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We are pleased to introduce two articles by Dr. Suzuki and Mr. Shoichi Yamamura about the third international convention held in Munich in August 1979. Mr. Yamamura is one of the earliest practitioners of talent education and a member of the board of directors in Japan.

Dr. Suzuki's article "You Ought To Know At Least This Much: On the Law of Ability" discusses the most basic and important point of the Suzuki method.

In June 1979, when President Carter visited Japan, his daughter, Amy, brought her violin and took a lesson with Mrs. Hiroko Ishikawa. Mrs. Ishikawa has written a lovely article about her hour with Amy-chan.

In this issue we also include a mother's notes from the Japanese magazine, Talent Education. Mrs. Yukiko Chiba is a Suzuki parent in Kofu.

Dr. Mineo Nakajima was a Suzuki student in his youth. His article "A Flower of Cultural Diplomacy" is excerpted from the Japanese news commentary magazine, Jiji Kaisetsu.

Kindly give us any comments or suggestions that you feel will help improve this Journal.

THE MUNICH INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION

Shin'ichi Suzuki

The Suzuki method, a revolution in teaching, has now spread to Europe and become a subject of international interest. The Third International Convention held in Munich in August 1979 was attended by 668 people from 16 countries. Many teachers, students, and parents from Germany, France, England, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and Sweden for the first time heard the performances of Japanese students (74 students above age four or five). Hearing these students perform, I believe they felt the importance of the "revolutionary teaching method which assures that every child grows." They appeared deeply moved.

I think this convention has inspired great enthusiasm to spread our early education movement throughout Europe.

Students from the U. S. and Canada with a history of seventeen or eighteen years of the Suzuki movement, were highly trained and seemed to be growing quite well. Student groups from countries with histories of five, three, and one year also performed. They were all good performances. What was clear was the duration of time since the start of the method. We could see the students' level in each area gradually rising according to the history of the movement and the environment.

It takes time for the penetration of the teaching method, parents' understanding, and

the effort to create an environment in which many advanced students are fostered who inspire, in their turn, newer children. "Man is a child of the environment." Ten years from now, it is obvious that many high level students will be growing in countries the world over.

* * * * *

For many years in foreign countries I have heard people say, "Mothers in our country are different from Japanese mothers." I heard this again during the convention from teachers from different nations. The problem must lie here. Children's ability grows at home. Our movement depends on explaining to parents and instilling in them understanding of skillful ways to foster children which inspire them so they will enjoy practicing. My motto, "Every child grows; everything depends on the parents," expresses the central theme of our efforts of thirty years. Therefore, for instructors, one important point of the Suzuki method is to have this well understood by mothers. Our gathering is simply a studygroup of parents who have come to know the vitality of life and who seek to study how to foster every child, with faith in their children. I explained this well at Munich: "Japanese mothers are not special. In Japan, too, it is only recently that many mothers began to understand the principle thoroughly. And that as a result of our efforts over many years." I emphasized that parental understanding is of prime importance in fostering children beautifully. If you listen to a child's performance, you know the parents.

Representatives of the participating countries gathered on the 27th and 29th of June,

and agreed to found a worldwide organization, the International Suzuki Association.

This is designed to disseminate the teaching method throughout the entire world and continually improve it. It is expected to serve as a vehicle to report on the movement in different countries and to expand it to all areas of education.

This was my keenest wish for the Munich convention. I was greatly pleased when this was unanimously resolved. I, too, will continue to make strenuous efforts, dreaming of the day when all countries of the world will promote our policies of education from birth.

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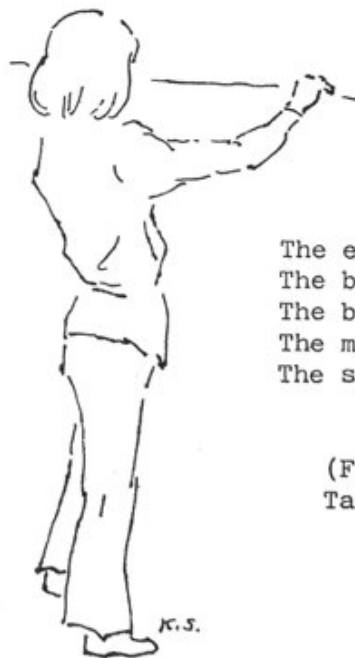
Piano teacher Misako Koike, who accompanied me to Munich, wrote from Tokyo after returning home:

I was lucky to experience again the beauty of talent education. Not only that, I was blessed by a reunion with the teachers who cared for me in Germany a dozen years ago and with other old acquaintances. I had a very happy twelve days. They really marvel at the Suzuki method. Most of the people I saw had seen the television program twice, but they were all the more moved to see the live performances. They regretted that there was no public concert in Munich. I thought they had a point. . . .

This letter taught me that it would have been good if we had planned a concert for the public in the great concert hall there.

Certainly, those who heard them for the first time must have been astonished by the growth of high musical ability in many young children. Even those of us who have actually fostered children for many years go about our work filled with admiration for the beauty of the workings of life in children, all of whom grow.

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The earlier period
The better environment
The better teaching method
The more training
The superior instructor.

(Five Mottoes of
Talent Education)

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION, MUNICH

Shōichi Yamamura
Trustee and instructor

At the Sheraton Hotel, the site of the international convention, students from sixteen countries finished the final performance of the Edelweiss. The convention was about to end, and students, teachers and parents were all filled with thoughts. In that thought-filled hush, teachers representing participating countries stood on stage with Mr. Suzuki in the center.

In a quiet voice, Mr. Suzuki began:

I regret that contact with all of you is now ending. Knowing that every child the world over is given life, I would like to create an era when it is only natural to foster that life. For over forty years, I have fostered children, regardless of who they are, with admiration and awe.

How sad it is that mankind, in its long history, has not engaged in fostering children from birth. Isn't it sad that children were only taught to speak. Mankind has been ignorant of their great potential. Education, however, starts from birth, by the very great workings of life itself. A three year old who has missed correct fostering is already greatly handicapped. Mankind, having now realized that talent is not inborn, has the responsibility to foster children. I am happy that you teachers and and parents agree with me. We now have

heart to heart contact and are making efforts for tomorrow's world.

Think of music: in Japan today, ten thousand babies are being brought up listening to Mozart's serenade. They are being brought up while gaining high sensitivity of Mozart and Bach. Twenty-five years ago, in the middle of the night, I cried realizing how miserably babies are raised worldwide. With an idea born of those tears, I have conceived of a national infant policy under which the nation provides instructors to teach mothers to bring up babies correctly, instead of police. I have promoted this movement.

I have been seeing ministers for more than twenty years. "Fine idea," they say but have done nothing. I am eighty now. I would like to postpone my retirement to one hundred and twenty so I can see it carried out. If that's not enough, I will extend it a little more and (Applause.) And I would like to have a place for experimentation in Matsumoto.

With a dream in my heart, I was able to share this convention with you who have known the wonder of children. I find happiness in you people from sixteen countries.

I don't know how to foster musicians, but I have come to know how to foster human beings with music. In Japan I have come to know that those who studied music have become worthy people.

I think of the words of Maestro Casals:
"Music will save the world."

I am sad to part with you.

Please foster your children so they will become fine people.

All of you, and teachers -- I thank you.

Mr. Suzuki's speech, so appropriate for the conclusion of an international event, moved everyone present. He exchanged a firm handshake with each of the national representatives, bringing the convention to a close.

I would like to touch briefly on the contents of the convention.

On June 26th, right after the opening ceremony, Mr. Suzuki started the program with a lecture in two parts:

1. The Law of Ability and Theory
2. My Report: Tonalization and Practice.

In the lecture, he emphasized that we should turn our eyes more to nature: "I was surprised by nature's workings. From there my views of all things began. Therefore, my emphasis in playing the violin is constantly on balance, as in nature." He drew a picture on the blackboard showing how the bow should achieve perfect balance with equal weight at the tip and the frog.



