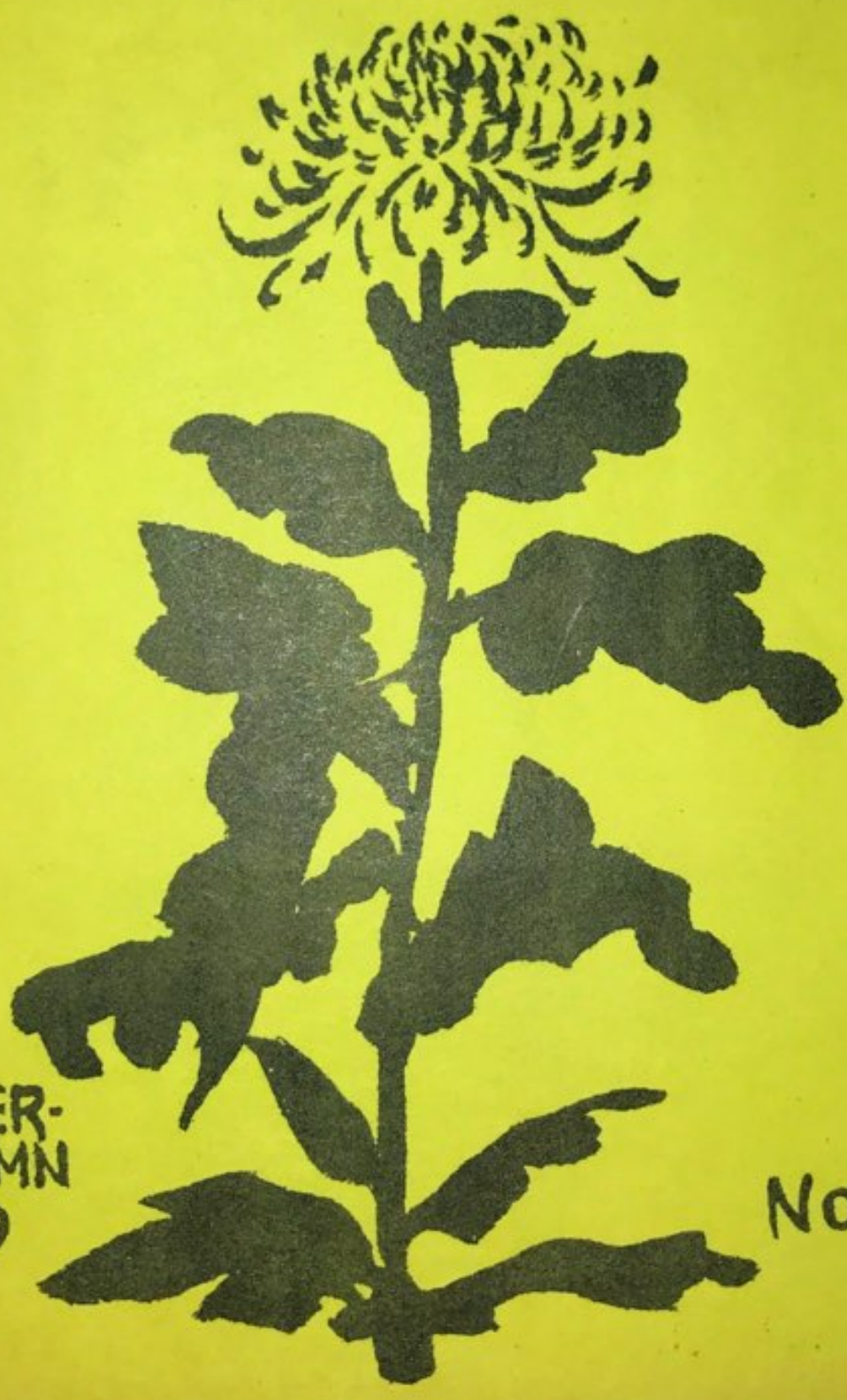
TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

Dr. Suzuki's article, "Listen to the records more" is from the Japanese magazine, Talent Education. We must realize anew how important it is to listen to the records more. As Dr. Suzuki says, "If you don't let them listen, nothing will be fostered." Let's make every effort to play fine records at home whenever possible.

"The Final Stage of An Uncultured Age" is an excerpt from Dr. Suzuki's book, Develop Ability From Birth. It includes the moving episode, "The Story of a Masseuse."

We are very happy to introduce Mr. Tomio Kondo, one of the earliest practitioners of talent education in Japan. Before he began teaching children as a Suzuki instructor, he served for more than ten years as concertmaster of the N. H. K. (Broadcasting Corporation of Japan) Symphony Orchestra in Tokyo, widely regarded as Japan's leading orchestra. In the "Interview" he informs us of the progress of two recent students. One two year old girl played Gossec's Gavotte and another four year old girl played the three movements of Bach's A minor concerto. These are record breaking phenomena for the youngest children ever playing those pieces. This interview took place at Memphis State University where he taught as guest instructor of the Suzuki Summer Institute. Eiko Kataoka, co-editor, is among his earliest students.

In this issue we enclose a subscription form for the Journal. Please return it to us if you would like to subscribe. We also hope that you will share it with other potential subscribers. We will be grateful if you encourage more people to read Dr. Suzuki's writings and other related materials.

LISTEN TO THE RECORDS MORE

Shin'ichi Suzuki

The first condition for fostering your children as persons with musical sensitivity and high sensibility is to repeatedly play the records of the teaching materials. This builds ability. If in your heart you wish to bring up your child as a person of fine musical sensitivity, please let him listen to the records and tapes every day. Without fail, he will develop fine musical sensitivity. This is a new method of education--a method of education born of the most important "law of ability" of the Suzuki method. In life, before they realize it, children indiscriminately imbibe repeated outside stimuli, good or bad, and that becomes their ability. If you don't let them listen, nothing will be fostered.

Please understand that this is the same as in language education. For instance, think in terms of music about the delicate intonation of the Osaka dialect, or of the Tokyo dialect. From the fact that any child listening to the melody of the speech every day masters it and becomes a speaker of the Osaka or Tokyo dialect, you will clearly realize the importance of frequent listening in music education. I would like you to understand this well. If you love your child, if you wish to foster your child as a person of outstanding musical sensitivity, then you must do this. Please, starting today, right now, do it for your child.

If it is too complicated to play the same piece over and over again from a record, record the piece on a tape. If your child is a beginner, record two or three pieces many times on one side of your half-hour tape, and have him listen plenty.

Even if you don't tell him to listen, if it is playing near him, he will imbibe it before you know it. No Osaka dialect speaker tells his child, "Listen"; yet every child listens and grows speaking Osaka dialect effortlessly. It's the same principle.

If your child listens well to the records, "an inner ability" growing inside of him, it becomes easy for him to play, and his progress becomes much faster. Ability to speak grows by daily speaking practice. Let your child repeatedly practice the pieces he can already play; emphasize the building of ability with familiar pieces. This fosters fine ability. (There is no need to rush ahead. If a child practices the pieces he knows over and over again so as to play them better and better, ability grows, and remarkable progress is made. This is the Suzuki method.) If you follow this method, your child will not but grow beautifully. He will also progress fast. But those who rush from piece to piece trying to play more advanced pieces will fail to foster ability and eventually drop out.

"Every child grows; it all depends on the parent," I often say. The young child's ability grows depending on how you foster him at home. Please study how to skillfully create the desire to learn; don't fail to bring up your child with excellent musical sensitivity.

Every child grows, never fails to grow. It all depends upon how you raise him. In addition, from your experience in music education, you will understand well how to foster all other abilities. When you understand "fostering ability," life will become very bright. It's not just music. It's the same in all other areas.

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Since October, I have been listening to graduation tapes from three to nine every morning. Some students have listened to the records well, and are growing up with truly fine musical sensitivity. Yet, as I listen to the tapes of those at the most important pre-elementary and elementary stages, I painfully realize how many students have not listened well. This is unsatisfactory, so I have decided to start a movement for eliminating dropouts.

