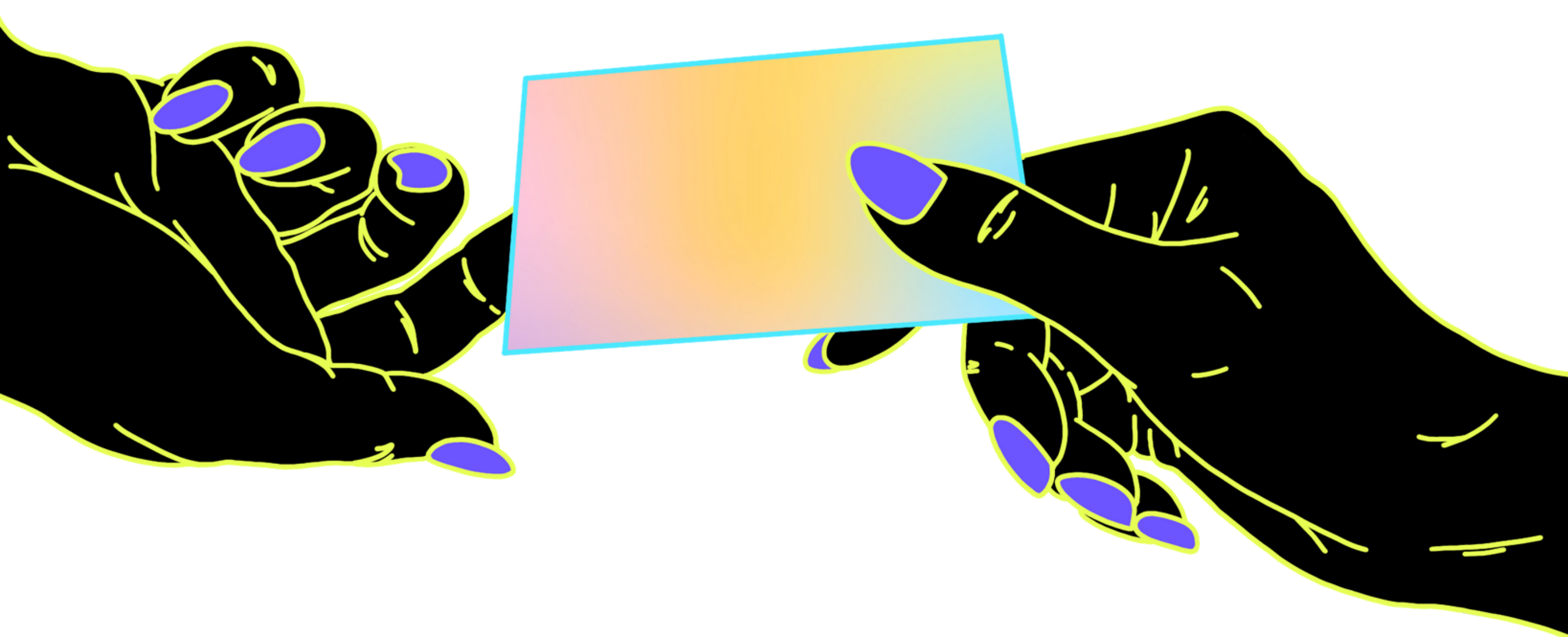
**How Much Energy You Need**

**05**

**How to Prioritize Your Voice Work**

## 2

# CREATE A PLAN FOR YOUR VOICE TRANSITION



## SETTING VOICE GOALS

Setting voice goals is an important step in your voice transition, but it can also be super intimidating. Many people freeze at this point and never move forward, because they assume they already need to know exactly what their end goal voice is. BUT, that's definitely not the case. In fact, most people starting their voice transition have a handful of voices they admire and an idea of the direction they want to move in (high or lower), but don't have a clear picture of their exact goal sound.



## **VOICE GOALS**

Instead of getting caught up in trying to define your exact goal sound, focus on the impact that having an affirming voice will have on your **FUTURE** self.

Take a moment now and grab a pen and paper, the notes app on your phone, or just find a quiet moment to yourself and do a little future tripping. Imagine a future where you have a voice that's affirming and answer these questions...

- **How will I FEEL when my voice is affirming?**
- **What will you be able to DO when your voice is affirming?**
- **What will you HAVE as a result of having an affirming voice?**

Once you have a clear vision of your future self, you can start setting goals around how to get there. There are two types of goals: short-term and long-term. Short-term goals are achievable in the near future, while long-term goals are more ambitious and may take longer to achieve.

For example, a short-term goal might be to practice your voice for 10 minutes a day, while a long-term goal might be to use your affirming voice in a work presentation.

When setting your goals, it's important to make them specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). This will help you stay focused and motivated as you work towards your goals.

For example, instead of setting a vague goal like "improve my voice," try setting a specific goal like "be gendered correctly on the phone 10 times in the next six months."



## **VOICE GOALS**

In Undead Voice Lab, I suggest several goals to ensure members create a voice that is well-rounded and sustainable for their lifetime. Here are some of the goals I suggest (bully) members of my online voice transition program, Undead Voice Lab, into having to ensure their voice is well rounded and lasts a lifetime:

- **I will achieve a voice that sounds natural and not put-on or charactery**
- **I will achieve a voice that is effortless both mentally and physically I will achieve a voice that is habitual, that just comes out when I open my mouth to speak**
- **I will achieve a voice that is unique and individual to who I am as a person**
- **I will achieve a voice that is sustainable in all loudness levels, lengths of time, emotions and environments**

If any of these resonate with you, feel free to steal with pride. Remember, setting goals is not just about achieving a specific outcome. It's also about the journey and the progress you make along the way.

Be sure to celebrate your achievements, no matter how small, and recognize the effort you're putting in to create a more affirming life for yourself!

