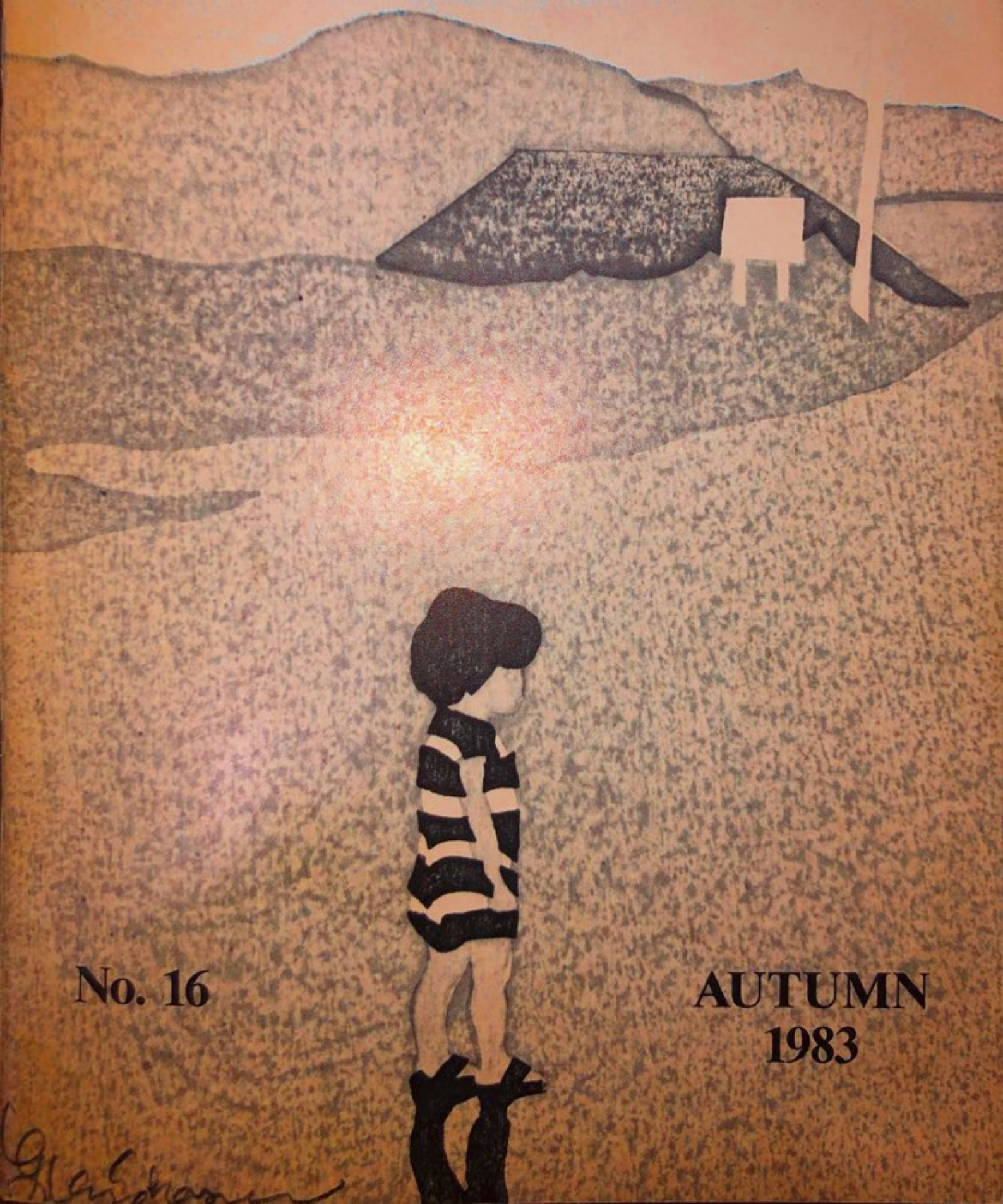


TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL

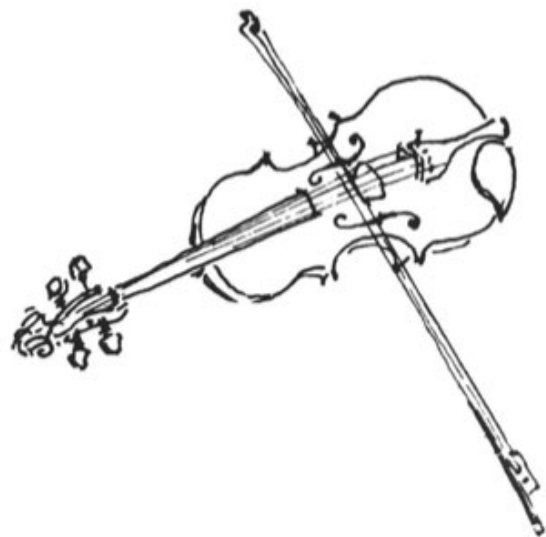


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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

How to develop children's fine musical rhythm and sensibility? Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki describes his method in his article, "This is the Suzuki Method."

On July 16 through 21 of this summer, the Sixth Suzuki International Conference was held in Matsumoto, Japan. Over one thousand people from 21 countries throughout the world attended this wonderful event. My wife and I took a sabbatical leave from the symphony and spent five months with our daughters in Japan, attending the annual concert in March, the all-Japan teachers' conference in May, and the International Conference and summer school in July and early August, besides performing piano trio concerts in eight cities. It was a delightful experience for us. "On the Sixth International Conference" is my report on the conference.

Last spring, 22 American and Japanese children led by Mrs. Waltraud Suzuki and Dr. Evelyn Herman toured China, giving concerts and workshops in Shanghai, Sian and Beijing. We are pleased to print Ms. Chise Yajima's wonderful report, "American and Japanese Students' Joint China Tour."

Mr. Suzuki's Lectures on Music Instruction in this issue advises piano instructors and students about practising with a tape and using the lottery concert approach.

The fourth installment of Mr. Suzuki's book, *Talent Education for Young Children*, contains these important thoughts: foster one thing to a height, make learning a pleasure, "prepare-teach-foster-foster-foster," don't hurry - don't rest, praise to create confidence, guide but not tug, correct defects and develop memory.

"Parents' Notes" and the reminiscence, "Memory of the Violin," by violin instructor Ryoko Yoneyama are also selected from the Japanese *Talent Education*.

THIS IS THE SUZUKI METHOD

Shin'ichi Suzuki

- How two or three thousand children play in perfect unison at the national concert: on the educational approach which makes it possible

At the national concert at the Budokan, Tokyo, students who have come from all over the country perform together, their number increasing with the progress of the program from 500 to 1,000 to 1,500 to 2,000. In the end 3,000 students give fine performances, without a rehearsal yet in strikingly clear unison, producing a great emotional impact on the listeners. The beautiful concert, perhaps the biggest in the world, has been improving yearly.

Why is this? Why do children from different parts of the country play together immediately, and stay so neatly together? Such a question is bound to arise. Moreover, the majority of the three thousand students are small children, and near the end of the program many tiny ones of three or four years are seen to participate.

Many who hear this great national concert for the first time do so with tears in their eyes. They are not only startled to hear the fine playing of so many young children but are moved by the musicality of their performances.

Now let me describe the educational method in order to clarify how it is possible that 3,000 children stay together in their unison playing, as though one person were performing.

