

ALLEN LIEB

TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL

SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ISSUE



SUMMER
1981

NO. 9

Cover by Osamu Yoshida

CLASS ACC.

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EDITOR'S NOTE Masayoshi Kataoka	2
DROPOUT OR DROPPED-OUT Shin'ichi Suzuki	3
REMINISCING ON THIRTY YEARS Hiroko Masaoka	8
TALENT EDUCATION IS EDUCATION TOWARD LIFE Shigeki Tanaka <i>from Young Children: Everything Depends on How We Raise Them</i>	15
THE EAR AND THE HEART Shin'ichi Suzuki	28
IF THEY CAN SPEAK THE MOTHER TONGUE! Lessons with Blind Children Uta Arimoto	29
EIKO'S NEW DIARY Kiyoshi Suzuki <i>from A Father's Record</i>	36

Editor's Note

Masayoshi Kataoka

In Japan the "dropout" problem is frequently discussed nowadays. However, this problem, far from being unique to Japan, is found throughout the world. We are pleased to introduce Dr. Suzuki's article on this subject, "Dropout or Dropped-Out."

In "The Ear and the Heart," Dr. Suzuki first described Tonalization, his original approach to fostering a fine heart as well as a fine ear. He says, "Everything depends on the growth of the heart."

We also bring to you Hiroko Yamada Masaoka's "Reminiscing on Thirty Years," which recalls the dawn of the talent education movement. Mrs. Masaoka, one of the earliest students of Dr. Suzuki in Matsumoto, was sent to the United States as a violin instructor. She later joined the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra before returning to Japan, where she is now a violin instructor in Matsumoto.

The article, "If They Can Speak the Mother Tongue" by Mrs. Uta Arimoto contains moving accounts of her experiences in teaching piano to blind children.

A *Father's Record* by Kiyoshi Suzuki contains an interesting story, "She Certainly Reads Notes," describing his thoughts on music and learning to read music. This is the ninth installment of this book and of Shigeki Tanaka's *Young Children: Everything Depends on How We Raise Them*.



Dropout or Dropped-Out

Shin'ichi Suzuki

I saw the following essay on "dropouts" in the newspaper by Mr. Yoshiyuki Nishi of Tokyo University:

In educational circles this year there seems to be a sudden surge of discussion on "dropouts." One can almost say in exaggeration that there may be days when crows don't cry but no day when newspapers fail to print the word "dropouts." This also seems to have been the major theme at the recent conference of teachers' associations. However, despite the frequency of such discussions, I feel that most merely glide over the real problem. So we even joke about the "7-5-3 education," a pun on 6-3-3 education and the November 15th festivals for seven and three year old girls and five year old boys, since 70 percent drop out in high school, 50 percent in junior high, and 30 percent in elementary school. . . .

Some high school students don't know the multiplication table, can't divide fractions, and can't write commonly used Chinese characters. Such students can certainly be called dropouts. However, what is their percentage?

If they can't multiply, and don't know how to divide by multiplying the fraction turned upside down, most of it is the teacher's responsibility. The material is not taught well. If there are such high school students, then surely something is amiss at junior high and elementary levels. The responsibility of elementary education is especially grave. Discussion of "dropouts" so

readily turns into a debate concerning differentiated programs and "special classes" outside of the regular curriculum. It makes me wonder. . . . It gets us nowhere merely to increase the amount of watered-down class hours. It's no wonder that we begin to hear voices of those losing confidence in school education. However, the "dropout" problem may not be such a simple matter. I always feel at a loss, finding the definition of the problem vague.

I am happy that the "dropout" problem has at last begun to be discussed. However, I find it sad that we are still at the stage where we consider it the problem of "dropouts." The fact is that what we call "dropouts" are "dropped-outs." They don't drop out, we drop them. Failing to foster children, we have been accustomed to blaming it on their "in-born" qualities. This traditional thinking still dominates educational circles today.

Having discovered that "every child grows, everything depends upon how we raise them" and that "ability is not inborn," I have continued to prove it and to appeal to society to understand this. In elementary education, I had it tested at school about twenty years ago. Through this experiment, I demonstrated a teaching method which drops no one, with the appeal that "there is a way by which every child grows." Since then it has neither generated a response nor stirred surprise among Japan's educational circles. That's a pity.

However, the problem of "dropouts" has finally surfaced at this late point, indicating the beginning of a small response. In time, the problem will be vehemently discussed among those engaged in school education. I hope it will happen.

* * * * *

One day forty years ago, I was shocked to discover that children all over the country were growing with the outstanding ability to speak their mother tongue fluently. The possibility of every child's growth with superb ability, as well as the teaching method to insure that growth, was clearly suggested in that fact. Instantly I took to studying how the mother tongue is taught from birth. I first applied the method to music education, and have spent half of my life in the past forty years showing the world the fact that every child grows. During this interval, I have discovered the following:

1. A teaching method by which every child grows;
2. What helps the child to master an ability (the workings of Life does that for the sake of existence);
3. "The law of ability";
4. Neither the heart, senses, nor all the abilities are inborn; there is no such thing as inherited musical or literary talent;
5. Ability is a problem of physiology, or of physiology of the big brain.

I'm an amateur; yet I was able to discover the above through my actual teaching experiences and quest for the truth of the natural world.

This discovery of the fact that "there is a way by which every child grows" is of grave importance. When I painfully felt the weight of this question, I once cried at night for children on earth who are miseducated.

* * * * *

From my sorrow then came my future task: national policy concerning child-raising from birth. The child's fate rests in the parents' hand. If the wolf raises the child, he grows with the heart, sensitivity, and ability of the wolf. Think of how Kamala, found in the Indian jungle at age seven, embodied the law of ability. Ability is not inborn; it can grow in whatsoever way by the power of Life. The state must concern itself in guiding the parents of every infant so they will foster him beautifully. This is an urgent duty of all nations in today's world. It is a problem of every child from birth. The state should install advisors in localities so that they will assist in correct upbringing at home at the time of the birth of a child. They will also walk around watching over children in their areas, guiding parents, and arranging state aid for families which cannot afford to provide education for their children. They will responsibly assist in child upbringing at home from birth to age five or six so that no child will fail to develop a beautiful heart and high sensitivity, and to benefit from correct ability development. This should be facilitated by the state.

