

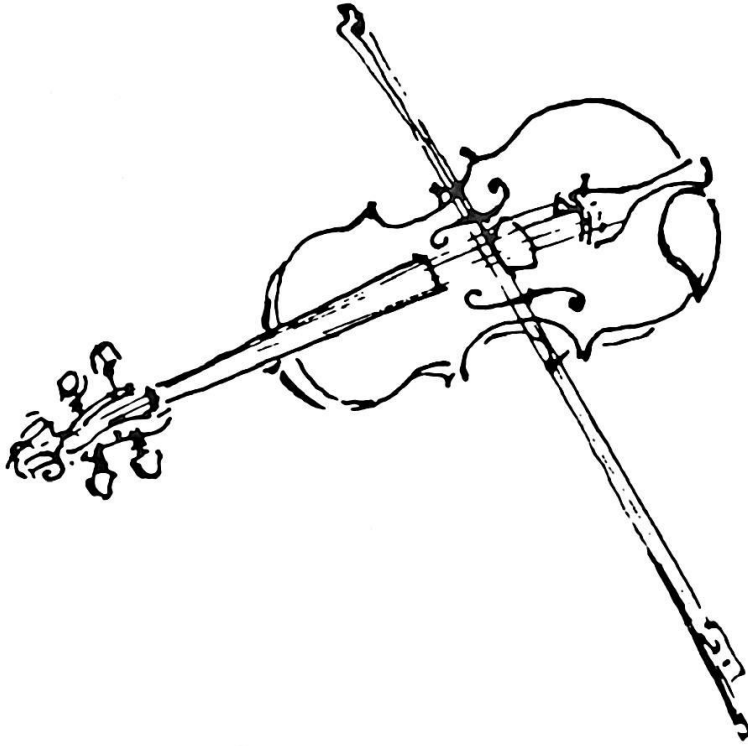
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Signature

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

(Five Mottoes of Talent Education)

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

The headquarters of the International Suzuki Association will be located in Matsumoto. This decision, made at the International Suzuki Teachers Conference in Berlin this summer, should make it possible to rapidly convey Dr. Suzuki's ideas and teaching approaches to members throughout the world.

Dr. Suzuki constantly refers to tone. The ability to produce tone with natural reverberation is the essential point of playing technique, whether violin, cello, or piano. He emphasizes it anew in "My Lessons: Always Tone, Tone, Tone." In "Instruction by the Suzuki Method," he describes concrete points of his instructional approach. The installment from his *Ability Is Not Inborn* describes "how to train" in order to foster ability.

Around the same time of spring as the Violin School Graduation, Piano School graduations are held each year in various places in Japan. We would like to introduce Kenkoh Aoki's report on this.

Soon after becoming an instructor, Ayako Tamura went to Finland to teach. She records her fresh impressions in "Teaching in Finland." "Encounter Inseparable from Bach" is a moving story of Kazuko Umemura from her awakening to talent education to her becoming an instructor.

A Suzuki father enters the stage after a long while in this issue. We would be delighted if "Seeking the Essence of the Suzuki Method" conveys the family life of the Okubos to American parents.



MY LESSONS

ALWAYS TONE, TONE, TONE

—Give Life to Tone—

Shin'ichi Suzuki

I have one wish for every teacher, and that is that at every Suzuki Method lesson each student be taught aiming for fine tone, beautiful tone. Every child can grow.

Please work hard so that all of your students will play with fine tone. I know clearly that the quality of your students' tone is the ultimate test of your ability to teach.

To successfully develop outstanding musical sensibility and technical ability in your students, you need to have them repeatedly practice review pieces, whether it

be four or five, daily with the tape. This requires proper parental understanding above all else.

Helping parents realize that this is the way to create ability and implement such practice habits is another important role of the teacher.

Those who repeatedly practice the pieces they can play daily with the tape are good Suzuki students. Their ability multiplies quickly as they grow so that they become students who learn new pieces with minimal effort and progress rapidly.

This is what the Suzuki method is all about. This is what I mean when I always tell parents: "Every child grows, depending on the parent."

This is the same educational process that children experience to master the mother tongue as they grow. This is *the* educational method by which every child develops.

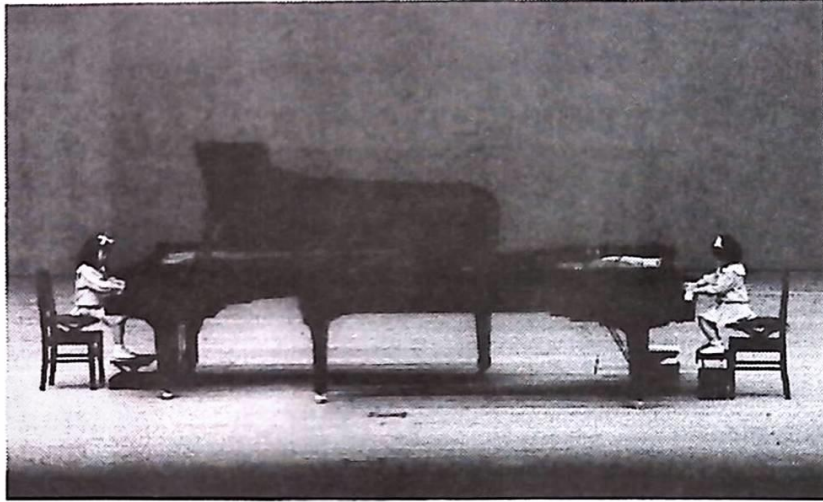
Let me ask parents from the bottom of my heart. If this method is followed, every child will grow into a human being with high ability and, without fail, also achieve the highest levels at school. This is clear from my fifty years of experience.

No ability is inborn; it is a result of the collaboration between two responsible parties that foster every child with high abilities and fine sensibility: "Every child grows, depending on the parent" and "Every child grows, depending on the teacher."

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ON THE PIANO SCHOOL GRADUATIONS



Piano School Graduation
Unison Performance of Suzuki Allegro

Kenkoh Aoki

This year's piano graduations concluded with the Tokyo graduation on March 31.

It is already twenty years since Shin'ichi Suzuki started this through his desire to let the Suzuki method serve piano education. Today Piano Study Group has spread throughout the country, enabling piano education by the Suzuki method. At present 1,300 teachers participate, the number of their students amounting to 15,000.