*

The method - with its emphasis on ability development

– is practised as follows:

In Suzuki method class, whether in violin, piano, cello, or flute, when the student has started to be able to play his new assignment piece, he begins practising to play it with the record or tape every day without fail during home practice. While practising plenty with the record or tape, he unconsciously adopts the model's fine musical rhythm and sensitivity, with a result that a high sense of music becomes part of him.

This approach is the same as in language: while an Osaka child hears his mother's Osaka dialect every day and talks with her every day, he perfectly masters the delicate Osaka speech. Thus every Osaka child grows with a fine ability in Osaka dialect.

This follows that students who do not practise playing with the model performance in the record or tape cannot develop correct musical rhythm and sensibility. This method of practising with the model is the Suzuki method. I had emphatically urged members to carry this out since a long ago, but not many easily followed.

What I thought of then is the lottery concert approach which is now in effect.

By the lottery concert approach, every day the student practises with the record or tape five or ten pieces he has already learned in order to create ability. After this review practice, he studies the newly assigned piece, so that home practice in two parts will be regularly carried out. This is the Suzuki method.

And we guide the child eventually to become a student who can practise at least two hours daily.

Again, in class the teacher lets the student draw a lottery at the beginning of the lesson using cards with the names of the pieces he has learned before, hears him perform the piece he draws, and tests the growth of his ability. This is an exciting game which greatly pleases students. Occasionally, a lottery game for a group of students is also fun.

This is the same method as the mother tongue approach by which the child develops superb ability only when he daily speaks all the words he has learned. We call this the Suzuki method. This is ability development.

Since practising this throughout the country, students' ability has markedly grown, and their progress in mastering pieces has increased. Perhaps for this reason, in recent years the performance at the national concert has come to be greatly more together and the tone has also improved.

If there is any class which is not yet practising this method, I would like you to do so since this is the Suzuki method. I would like you to understand that this is the same as the most important point of ability development in the mother tongue by which every child grows.



From long ago children all over the world grew with extremely high ability to speak the mother tongue. Why have we not noticed this wonder until now? All parents taught their children the mother tongue. Yet was it not careless of them never to have thought of how they taught them? This is an important problem on which they should reflect as human beings. Those who have become aware of the wonder of their children who grow if fostered are genuine practitioners of our method.

"Children's fate is in the parents' hands." With this great reflection we have gathered, resolved to foster every child correctly and beautifully. Such is our association; such are you, its members. Please, since every child surely grows, let's raise children a lot more seriously so that there will be no failure in fostering.

At present, I think that we have not yet come to the point where every child is growing well. Every child has the same potential for growth as in the mother tongue. We have yet to try.

For fifty years I have daily studied with a constant fresh feeling the correct educational method by which children grow well and, as in the mother tongue, painlessly and smoothly. I am still studying every day.

Let me ask teachers to study together and practise a

good method by which children grow smoothly. Let us
 teachers all over the world continue to study the fact
 that every child grows.
 Now's the time to start.

Talent Education, no. 63

"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."*

— *Shin'ichi Suzuki*

ON THE SIXTH INTERNATIONAL SUZUKI CONFERENCE

Masayoshi Kataoka

Located approximately in the center of Japan and surrounded by the beautiful Japan Alps, Matsumoto is a gem of a city. While prospering from the old days as a town that received travellers visiting Shinshu's mountain areas, since the introduction of Western civilization Matsumoto has been a forerunner of modern school education. It may be small wonder that in this area a new educational method rose to awaken the world from a slumber. Perhaps it was with some deep thought that Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki, on starting the talent education movement, chose this place as its base. In any case, Matsumoto which was just a mountain city forty some years ago when talent education had just originated now welcomed the visit of over one thousand foreigners carrying musical instruments.

Starting with the Hawaii convention, the International Suzuki Conference went round the cities of San Francisco, Munich, and Amherst, and on its sixth anniversary it came back for the first time to Matsumoto, to its origin. The conference was held during the five days between July 17 and 21, with the support of the entire city. In order to welcome the large number of foreign visitors unparalleled in its history, the city united with a variety of groups including the Youth Congress to prepare for the occasion. The locale of the conference, Matsumoto City Hall, was refurbished on a large budget, with a newly equipped acoustic screen. Along the main street leading from the crowded shopping area before the station to the Hall, conference pennants fluttered in the wind, while recorded unison playing of *Twinkle* and minuets flowed from speakers at

intersections. The city was filled with a buoyant, festival-like mood.

The foreign guests who rode in a dozen or so chartered buses from Tokyo were, on arrival in Matsumoto, taken directly to the front yard of the Matsumoto Castle, a national treasure, where a welcome party awaited them. They were entertained with pleasant and thoughtfully prepared events as well as delicacies that pleased the palate. And on the third night, a heart-warming gala dinner party was held at the Utsukushigahara Onsen Hotel, Matsumoto's finest. For children, the Youth Congress prepared a snow ball fight by bringing truckloads of snow from the Alps to the Agata-no-Mori Park. The Congress also offered such entertainments as rice-cake pounding, goldfish catching, and firecrackers, gathering children of many lands in delightful hours of fun and play.

The opening ceremony started with Mr. Suzuki's greeting. This was followed by the congratulatory speeches of Prince Mikasa, the Mayor of Nagano Prefecture, and the Mayor of Matsumoto City. Prime Minister Nakasone's message, too, was read. The conference included Mr. Suzuki's lesson and lecture as well as foreign instructors' reports in the morning, and in the afternoon there were group lessons and an afternoon concert. After supper, an evening concert followed. At these concerts instructors and students from various countries demonstrated for each other the results of their daily efforts.

Mr. Suzuki always thinks of new ideas to instruct in violin playing technique ever more lucidly and effectively. At this conference, too, he instructed on many things. Let me introduce three ideas he particularly emphasized. First, the use of a heavy paper clip in order to make the tone bigger and more refined. A clip of eight to ten grams clasps the screw part of the bow, increasing the weight of the frog. Now play with the bow upside down. When you attain a fine tone, try to remember the balance of the bow which made that sound so that you will be able to produce the same big and fine tone with the regular bow hold. Use the Handel Chorus as teaching



Make bigger tone with a clip.



Practice PANDA using a pencil.



Hold the bow with the right corner of thumb nail. (A)
If you hold the bow with the center of thumb nail, your arm will be twisted. (B)

material: play the first four measures with the upside down bow with the clip, change to the regular bow swiftly after the long note, and produce the same volume playing the next four measures. Quickly change again to the upside down bow after the next long note. Repeat this.

Second, the idea of fixing the bow tip with the use of a rubber band and a pencil. Hold the pencil in the same way as you hold the bow. Rest the tip of the pencil on the bottom of the rubber band held by the right hand. Move the right elbow up and down without changing the shape of the right arm. By the straight up and down movement of the arm with the use of the elasticity of the rubber band, the thumb of the bow hand becomes stronger. This also helps the student learn the degree of strength in each finger.

Third, the location of the right hand thumb which touches the bow. When you hold the bow with the right corner of the thumb nail, the elbow goes down neatly, and you can play with a well balanced bow. If you hold the bow with the middle of the thumb nail, the hand becomes twisted, and the elbow sticks out sideways. (Please refer to the photos taken from the conference programs.)

*

The Sixth Suzuki International Conference was prepared and run with the support and effort of many people. The events of the conference were daily introduced as special issues on local TV and newspapers, and some parts were reported throughout the country. Tying the world with love and trust, the conference was closed in prayers for children's happiness and a peaceful future.

