

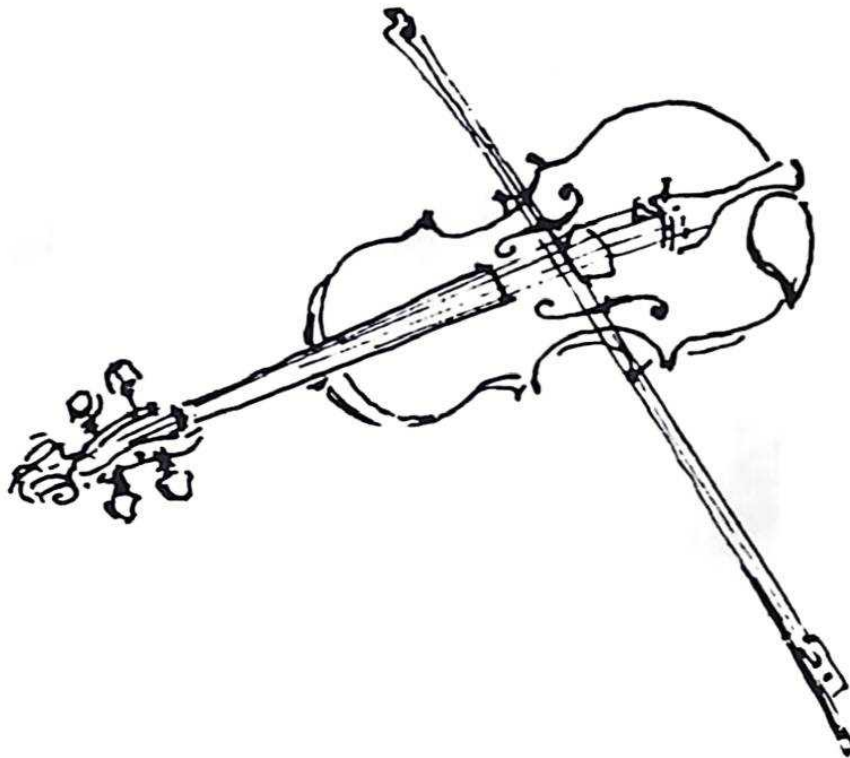
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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

How to motivate students is the most basic subject for the Suzuki teachers. Also, dynamics is a crucial point of instruction in musical expression. We are pleased to offer two articles on these subjects by Dr. Shin'ichi Suzuki, "How to Motivate Your Students" and "Let's Avoid the Common Practice: Instruction in Typist Playing without Dynamics."

In issues one through ten, we published in installments the book, *A Father's Record* by Kiyoshi Suzuki. In this issue we introduce his article, "Parental Responsibility," from his booklet, *The Road to Talent Education*.

The moving reminiscence, "Mr. Suzuki's Teachings," is by Toshiko Hasegawa. Miss Hasegawa, violin instructor, has visited the States several times, most recently last fall with the Ten Suzuki Children from Japan.

Koichi Hattori is one of Japan's leading composers. "The Suzuki Method and Myself" describes his personal experience with the Suzuki method.

The installment of Dr. Suzuki's book, *Talent Education for Young Children* includes an interesting and important report by Miwa Yano on "Education at Talent Education Yoji Gakuen" (Experimental Kindergarten of Talent Education). Mrs. Yano has been teaching at Yoji Gakuen since its founding in 1949.

Eiko Kataoka, violin instructor in St. Louis and co-editor of *TEJ* is one of the earlier students of talent education. "With Talent Education" describes her wonderful experience with Dr. and Mrs. Suzuki.

HOW TO MOTIVATE YOUR STUDENTS; HOW TO LET THEM ADVANCE IN PIECES



Shin'ichi Suzuki

Every morning from three to nine I have been enjoying listening to graduation tapes from all over the country. Tapes containing well fostered, beautifully musical and accurate performances really delight me. I hear them with gratitude and respect toward teachers who are demonstrating how, depending solely on the way of fostering, little children grow with outstandingly high ability.

Every teacher makes efforts to instruct students with the same serious wish to foster children beautifully, but in fact differences in student abilities are created by the different skills of motivating daily home practice. Hence, one of the important jobs of the instructor is to inspire parental understanding through carefully explaining how to motivate children at home.

While writing this, a thought occurs to me: we should have prepared a pamphlet on "How to Supervise Home Practice," explaining to parents how best they can assist at home. Out of this reflection I will some day make such a pamphlet.

While always repeating that students' ability grows through home practice, it was careless of me not to have even thought of writing a pamphlet asking for parental support.

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Now, listening daily to many graduation tapes, I find

a fair number of students whose growth is extremely slow. This is why I picked up my pen to ask teachers to help students advance in pieces in the following manner.

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I have been listening to the Pre-Elementary Level tapes in both the violin and piano schools. I find the performances quite acceptable, but while listening to secure enough playing, on looking at instructors' reports I realize that there are a fair number of leisurely students who finally graduate from the Pre-Elementary Level after two or three long years. Hence my resolution: "This won't do. I will start a new movement to improve on this leisurely education in the Suzuki method."

In piano, some students beautifully play Bach's "Two Minuets and Gigue" at age four or five, and in violin, too, a fair number of four or five year olds play securely the Vivaldi a minor concerto.

We are talking about small children's potential ability which grows if fostered. The same is true of linguistic growth: every child grows with a high ability to fluently speak the mother tongue at five years of age.

Whether piano, violin, or anything else, ability is not inborn; only as much as one has practised day by day is acquired as ability. Graduation from the Pre-elementary Level at long last in the third year is proof of letting unmotivated, leisurely days and months elapse without practising much.

Now, teachers are apt to be taken in by such students. "Not yet. Not until you can play it more securely," the teacher may instruct on the same piece at every lesson; it then takes a long time to finish a piece; the child, taking this for granted, repeats careless lessons on the same piece forever.

In such a case, the student becomes bored of staying on the same piece forever, loses motivation, and forms a habit of not practising.

More often than not, such students are not using the

lottery approach which consists of practising the former pieces with the tape every day. Again, in many of these cases, the Suzuki method is not properly carried out in class: first play the lottery game, let the student play the former pieces drawn, then move on to the assigned piece.

Especially with beginner students, the lottery approach is crucial as a method of motivating them to practise at home. Teachers who do not carry this out create third year Pre-Elementary Level graduates. Let me ask you Suzuki method teachers to practise this approach without fail.