About eight years ago, I was invited to talk about this for half an hour at the big hall of the U. N. My appeal for the realization of state child-raising policy from birth received a standing ovation. It will be hard to bring it about. Yet, I believe we must make efforts for the sake of humanity's future.

The building now under construction in Matsumoto is to be a center for child upbringing. It's for studying how to guide easy fostering at home as well as the development of infant education. We will some day prove that every child grows.

There is a pre-school problem in today's world. Awful education for creating "dropped-outs" is being given at home from birth. This is an era of lack of awareness. I know that every child grows to a high ability depending on how he is raised. Today, among young children under our care, some five or six year olds play the entire movements of Bach's violin concerto (a piece music school students play). I find it natural. Young children's potential for such superbly high growth is not yet widely recognized. They grow with an excellent linguistic ability to speak their mother tongue at age five or four. Isn't it first necessary for both educators and parents to marvel at it? If it doesn't even surprise you, you won't be able to know the reality of children, or know how to foster their ability. We used to look at the consequence of miseducation and blame low ability on inborn qualities. I know this to be the greatest error made irresponsibly and ignorantly by mankind. What a pity.

The question is the teaching method from birth. Let us become aware of the great power and workings of human life. If we know this, we find it a matter of fact that five or six year olds with the skill to speak the mother tongue fluently have the potential to play Bach's concertos as long as the same approach is employed.

I grieve over the fate of infants on the earth whose great potential may fail to be developed by their unawakened parents.

Children don't "drop out," they are "dropped out."

Reminiscing on Thirty Years

Hiroko Masaoka
Instructor, Matsumoto

I was asked to write in reminiscence of the past thirty years. What I remember are all fragments, hardly worth recording. Looking at old programs and newsletters that my mother saved for me, I say to myself, "Well, was that how it was?" Since my memory is that vague, I am afraid that what follows may be full of errors.

In October, 1946, over a year after the war, my mother and I returned to Matsumoto from Manchuria. I was five. About that time, Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki gave a lecture. Since his name was familiar through the Suzuki Quartet on the radio, my grandmother went. She was greatly moved by his talk which emphasized that "everyone, regardless of race, as long as he is a human being, is born with equal value as a human being, and has the potential to grow to a height that humans aspire to reach." I am told that my grandmother submitted an application on the spot to the Matsumoto Music School which had just been founded.

The great difference in the environment between Manchuria and Japan was a considerable shock to me. All the more because I did not comprehend the situation called war, the many events around the time of our departure were imprinted in my mind with unusual sharpness: Russian soldiers walking into houses in their boots, a neighbor tortured to death, a housewife who saw this and died deranged, the sad expression on the faces of children left at Manchurian houses as no one claimed them,

people who died one by one of epidemic diseases on their way home. . . . I hear that my mother, too, was unconscious for about two days, and that, when she came to, I was trying hard to put gruel and water into her mouth. The Manchurians we lived with, she tells me, were very kind to us. My father had gone to the front; his whereabouts remain unknown. Small child as I was, it was difficult for me to adapt rapidly to the new environment, coming from such an abnormal situation. Some years later, on my way to Europe via the Soviet Union, I stood on the bank of the Amur, and gazed across the river which was enveloped in haze, telling myself that that was where I was born. Reddish earth, reddish water; nothing much else seemed to be there.

I was a very active boss type child in Manchuria, but back home, I became totally reticent and retiring. A concert program from the Nagano chapter, I think, where I was invited to play a solo, said "Miss Yamada spoke no Japanese at the time of her entrance into the Music School." "As if," I smiled.

Both my grandmother and mother were worried about me. Naturally they were delighted by Mr. Suzuki's talk emphasizing that "every child grows." So I entered the Music School then in Shimoyokota. There was, however, no violin. I recited a picture book story for Mr. Suzuki, practiced the rhythm with my hands, and learned how to greet (as the ABC of all decorum). I watched Hiroko Suzuki, Yutaka Murakami, Etsuko Ota and others who had already begun practicing the violin in Kiso.

When I finally got my violin the following summer, Mr. Suzuki became ill. Teacher Ayako Yamamoto taught me in his place. The tuition was ¥600 (less than \$2.00) per year, and the registration fee was ¥10. I participated in the first recital that year playing Perpetual

Motion. A program from December 1948 remains recording my performance of Vivaldi A Minor, 1st movement, after a year and five months of training. This was a solo recital of everyone enrolled. There were eighty violinists, thirteen pianists, and ten vocalists, and in addition, there was a chorus. It was a marathon recital that lasted from the morning till the afternoon. Everyone had studied about the same length of time. I think I owe it to my grandmother's and mother's efforts that I was in the advanced group along with Yutaka Murakami, Hiroko Suzuki, and others. I hear that Teacher Yamamoto was quite rigorous. A Tokyoite, she seems to have had a tough time with an unfocused and inexpressive child like me; my mother tells me I was often scolded. With the vocal teacher Mr. Tamiki Mori as the central figure, Teachers Yamamoto, Okumura, Matsui, and others seem to have often given quartet, requiem, and other recitals. Miss Yamamoto passed away about 1949 of typhoid which spread in the Asama spa. She was young, and this misfortune occurred right before her marriage.

Fortunately, Mr. Suzuki recovered from his illness and gave us lessons with enthusiasm. We performed the Bach Double and Vivaldi G Minor at the movie theater, the Central. There were no records yet. We had mimeographed copies of the music, and the only model was Mr. Suzuki's performance in class. I think this falls into the time (1949-51) when Mr. Suzuki most frequently toured the country giving lectures for the purpose of spreading the talent education movement. Several of us students accompanied him here and there, including, of course, places within Nagano prefecture, as well as to Gifu, Toyama, Shinagawa, Kyoto, Niigata, Sendai, and later Kochi prefecture, Shikoku. This was not merely designed to enlarge chapters in different areas; it was also

part of the practice of human education. We visited facilities for retarded children, orphanages, reformatories, etc., sometimes taking a ride on the back of a truck. The Matsumoto Juvenile Detention Home, we were told, adopted Mr. Suzuki's proposal so that they woke in the morning with Rakhmaninov's piano and slept at night with Casals' cello. I wonder how it is now. Since it took eight hours on the coal train between Tokyo and Matsumoto, it was our custom to sleep on newspapers spread in the aisle. To sleep stretching long in the aisle, pitched and rolled just right by the train that never gained much speed, was far pleasanter than sitting in today's express train. However, we did get black with soot. . . . Mr. Suzuki never left us bored on the trip: sometimes he invented intriguing games, and at other times he told us stories full of humor. He was strict, however, as far as manners went, and made us give our seats to the handicapped and the old. If he had a brief moment, he drew pictures in ink on the newspaper. On the river bank, he threw flat rocks so that they skipped on the surface of the water many times. From such incidents, when a child, I used to think Mr. Suzuki was really versatile. Of course, I still do.