Prof. Starr of the U. S. also provided similar instruction in his afternoon group lesson.

He had the students hold the tip of the bow, and skillfully instructed them to play with different dynamics the Song of the Wind, Perpetual Motion, etc.

For training of proper bowing with equal weight on the tip and at the frog, Mr. Suzuki suggested the following:

- (1) Train the feel of the fingers by letting them crawl up the bow from the frog to the tip and down from the tip to the frog.
- (2) Hold the bow at the tip; with the little finger rather close to the third finger, move it up and down; then, without changing that bow-hold, play Judas Maccabaeus and Handel's Bourrée.
- (3) Train the right elbow.
 - a) Play Bourrée entirely at the frog.
 - b) Play the same at the middle of the bow with the same feeling.
 - c) In order to settle the tip of the bow, firmly hold the bow with the four fingers without the index finger, then put the index finger just so on the exact spot.
 - d) Practice moving the right arm up and down while retaining this good bow-hold.

Instruction with the use of tuning forks was also demonstrated. The practice consists of weighing down the tip of the bow by attaching a tuning fork, and trying to play beautifully and loud without crunching. Since this is a most effective method for volume, he urged teachers to try it on their students. It was important, he said, to teach students to play beautifully first on one string only, and then to shift to other

strings so they could let all the four strings ring out in the same way. I think these were his main points.

The instructors from the U. S. and other countries, I could tell, have been studying hard. Each of them conducted group and solo lessons which demonstrated their studiousness combined with inventiveness. I was struck by their zeal for the Suzuki method.

* * * * *

The number of Japanese participants in the Third International Convention in Munich was seventy-four students, ninety teachers, forty-six parents, seventeen piano "study-group" teachers, etc., a total of 259 people. The other countries involved included the U. S., Denmark, Sweden, Australia, Indonesia, France, Belgium, England, Holland, Germany, and Canada. It was wonderful that the Suzuki method was studied by participants from more countries than had ever gathered before.

Mr. Masaaki Honda, trustee of the Talent Education Center, said of this convention, "I would like to let grow the friendship which united people of different languages and customs through an international convention." I heartily agree with him. Mr. Mark Bjork, director of the American Suzuki Association, said, "It is wonderful that people from all over the world have gathered. This will have a big influence on the future development in Europe."

I would like to note here the names of three people who made great contributions to the talent education movement in Europe: Kōji Toyoda, Tomiko

Shida, and Yukari Tate.

The international board of directors also met at this time. It consisted of representatives from many countries participating in the convention. It will eventually issue a report including the names of participants. The teachers from different countries took part with "heart to heart contact" in order to mutually study the Suzuki method. With the convention as the momentum, Mr. Suzuki's dream will become these people's dreams, spreading wider than ever. I think the significance of this meeting was great. This newborn International Suzuki Association (ISA) has its headquarter in Matsumoto.

Mr. Suzuki lectured in various places before and after the convention as well as teaching in London. The responses of those who had the chance to hear him talk, and those who received his instruction were another big fruit of the convention. The convention left a great impact in Europe. The concert in Paris was videotaped by a French broadcasting company. It will eventually be broadcast in France together with Mr. Suzuki's lecture.

It has been more than a dozen years since the American tours started. By repeating the tours, it has been possible to yearly increase the number of understanding people in the U. S., Canada, and Australia. Now the movement has developed so far that it is not a matter merely of violin, nor of cello, piano, or flute alone. The convention was held at this crucial moment. It is indeed moving to see the Suzuki method spreading toward the entire world. Through the

five days in Munich, I realized afresh the wonder of children. I also had contact with able foreign teachers devoted to fostering children. This was a great occasion for my own self-reflection. I feel that I must study more and try to foster children more beautifully.

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"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



YOU OUGHT TO KNOW AT LEAST
THIS MUCH

On the Law of Ability

Shin'ichi Suzuki

I would like you to understand the Law of Ability. Whether you foster your own child or, as a teacher, instruct your students, unless you grasp this law, you will not clearly see how ability grows.

For forty years I have constantly repeated that "ability is not inborn." That you have joined this association means that you have become a member who studies the teaching method by which "every child grows." I find it really regrettable if even one person, forgetting this fact, is content merely to enrol his child and pay tuition. This center is a gathering of members who seriously study how to beautifully foster their children --and skillfully. This means that you must foster your child beautifully. Your child grows as a result of your cooperation with your teacher. "The child's fate lies within the parents' hands." Consequently, the parents' project is to know that "every child grows; everything depends upon how you foster them," and act accordingly.

Some parents, as in the old days, say to themselves, "our child's no good." They are the ones who are no good, according to the rule of our center. This is an association which, recognizing their wonderful potential, enjoys fostering children skillfully and smoothly. Please work hard at it.

As far as the mother tongue is concerned, people raise their children smoothly and well,

yet what a failure they are when it comes to other matters. Grownups all over the world are blind in this respect. Why does every child grow smoothly only in his mother tongue? The key to this growth can be sought in the "Law of Ability." Naturally, I would also like the teachers to study the law carefully and pursue the teaching method for the growth of every child.

Children's ability of course can't grow by weekly lessons alone. The teacher is responsible not only for coaching them correctly during the lessons but must guide them successfully by cooperating with the parents. While watching the children's smooth and pleasant growth at home, he must emphasize the fact that "the student's ability grows at home." If you can do this, you are a skilled teacher. Children don't grow only through lessons. In order for them to grow, one needs various devices for inspiring their desire to learn. In short, there is no problem on the side of the children. The problem exists between the parents and the teacher. A baby has no problem: if born in Osaka, he will learn to speak the Osaka dialect; if born in Akita, he will speak the Akita dialect; if born in Paris, he will speak French, no matter who he is. This is exactly in accord with the Law of Ability.

The Law of Ability (the Suzuki Theory)

Let me briefly explain this law. (Eventually I intend to write a book on it.) What is the principle on which ability grows? What motivates each living being to acquire ability? The answer is "the workings of life."

Life is something admirably strange and moreover actually existing though without a form.

The power of this life controls the entirety of the living body, protects and fosters it. The baby grows each moment, whether before birth in the mother's womb or after birth. Should we not watch this with wonder? It is by the great workings of life.

Please marvel at it. You need the ability to marvel at it. If you take this fact for granted and stay complacent, I am afraid you will not understand the Law of Ability. Who feels awe toward life? Those who have come to know the great reality of life and its power, are capable of cherishing awe toward life.

Now, with the growth of the workings of life which protects and fosters the living body, conditions are acquired for the germination of ability. In other words:

In correspondence with external circumstances, the function to protect and foster the living body grows as a power required for living, which leads physiological conditions for developing ability to germinate.

This is the Law of Ability which I have come to know. More briefly,

In accordance with all external stimuli, i. e., the environment, ability grows within the body.

Thus, ability is not inborn.

That is to say heredity is limited to life and the carnal body. Consequently, such traditional theories and common beliefs as someone has a good brain or was born a genius is a great error.

With this thought, forty years ago, I revised the traditional teaching method, and fostered children by letting them listen to the records of Kreisler, Thibaut and other great maestros of the world. The children learned from their outstanding musical sensitivity. Toshiya Etō, Kōji Toyoda, Takeshi and Kenji Kobayashi, Hidetarō Suzuki, and Takaya Urakawa were fostered by this method. This experience proves that every child grows, regardless of race. The same fact teaches us how to foster children so they will be "tone-deaf."

Mothers who don't understand this think "I have played records for my child," after only a tiny amount. If you foster your child in the cold environment of Alaska for a week, all you have accomplished is making him cold; you have not helped him develop the ability in his skin and flesh to withstand the cold.

I often say that knowing something does not amount to ability. How well one can do it is the measurement of one's ability. If you come to know the Law of Ability, you will know how to let your child acquire ability. Only if you let him acquire it, will it exist as ability.