This year Kanto and Koshin districts held the seventeenth graduation; Kansai celebrated the sixteenth,

and Tokai the eleventh. Since two years ago, two-piano unison performances have been included, which allows nearly twice as many students to take part in the graduation concert.

In Tokyo this year we tried unison performance of the "Coronation" concerto of the first stage of the post-advanced level; however, the "Apassionato" sonata, the final graduation piece, has not yet been performed in unison anywhere. I am sure these will be performed in unison in future. The number of graduates from the third stage of the post-advanced level this year was 103.

Thinking of over 7,000 students who graduate different levels each year, I have been asking that graduation recitals be held at least at Block level. This started to be materialized thanks to the efforts of block teachers, and now graduation recitals are held at over forty places throughout the country.

This year the Tokyo A, E, G Block graduation recital was held at Toho Seimei Hall on April 2 following the Kanto District graduation; on April 3 Chiba B Block graduation recital was held at Ichikawa Cultural Center. I attended both, and found nearly twenty teachers cooperating on each occasion. Student manners were good; unison performances on two pianos were impressive. After the recital, both at Tokyo and Chiba, the teachers lined up on stage, and each student called to the stage received a graduation certificate from his or her teacher. This was a heart-warming sight.

I regret that I was not able to visit the other graduations, but I imagine that they were similar everywhere.

The letter I recently received from Kyoko Kono of Tokyo says:

The Kanto District piano graduation already celebrated the seventeenth anniversary this year. I am deeply moved to observe the yearly development of our gathering. Knowing this innovative method in music instruction has

truly enriched the lives of us teachers who have participated in it. Had I not encountered this method, I would not have been able to discover this self fulfillment.

This must be more or less the common thought in every teacher's mind.

Mr. Suzuki listens to graduation tapes every year. Although I know this is a tremendous task, he does not complain about it at all. "Being able to listen to this many children's performances every year, I must be the happiest person in the world," he laughs.

Even limiting to the piano school, there were 7,300 graduation tapes this year. Just hearing this number suggests near impossibility. In selecting performers at graduations, we provided age limits and asked those who had already played to refrain from playing again in the interest of fairness, while the number of performing students was also nearly doubled by the two piano unison playing.

I felt that this year's performances, including those of free pieces, were strikingly better than in former years. This impression is not limited to me but is shared by Mr. Suzuki and other teachers. I think the results of the Suzuki method have spread.

Mr. Suzuki always says: "Fine to imitate a great maestro. If students frequently listen to the study record or tape, and if possible form the habit of playing with the tape, everybody spontaneously masters the important musical points from tempo, rhythm, harmony to the technique of expression, and learns to feel the composer's humanity."

"Listening to the tape" here means the importance of having the child listen to it repeatedly every day as pointed out by senior instructors; this is the reason why it is said that "the Suzuki method is through the ear."



Teachers presenting graduation certificates
at the Tokyo A, E, G block graduation recital



Chiba B block teachers
at Ichikawa Cultural Hall, April 3

The other point, "play along with the tape" is what Mr. Suzuki started having Matsumoto kenkyusei (teacher trainees) do several years ago. By this approach the students' playing has been transformed. In Monday Concerts at the music school, tape accompaniment has become more frequently used than piano accompaniment;

in particular, violin pieces requiring orchestral accompaniment such as Mozart Rondo, Mendelssohn concerto, or Tchaikovsky concerto are performed by kenkyusei just like Thibaut, Kreisler, or Oistrakh.

Since Mr. Suzuki is suggesting that this also be adopted by the piano school, I would like you teachers to experiment.

Another thing: Mr Suzuki says that "the earlier children start studying by the Suzuki method, the younger their age of graduation." For reference's sake, therefore, I tried classifying this year's graduation tapes.

According to this, the overwhelming majority of the pre-elementary level graduates are five years old (six in Koshin District); graduates are predominantly six in the elementary level, seven in the pre-intermediary level, 9 in the advanced level. Up to this point, the age of graduation increases by level. The first stage of the post-advanced level is divided equally among ages eleven and twelve. The second stage were partly thirteen and partly fourteen. Third level graduates were fourteen and fifteen in Kanto, fourteen and seventeen in Kansai, thirteen and fourteen in Tokai, and fifteen in Koshin. However, this survey emphasized younger students and is not comprehensive.

Last let me record the number of strikingly young students: four three year olds graduated from the pre-elementary level; three four year old from the elementary level; six five year olds from the pre-intermediary level; four eight year olds from the advanced level. Again, five eight year olds completed the first stage of the post-advanced level; one seven year old, two eight year olds, and four nine year olds passed the second stage; one eight year old and three eleven year olds graduated from the third stage. This demonstrates young children's potential.

The following pieces will be added to graduation tapes starting from 1988:

1. The intermediary level: Mozart Sonata no. 15 in C, K545 (record: Giesecking; for Book 6).
2. The pre-advanced level: Mozart Sonata no. 11 in A, K331 (the former intermediary level).

All movements should be recorded without repeats.

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TEACHING IN FINLAND

Ayako Tamura
Instructor, Kanto District



The author teaching in Kerava

From last February to the beginning of this year, I was given the opportunity to teach at Kerava, Finland. A teacher was on leave for childbirth, and I was asked to substitute for her; I was also asked to hear the Finnish teachers' tonalization before Dr. Suzuki's visit for the European Suzuki Conference in April.

We were unable to do much with tonalization, however, because the teachers were busy. Since there are only three Suzuki teachers in Kerava, they had much preparation to do for the conference.

Kerava is twenty minutes from Helsinki by train. The music school is a two-story building in which both Suzuki and traditional methods are taught.

I had thirty-seven students there, lessons starting, as in Japan, in the afternoon and going on till early evening. A Japanese translator came for two weeks when I first arrived in February, and after that, I managed to communicate with the mothers in broken English.

The students were all small children mostly in Books 1 through 4, and the most advanced student was in Book 6. After Dr. Suzuki came to the conference in April and gave group lessons, the mothers kept up some of their enthusiasm and began to come to the children's lessons, so things became easier for me handle after that. It seemed they were stimulated by the visit to Finland by Dr. Suzuki whom they had only known by name but never met before.