In my third or fourth year in elementary school, I hear, they told my mother that I would have to repeat a year if I missed school one more day. In those days school teachers didn't have as much understanding as today. Among them, according to what I hear, there was one who threw back at her a token of apologies which she had bought with the money she so painstakingly set aside. However, it's not that we were so crushed by this as to stop skipping school. If Mr. Suzuki called during the day to invite me to a lesson, having hit upon a nice idea, my grandmother rushed right away to school to withdraw

me, and we hastened to his house. This happened often.

Since we lost contact with my father when he was in Siberia, we came home to my grandparents' home in Matsumoto, but they had no jobs. We lived on what my aunt and mother earned. Naturally we were very poor, and everyone in the family shared a side job of paper bag making which often continued till late at night. In the midst of such a life, my grandmother made efforts to somehow manage not only the tuition for violin lessons but contributions for orphanages and detention homes, toward the purchase of the piano at the Music School, and all other expenses needed for assisting Mr. Suzuki's activities. This was, however, not much different from the families of my fellow students such as the Shidas, Ōikes, and the Mamines. There didn't seem to be very well-to-do people around. I owned a concert dress for the tours with Mr. Suzuki, one that my mother had sewn from her kimono, but I went to school in rags. Until middle school, I was probably the only one in school who spent winters in sweaters, having no coat. Thanks to this, even now I am so healthy that I'm almost never bedridden with a cold.

The other day, in Matsumoto, on the thirtieth anniversary of its incorporation, Mr. Suzuki handed letters of thanks to those who had contributed to the Music School. To our pleasure, my grandmother Fumie Yamada was one of them. She died in 1956. She was deeply devoted to Mr. Suzuki ever since the founding of the School. Despite my grandfather's criticisms, she worked at the office in the storehouse in Oyanagi. She also served as a junior probation official and as a welfare worker in the prefectural government. In these areas, she worked like a beast of burden relating her chores with Mr. Suzuki's ideal of society-making. How happy she would be if she saw today's talent education which has spread

to overseas countries.

At Matsumoto Music School, everyone gathered on Sundays, aside from lessons, for group play-ins. I made friends with students in other classes on those occasions. I remember that I played seriously only briefly, and was rather restless and naughty the rest of the time. The second floor of the Music School in Shimoyokota was the appropriate size and structure, whether we played tag or, using the kindergarten chairs, played train. My practice at home started around six in the morning. I did one hour, cleaning the yard between sessions. Afternoon and late afternoon practice was also divided into sessions. It seems I practiced a total of three hours every day.

In 1951, the first Kirigamine (Misty Peak) summer school was held. It was seven nights and eight days. This is one of my most pleasant memories. The participants were a little over one hundred children, age eight to twelve, who played Vivaldi A Minor and up. They were not accompanied by parents. The only adults who were there besides several parents who helped with the meals were teachers who taught the violin, botany, natural observation, drawing, composition, geology, etc., including college professors and other experts. The children were divided into groups of about seven, each from a different area of Japan. Group by group we drew pictures, collected plants, and rode horseback. I have kept contact with friends I made there. The purple of the pine-cricket flowers (*scabiosa*) that bloomed all over the plateau and the green of larch groves still return to my heart with nostalgia. The Kirigamine Hotel which was our lodging is still there, but the beautiful pine groves were removed for



glider practice. The summer school was held there again the following year. The first summer school produced the "Song of the Misty Peak" and the second the "Morning Mist," music by Mr. Suzuki and words by Shūgorō Itō. Later, the summer school moved to the Science Department, Shinshū University, Matsumoto, to Matsumoto School of Commerce, and to Hongō Elementary School, and the period was shortened to four days. However, lectures by eminent Buddhists were added, and so were round table discussions for parents with board members Shūgorō Itō, Kaname Hori, and Kiyoshi Suzuki as guests. Including the instructors' string orchestra, the Suzuki Quartet, and some trios, the concerts were no less rich than those today. The summer school mornings always started with Mr. Suzuki's performance which expressed his prayers. Teachers often performed, I think, because records were not available as now. On the last day of the summer school, there was an outing. We went to Lake Kisaki or to Utsukushigahara. I enjoyed more than anything else making new friends on such occasions, and I continued to exchange childlike letters long after.

Talent Education, no. 54;
to be continued in Fall,
1980 issue.



Talent Education Is Education toward Life

Shigeki Tanaka
*Young Children: Everything
Depends on How We Raise Them*
(no. 9)

Chapter III Talent Education Is Education toward Life

1. Educational Wasteland and Parental Responsibility

I have emphasized above the importance of early childhood and the necessity for not leaving it alone: seventy percent of the cells of a young child's big brain develop by age three; it is already too late at three; children want to learn, etc.

I have also stated that, depending upon the method, even brain injured children can sufficiently activate their ability, and therefore there is no reason to give up.

Again, I have repeated that children's ability is not restricted to intellectual ability and that talent education is not genius education. I think, however, we ought to consider for the last time here the ultimate purpose of early childhood education.

Are we constantly haunted by the question as to why we have to go to such lengths in thinking about early education?

Overemphasis on intellectual education, cramming, human isolation-- these are certainly the sources of today's educational malady. Reflecting concerns about these problems, every candidate, new or old, regardless of party, in the recent Diet elections included educational innovation in his platform. However,

when it comes to the matter of what to do concretely, they are either vague, merely discuss pipe dreams, or present extremely irresponsible views, contributing to our lack of confidence in politicians.

On the other side, no era is said to have had comparable lack of confidence in school education. We find proof of this in the spread of prep schools (*juku*), where children study after school and on weekends. The reason that the lack of confidence in school education leads to prep schools, to speak plainly, is that parents are worried that their children can't pass entrance exams unless they turn elsewhere than just school, and that even if they are not doing well academically, school doesn't offer them any help.