# BUDGET FOR YOUR VOICE TRANSITION



## INTRODUCTION

When considering your budget for your voice transition, it's important to keep in mind that there are many different paths you can take. Each option comes with its own benefits and drawbacks, so it's essential to choose the one that aligns with your goals, lifestyle, and budget.

## SELF - TEACHING OPTIONS

One popular starting point for many individuals is self-teaching via YouTube, Reddit, or Discord. While these platforms can be a great source of information and terminology, they also come with their own challenges. It can be difficult to vet each video or resource and make progress on your own without clear instruction. This method can also be time-consuming and requires a great deal of self-motivation and discipline.

Things to consider...

- **Consider whether self-teaching is the right option for you.**
- **Determine whether you have the time, motivation, and discipline required for self-teaching.**



## **MEDICAL MODEL + INSURANCE COVERAGE**

When it comes to voice transition, working with a licensed speech language pathologist (SLP) within the medical model is a common recommendation from primary care physicians. However, it's important to keep in mind that insurance companies often categorize voice transition as "elective" and deny coverage. This means that individuals may be left with hefty out-of-pocket expenses when working within the medical model.

While working with a SLP can be a good option for individuals with significant underlying voice concerns or suspected voice disorders, it may not be the best fit for those seeking gender-affirming voice work. The medical model of voice therapy can often pathologize and stereotype transgender individuals, and many SLPs may not have the level of skill or experience needed to work with gender-affirming voice.

It's important to work with a specialist that prioritizes your individual needs and goals. If working within the medical model feels like the best option for you, it's important to find an SLP who is knowledgeable and experienced in gender-affirming voice work. Be sure to ask questions about their experience and approach before committing to working with them.



## **COMMUNITY COACHES**

Community coaches can be a valuable resource for individuals seeking guidance and support in their voice transition journey. These coaches are often self-taught and offer a more affordable option than professional coaches, with weekly lessons ranging from \$50-\$100 on average, with some of the more well known online coaches charged over \$300 per lesson. While community coaches may not have formal credentials or training, they can still offer valuable guidance and support. When considering a community coach, it's important to research their experience and ensure they have extensive experience in gender-affirming voice work. When working with a community coach, approach the experience with an open mind and communicate your goals and needs clearly.

Things to consider...

- **Research community coaches in your area or online.**
- **Check their experience and be sure you align with their approach before committing to lessons.**



## **PROFESSIONAL COACHES**

Professional coaches who specialize in gender-affirming voice work typically charge around \$200 per session. These coaches have undergone formal training in vocal pedagogy, anatomy, and physiology, and may have professional singing training and experience. It is important to consider the coach's level of experience and expertise, as well as the number of clients they have worked with to successfully transition their voice. Additionally, inquiring whether they have experience working specifically with transitioning one's speaking voice (as opposed to just the singing voice) can ensure that you receive guidance that is relevant to your needs.

Things to consider...

- **Consider the number of clients the professional has worked with to transition their voice.**
- **Inquire whether they have experience working specifically with the speaking voice (as opposed to just the singing voice).**





## **STRUCTURED ONLINE PROGRAMS!**

Community based, structured programs like Undead Voice Lab provide an affordable and accessible option for individuals looking for a comprehensive support system for their voice transition. Unlike traditional coaching options, Undead Voice Lab offers lifetime access to a coach for a one-time fee. This means that you're not limited by the number of sessions you can afford or restricted in how fast you can progress. Undead Voice Lab also provides self-paced online courses that you can watch and re-watch at any time, providing you with the flexibility to work at your own pace.

In addition to the structured curriculum, Undead Voice Lab also provides a supportive community of over 300 daily users who are all working towards their voice transition goals. This community provides practice groups and a safe space to connect with others of lived experience, helping to keep you accountable and motivated throughout your voice transition journey.

Undead Voice Lab offers a one-time cost of \$1999 for unlimited lifetime access to coaching, courses, and community, making it an affordable option compared to traditional coaching. Members of Undead Voice Lab can transition their voice in as little as six months. In comparison, traditional coaching options for gender-affirming voice work take 1.5-3 years of weekly lessons to fully transition a voice, making it significantly more expensive in the long run. In fact, the \$1999 cost of Undead Voice Lab is 85% cheaper than weekly lessons over a three-year period. With Undead Voice Lab, you can achieve your voice goals more efficiently and cost-effectively.

# EVALUATE YOUR ENERGY AND PRIORITIES



UWV

When developing a practice routine for voice training, it's important to consider your schedule and energy levels. Once you have a better understanding of these factors, you can start to develop a consistent routine that works for you. It's important to remember that quality is more important than quantity when it comes to practicing your voice.

The Undead Voice Lab approach, which is research and evidence-based, teaches that small, frequent bursts of practice are the most effective way to create lasting change in something as habitual as your voice.

Patience is key during the voice transition process, and it's important to celebrate small wins along the way. Progress may not always be linear, but with dedication and a positive attitude, your voice can be uncovered. The team at Undead Voice Lab would be honored to be a part of that process with you.