Even if your child is three, if you let him listen daily to the records and repeatedly play the pieces he knows, he will never fail to grow beautifully, fast, and well. When I listen to the performance of a child who finally in his third year of violin playing submits his tape of the pre-elementary graduation piece, I can tell well that his parents have neglected to let him listen to the records. There is even one who played the same graduation piece in the fourth year. This is like saying "mma mma" for the first time at age four. An old German experiment in raising babies without exposing them to spoken language is a good example: no words came out of their mouths.

In the Suzuki method, the following two are crucial:

1. Let your child listen to the records well and often;

2. Let him play the pieces he knows over and over again so as to acquire ability.

Please never fail to carry out these two things. Then no child will fail to grow very well, and all will be filled with a desire to practice. As the saying goes, "the knack of fostering is the parent's skill," in fact "the parent's smile is the child's smile." Education while scolding and clashing is the least skillful way. I would like you to think as a parent about "how one can be skillful or clumsy at inspiring the desire to learn."

My experience of over forty years in child education has taught me that any and every child grows depending upon the way of fostering. I have come to know the great power and function of a newborn's life. And I have discovered the "law of ability." Five and six year old children including yours grow up with the ability to speak Japanese fluently. Please recognize this fact. Every year I listen to the graduation tapes of five or six year olds who play Bach's concerto neatly and well; that does not surprise me. I am merely pleased thinking that they were fostered well and correctly so they grew. It's my present commonsense that all children grow beautifully, if they are fostered as in the mother tongue.

Talent Education, no. 47

INTERVIEW WITH MR. TOMIO KONDO

Interviewer: Masayoshi Kataoka

(Mr. Tomio Kondo taught as a special clinician at Memphis State University Suzuki Summer Institute, 1979. He has taught Suzuki violin in Aichi Prefecture for thirty years. Eiko Kataoka was among his earliest students.)

KATAOKA: I am so fortunate to meet you in the States. Tonight I would like to hear you talk about a lot of things.

KONDO: Well, let's have a relaxing chat, avoiding hard topics. (Laughs.)

KATAOKA: How often have you come to the States?

KONDO: This is my fourth visit. I've been to Hawaii twice to attend the International Suzuki Teachers' Convention. Once I led the tour children.

KATAOKA: So you've already been here four times. How do you view the Talent Education movement in the States?

KONDO: Let's see. It is better known here than in Japan. Besides, colleges and parents are extremely cooperative, which is really wonderful. Only, in Japan, the organization is solid. For the number of participants is limited. To become an instructor under the present system, for example, one first goes to the school in Matsumoto and takes lessons with Mr. Suzuki; only after that he becomes a teacher. There are some who take seven years or so, though they stay there long because they like to.

KATAOKA: How about those who finish relatively quickly?

KONDO: Approximately two years in principle, but permission to graduate doesn't come so easily. Though it's called a school, it's a special school, so if Mr. Suzuki thinks you're not ready, you may have to remain there forever. You give a graduation performance at the auditorium of the Talent Education Hall, and if he judges that you can play to a certain extent, and thinks you have in addition become a good human being, then you become an instructor.

KATAOKA: That's very rigorous. Mr. Suzuki places great emphasis on fostering instructors, then. Over here, many people start instructing with an easy-going attitude.

KONDO: I hear that some teachers skip some pieces over here. Since the Suzuki method is the Suzuki method, I would like teachers to carry it through. After the ten volumes, since there is no text yet, it is more flexible.

KATAOKA: Speaking of the texts, there is a view over here that the Suzuki books incline too much toward baroque and classical music. How do you feel about this?

KONDO: "Learn from Bach, Mozart and Beethoven," Mr. Suzuki says. He says, "Aspire for the height of their sensibility." Certainly, new compositions are interesting to listen to. But they lack the nobility of older music. Bach and Mozart reverberate after the performance is over. They are like good whiskey. The fragrance lingers after. . . . (Laughs.) Children heighten their sensibility from early days by listening well to Bach and Mozart.

As I look around, children who learned from this kind of experience have all grown up as worthy human beings. Nobody went wrong.

KATAOKA: This, I think, can be called the tenor of the Suzuki method. First foster a child of high sensibility by Bach and Mozart; then add to it pieces of rich variety.

KONDO: That's right. I have a few students who play the Paganini Concerto. Mr. Suzuki has told me to have them perform it in unison. He says six or so would be enough. This is fun. There is no precedent for this in the world. . . . (Laughs.)

KATAOKA: You have already fostered children as an instructor for thirty years. Thirty years ago means right after World War II. You must have experienced many inconveniences in those days.

KONDO: Eiko-chan was among the very first students. She was two and a half or so, when she started with me. It was after the war, and besides, there were no small size violins. They [illegible] saws in Kiso, but they made no sound, really no sound. . . . (Laughs.)

KATAOKA: Did you have small size violins made on special order?

KONDO: That's right. They were really crude, all black and poorly varnished.

KATAOKA: In contrast, people today are fortunate.

KONDO: Oh yes. Now, there are records. There are accompaniment tapes. The texts themselves come with sono-sheets (small records), and you can just listen to them. In those days, there still was no

volume 4 yet. It was mimeographed on coarse paper.

KATAOKA: If there were no records as teaching materials, teachers played the pieces for their students. Is that right?

KONDO: That's right.

KATAOKA: Even in those days, children who grew grew. Since today they are so lucky, every child should really grow beautifully, isn't that so?

KONDO: If you listen at all, listen to good records. Play a single record every day for a newborn. The moment the same record is heard, a baby can stop crying. While being exposed, it seeps into the child's body, so to speak. Where music is concerned, it's no good if it just passes overhead. It's no good when one compromises half way. Have the child listen to the same thing until it becomes part of him. And until he loves it.

KATAOKA: That's really important. Another thing is, over here, probably because individual lessons are scheduled, it's rare for a child to listen to other students' lessons.* I wonder if it isn't important to observe others' lessons--?

KONDO: That's right. Without that, a child will never grow. "Today, that child is playing that kind of music," "That child has become real good of late,"-- a child practices inspired from seeing other children who have made progress. This is not competition, but aspiration. It's annoying when these terms are confused. If you call it

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*In Japan, children observe each other's open lessons. There is no individually set schedule. One is free to stay or leave after one's lesson.

competition, it can become combat, so it's not so good. Aspiration is something that everybody has.

KATAOKA: How can a human being grow without that?

KONDO: Those who only compete never fail to drop out. They merely think of going ahead in pieces before they raise their real ability. That's not the way. As you build more ability, you gradually advance. This way, there are no dropouts.

KATAOKA: That's really so. Well, now, may I ask you about your students? I hear you have one who played Gossec's Gavotte at age two and another who graduated Bach's A Minor Concerto at age four. I understand that this is a record even in Japan. First, would you tell us about the one who graduated Gossec's Gavotte at two?

KONDO: She really loves the violin; though, being the only child, she tends to be rather willful.

KATAOKA: Is she the only child? Mr. Suzuki often says that a child with a big brother or sister doing violin progresses fast. Here an example has emerged that doesn't apply to that. Her mother must be very enthusiastic, is she not?

KONDO: Well, no; from what I hear, it's the child who's enthusiastic. She asked and asked to start violin, so the mother came over and asked me, "Would it be possible for her to start when she's so small?" I often met them in the train on the way to the classroom. The child became friendly with me, calling me "Sensei" (teacher) many times. So I asked her, "Do you like violin?" She answered, "I do!" "Then let's start," I said, and we started. But at first the "Twinkle Variations" were hard

for a two-year old. It just fell on her second birthday. She wouldn't understand no matter how many times I said anything. If I let her hold the bow, she would drop it. If I touched her gently, she would fall backwards with a big thump. For her feet were still wobbly. . . . (Laughs.) I think we spent about half a year on the "Twinkle Variations." After that, she zipped ahead smoothly. Well, being a two year old, her Gossec Gavotte had some shaky points, but I thought there weren't too many other examples. Then as I thought, it turned out to be a record, playing Gossec at two.

KATAOKA: The mother must have done a terrific job in raising her.

KONDO: That's of course so, but her father has also been cooperative. He's a high school teacher, very fond of records. I think he was playing them all day long. The child knows Mendelssohn; and if I play for her Zigeunerweisen, she recognizes it. No matter what I played, she knew it.

KATAOKA: I realize how important it is to let a child hear records from birth. The one who graduated Bach's A Minor at four, too, listened to the records well, I gather?