Talent education under the guidance of Mr. Suzuki's love and spirit of practice is now receiving understanding and applause as a worldwide method. However, it may be a long way before his dream of a "national program for child raising" can be realized. Commonsense would hold it hardly possible to change Japan's educational

system – or to change that of the world. However, to Mr. Suzuki, as in the past, the issue is not whether or not it is possible. He is straining himself wishing to realize his dream simply for the sake of children's happiness in the world, which, he believes, is related to mankind's peace.

On looking back at the International Conference, I think of Mr. Suzuki's unyielding faith; at the same time, I wonder if studying his teachings deeply and spreading them isn't indeed the mission assigned to us who are engaged in this movement.



*Fix my power
firmly at 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

PARENTS' NOTES
- HOW I BROUGHT UP MY CHILD -
(No. 5)

(This is from a collection of parents' notes included in the Talent Education Survey of 1981.)

[From the Violin School]

Mother of Fumi Asai (11)

We are very happy to learn Mr. Suzuki's teachings through Teacher Hasebe's weekly lessons. We are apt to spend our days casually, or, forgetting the important aim of fostering true humanity, lose ourselves in the more immediate such as academic achievements and athletic records. The talent education lesson each week, I find, is an opportunity for us to find, or to recover, something important.

It also makes us realize that nothing is born without effort. I don't mean blind effort, but effort guided by a warm heart with which to foster the child wherever she goes. A big heart, a heart with fortitude, is necessary to help the child make efforts without knowing it. It is simple to force the child to practise (especially when small). However, that is never good for the child.

The beauty we find in making efforts toward one thing, parent and child together, the realization that the child can enjoy performing without reserve before a big audience - there is so much for us to treasure. At the same time, there are ups and downs in the practice at home. On a day we have done well, we are filled body and heart with a wonderful emotion, but what a long hour of sad remorse we experience on a day we have failed.

Thus year by year has passed, and we are now aiming to reach the Post-Advanced Level. I am convinced that

Mr. Suzuki's teachings will stay with us all our lives.

Mother of Sachiko Orido (14)

From her early childhood, I always wished to help my daughter acquire one thing that she would be able to continue throughout her life: something that would enrich her and contribute toward gaining confidence.

With that thought I started her on violin. But the process was precisely a variety of ups and downs, and with each down we painfully realized lack of practice, lack of rigor and precision, and also lack of love on my part. All the more for this, however, when walking home hand in hand on the dark street after the lesson, we have often tasted refreshing satisfaction as though we were taught and reminded of something important besides the violin itself.

Before we know it, nearly ten years have passed. My daughter experienced an entrance examination, and following that her days have become fuller than when a junior high student. Although the violin, regrettably, has become a little distant, the practice continues like a slender stream. I am encouraging her to stick to it, hoping that she will soon play Vitali's Chaconne with a rich tone. I hope to continue supporting her so that the violin will be her lifelong friend.

Now that I look back, I think it was really good that she was able to have something to strive for without losing sight of her initial aspirations. I hope she will continue to take lessons to come home with something wonderful.

Mother of Eri Wakita (11)

Eri received a graduation certificate for the Advanced Level in March, last year. On looking back, I am glad that she made great efforts to tape the piece. I say this because until then she had been a relatively unconcerned child in everything including violin practice, study, and

daily life. However, when it came time to tape the Bach a minor, she started to insist that she must graduate that year no matter what.

It was hardly possible to do that if she continued the same practice habits as before. However, she practiced diligently as told by her teacher, and finished the taping, while also doing conscientious school work. I remember how she jumped for joy when she had the teacher's permission to do the taping. (About the same time, she also started to do a little better at school.)

Since then she seems to have developed something like confidence: "I have to take the initiative in everything, and if I try, I can do it." It seems that at school, too, she has come to take the initiative to help in different areas. I think she has become motivated not only in violin but in academic work and things in general.

I hope she will continue to advance with the same confidence. How can a child change this much at the time of graduation from the Advanced Level? I am startled by her growth. I feel that I have begun to understand Mr. Suzuki's words: "Please continue at least until your child graduates from the Advanced Level." Recently Eri's face has become brighter.

Mother of Mayumi Sato (14)

Mayumi was six when, after seeing our nephew take part in the national concert, we joined the association with faith in Mr. Suzuki's words: "Every child grows; everything depends on how they are raised." Maybe a little on the late side, I thought, but I was late in knowing about talent education myself. While continuing lessons several years, we have experienced both hills and valleys. We have managed to survive thanks to the teachers' warm encouragement and deep love, as I freshly realize at this point.

My daughter is now a third year student in junior high. Although she is fairly busy with her study, violin club activities, and her duties as class president, she continues

at her own pace, skillfully creating time to practise. We are pleased to watch her making efforts with a forward posture in a society where juvenile delinquency is reaching down to younger age groups. I don't think she is at all good at playing violin, but what she has acquired through violin is immeasurable.

I wish in my heart that she will grow with beautiful music, gentle to others and strict to herself. I am grateful to talent education.

Mother of Yasushi Idegami (9)

When I first heard the Gossec Gavotte on the record, I thought how wonderful it would be if a piece like that could be heard at home. When I heard the Book 2 record next, I thought, "Such difficult pieces will be impossible to play - " As Yasushi progressed to Book 3 and then to Book 4, I kept thinking, "Now we will have to give up." However, with the combined *efforts* of the teacher, my son, and myself, I am happy that he was able to graduate from the Advanced Level.

I can't say that he was changed in such and such a way because he is taking violin, but I think there is happiness in being able to carry something through and taste its joy, as well as to experience satisfaction from playing with friends as a group. I can no longer help him by supporting his arms and legs as when he was small, but wish to continue encouraging him so he will be able to persist in his effort.

[From the Piano School]

Anonymous

Since my child started piano in Sapporo, she took traditional lessons for about three years up to the second term of the first grade. When we moved to Sendai, we came to know of talent education, and directly applied to

the teacher on the phone. I cannot forget the sound on the tape from the student recital of her class which she kindly let me hear right away. The more I think about it, the more wonderful it feels that we were able to come into contact with her instruction which is strict yet filled with true love.

I have learned through my personal experience that piano lessons do not simply mean instructions in technique. In the great power which guides humble people like us, I recognize true musical education. To be able to share with other young children and parents the value of the heart that is drawn to something lofty – this I understand to be talent education.

When my daughter was born, her great grandmother bought her a small tape recorder saying that she had read about the Suzuki method in a magazine. Although I did not know too well about the method in any concrete terms, I played the tape recorder since her infant days. Since she heard music every day, literally every day, she grew as a child very fond of singing.

Nine years later we joined talent education. At that point we were still groping in a fog. However, as I looked back a little later, I realized that her now deceased great grandmother was watching her.

Mother of Miki and Maki Mio, 14 and 12

This is already the seventh year since joining talent education. As we joined with no advance knowledge, Keiko Sato, piano instructor in the Kagoshima branch, repeatedly explained to us Mr. Suzuki's words, "Every child grows, everything depends on how we raise them." I cannot forget how we were moved when we first participated in the grand national concert.

The difficulty and effort involved in repeated practice seems to increase the joy of finishing a piece. Miki has graduated from the First Stage of the Post-Advanced Level, Maki from the Advanced Level, and our third daughter from the Violin Elementary Level. Each seems to be making efforts in order to advance to the next

level again this year. As I hear the older girls play the Coronation together, or the youngest play the violin with the accompaniment of Maki, I cannot thank Mr. Suzuki and their teachers enough.