Don't you see that children develop a very high ability to speak their mother tongue fluently by the daily training to acquire it?

Let them practice well, train them repeatedly every day, let them listen to the high level environment of, for example, adults' language, and foster them by this method. Then parents all over the world will succeed in their children's ability development in every

field. Please understand that your baby was born with the basic capacity to grow with the ability of 10,000 years from now, only if fostered by people 10,000 years hence.

Neither the heart nor ability is inborn. Please foster your child beautifully. I pray you.

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A HAPPY HOUR WITH AMY-CHAN

Hiroko Ishikawa
Instructor, Daitō District



In early June, I received a call from Matsumoto: I was asked to give a lesson to Amy Carter in Mr. Suzuki's place, a big responsibility I was to fulfill in his absence, attending the Munich International Convention.

We talked immediately about how to receive her: a welcome performance at Haneda Airport, a party combined with a lesson at the Shufunotomo Cultural Center (where Talent Education's Tokyo office is located), etc. but it was ultimately decided that five students and I visit the Embassy where the Carters were to stay.

Finally the day came of President Carter and his family's arrival. Amy-chan, as we call her, made a clear first impression on me as she descended the plane firmly holding her violin case. This was broadcast on television. I was one of those who watched it with excitement.

On June 25, I finished saying to Mizunosan, "Well then, I'm off," and hung up the phone. A second later, I was notified: "Amy's not feeling well. The plan is cancelled." We were all disappointed. Yet, the following day I received another call to my great happiness. The children had gone to school already, but I had them collected, and rushed to the Hotel Ōkura. Security measures were tight, but we passed freely thanks to our slips issued by the Foreign Ministry. We were met there by Teacher Kimura, and headed toward the official residence at the appointed time.

While waiting in the lobby, looking at the well-kept garden, though I am normally carefree, I felt rather tense, worried about the children's manners and anticipating anxiously what in the world was going to happen. However, on greeting the gentle Rosalynn and friendly Amy, I felt at ease, and was able to deliver Mr. Suzuki's message, wreath, and presents.

Then the lesson started. Amy, we learned, was working on Bach's Minuet. So we played the piece together. She sounded quite good. The children seemed to communicate through music. Amy appeared relaxed at once. Her mother listened to the lesson with a constant smile.

I gradually introduced a bowing exercise using less advanced pieces, posture, hearing each other's tone, passing the music back and forth at a clap of the hands, left-hand handshake while playing open string notes of the Twinkle, etc. It was hard trying to explain to Amy with what little English I have, but she said, "Oh I know it, 'cos I did it with Mr. Suzuki last year." Somehow I got the meaning across, to my great relief. But at one point, I was about to start a game without explaining it to the Japanese children, who said, "Mrs. Ishikawa, we don't understand it."

Thirty minutes or so later, who came in but the President himself! I was happy to see him, but felt my heart thump. He seemed much gentler than on television, and really friendly. As we were in the middle of a piece, we went in front of him playing, with Amy leading the file, and bowed to him. After greetings, we played again, in a peaceful atmosphere, several pieces requested by the President, including Minuet I and The Happy Farmer. As I watched him he appeared like any father listening to children's performances with eyes narrowed

with pleasure. We all felt warm. Rosalynn Carter, too, like a Japanese mother, played the Twinkle Variations on Amy's instrument, and said, "I practice with my daughter every day, but it's hard." I thought I saw the warm, smile-inducing side of the family.

Later, ex-Prime Minister Fukuda came and listened to the Suzuki children. This was broadcast on television.

We were sorry to have to go. We exchanged many handshakes and repeated "Bye-bye," for this was the only mutual word between the children.

We received a letter from the White House, saying that the experience was "the greatest highlight of the trip." I am so glad and relieved that they enjoyed it. I am talking with the children about what to write to our lovely friends beyond the sea.

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HOW TO DEVELOP ABILITY



Shigeki Tanaka
Young Children: Everything
 Depends on How We Raise
 Them (no. 4), continued
 from Summer/Fall 1979

Chapter III How to Develop Ability

1. Understanding Developmental Stages

The experiments discussed below are not to demonstrate how to handle specific points. Lazy teachers are apt to copy what others have done, instead of using their heads. When they fail to achieve good results, they jump to this conclusion: "I too have done that kind of thing, but after all that was only a special case."

Or, if they succeed in one experiment, they become carried away by success; they appear as victors and try to go no further. However, examples are only examples. It is important for teachers to use such models as a stepping stone to establishing their own teaching technique.

There is no one supreme teaching method. There will always be a better one, and the constant search for the better is part of the talent education approach.

Even Mr. Suzuki whose violin teaching method receives worldwide recognition is immersed in the study of better teaching methods, requiring of himself daily improvement. When we face this reality, what we are doing may seem infantile.

Studying with children, I always marvel at them. Seeing that they grow so much with even

perfunctory assistance, I only wish that I had more strength. I am convinced that young and zealous teachers as well as veterans with rich experience will discover improved teaching methods

As it says in Article I of the Basic Law of Education, our aim obviously is to build the foundation of a healthy body and mind which are the roots and stem of human formation.

In kindergarten and nursery school education, children's rapid development can be divided into the following areas:

1. physical; 2. intellectual;
3. emotional; and 4. social (moral).

From here are established the six areas: health, society, nature, language, music, and art. Of course, these are not taught in isolation, since they are mutually related. Especially in the case of young children, when one thing is done thoroughly, we realize that everything is included in it.

I have set up six areas for convenience's sake, and chosen one example from my experiments in each area. I hope they will prove helpful.

2. Backward and Forward Twirl: Motor Function

Gymnastics has two aspects: Strengthening the body and training motor functions. At present, nursery school and kindergarten education pay scrupulous attention to preserving health. But the problem is their protective approach; they neglect positive training.

The Little Lamb Kindergarten of Toyohashi, a school adopting talent education methods, has a national reputation as "a shirtless kindergarten." The children wear clothes to school, but once inside they go naked from the waist up. In winter they wear tops, but a fair number of children, I hear, stay shirtless all year round.

Mr. Kamizato, the schoolmaster, believes in "the navel and the sun": he doesn't recognize a slight cold as an excuse for wearing tops. Every child has healthy, suntanned, taut skin; brisk action, full of lively power; and eyes that shine with life. Teachers who come to observe are all impressed and listen enthusiastically to Mr. Kamizato's story of his efforts. However, they do not apply this in their own kindergartens.

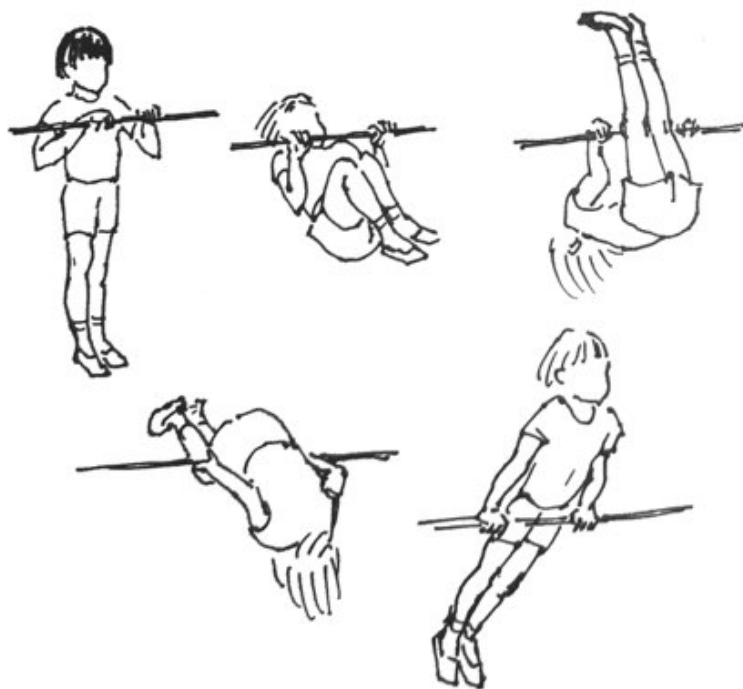
Further, in most schools, when it comes to the matter of training motor skills, it is not too much to say that no teaching worthy of the name is done. This can be called a serious problem. The reason is that the kindergarten period when children are four or five is precisely when motor functions develop most. Unless trained in this period it is usually more difficult for them to develop later.