KONDO: Right, they, too, play records well at her place. Besides, the child also loves it.

KATAOKA: Am I right that there is a reason behind it when the child becomes fond of it?

KONDO: In this case, she has big siblings. Her big brother and big sister play violin, so she knows all the pieces already. It was just before she turned five--that she graduated Bach's A Minor. Just under two years since she started violin.

KATAOKA: Bach's A Minor within two years--that's impressive.

KONDO: Now at age five she's playing the Mozart in volume 9.

KATAOKA: The mother must be a really confident person, is she not?

KONDO: Yes. If she has a baby again, she says, she is definitely going to raise it more skillfully. But with the third child, she has considerable confidence already.

KATAOKA: What do her brother and sister play?

KONDO: Her twelve year old brother plays the Zigeunerweisen, and her eight year old sister plays Vitali's Chaconne. Their mother often says, "I don't get anything done around the house." Of fourse she can't do anything if they practice violin this much. Nowadays, things like laundry are conveniently done with the machine. But when you have three children, you are already busy to begin with. She does well, she really impresses me.

KATAOKA: Though she says she doesn't do house-work, that must be in comparison with other Japanese mothers. It's nice in the States. Laundry is simple, dust doesn't gather, meals whip up by themselves in the oven if you just put them in there. As for food, you shop once a week and keep it in the big refregirator. Hot water comes out of the tap as you like. It's really convenient. Therefore, it can be said that mothers over here have a lot more free time than do Japanese mothers. In general, however, Japanese Suzuki children are fostered better. This is of course partly because

Japan has a longer history and Mr. Suzuki's teaching method is carried out more thoroughly. In addition to this difference, do you also perceive any difference in life-styles?

KONDO: Well, I think the environment for raising children is different. Japanese mothers try somehow to guide the children along and raise them with their own hands, don't they? American parents more or less release their hands and push the children away from them so that the children will become independent. In Japan, they pull the children this way, toward the parents. Meanwhile, they just neglect their husbands. I for one suffer wrong and contumely. . . . (Laughs.) The mother whose child graduated Bach's A Minor says, "I leave my husband alone." Well, unless you leave him alone, you can't raise your children that way--three of them that well.

KATAOKA: I bet her husband is also keen on the children's education.

KONDO: Yes.

KATAOKA: As I observe, it seems that whenever a child is growing beautifully, in that family the husband proves very understanding. Now, let me ask you my last question. What is the secret of inspiring children to practice well?

KONDO: The first thing is praise. But don't leave it there. When you praise something, also correct: "That was good, but this was a little poor." The child, when praised, thinks: "well, then, if I correct this place, I become even better." This is the point.

KATAOKA: You mean we have to know how to praise

and to be good at praising.

KONDO: Suppose an adult is taking lessons: if he's scolded all the time, he would say, "Well, I'm going to quit." A child stays patient even though he's scolded. Instead, if you correct him while praising, he can make progress much faster.

KATAOKA: Mr. Suzuki constantly talks about inspiring children to learn." "Foster while praising," I think, is a powerful clue.

Today, as a father, I have learned many things. They were lovely as well as conscience-pricking. Thank you very much.

KONDO: It was my pleasure, indeed.

July 31, 1979
Memphis State University
Suzuki Summer Institute

THE FINAL STAGE OF AN UNCULTURED AGE

Shin'ichi Suzuki

The twenty-first century is on its way, but this world cannot yet be called cultured.

I think this is the final stage of the uncultured age.

For human beings have been repeating the history of war ever since that stone age when men killed one another with rocks and sticks.

People talk about the development of man's wisdom, but that, in my view, is just shallow apish wisdom. Weapons have merely changed from rocks and sticks to swords, to cannons, and eventually to atomic and hydrogen bombs; there has been absolutely no change in the basic principle of killing one another.

What I call the age of culture is a happy time when all human beings can coexist on this earth without hurting one another. Then, the present age is not yet the age of culture.

All human beings must advance to the twenty-first century with great self-criticism. We must turn the coming century into the start of a new age of culture.

Isn't this our great task as human beings?

It is wonderful that things have become convenient. However, no matter what conveniences we produce, if we are involved at the same time in producing weapons for murder, what can this be

but ante-culture?

It is splendid that airplanes enable us to fly to distant countries in a few hours.

But let's think well. Suppose the flying time between the U. S. and Japan were reduced to four hours to three hours and further to two hours, how much would that relate to the problem of human happiness? People today identify convenience with happiness. But it's not so. There is no direct relationship between the two.

Now, the basis for creating the age of true culture lies in fostering people. Let's really foster our children as cultured people--this resolution is necessary for all parents.

What is a truly cultured person?

One who is kind to others.

One who can pour affection on others.

One who knows the joy of life, and enjoys making efforts for the sake of everybody's happiness. We must bring up such children. When such children grow up, they will both love others and be loved by others.

The age filled with such people can be called the age of culture.

To bring up such people and create such a happy age is the parents' supreme gift for children. What else can it be?

Where can there be a parent who doesn't wish his child happiness and good luck?

The Parent's Thought Is a Prayer

No matter what kind of mother you are, you must at least once have prayed, holding your baby at your breast, "May this child be healthy and happy all his life."

Yet, as the baby gradually grows into a child of five or six, you may begin to complain: "How come this child doesn't listen to his parents, what a difficult child he is."

There are even those who, exhausted from emotional troubles with the children, think, "Wouldn't life be more agreeable without such children?"

Neglecting their personal failure to foster their children well, some parents scold harshly, and complain all day, "He doesn't even listen to what I tell him," or, "He is out of my hands." Isn't an example of this familiar to you?

I would like to say to such parents: "Please at least once a day enter an empty room. And say in the same words which you uttered when your child was a baby: 'May this child be healthy and happy all his life.' You can call that a prayer, but it is in fact a refrain which you recite to yourself. It takes no time. Ten seconds suffice. Then, go out of the room, and face your child once more. You will feel as though even his expression toward his mother has changed."

To pray is to repeat to yourself your heart's wish.

After repeating such a wish, you can't snap at your child when you leave the room. Your heart

must be overflowing with warmth. Seeing the mother's face then, the child will respond with a bright and gentle expression. It is bound to be this way.

The parent's true heart should be a prayer. However, in actual life, this is forgotten, and days pass in resentment and criticism. What is most important becomes neglected, as though your train has run off the rails. You must pray in order to criticize yourself for this. If the word "pray" sounds too religious for you, you can call it self-questioning.

The Story of a Masseuse

This happened about two years ago.

When I went to Tokyo, I was so tired that I asked for a massage at the inn. A woman of thirty-five or six came. She said, while giving me a massage: "It's said that a child is a gift from heaven. It's true. Some are given good children, others terrible children. That seems to determine the luck of the parents. I, for one, got such a bad child I can't even describe him. I am truly unfortunate."

This won't do, I thought. So I made a familiar speech on talent education. I emphasized that the child reflects the mother's upbringing.

Then the masseuse gradually stopped her hands, shedding tears.

"Why do you cry?" I asked.

"While listening to you, I realized what a terrible parent I have been. I've given him a hard time, I've treated him poorly, I thought, and couldn't go on massaging."

Moved, I answered, "You are a wonderful mother. That very self-criticism makes your child happy. Face your child from tonight with the same heart with which you feel sorry for him now. You needn't say anything. All you need do is keep that thought secretly in your breast."

"Is that so? Then I'll try doing that. I promise you," she said, and we parted at this point.

A month later, after the annual national concert in Tokyo, I was tired again and requested a massage at the inn.

By chance the same masseuse came, and said, "I wished to see you just once to thank you. I am happy to be given this opportunity."

"What happened?" I asked.

"It's so strange. I said nothing to my child. Only, I kept feeling sorry for what I had been. Then recently he has really become a good child. When I'm doing something, he says, "Mother, let me help." Since I saw you last, we've stopped fighting. I owe this to you. Thank you," she said, her face brimming with joy.

"Your child will grow up beautifully," I congratulated her and parted. What is impressive in this story is the heart of the mother who could apologize to the child.

This is the heart of a parent who can lead the world from the age of the uncultured

to one of culture.

From Develop Ability from Birth, (1969)1977

"Man is a child of the environment."