Children grow only with the cooperation of the family. Although I cannot handle any instrument, I record music on a tape if I find a nice piece on FM while they are at school so they can hear it later. I can tell their feelings of the day from their practice which I listen to while preparing supper. It is a job for them to schedule their practice sessions. They fight for the piano between TV viewings and supper. The youngest one sometimes misses out. My biggest wish now is that the children would be able to practise all they want without having to worry about disturbing neighbors.

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AMERICAN AND JAPANESE STUDENTS' JOINT CHINA TOUR

Chise Yajima
Instructor, Tokai District

China – how much our ancestors owed to this country in spiritual, cultural and intellectual ways is impossible to measure. To that land with a history of several thousand years, twenty-two American and Japanese children ranging from age five to eighteen made the first "Suzuki Children" visit in the Communist sphere, giving concerts and workshops in Shanghai, Sian, and Beijing.

On March 20, having repeatedly heard that it was cold in China, we landed in Shanghai, all of us armed with warm, protective clothing. We were, however, met by a mild breeze of 18°C. The composer Mr. Wang, whom we had met in Japan, and a China International Travel Bureau guide were waiting for us. From the airport to the hotel by the side of the Suzhou Creek, we were divided into two groups, the 34 Americans headed for Shanghai on a big bus, and Mrs. Suzuki and 13 Japanese on a small bus. What surprised us during our first glimpse of China was that there were so many people: people, people, people, till we thought we might have wandered into a maze of living things. I had heard that China's population was one billion – our buses ran amidst these throngs of people as though it was a matter of fact.

In Shanghai we gave a workshop at the Shanghai Academy of Music. We also listened to the academy students' performances on violin, cello, piano, and traditional instruments. Their appearance and their skills not only clearly conveyed to us the Chinese people's

serious approach to education but we felt their eager eyes desiring to learn about the Suzuki method. We gave a concert at the hall there the same evening. People at the main table delivered greetings before the program, then they went on stage and gave each child a firm handshake. We had calculated the time for performances before leaving Japan, but had failed to include this in our calculation. The Shanghai concert lasted nearly three and a half hours, and small children fell asleep while waiting, having to be woken before their numbers – a backstage episode.



On a visit to a Shanghai shrine

On March 23, we proceeded from Shanghai to Sian, the ancient capital of Changan. We woke early in the morning and went to the airport with the children not in the best of health due to unfamiliar water and fatigue, only to find our flight delayed: it was snowing in Sian. Since there was no prospect of departure, it was decided that we would have a group lesson in a big room we borrowed in the airport. We were able to have a precious hour. Past lunch time, we finally decided to return to downtown Shanghai for a bite (there are no restaurants in the Shanghai airport). As we were eating, we were told that the airplane was waiting for us, ready to take off any minute. We rushed back to the airport, and left five or six hours later than scheduled.

As we deplaned in Sian where we had expected to see a big snow, sleet was falling. This ancient city prospered as the start of the silk road: the colossal castle wall and towers made us feel the weight of history that spanned over 2,000 years. That night top leaders of Sian in administrative, cultural and educational fields held a welcoming banquet with splendid fare. And they spoke: "Mankind's future is on children's shoulders. Education is the most important thing for the future of the world." The China International Travel Bureau interpreter in Sian, whose child had just turned three, said, "I would very much like to raise my child by the Suzuki method." We handed him a copy of Mr. Suzuki's *Nurtured by Love*, and explained that "the Suzuki method is not intended for fostering professionals." "That's what is so wonderful about it," he responded. I thought that what inspired him was not only the children's performances but the sight of their lively growth. I experienced this many times during the trip.



The tour visits the Great Wall.

life-infused freshness and almost forgot the length of their history. The landscape we watched from the bus windows consisted of mountains covered with white snow, apricots which had just started to bloom at the foot of the mountains, and a person pulling a cart with heavy lumber. It was such a peaceful scene as though in a Chinese screen painting. I hear that Sian is a treasury of

In Sian, facing the tomb of the Chin emperor, Shihuang-di, which is famous for the uncovering of 8,000 human size figures, the Huaquing Pond in which the famous beauty Yang Guifei* is said to have bathed, and the Banbo ruins from 6,000 years ago, we were struck by the

history which one cannot exhaust in less than a week to ten days. We caught only a tiny glimpse of it on the run.

*

March 25, from Sian to Beijing. Again there was a long wait at the airport due to fog, during which we had a group practice. When the fog lifted we left for Beijing. "Beijing is the coldest," people had told us. However, we found the city so warm (they spoke of an abnormally warm weather this year) that we almost didn't need our winter coats. Beijing is the capital of China: on the wide roads, not only bicycles and trolley buses but many cars travelled.

That night we gave a concert at the hall of the Central Music Academy where Mr. Wang teaches. In the audience were Mr. Wang Bingnan, president of the Chinese Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, Japanese Ambassador and Mrs. Katori, the wife of the American Ambassador, and other distinguished people. The performance was followed by long, long applause, about which Mr. Wang afterwards said, "This is very rare in China." "Many who heard this performance received *shindo*, a [soul-] shaking impact." "Professor, may I ask why you say *shindo*, for I'm sure you mean *kando* (emotional impact)?" I asked, not familiar with the word. In China we have an expression *shindo* which conveys a stronger emotion than *kando*," he explained. What a nice expression, I thought.

The following day, we had a workshop with teachers of the Academy. I clearly observed among them a *shindo*-impact and a wonder at coming into contact with a new world. They commented that they "would like to study and adopt anything that is wonderful," and asked many lively questions touching on fundamentals of the Suzuki method. The method has become a matter of fact for us who are near Mr. Suzuki. "A wonderful teacher is right there," Mr. Suzuki repeatedly tells us; yet I toil and moil in my narrow world, losing sight of my aim. I freshly realized what I have been doing while at the Academy.

In Beijing, Chinese, American and Japanese children

performed together Mozart's *Eine Kleine* and a Chinese piece called "Beautiful Evening."

Children were looking forward to seeing the pandas and were greatly pleased to do so at Beijing Zoo. We also saw the Great Wall which extends 6,000 kilometers on sharp mountains, and such already familiar sights as



The author in the Tiananmen Square

Tiananmen Square and the Gugong Palace. The grandeur of the scale and the brilliance of luxury enjoyed by power were something that we could not have begun to imagine while in Japan. Seeing today's China now before my eyes, I pondered: if history

had remained history with people living today's lives as before, having never envisioned their future, then what?

*

On the afternoon of March 18, we left, everyone in good health, with a big stuffed panda as a gift for Mr. Suzuki, and headed directly for the national concert at the Tokyo Budokan on the 30th.

Mr. Wang, the composer, took time from his stay in Japan as a foreign student to return to his country in order to arrange everything for us. He accompanied us during our entire trip in China, and cared for everything including minute backstage details. We were able to complete this trip without accident thanks to Mr. Wang and Mr. Chi of Sony, China-Japan Cooperative Enterprise consultant. Thank you very much.

Let me also thank our American co-travellers:

Professors Herman, Jempelis, and Aber, as well as their students and their parents, with whom we were able to make good friends.