Then are politicians and school education the only ones responsible for this educational wasteland? Was there no responsibility in parents' awareness, in other words, in family education? Freedom and equality, concepts that emerged after the war, are of course important, but when interpreted cheaply, the result is that parents evade responsibility, take overprotection for granted, raise their children as hopelessly egoistic human beings, interfere with them so they will *study* in the narrow sense of the term, spur them to entrance exams, and turn them into enervated, emotionless children. Isn't this a much more fundamental cause of the wasteland?

2. What Is "Education toward Life"?

What is it to foster children freely and smoothly? As I have repeatedly emphasized earlier, children are born with the vitality to try to live *better*. I think education, in its original meaning, was to foster that vitality



freely and smoothly without damaging it.

Mr. Suzuki says in his *Nurtured by Love*:

Talent education is education toward life-- Great nature endows everything with life. The workings of life, that power, with which a living thing tries to live, is far beyond human wisdom. Once aware of this wonder, everyone must respect, and highly estimate, children, grownups, and even oneself.

We are deeply moved by Maestro Casals' performances. Children's performances that made that Maestro cry, and summon tears of emotion to many people--they are beautiful symphonies of pure human life. The heart, the senses, wisdom, and actions, or the activities of the inner organs and the nerves, are all merely portions of the function of the power that urges man to live.

Regardless of what human wisdom searches for and discovers, everything rests on the selfsame power. We must not forget to comprehend the human being as the sum of the activities of life.

3. Don't Pull Back Progressing Children

What is the awe of human vitality which Mr. Suzuki talks about? To live as a human should not just mean to survive. I think it means to live with the firmly established self, resisting various internal and external pressures.

Though easily said, this takes great courage. We are often crushed by external pressures. We also often run away, by suppressing ourselves, from the painful struggles of the heart. However, the power that drives us to truly live as human beings never entirely perishes. We ought to think that this is a wonderful grace given to human beings. If we are unable to stand up, still facing backwards in de-

despair, it's because we don't realize how great that power is.

A backward-looking perspective refers to a situation in which a person broods on past failure or error, unable to snap out of it. That person is living facing toward the past.

Or, one may worry so much about shortcomings of personality or fragility as a human being as to despair. That is because he looks only at his present self and is wrapped up in it.

In order to overcome worries about the past and present, there is no other way but to depend upon the great life-driving power which still remains within oneself. In other words, one must awaken to the forward-looking attitude and live facing the future.

We must try to avoid defining ourselves by our relation with the past or by what we are at present, and live facing the future, with faith in its possibilities.

The past may explain the present; yet it does not have to determine the future. When we become aware of this, we can free ourselves from our past.

This power of life never forsakes weak-minded human beings who are apt to wander into the abyss of despair, but gives them strength to rise again. We must feel responsibility toward this power, and regard it with awe as a precious gift from great nature.

Conscience Grows by Love and Prohibition

If the mother lives facing forward, the child will not fail to be strongly influenced. Children are born facing forward. They are living bodies with wonderful potential. We must have awe toward their power of life, intense life-propelling power; we must recognize it.



However, it is easy for the mother, out of blind love, to be so insensitive as to pull back the child who tries to go forward.

There is no question that love plays an important role in the formation of his personality. When the child feels that his love for the parents is accepted and that they love him, he feels secure.

Yet, love that the child truly needs must permit him independence. Excessive maternal love, in reality, always acts to restore the child to her womb. Not only that, she spoils the child to insulence, which will hinder him from healthy human relationships even after growth. He expects from others the same treatment as his mother gave him. When he is betrayed, instead of reflecting and trying to remold himself, he is distressed that he is not loved. This develops into an inferiority complex. In some cases, his desire to be recognized by others exactly according to the estimate unduly inflated by his mother begins to control his emotion and action, and when (naturally) he does not receive the treatment he desires, he becomes hostile, wild, and gradually unsociable.

True love is not something that enjoys being loved; it enjoys bringing happiness to others.

The growth of conscience starts with parental prohibition during early childhood. Children lack the ability to distinguish good and evil from birth. Parental opinion after birth is the sole guide. Children's activities are constantly controlled and adjusted from outside, and in the course of this, they gradually learn to distinguish between good and evil. If the parents repeat random prohibitions at a whim, conscience can't possibly grow.

Again, if very strong prohibitions are

enforced, children may react behind the parents' back. This leads to guilt at having done something they are not supposed to do. The conscience that children first gain is other-motivated prohibition-conscience. But with their growth, it is assimilated and developed in their mind as positive self-motivated conscience. However, if this prohibition-conscience is too strongly implanted during early childhood, the child may be unable to develop positive conscience even after growth. In other words, one is simply afraid of doing something bad, incapable of loving and of doing good things with a positive attitude.

I hope you see how important it is to foster independence in early childhood, as well as a forward-looking attitude.

4. Forward Education, Backward Education



To immediately construe education as intellectual education is a narrow way of thinking. To identify education with reading, writing and arithmetic may resemble looking at a pebble in order to see the globe. Surprisingly many parents equate early education with teaching letters and numbers in infancy.

Since I have written positively about teaching reading at age two and math at about four, etc., I fear that I might have spurred that kind of thinking.

I have taught first graders many times at elementary school. Children who didn't know how to read or write at the time of enrolment catch up completely by the second term. Contrary to expectations they learn to read more rapidly and correctly than those who already knew how to read individual letters through card games and so forth. When children have

been taught incorrectly, we have a hard time trying to correct them. --As long as the attitude toward learning (forward looking, wanting to learn) is there, learning to read is nothing.

It is much more helpful for future learning for the school age child to have developed basic qualities such as concentration, observation, or memory, rather than the ability to read a little or count numbers.

What is even more fundamentally important is the spirit of self-reliance and independence that allows him always to live looking forward, as well as emotional security, childlike cheerfulness and purity.

Receptivity and Meekness are Different

When we consider ideal childlike qualities concretely, we can first point out receptivity.

Receptivity is not meekness. Receptivity is a forward looking attitude; meekness looks backward. A child who is simply meek lacks self-motivation. He only follows others and obeys orders no matter what he is doing. However, receptivity is a self-motivated attitude of one who tries to understand and accept.

Children are by nature receptive if only no interference is given. That is because they must go forward in order to live.