"Sound breathes life--
Without form it lives."

"Strings are mindless
They only sing forth the heart
Of those who ring them out."

---words of Shin'ichi Suzuki

TEACH OR FOSTER?

Shigeki Tanaka
Young Children: Everything Depends on How We Raise Them (No. 3), continued from Spring, 1979

Chapter II Teach or Foster?

1. How to Design a Curriculum

First let me clarify. What I am about to describe is not an entirely new method. You can call it commonplace guidance which everyone has practiced from ancient times till now and in the east and west. Therefore, those of you who are anxiously seeking a new method may be disappointed.

But wait a second please. I think you agree that what is called commonplace and used by everyone becomes increasingly formalized in the course of transmission. The original beautiful meaning is apt to become foggy and threadbare.

Let me first tell you my experience. We still find in bookstores an array of books advertising themselves as "a new teaching method." The word "new" has a very attractive ring. I used to voraciously read any book entitled "a new teaching method." In those days, I was grabbing at straws. In order to avoid creating dropouts, teaching methods had to be changed. But I didn't know how to go about it. "If anybody would teach me, I wanted to learn everything from him"--this was my thought.

And I tried everything I thought good from

the methods introduced in books. However, the results described in books were hard to obtain. I felt agitated. Then one day, I reflected upon myself. Maybe my expectations were too high, I thought. I reread each of the books and discovered that my attention had been directed only to "the forms and their effects."

The fact is that I was unable to grasp the guiding principle of these methods. When I discovered it on reading the books a second time, I no longer felt uneasy. I had just been copying the methods without considering the reality of the children I had. By comprehending the guiding principle, I began to understand how to apply those methods and the reason why I had not succeeded so far.

As I delved into the guiding principle, I realized that the methods in all these books ultimately derived from the same place. I would like to discuss that below. Therefore, please do not skim over this but pore over it carefully.

We know the phrase, "an old and yet new method"; there is also another, "seek the old and bring forth the new," Our great predecessors have suffered, agonized, and repeated trial and error before achieving success. Now or never is the time, I think, to listen humbly, to the "guiding principle" behind their methods.

*

Children grow not because the teacher causes them to grow but because they themselves grow. Please inscribe these words deeply in your mind. You will understand them if you recall the first part of this book.

Mr. Suzuki, let me repeat, quotes the phrase "lead but don't pull" from the Book of Rites. From this he goes on to explain: "Children's growth can be likened to caring for seedlings. Don't pull them to make them grow, but assist their growth indirectly by watering, sunning, and fertilizing them."

Maria Montessori also says: "the teacher must withdraw to the background once he prepares the children so that they are able to carry out their activities."

"A tiny child has, burning within him, a boundless desire to learn," says Dr. Glenn Doman. It is adults who thwart this. Doman insists: "We can increase learning markedly, simply by removing many of the physical restrictions we have placed on him."

All of these theories clarify the teacher's responsibilities and functions. They do not represent the attitude of laissez-faire.

Then, what should we teachers do in concrete terms? Let's start with how to design the curriculum.

Where to Find the Center

Until now, we always thought about how to arrange the curriculum in gradual and cumulative steps, after first setting the target. We decided the year's target, and from there derived each semester's target. Monthly, weekly, and daily schedules followed accordingly. With each day's schedule, too, first there was the daily target, and we agonized over how to start it and to bring it to the final stage.

But think a little here, please. According to this traditional method, the main factor was the target. First there was the target and then we pondered about how to take the children there. My failure lay precisely here. The point should be the children, not the target. I lacked the eye to see the reality of each child. If this is so, the curriculum is mere form. We should never forget that the center of education is the children.

Certainly, there is no education without an aim. You would, therefore, say that an aim has to exist before there can be a task of education. There is something in that. However, though we all endeavor to reach the target, it is wrong to regard the target as the only factor as in the past. For if we do so, we end by pulling the children together in a bunch, without distinguishing between this child and that. Yet, isn't this precisely the method of education practiced today?

Some teachers would argue: "It's simpler to first establish an aim and them to pull the children toward it. It is a big chore to watch from behind each of their individual differences while skillfully steering them toward the same destination. Besides, if we blunder, the result will be chaos and we won't be able to reach the goal." However, this anxiety is all wrong. Let me explain.

Although it's not so good to compare children to cows, suppose we chase some cows up a grass knoll which has steps, into a corral on top of the hill.

According to the traditional method which emphasizes the aim, the ultimate goal of the year is to put them inside the fence high above. Therefore, the steps leading there are divided into semesters and months. Before we start, we draw a plan

stipulating which step is to be reached by which month.

At first we may proceed according to the plan; but after awhile, one cow, then another, will be left behind, and only 70% or so will barely enter within the target fence. As we look back, the remaining 30% are still on different steps, and we'll notice that we have even left three or four cows half way back.

In the following year, a fence further up becomes the target. What then happens to the cows left half way? They will most likely be abandoned, since they are hopeless.

What do you think? Abandoning one dropout after another--this is the reality of today's school education.

But how will child-centered education work? First, the beginning is very different. The traditional method quickly passes the beginning, for it is so simple that everybody can do it. However, since nothing is so important as the beginning, I take plenty of time there. I foster the joy (confidence) and interest (concentration) of doing the simple things everyone can do, more and more skillfully (accurately and fast).

I allow plenty of time between the first and the second step so that I can stimulate the knack of climbing one step up as well as the desire to do so (for example they will begin to think that the grass higher up is better-tasting). Until the cows try to climb a step higher, I patiently let them play on the first level. I don't just leave them alone, but contrive so that they will begin to aspire to climb. Once they start to try to go

up, it's fine to leave them to do as they like. They climb by themselves.

Suppose there were thirteen steps. According to the traditional method, the plan will be to climb roughly one step a month. Starting the first step in the beginning of the academic year in April in May the children will go on to the second step. However, in child-centered education, this won't happen until September or October. The rest, however, goes full speed. They advance two or three steps in one month, reaching the goal already by February. Moreover nobody drops out.

The secret is that the child advances not reluctantly but because he wants to. Therefore the progress is fast, and there are no dropouts. Yet, it is hard to make this point understood. People are apt to think "this is just about enough," and stop in July what they should continue to do until September. This is because they cannot clearly anticipate the growth of the children's ability.

Mature teachers, in particular, who have taught for a long time in a target-centered manner, find it unsettling to wait until September. They become impatient by July or so and push the children forward.

The teacher's brain, once arranged in a circuit, powerfully resists redistribution. I hope you understand how difficult it is to revise the brain.

Let me summarize the point of this section.

The curriculum must be so designed as to allow sufficient time so that the first portion will be carried out with deliberate care. Most important

is to clearly anticipate the growth of ability. You must tackle the first part again and again, and wait patiently for the children's ability to take root. If you consider this a waste of time, the final result will be a great disaster.

2. How to Stimulate Children's Desire

"Children should have no likes and dislikes. You must do what is necessary for the children, even if you have to scold them. If you make them do it, they'll do it."

Some resort to such coercive approaches. But it won't do.

Children will do what they are made to do. However, once they reach a certain point, they won't go beyond it. When you force them to go further, the effort will not only be wasted, but may even induce psychological disturbances such as autism, ending in terrible results. Children who "hate both school and study" hate being forced to study and to go to school.

Parents and teachers all say, "Study means efforts, enduring the difficult." Children, too, when they are ten, begin to feel like striving on their own accord. However, what is disagreeable is disagreeable; they can't tolerate it. If that's so with ten year olds, how can very young children understand such logic? If they nevertheless silently do what they dislike because parents tell them to do it, far greater problems may result.

As I mentioned before, small children instinctively enjoy study (learning in the broad sense). If they dislike it, there must be some reason.

Many parents and teachers, instead of clarifying that reason, force them at a certain age, saying "study, study, no matter what." No wonder many drop out.

When we wish children to learn something, we must first create a willing attitude and a happy environment. Children by nature take pleasure in doing something new. If they don't enjoy it, there must be a reason. Were the teaching materials too hard? Was there a mistake in introducing them? Was there a prejudice which made them hesitate? Was there an individual factor related to personality? We can enumerate various possible causes.

We can only learn the reason from the children. Of course, they don't tell us explicitly what they want us to do, but we can judge from their attitude, approach, and progress.