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* Shihuangdi (259-50 BC) was the first emperor who unified China in 221 B.C. He drove the Huns north of the Yellow River, and is credited with building the Great Wall. He is also famous for burning books and executing scholars. Yang Guifei (719-56) was a lady of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang Dynasty. The emperor loved her to the point that he neglected government. She was killed (or committed suicide) during the An Lushan rebellion. Their eternal love is a celebrated topic in poetry since the time of Bo Juyi's "Long Lament."



*The earlier period
The better environment
The better teaching method
The more training
The superior instruction.*

*(Five Mottoes of
Talent Education)*

PIANO STUDENTS SHOULD ALSO PRACTISE AT HOME WITH THE MODEL

Lectures on Music Instruction (36)

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Listening every day to several thousand piano graduation tapes sent by teachers throughout the country, what I most regret concerning the performances of students of most teachers is that in piano,

The Suzuki method – the method of daily home practice playing along with the record or tape – is not yet practised.

I would like you to carry this out.

This is our new method which did not exist in traditional education; it is an approach which has the greatest effect. Yet many people do not readily practise it.

Unless you practise this central approach of the Suzuki method, yours is not the Suzuki method. Wishing to have the Suzuki method tried everywhere, let me freshly ask the teachers who have joined the piano study group: "Please give it a try."

You will eventually understand what great results it will produce. Every child will grow musically with good ability. Of course the amount of daily practice at home creates differences in ability, but anyway this is a way for every child to grow.

I also listen to several thousand violin students' graduation tapes. In violin they have been growing while playing with the accompaniment tapes whether in the Pre-Elementary or Elementary Level, with a result that fifteen year olds and three or four year olds share the same musical tempo. Their tonality and quality of singing depend upon the skill of their teachers' instruc-

tion as well as their own efforts.

The wonderful fact of three thousand students playing in perfect unison without rehearsal at the annual national concert at the Budokan in Tokyo is proof of the results of this educational approach.

When You Don't Like the Textbook Performances

I would like those who are not happy with our records or tapes to record your own performance for your students. Having your students practise at home with your own tapes is also the Suzuki method. This is the same as the teacher going to the student's home and playing with him any number of times, so it constitutes a wonderful lesson.

Sweat now over the tempo and now over the expression at the single weekly lesson: children will have forgotten most of it when they practise at home. But have them always practise playing with the tape at home and they will absorb both the tempo and expression before they know it. Due to the power of life which allows them to do this, they will grow beautifully. Make sure that you try this approach.

Set the Pitch of the Tape to the Piano at Home

In case the student's home piano is low and does not match the pitch of the accompaniment tape, either ask each family to purchase a tape recorder with pitch control, or copy the tape yourself for your student so that it will be in tune with his piano.

Anyway, have your students practise at home with the tape. Pitch control recorders are available. Keep some in class.

The violin can be tuned to the tape quite conveniently.

Be Sure to Carry out the Lottery Method

The lottery method is a Suzuki approach for fostering ability.

While the child repeatedly plays the pieces he can play with the study tapes, the ability of musical rhythm and musical sensitivity grows high before he realizes it.

If the child only practises the assignment, all he acquires will be the habit of toddling. Since people tend

to rely on the commonsense that practice means learning to play a piece the student can't yet play, a mountain of toddler students exist in the world. "Why does the mother tongue alone develop?" "Every child grows without fail." - With this faith, I would like you to practise the method by which every child's ability beautifully develops.

"I am putting to the test the educational approach for creating ability by which every child grows." I would like you to instruct with this resolution. One who observes individual children's growth and fosters them alertly thinking of how to guide them to practise well, is a teacher who understands the Suzuki method.

No matter whom I take as my student, I instruct him with a resolution that I won't be happy until I make him great.

If a child does not practise, I think of a clever method to make him feel like practising, so as to eventually change him into a highly motivated child. Keeping an eye on this, for the past fifty years I have done my best in instructing children. If you simply watch a child vacantly, labeling him, according to commonsense, an unmotivated child, you are no instructor who fosters children, but a teacher who keeps company with the child so as to spoil him. With strong belief in the fact that every child is a great child who grows while mastering the mother tongue, let's watch the totality of each child, and make patient effort as instructors of love who will foster every child without fail.

Talent Education, no 63



FOSTER ONE THING TO A HEIGHT

Shin'ichi Suzuki
From *Talent Education*
for Young Children

While, as I have already stated, early childhood is the most important period for developing ability, it is unreasonable to try to have the child learn many things all at once. First of all it would be impossible for parents to foster superior ability in many areas. Besides, that would be too great a burden for the child. Hence it is wise to choose one thing and help the child by fostering that ability to a height.

Let it be music, language, math, literature, memory, or anything. Whatever you choose, the important thing is to decide on an area in which one can aspire to a height, or in which ability can grow beautifully.

In any case, ability fostered to a height will prove a great strength when the child does something in a different area in the future.

In talent education violin class every year we find about one thousand children who have learned to play the Vivaldi a minor concerto. The majority are elementary students. Younger ones are first or second graders, and there are a fair number of such children.

This was a graduation piece before the war when I was teaching at a music academy. Now many children are performing it. Among them there are those who play such more advanced pieces as concertos by Bach or Mozart. This ability equals that of present day conservatory students. Both in technique and high musical sensibility, it may surpass the level of music students.

These children can play at any time any of the 48 pieces they have learned earlier, having committed all of

them to memory. Therefore, during that interval they have acquired memory, concentration and the habit of making efforts.

We are talking about elementary school children here. It is only natural that they are outstanding students at school.

I don't intend to make professional musicians out of these children. Naturally it is a different matter if the child and the parents desire it, but my purpose is to help foster high ability and beautiful heart in children through music. And I think, whatever path the children choose in the future, such a high ability fostered while young will surely bloom into a fine flower.

There are many examples of this.

Make It Fun

In whatever area, elementary instruction is the most important and requires great care. Especially in young children's education it is essential to understand children's psychology and to be prepared to foster them with pleasant games. Moreover, unless you recognize the nature of the growth of talent before you start, you will come to a standstill in your instruction, finding it difficult to succeed in developing ability. To think it "all right that a beginner does as a beginner is expected to do" is the first step toward failure.

Whatever you teach, the material is simple at the beginning. Therefore children can learn to imitate it relatively quickly. However, the essential point of talent education is the beauty of strength which grows and develops in children, not the height of the level.

Therefore, from this first step where children are capable of "imitation" with fair ease, we must start to create strength aiming at fostering ability by repeated training in "imitation" and by correction. This is the same approach as in young children's language learning. Just because a baby has learned to say "mma mma," we must not teach him to say "ohayo" (good morning) the following day, brutally leading him ahead.

We train children repeatedly in one thing, and proceed to the next step only after they master it to the point that they can handle it with perfect ease. However, in this case we must not forget to add to it what they have already acquired earlier and train them in both materials at the same time. This may seem useless at first glimpse; however, as stated earlier in discussing conditions for the growth of ability, young children learn language while creating ability by this method. We let children accumulate ability through reviewing earlier material with greater perfection and refinement so that they will be better prepared to smoothly enter the next stage. In addition, it is necessary to avoid a sudden leap to the next assignment but to choose feasible material the level of, say, an application of the first assignment, and allow children to advance step by step while measuring the level of their growth. In short, progress which leads children to bump against a wall is sure to fail. Some insist that we ought to let them acquire ability through overcoming the wall with great effort, but even with adults this approach means much pain and little effect. All the more so with children: they lose confidence and become unmotivated.