Let me explain the development of the internal organs of the human body. Individual parts of the body do not develop simultaneously in early childhood. Forty percent of the respiratory and circulatory organs, muscles, and bones are said to develop by age four, and fifty percent by age ten. However, eighty percent of the motor functions develop by age four and ninety-eight percent by age ten. That is, almost full maturity is reached by age ten. Therefore, if you prevent a child from doing anything because his

body is small and immature, his motor nerves will forever lose the chance to develop.

We divide physical education for young children into three pillars, and consider them as forming a triangle: (1) muscles, (2) motor nerves, (3) internal organs (stamina). These develop in close interconnection. If one practices a movement with the aim of training motor nerves, the muscles and stamina also benefit.

Let me give an example. Backward twirl (holding the bar with two hands, kick the legs up and twirl backwards around the bar) is included in the third grade curriculum in elementary school. On asking a gym teacher



I learned the reason was that "muscles of the arms and lower legs are not sufficiently developed until age eight or so." However, I have done it with four and five year olds in kindergarten. Nearly everybody learned the backward twirl, including twirling many times in succession around the bar.

Here's how it worked. Trying it on third graders, nearly half failed. Sixty percent of second graders succeeded. The rate was even higher with first graders, and it was still easier to teach younger children. Between five and four year olds, strangely the four year olds learned faster. Yet a stranger thing happened. A fragile three year old girl who was watching five year olds do the backward twirl poked me, saying in a soft voice, "I want to do it, too." Granted that children her age want to copy everything, I thought this would be too hard. However, she repeated that she wanted to try. When I helped her hold on to the iron bar and pushed her bottom, she screamed with joy. She asked to do it over and over again. Becoming lazy, I said, "Then do it yourself." Even then she hung delightedly and tried to pull her bottom up. This was repeated four or five times.

One day I pretended to push her up, only gently touching her bottom. She just smoothly went up. I thought this would do and said, "Now try it yourself." She was happy to try and accomplished the backward twirl with ease.

This surprised me. I praised her from the bottom of my heart. But I was arrested by thoughts. Was the Ministry of Education guideline correct in stating that children are not ready for the backward twirl until age eight or so when the muscles

have matured. Are the developmental stages which nearly all teachers regard as their instruction bible fundamentally flawed?

This girl then developed remarkably: she learned to twirl in succession without difficulty. Along with it, her slim arms became strong, and she became interested in all types of exercise. She became so active as to be almost unrecognizable.

I did not teach her the knack of successive backward twirls (bend the arms, keep the stomach very close to the bar, and swing up by using the inertia from the downward swing; when the body becomes a ball entwining the bar, it swings around many times). All I did was watch, worrying. But the girl saw what older children did and copied it; she learned the rest by herself from experiencing it.

I did not, however, try to let all the three year olds do the backward twirl. My principle is to wait until children say they want to do it, as this girl insisted. If a child truly wishes to do something, that may be the best moment for him.

Forward Somersault

I emphasize the sense of upside down posture as an important pillar for training kindergarten children's reflexes. This concerns the child's ability to balance the body instantly when upside down. This sense is important for avoiding injury by controlling one's balance when falling. It also leads to training reflexes which enable one to relax the body to soften the shock of impact and immediately to take the proper next action.

With one or two year olds it is best to start with the game of rolling over sideways like a log. By the time they are three, they have sturdy necks, so there is no worry about starting forward somersaults.

All children love to somersault. This seems to be something instinctive. However, they don't get better if they don't practice.

When I lectured at a certain kindergarten, the head mistress told me, "Every child in the oldest group can do forward somersaults." So I asked to observe them. But it was awful. It could hardly be called forward somersault. Everybody somersaulted with the head touching the mat and landed flat with a thump, unable to finish by standing up. At this rate it might better be called forward slump.

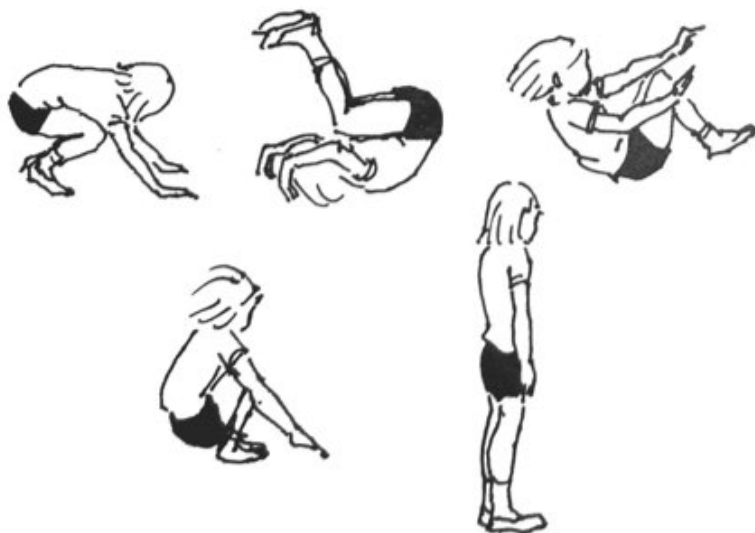
I got permission to play with the children on the mats for twenty minutes. I practiced the technique of forward somersaults with them from the basics. As I always think, children are wonderful. They practiced this simple and uninteresting-looking thing delightedly with shining eyes. Nearly everyone acquired the knack. By the time I left, we were such good friends that to my embarrassment they asked "When are you coming back?"

I wish I could go every day, but I would have no more chance to visit. Unable to answer, I thought why is it that teachers won't teach what children enjoy so much.

Forward somersault is a simple action which everybody can do, but it is not easy to perfect. Unless the child first masters the basics correctly, he forms bad habits which are hard

to overcome.

The main thing is to twirl while perfectly rounding the body. It is good, depending on their individual needs, to advise the children to turn looking at the navel, to touch the navel with the nose, or touch their legs with the head while turning. In order to avoid legs stretching, it is nice to set up an elastic band and let them somersault under it taking care not to touch. Make the band slightly lower toward the end of the mat to help them grasp the knack of keeping the body round. You need only think a bit to turn it into an interesting game, such as forward somersaulting over a jumping box which develops the skill of tumbling straight, and "valley somersault" which requires tumbling in a narrow space between two jumping boxes without touching them.



In order to develop arm power, it is good to use games like "unicycle" (one child walks on his hands while another holds his feet and pushes); "holding the earth" (hand-stand against the wall; another child helps by pressing the legs to the wall); "hanging competition" (see how many minutes children can hang from an iron bar); and "bicycle game" (support the body with two arms between two desks, raising the legs and pedalling).

These games help the child acquire the power to support the body with both hands as well as the knack of rounding the body to minimize the shock of falling.

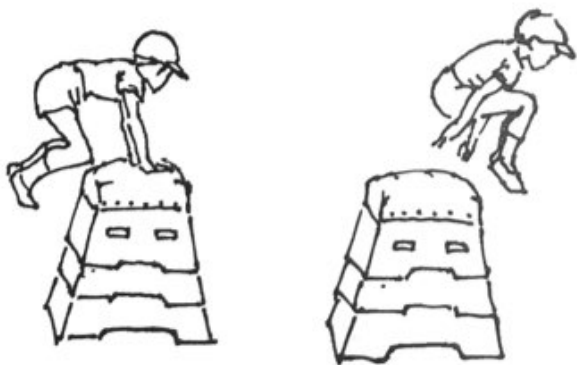
Forward somersault should be taught by stages as follows:

- (1) Learn the knack of forward somersault.
- (2) Take three running steps, somersault once and stand up (precision and speed).
- (3) Use just the top box of a set of jumping boxes to somersault over it.