This is something I experienced during lessons. When I would say to a mother, "In Japan, the mother stays with the child and helps her learn," she would answer, "That's difficult. It can only happen in Japan." By this, she referred to the fact that most Finnish women work outside of the home. "In Japan, isn't the mother at home?" I would be told. And, "Japanese children are fortunate." In Japan, too, there are mothers that work, but this does not seem to be part of their generalization. However, I spoke to one brave woman who said, after having read Dr. Suzuki's *Nurtured by Love*, "I am going to quit work for my children's education"

I have not yet had a class of my own in Japan, and I was able to learn a lot from this chance, trying out what could be done in this or that situation. It was particularly helpful for me, since all the students had already received prior training with other teachers.

A Japanese classroom is constantly adopting Dr. Suzuki's new ideas, but over there, things are late in arriving. Still, when I introduced some of his ideas the effects were clearly visible, and the mothers, too, seemed to think, "As would be expected, Dr. Suzuki's ideas are great." As in Japan, I showed the children how to practice with an upside-down bow, and with a chopstick attached to the side of the violin to help them play on the Kreisler

highway. I also took practice tapes with me, and had them copied for all of the students for their practice at home.

It is a pity that many of Dr. Suzuki's writings are not yet commonly available even in English. I think it will be good if foreign teachers take a greater interest in Dr. Suzuki's ideas and philosophy. Of course, it is hard, being so far away. Even more because of this, on my return I feel when I see foreign people studying in Matsumoto, "They are so diligent to come," and also, "It really ought to be like this." Before, when I was a teacher trainee in Matsumoto, I only saw them unthinkingly: "Oh, they are from abroad."

I went to such a faraway country without even being able to understand the language; yet I was able to have great fun with the children communicating through music. The strength of music, I realize, is greater than I imagined.

I thank everyone who was so kind to me.



A snowy landscape through a window
in the boarding house

INSTRUCTION BY THE SUZUKI METHOD

Lectures on Musical Instruction (53)

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Teacher's Responsibility and Mission

"Every child grows, depending upon the teacher."

1. Work hard on tone, tone, tone to improve it.
2. Teach so as to develop the ability to express musicality through tone, and motivate children.

(Teaching is easy!)

Parent's Mission

"Every child grows, depending on the parent."

The child's ability develops at home. All that has to be done is to let children practice playing again and again with the study tapes or records, or, if they are advanced, with recordings of the world's master performers. Through this good daily practice you can help them naturally absorb highly sensitive musical expressiveness and develop good technique. (The masters are giving them private lessons at home via tape.)

Eventually, if you assist them to become children who joyfully practice two or three hours a day, every child will develop rich ability.

Instruction in Tonalization, Unique to the Suzuki Method

1. Play with the bow held upside-down.
2. Play while holding the bow hair instead of the stick.
3. Play holding the frog (thumb on mother of pearl).
4. Play with the bow held balanced just between the thumb and the forefinger.
5. Play with the normal bow hold.

Utilizing the above five methods, develop the ability to play with the same amount and quality of tone.

At lesson, work in depth on tone using the first eight measures of Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus. When the student has progressed with a piece, try having him play it with upside down bow hold, with the bow held around the frog, etc. Use this approach at group lessons, too, whenever it seems appropriate to you.

This is an important, new approach for developing fine tone. I would like to see it enthusiastically tried everywhere.

The Basics of Bowing

1. Shoulder is in front
 elbow also is in front
 when you play.
 (Bow arm moves up and down in front of body.)

2. Relaxed shoulder
 is the way to play
 moving the elbow
 from the shoulder.
 (Again, this is a vertical motion)

The above two points are not only most basic to bowing; they also define good posture.

1. A poor student —
look at him play
with his shoulder tightened up.
2. A clumsy elbow
that moves sideways
just cannot be allowed!

Always Teach Semi-Circular Finger Manipulation in Conjunction with Half-Circles with the Elbow.

Whenever the elbow is making a semi-circle into the string for rich tone, the fingers of the bow hand should be helping by making the same motion. This is an important teaching point for good tone.

What good friends!
always moving together—
the fingers and the elbow.

Listen for Ringing Tone

To play properly, one must have beautiful tone.

Teach the student to pluck the D string and train the ear and bow to imitate the natural reverberation of the string on a single note, by alternating pluck and bow. Then practice with just the bow to produce the same reverberation, lifting the bow between each note. Gradually lengthen the bow stroke until the end product is a beautiful legato.

Posture: Proper Position for the Right Arm and Elbow During No-Tone Arpeggios

This point is especially important for correct posture, and must be dealt with extensively. Please work on it with every single student.

These silent string crossings will not only improve tone volume and quality, but are wonderful for training good posture. Please teach the following:

My shoulder's in front
so also my elbow
up and down in front.

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(Translated with the assistance of Ririko Iriye)



ENCOUNTER INSEPARABLE FROM BACH

Kazuko Umemura
Instructor, Tokai District

Although brought up by talent education, I am ashamed to say that until college I did not seriously read Mr. Suzuki's books.

It was the evening when I returned from "St. Matthew Passion" performed at Hibiya Public Hall by St. Thomas Church Choir, which had moved me so much that all strength left my body. Without a particular thought I took in my hand *Nurtured by Love* which stood in the same row as books on Bach in my bookshelf, and reading it at one sitting, I received an awakening blow no smaller than that from the "Passion." This rather late awakening may have been quite natural for me who was a relaxed student of violin. I had entered college with a goal of taking a job in the educational area; however, pressed by a wave-like thought that by Mr. Suzuki's side there was something wonderful which could hardly be learned in busy college life in Tokyo, I visited him in Matsumoto at once.

When I saw him I found him full of life, and there was something even overwhelming about his vital force. "If you agree with talent education, let's do it together because this is a social movement. Come to Matsumoto," he spoke to a small presence like me with such warm

words that I felt like crying; and before I had the time coolly to reflect upon my ability, my mind was made up.



Rehearsing for the first recital, age four

It was an encounter too big for me, yet a wonderful one nevertheless. I promptly moved to Matsumoto — youth, I am impressed, is really bold.