Prepare-Teach-Foster-Foster-Foster

I don't know who invented the word *kyoiku* (education). *Kyo* means to teach, and *iku* to foster. I think the word has an important meaning of fostering the child until he thoroughly masters what was taught.

Yet present day school education only emphasizes teach-teach-teach, forgetting the important factor of fostering.

In other words, traditional education is constantly engaged in teaching and advancing, neglecting to foster ability.

I consider that in order to develop human ability, the greatest emphasis should be placed on the element of fostering. Therefore, education should be *kyo-iku-iku-iku*, or teach-foster-foster-foster; I even think it fine to

have *iku* (foster) as many times as you like.

The ideal education, I think, is when we further add the word *junbi*, or preparation. Hence, we get *jun-kyo-iku-iku-iku*, or prepare-teach-foster-foster-foster.

I ought to explain a little about adding preparation here.

Let me take for example my approach in violin instruction.

My Violin Instruction

First, a parent brings a child and asks to learn violin.

We instructors ask the parent to read books on talent education so that it is thoroughly understood. The child's lesson doesn't start right away. We teach the parent to play the Twinkle Variations at the beginning of the text so that she will become a good assistant at home. In the meanwhile, the child listens to the record of Twinkle every day at home.

Until the parent can play the first piece, the child doesn't get to play the violin. What this aims at has a very important meaning.

However much the parent wishes the child to learn violin, a child of three or four has no desire at all to practise violin. What is necessary, therefore, is to prepare him so that he will feel like it unconsciously: "I want to do it too." To begin with, therefore, the mother lets him daily listen at home to the piece he will learn first, takes him to the lessons and places him amidst children who play the violin. This means giving that environment to the child. Moreover, in the classroom and at home, his mother plays on the small violin which seems to fit him better.

In the meanwhile, the child begins to feel like doing it himself. He begins to think that he wants to take the violin away from his mother and "play with" it.

I already know the melody of the piece.

Other children are already playing.

I want to play with it, too.

Gradually such a desire burgeons.

After creating such conditions, the child will be started on lessons in the following steps.

"Do you want to play the violin, too?"

"Yes."

"Will you practise well?"

"Yes."

"Then, I'll ask the teacher next time."

Impatient parents would like the child to take lessons as soon as possible. However, progress in lessons is completely different between a child who is motivated from the start and another who is forced to learn. Your child may start a month or two late, but later on he will gain sixth months or a whole year.

Start the child with the joy of play, and guide him in the proper direction with the joy of play – early education, whatever the subject may be, has to start here. The main thing is growth. The moment the parent or the teacher becomes stiff-collared with the idea of "education," the child becomes warped. First foster a desire to learn, then help acquire ability. This is the knack of instruction.

Don't Hurry, Don't Rest

Another thing I would like to draw your attention to is parental competitiveness. When seeing others' children advancing, parents tend to force study on their children; however, this is *their* idea, and has nothign to do with the children. At first, have your child study only while his attention span lasts, whether three minutes or five minutes, and stop immediately when the child is bored. Never force. Cleverly grasp a moment again between his play times, and give him another lesson. Even if the child practises no more than three minutes at a time, if he does it three times a day, it adds up to nine minutes. Help him concentrate longer little by little.

"Don't hurry, don't rest" is my motto.

Hard as you may try to keep the child at it who has lost his concentration, you can achieve no effect. Not only that, parental criticisms will increase, and as for the child, he will resist; mutual soreness will remain so that tomorrow's lesson will again start in an unpleasant mood.

Contrary to this, a parent who understands child psychology well is good at tactics along this line, and, listening to catch the moment when the day's lesson has nearly reached the target, moves ahead: "Let's stop here today." Then the child will want to do more, but you should save the desire till the next day.

Praise to Create Confidence

Scolding the child into doing it and praising him to doing it are completely opposite in the psychology they create in the child. If repeatedly scolded, the child loses confidence, and loses motivation.

When praised, the child starts to gain confidence and feels encouraged. However, if your praise is clumsy, since children are sensitive, they see through your lie immediately, and the effect is the opposite of what you wished.

People around me often say that I am good at praising, but I never even once praise without sincerity. Again, I have never said "no good" no matter how poor the student is.

I Only Praised the Child for Taking the Challenge

Once at talent education violin class, a teacher said to me, "There is a child who never practises no matter how hard his parents or I try to encourage him. I would like you to hear him once." So I had this child play for me.

The child did play the violin, but it was all completely messy. As I praised him despite that, "Well played, well played," he smiled charmingly. "Though you played well, I'd play this way. Can you do this kind of thing?" I said. "I can," the child answered. "Then try it," I said. Since it was just a matter of playing *chon chon chon* with the bow, naturally he could do it. "Well done! Then how about this." I let him try again. "Well done. How about this, then?" While I tried this and that, the session turned into a lesson. We were practising hard, the two of us together.

Later a parent asked: "Mr. Suzuki, the child played so

badly, yet you praised him saying he played well; is it okay to tell a lie?" "I never tell a lie. What I mean is this: the child who obstinately refused to play when you and others told him to play actually played. So I simply told him he 'played well [took well the challenge to play],' but I have not at all said that he played skillfully," I replied. Depending upon one word of praise, the child may get in a good enough mood to start to practise. When you ask him "can you do this, can you do that?" the child tries to take the challenge, wanting no defeat. However, in that case you must challenge him to do what you know he can do. You must not try a difficult thing. And when he does it, praise him, "You're good, aren't you," and pull him forward.

What is important is with what heart parents face the child, or, their attitude.

In any case, the parent, although good at scolding the child, seems to be poorest at praising. Some say that they can't praise their children because they feel embarrassed, but if you practise this, you come to be able to do it naturally.

Parents tend to criticize children because they are only involved in correcting weaknesses. It's fine to relax a little and think your job is to develop strong points. What matters is to let ability grow even if little by little, so I hope you will have the calm and objectivity which allow you to watch your children's growth without hurrying and without resting.

Guide but Not Tug

There is an ancient Chinese book called the *Li Ji* (The Book of Rites) dating from 3,000 years ago. In it we find a phrase "Guide but not tug" describing an educational method. I think it a really good phrase.

Guide but not tug – in other words, it teaches us to guide, yet never forcefully tug as if pulling a reluctant cow. As many as 3,000 years ago such a wonderful truth was shown.

When a seedling has started to grow rapidly, no one

would pull its tip to make it grow faster. For it is obvious that this would tear and spoil the plant.

Yet with human beings, education is practised which tugs children in order to forcefully propel them forward with no consideration for conditions of growth, simply out of a desire to give them knowledge quickly. At times, people are so misdirected as to yell if children aren't as malleable as they wish.

The word *kyoiku*, or to teach and foster, contains no such meaning as tug or yell. What is used here is the profoundly meaningful and ingenious word "to foster."

It is easy to teach, but quite difficult to foster. If you scold a child, the ability to be scolded grows in the child. Some will notice this and try to stop scolding in the future, and others will feel at a loss as to what to do, thinking that the situation may worsen if there is no scolding.

An acquaintance said once:

"Since you told me that the ability to be scolded will grow if I scold my child, I was obliged to leave him alone without scolding, but in his case the result was so poor that I decided this just wouldn't do, and one day dropped a big thunder bolt with a bang.

The effect was instantaneous: since then he hasn't done what he was doing before. After all it seems better to give an occasional bang. What do you think?"

