



## **The Singing Cabbie**

John Peels 'Home Truths' radio show features a previously tone-deaf London cabbie who, with the aid of hypnotherapy, learned to sing for his dad's 75th birthday party...

Patrick Galea is a London cabbie and his dad, Tony, is very special to him. "He's my hero. There was 5 of us in the family, and me mother, she was ill for a long long time, mentally. It was my dad that brought us up for years - he was our mother, our father, our friend." So for his father's 75th birthday party, at which around 200 people would be present, Patrick took the plunge. He learned to sing.

Patrick's elder sister, Maria, was merciless about her brother's inability to sing. Although Patrick himself is the first to admit that he may not have sounded too good, "You put a tape or record on, you stand in front of a mirror, you think you sound and look good, but you don't!" But with a little help from Blue Marsden who uses hypnotherapy to help his singing students to relax things began to change for Patrick.

Blue explained how hypnotherapy could help those who seemed to be terminally tone deaf! "First of all I have a talk with people. We talk about what their goal is. We talk about their experiences with singing. I then go on to listen to their voice and just get an idea of anything they're doing

obviously wrong. For example, incorrect posture, or an incorrect breathing pattern. Then we go on to work on the relaxation aspect. I lead people into a hypnotherapy session, and give suggestions about being more confident about their voice - visualising any particular event that's coming up. Then at that stage we go on to the singing exercises and so people are already quite relaxed and they've got the deep breathing needed for singing."

Blue remembers Patrick as a good pupil, "A wonderful character, but he had a couple of things challenging him at the time. His family and his friends considered him to be tone deaf and had told him this many times. Indeed when he came to see me first, he wasn't singing too well..."

Practice, practice, practice, was the key to Patrick's success, "In the cab, in the bath. All over the place. Anywhere I went I took the tape. I'd sit there at the traffic lights going ha-ha-ha-ha-ha and I'd find someone looking at me..." As a cabbie, it was easy to arrange an audience. His sister ruefully recalls, "He wasn't shy about practising in front of anyone. Even if you didn't want to listen. If you were in the cab you were locked in until the finish..."

The big night arrived. Patrick's dad pulled up in the Rolls Royce his family had arranged for him, and the guests - all 200 hundred of them - were assembled. This was no small affair. When Patrick got up to sing, his dad looked nervous, "What's he gonna do?!" he whispered to Maria. Two songs later (Pretty Woman and Unchained Melody, since you ask) , Patrick's months of preparation had paid off - even his sister admitted that his voice was good. He made sure the moment was not lost for posterity, "I got someone to go round and take pictures of the audience's reactions for a keepsake! I didn't get any bad criticism. I'm not sure if that's because Maria went round beforehand saying, 'If you don't like it, just clap anyway! Pretend!'"

Have you overcome a personal fear to show a family member, or friend, how much you appreciate them?

What did you do and who helped you reach your goal?

How did your family and friends react to your achievement?