Since I was like that, days in Matsumoto were continually moving as well as rigorous. Without understanding what Mr. Suzuki was saying, I was carried away trying to finish pieces, when a senior teacher trainee said: "We are here to study music of course, but also to study the educational method. Unless we carry out his instruction to 'train ten thousand times' and first change ourselves both externally and internally, I doubt if we can contribute to true education."

These words made me think that my future direction was now visible; then I became depressed by Mr. Suzuki's painfully rigorous early morning lesson; then

again I recovered by a warm advice. Such situations repeatedly alternated. "To change one's tone is to change oneself" — I think I really focused on this point every day. However, Matsumoto's beautiful nature was not expected to allow me to engage only in this: I have sweet memories of visiting the mountains with friends in spring and fall and spreading my wings to relax.

I was also given a fortunate opportunity to be there when Moyses and Blanch visited Japan. We had a precious experience to study the Brandenburg concertos no. 3 and 4 with Blanch, whom even Casals is said to have respected, and held a concert together. Her conducting which drew me in and her charming personality and talent, with which she endured our clumsy skills and patiently and gently guided us toward Bach's height, strongly remain in my mind as if she were an image of a female Bach.

Then there was my graduation concert. Mr. Suzuki's skillful praise, sharp criticisms, humor, sternness and warmth tossed me like a boat on billows in those whirling yet fulfilling days. The Matsumoto period is no more than a fraction of my life, yet I cannot exchange with anything else the happiness of having been in direct contact with Mr. Suzuki.

Each time I look back, I feel grateful to teachers Isako Yamamura, Minako Ouchi, and Hironaka Matsui who taught me by the Suzuki method from age four. At present I am studying string playing method as a member of the Shoichi Yamamura research group, Nagoya Chapter.

As I look up at Mr. Suzuki's height, I feel the words of my late teacher alive in my mind: "There is no true education without pulling up the lowest level." On the other side of our rich lives are countless children in the Philippines, India, Africa, etc., left in the lowest living environment. I walked from child facility to facility in college days. As I think of the many unforgettable eyes of the children I saw there, my teacher's words to me seem to have something in common with Mr. Suzuki's: "deep

love and sorrow in my prayer for the happiness of all children." These words constantly encourage me.

How wonderful it would be if every child could live in the Suzuki world. I hope that at least these children, chosen, blessed and really limited in number, would all walk toward moving tone and rich humanity without a single failure.

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HANDS MOVE THANKS TO THE BRAIN

From *The Evolution of the Suzuki Method*

Shin'ichi Suzuki

ABILITY IS NOT INBORN (1951), PART V

HANDS MOVE THANKS TO THE BRAIN

Among the conditions under which ability develops, the greatest is "the more training."

Let us think about our hands.

A similar difference in ability exists between the left and right hands as between an inferior child and a child prodigy. (This applies to right-handed people; it is the opposite for the left-handed.)

Placing my hands side by side, I carefully examine them as if I have never compared them. Nourishment seems to have reached both right and left equally well, for both hands are physically well developed.

Here, I hold in my left hand the pen which was in my right, and try to write.

I find how insensitive and dull my left hand is. It cannot even draw a straight line; the line wanders away wavering. What miserable ability this is.

Now, I shift the pen back to my right hand. Indeed, what freedom it has. I can write smoothly and sensitively just as I will. This is a product of ability development. This is a hand that has been educated.

Try yourself. Although the brain that commands them is the same, there is this much difference in ability between the right and left hands depending upon whether or not there was training.

This difference in sensitivity is that between the abandoned and the fostered. It is not an inborn difference.

We can think of this as an experience with two individuals with identical brain performance. The way we handle our hands is like fostering ability in one of these two individuals from early childhood while leaving the other alone with no fostering effort.

We are, as it were, constantly educating two children, Right and Left, experiencing the effect of talent education by ourselves. We neglect to foster the left hand, forget that we have abandoned it, and supposing that Left is a useless child of dull sensitivity who is clumsy no matter what we let him try, we conclude that he is dull by birth.

Those who insist on the inborn have been so taught that they can only think of delicate human sensibility and superior technical ability as innate.

However, when we think of the difference in delicacy or sensibility and the gap in skills between the right and left hands, we are made to clearly see how human ability develops.

In this example of the right and left hands, they act differently under the selfsame brain. However, I am not saying that every child's brain performance is identical. Naturally there are qualitative differences in the efficiency of brains people are born with. What I think is an extremely grave question for the human race is that those who have the potential to develop superior brains like the right hand are made into dull people like the left hand. Herein lies the basic meaning of our movement.

"Mr. Suzuki, somehow my fingers do not move fast," a music school student complained to me about the inability of his fingers to move when playing the violin.

He seemed to think that he had a physiological lack of finger agility.

I let him play. He was right: when he came to a fast passage the finger movement not only lagged behind the tempo of the piece but was irregular.

So I said to him: "There seems no problem with your fingers."

"But, Mr. Suzuki, they refuse to move as I wish."

"Then put your violin on the desk." I had him put his instrument on my desk and continued: "Put your hand on the desk, and try moving your fingers fast. See? They move as fast and freely as my fingers. There's no problem with your fingers."

"But it doesn't work when I hold my violin."

I said again: "There's no problem with your fingers. The problem is in your brain. Fingers move according to the brain's command. That is, commands are not issued smoothly from your brain. Your brain is faltering. Because your way of practicing is clumsy, the speed of finger movement has become irregular. Take it two or three times as slowly, and practice the passage every day thirty or forty times with a neat, regular tempo. Try saying, or thinking, "It's a beautiful day" while playing that difficult passage; do it until you can still play without a mistake. When the brain thinks this is a difficult passage, its commands become disrupted.

In brief, a passage you think difficult is difficult not because your fingers think it difficult but because your brain thinks it difficult. If you straighten up the disorder in your brain, your fingers will move as commanded. If fingers move the way they like, the human world will be a mess."

A week later, the student's fingers moved freely, the disorder in his brain having being fixed.

Ping-Pong's Moral

This was when I went to give a talk at a big factory. When having tea after the lecture, its company president said to me: "Mr. Suzuki, among the factory workers here, there are some thirty who work very hard but somehow can't be efficient — slow handed, so to speak — and they

are a problem to the factory. I've tried many things, but they are slow no matter what I do. They do their best, but it doesn't work. Is there a good talent education approach?"