**TAKE THE QUIZ**

# KEEP YOUR VOICE HEALTHY

**YOU'LL  
LEARN**

**01**

**Common Voice Problems**

**02**

**Vocal Warm-Up Exercises**

**03**

**Vocal Cool-Down Exercises**

**04**

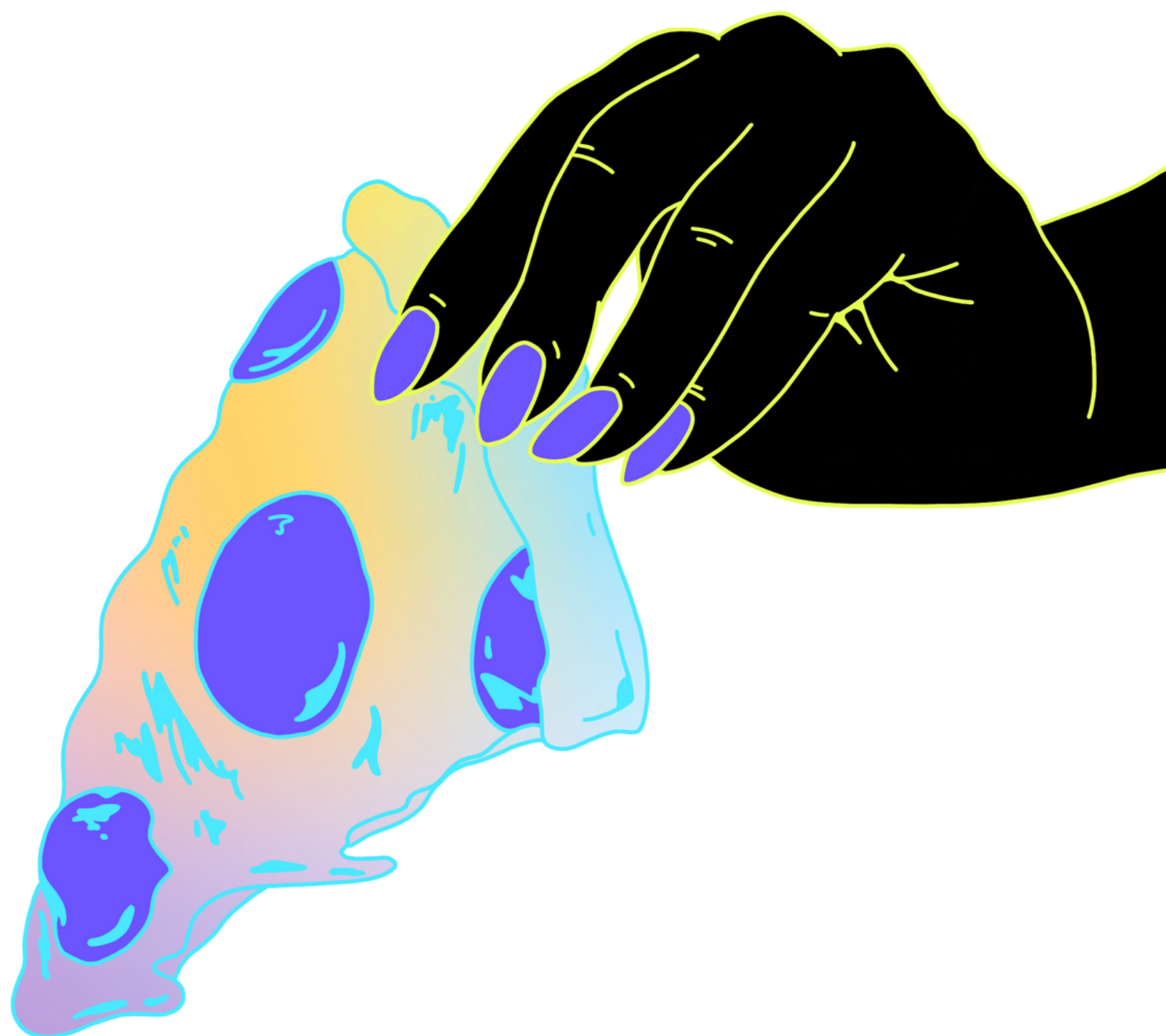
**When to do Vocal Rest**

**05**

**When to Seek Medical Attention**

# 3

## HOW TO KEEP YOUR VOICE HEALTHY WHEN TRAINING



### INTRODUCTION

The importance of maintaining vocal health during voice training cannot be overstated. It is crucial to avoid vocal damage that could result in discomfort, pain, or even a loss of voice. In order to effectively transition your voice, you need to have a healthy and strong foundation to build upon. By incorporating good vocal hygiene habits into your daily routine, you can prevent unnecessary strain or injury to your vocal cords. Prioritizing your vocal health during voice training can also lead to long-term benefits, such as improved vocal endurance, greater control over your pitch and tone, and increased confidence in your speaking or singing abilities.



# **COMMON VOICE PROBLEMS + HOW TO PREVENT THEM**

When it comes to voice training, it's important to be mindful of your vocal health. Here are some common voice problems that can arise during training and how to prevent them...

## **VOCAL STRAIN**

This occurs when the muscles in the vocal folds are overworked or tense, leading to hoarseness, pain, or fatigue. To prevent vocal strain, it's important to warm up your voice before practice, and pay attention to when the sensations of effort cross the line to pain, prolonged discomfort, or strain. Take regular breaks to rest your voice, don't overdo practice, and if you're experiencing hoarseness or vocal discomfort for more than 2 weeks, consult an otolaryngologist or ear, nose, and throat doctor.

## **CUP BUBBLES**

Cup bubbles are an exercise commonly used in voice training to “massage” the voice and alleviate tension. Grab a straw and a glass of water. Place the straw one inch below the water line, and breathe in through the nose, out through the straw producing a consistent stream of bubbles (no volcanoes!). Do this for 1-3 minutes at a time when feeling vocal strain, or as a warm-up + cool-down when doing vocal exercises.



# **COMMON VOICE PROBLEMS + HOW TO PREVENT THEM**

## **STEAMING**

Steaming is a helpful tool for hydrating and soothing the vocal folds immediately. make sure steam is at a comfortable temperature and limit your steam sessions to 10-15 minutes at a time. You can either grab a cup of steaming water and inhale in through the nose, out through the mouth. Or at the end of a hot shower, step to the side, turn the temperature up, and breathe in and out the steam.

## **HYDRATION**

Dehydration can cause dryness and irritation of the vocal folds, making it important to stay hydrated during voice training. Aim to drink at least 8-10 glasses of water per day, and increase water intake when drinking alcohol or caffeine to not dehydrate the body.

## **CONCLUSION**

By being mindful of these common voice problems and taking steps to prevent them, you can make sure your voice training is healthy and effective. Don't hesitate to reach out to a professional voice therapist or healthcare provider if you experience persistent vocal problems or discomfort during practice!