When the student has started to play a piece fairly well, ask him to play it with the tape at the next lesson. If he is really with the tape, advance him to the next piece — assign him a new piece.

Ability grows gradually if you have him play the finished pieces every day by the lottery method, so you need not worry. I always use this method. If you keep him plodding on the assigned piece taking a long, leisurely time, he gradually stops practising.

Have the student play a former piece at lesson using the lottery approach. Have him also play the assigned piece to the tape. You can let him try again if he does not perform well. If he has such requests, he will gradually feel motivated to practise at home. In time he will apply himself diligently and start to gain speed in his progress. I would like you to watch individual students and think of appropriate ways to instruct them.

Graduation Tape Recording Is an Approach for Fostering Musical Sensitivity

Our graduation tape system enables us to see what beautiful tone and what outstanding musical sensitivity have been fostered in the past year. Every year I take great pleasure in listening to the tapes as a report of such growth.

I am sure that you students, too, feel fully inspired

to do your best to submit a fine recording of the graduation pieces.

Through this effort, you are acquiring higher and higher ability. Thinking of the great effect and significance of this graduation system, I am truly happy that we created this system.

Let me ask you students to try hard again this year and submit even better graduation tapes.

Concerning these tapes, I am writing today to convey to teachers the following thoughts:

1. Have your students practise playing the graduation pieces every day with the record or tape. In piano, too, it is fine occasionally to submit a recording of a performance with the record or tape.

In violin and cello, you can record the performance with the record (make the volume of the record soft, or just loud enough for the piano accompaniment to be clearly audible), or you may choose to use piano accompaniment or the accompaniment tape.

However, in either case, think well about the volume of the accompaniment so that the sound of the student's instrument can be heard beautifully, loudly, and clearly. Submission of a tape without accompaniment is unacceptable.

2. It is fine to record the Mozart piano concerto, Mozart violin concerto, etc. to the orchestral accompaniment of a record. Whether violin or cello, piano accompaniment is of course acceptable, but I think recording with a record is a good learning experience. It becomes a performance with an orchestra and that is nice.

Whether in piano, violin, cello, or flute, please avoid as much as possible recording concertos without the accompaniment. In piano last year there were a fair number of cases in which accompaniment was missing. If piano performances are recorded with the record or tape, it is pleasant to listen to; besides, it is a good experience for students.

Let me request the above. Have your students practise sufficiently toward the submission of this year's graduation tapes. I would like you to carry this out without fail as part of education in beautiful musical sensitivity.

If a student is already at the point of playing the graduation piece, be kind enough to graduate him even if he is a little clumsy. Remember that motivating students is an important condition. Postponing graduation for one year is a letdown for students, and results in the loss of motivation. In such a case, all you have to do is just mark "motivation in process." One aim of the submission of graduation tapes is to motivate students. Moreover, the tapes remain as their important human documents. I would like teachers to study "how to record well," so that you can record them with as beautiful and good tone as possible.

Talent Education, No. 66

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



*(Five Mottoes of
Talent Education)*

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY



Kiyoshi Suzuki

"How long should parents maintain direct contact with their children and how long should they educate them?"

"I feel that children behave better when parents aren't around than when they are. Could that be true?"

If it is known clearly, as if drawing a line, just how long parents should educate their children, it might be easier than imagined for them to engage in child education with that in mind. However, not only is this unknown but when and how to do it is the very crux of education. And that's why, I think, it is said that it is difficult to raise children beautifully.

There is no such foolish parent as gives a hand to a child who can now walk on his own feet saying, "Step firm, step firm."

Yet in actual life cases abound in which the parent faces the child in the same way as holding a hand out to a toddler who can walk. This is just like the sixty-five year old worrywart father who warns his forty year old son, "When you go to Tokyo you have to watch out; there are so many cars you may get injured." There are also cases in which the parent is unaware of how the child's mind has been growing.

The newborn was of snow white innocence not knowing the east from the west, but the hearts of the parents and other people as well as everything in the environment that is seen and heard add hues to this snow white heart. The combination of these hues becomes the child's heart.

As a year passes, and another, as both heart and body

develop, growth over growth is further accumulated into adulthood. While thoughtful parents can continue to foster their children's hearts whether they are eighteen or twenty-five, some parents lament: "Indeed our child listens to nothing we say."

Sometimes parents assume that "a good child" is one whom they can handle as they wish, or who obeys them whatever they say. Or, assuming that everything parents say is correct, they single-mindedly believe that children benefit if parents accept nothing they say.

Consider that the behavior of a child that has been fostered stems from the heart which fostered him; you will realize that "the child's being is the parent's heart."

Complaining about the child's behavior or scolding him means criticizing your own heart, yet the child is being scolded, suffering, so to speak, a by-blow. Don't you think this is unreasonable?

We must say that parents are indeed selfish.

It goes without saying that parents are parents and children are children no matter how old they become. That is why parents keep thinking of their children as little children. However, before they realize it, their little children grow up and become fine adults. I always say, "A child becomes an achild, then an achult, and then an adult."

With what heart the parent should face the child during the "achild" or "achult" stage is a difficult question, and I, too, am tasting its difficulty now.

Parents must, until they die, pray for their children's happiness. That is, I think, what parental love is.

There is nothing so clearcut as to be able to say just how long parents should educate their children.

I think of parental heart not as stiff resolve to "educate the child" but as something always filled with love. The child's personality is fostered by this parental affection.

Excessive affection, however, spoils the child. Let's say *expression* of excessive affection. No love is too great for children; I think it's fine no matter how great

it is. However, depending upon how it is expressed, it can create an independent-minded child or a child who, the moment he sees his parents, starts to play the baby.

"To a certain extent, it's cute when a child plays the baby," some say. However, once the child learns to play the baby, it's going to be a job, or more than a job, when the time comes to let him stop playing the baby, i.e., when he is simply too big to play the baby without embarrassment. You can't keep on saying that the play-the-baby stage is sweet, for such a child never does anything by himself when he is with his parent.

Although he manages all right by himself when his parent isn't around, the moment he sees her, he has her do everything as if he has lost all ability. If she tells him, "Do it yourself," he droops on her breaking into tears. "What a helpless child," she says and does it for him. This way, the child's ability only declines.