Furthermore, even when they seem to be working joyfully, there may be better methods which will help them work still more positively and with greater pleasure. Learn from the children--we should never forget this. So long as we don't understand this, no matter what book we read, I must say it is meaningless.

While Playing, Powers of Concentration Grow

Mr. Suzuki says, "It is most effective to learn while concentrating. When concentration lapses, it's better to stop and change direction."

Look at the forty-five minute class hour at primary school. What requires only five or ten minutes if all concentrate drags on in a slovenly way for the entire period. This is not only a waste of time but eventually causes the children to lose

interest in learning itself.

Many people believe that the concentration span of small children is very brief. Some teachers even say that first graders' concentration lasts only five minutes. However, when I experimented, I discovered that an eight month old baby repeats the same thing for twenty minutes if it pleases him. Kindergarten and nursery school children can easily last forty or fifty minutes. My experiments at primary school show many children can concentrate on the same painting for three hours. All of these paintings were outstanding.

Take play for example. Some children become carried away while playing; others play because they have no other choice. Lately, those who play passively seem to outnumber those who play enthusiastically. Those who are enthusiastic have bright eyes, but reluctant children's eyes are lifeless.

Children, with their quest instinct, should be enthusiastic in their play, but somehow they have lost the joy of play. I should like to show the reality of these children to grownups who think it suffices to leave them alone to play freely, for who else but the parents are responsible for this result?

For children, nothing is so ridiculous as separating play from learning. Play is no "leisure" for children; it is learning, it is life. This may sound similar to established child education specialists' views. But there is a difference. For I believe that what adults regard as learning is also play, and that it is something children will happily and freely engage in without being forced, just as in pure play.

Excercise on bars, learn letters, paint pictures, play music, count numbers, etc. constitute joyful play for children. There is no reason why they should do these knitting their eyebrows and getting scolded. Children should move their bodies, put their brains into action, and play with brightness in their eyes, while tasting the joy of success. This is the original landscape of children. I always wish to bring up children who can throw themselves into doing these things.

Children Enjoy Repetition

Children enjoy repetition to a point that exasperates adults. They ask for the same story many times. They repeat the same gymnastic exercise, trying to become better. Likewise in play.

Why is this? It's because there is no other way if children want to master a skill. Repetition--that is children's instinctive desire.

However, if something is repeated endlessly without variation, even children become irked. In the case of stories and picture-story shows, even the same things can be repeated with sustained interest because children receive them differently each time. In other cases, it is necessary to repeat the same thing with variations. We must also consider the method of evaluation so that children themselves will recognize their progress after each repetition. For they are elated when realizing they can do something, and this sense of satisfaction and success gives them strong internal support.

Let me explain from the physiology of the big brain. After birth, a new wiring system forms in

the brain. When a signal passes through this repeatedly, the system develops gradually so that the response becomes possible on reflex. This is called conditioned reflex. Children acquire a new exercise style and posture by the formation of a conditioned reflex. At first, the imitation reflex and quest reflex urge a new move, and while it is being repeated, a conditioned motor reflex is formed. By this, a new motion can now start by reflex.

I know from my past experience that teachers who have studied and practiced traditional methods do not like this kind of repetition. Even those who claim to understand repetition call this "drill," agreeing that "drill" in the basics is certainly important. However, the word "drill" carries a dark image of making strenuous efforts in what is totally uninteresting such as Chinese character dictation and calculation practice.

What I mean by repetition is nothing like this. Instead of something they must do knitting their eyebrows, it is the repetition of things which children really enjoy and try to master on their own accord. In other words, it is something that children desire, not what teachers want and make them do intentionally. It is hard to make this understood.

Two more points.

"Repeatedly practice what everyone can do," "above all practice the rudiments"--these points are not understood either.

There is no need to repeat what everyone can do. Repeat what's difficult and make it easy. Repetition of easy things is completely useless; in the first place, children become bored. --This is what people think.

What does being capable of doing something mean? Suppose a child can add 3 to 2 and get 5. This means he understands the rudiments. Education heretofore has almost all been like this; and it proceeded to the higher level after this. What I propose is to repeat this instead of going further, until the student reflexively thinks of number 5 on seeing the numbers 2 and 3.

Mr. Suzuki says: "The rudiments are the most important; the first great failure of instruction is to think that rudiments, since they are rudiments, can be finished simply."

It is not good enough just to understand something. It has to be repeated until the skill is perfectly mastered.

The Principle of Continued Development

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827) explains the principle of continued development as follows:

(1) Start with a very simple thing.
(2) Learn this very simple thing with greater and greater perfection.
(3) Then gradually add new materials.

The principle of continued development is to achieve perfect mastery by repetition. If you understand this, you have for the first time entered the threshhold of talent education.

Even if you understand this mentally, it is never easy to carry it out. What must we do so that children will enjoy repeating? How far should we go to reach "more perfect" skills? When faced with these questions, you will notice how concrete the

concept of educational method is which teachers received in the past.

"Haven't we done enough?" "Is it all right to take so much time?" you may begin to wonder. In fact, it is hard to patiently wait for the growth of children's ability. We tend to feel an irresistible urge to advance rather quickly to a higher stage.

Continued development means to keep on developing without halting on the way, its crucial point being how much ability was acquired at the earliest stage.

Mr. Suzuki's violin lesson is exactly like this. The first piece, "The Twinkle Variation," is repeated thoroughly, and the growth of ability is awaited. When the student advances to the subsequent materials, he always returns to the "Twinkle Variations." No matter how advanced he becomes, he is not to forget to practice this first piece.

What does this mean? We easily forget the easy pieces of the earliest stage, the moment we reach the third piece, and never even think of returning to them to practice.

I have made efforts, in my various experiences of teachership, to somehow help children who were dropping out. The wall that I always faced then was that the basics were fragile. However, in the present school system, it is next to impossible to take time to repeat the first grader's curriculum for third or fourth graders. Not only dropouts. Even those who barely make it at present, too, have to strive so hard. If the basics were firmer, I think they would follow the course more easily.

Everything leads us to think how good it would have been if the very beginning had been

more satisfactorily and firmly built. However, it is only after the teaching materials have become fairly advanced that we notice this, so nothing can be done.

When children are first graders, we think we've taught sufficiently. We still notice nothing when they are second graders. When they are third graders, we first become aware that the basic training might have been inadequate. When they are fourth graders, we begin to feel that the situation is grave and that we must do something. We start special instruction and what not, but already we know it is too late. When they are fifth graders, we gradually start to give up; when they are in the sixth grade, we give up completely.

In other words, the more advanced the materials, the more clearly do we realize how important the basis of the early stage was.

There is yet another error. Many teachers consider that repetition, at the early stage, of easy things which everyone can do is a means by which to save children with low ability while might hold back children with high ability, by pulling them down to the lowest level.

Let me refute this by borrowing Mr. Suzuki's argument. He says:

> No matter how well a student plays the "Twinkle Variations," it is never enough. For suppose Kreisler plays it in a way that he can play it no better; no one will be able to compete. When the student returns to the "Twinkle Variations" after going on to the next material, his "Twinkle Variations" will be the better. When he advances further, it will be that much better again. If the "Twinkle Variations" remain the same when the materials are more advanced, there always is a problem somewhere.

There is a new teaching method called "programmed learning." The teaching processes are analysed in detail into small steps so that every child in the class can get a perfect score. If there is any stumbling, the child is put back to a previous stage. After repeated training at the earlier stage, he once more steps forward. Thus, all members of the class are pushed up to the goal. This method seems very effective and economic, but it is a strain for teachers to organize the program according to the ability of each child in the class. Therefore, it did not spread much.

A teacher whom I know experimented with this at elementary school. He says that it was smooth at first. However, as each child began to gain different speeds, children who stumbled stumbled increasingly. So programing according to each child's ability became virtually impossible.

I am sure there probably were many problems in organizing the program, but I think the failure was caused by neglecting to practice the same thing until it became thoroughly internalized at the beginning stage of the program.

I have indeed repeatedly explained the need for repetition. I must say again that repetition does not mean repeating the same things in the same way ad infinitum. Even though the content remains at the same level, we must create various occasions in which children can repeat the same thing many times in different forms until they master it. Please grasp this fact firmly so there won't be any misunderstanding.

