



Twinkling The Ivories

November 2015

The Wonder of Growth: Notes from the Fall Workshop

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With patience and repetition, the seed blossoms. --- Dr. Shinichi Suzuki.

We as parents must cherish the wonder of growth --- our children's and our own. At the Fall Workshop, Guest Teacher Nena Lamarre reminded parents of this core value of Dr. Suzuki.

During the parent talk, Ms. Lamarre introduced the book *"Mindset: The New Psychology of Success"* by Carol Dweck, a world-renowned Stanford psychologist. I was a little surprised. I had read the book some time ago but it was not a book about music at all. The main insights of the book are twofold: first, neuroscience researchers show that our brains can change throughout our lifetime; second, having a growth mindset, or believing that we can change, will motivate us to seek better strategies, put in more effort, and search for potential supports, all of which will increase the probability of long-run success.

Ms. Lamarre urged parents to apply the following four steps in piano practice and in other aspects of life to shift from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset:

- Step 1: Learn to hear your fixed mindset "voice."
- Step 2: Recognize that you have a choice.
- Step 3: Talk back to it with a growth mindset voice.
- Step 4: Take the growth mindset action.

Most of us have learned through experience that we in fact can change, and we may have learned to talk back to the obnoxious voice in our mind that sometimes tells us "I knew you would" whenever we fail to achieve a goal, but our children are young and they may not know their own potential. We can help our children develop a growth mindset by consciously applying it in piano practices.

Having a growth mindset is not easy in action. During the Q&A, one mother shared that she was frustrated by the journey of book 1 --- the repetition of the same things again, and again, and again. When is it enough, three months or six months? I saw some other parents nodding because they could relate to the question. After all, the majority of us there were parents with kids in book 1 or book 2. A lady in the audience volunteered an answer. Later, I found out that this elegant lady was Guest Teacher Susan Magnusson. She said that as we couldn't predict exactly when our children would talk, we couldn't predict exactly when our children would be able to achieve the milestones in music; and that we simply had to trust that our children eventually would achieve all those, as long as we create the right environment, just like they all learned to speak their native language. What a great answer! A growth mindset requires enormous faith and patience. I think that faith leads to patience.

Growth is a wonder --- a wonder of the seeds and the environment. Let's have faith and create a nurturing environment for our children, for music, and for growth.

Li Zhou



Edmonton Suzuki
Piano School
presents
A Very Special 40th
Anniversary Concert!

Join us for a unique
concert featuring
performances by ESPS
alumni, faculty, family
members and duos
and groups!

December 6, 2015

2:30 PM

10720 54 Street

Tickets are \$5 and can be
purchased in advance
from your teacher or by
calling Kim Green at
780.488.0548

Halloween Concert Fun!

On Halloween day, students of Rhonda McEachen performed for the residents of Canterbury Court. Melanie Bodnar and her daughter also performed and one of Ruth Johnson's advanced students participated as well. It was a great way to pass the time before trick or treating in the evening!

Nena Lammre's Tips to Change Your Words and Change Your Mindset

Instead of...

I don't understand

This is too hard

I can't read music

I made a mistake

Plan A didn't work

It's good enough

I give up

Try thinking...

What am I missing?

This is going to take some time and effort

I'm going to train my brain in reading

Mistakes help me to improve

Good thing there are 25 letters in the alphabet

Is this really my best work?

I'll use some of the strategies I've learned

ESPS has a copy of Carol Dweck's **Mindset: The New Psychology of Success** in its lending library. Contact Kim Green if you'd like to make arrangements to borrow this book.

Coming Soon! ESPS at the ESO

On January 17, 2016, the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra presents its Sunday Showcase, **Vivaldi and Chopin Concertos**. The ESO promises a varied and delightful afternoon:

A full slate of young talent is on display as Ken Hseih makes his ESO conducting debut, joined by pianist Megan Milatz (Chopin), ESO trumpeters Robin Doyon and Frederic Payant (Vivaldi), and ESO violinist Aiyana Anderson-Howatt.