As ability develops in the child, he begins to feel like doing everything he can using that ability. Therefore when he is alone he demonstrates his ability in various activities. But he may not apply himself when the parent is in sight who does everything for him if he plays the baby. Or, even though the child tries to do it, an adult may take it away to do it for him. More often than not we find such cases of this among children called "grandma's baby." Perhaps it is because grandmothers tend to do everything.

It is important to realize that personality has already been formed in a two year old in a two year old's way and in a three year old in a three year old's way. It is also crucial to help children form the habit of caring for themselves.

It is desirable to raise children who, whether or not their parents are there, can lead a fine everyday life in the same way without showing two different sides.

What seed you planted, what flower bloomed, and what fruit was borne — these important questions apply to childraising, too. Suppose you forget what seed you planted and just apply ample fertilizer, and, when a flower blooms, you are shocked: "O no, look at the

flower you've turned into. I expected to see something more beautiful."

This won't do. You have forgotten the seed.

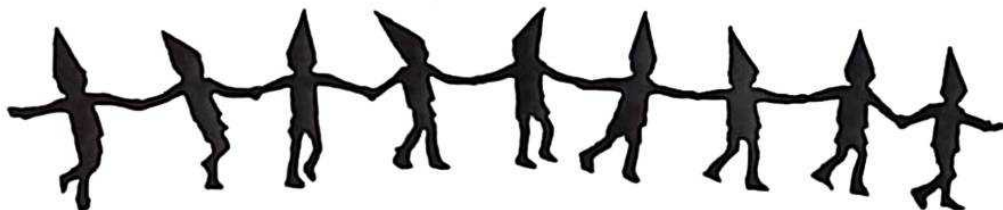
To think of the seed is to reflect upon yourself.

There are many cases in which you can replant a seed once again.

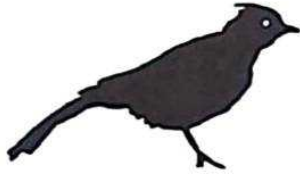
How many times does a human being grow a flower in a lifetime? Probably the moment comes innumerable times. Flowers bloom from the seeds one planted alone, and flowers bloom from the seeds people planted together. Of all flowers you grow, you should hope that at least those whose seeds you planted for your child's florescence will be fine flowers.

Let me hope that parental love is poured not only until a fine flower blooms but until the flower turns into a fruit.

From *The Road to Talent Education*,
Mother's Heart Library, no. 2.



MR. SUZUKI'S TEACHINGS



Toshiko Hasegawa
Instructor, Tokai District

"Come to Matsumoto. Let's study together." In response to this invitation, I made the Talent Education Institute my garden of learning and started to haunt it. The Institute is permeated with sundry memories of Mr. Suzuki. Let me introduce but a few of them.



"I'm going to study at this Institute, I told myself with mixed feelings of expectation and fear, when I visited the hall casually by myself. Having just been completed that year, everything in the hall was new and impressive. Moreover, since the summer school had just ended, there was a hush that made those sounds and noise of a while ago now seem unreal. As I stood in the lobby feeling solemn as though I had come to a chapel, Mr. Suzuki happened to come down from the second floor. He spoke to me with smiles: "I am about to start lessons; come to my room."

Shyly, I followed him to find Yukari Tate and Hiroshi Nishida getting ready holding their violins. Having heard their beautiful performances every year at summer school concerts, I was thrilled with joy. "What lucky timing," I thought observing their lessons. Overwhelmed by these two young people who effortlessly played the concertos of Tchaikovsky, Brahms and so on, I went perfectly blank. Then Mr. Suzuki said to me, "You too, please bring your violin." I had never expected this to happen. Besides, my instrument was at

my lodging. "When you come to the hall, fine to forget your hat but never forget your instrument," he said laughing to me who was squeezing my hat tight out of shock.

Since then I have never gone to the hall without my instrument.



"Don't think you have come to Matsumoto to play the violin; try to think that you have come to change yourselves." These were the words of Mr. Suzuki when he gathered kenkyusei, or teacher trainees, in his room for a talk. It was my first day of classes as a kenkyusei. The peak of Utsukushigahara, the Fair Plateau, was clearly etched against the blue of the September sky. Somehow, side by side with this landscape, his words left a profound impression on me.

Change myself How in the world? I thought I would like to learn the meaning of "change" by being as close as possible to Mr. Suzuki, whenever he was at the hall. Once at lesson I heard him say that only through repetition could one gradually change oneself. "So that was it," I was enlightened, and resolved to try repeating one thing starting that very day. Hitting the strings with the horse hair in order to know the balance of the right arm — that ching-ching method — became my project for repetition: Anyway let me try this 10,000 times, his favorite number . . . !

On rising in the morning, I took out my violin and went ching, ching, ching, ching. Since at that time the meaning of the right arm balance was unclear, my bow wobbled and I am not sure how many times out of ten I could get the proper ching sound out. In Asama where I stayed, several other kenkyusei had their lodgings. The closest were Kinuko Sugano, Hiroko Iritani (Driver), and Rie Furuike (Katsuno). Since my lodging was near the Asama public bath, everybody passed on the way to the

bathroom in the morning. How can you go ching ching like that every day, they said passing by, half dumbfounded. Do I really change by doing this kind of thing? — sometimes I wondered. 6,302, 6,303, . . . , I went, at times vacantly, only concerned about the number.

After about three months, when Mr. Suzuki told me at lesson that I had started to change, I could not spot the change myself, but the ching ching had become fairly easy for me to do.

If the ability has developed, it feels easy. I must try until it is felt easy . . . and change myself as Mr. Suzuki says. It took a long time before the meaning of this flashed on me.



It was during a little recess after the lesson, almost at noon. "Filet cutlets at the restaurant that opened near the hall are very tender and tasty. Did you all go already? You don't know? That won't do. Let's go eat together." Three or four kenkyusei who happened to be there accompanied him. While eating a tender cutlet as thick as one inch, he told us with a laugh to produce a rich sound like that. What a poignant hint. This was not the only time he treated us. Concerned about what kind of food we cooked for ourselves at our lodgings, he took us out every now and then so that (I discovered later) we would not become undernourished.

Bathing in Mr. Suzuki's abundant love, I cannot express my gratitude.



"Do you hate music? You don't. O good! Then let's not rush but take our time to study. The world of music is beautiful and spacious."