A THIRD STOREY CHAIR

Kiyoshi Suzuki
from A Father's Record
(no. 3), continued from
Spring, 1979

18. A Third-storey Chair --Ages Three to Ten

When Eiko started to write and to draw pictures, I had a little desk and chair set custom-made for her. Eiko was delighted. She kept some stationery neatly stacked in a childlike way in the desk drawers, and enjoyed using the chair and desk for writing her diary and drawing.

One day, when an acquaintance who was a primary school teacher came for a visit, Eiko happened to be writing her diary at her desk. He peeped and said, "What a nice desk, Eiko-chan. Let's see. Oh, a diary, how good." After thus praising her, he stayed watching her write. Then suddenly he came to me. "Mr. Suzuki, Eiko-chan writes the character gaku (learning) in gakkō (school) wrong. That form is no longer used," he warned me. "Oh, I see, thank you very much," I thanked the teacher, but the word "wrong" when he said "the character gaku is wrong" stuck in my mind.

When we were children, we learned the unsimplified form of the character gaku not included in the Tōyō Kanji (Chinese Characters in Current Use).* Therefore, the Tōyō Kanji form didn't occur to me when I taught Eiko the more complex way of writing gaku. Eiko, shortly to enter school, was happy to be able to write it in the Chinese character

*The character was traditionally written 學; its simplified form is 学.

instead of in hiragana (Japanese script), and wrote a simple story in her diary using that character. I taught her the simplified form for gaku at once, but still feel greatly dissatisfied with the sensitivity of the teacher who called the old way wrong.

There are many theories about Tōyō Kanji. An amateur, I can say nothing, but it saddens me to think that the heart within the traditional characters will gradually be lost as they go out of use.

I have digressed from the course of my story. Eiko's desk and chair became lower and lower as she grew. When her homeroom teacher visited us, she said, "The desk seems a little low." It was decided that Mother Carpenter would promptly heighten this desk. She "grafted" it using what scrap lumber she could find. Now the chair became too low, so she also grafted it, and finally the set was just right. Right now Eiko uses the same desk and chair grafted for the second time. My wife says, "When she enters middle school, we have to say goodbye to this desk." "Right," I respond, "but when the desk and chair are bigger, the room will be narrow. Then what?" "If the room gets narrow, all you have to do is build a big house," Eiko says, laughing with my wife. "Maybe so. When Eiko's big, I'll ask her to build a two storeyed beauty," I say. "Oh, no-o-h. All right, then," Eiko says, "we'll build a big one behind this house." "Please, I'll count on you."

On such an occasion, our house is filled with truly happy and cheerful laughter.

19. Schumann's "Happy Farmer" --Four Years Old

It was a very pleasant part of my life to bike around with no particular destination on a fair day, or to go on an errand, with Eiko in front, humming the melody of the piece she was practicing.

One day, I went to a bookstore with Eiko on the bike as usual. I put down the kickstand with Eiko still sitting. "Stay still, the bike will turn over if you move," I said and went into the bookstore to speak to the owner's wife at the cashier about four meters inside. When I came out, she also came out, and stared at Eiko with a droll expression. She said, "My, singing Schumann's 'Happy Farmer' and she's so small."

"Yes, she's just learning that piece at her violin lesson, so--" I answered with no special thought.

"Ah, that's right, I heard she was taking violin. It must be hard, she being small. What's her name?"

"She's Eiko."

"Ah, yes, you're Eiko-chan of course. That's great. You like violin?" she asked Eiko, but Eiko only remained smiling.

"She's learning such a nice piece--I'm amazed," the bookstore owner's wife seemed surprised.

To me it was no surprise. Still less to Eiko; she was shocked, so to speak, to have surprised another.

Eiko was simply singing the melody of the piece which was given her and which she therefore memorized. She was not at all aware that the "Happy Farmer" was high-class music, that a small child did not tend to sing it, or that a tiny child singing it would be branded "precocious."

However, the bookseller's wife had seen many four or five year olds and almost without exception they sang so-called children's, but in fact babyish, songs, giving a very lovely impression to adults. And she felt that was indeed very natural and that the young children's world was beautiful. So the sight of Eiko singing Schumann's "Happy Farmer" must have been like seeing an entirely different child. It was then probably natural that she was a bit surprised.

It seems that fine music of high sensitivity is regarded as unfit for small children. But if we don't give them highly sensitive things during the early period when they are most susceptible to influence, high sensitivity will not grow in them. Therefore, we parents must think again about giving small children babyish songs.

I am neither a music specialist nor a child-psychologist. Therefore, I can offer no criticism. However, as a father with a passion to raise my child as a person of high sensitivity and believing that art helps create a worthy person, I must emphasize that we should expose young children, more than anybody else, to high artistic sensitivity.

In the old days, people started to read kanbun* aloud from age five or six. That totally ignored

*Kanbun is classical Chinese read in Japanese.

what we now call child psychology. And yet it created fine human qualities. That exemplifies young children's resonance with the atomosphere of first-class materials. We shouldn't underestimate children.

20. Peeing in the Street --Ages Four to Five

I often see a child pee in a crowded downtown street. From my house I also observe a mother helping a baby pee outside on the street. It is natural that a child who practices with his mother how to pee in the street from babyhood does it calmly when grown up. I speak candidly to mothers for example at a lecture meeting for women: "Do you pee calmly in the midst of the crowded street? Perhaps you wouldn't. Why do you then let your babies do what you are too embarrassed to do yourselves? Don't say it's all right since it's babies; precisely because of that you should give them upbringing. If you really truthfully recognize your babies as human beings, you can't do such an irrespoinbible thing."

Since we became aware of this, in our family, we never let Eiko pee in the street. While she couldn't yet attend to her needs by herself, though it was inconvenient and uncomfortable to help her in the narrow bathroom, I explained it well to my wife so that she would always help Eiko only in the proper place. We carried this out even when Eiko was still in diapers. Perhaps for this reason, she rarely soiled, and on the contrary it seems to have saved our time. I think she hardly ever wetted at night since about age one; at least I have no recollection of that.

While she still seemed too small to go to the bathroom by herself, my wife watched her, and I encouraged her to go there alone. Our bathroom had an old-fashioned wide seat, difficult for a small child to use. Since she couldn't use it well from the beginning, she often soiled her clothes, but when that happened, we changed her at once. "Next time, let's do it well without messing the clothes," we gently advised her, never scolding her about soiling. If this smoothly developed until the present in this way, it would have been quite passable. However, as we got more and more used, both the parents and the child relaxed and once we had a great fiasco.

One day, a fairly big splash came from the bathroom. My wife rushed there into the toilet. Shocked, and quite beside herself, my wife pulled her out. Eiko, who couldn't even cry at first, started to wail as loud as we had ever heard her, really frantically "as though catching fire." My wife, crying along with Eiko, apologized, "Mama was bad, so bad, please forgive me."

Fortunately, as she was holding on to the pot with both hands, only her bottom got wet. She didn't hit her head, and there was not even a scratch on her. It's amazing how skillfully she fell. It was lucky that her mother was at home and could hear the sound of the fall, but I didn't know how to apologize to Eiko.

"Let your child travel if you love him," ancient people taught us. But there are ways to let your child travel. I made my child care for herself in a poorly furnished bathroom where she could fall--from lack of consideration on my part. After this occasion, the same error was never repeated. Perhaps this stimulated a protective

impulse, for she became very careful no matter what she did.

Dr. Fukui of Kawai Hospital, Toyohashi, said in his lecture:

> When a little child wants to go to the bathroom in the middle of a meal, old-fashioned people make him wait till the meal's over saying it's unmannerly. But this is very unhygienic. It is best to let a child go when he wants.

I agree with him. If Eiko wanted to go to the bathroom during the meal, I let her go quickly so she could enjoy her meal leisurely afterwards. (It seems that it is a common physical phenomenon for a child to want to go to the bathroom when he eats.) It's my habit to go to the bathroom after breakfast. Occasionally, after I go in, Eiko wants to go and knocks on the door. Now, this can be bothersome. But even then, Eiko seemed to very much dislike substituting the backyard for the bathroom.

