**COWBOY YODELING 101 A workshop for RainyCamp 2016 by Meryle Korn**

Definition: a practice a form of singing or calling marked by rapid alternation between the normal or “chest” voice and falsetto or “head” voice.

Yodeling breaks the first rule your vocal teacher taught – instead of smoothly sliding from your chest to your head voice, you have to work your “break.”

Everyone’s break is different. To find yours, try the *Wolf Howl* - ah-OOOOOO!

Now pick a vowel sound - ay, ee, eye, oh, ooo – it doesn’t matter which. Sing it in your normal range and move your voice from low to high. The break is created by the epiglottis, a flap at the back of your tongue that prevents you from inhaling food while you eat.

**Practice** moving from low to high notes, making sure to emphasize the break. Start with any mid-range note in your chest, using the sound "oh". Now jump up to a high note in your head using the sound "ooo". Although it’s a new skill, try to stay relaxed.

**Remember the knock knock joke.** Knock knock. Who's there? Little old lady. Little-old-lady-WHO! Practice your yodel by singing "little-old-lady-WHO," with the jump from chest voice to head voice occurring between the word "lady" and the word "who".

**Go through a chord scale.** Try singing "yodel-A-E-C#" for each note on a chord scale. This will allow you to practice your break and also help you to get warmed up!

**Be forewarned.** You are going to sound terrible at first. Learning to yodel well takes time. You will need to put in many hours of practice if you want to sound more like a Swiss milkmaid than a strangled cat. I practiced while driving alone in my car. You’ll know you have it when cars ahead pull over!

**Hints & Tips:**

**Watch yodeling videos.** One of the best ways to improve your yodeling technique is to imitate some top notch yodelers. There are loads of great yodeling videos and tutorials that you can watch online. For cowboy yodeling, try Wylie Gustafson or Ranger Doug from Riders in the Sky. For Alpine yodeling, try watching videos of Franzl Lang.

**Listen to CDs.** Try to get your hands on some yodeling CDs, so you listen to some yodeling experts and try to sing along. Montana Slim, Riders in the Sky, and Cathy Fink

**Play an instrument.** If you play an instrument, strum along while you yodel! Singing along with an instrument will help you stay in tune and make your whole performance more impressive.

**Practice outdoors.** Yodeling began as a method of communication between herders and their stock in the Central Alps. So what better way to get in touch with your inner yodeler than to hit the great outdoors and allow your yodel to echo through the hills. Ideal natural locations include mountain ranges, lakes, rocky gorges or open areas with distant rock faces.