Practising six hours a day, I thought I was doing my

best; yet, detouring and so on due to the way's impenetrability, my violin playing did not easily improve. One day when I was so tired of myself that I decided I couldn't go on, tears trickled down despite myself the moment my eyes met Mr. Suzuki's. Taking a handkerchief from his pocket and wiping my tears, he encouraged me with the above words. At a recent concert, when I saw him wiping the face of a child crying on the stage, I was reminded of myself in those days and smiled.

Having gradually begun to realize the width and beauty of the musical world as in Mr. Suzuki's words then, I feel lucky that I did not quit.

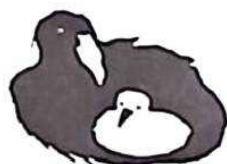
However this be, I have learned through contact with Mr. Suzuki that talent education does not only aim at violin training but endeavors to foster children through their practice as persons who know a lofty and beautiful world, who have acquired outstanding ability. Talent education, I have found, is a way of life. I would like to make efforts so as to share this lovely world with as many people as possible.

Talent Education, no. 31.



LET'S AVOID THE TOO COMMON PRACTICE:
INSTRUCTION
IN TYPIST PLAYING WITHOUT DYNAMICS

Lectures on Music Instruction, no. 39



Shin'ichi Suzuki

Dynamics is the first point of instruction in musical expression which is most important for singing the heart of a piece.

Whether in piano or in violin, how to teach musical expression is a crucial question, yet it can easily be neglected with the result that many typists are fostered who simply type out musical notation with the same volume, absolutely devoid of dynamic variations. This is the most inferior kind of music education.

Regretfully, in general such students are seen all too often.

So today let's think together about how to teach musical dynamics. I wrote on the subject long ago in my book *Musical Expression*. Since I feel strongly that it is crucial in instruction, I would like to jot down my own thought on study and instruction in this area.

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The point is not just that "we are training well to play *f* and *p*." If you simply tell your students to play now *f* and now *p* without delicately graded expression of sound, it is totally unsatisfactory.

Take just a measure or two for example. We must never neglect to teach how to vary the dynamics of each sound and play with a changing volume.

I would like you to constantly apply to education Maestro Casals' famous teaching:

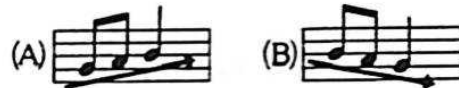
"Monotony is the enemy of music."

Suppose we teach students to play now *f* and now *p*, have them always produce the same amount of volume for *f* like a typist, and again the same amount of volume for *p*. The result is pure monotony and lack of variety.

Such instruction is representative of clumsy teaching. First let me illustrate with a simple example.



Even with such a measure-long melody, on principle, rise in the sound (crescendo) in the first three notes must be taught as in (A), and again as in (B) it is important to instruct changing the sound into calmness (decrescendo).

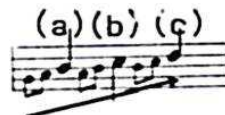


We need to train the student through such guidance to develop an ear to listen to his own sound as well as a singing heart.


Next consider the dynamic variation between sounds (a) and (b):




In other words, it is necessary to increase the volume somewhat so that sound (b) is a little stronger than sound (a). Then,



instruct to gradually increase the volume in three steps from (a) to (b) to (c) so that these three notes will sing well. Next comes a descending melody.

(Ascending melody) 

(Descending melody) 

The difference between these two slopes, I think, is again an important question of musical expression. In other words, this time in a descending slope the volume should become gradually smaller and quieter from (c) to (b) to (a).

The crucial point of instruction in these up and down slopes, however, is that it is not the same in both directions, but that it must change in volume and in musical character:

1. The ascending slope should be bright and lively, climbing with a gradually bigger tone (character).
2. On the contrary the descending slope should gradually change its tone to dimmer and lonelier tranquility (character).

This is how volume and musical character have to change. This is the life of a piece of music.

To teach this properly and thoroughly I consider the most important method of cultivating the ability to express music beautifully.

Let me ask you to study this issue carefully, and apply it to every piece in your instruction.



Take a glance at these notes from Long Long Ago and sing, thinking of how beautifully to express its dynamics and its musical heart.

Then test your students by having them play the same phrase: how can they express the uphill and downhill phrasing?

The ability to sing the heart of music clearly demonstrates itself even in these four short measures.

Therefore, every piece of music must be expressed from beginning to end with the beauty and excellence of ascending and descending musical slopes.

It is the teacher's responsibility to train students in this area to gradually acquire a sense of musical phrasing and tonality. Have them without fail play every day at home with the record or tape while learning such beauty of expression. Practise the two-sided approach with model performances in records or tapes and the teacher's instruction. Carrying this out in the manner of mother-tongue learning comprises the Suzuki method.

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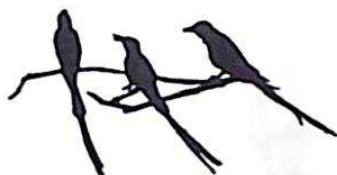
Never fall prey to infelicitous instruction, i.e., generally practised flawed instruction of merely translating notes into sounds like a typist without expression and always with the same volume. From the beginning of Book 1, teach so as to gradually create outstanding sensitivity and excellent skill of expression. Instruct your students so that they will acquire musical ability step by step, so that every child will become a fine player.



Talent Education, no. 66.

Talent Education of St. Louis, the publisher of Talent Education Journal, has received tax exempt status. Your tax deductible contribution to Talent Education of St. Louis will be deeply appreciated.

THE SUZUKI METHOD AND MYSELF



Koichi Hattori
Composer

Although few know this, my association with the Suzuki method spans the long period of thirty years and six months.

It goes back to when, as a freshman in college, I assisted Saburo Nakayama, violinist and student of the Suzuki method, by accompanying his students on the piano.

Starting with Twinkle, I'm sure I played through to about Book 3 of the Suzuki literature tens of thousands, or rather, hundreds of thousands of times.

As the saying goes, "The little rascal near the temple recites the sutra he never studied" I learned the Suzuki method through the ear, and was moved to know its greatness.

I lost contact after assisting for a year or so. Later, in 1963, through the introduction of Kenji Mochizuki who was then studying in the States, I was able to meet Mr. Suzuki.