- (4) Learn the knack of consecutive forward somersaults (precision and speed).

- (5) Separate two mats, pretending that the space in between is a river. Forward somersault so as not to fall in the river. Up to this stage always use mats.
- (6) Forward somersault once on the floor without a mat.
- (7) Stretch an elastic band, dive and forward somersault over the band (with the use of a mat). Use two parallel elastic bands and gradually increase their height and width.
- (8) Place the jumping boxes sideways, dive and somersault forward on landing. Start with the top box.



- (9) Consecutive forward somersaults on the floor without mats, on the ground, on a concrete floor, etc.
 - (10) Consecutive diving forward somersault without mats.
- When the forward somersault is brought to this tenth level it is really perfected.

A child who has completely mastered the forward somersault is never injured no matter how badly he falls. He instantly rounds himself with the knack of the forward somersault, nimbly deflecting the shock. This is also useful for all kinds of exercise and sports. We produced many children who could jump over the highest stack of jumping boxes for elementary school use. The skill was developed on the basis of the forward somersault exercise.

3. Line Drawing: Hand Exercises

I have already mentioned the importance of hand exercises. It seems that children have an instinctive desire for drawing and enjoy using pencils, pens, and crayons. Hand exercise is training designed to make hand (especially the elbow) movement smooth in order to better satisfy this desire.

Teach the correct way of holding the pencil from the start. The child is to hold the pencil with the thumb and the index, pressing it to the side of the middle finger's first joint, thus firmly holding the pencil with these three fingers. The distance from the pencil tip to where he holds it should be about the same as the distance between the tip of the thumb and the first joint. When he sits correctly and brings the pencil forward, its eraser should point to the tip of the child's right shoulder. Lift the arm so the forearm is level, and draw by moving the whole elbow, avoiding drawing with just the finger tips.

This initial training is very important, for this posture, pencil hold, and elbow movement are hard to correct later.

Prepare sheet of paper 10 by 14 inches (fliers, waste paper, etc.). Draw a spiral clockwise using correct posture. It may be proper to call this an exercise in moving the elbow rather than drawing. In the trace of the pencil, which can be considered the locus of the elbow movement, is the first clue for further instructions.

The questions of concentration, pencil-point pressure, personality, muscles and motor nerves—these constitute a tremendous topic for research which I cannot explore here. I would just like you to know that even a simple line drawing game like this has important pedagogical meaning.

Let me give you an example. This is a fairly advanced exercise. It might better be called training powers of concentration rather than a line drawing exercise. Draw a line from point A to point B in one stroke, covering about six inches in a second or a second and a half. First place the pencil point on A, carefully looking at point B. Inhale, stop breathing, draw swiftly. If the end of the line does not meet point B, don't worry. Don't bend the line to meet point B. It is very difficult at first to end exactly at point B. As you gradually become practiced, the end of the line approaches the point.

If the pencil stops exactly where intended, it means that the adjusting power of the hand's motor nerves has grown. At first, you should place more emphasis on concentration than on ending exactly in the desired spot. Prepare your breath, concentrate your spirit at that moment on the tip of the pencil and draw.

Stop after drawing five or six lines at one sitting. Without concentration it is a waste no matter how many lines are drawn; on the contrary it builds bad habits.

As is true in everything, it is not important to do a great deal but to do it correctly and with concentration. Please note the following three points:



- (1) Maintain good posture.
- (2) Try to draw with the elbow, moving the entire arm. Never draw only with the wrist.
- (3) Take a breath, stop, calm yourself and draw in one breath. When the pencil stops at point B, ease the breath.

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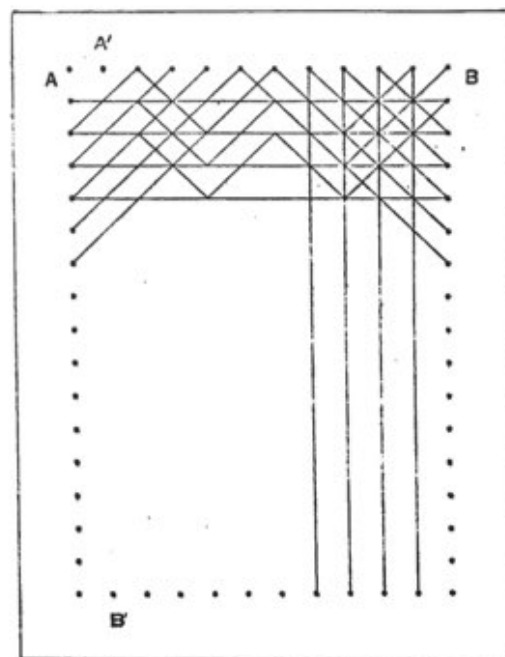
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Start with the speed which is easiest for the child and gradually increase it. When you demand speed from the start, it becomes half hearted, lacking in tension. But please take care that the child won't feel so tense as to hold the pencil too firmly, or the pencil pressure becomes too strong. The tension is needed in the mind, not in the finger tips.

When the child masters the horizontal line, let him try the vertical line (from A to B'). Further, let him practice the diagonal lines (from A to A', from A' to B), connected diagonal lines, and go back to the original horizontal lines. At this point compare them with the horizontal lines drawn at the outset.

The new lines ought to be much more skillfully drawn. This repetition of practice always returning to the first stage is characteristic of the Suzuki method.



A FLOWER OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY



Mineo Nakajima
 Professor of International
 Relations, Modern China,
 Tokyo University of Foreign
 Languages

The much feared U. S.-Japan summit conference is over, the Ōhira administration having achieved relative success in overcoming one hurdle. Since the conference confronted the most serious problems in Japan-U. S. negotiations, it is easy to imagine the efforts of top class Foreign Ministry people working behind the scenes. The negotiations taught us the difficulty of economic diplomacy, and at the same time revealed the progress of our bureaucrats as specialists in international economic affairs.

However, there is a pitfall in bureaucrats' playing the major role behind the scenes. Topics became overly specialized and detailed, nullifying the true meaning of a summit talk where statesmen discuss the modern world and culture. . . .

At the beginning of the conference which had many conflicts, President Carter said to Prime Minister Ōhira, "My daughter Amy is studying Suzuki method violin." This was very significant, and made us think about the nature of cultural diplomacy.

"The Suzuki method," of course, refers to the violin teaching method started by Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki of Talent Education, with the faith that "as every child can speak his mother tongue, so can every child learn to play violin well." Based in the Talent Education Center of Matsumoto, Shinshū, this musical education movement is now

spreading all over the world. Although not well known to the Japanese public, the Center's achievements were introduced for example at the Prime Minister's official residence when Vice Prime Minister Deng Xiaoping of China visited Japan for the first time. In the States, already as many as 100,000 children are studying "Suzuki method" violin. Last year, when President Carter heard the lovely combined performances of American and Japanese children led by Mr. Suzuki, he was so moved that he rose on stage and spoke words of praise to Mr. Suzuki.

It has been a long time since the importance of cultural diplomacy was advocated. However, this is not an age when we can merely continue to export such traditional arts as noh drama and kabuki, or flower arrangement and tea ceremony. Therefore, something like violin education can all the more be recognized as the flower of cultural diplomacy: we inherited it from the West, and yet through the uniqueness of the method, it has attained a high level, while maintaining universal value.

The "Suzuki method" is a radiant example of such diplomacy. However, let us note that it is strictly civil "cultural diplomacy," having never received any aid either from the Foreign Ministry which advocates cultural diplomacy nor from the Ministry of Education.