So I replied,

"It might have been good in your child's case. But if that bang was indeed effective, the reason may be this: for one thing, you hadn't scolded him for a long time, and for another, you didn't direct your anger at your child but, when reason told you things were going nowhere, you wisely directed the stage within the boundary of that reason. These factors probably strongly induced your child to realize he had been bad.

However, if fear of getting scolded is all that is created in his heart to keep him from doing it, then the education was only temporary and external. He might do it all the same if you aren't around. Children are quite clever, you know.

If you acted in order to teach your child, fine, I think

it good for you to let whatever skillful thunder rumble. However, the better fostered the child is in the talent for being scolded through frequent suffering, the greater the theatrical thunder has to be in order to achieve a temporary effect.

While we teach children with an intention to teach or to guide, I think it only corresponds to *kyo* of *kyoiku*. Therefore, depending on the degree of growth of the talent for being scolded in the child, it is unavoidable to have different degrees of strictness in teaching. However, if you become angry, you should stop scolding at once. The moment you are mad it is no longer education: you are fighting with your child.

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Correction of Defects

Correction is a very difficult job.

Why is it hard for us to correct our own defects when we do reflect frequently on ourselves? Let's think about whether ability already formed can be corrected.

If, during early childhood, one is raised like Kamala, the wolf child, it would be a great misfortune which cannot be undone in a lifetime.

Some people are so relaxed as to think:

"Leave children alone until an appropriate time comes; fine to educate them after that. In education there is a thing called timing. Depending upon how this is done,



Rainbow, rainbow, rainbow, rainbow, rainbow, rainbow,

Music is a rainbow.

Casals

however, children can be fated to irremediable misfortune.

A woman asked Darwin when she should start her child's education. "How old is your child?" he asked. When the woman told him the child was one and a half, Darwin answered, "Then you are one and a half years too late."

This is a really good story which all parents should ponder deeply.

Those who carelessly think it education to teach and guide only in things intellectual forget that on the day they are born newborns start great activities of formation of human ability through receiving everything from their environment.

Human ability – namely both sensitivity and intellect – is formed from the day of birth. If you come to know this, you will realize that leaving newborns alone will naturally lead to something irreversible. Hence, I consider it impossible to correct what has grown as ability. In other words, what is already formed cannot be returned to white paper.

It is the same as our past. Our past, which we have lived until today, cannot now be changed, we cannot now amend it. What we can do is simply to newly create our lives from today through reflection on our past lives.

In other words, I think correction means an effort to foster and add a different and correct ability through reflection on the past.

*

Correction is a difficult task. Especially after reaching adulthood, it requires great effort to develop a new ability by oneself. I am sure many of you have directly experienced this.

Let's think about why this is difficult, why it cannot be done without great effort.

This question is related to the question of formation of ability, and to age.

Another power from the past always exists which hinders the effort to obtain a new and correct ability. It involves the following two points:

1. Lowering of the ability to acquire ability through adapting to the environment.

2. Activity of the already formed ability.

In infancy and early childhood, power of growth, or power of life, sensitively adapts to the environment and serves in human formation, but, as one grows in age and in human formation, one's adaptability declines. For this reason, difficulty arises when one tries to acquire a new and different ability.

Another problem is that all the abilities already acquired are in action. Therefore, the earlier the age, the easier the correction.

Suppose a child has acquired a certain bad habit at three. In order to let him quit it we should try to give him a different habit. If the bad habit was formed through repeating it a hundred times, train the other correct habit more than one hundred times. When it is repeated one hundred times, it puts him back to the starting point. When the child is trained 150 or 200 times in the proper habit, he will start to use the ability which was repeated more frequently, and gradually stop using the former bad habit. In other words, we correct the child by different intensities in abilities. What this means is that "correction is to foster a new, proper ability independently."

As I stated before, the younger the child is the easier the correction; after reaching adulthood it becomes extremely difficult. At twenty, one does not have enough life left for thorough correction. Among the many abilities already formed by adulthood, ability to judge what is correct is also heightened. Therefore, those with higher abilities live with more self reflection.

However, no matter how much one reflects upon oneself, pledges to oneself and to others, one returns to the starting point before one knows it.

"In spite of my firm resolution and self reflection, how sad it is that my will is so weak that I repeat the same thing again," we grieve. However, this is not a matter of

will; rather, this is the very nature of ability. If you realize that "correction is impossible, and the only way to correct myself is to make efforts so as to develop a new and proper ability," then go ahead and make efforts to develop that new and proper ability. Resolution alone does not foster ability. "Ability is formed in proportion to experience and frequency" - this principle is an immovable fact.

I hope you understand how difficult correction is once we grow up.

The best is to avoid forming habits in early childhood. If it happens, it is desirable to correct them immediately.

Not This and That, but Just One Thing

My method of correction in violin instruction is this: I let a student play, and listen paying attention to his defects. They may include technical errors, problems in musical expression, weakness in posture, shortcomings in the method of practice, etc. I think about which one of these shortcomings to correct first. In other words, I pick out the most important one, and ask the student, "correct this one thing by next week."

A week later, the student may be much better, but not sufficiently corrected, so I assign the same again. When the habit is thoroughly corrected, I point out the second defect and assign him to train himself in that area. After letting him work on it until he corrects himself completely, I go on to correct the third, then fourth, then fifth problems, correcting one after another habit. This way his progress is fast, and he becomes a fine player. No matter how advanced the student is, I always seek a weakness and try to mend it. Defects in advanced stages develop into really delicate problems.

*

It is the same with correction of different habits in a child's character and behavior. If you scold the child every day saying this is wrong and that is wrong all at once, you can never correct him: all you accomplish is to increase the psychological burden on the child. The most

effective method is emphatically to focus on one thing which you think you must correct.

However, in order to do this, it is important to contrive it so that you can give it to the child as a pleasant game.

Develop Memory

Daisetsu Suzuki states in his book, *What Is Zen*:

Human properties include experience That is because humans have memory. Memory is a very important thing, and human beings' thoughts and ideas are derived of memory On the basis of memory experience forms, and because there is experience, human beings, it can be said, fulfill the reasons why they are human beings.

Memory is as important as this. If the child acquires the ability for memory through training from early childhood, it will play an important role in the development of basic abilities.

Children in the old days used to read aloud difficult writings of Confucius in classical Chinese. They learned to recite passages from memory, and we hear elderly people say that they never forgot them after growing up. In the old days, people knew very well the importance of memory. Reading Confucius not only trained memory, but helped children acquire emotionally if not intellectually the teachings of the Four Books and Five Volumes through their teachers' personalities.

*

Training of memory is more effective when given early. Adults cannot easily develop memory.

If parents and teachers pay attention to this and train children to develop memory, they will not only benefit from memory in academic work but find it a helpful strength all their lives. I, for one, was not able to

develop memory, and, under the negative burden of constant forgetfulness always painfully realize inconvenience and powerlessness about everything.

People have already noticed how fast children learn things. I would like to suggest that you use this strength for training children's memory, and guide them with careful planning.

Children with good academic standing have a better memory than average children; inferior students are ones who have missed a chance to develop that ability. The difference is as simple as that, I think. For there is no inherent difference in the quality of children.

The Case of Yoji Gakuen

At Yoji Gakuen (Young Children's School), the experimental kindergarten of talent education, young children before school age are prepared in basic skills which will be needed in the future. One area is the training of memory.