# WARM-UP EXERCISES FOR VOICE TRAINING

To protect and maintain the health of your voice, it's essential to incorporate warm-up and cool-down exercises into your daily voice practice routine. These exercises will help you prepare your voice for training and allow it to recover after your sessions.

## LIP TRILLS

Gently press your lips together and blow air through them, creating a "brrr" sound. This exercise helps relax your facial muscles and warms up your vocal folds.

## HUMMING

With your mouth closed, gently hum at a comfortable pitch, gradually gliding up and down your vocal range. This exercise warms up your vocal folds, stretching and compressing them, and helps you become more aware of the movement of your voice.

## SIRENS

Slowly slide from the lowest note you can comfortably produce to the highest, and then back down, imitating the sound of a siren. This exercise increases your vocal range and flexibility.



# **WHEN IS VOCAL REST NECESSARY?**

There are very few instances where I would advise you to undergo complete vocal rest. Unless you're recovering from gender affirming vocal fold surgery (in which case, you should follow the advice from your surgeon). There ARE instances though in which vocal rest can help you transition your voice more effectively. Particularly, when you're engaging in exercises or techniques that feel strenuous on your voice. Vocal rest means giving your voice a break from speaking, or singing T-Swift in the shower, as well as any other form of vocalization to allow your voice the opportunity to recover and heal from any stress or irritation they may have sustained.

## **AFTER PROLONGED USE**

After prolonged vocal use: If you've been using your voice extensively, such as during a long day of speaking or singing, taking time for vocal rest can help prevent overuse and potential injury.

## **VOCAL FATIGUE OR DISCOMFORT**

When experiencing vocal fatigue or discomfort: If your voice feels tired, hoarse, or uncomfortable, it's a sign that you need to give your vocal folds some time to recover. Listen to your body and take a break when needed.





# HOW TO PRACTICE VOCAL REST

## MINIMIZE SPEAKING

Limit speaking as much as possible during your vocal rest period. If you need to communicate, use non-verbal means like writing or texting.

## AVOID WHISPERING

Whispering can cause more strain on your vocal folds than speaking with your normal voice, so it's best to avoid it during vocal rest.

## STAY HYDRATED

Drinking plenty of water helps keep your vocal folds lubricated, promoting healing and recovery.

## USE A HUMIDIFIER

Maintaining a comfortable level of humidity in your environment can help soothe and protect your vocal folds during periods of rest.

## AVOID IRRITANTS

Stay away from substances that can irritate your vocal folds, such as caffeine, alcohol, and smoking.

By practicing vocal rest when necessary, you can maintain your vocal health and ensure that you're able to continue working on your voice transition without causing long-term damage or setbacks.



# **MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR VOICE STRAIN**

Voice strain occurs when your vocal folds become stressed, fatigued, or injured due to overuse, improper technique, or other factors. While some cases of voice strain can be managed with vocal rest and self-care, there are situations when it's essential to seek medical attention. Here are some signs that you should consult a healthcare professional for voice strain.

## **PERSISTENT HOARSENESS**

If you experience hoarseness, a raspy voice, or other changes in your voice that last longer than two weeks, it's a good idea to consult a healthcare professional.

## **PAIN WHEN SPEAKING / SWALLOWING**

Pain or discomfort in your throat while speaking or swallowing may indicate an underlying issue that requires medical attention.

## **LOSS OF VOCAL RANGE**

If you notice a sudden or significant decrease in your vocal range or struggle to hit notes that were previously comfortable, it's essential to consult a healthcare professional.



# **MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR VOCAL STRAIN**

## **DIFFICULTY BREATHING**

If you experience shortness of breath, wheezing, or difficulty breathing while speaking or singing, consult a healthcare professional immediately.

## **RECURRING / WORSENING SYMPTOMS**

If you have a history of voice strain and your symptoms continue to recur or worsen despite taking precautions, it's crucial to seek medical guidance.

## **WHEN TO SEE A SPECIALIST**

In cases of voice strain that require medical attention, it's generally recommended to consult an otolaryngologist (ENT doctor) or a laryngologist, who specialize in conditions related to the ear, nose, throat, and voice. They can assess your situation, diagnose any underlying issues, and recommend appropriate treatment options. Additionally, working with a speech-language pathologist or voice therapist can help you develop healthy vocal habits and techniques to prevent future voice strain.