(Excerpted from Jiji Kaisetsu, May 15, 1979; Talent Education, no. 49)



I'VE GOT A TICKET

Kiyoshi Suzuki
 from A Father's Record
 (no. 4), continued from
 Summer/Fall 1979

26. I've Got a Ticket
 --Age Six

On passing through a ticket gate, Eiko presented her ticket holding her arm high. Puzzled, the attendant watched her vacantly, but then as though realizing something, he punched her ticket. At this rate, Eiko, petite for her age, could still ride trains without a ticket, I thought once or twice, though she had reached the age when she was required to buy one. However, if I let her ride free, she would not have an awareness of her growth. Thinking it an education of the heart which should not be dispensed with for a trifling amount of money, I always bought her a ticket after she turned six. She held the ticket, proudly approached the gate, and presented it to the attendant looking as much as to say, "I've got a ticket, too."

This is a matter of fact, and not buying a ticket is more illogical. But I have seen and heard of those who don't buy their children train tickets from their sixth birthday.

"If the conductor asks how old you are, say I'm five."

"But I'm six."

"That's okey. Do as I tell you, all right?"

"All right."

When a dialogue like this transpires between mother and child, the child's answer "all right," sounds very dark. When grownups know so well that "lying is the beginning of stealing," why do they teach their own children to lie for pennies? They seem to think, simply and with no wicket intention, "I ought to pay, but it's not necessary to be so square, for he easily passes as five till he's a little bigger." However, if you think of the influence on the child, it's far from innocent. It is something we should ponder.

One day, I saw a second grader asking her mother at the station, "Buy me a ticket today, I'm embarrassed." No matter what fine principle the mother has of educating her child, if the child discovers the mother's lie in a small thing, the child will lose faith in her. This reveals the truth of the saying, "One fact is worth a hundred days of preaching."

Mr. Suzuki once said, "If you want your child to study the social studies of real life, take him on a train ride every day and teach him to behave civilly on the train."

On the way to Mr. Suzuki's group lesson once a month in Nagoya, Eiko, after passing through the ticket gate, pulls my hand to rush to the platform. When the train enters the platform, she makes a fuss to get on the train quickly. "Let's take our time, it's dangerous," I tell Eiko, but in truth I also want to get a seat for a comfortable ride to Nagoya. Getting on the train Eiko spots a seat and sits down swiftly, at the same time securing my seat by putting her hands down on the empty space next

to hers. What a feat. When I sit down, she looks up at me with a smile and says, "Good." I am such a mediocre person that I nod to her. If we are standing on the train, Eiko's expression changes when it stops at a station. If even one person stands up to get off the train, she flies to get his seat. I feel embarrassed sometimes, noting the smiles on the faces of passengers watching this.

Getting on the train nowadays is like entering a battlefield. Someone commented, "It is an exact image of the struggle for survival in society. Pretending that I have to win in that struggle, I make it a rule to get a seat on the train."

Introducing her this rat race so early fostered in Eiko an ability which I can't be proud of. It is difficult to foster social morality in a child in our present society which is so lacking in the balance between supply and demand.

27. Mama Falls Asleep —Age Six

My wife learned to read music when Eiko started to practice violin. Since she knew no music before, reading seemed extremely difficult. So, for Eiko's violin practice, she showed her finger numbers, writing them on the notes, rather than teaching her the names of the notes. Talent education trained children are often criticized for not being able to read music. That is because their mothers use this method to teach them new pieces. Children memorize all the pieces this way. Mr. Suzuki says, "The

musical notes are not music."

Although you can't say that you can play music because you can read musical notation, it is also inconvenient not to be able to read the notes. Of course it's important to train children to read music at an appropriate stage.

Since she started training early, Eiko was good at memorizing. But if she is never given the music, she will never acquire the ability to read. From about Book 4, we showed her the notes she was playing, even though she could not read them. My wife sang the entire first movement of Vivaldi's A Minor Concerto using the finger numbers: "0, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 3, 2, 1, 3, 2, 1," 1 being the index finger, 2 the middle finger, and 3 the ring finger. Talent education mothers all excel at this. However, when the pieces gradually become more complicated, this method no longer works. If the child is not trained to memorize the piece by looking at the notes, both the parent and child reach a dead end.

After we started to show Eiko the music, she began to understand the notes by the finger numbers and by intuition. When my wife wrote in the wrong finger number, she began to be able to point it out. When she was a first grader, the teacher said one day in class, "Eiko-chan, you don't need finger numbers any longer. You understand music, don't you?" She was working on the third movement of Bach's A Minor Concerto in Book 7. Eiko smiled, nodding. My wife said, "But I won't understand without fingers." The teacher said, "It's oka-a-y, isn't it, Eiko-chan, as long as you understand." So my wife gave it up and stopped writing finger numbers. From the

A Minor on, therefore, the pages of our music have remained clean. Eiko gradually learned to look at the notes. But when would she really learn to read music? I don't know. My wife started to nod during Eiko's practice hour about this time.

28. All the Happiness of This World
--Six and Three Months

On October 25, 1952, the first Talent Education Center graduation was held in Kyōritsu Hall, Tokyo. Eiko graduated from the elementary curriculum. Eiko longed for this day, for she was going to Tokyo for the first time. On October 23, Eiko and I got on a Tokyo bound train. She wrote her picture diary, and read a fairy tale bought especially for the day. She was disappointed when she could not see Mt. Fuji because of the clouds. On arriving in Tokyo, we stayed at Shichirō Hozumi's that night.

On the following day, talent education students took part in the events of the United Nation's Day. Eiko, too, played violin for the first time on the stage of the Hibiya Public Hall. In his greeting prior to the performance, Mr. Suzuki, moved to tears, talked about the children who grew to what they were then.

On the way back, as we walked along the moat of the imperial castle, Eiko asked me, "Papa, how come there are so many cars in Tokyo?" "Yes, there are so many cars. How come? Maybe there are many people who ride in them. And many people who own cars." I stepped on the fallen leaves at dusk with a warm feeling, a violin and a brief case in one hand and Eiko's

hand in the other. I walked toward the bus stop thinking of the following day's graduation ceremony. I felt as if all the happiness of this world had come to me.

Kyōritsu Hall was full. On stage, representatives from each district lined up to receive certificates from Mr. Suzuki. Eiko was among them. Representing the Mikawa district, she waited for her turn. When her name was called, "Eiko Suzuki, representing the graduating students from Mikawa," I felt anxious about whether she would receive the certificate with good deportment. Eiko started to walk calmly toward the center of the stage. Then, a girl called from a balcony seat, "Eiko-chan!" It was Mr. Hozumi's daughter. She and Eiko had become fast friends in one night, and she had come to watch the graduation with her mother. So the moment Eiko appeared stage center she called out loudly. I am sure she was not even aware of the audience that filled the hall. Children are innocent.

Mr. Suzuki stretched his arms and handed the certificate to Eiko. She bowed politely, and completed her task.

I had never expected that she would graduate from the elementary curriculum so early. The more I think about it, the more clearly I realize the level of Mr. Suzuki's teaching method, and the depth of my indebtedness. Teachers Nishizaki and Kondō who taught her directly for the three years and nine months since her enrollment in the class also must have taken great pains to guide her. When the child is small, teaching requires an added effort. If you are gentle, the child becomes proud. If you are strict, he may cry and sulk. It is such a chore to teach many children according

to Mr. Suzuki's ideal method. I would like to thank these two teachers heartily.

Vivaldi's Violin Concerto in A Minor in Book 4, I heard, was once a graduation piece at a certain music school before the war. I have also heard about a music student who played this solo for his farewell on leaving for Europe for advanced study. A child graduates from Talent Education elementary curriculum when completing Book 5. It can be considered that on graduating from it, a child has acquired comparable ability to those pre-war violin students. I am moved to recall that Eiko graduated from the elementary curriculum before entering primary school.