They learn a haiku a day from Issa's work which is easiest for children to feel familiar with, recite repeatedly and memorize. Children who did not easily memorize a haiku after repeating it ten times at first can do so after repeating it three or four times by the second term and by the third term it takes just once.

The haiku are chosen according to the season so that they can easily be adopted for observation, singing, and game playing. For example:

First Term (54 haiku)

"The snow thaws,
it thaws," pigeons
coo on a tree.

The snow thaws
lo, a villageful of
children.

(etc.)

Second Term (64 haiku)

A rhubarb leaf
tears with a pop –
this heat.

A kitten's pose
as he lightly presses
a leaf.

(etc.)

Third Term (45 haiku)

Crawl, smile,
your second year starts
this morning.*

Old home
pounding into rice cake
spring snow

(etc.)

All the children learn the approximately 170 haiku by Issa with ease in a year.

This ability for memorization increases speed and length of retention through daily training. Memorize at once, never forget once memorized – this is how we train children in memorization ability.

Beautiful poems other than Issa's haiku are also used. Longer materials such as fairy tales are set into the form of *kamishibai* [paper theater, using a set of cardboard pictures, each representing a scene, held by the narrator who reads the story printed in back]. They memorize a story of about 500 words after hearing it four or five times.

How can it be done at home? Whether a picture book,

*Under the old lunar calendar, a baby turned two on the New Year which celebrated the beginning of the spring.

haiku, children's song, or a short tale, choose what is shortest, and let your child repeat it about five times. The next day, let him repeat it several times again, add a new one, and train him on it as before. On the third day, train him on the first and second materials, and add a new one again. Training in all the materials already taught together without omission in this way is the talent education approach. Therefore, in the case of a long tale, divide it into many sections feasible to the child, and train him so that in the end he can narrate it all the way through. You must not forget either to train him to recite after you beautifully.

While continuing this way, ability is accumulated, allowing the child gradually to memorize more and more quickly. If you continue this two or three years, the child will acquire an ability to retain in his memory what he has heard once throughout his life.

*

The approach is the same in violin. Although a separate training, i. e., learning of technique, is added in the case of violin, practice in playing without the music is done from the start. Therefore, here, too, memory is fostered. While still training the child in the piece he first learned toward greater refinement, we teach him the next piece. We help him create ability by training him in these two pieces together, and then add a third piece. Thus children never forget what they have learned, and can play them at any moment.

*

Since training of memory also creates concentration, it proves a great strength in academic areas after entering school. That children of Yoji Gakuen or of talent education all achieve superior academic standards at school is partly due to this memory and concentration.

[To be continued.]

The Writings of
SHIN'ICHI SUZUKI

Where LOVE Is Deep



WHERE LOVE IS DEEP: THE WRITINGS OF SHIN'ICHI SUZUKI

In this volume Shin'ichi Suzuki explains the philosophy and method of talent education, the theory and practice of the Suzuki method. The book, richly illustrated with practical examples, illuminates many aspects of Suzuki the man, the musician, the teacher. It includes writings and talks never before published in English. 149 pages, illustrated.

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MEMORIES OF THE VIOLIN

Ryoko Yoneyama
Instructor, Kushiro Chapter

As I stop to think, I am amazed by the speed of time, for it has already been six years since starting to teach at Kushiro, Hokkaido, the northernmost Japanese island. Fresh joy surges at having a career with the violin. I wish to cherish my companionship with the violin, which, I realize, has continued twenty-some years.

*

One day when I was a kindergartener, I was strongly attracted by a violinist on TV. I remember asking and asking my mother ever since that day to let me take violin. Even the piano was no daily matter at that time: my parents may not have seen or heard the violin before. I can imagine how bewildered they must have felt. They promptly learned that there were two violin teachers in our area, and visited Teacher Sugano who taught by talent education. This is how I started going to his class.

I remember that I observed lessons long, but after a while I was so delighted when my own instrument was bought. When *Twinkle* lasted more than a year after the first lesson, my mother, as she tells me, was worried about whether I would be able to keep up with the future lessons, but she continued to accompany me to lessons with faith in the teacher, as though engaged in a game of patience with her child. However, I hear that she started to enjoy it when I began to advance in pieces, since they were all beautiful pieces. Later on, my older and younger sisters began to take lessons with me, and whether it was because three sisters studying together was rare, we were very well cared for.

I remember the warm smiles of grownups around us when my little sister and I, who had fallen fast asleep on

our big sisters lap on the bus on our way home alone from the lesson, woke up at the terminal rubbing our sleepy eyes.

Probably because the three of us studied the same instrument, when one of us started to play, the others raced to get the violins out too, feeling like doing the same. However short our practice may have been, we were somewhat uncomfortable till bedtime if we had not touched the instruments all day, and felt restless lest we should be scolded, acutely sensing the atmosphere which whispered to us that our mother would not let us get by.

I remember how pleased I was when praised for practising, how before supper I came out of the hiding place behind the curtain to perform following applause in the manner of a mini concert, how I delightedly played on a small low table. I recall only happy events like these despite the fact that probably we practised happily less often, so it may be that our mother strove hard to come up with good ideas. Learning comes with waves for everyone; it never continues always with good winds and full sails. As I realize, the smaller the child is, the more important to continue with the encouragement of teachers and parents who are ready to wait. I cannot help feeling thankful that I have somehow managed to reach this point. My big sister and I often listened to each other or I had her teach me, but I recall with nostalgia that, being close in age, at times we were fighting fiercely before we realized it.

*

Studying four years with Mr. Suzuki had a precious meaning for me in that he showed me what is real through the violin. With warm, endless faith in human potential, he instructed me patiently at each lesson. I am happy to have encountered the teacher who taught me faith and determination: "I will teach at least this much." Without ever raising his voice, he showed me sternness, gentleness, and "waiting" by his own example. We teacher trainees often discussed Mr. Suzuki's philosophy and mutually grieved over the difficulty of

changing ourselves and over our slow progress.

They were all pleasant friends. When I was absent due to despair or illness, they were so worried that they visited me with my favorite cheese cake and gave me support. One unforgettable memory is of when Mrs. Suzuki whom we called Obachama, or Auntie, went home to Germany for a visit. The teacher trainees took turns, two at a time, staying at his place to cook for him. We made a lot of fuss over what to cook, turned pale hearing about the fiasco the day before, taught each other how to flexibly handle the situation as it arose, and did our desperate best. Seeing Mr. Suzuki's daily life before our eyes was a continuation of fresh surprises. I wonder if his stomach got a shock from suppers prepared by teacher trainees, for he took us out to a good restaurant. Who else was the most relieved when Auntie returned but Mr. Suzuki himself – a cold sweat almost breaks out thinking of this.

*

For three or four years after leaving Matsumoto with numerous memories, I continued to worry Mr. Suzuki because I was not able to collect students easily. However, we held the second recital in October, 1982, to which the Nemuro class children and parents came on a chartered bus and stayed overnight. To my pleasure the recital was a great success.

Although neither children nor parents have directly met Mr. Suzuki, they feel close to him through monthly and quarterly magazines, and, realizing that everyone is walking toward the same aim with his guidance, we are all burning with the desire to create a better classroom. Remote as we are geographically, we hope to hear his voice always in our hearts and try to approach step by step the faraway beacon of true talent education.

Our chapter's wish is to invite Mr. and Mrs. Suzuki to the Kushiro class several years from now.

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