# VOICE TRANSITION EXERCISES

**YOU'LL  
LEARN**

**01**

**Vocal Weight**

**02**

**Vocal Tilt**

**03**

**Resonance**

**04**

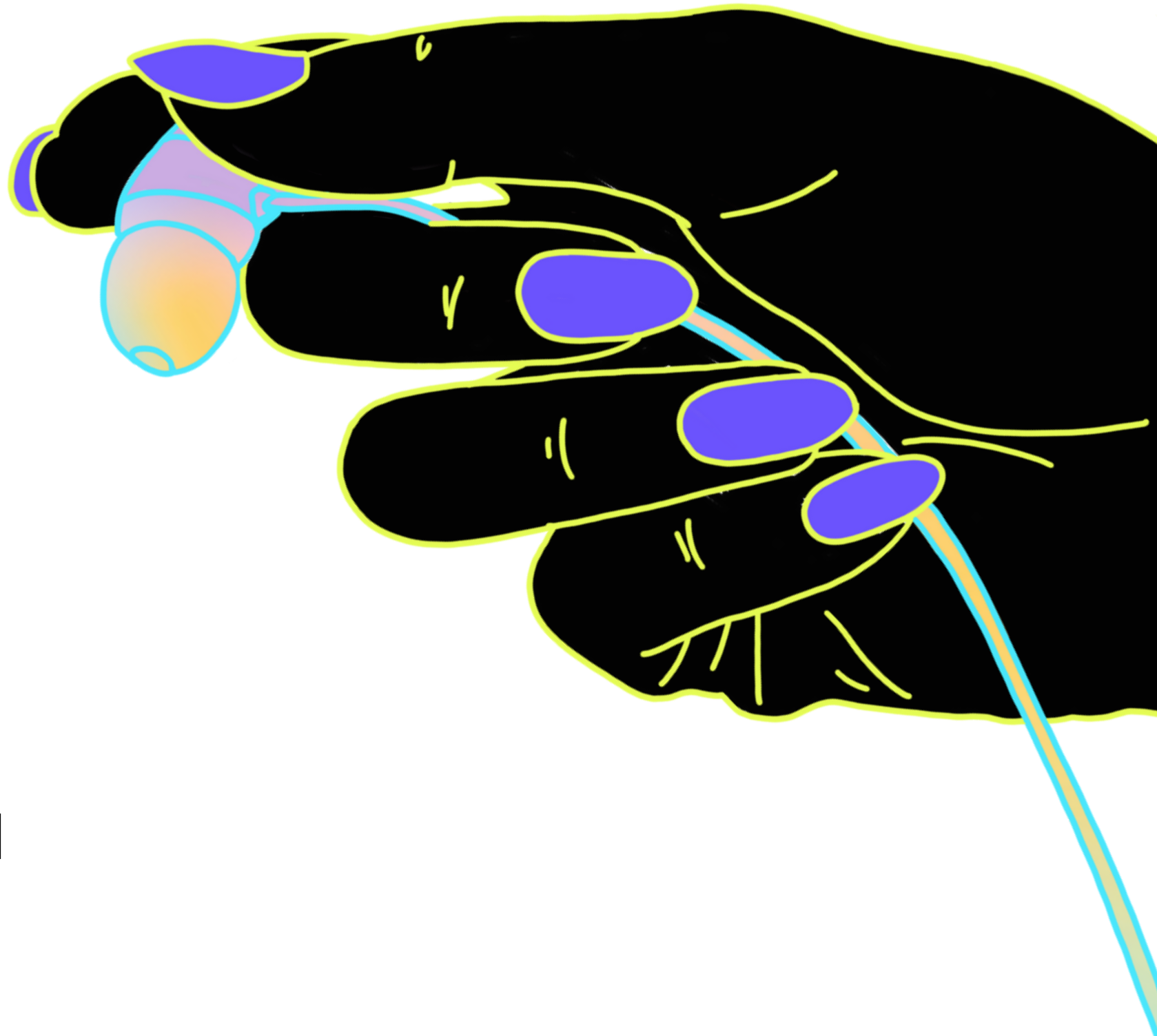
**Pitch**

**05**

**Dynamics**

## 4

# BEGINNER EXERCISES FOR VOICE TRANSITION



## INTRODUCTION

In this section I'm going to show you beginner exercises you can do to hear how your voice sounds as it starts to shift around the spectrum of gender perception.

### **I want to be VERY clear here...**

These exercises are in no way meant to be a comprehensive curriculum or guide to transitioning your voice. I chose them specifically as quick trick to help you start hearing some movement in your voice and understand what is possible for the future.

I say this because many individuals may be tempted to rush through their voice transition, using a few YouTube exercises they find, seeking a quick fix that brings them closer to their desired sound. However, this approach often leads to unsustainable progress and can even cause vocal trauma that needs to be addressed later on. Developing a truly affirming voice involves a much more comprehensive and targeted training process.



# 5 PILLARS OF VOICE TRANSITION

To create a fully transitioned sound that is healthy, passable, natural sounding, and effortless, you'll need to use a resource that is structured, has guidance, coaching, feedback, and preferably, community support of those with lived experience to practice with.

For individuals experiencing voice dysphoria and considering voice transition, the main options are typically voice training, vocal fold surgery, or hormones. Traditional voice therapy techniques used by many speech pathologists have heavily emphasized pitch as the primary focus. This outdated approach can limit the amount of range and skill that one gains in controlling their voice and leaves them without the ability to fully explore and express their gender identity through the voice.

It's crucial to find resources with up-to-date techniques and approaches that don't solely focus on pitch. Instead, these resources should empower you with the ability to control the full spectrum of your voice, moving beyond traditional cultural stereotypes of what a "femme" or "masc" voice "should" sound like. This allows you to discover where your unique identity falls and choose how your voice presents.

As we explore the different areas of voice transition in this guide, we will focus on moving along the entire vocal spectrum from the brighter/higher end to the darker/deeper end. Voice alteration is not just for those who want to be coded as femme or female in society, but for anyone experiencing voice dysphoria, regardless of their gender identity. One of our core tenants at Undead Voice Lab is use terms like brighter/higher and darker/deeper, rather than feminine and masculine, as voices don't have a gender, people do.

# VOCAL WEIGHT



Vocal Weight is all about how to take bass out of your voice or add more bass into your voice. Let's use an analogy to unpack this. So we often refer to the voice as an instrument and there's a reason for that. A lot of the changes you can make in your voice are similar to how different musical instruments work.

For example, there are 2 types of guitars in most bands. There's a standard guitar, and a bass guitar. You can probably guess which one has a heavier, thicker, bassier sound, the bass guitar. Now the main difference in these two instruments has nothing to do with the shape of them, or the person playing them, it comes down to the size of the strings. So a bass guitar has thicker strings and a standard guitar has thinner strings. That means, even if they play the exact same note, at the exact same pitch, the bass guitar sounds thicker, and the standard guitar sounds thinner.

Same exact thing happens with the strings in your throat, your vocal folds. Learning to either thicken up the folds to add more bass to your voice, or to thin out your folds to have less bass in your voice is a key pillar in controlling the gender perception of your sound to craft a voice that's truly... yours.