When we try to teach children something, unless their desire to learn is hindered, they accept it with great powers of absorption. I have had many experiences in which I felt as though my words permeated into their hearts to the last drop as water soaks into the sand. What wonderful absorptive capacity they have for the sake of forward progress. I feel I can't speak a single word to them without sincerity.

When their desire for progress is hindered, however, children lose their receptivity. By the time they are two, they are capable of

using their finger tips fairly skillfully, and rapidly develop a desire for progress, wanting to do everything by themselves. Unless the mother thinks well about what to allow and what not to allow before facing the child, she will be pulled around by him, and every day a state of war will exist between them.

Further, when the child is about three, with a clearer consciousness of ego, the accumulation of discontent caused by the mother's incorrect attitude may lead to a sudden explosion: the child may start to resist.

"My child recently stopped listening to me docilely; is he in his resistance stage?" I am often asked. There is no such thing as the resistance stage. The mother has kindly created it for the child. If one insists on finding such a stage, one can find it at any age. However, generally speaking, around age three, the ego can be said to develop most intensely.

Whether or not egoism develops also depends upon the mother's attitude. Her attitude is always backward looking when encouraging egoism. Overprotection naturally develops into indulgence, resourcelessness and irresponsibility. She has no excuse if someone wonders what kind of mother the child has.

At three the child is still incapable of understanding the framework of the family or of society. If everything he wants to do is taboo, he suffers from unfulfilled desires. This gravely influences the formation of his personality.

I have written that retrogressive escape abounds in the adult world. Children, too, retain the desire to be close to the mother and to return to the womb. Hence there is constant conflict. If the child comes home disheartened and frustrated, the mother must not only comfort him but have the courage to turn his direction and say, with a pat on the shoulder, "You're

all right, go now." When the child docilely faces forward again, then he is himself again.

Bean-Sprout Kids Lack Endurance

Second is sturdiness.

The fragility of "bean-sprout kids" does not belong with true childlikeness. There are always obstructions in front of children. To stride into a storm with their faces boldly up is ideally what children facing a bright future should do.



Some mothers may try to give their children a forward looking attitude, but faced with physical fragility, they may give up their efforts too soon. Certainly, children's physical constitution is immature: their resistance is weak, and slight negligence can lead to an emergency. Naturally mothers worry.

However, according to child specialists, cases of naturally delicate health are surprisingly few. Most cases involve oversensitivity of the mother.

All animals including human beings are endowed with physiological defense mechanisms against environmental changes and intrusion of harmful objects. Vomiting, diarrhea, fever, coughing, etc. are all parts of this mechanism. The proper functioning of this mechanism depends on the action of the autonomous nerves in the middle brain and internal glands such as the pituitary and adrenal glands.

A careful look at children who are apt to run a fever or lose appetite for a tiny reason reveals that this physiological defense mechanism is unnecessarily sensitive. Such sensitivity is completely different from essential weakness. Why then did the child become so sensitive? The mother's attitude toward

fostering is said to be a major cause.

A few children of this type enter our kindergarten every year. They come to kindergarten for a while, soon catch cold and run a fever, stay home as long as a week, come to kindergarten, run a fever, and stay home again. Please don't let my child exercise, their mothers say. They don't let their children go on school outings, they don't let them go outdoors because it's hot in the summer or because they cough in the winter. The mothers say it can't be helped because their constitutions are weak. They themselves believe that they are fragile. They don't play with friends; they just watch vacantly from a distance.

Parents' nervous interference and overprotection create a sense of insecurity in the child when he starts to do something. That makes his nerves tense, and the result is fever. "Just as I told you," the mother says in rising insecurity, which leads to nervous interference and overprotection. This controls the child's activity, producing a vicious cycle between the mother and the child.

Exactly the same can be said of areas other than physical health. For example, at our kindergarten, children do heavy gymnastics using mats, jumping boxes, and iron bars. This kind of exercise, after a certain point, requires determination and courage. We try to be careful so that children won't be injured, but we let them try without worrying about small bruises.

Nervous mothers who watch this seem to consider our approach totally reckless. Children, who love active movement, are surrounded by many dangers. In order to help them avoid big injuries, too, we have to foster their motor nerves and the ability to control their bodies skillfully. Worrisome mothers understand this theory, but their emotion holds them back. Children of such mothers really give us a tough

time. Children who are always cautioned to be careful, careful, careful, are full of anxiety when they start to act. That anxiety causes the muscles to contract: they fail, and they experience pain. This augments their mothers' anxiety, which in turn further withers the children.

Bean-sprout kids have no endurance. When they meet even a small difficulty, they immediately give up; once they are defeated, they no longer want to try. Since they are weak, mothers protect them. Since they are protected, they become weaker. Sometimes I wonder how much mothers have to hover around their children and spoil them before they can be satisfied. This is what I mean when I ask mothers to face forward.

Would that they grow as robust children like weeds which never stop growing, never stop rising whether they are stamped upon or cut. I cannot help praying thus each time I look at the lovely faces of children.

Recognizing Each Other

Third is gentleness. Children, since they are immature, need protection. Naturally they have a strong desire to be loved. However, in order for them to grow well as human beings, passive love is not enough; they must foster a heart which desires to love others. Normal love not only enjoys being loved but finds greater joy in loving others.

As I have already stated, the mother's excessive love tends to smother this normal love for others, creating a child who cannot adapt to healthy human relationships.

On the other side, when this love for others is rejected, a deep scar is imprinted in the child's heart. In the end, he may develop

neurotic solitude, shutting himself in in order to avoid the possibility of being rejected again. Gentleness is an expression of forward looking, positive love for others. It is fostered while the child lives a fruitful life, sharing joyful experiences with friends.

Children are not from the start determined to be selfish, wild, or gentle. No matter how wild and bossy a child may look, when he knows what he has to do by himself and takes a forward looking stance, he begins to show a very fine attitude. Gentleness grows gradually.

"A gentle heart," "warm sympathy"--recognition and acceptance of beings other than oneself is the most basic human feeling. Acceptance in the true sense of the word may be established in adolescence through a deep confrontation with his own heart, but the feeling which will become its base must be fostered from early childhood.

Some mothers interpret gentleness superficially. They try to block children's desire to act lively and play noisily with friends. To keep them quiet, let them hear music, and decorate their rooms, they think, is to foster gentleness.

What is more important, however, is for the child to enjoy his daily life in which he can express himself as much as he wants.