It was the early stage of the Suzuki method's overseas spread, when Mr. Suzuki himself was energetically touring. I followed him around, even more deeply realizing the beauty of the method. In particular, I was moved to tears by Mr. Suzuki's instruction in Harlem, New York. There at the music school headed by Dorothy Maynor, I saw him teach children with an atmosphere of a humanist, loftier than that of a musician.

I wrote about this scene, and further, my writing was broadcast throughout the country in NHK's program called "My Bookshelf."

Thus I became a supporter of the Suzuki method.

I took every opportunity to write in newspapers and magazines that the method is the world's highest music education for children. I also actively introduced it, for example, at Michigan University where I taught.

Deeply inclined as I was to the method, a composer unfortunately without a child, I was unable to experience it myself.

However, about four years ago, our daughter Nana was born, and in July, 1982 she started lessons with Mariko Hara of the Shonan branch chapter. It was exactly thirty years since my first encounter with the Suzuki method.

I then said to Mr. Kenkoh Aoki of the main office, "This time I am conducting an experiment on a living body, so please stand by" Bursting into laughter, he introduced me to Instructor Hara.

Of course, since I knew well how good the method is, I had absolutely no need to experiment. Yet my wife is someone who never had anything to do with music, and besides, I had no idea about my daughter's response to her lessons Experiments were needed in these two areas.

What occurred as a result of this was all related to human relationships among us, mother, daughter, and myself.

For one thing, the mother In other words, my wife's feeling of inferiority about never having received musical training turned around and had the effect of producing too much expectation. She was irritable about her daughter's practice.

For another, carried away by my faith in the method, I left the two alone musically. Or, again, my daughter, who knew me to be a musician, depended on the knowledge . . . , etc.

Six months since starting Twinkle, naturally the Suzuki method has started to demonstrate its effect even on our foolish daughter. Savoring the method's greatness as a father, I am truly delighted. This has confirmed my past observations as a composer.

Now she has climbed one step up to challenge "Lightly Row," while I am still serving as the Book 1 accompanist which I was thirty years ago.

This is a father's report, thirty years and six months after his first encounter.

Talent Education, no. 63.



K. S.

TWO EXPERIMENTAL CLASSES
IN
TALENT EDUCATION



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

TWO EXPERIMENTAL CLASSES
IN TALENT EDUCATION

Talent Education at an Elementary School

When promoting talent education, I became convinced that this approach must be practised in all aspects of education, not just in music training. I asked Shigeru Kamijoh, the then principal, to test this method at Hongo Elementary School in the outskirts of Matsumoto. Many agree that without this great spirit in Shinshu education, the decision to put this bold educational principle to the test would not have been born.

Thanks to Mr. Kamijoh's searching mind as well as his deep love for children and the outstanding originality of Shigeki Tanaka who directed the experiment, students began demonstrating surprising abilities. However, due to the unfortunate death of Shigeru Kamijoh, the experiment of the century had to be cut short after four years. [Shigeki Tanaka's *Young Children: Everything Depends on How We Raise Them*, 1978, was published in English in *TEJ* nos. 1-12.]

Talent Education at Yoji Gakuen

The other experiment was the foundation of the Matsumoto Yoji Gakuen. This kindergarten opened in Matsumoto in April, 1949, the year after the onset of the Hongo Elementary School experiment.

With the hope of inviting a fine leader for this experiment, we asked Miwa Yano to come all the way from Osaka for her long years of experience in kindergarten education.

I discussed my idea of talent education with her, including the conditions for the growth of ability, and the method of fostering child sensitivity. As for the actual education, I trusted everything with her.

For twenty years since then, Teacher Yano has taught at Yoji Gakuen with great enthusiasm, achieving astonishing results, as tested in 1978, with the average IQ of graduates as high as 156.

For your reference, find below the reports by Yoji Gakuen teachers including Miwa Yano.

CONTENTS OF EDUCATION AT YOJI GAKUEN

Miwa Yano

Our experimental school started when Mr. Shin'ichi Suzuki thought of demonstrating, in areas other than music, young children's high ability as understood through his many years of research, experience, and violin instruction. Its aim was to foster memory which is most crucial in developing every ability.

My greatest initial effort went into finding how to encourage children so that they gladly and voluntarily

gather to learn. Since kindergarten is where children, leaving their families, first experience group life, I tried hard to eliminate anxiety and create a pleasant atmosphere. This effort is equally shared with all kindergarten and nursery school teachers on receiving new students. However, when Yoji Gakuen opened, all we had were a piano and child-size and adult-size chairs and desks. There was not a single toy to delight a child, not even a playground. The only thing we could do was to speedily build relationships of the heart.

I tried to quickly learn the character of individual children and to instruct accordingly. If equipment was absent, I could answer children's needs with tales, songs, dialogues, and games. Through such activities, I struggled to give them satisfaction and joy, inspiring confidence and security in both children and parents.

Even if there is neither toy nor sports equipment, children respond to the instructor's attitude. There is no such thing in children's world as the words: "We have piped unto you and ye have not danced."

Quietly listen to a story as a class, volunteer to tell own experiences to the class, seek to do something with friends, desire to learn something My objective was to motivate such desire and create such an environment. Eventually they began to look as if something was missing on days when no new haiku were introduced.

First, I made efforts to lead children to this stage.

Mr. Suzuki writes in "Don't Make a Child Walk Blindfolded": "When teaching violin to a young child, first prepare him so his heart will desire it, then let him play." Unwittingly, I was carrying out the same principle.

I said that I pleased children and let them have fun, but I never pampered or flattered them. Since the beginning is crucial in everything, I never allowed children to disrupt the order of the class or go against the group life, although I did not scold them for such acts. For instance, no matter how loudly a child howled or how long another sobbed, I watched them with love,

and let them know at the start that their willfulness could not pass.

Of course I endeavored to correct their former bad habits with as much cooperation with their families as possible. Parental awareness is particularly essential in this area.

What took my second greatest effort, perhaps, was preparing students to act swiftly. This is another characteristic of talent education. Starting with correct posture, children learn how to sit in a chair, clean up, stand, sit, walk, and greet, so that they will be capable of fine and swift acts. This requires a fair amount of patience, but I train them in this throughout the year.

Mr. Suzuki's talent education consists in fostering latent human ability to a height during early childhood, and, at the same time, nurturing a beautiful heart so as to create a fine human being.