In other words, if you raise a child who feels too uncomfortable to attend to his needs outside the bathroom, he will never pee in the street.

21. Group Lesson
--Ages Four to Nine

At the first group lesson Mr. Suzuki gave at Toyohashi, Eiko played the "Twinkle Variations." Mr. Suzuki listened to the whole piece with a smile, and praised her, "You've studied well." After that he gave me some advice.

On this occasion, Eiko played in good posture such as we never saw at home, proudly standing tall. "Well, so it goes," I thought, realizing how good it is for the children to play for Mr. Suzuki.

Yet, however good it might be for the children, it was impossible to ask Mr. Suzuki to come to Toyohashi every day. When group lessons began on a regular basis in Aichi Prefecture, it was decided that there would be one lesson every month in Nagoya. It was too much for Mr. Suzuki to appear in every chapter to give group lessons. "Oh, no, not to Nagoya," said some mothers, feeling reluctant about going that far. However, I had to go to Mr. Suzuki's lesson at any cost, and decided to make it the first priority in my life. When the date was set, I always marked it in my pocket diary. If there was anything else on the same date, I either changed the date, or canceled it.

Eiko, too, counted days with her fingers until the group lesson, since she enjoyed riding the train, seeing the city and department stores, and eating at a restaurant somewhere.

"Well then, she doesn't go to group lessons in order to study violin. It's as if she attends in order to go to a restaurant or to ride the train," some said. I could not deny this. I don't know how well she was beginning to understand that she went to Nagoya to study violin. Somehow she went out, rode the train over one and a half hour and got a 20 yen box of caramels. For such a purpose, I believe it was a joy for her to go out with her violin in her hand.

However, I hoped that after experiencing this a great number of times the relative importance

would shift in her mind to playing for Mr. Suzuki. I let her participate in the group lessons in order to gradually foster that feeling.

At the group lesson, Mr. Suzuki always listened to one solo piece. And he always said, "You've studied well."

I can't say how much this nurtured Eiko's heart. She seemed to take more and more interest in playing violin at group lessons.

"Papa, how come people don't go to group lessons more often?" Eiko once asked me, wondering about those who didn't participate. I, too, could not understand why. "Because it's time consuming," "Because it's expensive," "Because my child can't play well," etc., etc., some mothers make excuses. I can sympathize with those reasons, but I think one can create time and money to a certain degree, if one wishes to. Money, especially, is something that you can't spend unless you tell yourself, "It's no waste if it's for this purpose." The moment you think it's a waste, it becomes difficult to spend even a small amount.

"Argue all you like; you had money to spend," some may say. A humble salary man, it was a job for me to earn such money, but I never thought it a waste to spend it.

Not to participate in group lessons because the child can't play well seems odd. Because a child can't play well, he must play for Mr. Suzuki and receive instruction. If you think your child doesn't do well, you should attend group lessons all the more. The group lesson is no place for showing off slightly better children. It is a place where children learn mutually whatever is growing

well, and come into contact with Mr. Suzuki's heart, which will be the food for tomorrow's study.

The chance of a specific date never returns. Also, chance never comes of its own accord while we wait passively. Let's therefore seize the time, for isn't it to give our children a chance to grow?

22. Diary Since Age Four
--Age Four till Now

Talent Education Drawing Class opened in Toyohashi on April 1, 1954 when Eiko was three and eight months. Teacher Tomiyasu nicely motivated Eiko. It became her habit to draw one picture a day, just as she always practiced violin a few times daily, a little at a time. On her fourth birthday, she could write her name and dates, so I started her on a diary.

I have no fortune to leave for Eiko, but at least, I thought, I could leave her own diary. Every day, she wrote the date and her name, and drew whatever picture she wanted to draw. At first it was just a drawing and her name, but soon she started to write a simple story, her diary approaching more and more the proper form of a journal as she grew. I prepared a notebook for her with drawing paper on which I had lines printed so that she could draw and write both in Japanese and rōmaji (Romanized Japanese). She has been keeping her diary in this form ever since.

It became her very important daily schedule to keep her diary and to practice violin. Even on a day when she could not practice violin, she

made it a rule to write her diary, since a diary is meaningless unless written on the very day. She wrote her diary in the train on the way to Tokyo where she was attending the violin graduation ceremony. She went to summer school with her diary. I tried to let her write her diary without fail, not to let her forget. I made efforts to create a habit in her so that she would do it on her own accord. On a day she was tired after an athletic meet, a school excursion, and so on, this was a job. But remembering that this day would never return, I encouraged her to write: "Perk up. Papa is going to study, and Eiko will at least do her diary. It's okay to skip violin today." So she has kept it since age four.

Looking at the stack of her diaries, I feel happy that I have given her the chance to write.

After she entered school, too, I have given priority to her violin and diary, saying she did not have to study school subjects at home. However, I constantly told her: "Listen to the teacher well and study hard at school. At school, it is normal that anyone can achieve a perfect score." Thus, she almost never studied at home; all she did was look at some books when it suited her. Of course I had her do homework since it's her duty, but I can't agree with the practice today in which even material not yet covered at school are given as assignments. If they take that much time at school, there ought to be a method that allows children to learn sufficiently. I always say to Eiko, "You study at school, so it is only natural that your tests are perfect. If there's a mistake, that's because you didn't listen to your teacher, or you didn't take enough time. Check your errors well." Our rule is that she doesn't have to show us tests with a hundred

points, but she has to always show either me or my wife the ones that are below, so we can find out her errors and help her understand the questions. Since we made it commonsense to score a hundred, Eiko seemed to think it a shame when she failed to achieve it.

23. Eiko or Job Opportunity --Age Five

When Mr. Shichirō Hozumi was elected to the Diet, I was asked to work as his secretary through someone I was obliged to. It was an honor to have this important job; it may have been the best chance for me to rise in the wider world. However, thinking of Eiko, I hesitated. If I accepted this, I thought, I would live mostly in Tokyo, losing the chance to be with Eiko. Suppose I became a little better known, it won't amount to much. I was already past forty. Though life begins at forty according to the saying, in my case there would be a limit, considering my education and my past record. Rather, I should concentrate for the rest of my life on raising Eiko into a worthy human being. Though this would violate social obligation, I must not, I concluded, accept the secretary's position. However, since I did not want to use Eiko as an excuse, I gave other reasons such as "There will be a more appropriate person," and "I am not up to the job."

The person who recommended me to Dietman Hozumi helped me a great deal during my adverse years, yet never mentioned it on any occasion. It was very difficult for me to decline the offer. He eagerly tried to persuade me, saying, half in jest, "No, you are the best. Would you please accept? Or will you be too lonely to live away from your wife?"

I had no choice but tell him that my real reason was the child. Then, he just said, "I see," and dropped the issue. I was moved.

When I went to Matsumoto to attend the general meeting of talent education, there was an informal meeting at Mr. Suzuki's place. As usual, we talked about children. Mr. Suzuki then said, "Miss Tomiko Shida grew up so beautifully. She owes her father for what she is today. He was a school teacher, but since he was too humbly paid to provide his child a good education, he quit teaching to go into business. He and his wife worked very hard and prospered so they were able to buy a good record player and what not for Tomiko." I was deeply moved.*

In order to foster children well, a degree of income is of course necessary. It is conceivable that one might want to change one's occupation for that reason. However, teaching, though it does not pay well in today's society, is not a bad occupation, both socially and economically; it promises a secure livelihood, and in the future a pension. Miss Shida's father had the courage to abandon it for his child and to face another direction. I admire him as a truly worthy father. Although one cannot buy education with money, one may still need sufficient income to provide one's child with the kind of education which one holds as ideal.

Striving for a better economic foundation in order to bring up a worthy child--I saw nobility in this act, and thought I should learn.

*Miss Tomiko Shida joined the talent education violin class in 1950. She made such progress that foreign performers were surprized. She is expected to study in France as the first student sent abroad on the Talent Education Center fund. (author's footnote)

ZEN AND SELF-REALIZATION
(Part II)

Osamu Yoshida
(Continued from Spring, 1979)

"What am I?" I am a musican, teacher, parent, husband, human being, living thing, and so forth. I can see myself from different angles. We are all many-faceted. Our eyes, however, tend to perceive only a sharp-edged pinnacle of our being and neglect what extends far and wide below.