At the same time, environmental influence is also important. Therefore, parents' behavior in family life must be fine. We learn through thinking of each other, pleasing each other, and sympathizing with each other--from the contact between our hearts and behavior. The mother's unconscious behavior and thought in daily life will be reflected in her child's act at kindergarten and among friends.

In present day society, mutual sympathy is scarce, especially in the cities. So many people seem to care little about others as long

as they themselves are fine. They push others aside, and pretend not to see someone in trouble. Let's consider how this fosters "coldness" in children's mind.

"Receptivity," "fortitude," and "gentleness" seem to be related to each other, to stem from the same source. They come from the forward looking heart. The mother, too, must always look forward.

Every child is endowed with a beautiful power for life. Unless this power is hindered, he can grow beautifully. If parental ignorance, negligence, or excessive blind love plucks the shoot, and the result is then ascribed to in-born qualities, what can the child do?

The young child's heart is tender and receptive. He has a strong power to imbibe. The parents' attitude toward child-raising penetrates his mind, leaving a permanent effect on him. Precisely for this reason, the parents' efforts can never be more influential than in early childhood. I hope you will recognize the importance of early education and proceed with deep love and understanding.



The Ear And the Heart

--Tonalization--

Shin'ichi Suzuki

When tuning the violin, everyone concentrates his mind and makes his ear responsive to the sound of turning in order to create a beautiful chord. Certainly, being able to tune the violin is a fine ability.

Yet, the moment one starts to play a piece, one often doesn't care if the intonation becomes uncertain and the strings lose the beautiful reverberation. His ear doesn't work. As long as he can tune his instrument well, it's not that he has a bad ear. Then why? The answer is that the mind no longer works on the sound. The mind becomes so absorbed in *playing* the piece, that it loses the sharpness with which one listens to each single sound when tuning.

The ear loses the power to listen when the heart forgets to listen to the sounds.

It is necessary to practice listening to each sound as when tuning. This training in the heart and the ear reflects the instructor's ability to teach.

Tonalization, I think, will play a big role in training.

This is a new teaching approach. Everything depends on the growth of the heart. A method to foster an active, fine heart is, I think, the crux of education.

Talent Education, no. 6

If They Can Speak the Mother Tongue!

Lessons with Blind Children

Uta Arimoto
Piano Teacher

"This is about a student in the school for the blind in your neighborhood. Would you like to teach her?" One day Teacher Keiko Tanaka called me. I had heard from long ago that the blind are very intuitive; besides I knew that "with children who can speak the mother tongue, everything depends on how we raise them." So I accepted the offer, though with no experience.

With a jingle of the bell, A. came in quietly with her mother. First of all I felt relieved to see their cheerful expression. The initial tense moments gone, we started on the first note of Twinkle. Reaching my hand to hers on her lap, I guided her right hand to the piano slowly placing the first finger on C. Very slowly. Her action suggested that she listened to my words as though to chew them and hold them in her heart. When it was repeated just a few times, she learned the distance from her lap to middle C. Since then she has always been able to place her finger where she wants. I have been impressed by her precision. The first lesson went well. My mother learned the koto from a famous teacher who was blind. She used to tell me what keen intuitive sense he had, and how clean and precise his movements were. I also recalled similarly handicapped individuals' great achievements, which filled me with refreshing thoughts.

Right now this student is in middle school. Both the academic work and music have gradually become challenging. She often faces the

piano with a serious expression. When she studied "the Short Story," she made painstaking efforts where she had to jump two octaves with her left hand. I read and reread the section on "touching the left hand with the tip of the bow" in *Nurtured by Love*, comparing and seeking encouragement. Over and over and over again we practiced, toughening our heart when we were nearly crushed. When she got the correct notes, the three of us, including her mother, were happy beyond description.

Having submitted a tape for pre-elementary curriculum, A. attended the graduation ceremony. Looking tense, without a budge, lifting her head up which tends to hang down, she stood on the stage for a long time facing the front. This made an impression on me; many other teachers also noted her. Later Mr. Suzuki shook her hand, with gentle words of encouragement. How she must have been moved that day. I think she will never be able to forget it. "I never expected we would accomplish such a thing," her mother said. Although her progress is slow, A. is continuing to study with a bright hope, coming to see me week after week with her mother, ringing her bell.

The Waltz Rhythm and B.



Looking down, B. listens intensely to Chopin's Waltz which another child is playing. Her expression is stiff, she's still guarding herself, and her body sometimes twitches. She is in no way ready to

greet or sit before the piano. However, I am certain that she feels the music. She takes the rhythm with her body. --This situation lasted many weeks, but she never resisted

entering the room on the lesson day with her mother, and she always listened quietly. By the time the other girl's Waltz flowed beautifully, B. began to respond to the rhythm looking happy. Neither physically nor intellectually did she seem to be growing up to that point. On top of it, she faced life as a blind child. No matter how hard I tried to be calm, I felt myself tense at her lesson, and all my attention went to calming myself.

Eventually, by the time I held her hand and played "taka taka tatta," we were friends. "Your hand's cold," she spoke. I, too, found myself giving lessons feeling more normal. "She can just barely count up to five," her mother says. However, she can put her finger quickly on the right key, and knows the correct length of each note. Of course, she has learned the order of the phrases. She is very easy to teach. When small, her mother might have tried with some impatience to make her play the piano. Earlier, she had refused to sit before the piano. But her mother and I promised each other to proceed "slowly and patiently," her practice time at home gradually became longer, and she advanced in pieces. "My next piece is this," she pronounces clearly, with her fingers ready. I cannot believe that she cannot count numbers. Even when she doesn't feel well enough to go to school, she insists on coming to her lesson.

C. Can Use Chopsticks Now

Conquering the paralysis in her limbs, she is always cheerful, with a smile around her closed eyes. She cannot use her five fingers freely. With her thumb fixed in place, she smoothly plays the pieces she hears on the record with just the four fingers. This, however, is no real training, I thought. Combining

my efforts with her mother's I started to put her thumb on the key. She seemed in pain. She wanted so badly to play, yet her thumb did not move. Two years since then, although sometimes with painful efforts, she puts each of her fingers correctly on the keyboard, and plays slowly with unerring fingering. Partly due to physical development perhaps, her mother reported that she can now use her chopsticks. I almost shouted "bravo!"