ESPS is coordinating discounted group purchasing for this kid-friendly afternoon concert and we'd love to see ESPS members enjoying this special opportunity to attend an ESO concert together.

Ticket pricing and order forms will be available from your teacher later this month, and must be returned by December 11th in order to confirm seats at this special price.



Plan for Family Fun at the ESO

In the summer of 1996, when I was hired to be the Artistic Administrator of Ottawa's National Arts Centre Orchestra, I imagined speaking with famous conductors, instrumentalists and singers from 9 to 5 every day, and plotting grand concerts of masterworks for cosmopolitan audiences.

Working with some of the world's pre-eminent classical musicians was certainly the core of my job, but I was shaken to learn that my responsibilities also included overseeing family and education concerts. Not yet a father, I had never attended a "kiddie concert". I was relieved that a colleague assembled those programs, and that she was both passionate and adept at introducing music and instruments to young people.

And so, one Saturday afternoon shortly after I moved to Ottawa, I went to a **Saturday for Kids** concert. I was staggered by the energy in the building – the lobby was far noisier and chaotic than I had ever experienced. The auditorium seemed like it was bubbling, with hundreds of children wiggling and fussing in their seats. The lights went down, and the buzzing chatter turned into an awe-filled, "Ooooooh!" The orchestra played *O Canada*, and the kids sang with gusto. Everyone seemed to be having a ball, and 60 minutes later, after a brief smattering of applause from little hands impatient to get on with their day, the huge auditorium emptied in seconds, as children ran up the aisles with parents in tow. Fun!

A couple of weeks later, I attended my first Education Concert. I was amazed by the three dozen buses that efficiently deposited our pint-sized patrons outside the front door, the students' excitement, the skill of the teachers and ushers in corralling the kids into their seats, and the breakneck pace of the performance itself, specifically designed for restless bodies and curious minds with short attention spans.

Fast-forward to 2015, and I have a 5¾ year-old daughter – Jolene (who would be displeased if I didn't give her that ¾ year credit). I've volunteered to chaperone her first "ESO concert" with her classmates in May. I know now that hardly anyone realizes that orchestras present school concerts. The Edmonton Symphony, where I now work as Artistic Administrator, performs up to 16 Education Concerts annually, for as many as 28,000 students.

What do they experience? The genesis of all our Education concerts is the curriculum. Although finding ways to connect curriculum with music can be a challenge, we do our best to ensure there is a connection between what children are learning at school and the music we perform. But we also know kids have short attention spans, and so we make sure musical selections are brief (unless we're talking about a narrative like *Peter and the Wolf* that bounces back and forth between text and music). We try to include masterworks by Bach and Beethoven (edited into "bite-sized" chunks) alongside contemporary favourites like *Frozen* and *How to Train Your Dragon*. We feature different sections of the orchestra, using excerpts from a Mozart serenade one minute and *Sailor's Hornpipe* the next. We prepare study guides for teachers, and host a teacher-session (which is also recorded and available for streaming) to help them prepare students for the exciting trip to the Winspear Centre. Students can even learn songs to either play along (recorder) or sing along with the orchestra.

Most importantly, we want concerts to resonate and to be fun. Earlier this year, after playing *Peter and the Wolf*, the orchestra played music from another famous story. The sound of 1,500+ young (mostly female) voices singing "Let It Go" at full throttle is something I'll not soon forget. Nor will I forget the sight of some little boys in the audience, dropping their heads into their hands in despair when they realized they'd have to endure the song yet once more...