Can you imagine how miserable the world would be if one were to live a thief's life? His world is narrow, barred from the great ocean of life. He resembles the gadfly striking against the window pane trying to escape, ignorant of the wide space on the open side of the window. We need, then, to step back from the narrow world we ourselves have built. We must free ourselves from the imaginary nets, traps and cages. We must see reality with no delusions and deceptions. Once separated, La Metri said, it is impossible to unify. The initial and essential step of Zen is to directly see the true reality, avoiding conceptualization. In hearing sound and seeing color, one is awakened to the egoless nature of unified mind-body, self-other, epistemo-ontological existence. One sees the limitlessly interrelated world of phenomena. One sees dhamma (true reality), and is verfified by phenomenal reality. In peace one settles in dhamma. Then for the first time one starts living the total life. The mind, body, and the outside world become united: one lives the undefiled body and mind of the mountain, river and the great earth. Satori (awakening, verification) is to see the

mind and body, life and death, self and other in the dhamma (of Dependent Origination) with unbeclouded eyes and to live it out wakefully here and now. Self recognizes the dhamma and universal truth is actualized by self.

For self-realization it is crucial to know the true self. True self-knowledge is achieved only through self-cultivation. A girl fostered by a wolf can cultivate eyes which can see in the dark. A blind woman used to thread a needle for open-eyed people. Zen master Ryōkan had a guest, convention calls him thief, one night. He presented his robes, because in his shabby hut there was nothing else to offer. It was a cold winter night. However, Ryōkan, instead of worrying that he might catch cold, regrets in his poem that the guest did not appreciate the beautiful bright moon shining through the window.

Our eyes may be able to see only the glittering light called 'success,' 'money' or 'position.' There are ears deaf to music. There are ears which never hear the chirping of birds. There are, on the other hand, brain-damaged children of age two or three who can read better than ordinary healthy children. What makes all these differences? Cultivation: education and self-training. Master Dōgen said that an uncultivated man is inferior even to a toad or a leech. (At least the latter have no delusions.)

Zen is known for its hard and long training--in fact it demands total effort without end. There is no other way for anyone who really aspires to perfect the true self. Only those who seek are given. Our conceptual world is the tip of a huge iceberg only visible above the water line. Furthermore that is merely the shadow of

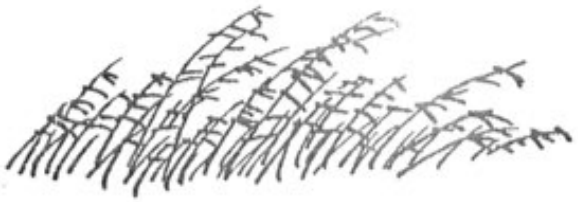
symbols. To see the reality of our existence, we must eliminate our preconceptions, wishful, wayward thoughts. Only the quiet and concentrating mind can perceive the ticking of a clock and produce an exquisite note on the violin. Calm mind and clear vision are attained in a motionless quiet body. The mirror-like surface and crystal-clear body of water in a still vessel reflects and reveals the world. The reality of life manifests itself, and the source of life is reached; thence springs the fountain of arts and sciences, cultures and civilizations, and the revitalizing force needed for life.

The deeply moving music of Casals comes from the vital source of his life. His total person, not mere technique, communicates directly to us. When he plays, he is one with the bow and the cello. Everything is subsumed, and only the sound is there. A single note reveals the artist's total being. Casals said, "I am a man first, a musician second." We must first make our lives masterpieces. Dr. Suzuki can tell from his student's recording not only his bowing technique but his daily life. The Suzuki method rests on Suzuki philosophy. It does not aim to produce a typist, a robot fiddler, much less a specialist-fool, but to make genuine human beings and a society realizing truth, goodness, beauty and love. These virtues must not be just dreams but concrete actions in the daily lives of ourselves and our children. These ideals should not be "the flowers in the air"; we must realize them in every little move in our life, even when "raising a hand or stepping a foot." Likewise in violin playing, in bowing to the teacher and to the true self.

"It is good to make beautiful embroidery," said a Zen master, "but never forget the golden needle which works out the embroidery." In Zen

it is essential to have the right teacher. The teacher should have profound insight into human nature; he should never mistake a branch for the trunk. The task of a teacher is to bring the disciple to full self-realization so he will be able to live perfectly in all situations without succumbing conceptually or physically to narrowing elements of life. To become a teacher or parent in the Suzuki method is, likewise, most difficult but most rewarding. To undertake this task is to deepen one's insight into human nature and to cultivate it in one's self.

Dr. Suzuki says, "When there is love, there is a lot to do." Let's be aware that there are better ways and more correct forms, whether in playing the violin or in living our daily life. Let's not lose this precious opportunity to realize the self. Nothing else can replace the self; nothing else can retrieve the life of the self here and now.



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Fix my power
firmly on the tip:
bow won't wobble.
Move on, pony hair,
as my elbow moves.
I won't let you float,
I won't press you down.

--Shin'ichi Suzuki

RECORD GUIDE No. 3

TITLE	RECORD NUMBER
The Young FRITZ KREISLER Violin Recital	Everest 3258
BACH The Six Suites for Cello Solo Pablo Casals	Angel Mono CB-3786
PABLO CASALS RUDOLF SERKIN Beethoven The Complete Music for Cello and Piano	Odyssey 32 36 0016
PABLO CASALS	Seraphim 60240
CORTOT-THIBAUD-CASALS	Seraphim 6042
Age of the Great Instrumentalists Six Legendary Pianists	Seraphim 1C-6045
BRUNO WALTER Beethoven Symphony No.5 Schubert Symphony No.8 ("Unfinished")	Odyssey Y 30314

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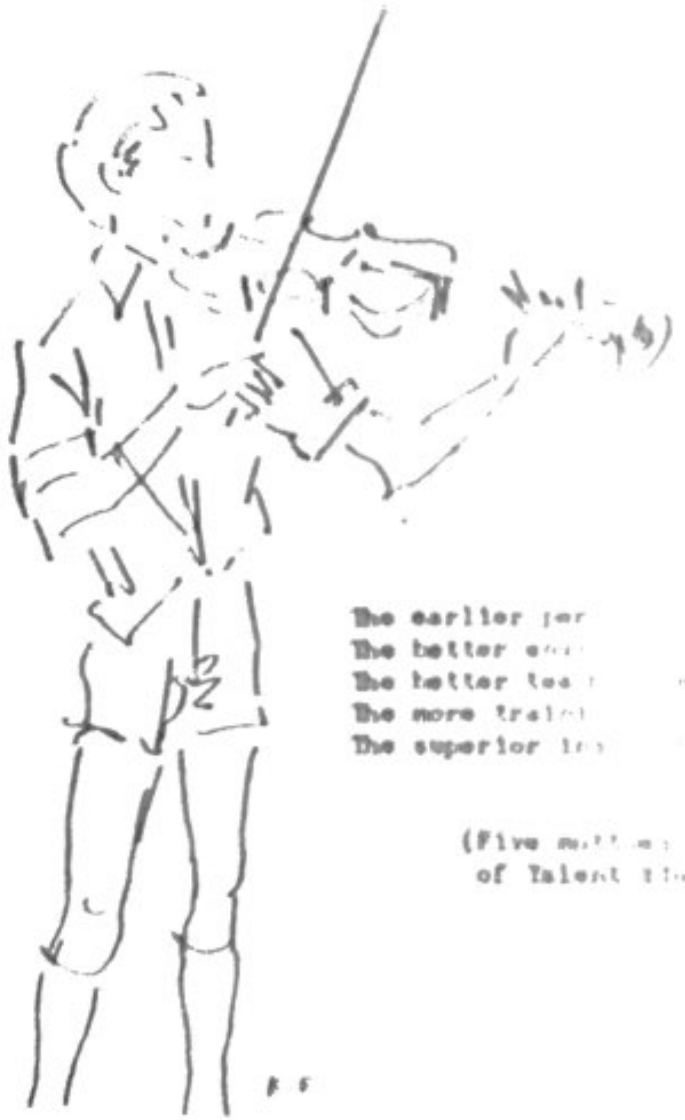

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The superior [illegible]

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