Atsu on "Go Tell Aunt Rhody"



"Go tell, go tell," a lovely voice comes from the entrance. After a quick greeting, the moment he sits down, he starts to play "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" with one finger. His left hand holds my hand, demanding that I play with him.

He doesn't speak much, just a word here and a word there. But what superb rhythm he has! He refuses to stop playing so I shift to G Major, to D Major, and to minor keys, but he comes right along with me. Fifteen minutes passes, twenty minutes passes, all in a twinkling of an eye. His satisfied expression is endlessly lovely. When tired, he takes a lovely bow and leaves quickly. I pray that he will be able to play not just "Go Tell Aunt Rhody" but everything well, so that music will be a light to open up a bright life-- I ponder, wishing to know how to instruct him to eventually use all five fingers.

From a Note from D.'s Mother

D. was born without a problem but lost her sight within two months, and I despaired of life. I started to impatiently grope for something to give her to make up for her lost eyesight. This was when she was four. However, no one accepted

heavily handicapped children. The only thing that gave us peace was beautiful music. I sang --to console myself rather than my child. By my side, my child who can't speak hummed the melody looking carried away. She moved her body to the rhythm of a march. She seemed interested in music. I thought of giving her music lessons. I hesitated and hesitated, wondering if anyone would give lessons to this child with a severe handicap, or if I was being too conceited to think of such a thing. When I started her piano lessons by the Suzuki method with a senior friend in the school for the blind, both my child and I attained real peace. She repeats her teacher's name and looks forward to her lesson day. It may be a far-away dream still, but I would like to join her in the effort till she will step by step approach the day when she finds joy of life through music to nourish her humanity.

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Reading this note, I reflected upon myself and thought I should try to have more dialogues with parents. D. is studying hard so that she will be able to record Bach Minuet 2 by the end of October.

Now I have ten such small friends. Their mothers can never say, "I'm busy today, I'll just send my child alone." They always come with the children to study. They write in the fingering and teach it at home. They go to school in the morning with the children and come home with them. How much they have to do from the time they get up in the morning till the time they go to sleep. "When love is deep, much can be accomplished" --these words penetrate my mind.

Living near the school for the blind by coincidence, I was given this task, and met many mothers with very deep love. One of them said,



"At least there is no need to worry about my child going bad." Her expression was so peaceful. With multiple handicaps, the children have a kind and beautiful heart greater than the handicaps. And so is their mothers' love. The only thing demanded is "the better instruction." I can't spend my days idly. "If they can speak the mother tongue!" I would like to advance step by step, if slowly, with faith in this solid fact.



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

(Five mottoes of
Talent Education)

Eiko's New Diary

Kiyoshi Suzuki
A Father's Record
 (no. 9) continued
 from Spring 1981

53. Eiko's New Diary

--Age Twelve

In the fall of 1958, on the way home from a trip to Gifu, I said to Eiko: "You'll be a junior high student next year. How would you like to graduate from your old illustrated diary into a fine diary notebook sold at bookstores?"

Eiko replied, "That'll be fine," looking neither particularly happy nor reluctant. We got off the train at Nagoya to stop at a department store. We went where many diaries were displayed.

"Come, choose any one you like: I'll buy it for you," I said. Eiko picked one out, saying, "I like this." So I bought it, and we went home.

At home, Eiko said, showing her notebook, "Papa bought me this at Nagoya. Isn't it neat?" My wife responded happily: "Good. Let me see, it's quite handsome. Then I can stop making diaries."

Eiko had been using homemade diaries, each notebook consisting of ten sheets of drawing paper folded into half and bound for twenty days' use. With the purchase of a new diary, my wife no longer needed to prepare them.

"Mama, make me a diary."

"Gone already?"

Such an exchange was repeated countless times. All there was to be done was to bind the sheets with a string, but only on rare occasions when things were going smoothly was

the next notebook ready on time.

For over eight years, she had kept child-like illustrated diaries. I thought we might miss them. I said to Eiko, "You've been drawing pictures every day. Whenever you feel like drawing again, do so, we'll buy a separate sketch book."

I haven't bought one yet, but I should, soon. Well, we still need to keep providing things for her.

On the night of the New Year's Day, having brought her new diary to the kotatsu (small table with heating underneath), Eiko caringly opened the first page and wrote in it in ink. After she finished writing, while moving around she overturned the ink jar. Her *zabuton* (pillow to sit on) got a large stain. "O, oh." "Indeed o, oh." Thus her record of life began in a new form.

54. Home Seminar

--Age Twelve



Members of the Talent Education Toyohashi Chapter meet for a home seminar once a month. It costs ¥10 per person to participate, ¥20 if a parent and a child attend together. This is for a snack. Different families take turns providing the space. The host family contributes cheap tea. They also buy rice crackers and what not with the ¥10 per person fees, and divide them into small individual paper bags. Mothers, fathers, and children alike receive a bag each. If too much is served, the members complain: "It's a breach of the rules."

I always attend the seminar with Eiko. The participants enjoy ensembles, solos, discuss children's study and exchange information about

the pieces they play, sharing a pleasant moment in the afternoon.

On January 4, 1969, the children played together at the home seminar using the program for the national concert a few months ahead. In the middle of the group playing, students who expected to play solos at the New Year's chapter meeting also rehearsed their pieces. When the final group piece was over, it was already completely dark, and the children seemed fairly tired. As Eiko was also scheduled to play at the chapter meeting, I said, "Why don't you play, too?" Some mothers encouraged us:

"Oh, please, let us hear. What is she playing this time?"

"It's Beethoven's Concerto, 2nd and 3rd movements."

"How wonderful. Please, by all means."

"I'd like her to sound wonderful, but it's yet to shape up; there's no end no matter how much one studies, is there?"

"I'm sure that's the case."

After such an exchange, Eiko began to play. Mothers quietly listened but the children, who thought the rehearsal was all over, were scattered in groups here and there, having a merry time. However, midway through the second movement, one came before Eiko, sat, and started to listen to the violin. Then another, and still another came; by the time the third movement began, all the children including small ones about four years old sat neatly side by side, and that very quietly without even the slightest noise. They listened so to the end. The atmosphere of the audience almost suggested a fine recital.

When I mentioned this to Mr. Suzuki, he commented:

"The children have acquired the ability to listen."

