

## BETTER PRACTICING

### I. THE PRACTICING EQUATION

PRACTICE = Growth, Discovery, Good Feelings

THE PRACTICE REALITY: Practice is necessary.

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### II. SETTING THE STAGE

- A. Establish the habit first. Gradually increase time and complexity.
- B. Remove obstacles through preparation. Comfortable chair, sharpened pencils, create a "practice space."
- C. Importance of mood. Delight and enthusiasm are contagious.
- D. Tools and Aids.

PRIMARY: The teacher's notebook. Instructions in the teacher's hand often carry more weight than parent's memory.

SECONDARY: Charts, calendars, stickers, lottery games, etc.  
(Rotate for variety.)

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### III. PRACTICE HYGIENE

- Work on one thing at a time.
- Vary material and sequence.
- Segment sessions to maintain interest.
- Start with a framework but encourage spontaneity.
- Include creativity and free work.
- Know when to overlook and move on.

## BETTER PRACTICING (Cont'd) p.2

### IV. ELIMINATING COMMON CAUSES OF BAD PRACTICING

1. GUILT: Everyday is a chance for a new beginning. Music requires constant re-creation and practicing can be eternally regenerated.
  2. TOO MUCH, TOO SOON: Add new information in small quantities. Be conservative and enjoy each small success.
  3. SPORADIC WORK: Regular work creates perceivable progress, the strongest engine of motivation.
  4. FATIGUE: Admit fatigue and work in a different way. Shorter Segments. Take special credit for persevering.
  5. OVER INVESTMENT IN RESULTS: Process is important. Results will happen.
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### V. ROLES

Create a good parent/teacher partnership through clearly defined roles bound together by mutual respect.

Teacher: Introduces the new information, sets pace.

Parent: Praises progress, aids memory.

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### VI. THE POWER OF ATTENTION

When in doubt, listen without preconception or judgment. Focussed attention sparks work and progress.

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### VII. EXTRA-MUSICAL BENEFITS

Musical goals are reached by incremental steps. One goes from not knowing to knowing, from not being able to being able. This is a powerful model for self-education and self-realization.

Good practicers know how to achieve their goals whether it be in homework, sports, hobbies, social interaction or any other pursuit.

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Music is the universal language of the emotions and the spirit. With enlightened practicing every child can speak it fluently.