"I have no experience in that kind of problem, so I am not confident, but I wonder if their being "slow handed" is the only clue to studying it. If you think the problem is that their hands don't move, there is no way to help them; however, if you think that it's their brain, not their hands, that won't move, a path may open up.

Those who are clumsy, slow-handed, or slow-moving are those who, in their childhood, did not play sports, especially the kind which requires training in instant response. A few minutes ago I saw a room in this factory with many ping-pong tables.

Try letting your workers play ping-pong. Let the slow workers quit work one hour or half an hour early every day, and have them coached by a skillful player.

The ping-pong ball flying back instantly will develop instant brain activity. You can't say "wait" in ping-pong. When the brain and the body never experience that kind of brain activity, the result is a human being who at heart thinks of acting yet can't actually do it. As you try this, it will be good if you pretend that you are going to turn those thirty people into team players."

"I see that you have a logic there. I will experiment on it then," the president said looking very interested.

One day over half a year after that, I was invited to the factory again. The president appeared and said: "Thank you, Mr. Suzuki. Your method had a great effect. As they improved in ping-pong, their efficiency in work has gradually risen. One of them was so pleased about his improvement that he became crazy about the sport, and his work efficiency has risen the highest. Your idea that 'the hand works under the brain's commands' was quite helpful. It didn't apply just to workers' hands but to our business. It further made us think deeply about our daily lives."

Is "Bad Habit of the Hand" Inborn?

"He has a bad habit of the hand" is an old expression with an implied meaning that it is "inborn."

People are apt to overlook an ability fostered in early childhood and often wrongly attribute it to birth. Since even physiological adaptation occurs in infancy, it is not unreasonable that an ability thus acquired is regarded as inborn.

An infant makes no distinction between good and evil.

All he has is the attitude to take if he wants to take and try to eat if he wants to eat.

If you stop him and tell him not to take, his desire to take becomes stronger; if you stop him and tell him not to eat, his desire to eat (not appetite) intensifies and develops. If you frequently give him such training, how does the child's mind grow?

Eventually he develops wisdom enough to steal behind others' back and eat unseen, and the parent grieves, catching him in the act: 'There's wickedness in my child.'

Even a kitten who at first leisurely eats something she finds around the house learns, through the experiences of being yelled at, to steal in, pick up a fish or something with her mouth, and leap away.

A cat is a cat; who made her a thief cat but a human being?

An infant holds something in his hand, and tries to bring it to his mouth.

The mother who is watching him says, "Oh, no, you shouldn't eat such a thing," and abruptly snatches it.

The child has no particular feeling, and remains calm when the object is taken away. However, while similar experiences are repeated, he gradually learns to put strength in his hand in order to hold on to the object.

The heart to resist losing it has now developed.

The mother acts out of love, not wanting the child to eat such a thing.

However, on the child's part, since something in his hand is abruptly taken away, it is like coming across a highwayman. So, instinctively he tries to protect what he has.

When he learns to hold on tightly refusing to let go, this time the mother becomes stronger, and she takes away the object forcefully from the hand of the child who is resisting, though attaching a seemingly logical explanation: "It's not good to eat such a thing!"

His treasure snatched away with force, the child learns to cry aloud. From his point of view, he was robbed; it was like encountering a burglar.

We ought to consider how the child's psychological development through such parental training in daily life prepares a lifelong, firm quality as if it were an inborn quality. As the saying goes, "A three-year old's soul [lasts] until age one hundred."

Through having something snatched away, taking also develops deep roots.

It's no wonder that a child who received the 'three-year old's soul' education becomes an adult who is on his guard, mistrusts others, a man like greed itself who will never let go of what he has grasped even if his parent dies. I think it particularly meaningful for parents to have sense enough to take something from an infant always after giving something else in his other hand, because this is the period when the foundation of his entire life is created.

Let us consider how our hands develop.

Naturally they develop through nutrition and exercise. However, when we think about the development of ability, sensibility, and nerves, it occurs to us that they develop through the activity of the brain; we also realize that nutrition and exercise are also under the control of the brain.

So we can say that the hands develop by the brain.

Suppose we keep a young child's hand tied so it cannot move, and leave him that way several years, though giving him enough nutrition. While there is still the will to move the hand, it will continue to develop, but when the child

realizes that it does not move however hard he tries, the brain activity will stop as far as that hand is concerned.

Then the ability which should develop in the hands cannot develop. Even the ability which originally existed is gradually lost.

What will happen if the hand is kept from moving for five or ten years? Suppose this is the right hand, how will it compare with the left in terms of physical and nervous development, delicacy of sensibility, scope of ability, power, muscular growth, etc.? You will see great qualitative difference which is totally beyond comparison.

What causes this? It is the result of brain activity, i.e., of adaptation. If the hand is tied and immobile, the brain no longer commands that nutrition be sent there to develop the nerves. The brain also reduces the blood supply to the lowest amount necessary. Since the muscles are not used, the brain no longer sends nutrition to develop muscles, either. Since there is no need for training sensitivity, the "sensory department" does not send men to the hand. No personnel increase occurs in that department.

Considered this way, you can say that "the brain is the body's fostering department; nutrition is nothing more than the material used in the process." Moreover, it follows that "the distribution of nutrition is determined by the office in the brain, and the ration is changed every minute according to needs."

I have seen a child whose arm, due to a problem in the joint, hung down. Perhaps as a result of polio, his left arm was twice as slim as his right, and it seemed to have been that way from infancy, for, although the length was similar in both arms, their growth was completely different. The brain commanded reducing the ratio to the left arm because there was no need, and as a result it grew as a slim, hanging arm, which, of course, serves no purpose. It dangled at the joint.

The human brain has a wonderful, delicate function which surprises us, and it is astonishingly busy without a moment of rest.

If there is action, the brain arranges distribution of nutrition necessary for that action, and prepares the part of the body to develop enough to achieve the goal. The brain also has to develop sensitivity, and sometimes it has to think about things. No role can be as busy as this. However, despite its busy role, everything is done neatly and with confidence always according to the law of cause and effect.