29. A Child's Brain Is Active --Six and Ten Months

On May 16, 1953, Nejiko Suwa's solo recital was held at Toyohashi public hall. I went to the recital with Eiko. The program included Mozart's violin sonata No. 10 in B Minor. I quickly forgot what kind of music it was. Forty days later, one morning, violin music came from the radio during the Famous Musicians' Hour. Eiko said, "Oh, it's the same piece as Miss Nejiko Suwa played." I thought it hard to believe, and said, "Is that right? I wonder if that's so." "That's right, I'm sure that's right, because I remember it," Eiko emphasized. I took out Nejiko Suwa's program, and compared it with the name of the piece on the radio. They were the same. I was the loser. I was somewhat surprised. The reason that I could not believe Eiko first is that, though I took her to the solo recital, she didn't listen to the music with "concert manners." She was constantly restless and fidgety, and I even

had to whisper to her several times, "Let's listen a little more quietly, so we won't disturb people. Look, everybody is listening quietly."

Yet, though she was restless and fidgety, I now realized that she was really listening. I had heard from Mr. Suzuki that such a thing is possible, but I faced it as a fact for the first time, and was belatedly surprised by the wonderful ability of children. Who was I to tell her to listen quietly? I looked serious during the recital, and knowingly commented, "Miss Nejiko Suwa was good, wasn't she?" Self-congratulatory as I was, the pieces we heard were clean forgotten.

After this, I have tried to take Eiko to concerts as often as possible. Good concerts are rare unless we go all the way to Nagoya. Going to Nagoya for a concert requires a whole day's leisure and some money, but I have tried to prepare myself to make such trips. Though it is hard to do this in an ideal way attending every single good concert, I think I should do it even if it's just once in three times, or once in five or seven times. Rather than my own desire to enjoy music, it has become more meaningful to go to concerts for my child who can harvest so much more than I ever could. It was lucky that I became aware that Eiko's brain was active, even while mine was asleep.

I often hear mothers say, "we put on records at home, but our child never stays still to listen." That children don't listen if they don't stay still is a grownups' illusion. While at play, children are listening well to music coming from the record player. Before they know

it, they memorize and sing popular songs sung on the radio. This makes me think that we have to be thoughtful when selecting channels.

30. Eiko Amidst Grownups
—Ages Six to Seven

Eiko started violin when small, and finished the curriculum rather quickly after graduating from the elementary requirements. Local newspapers picked this up, and introduced her with her picture on several occasions. Then, she would receive lovely letters from unknown children saying, "Please be my friend." On the other hand, some said the wrong thing: "Eiko-chan is a genius. Each time I heard it, I talked about talent education, emphasizing that what it calls "ordinary children," i. e., children who can speak Japanese, can all grow beautifully, and that they naturally turn into what the old days' commonsense called "geniuses." I further added, "If I had educated Eiko exactly as talent education would have it, she would have been better, but I regret I could only do this much for her."

When newspapers make a fuss about "genius" and so on, it often overburdens a child. My wife was very concerned about it. However, it was good for children that the papers informed more people that "talent education certainly creates fine children."

There were some who, after seeing the papers, came over and asked to hear Eiko play. I asked a favor instead: "It won't be so meaningful if you just listened to the child play; I would really like you to hear a talk first and then enjoy the violin." Then I would visit a women's meeting, a P. T. A. gathering, and so on.

"Suzuki, you're going to be Eiko's 'briefcase holder,'" a close friend teased me. A parent is a funny thing: I was a little pleased to be teased this way. But I really was like Eiko's secretary often, so I started my talks with an excuse: "This is just an extra to go with Eiko's violin."

Eiko started to accompany me to lecture meetings about the time when she was a first grader. These meetings were of course only for adults. Before the meeting, we waited in the anteroom, where tea was served. Eiko, too, sipped tea, when offered a cup: "Little girl, have some tea." Looking shy, she also had some cake. When the meeting started, since she played after my talk, Eiko sat in a grownup's chair on the stage right or left, dangling her legs, listening to my talk which lasted at least one hour. On occasions, she started to chuckle aloud which prompted the audience to laugh. Becoming aware that she was sitting in front of many people, she resumed a serious look again. When I talked in a cold auditorium in the mountains, the schoolmaster brought in a hibachi especially for Eiko. No matter where I went, people commented, "Eiko-chan is quiet." she was not especially quiet, but I think she was enduring because she had no other choice. Not knowing how Eiko really felt, I sometimes felt sorry seeing her sitting straight just like me, while I was talking and eating with the hosts. I pitied her when, late at night, it was obvious that she was fighting off sleep. However, these occasions might have let her cull some knowledge about society.

When Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki came to Nagoya, chapter representatives and trustees often met after the group lesson. On such occasions, Eiko stayed with me, quietly waiting till the meeting

was over. On the train home, she slept leaning on my lap. It was past eleven thirty when we arrived at Toyohashi. "Let's go, Eiko, it's Toyohashi," I said. Eiko looked up at me with her sleepy eyes. "It got late tonight, let's take a taxi home," I said, and took her hand, as she hastened outside off the platform, pleased by the suggestion. Eiko never hated walking. She had to wait till so late for matters of no concern to her, yet she never fretted.

When the meeting got late in Nagoya, Mr. Suzuki, teachers, and chapter representatives consoled her warmly, "Poor Eiko, it's late." During the trustees' meeting, like me, she was treated to an adult's serving so she could eat with Mr. Suzuki and all the others. I was filled with gratitude.



A MOTHER'S NOTES

Yukiko Chiba
Kōfu Chapter

My daughter Junko is in her seventh year of violin practice. Whenever I think of her violin, I think of my father who passed away seven years ago. For I recall the occasion when I took Junko who held her little violin case to visit him in the hospital. When she shyly showed him the greeting which she had just learned, "Onegai-shimasu" (please teach me), he looked gentle as though he had forgotten his pain, pleased by her act. However, soon afterwards he left us, without once hearing Junko's violin sound. Had he lived till today, he would have listened enthusiastically to her performances.

The reason I say this is because I found some cherished items in his desk after his death: the program of a recital by Matsumoto talent education students at a Kōfu school, articles about the performances, Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki's postcard to my father regarding this recital, etc. I remember being moved by this recital as a girl. On the way home, if I remember correctly, those of us who had just started violin in the school's instrumental club gathered at my house. Mr. Suzuki stopped over, and taught us how to greet and other things. This is my most prized memory.

Because my father was weak and for other reasons I was not able to continue violin too long. But I always recall my father's dream, "violin for my child," at each of Junko's performances. And thinking of my father, I listen to her with a prayer-like feeling.

Because of such memories and of the moving performances of the Matsumoto students, I began to think of providing my daughter violin lessons through talent education. About that time, Kōshin District violinists met in Yamanashi Prefecture. I listened to their performances, and met Teacher Mutō. I read Mr. Suzuki's Nurtured by Love, which intensified my wish. I also observed a few lessons. Junko was three and a half then.

Soon after Junko's lesson started, my father died. I was so shocked that I lost the incentive to let her practice. Yet our teacher continued to teach with unchanging zeal. His passion eventually brought me to realize that I shouldn't let it slip like that, that I must encourage my daughter to practice every day. After that, records sounded frequently at our place. A year later my second daughter was born. Junko was unable to record her pre-elementary tape due to these events. However, when she was five, she made a graduation recording of both the pre-elementary and elementary pieces. After that, she recorded a piece every year, and graduated the tenth volume in her second grade. Subsequently, she was allowed to participate in two American tours, and, with the care of the teachers and many others, was given precious experiences during the days away from her parents.

* ** * ** *

I have no special things to say about her practice, but that I have tried to faithfully carry out what the teacher told us to do, while cherishing each moment as much as my daughter and I could. As a result, over-meticulous on a single

thing, we sometimes neglected other important things. Even now, we are slow and absent-minded, and keep troubling our teacher.