"The task of education is nothing but inspiring divinity which is the nature of the child." Having spent many years with young children with this spirit of Froebel, I found something common with this in Mr. Suzuki's approach.



ACTUAL INSTRUCTION AT YOJI GAKUEN

Since Yoji Gakuen is a model school for talent education whose principle is "every child grows," we accept any child in the order of application. Hence we give no screening test whatsoever.

Mr. Suzuki constantly repeats: "Every child who speaks has an excellent brain; we must not create a single dropout."

If such a student is created, it follows that it is the instructor's responsibility. In actuality, however, there

are always one or two, among every set of new students, who are intellectually slow or physically problematic. Yet there have been frequent cases in which they were raised, in their own different ways, to above average levels in two or three years.

Especially with students enrolled for only one year, there were times when I regretted that I could not keep them another year, for I was sure they would have developed further.

Here, approximately 35 children between ages three and five study together. On principle, it is easier to instruct children divided by age, but this type of mixed class education, though it takes more work, has its benefits. Newcomers unconsciously learn from watching older students with one or two years' experience, and older ones lead younger ones to help them become part of the group life earlier.

It is extremely significant in early childhood, I think, for children of different ages to be able to learn together in a group situation with sibling-like affection and trust.

This may provoke a question: in mixed class education, aren't older children made to mark time, while younger ones are left behind?

My response to this is that talent education emphasizes "fostering ability;" it is not an approach for merely advancing children in academic learning.

Therefore, whether in daily memory training by haiku or in other activities, efforts are made so that five year olds can continually improve themselves toward greater precision and refinement. Viewed from the perspective of ability, there is a big difference between five and three year olds. It is important to instruct them so that they neither overreach nor feel bored.

Calligraphy, painting, and English, however, are taught by specialists individually or, occasionally, age by age.

The school hours are from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. for everyone, and five year olds stay until 2 o'clock.

I do not prepare any particular curriculum. If one insists on a curriculum, our haiku approach may be called one: I base various activities around 180 haiku by Issa which children memorize in a year, developing and varying the poetic themes in response to children's condition at any given moment.

Naturally, even in this flexible environment, some things must by all means be taught in early childhood: we must train children's bodies and develop agility, while fostering cheerful and strong hearts. Memory should be created on this basis.

Let me classify this general education given daily at our school.

Physical Training

I emphasize this, since lack of a healthy body greatly affects group life and learning.

Although class starts at 9:30, children start coming around 8:30. The free time until the beginning of the class is used for developing their bodies and motor nerves. Using their own ideas, they play freely. The main activities are with mats and jumping boxes. Since there is no game room, on arriving in the morning



children put away desks and chairs in a corner of the classroom, pull out mats and jumping boxes, and play at jumping and somersaulting.

Youngsters who were at first too afraid to try are encouraged by seeing older children in action and become motivated.

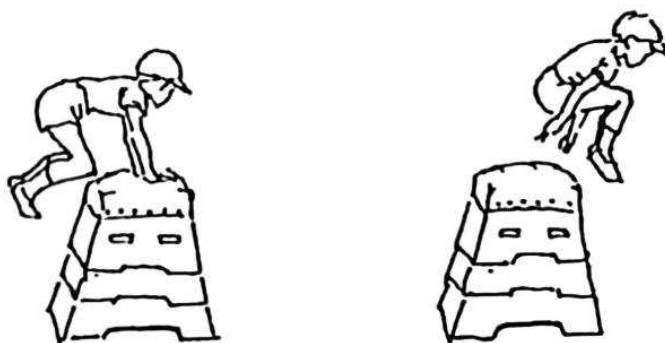
Once they accomplish something, they delightedly repeat it any number of times.

Since I am not capable of professional coaching, I simply try to help children build pliant bodies so they can fall skillfully and stand up properly. At the same time this seems to foster sociability which involves waiting for their turns and acting according to the rule.

After two years, by graduation most children can handle push-ups, jumping up, jumping with open or closed legs, forward somersault, backward somersault, forward somersault on the table, etc.

As for jumping boxes, we start out with three boxes. The child climbs them, and jumps down on to the mat. This is so that the child will learn not to fear standing high on the three box set but jump freely, with interest and delight. When this is accomplished, next is the practice in arm-on-the-box jump, i.e., jumping on the boxes by kicking up with the toes, hands on the top box. Younger children cannot easily jump up this way, their arms still being fragile. It takes a fair amount of time before they achieve this feat.

When the child jumps up on the boxes, he then turns around, jumps down, and somersaults on the mat. Since the arms, supporting the body, become strong while repeating this kind of thing every morning, the child is now ready for jumping over the boxes. For this I have children first practice to run to the boxes and prepare to jump, reaching the hands close to the other end of the top box. Younger children may not be able to do



this at first, but they have been watching older children jumping with ease. So they try to somehow imitate them. They fail, bump their heads, say "ouch," but, whether or not it hurts, I refrain from giving too much sympathy. Of course I watch them carefully, but I stand back in order to foster their strength.

Children always think of new ideas. For example, they make a flat array of individual jumping boxes without piling them up, hop over them to the rhythm, or use them for running broad jump. I let them enjoy all original ideas and devices. However, I do watch to avoid danger.



I think that superior results would be achieved in gym if we had professional coaching. Fortunately, Shigeki Tanaka has recently agreed to coach.

Further, everybody learns jump rope, ball games, and especially balance ball. This last seems best for learning to balance the body. First they start by holding on to a desk or the wall and trying to balance on the ball so they can stand without falling. When they can do this, they move off, spontaneously using their legs. Here again, older students show what they can. Once they get interested, younger children, too, keep at it untiringly, though at first clumsily, and eventually learn the knack.

We play a variety of ball games, but above all I let them throw and catch freely in order to train their strength.

One game consists of throwing a ball the size of a dodge ball upwards and catching it about twenty times. Children surrounding the player count one, two, three, . . . This also serves as counting practice, for they repeat this as they take turns. I also train them to pass

the ball to one another.

In jump rope, I train them to jump at least 30 times in a row. Children who are good at it easily jump one hundred or two hundred times in a row.

There are still other tools for building children's bodies such as balance beams and horizontal bars, but whichever equipment we employ, the important idea, I think, is training while having fun.

Although children spontaneously engage in physical exercises before class, group training is done during class hours.



In addition, children are trained daily in the proper way of walking, stopping, and lining up with a record or the piano.