This is wonderful and deserves respect.

Even if a little scar is made, the brain must demonstrate the ability to adapt and arrange to cure this. If there is no such function, the surgeon cannot cure a single scar. The surgeon simply makes use of that ability to adapt. If the scar does not congeal, the surgeon cannot find a glue to close it.

If one receives training, the brain must enter this in the ability notebook of memory and keep track of the frequency; if one is resting, the brain must erase the entry from the notebook in proportion to the time rested.

Likewise with the hand: the brain increases sensitivity in a hand that receives training, adds more delicacy to a delicate hand, and prepares muscles in a hand that requires strength.

From a physiologist's viewpoint, the brain may be supported by the heart. Of course a human being's existence depends on such mutual relationship. However, when we think of the roles of the parts of the body, the brain is the company president who exercises command. The blood is nothing more than his food. He is a very impartial president, and his distribution and concern for the entire body are quite rational. Therefore, he never deals in the black market or hoards goods, and never demands to have anything even a little beyond necessity.

If he carelessly pushes too much in his pocket, he will end up with cerebral hemorrhage; so he behaves with due caution.

Since I am about to digress from the problem of the hand, I think it good to cut it off around here. I cannot help thinking about ability without focusing on the brain, and I

am left with self-reflection: before I realize it, my subjective thought probably run too much toward the brain with a result that I am a little carried away.

When I study voin, I circle with a pencil three or four measures which are the most difficult parts in the piece I am practicing, and repeatedly practice those spots several tens of times by changing the tempo to the speed at which I can play securely, sometimes ten times more slowly but with precise intonation.

That is, I talk to my hand.

If I take it ten times more slowly, I can play with precision even the most difficult section. I repeat this precise exercise, which is training for developing good ability, repeating the same thing thirty or forty times taking a walk in the room, without thinking about anything.

When the passage is difficult, I repeat the same thing for two or three days. Then when I play it at the correct tempo, the fingers press the places they learned to press without an error, no matter how fast the tempo.

I am doing the hand's talent education.



WONDERFUL INFANT SENSITIVITY

What the Face Expresses

Lovely charming faces of children,

Blunt, expressionless faces,

Faces threatening to cry, irascible faces, etc., etc.,

Human facial expressions have a hundred variations.

Each of those faces, I think, is the product of the individual's interaction with the environment.

Kamala, the girl brought up by wolves, did not know how to laugh.

While giving her breast to her child, a happy mother turns her glad face, her smiling face, or her affectionate eyes to the child, stimulating his ability to adapt.

A child who grows while looking at the smiling, affectionate faces of his mother, father and others around him starts to adapt to that environment, and starts his brain, heart and muscle activities. "Peek-a-boo," a parent may say poking the infant's cheek, which is part of the muscle training which stimulates gradual physiological adaptation.

It is not that the baby smiles simply reacting to any stimulus. Only where there is a loving face by his side, the reaction occurs through adaptation.

If the baby is to smile simply from stimulation, try leaving him alone in a situation in which his cheek is lightly poked by a mechanical device. What kind of face will be created?

Infant adaptability is really wonderful.

If the mother breast-feeding the infant leads an unhappy life, spending every day with a laughless sad face, the child will adapt to her facial expression and develop a lonesome face lacking smiles. A child brought up in an unhappy family in an unpleasant daily environment is given the heart and expression of that environment.

Those who have raised four or five children should carefully observe the differences in their facial expressions: though siblings of the same family, each of them records in his or her face the history of the happiness and unhappiness of the parents' lives, the child's health or illness, and the accompanying situations of the environment.

Looking at this in general terms, compare European and Japanese faces. I think we cannot deny that the history of Japanese people's lives is recorded in today's Japanese faces.

These are faces created through the long feudal period.

We don't look sad when we are sad.

Our ancestors were held back from boldly expressing joy when they were happy. Those historical faces, having been succeeded by generations of parents who adapted to them, now seem to have become present day Japanese

faces. Foreigners sometimes seem to have trouble reading into Japanese expressions.

To foreigners, the Japanese face is immobile. They seem to have a hard time judging:

"That person looks happy, having come to express condolence."

"It's not at all clear whether he is happy or sad."

"At such a happy moment, he doesn't look at all happy. What can he be angry at?" With these questions, they look puzzled.

In this world there is physical adaptation as a result of which the heart and facial muscles react in the opposite ways.

It is internationally inconvenient unless we Japanese start to create a face which moves along with the heart.

Die with a smile — this is a little impossible for me to do even if asked.



Handing Down an "Accent"

Children born in Osaka who grow in the environment of Osaka parents and dialect are raised while responding to the delicate intonation, accent, and pronunciation of the Osaka dialect, and with the special stamp of Osaka borns with pronunciation and tone impossible especially for foreigners to reproduce.

German children in Berlin similarly grow in the environment of Berlinese-speaking parents and the Berlinese environment while adapting to the delicate rhythm, accent and pronunciation of the Berlin dialect, acquiring pronunciation and tone Japanese people cannot reproduce and thus getting stamped as Berlin born.

The language spoken by the side of a newborn is the preparatory training for talent education in language, which

already has a strong influence; the baby responds to the pronunciation, tone, etc. of the language spoken by his side, and goes through the process of physiological and functional adaptation.

The *r*-sound in German is hard for us who were brought up in Japan. That must be because we are physiologically fixed to fit Japanese pronunciation.

However, German children, without even training by their parents, produce that sound freely through adaptation to the sound they hear in daily life. I think I can ascribe this to wonderful infant sensitivity.

Probably it is impossible for an Osaka born who has lived in the Osaka dialect environment till age fifty to move to Tokyo and to adapt to the Tokyo dialect's accent and rhythm. What about a twenty year old? And a fifteen year old? A ten year old? A five year Old? As the age moves down, the adaptation is stronger, faster, qualitatively purer, and the possibility increases.

Contrariwise, adaptability decreases with age. In infancy and childhood, even physiological and functional adaptation occur.

A lady who came to visit me said, "My child has started to stammer recently. No one in our family stammers, so I don't know how this has happened." Her boy was four.