# VOCAL TILT



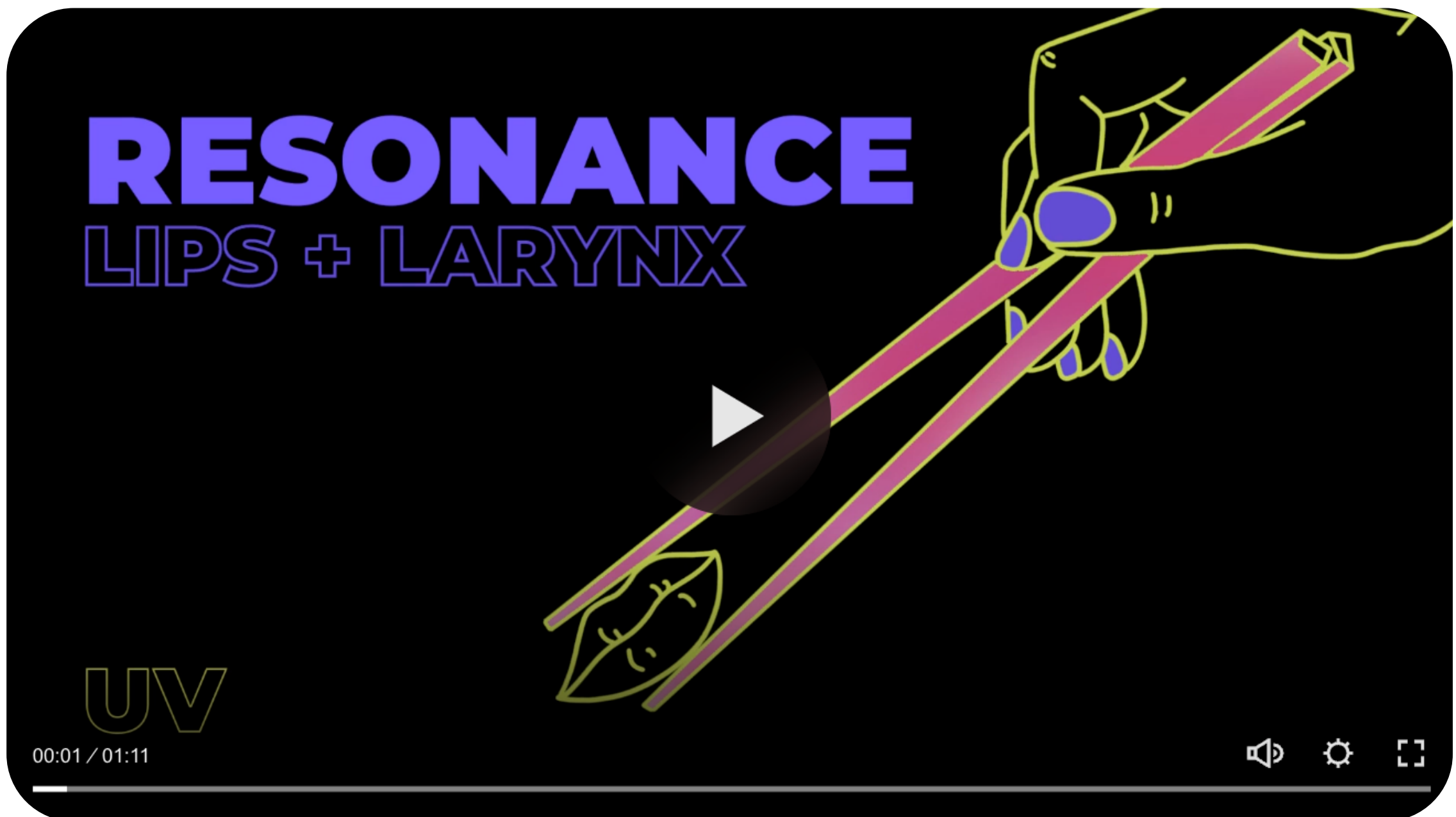
Vocal Tilt is a key aspect of voice transition, providing an additional dimension to your voice by adding sweetness or assertiveness. It goes beyond the common factors of resonance, pitch, or vocal fold configurations, offering a more nuanced approach to voice alteration.

Physically, tilt occurs when the thyroid cartilage, also known as the Adam's apple, tilts slightly up and forward, adding an extra stretch to the voice. This stretch is perceived as sweetness in the tone. The degree of tilt can vary, with more tilt resulting in a sweeter voice and less tilt leading to a more neutral or assertive tone.

Understanding and mastering Vocal Tilt can greatly enhance your ability to express your gender identity through your voice, allowing you to access a wider range of vocal qualities and emotions.



# RESONANCE



Resonance is the most critical aspect of voice transition and the essential key factor in changing the gender perception of a voice. You control your resonance by manipulating the length and width of your vocal tract.

Every individual has a unique vocal tract, much like a fingerprint. However, it is possible to manipulate the size and shape of your vocal tract to a large extent. In fact, you already make adjustments to your vocal tract throughout the day when you talk.

The concept of resonance can be heard as a spectrum, with dark at one end and bright at the other. By manipulating the size and shape of your vocal tract (the space from your vocal folds to your lips) you can change the resonance of your voice. Plainly put, making the vocal tract smaller results in a brighter resonance, while making it larger leads to a darker resonance.

Through proper training and practice, you can learn to control these changes and choose the resonance that aligns with your unique identity, allowing for a more authentic and expressive voice that truly reflects your gender identity.