Young students cannot yet move their hands and legs skillfully, nor is it easy for them to stop to the exact beat of the music. It takes time, therefore, but order forms itself gradually as this is repeated every day.

I also introduce such games to divert the mood between study sessions like rhythmic, hopping on one leg, train games with hands on the shoulders of the person in front.

Fostering the Heart

Side by side with physical development, the heart has to be fostered during early childhood.

Children enter school with individual differences due to their home environments. As I stated at the beginning, it takes time before they become familiar with group life. I may, for example, seat a withdrawn

child next to a wild child, a chatterbox with a quiet child, or keep an especially difficult child by my side — every consideration must be given to that.

Honoring promises with the teacher, following class decisions, not bothering friends, judging good and bad — hoping that they will be capable of these, I let children think by themselves without my leadership and help them carry out their conclusions. Since each child strongly insists, this is quite a job.

At 9:20, when I put on the record of Haydn's Toy Symphony, children put away jumping boxes and mats, bring desks and chairs from the corners of the room, and arrange them for class. They use the toilet and seat themselves before the record is over. I watch them imitate conducting, blowing through the trumpet or the flute, and playing the violin or the piano, taking parts in the imaginary orchestra, each child in a different way.

When the record finishes, they rise and take a bow with the morning greetings: "Good morning, Teacher. Good morning, everybody."

When bowing, following Mr. Suzuki's example I teach them to stand with good posture, bend the upper body half way and hold it there. If some are clumsy, I ask them to try again any number of times.

I help every child to form the habit of greeting spontaneously. Nobody is too shy to do this. Those who could not do it at first eventually start to imitate others. "You bowed so beautifully; please come and do it again so everybody can see," I tell such a child and let him bow to the class.

I ask each child if he has brought a handkerchief and tissue paper, and if he is washing his face and brushing his teeth. I also check their finger nails and help them form the habit of washing their hands, for hygiene is another important training.

When children become noisy, I induce them to calm down using our code words: "We can be good children;

we can be bad children; which do we want to be?" After letting them think about this, I lead them to the desired conclusion: "Let's all be good children."

In order to draw their attention, I lead children to point with their fingers to their eyes, ears, and mouths, saying "See well, hear well, talk well." If a child sobs, the class encourages him quoting, for example, the pedagogue Motoko Hani's phrase: "Strong child, good child, no cry baby."

Down to such details, I try to let children solve everything by themselves and help them to be observant.

[To be continued.]

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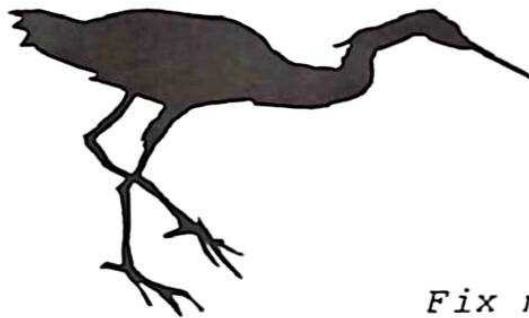
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WITH TALENT EDUCATION

Eiko Kataoka
St. Louis

Last spring after a long time I returned to Japan for five months starting in late March, and with my twelve and six year old daughters attended the grand national concert after over a dozen years. This was the first national concert for them, but, while listening to the wonderful performances of 3,000 children filling the spacious Budokan hall, I recalled with sweet nostalgia how I travelled to Tokyo when small accompanied by my father to participate in the graduation ceremony.



*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

The first graduation I attended was the Second Graduation, which, if my memory is correct, was held at Aoyama Gakuin University, Tokyo. At present, the trip from Toyohashi takes only two and a half hours by Shinkansen, but in those days the train ride to Tokyo lasted nearly ten hours. Early in the morning my mother prepared my lunch. I put this in a bag together with fruit and sweets from neighbors who wished me bon voyage. I also carefully packed my diary which I used to write every day. Thus I started on a big day-long journey. In those days only a little over 200 students graduated. Thinking of how it is today, I feel as if that belonged to another era. After the graduation performances, Mr. Suzuki handed certificates to regional representatives. Being the youngest graduate, I was chosen to represent the Tokai district elementary Level students. I remember waiting for my turn with a thumping heart. I had practised how to receive the certificate again and again with my mother at home — this again is a cherished memory.

I prepared the graduation tape when seven and a half. In those days we were to record only Mozart's Concerto No. 4. Tape recorders were not yet so popular then, and



Author at age six, with her father Kiyoshi Suzuki.

my father was very proud of his purchase of a Phillips recorder made in Holland. For the recording session of the graduation piece, Mr. Tomio Kondoh, my teacher, stayed over at our place after the lessons (which he held there), and I taped myself into this Phillips machine with a desperate determination playing over and over. (There were no accompaniment

tapes then, nor was there a pianist we could ask a

favor.) This summer I pulled out the same tape from the bookshelf and listened to it after a long time — following my performance, Mr. Suzuki had taped careful instructions, while playing the violin, on how to practise and so forth. Mr. Kondoh and I listened to it together when the tape was sent back, which is another fond memory.

Mr. Kondoh has done so much for me over the years. Now it is my daughters' era, and what first inspired the oldest, Chizu, to become interested in the violin and practise well were his lessons: in the summer when she just turned three, Mr. Kondoh taught her Twinkle at the Utsukushigahara lodging during the summer school. She also joined the group playing of his students in the inn's hall. To me it feels like yesterday that she moved with happy pride.

The Toyohashi class opened when I was two and a half. It seems that my father, having been greatly moved by Mr. Suzuki's lecture and children's performances, went in all directions in an effort to begin a class in Toyohashi. In those days the textbooks had not yet been completed, and naturally there were no records. For my mother, who couldn't tell one note from another, the only thing she could depend on was listening to the teacher's model playing at lesson or more advanced students' lessons. On Sundays, which were the lesson days, the three of us went out with packed lunches, and spent a whole day at the school (three, because my father, too, never missed a day). While small, it seems that I loved going to lessons for the fun things we did outside: since the school was in a temple, we could play hide-and-seek, kick-the-can, and so on in the grounds right in front of the shrine building or in back where many gravestones stood. After a while, in response to my father's suggestion, a monthly family seminar started which the member families hosted in rotation. We had fun playing the violin together, and the parents either shared one another's difficulties or listened to their predecessors' talk. This was a gathering strictly for parents and children without

taking the teacher's time. A snack was prepared by the host family on a budget of ten yen per person collected from the participants. The children used to greatly look forward, wondering whom they were to visit next. This meeting lasted quite a long time. Remembering those days, we have been gathering together in St. Louis in the name of "family concert" every third Sunday. At the time of its inception, the host family simply prepared a snack, but since some time ago, it has been a custom for each family to bring one dish and enjoy a pleasant chat after the concert sharing a potluck supper. Since we don't do much more than greet the members at usual lessons, we find it a delight to be able to chat informally with them in this way. Our children, too, are pleased by the opportunity to become good friends with others in the class.