Two weeks later when I saw his father, I carefully watched him while talking with him, and found that his speech contained stammering sounds, although these were not detectable when one just listened. The stammering was so slight that it was hardly voiced. However, no matter how slight, the child's sensitive adaptability unmistakably catches it.

Dr. Kunze who taught German at the Higher School of Commerce, Nagoya once told me an ancient tale. It was thirty years ago.

Before coming to Japan, Dr. Kunze took a Japanese course at the University of Berlin. First he learned "*soro-style*", the epistolary style favored by old fashioned people,

characterized by the abundant use of the polite endings *soro*. He did not know the difference between epistolary and spoken styles. This was understandable. When I was in Berlin, an acquaintance by the name of Mr. Sato lectured on *The Tales of Ise*, a ninth century courtly writing which precedes the *soro*-style by several centuries. So the *soro*-style was not unreasonable. Now, Dr. Kunze set foot on the Japanese land for the first time and went to a Japanese inn for the first time.

He was relaxed about speaking Japanese, because he had learned it in Berlin. Proudly, he caught the attention of one of the maids and inquired: "*Watakushi no tame ni heya hitotsu kore ari soro ya*, Existeth there a chamber for mine sake?" All the maids burst into laughter. Dr. Kunze was really taken by surprise, he told me.

Old Man H of K Village who lives by working on the farm and catching fish is a really likeable man who is kind and detests dishonesty.

Having become friends, sometimes he comes over to chat, and I also visit him.

"Come on up," he says, pushing away the scattered straws, placing a blackened cushion to a side of the fireplace in the center of the room, and urging me to sit on it. I step up without reserve.

The room is all black: from the ceiling to tatami floor and the walls, everything in the room is black with the soot from the fireplace. On the dark dirt floor, fodder for the cow is heaped up, and the coal-black cow crouches on the far end of the dirt floor, only her eyes glowing.

That dark room suggests a one room apartment shared with a cow, and as far as dirt and disorder are concerned, it is top number one in my knowledge.

In that dark and dirty surrounding, only the goodness of the simple hearted old man is shining.

He is a human being who shines with truth and goodness, and that is the reason that I enjoy pleasantly chatting with this old man. Regrettably, however, a sense of beauty is lacking there.

In the old man who was born in this black room and brought up in this house always with cows, the sense of cleanliness was not fostered so that he would find the uncleanliness of the room as unclean.

About two years ago in the summer, when his grandson suddenly fell ill, I often went to that house, and once spend half a day looking after the boy.

Sitting by the sick child's pillow and watching his face, I was made to think about this human being who would grow in this dirty gloom without coming to know what beauty is.

Every job is worthy of respect. However, I could not refrain from praying that everyone who engaged in a worthy job would lead a happy, pleasant, and, moreover, beautiful life. If a time came when truth, goodness and beauty were fostered in every member of the human race, I was sure society would be beautiful and pleasant. I dreamed this way and that about the world constructed by such people.

That day, three fleas graciously accompanied me home.



SEEKING THE ESSENCE OF THE SUZUKI METHOD



From the Family Concert

Hiroshi Okubo

Hello, everyone. I am Okubo, and we live in Nishikasugai-Gun, Aichi Prefecture. I would like to take a moment to talk about my children's Suzuki experiences and my daily thoughts on the method.

A Family Concert at the Work Place

At the company where I work, we hold a Christmas party every year. Last December, my family was given an opportunity to present a family concert on that occasion in

front of several hundred members of my colleagues' families. We have been asked again this year and the day of the concert is drawing near. I think this is a rather rare case whether in a company or in society in general.

At the Christmas concert last year, first our oldest son played Bach a minor. Then our second oldest son, oldest girl, second oldest girl, and the third oldest girl went on stage and the five of them performed Vivaldi a minor together. When the five of them lined up, there was an indescribable commotion in the audience which was impressed by the size (?) of the family as well as moved by the beautiful pieces played by the young children. "Let me introduce my wife who brought up such wonderful children," I said, and my wife went on stage, holding the youngest girl. I clearly remember that there was a louder cheer, or perhaps a deeper sigh.

Immediately following that concert, a lot of people walked over to talk to my wife and me. Many seemed to have been moved. At the office the next day, a ring of people formed wherever I went, and even those who normally looked indifferent to emotions commented that it was wonderful, or that they were moved.

So, in order to explain why that kind of thing was possible and why this kind of family was created, I talked to them about the Suzuki method and child education, quoting various words of Mr. Suzuki. The topic, regrettably, seemed to have been as yet unintroduced to the majority of people.

For those who were impressed by what I had to say, the following day I bought copies of Mr. Suzuki's *Nurtured by Love* and sold one copy to each. It would be easy for me to give them the book, but people often don't read gift books, so I had my friends buy it.

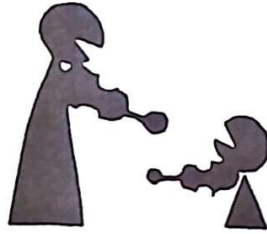
Since then, I have been making efforts to invite many of my colleagues and their families to Suzuki method recitals and big concerts at Nagoya.

In March this year, when all of us went skiing for the first time as a family to Mount Hakuba (White Horse), Nagano Prefecture, we became friends with the wife of

the hotel owner. When we talked about the Suzuki method, she said she wanted to hear the children, and it was quickly decided that we give a concert in the hotel lobby the same night. Our children always carry their violins no matter where they travel.

This was announced through the hotel loud speaker to collect many people to the mini concert at the lobby. It was late by the time guests finished their dinner, and our children looked fairly sleepy after skiing, but they played three or four pieces. The audience was quite pleased. There, too, I talked about the Suzuki method.

Making use of family occasions, weddings, memorial services, etc., we try to make many opportunities for the children to play for friends and relatives. In an apartment complex of about 450 families where we live at present, I seek chances to talk about the Suzuki method as often as I can, and encourage them to read Mr. Suzuki's books or join the violin class.



Mr. Suzuki's Heart and Words

When we have my children perform before an audience, some take it as an act of showing off my family. However, many people feel moved. I do this out of a desire that as many people as possible will come to know the essence of Mr. Suzuki's heart, or the essence of the Suzuki method. It is because I believe that "those who believe in the Suzuki method and Mr. Suzuki's words and practice Suzuki life can make their families and themselves happy."