# PITCH

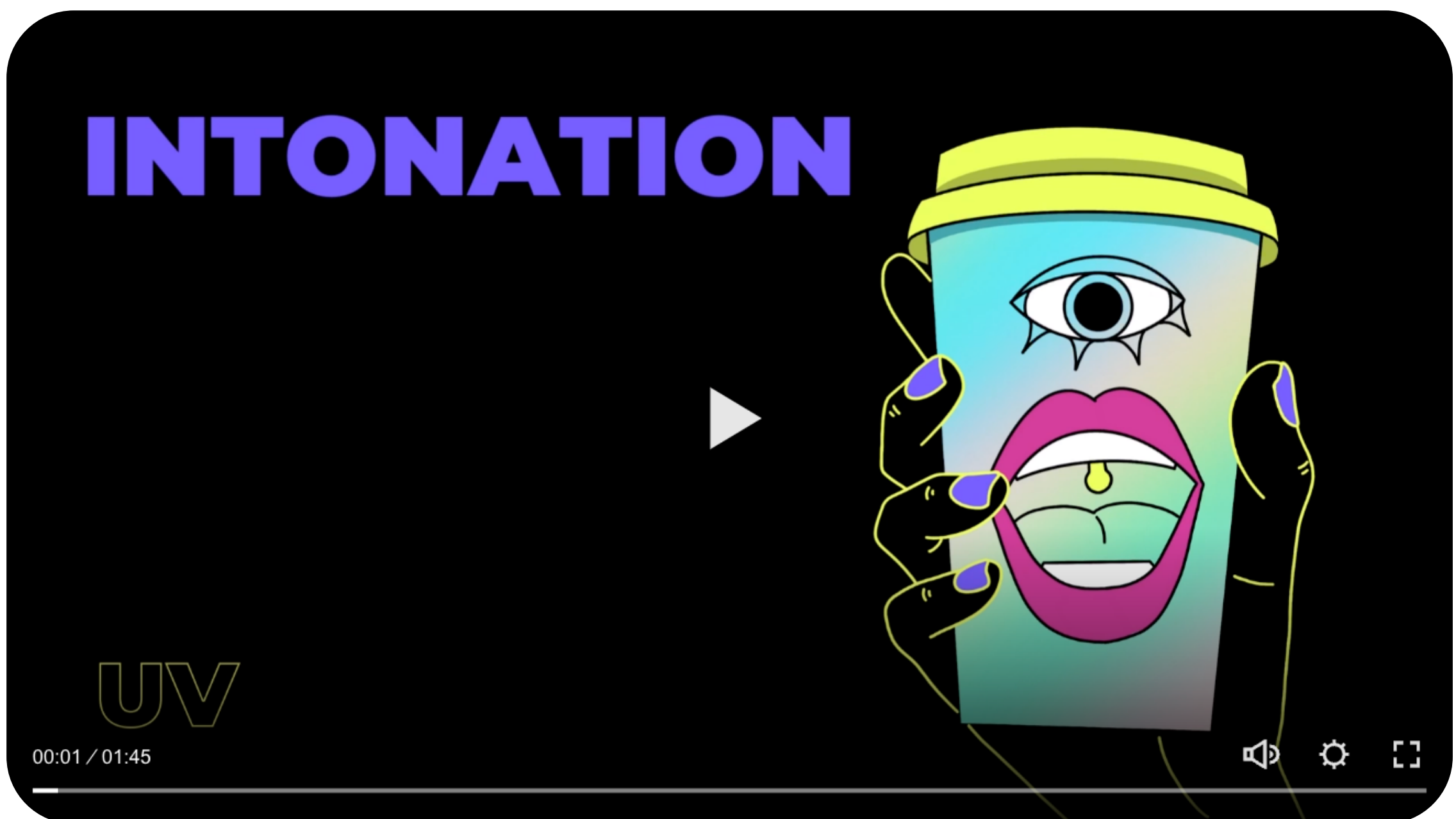


When most of us think about changing the gender perception of a voice, the first thing that often comes to mind is pitch. Plainly put, pitch is how high or low your voice sounds. Pitch is what we're familiar with changing when we sing, and it's easy to hear and pick out in a voice. However, when it comes to how we code gender perception in a voice, pitch doesn't even make the top 3 in terms of what's most important. This is reflected in my experience of working with hundreds of clients transitioning their voice, where most find an affirming sound that they love without focusing much on pitch at all.

Traditional voice therapy techniques used by many speech pathologists have heavily emphasized pitch as the primary focus. This outdated approach can limit the amount of range and skill that one gains in controlling their voice, and leaves them without the ability to fully explore and express their gender identity through the voice.

It's crucial that the resource you choose has up-to-date techniques and approaches that don't solely focus on pitch. Instead, they should empower you with the ability to control the full spectrum of your voice, moving beyond traditional cultural stereotypes of what a "femme" or "masc" voice "should" sound like. This allows you to find where your unique identity falls and choose how your voice presents.

# DYNAMICS / INTONATION



Dynamics, the variations in volume and intensity in your voice, play a crucial role in conveying your emotions and thoughts. However, some people find it challenging to express themselves effectively if their voice lacks natural dynamic range or has a monotone quality. In such cases, voice training becomes particularly important.

By the time you reach the stage of focusing on dynamics, you've already learned to control the more structural and technical aspects of your voice. This foundation empowers you to put all the pieces together and truly infuse your unique personality into your voice and communicate it to the world. No longer will you feel unseen, unheard, or restricted by your vocal ability. You'll finally be able to express your emotions and thoughts with clarity and confidence.



# UWV

## WHAT'S NEXT?

**TAKE THE QUIZ**

The five pillars of voice transition — Weight, Tilt, Resonance, Pitch, and Dynamics—provide a condensed version of the Undead Voice Lab's comprehensive [8-course curriculum](#). Our framework enables you to understand and modify your voice effectively, ultimately creating a new habitual, natural, and effortless voice that aligns with your unique gender identity.

As you delve into each pillar and embrace the full curriculum, you'll gain the power to transform your voice and communicate more confidently and authentically in all aspects of your life. Remember, your voice is a potent tool for self-expression and connection, and the Undead Voice Lab's extensive program is here to guide you on this empowering journey.