Our family runs a stone business. During the day the noise of stone-cutting never ceases. This, in addition to the noise from the road, makes it hard to practice with the tape recorder. Moreover, our third child who is a boy is at his naughtiest stage now. If the tape recorder is out, he picks it up and toys it as if it was his own. He does the same with the metronome. He bangs down the music stand. He makes off with the music. This is an environment far from what Mr. Mutō describes: "In tranquility is music." Right now, therefore, rather than listen to Junko practice, I play with the little one so he won't obstruct her. At this point, we have no time together for intense practicing as before, but I am aware that among co-members there are many who manage to continue good practice under various difficult circumstances.

Recently we often go out on Sundays as a family. For a long time, Sunday was Junko's lesson day, but we asked to have it switched. For Mr. Mutō often said, "It fosters musical sensitivity to be close to nature. Listen to the warbling of birds, feel to your skin the cold water, touch the beauty of nature. We are lucky to live in the country where we can afford to do that." On Sundays and holidays we try to visit nearby rivers and mountains. What I always think is that during his lessons, Mr. Muto, technical aspects aside, seems to emphasize inspiring in a child a heart to respond to music and a way to express it. Two lesson days a week leaving the youngest at my mother's place (two because both

of our daughters take lessons), are important hours for us. I listen to Mr. Mutō with great interest when he talks about various musicians, his own experiences, and things unrelated to the violin. I retell them to my husband on coming home.

* ** * ** *

Once, when Junko was unable to use vibrato, I asked Mr. Mutō, "How would it be possible to become good at vibrato?" He calmly answered, "That's just a matter of taste. If you want to produce a good sound, your vibrato becomes good; if you are satisfied with yourself, then you can only produce that much sound. Music is not logic. The demand of the heart makes it good or poor. The same with bowing." I was slightly dissatisfied with this answer, at a loss as to how to convey this to the little child. Now I think I understand these words. Mr. Mutō does not give minute instructions, but plays often for us, saying, "It takes hours to explain this with words." I think he patiently waits for the child to catch something from his sound and become musically aware.

By the time Junko played Mozart's concerto, she painfully felt the difficulty of musical expression. She could not easily produce what Mr. Mutō called Mozart's youthfulness, loveliness, gentleness, brightness, etc. When she performed for the first time at Matsumoto having graduated from the tenth volume that year, she was quite worried about these things. She seemed to listen to the record often. I had no idea what advice I could give her. But I said to her, pointing at the mountains we could see when the windows upstairs were open, "On top of that

mountain is the person you want to see most now. Pretend that you are playing for that person." She often played facing the mountains. She also played against thunder. On a day when thunder roared so fearfully that we lost heart to hear it, she practiced passages requiring power, as though competing with the thunder. Later a neighbor said, "Wasn't the thunder awful?" but, thanks to the practice, we hadn't felt it as scary. When Junko didn't seem to want to practice, I took her at night to the riverbank, some fifteen minutes by car, for a change of mood. It was so calm there that she could concentrate. She enjoyed practicing, though only a while, and came home.

Right now, she is practicing Mendelsohn's concerto. Mr. Mutō's words, "to be musical is to sound natural," are hard to realize. Partly because she doesn't have sufficient practice time, she can't easily play this piece as it should sound. She was told, "Use painting by way of comparison. Your playing is like a brush and ink painting, devoid of color." She seems to be feeling the difficulty of playing differently according to each phrase's demand within the piece. I wish her to take time over months and years, without becoming jittery. I would like her to experience whatever she wants to in other areas than violin, too. Only, through violin, I think it would be nice if she could foster a heart that finds a beautiful thing beautiful and respond to it, as well as the strength to carry through to the end whatever she has undertaken to do.

I don't recall when, but once Mr. Mutō told us, "You don't have to think of playing well for a performance. To think so is a feeling irrelevant to music." I think I understand the meaning of these words. I repeat to my daughter: "Once

you hold the violin, play with all your heart, think about nothing else." I find a person moving when doing something without thoughts, no matter what it is. I find a person wonderful when making efforts toward something single-mindedly. I would like my children to be that way also.

Junko's former home room teacher wrote me that she was struck by the brightness in Junko's eyes when she passed her in the hall at school. Although I feel impatient at Junko's quiet and withdrawn personality, her teacher's letter says, "She is very reserved, but she is confident and well balanced. Children who play music seem a shade different." Although I was never aware that playing violin had other pluses, this letter made me realize that her contact with music through violin must have fostered a child "a shade different."

Whenever I look at Mr. Suzuki's calligraphy on our wall which says, "Where love is deep, there is much to do," I reflect upon myself: do I face my children correctly, don't I have to change myself further, don't I place my parental feeling before the growth of my children's heart, don't I misunderstand them, am I not lazy in bringing them up? Even while I reflect upon myself, I feel my heart cleansed.

What my husband and I look forward to now is that our youngest will start an instrument. What kind of music will fill our house by the three children, we can hardly wait to see.

Talent Education, no. 49

ZEN AND THE ARTS

Osamu Yoshida

Zen is the art of life. In the profound insight of zen one reaches the root of existence and springs forth creatively harmonizing the self and the world in truth, goodness and beauty. The total body and mind, self and world, participate in appreciation and creation. Where body and mind, self and other, thus function freely, is the art of man, the work of the universe, and the creation of daily life. Of all religions zen demands the longest and hardest training of the body and mind to achieve the total development and full functioning of life.

Zen added unique aspects to the arts and culture of Japan in the areas of haiku (17 syllable poem), waka (31 syllable poem), painting, calligraphy, tea-ceremony, flower arrangement, noh-play, gardening, cooking, etc. They all derive a substantial portion of their depth and originality from zen training. Some of these forms are significantly called the "way." For instance, the way of tea cultivates the body and mind through the refined process of making and drinking tea. Here the most common daily event is transformed into an art.

The essential meaning of the so-called arts lies in creating and appreciating beauty. This is possible only through cultivation. Talent education aims at the free and full blooming of human potential. Zen cultivates the root of the body and mind, developing concentration and insight, the most important abilities required from human activity, from simple daily routine to highly specialized fields,

and to creative moments in the arts and sciences. The human faculties are cultivated by the positive and insightful use of the self and its surroundings. This is the Law of Ability.

When one observes how a baby grows physically and mentally, one understands that mere words of love are not enough, but proper nutrition, environment, and training are necessary. When meditating on our existence, we recognize that this life reflects all past and present relations with others. It reveals what one owes to all living and lifeless beings. This insight leads to gratitude towards all beings, and to creative efforts in gratitude to the past, both benefiting the present and enriching the future. Here is the art of life: appreciation of the absolute beauty of everything, and creation of absolute value in each action. Each action is the spearhead of creation, limitlessly and endlessly interrelated with all other phenomena of life.

Modern men and society tend to be specialized and isolated. It is necessary to regain the value of the whole person, harmonious society, and everyday life. The total man appreciates and creates art. Art is the man. The highest genuine art comes from those who can declare themselves "a man first" as Casals did. Talent education and zen training concern the making of man. Genuine appreciation and creation of beauty must be carried out by daily cultivation of the total body-mind environment. Then the valley sounds, mountain colors; tea drinking, dish washing, and so forth become art. This life-art is a rewarding task to be realized by everyone.

Every dewdrop reflects the moonlight.

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. 4

TITLE	RECORD NUMBER
PABLO CASALS Beethoven Sämtliche Sonaten für Violoncello und Klavier	EMI-ELECTROLA Dacape 1C 147-01538/39 M
Cortot, Thibaud, Casals	EMI-ELECTROLA Dacape 1C 049-01808 M
DINU LIPATTI Chopin	Seraphim 60007
DINU LIPATTI Grieg Schumann	Odyssey 32 16 0141
BUDAPEST QUARTET Beethoven String Quartets Volume I	Columbia M3S-616
Volume II	M4S-616
Volume III	M5S-677

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An artist cannot separate his artistic existence and his duty as a man to society. We are before anything men, and we have to take part in the circumstances of life. If one has a respected name, the responsibility is even greater. A good name has attached to it a human duty. One is at the same time a man and an artist. As a man I have sought justice; as a musician I have sought perfection.

Pablo Casals