The ESO strives to enrich, entertain and educate its community. Here are some upcoming ESO performances you and your children might enjoy at the Winspear Centre:

- Monday 21 December 2015 from 7:00pm to 8:15pm: **Candy Cane Christmas** (no intermission)
- Tuesday 22 December 2015 from 7:00pm to 8:15pm: **Candy Cane Christmas** (no intermission)
- Saturday 23 January 2016 from 2 to 3pm (lobby activities start at 12:45pm): **Symphony For Kids: Planes, Trains and Automobiles (no intermission)**
- Saturday 18 February 2016 from 2:30 to 4:30pm: **Disney in Concert – Tale As Old As Time** (with intermission)
- Saturday 18 February 2016 from 7 to 9pm: **Disney in Concert – Tale As Old As Time** (with intermission)
- Sunday 19 February 2016 from 2:30 to 4:30pm: **Disney in Concert – Tale As Old As Time** (with intermission)
- Sunday 19 February 2016 from 7 to 9pm: **Disney in Concert – Tale As Old As Time** (with intermission)
- Saturday 27 February 2016 from 2 to 3pm (lobby activities start at 12:45pm): **Symphony For Kids: The Great Human Odyssey for Kids** (film with orchestra; no intermission)
- Saturday 7 May 2016 from 2 to 3pm (lobby activities start at 12:45pm): **Symphony For Kids: Fun & Games**

Congratulations to Book 7 Graduate Annika Hanson!

On October 30, at Muttart Hall in Alberta College, Annika Hanson presented her Edmonton Suzuki Piano Volume 7 graduating recital. Her friends and family were treated to nearly an hour of beautiful music, which included Bach's Prelude in G major from Well-tempered Clavier Vol. 1, Mozart's Sonata K.331 with the well-loved Alla Turca finale, Debussy's The Girl with the Flaxen Hair, Chopin's Nocturne in C# Minor, Bartok's Rumanian Dances and Handel's Harmonious Blacksmith

Annika began her lessons with Ruth Johnson in Suzuki Piano when she was just 5 years old. She also joined the Cantilon Choir program when she was very young. She continued to sing in the various choirs of Cantilon through her public school years and still participates in their Chamber Choir. Being involved in the choir program has also given her the opportunity to travel quite extensively. The choir has participated in festivals and competitions in Newfoundland, Italy, Wales, Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic. Singing lessons have enhanced her rich musical life for several years.

Annika has also found time to volunteer with the "Chatter" program, which is a respite service that helps children with communication disorders to increase their conversational skills. This past year she has become a paid employee with Chatter.

Annika graduated from Bellerose Composite High School in St. Albert this past spring. She is presently enrolled in her first year in the Arts faculty at U of A, planning to study speech pathology. She continues to sing, individually, and in choir, and to study piano.

Congratulations Annika!

Ruth Johnson

There is no point where we can say, "This is enough." Always seek finer music, finer performance. Eventually this will change from a learning attitude to a joyful quest which will last throughout our lives.

– Dr. Shinichi Suzuki

2015/2016 ESPS Calendar

December 6, 2015 ESPS 40th Anniversary Concert

January 17, 2016 ESPS at the ESO Event

January 31, 2016 Graduation Ceremony at Muttart Hall

February 7, 14, 21, & 28, 2016 Winter Recitals at Suzuki Charter School

April 9, 2016 Spring Festival at Suzuki Charter School

April 10, 2016 Graduation Ceremony at Muttart Hall

May 1, 2016 Group Concert at Suzuki Charter School

June 4, 5, 11, & 12, 2016 Spring Recitals at Convocation Hall

June 19, 2016 Graduation Ceremony at Muttart Hall

Congratulations November Graduates!

Congratulations to the following students for their hard work and well-deserved graduations:

Volume 1

Jonah Christensen
Clare Guo
Michael Palmer
Isabella Wang
Hannah Tao
Matthew Zhang
Alexander Zubritsky
Ephraim Zubritsky

Volume 2

Wesley Deng
Rachel Mack
Ethan Zhang

Volume 3

Hamish Chan
Anna Heintzman
Pauline So
Dan Zhang

Volume 4

Conrad Oddoye
Galen Wei

Volume 5

Matthew Lee

*Beautiful tone,
Beautiful heart.*

Dr. Shinichi Suzuki