# CHOOSE THE RIGHT RESOURCE

**YOU'LL  
LEARN**

**01**

**The Flaws of Speech Therapy**

**02**

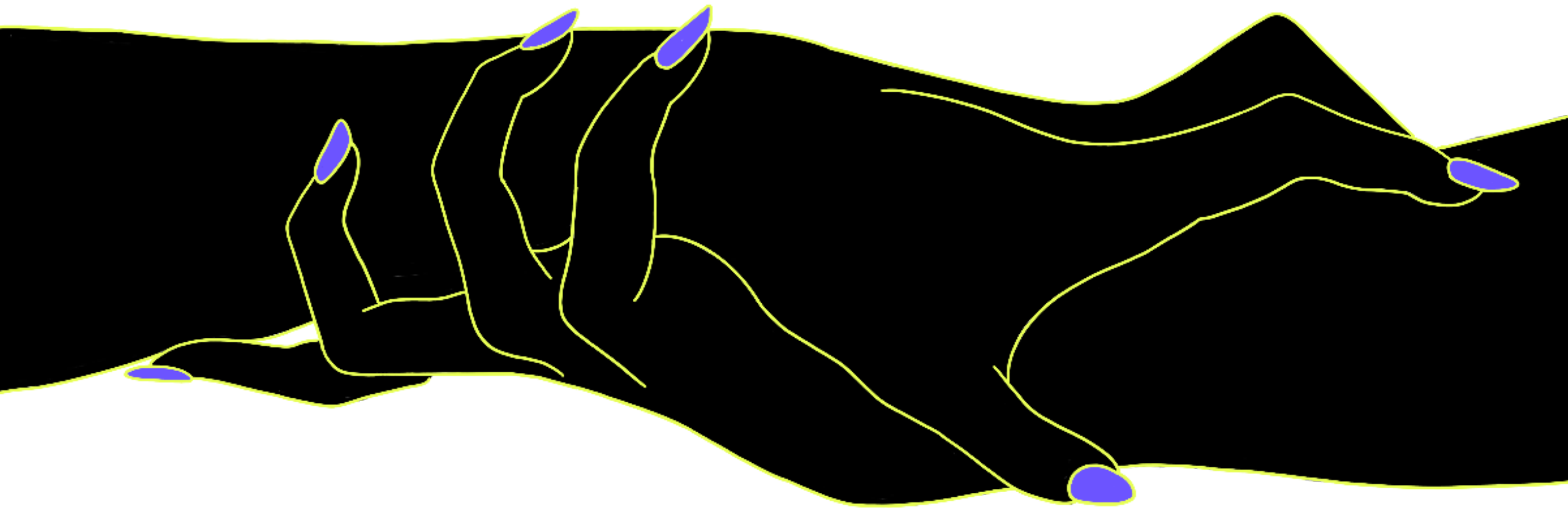
**How to Vet Your Vocal Coach**

**03**

**14 Questions to Ask**

## 5

# HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT RESOURCE



## INTRODUCTION

Throughout this guide you've heard me be marginally critical to the medical model and the strategies that many speech-language pathologists use for gender-affirming voice work. As a speech pathologist myself, I'm aware of the limitations of the curriculum and techniques we are taught to address voice transition and believe strongly that working within the trans community requires a personal, dedicated journey into your own internalized phobias, identity, and vocal expression.

Traditional methods taught by speech therapists don't work because they were designed for those with voice disorders - not someone transitioning their voice. The research behind traditional methods is conducted on an entirely unrelated control group. Bad input equals bad output. These methods are inherently pathologizing, stereotyping, and ultimately ineffective. Your gender diverse voice isn't a disorder that needs curing.

# QUESTIONS TO ASK



Your future vocal coach should be EXCITED to answer these questions. Their responses will help you understand their competence, approach, and qualifications to working with trans voice, and help you determine if you want to move forward.

- Have you received any education or training outside of your speech pathology program specifically related to working with transgender clients and voice transition?
- Have you received any specific training or certifications related to cultural competency and working with the transgender community?
- Can you demonstrate the techniques you teach, describe the WHY behind them, and explain how extensively you've practiced and become proficient at these exercises?
- How do you ensure you're meeting the goals of your clients and not stereotyping the way you lead their voice transition to meet cultural expectations?
- What techniques or methods do you use for voice transition that were specifically designed for this purpose, rather than for voice rehabilitation?
- How have you evaluated the exercises and techniques you teach to ensure they're not inherently pathologizing?
- How do you stay updated on current research, best practices, and developments related to trans voice therapy and cultural competence?
- How do you work with resonance? (Be cautious if they mention vibrations in the face or chest.)
- What do you prioritize when it comes to voice change? (You don't want them to say pitch as the number one priority.)
- How do you handle potential cultural barriers or concerns that may arise during therapy sessions?
- How do you ensure your therapy sessions are culturally sensitive and inclusive?
- Can you provide examples of how you've adapted your therapy sessions to meet the unique needs of diverse clients?
- Do you have any testimonials or references from transgender clients who have worked with you?
- Are you open to feedback and dialogue about cultural concerns and therapy goals?

# ABOUT UNDEAD VOICE LAB

Undead Voice Lab (UVL) is an online platform that provides expert coaching, courses, and a diverse community for transgender individuals seeking to develop a voice that feels affirming and comfortable. Members of UVL enjoy unlimited coaching, courses, and community support for life.

Founded by trans voice expert and speech-language pathologist, Nicole Gress (she/they), Undead Voice Lab is committed to providing the trans community with evidence-based techniques that work. Our curriculum is the first ever standardized program based on lived experience, proven effective by thousands of trans individuals, and grounded in evidence-based techniques that have been shown to work.

At Undead Voice Lab, we empower trans individuals to express themselves confidently and authentically. We believe in creating a welcoming and inclusive space for all gender expansive folx, and work with voices that span the entire spectrum of identities.

Watch a behind-the-scenes walk through to see how UVL works!

**WATCH NOW!**

We offer accessible, affordable voice transition resources you need to develop a voice that feels affirming and comfortable. To learn more about our program, visit our website at [undeadvoice.com](https://undeadvoice.com).

Take the QUIZ to learn which resources is best for you. Or check out our voice tips by joining the UVL community on social!