I started to participate in the Matsumoto summer school from the second session. Hongo Elementary School was the locale then, and the lodging was in the Asama spa. I clearly remember listening to talks by Instructors Junkyo Oishi and Jikai Kobayashi. Lunches were packed by Matsumoto chapter mothers. The Talent Coffee Shop already existed then, and my father frequented it. At evening concerts, I was able to hear wonderful performance after performance by towering predecessors including Kenji Kobayashi, Tomiko Shida, Hiroko Yamada (now Masaoka), and Yoko Oike (now in Canada).

Once during the afternoon group lesson I fell into Mr. Suzuki's humorous trap.



Having been told that the winning team in the "three-legged race" would receive a prize, I practised hard at the inn with Kimiko Ishikawa (now Ashina) of the Toyohashi chapter. Possibly due to our diligence, first place went to us, filling us with expectations about the prize — but it was nothing

but a half drunk bottle of juice!! What a letdown, as we stood amidst a grand ovation.

Around that time, to recall another endearing memory, on the last day of the summer school a chain of buses used to carry us for a hike in Kamikochi (the Highland) or Utsukushigahara (the Fair Plateau).

When a fourth grader or so, a big typhoon attacked central Japan during the summer school, paralyzing the Chuo line. Since the Iida line, the alternative transportation, was jammed with those returning to the Nagoya area, Mr. Suzuki extended his thoughtful invitation for us to stay at his place, if only the children. After all, I was the only one who stayed to be cared for at the Suzukis', but I spent a truly happy week — an experience which, on looking back now, seems too precious to be true. Mr. Suzuki's younger sister Miss Hina, who was still healthy then, kindly let me help in the kitchen. I accompanied Goroh, their dog already in his venerable age, when he was taken out for a walk. Mr. Suzuki took me to the house of Mr. Shiroh Suzuki who used to live nearby to see violin making in process. I was not only able to observe Tomiko Shida's and Hiroko Yamada's lessons, but had a chance to play with them. Every day was so pleasant that, when my father came to pick me up, I embarrassed him saying I didn't want to go home.

From a higher grade in elementary school, I started to commute to Matsumoto once a month for a lesson. At the same time Etsuko Suehiro of Yokkaichi, Norie Kuramochi of Niigata, Yukari Tate now of France, Yuko Honda now of the U.S., and Naomi Ishida were also commuting to Matsumoto, forming a gang of six including me. Contacting one another on the phone, we did our best to go to Matsumoto on the same day, and together we stayed at Mr. Suzuki's place or at Miss Hina's — it was so much fun. Obachama, or Auntie as we called Mrs. Suzuki, kindly taught us many things from kitchen chores to manners, or took us for a ride in her black Benz. The six of us used to be carried away



At Osaka, 1963

in our late night chats, and to rub our sleepy eyes when Mr. Suzuki knocked for us at six in the morning. Our training was not limited to violin alone: we were trained in "thoughtful, quick response," which meant, for example, who could be

the first to stand up and serve tea when a guest arrived. The moment the entrance door opened, we raced to stand up.

When a second year student in junior high, with Yukari Tate, I accompanied Mr. Suzuki's tour in the Tohoku and Hokkaido areas. Including Mrs. Shizuka Suzuki who accompanied us on the piano, and Yukari's mother and my father who chaperoned, the six of us toured for twenty days. In Sendai, we were hosted by Instructors Nakatsuka, Iizuka, Oka, and Terui. At Aomori we took a ferry and crossed the strait to Hakodate, which was my first experience of boarding the Seikan line. I was struck by the grandeur of nature in Hokkaido as we toured performing in Kushiro, Sapporo and other places. Once when we were driving through the open country, I spotted in the distance a great heap of something like peanuts. "What a lot of peanuts," I shouted quite amazed. Our friendly driver instantly responded: "Those are potatoes, miss." At this we all laughed. In the spaciousness of Hokkaido, I made a blooper of mistaking potatoes for peanuts.

I think it was in Kushiro that members of the chapter took us on a tour of yellow mountains and Lake Mashu. Unfortunately the lake we overlooked from atop a hill was hidden under a thick mist. We listened with disappointment to the guide's explanation: "This lake,

Mashuko, is also called Mashiroko (snow-white lake)."
Indeed, it was all white with the fog.

Mr. Suzuki, if he had time on arriving at a lodging, took out *shikishi* (square poetry paper) to make sketches of the landscape we saw on the way. Just like his more familiar paintings of Shinshu mountains, his landscapes of the spacious Hokkaido plains, too, were wonderful. I still cherish the *shikishi* painting he gave me then.

Two years or so after that, we again accompanied him, this time in the direction of Kyushu, and toured in Kure, Hiroshima, Kumamoto, and Fukuoka. Thus I was able to listen to his talks again and again. Whenever he came to the passage which always occurred in the same place in the storeroom episode, I remember shedding tears.

In May, 1984 when we gave a piano trio recital with Yuko Hirose in Fukuoka, I experienced a sweet encounter: a piano school teacher told me that she had attended a Kyushu lecture of that tour. Touring with Mr. Suzuki and the warm reception of local members remain wonderful memories which I would not exchange for anything else.

o o o

Our older daughter Chizu is already about the age when I accompanied the Hokkaido tour, and has come to attend Mr. Suzuki's graduate class in the summer school. Months and days fly by, yet, when I see the Suzukis who are healthy as ever, I feel as though my memories are but from a brief while ago. At the same time as I cherish my good fortune of having been raised enveloped in Mr. Suzuki's heart, I realize the depth of his infinitely spreading mind in the fact that children throughout the world, now hundreds of thousands, are being fostered by his love.

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