Ability does not grow in a day. Unless

every opportunity is effectively used, it is difficult to foster children's ability. "I'm busy," some parents may say, and evade having to create good opportunities for their children. This is a misfortune for their children.

55. She Reads Notes

--Age Twelve

In late 1958, after supper. I said, "The music of 'This Land' was lying around somewhere, the song included in the program of the fund-raising concert the other day. Bring it to me. It's a nice song."

My wife brought the music from a table.

"Well, it's a very nice song. Let's see if I can sing it for you," I said, taking the music in my hand, and started to sing aloud. Eiko interrupted: "Papa, your intonation's off. It's '*This land is. . .*,'" she sang. I thought 'ouch,' but I wasn't sure if her intonation was really correct, either.

"Yes, I see, I'm sure yours is correct. But play it on the organ just to be sure," I asked, insipidly. Eiko stood up, went to the organ, and played just the opening phrase. "See, I told you," she said, returning.

"Of course Eiko's version is correct," my wife boasted. I, too, was happy to be defeated. At the same time, I realized that Eiko could read music.

Many mothers ask if Eiko can read music. Each time I answer: "Well, recently she listens to the record then practices looking at the music. She picks up much from the weekly lesson in class. I guess she is at the stage where she just vaguely understands the notes."

In any case, my wife has no knowledge of written music whatsoever; nor have I helped

Eiko with the violin at all recently. I think I ought to listen to her as often as possible once she learns a piece, but often I don't even have that chance.

Some mothers respond pessimistically with "O how nice; I wonder when my child will read music, if ever." Others view their children more cheerfully: "Yes, I feel that mine has started to understand written music, too, lately."

I tell them with confidence: "Anyway, Eiko can now read some music. We must make efforts to foster that ability. From about Book 4 on, regardless of whether the child understands music, it's good to show him the music, help him relate the music he hears with his ear to what he sees in print, explain how you put finger numbers in the music. If you try to clarify musical notations little by little, your child will certainly begin to read music."

The distinction between the expression on the faces of those who feel confident, and that on the faces of those who lack confidence, oddly depresses me. I have moments when I regretted what I had said.

The written music is not music, Mr. Suzuki says. Certainly, written music is not music, but it is convenient to be able to read it. Talent education does not necessarily encourage one not to read music; however, it is a fact that many children can't. In talent education, children do not learn to read written music before they learn music, just as they don't learn to read letters before speaking. In exactly the same way as learning to speak first, music making comes before anything else in the first steps of training in musical sensitivity. For this very reason, many children know music but can't read music. In the same way, six year olds who speak fluently using three thousand

words may not yet read. Just as they learn to read later, it is natural that talent education children will learn to read music.

56. A Farewell Party with a Doll

--Age Twelve



A farewell party for the doll with which Eiko shared her life for ten years was held in the summer of 1958, with Eiko, my wife, and the doll present.

For ten long years, now felt so short, how many times did Eiko make a dress for it, change her face, and sleep with her? Sometimes, the doll which lay by her side at night on going to sleep was found in the morning a pillow under her head. No matter what happened, Eiko never forgot to sleep with her. If, remembering something, she left her bed after once lying down, it was always to get the doll. It must have been sad for her to part with it.

"Why did you do such a thing?" I asked my wife. She replied, "But Eiko's big now; besides, that doll got so old and ugly. I thought it was fine to give it up now." I remained uneasy, however.

On the night of the farewell, Eiko and my wife placed the doll before them and greeted, "Thank you very much for a long time. Eiko's now so big that she is parting with you tonight."

They put the doll in an empty box, put in some sweets also, and let it float in the small stream near our house. By now, the doll may have drifted far and sunk in the riverbed somewhere.

Writing this, I can't help my thoughts from wandering to Eiko's feeling then and the doll. It was indeed a dirty doll. Seeing Eiko making

dresses for it out of remnants, I used to say, "The doll's clothes? It looks dirty, why don't you clean its face a little?"

Now that the doll has drifted down the river after a farewell party, I recall with emotion the time when we left the girls' school, where she got it. Looking happy in my arms, Eiko held the doll, as students saw us off to the school gate.

Rest in quiet, Eiko's doll.



57. Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki

--Age Twelve

This is about the talent education summer school at Matsumoto in the summer of 1958. Every summer, it's been our delight to go to the summer school.

Eiko performed the Beethoven concerto, 1st movement at an evening concert. When it was over, people around me clapped turning toward me. Some sitting behind me even stretched their arms toward me, clapping. Filled with joy, I nodded thanks to them repeatedly.

One said, "Don't ever let Eiko take lessons with anybody else than Shin'ichi Suzuki. Mr. Suzuki is a really wonderful, great teacher. He is of international caliber." Of course I had no intention to swap teachers, with Eiko fostered thus by talent education before my eyes. However, I heartily thanked him for this well meant

advice to stick to Mr. Suzuki.

The following day when I was having lunch during the noon recess, three violin teachers approached me.

"Mr. Suzuki, Eiko's performance last night was super. When I saw the program, I noticed she was playing Beethoven, but I thought, well, she may play Beethoven, but she's just a child, it will be just so so. I really did. Didn't you, too?"

One of them turned to the others, who joined in the praise:

"Of course, everyone thought the same. But then Eiko's a sixth grader. It's natural that we all thought so. But -- we were shocked to hear her. It was a blow. It was something beyond our commonsense. It was well played indeed. Congratulations."

I didn't know what to say, but replied:

"To tell you the truth, we came here five days early, and had lessons with Mr. Suzuki. Of course we owe it first to Mr. Kondō's instruction but I think the final finish with Mr. Suzuki brought it to the level where it was just barely passable as music."

"Even so, it's quite impressive. Even we talent education instructors probably don't realize its real power. The soloists at the summer school this year are all truly great. It's a learning experience for us. You must be having a nice time, Eiko being so wonderful."

Again I felt speechless, praised beyond what I deserved.

No matter how well one can play the violin, or how many pieces one has memorized, it's nothing unless it is connected to human growth.

I am wishing that Eiko will have ever greater contact with Mr. Suzuki, partly for the purpose of developing richer humanity.

Eiko will be a junior high student in April,

1959. I hope she will be able to make the trip to Matsumoto alone. Even if she has no chance to play the violin, my wife and I think it would be great if she could see Mr. Suzuki and return with his words, however few.

"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



rt.5.