I hope that many parents who take Suzuki children to classes will learn Mr. Suzuki's heart aside from enjoying

their progress in violin. My constant wish is also that instructors who engage in Suzuki method education as Mr. Suzuki's disciples will try to convey his heart to both students and parents.

I think he will probably be assessed in future history as this century's greatest educator. Since we are in direct contact with his teaching, I think we should learn its wonderful aspects. Some may leave the method quickly after the Twinkle Variations. Even then, if they have in that brief period learned many of Mr. Suzuki's words, I think it will prove extremely valuable. If, however, his words are not conveyed to parents at all, it is regrettable.

I saw Mr. Suzuki for the first time at Nagoya's City Hall when there was some gathering. It was six or seven years ago.

I was greatly surprised. I imagined what kind of person he might be, since he was world famous. Contrary to my expectation, however, he had no pose at all, and sat in the lobby by the side of the hall, talking in a normal and calm way with many people without a hint of haughtiness. I was really moved by his attitude.

When they get a few titles, some think of themselves as big shots and gradually assume an arrogant air, or, even if this is not the case, they receive special treatment. "This is a true teacher," I thought, as I still remember clearly.

To change the topic, a little before our oldest child was born twelve years ago, we received a copy of Mr. Suzuki's *Nurtured by Love* from the parent of Hiroshi Nishida who is now actively working in Europe, and both of us read it through tears. This was the beginning of our encounter with the Suzuki method.

"There is such a teacher," "There is such a method," we thought, and wished to try the method when we had a child. We lived in Konan-cho then, luckily near Instructor Ryoichi Hasegawa. When our son was two and a half, we went to his place to observe lessons for approximately half a year.

About the time when our son was three, we started lessons because he insisted on learning. At present he is practising Book 8. Later, his younger brother and sisters started violin, too, on their own initiative, without our telling them to do it. At present all six study violin.



Participating in the Summer School

To change the topic again, we participated in the Summer School for the third time this year. Juggling my work schedule as much as possible, I try to get my summer break to coincide with the Summer School, but it is difficult to succeed every year; so this was our third participation.

On the last night of the Summer School, parents staying in the same place, or mothers rather, gathered to have a round table discussion. Most were members of Hasebe and Hasegawa classes of Nagoya. I, too, joined the circle half way in the discussion. When I sat down, I realized they were all mothers. I did see a few fathers in the morning at breakfast, but there I was the only male. So, I spoke as follows:

"Friends, children's playing which evolves before your eyes right now is a miracle. A miracle is happening in front of our eyes today, that same miracle that moved Maestro Casals to tears.

Here are the highest arena of education and the highest educators. Let's not forget this.

Daily practice may be a chore. Some of you may think, 'If there's no violin, this world will be peaceful.' However, what I think in the course of raising children is that this refines the parent's heart — that this is a process which helps refine oneself. It may look as if the parent is

Suzuki. Let's each of us place a set by our side and peruse it. I am convinced that it will be the treasure of each family.

Now, coming to the Summer School and talking with you, I realize that I am the only male here as you see, and some of you may feel like complaining: 'I wish my husband was as understanding as Okubo.' However, please never have such complaints, for the basis, or the great presupposition, of producing good tone is the couple's harmony. Family environment comes first. The harmony of the couple's hearts is first. So while you throw complaints at each other, your children's tone can't be expected to improve.

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I think it's no good if, when Summer School is over and you go home, you say 'Oh I'm so tired' and collapse. Unless the first words that come out of your mouth are, 'We owe it to you that we were able to go, thank you,' I think something is missing in you as a wife and as a follower of Mr. Suzuki's heart.

As is written in Mr. Suzuki's books, the method's, or Mr. Suzuki's, purpose is not to create professional musicians. The purpose is to create human beings with fine heart. If there is a person without hands, would he be unable to learn the Suzuki method? That is not so. He can learn it.



No matter what difficult piece a student can play skillfully, if he is vain about his ability and advanced technique, or if he looks down upon others, it is the same as not having studied the Suzuki method at all. Please, let's not forget that our aim is to foster human beings of rich heart."

I took the liberty to talk in this vein about fifteen minutes. I am afraid I sounded fresh as if I were knowledgeable, but what's worse, later I found that a few teachers including Instructors Hasebe and Hasegawa sat right next to me. Since I didn't know them, I thought of them as parents. It never occurred to me that famous teachers might be listening, so I just prattled away.

Being Moved

Instructor Umemura with whom our children study now is concerned about conveying Mr. Suzuki's heart. I often discuss with her the importance of Suzuki teachers' efforts first of all to let themselves grow as human beings, with which she completely agrees. Both my wife and I are thankful that we encountered a really wonderful teacher.

Recently we had a chance to hear Shotaro Andoh's recital. My wife and I were both moved for the first time in a long while. The blind boy played many wonderful pieces. Feeling the thoughtfulness of the friends who surrounded him, we shed tears while listening to his performance. When I hear that kind of performance, I feel like letting as many neighbors and acquaintances as possible listen to that resonating tone.

When we constantly listen to Suzuki children's performances, we become so used that we forget that they are moving events. Taking them too much for granted, we forget what they are. However, before Mr. Suzuki adopted this method, such performances by small children were never a matter of course. I think it's no good to lose our initial sense of wonder. I constantly tell myself to cherish the heart to be moved.

I don't know how long our children are going to go from here. Since we give concerts at various places, people ask us if we want our children to become violinists, but we never think of the future. Anyway, they love violin, and they say they want to improve. All I wish is that through violin each of them will develop a heart that understands great music — as rich a heart as possible.

This may be a little boastful, but our children, all six of them, are quite cheerful. About the four of them who go to school, we often receive such comments as this from their teachers: "They are like children in the old days — truly unrestrained and, moreover, robust." They are indeed relaxed, contributing to a cheerful and happy family. Friends who visit us leave somehow feeling happy from just being here. This is partly due to having studied Mr. Suzuki's teachings.

Mr. Suzuki, I wish you to continue your active work in ever greater health. Thank you.

(December 1986)



A family photo

Talent Education, no. 80

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 let them ring.

——Shin'ichi Suzuki



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