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"Approach Positive as babywalk talk" (Armena's original version with new revisions 27 March 2006)

So helpful to teaching and parenting is **positive approach**, the best nourishment for motivation, learning, and longevity. Picture your ideal, then give the students that image. Show them the right way (rather than the wrong way). Tell them what to **do** (rather than what *not* to do). Say, "**Please do this.**" Please ASK with "**please**" first. Stop yourself from saying, "Don't do that." Use all positive words (root out negativity). Life is good this way. Students learn well this way. Why?

First, positive models make it clear what to do. In watching hundreds of lessons in various fields, when a negative model was shown, I've often been unsure of which model was desired, and which not. Positive models are straightforward. Negative models can confuse. If you feel it's helpful to show the wrong way, please **first show the right way** repeatedly, saying, "**Yes!**" (Then, *before showing the wrong way*, say, "The following is *not* the way. "No"). Be clear: which way is "yes", which is "no". (Put negative instruction in parentheses: separate it). After showing the wrong way, show the right way again. The last model shown may be the first recalled. Show best first and last.

Dr. Shin'ichi Suzuki said give "one point". A positive model is one point. A negative model presents more than one point at a time because you first see the wrong way and have to tell yourself not to do it, then you have to imagine the better way and tell yourself to do that instead. The negative model adds steps to the process of students' learning what to do. Plus, it may cause students to lose courage, by making the learning process seem negative, confusing, complicated, and hard.

Second, positive models make us feel inspired, and hopeful; they feed **motivation**. (Negative models can be demoralizing and depressing.) Inspiring and **keeping students' motivation strong** is teachers' first and continuing project, while fostering an **atmosphere conducive to learning**, at lesson and at home. A peaceful mood allows clear awareness, the basis for learning. Stress hormones impair learning, so be aware of students' feelings, and of your own. Be happy, then they can be happy. Find what to enjoy and celebrate as you focus together on the projects at hand. Cultivate your smile.

Third, humans imitate what they observe, good or bad. Scientific studies show that even subliminal images influence us to be more comfortable with them, and that we are likely to imitate (internally or externally) what we see, even if we know it's bad.

When I'd just started teaching, in Oberlin in 1972, an elder teacher from Columbus, Ohio, Mrs. Ethyl Evans (age 80) watched my lessons. After, she explained: Show always the right way, (not the wrong way). Tell children to stay on the sidewalk (rather than not to run into the street). Give them the image of what you want, (not what you don't want), because they'll have the urge to imitate whatever the image is, good or bad. She pointed out that if you say, "Don't run into the street", you give the image to run into the street. The fact that you precede those words with "don't" doesn't

change the image. And the impulse is always to imitate the image. So you are giving them a conflict. You're saying, "Run into the street" at the same time you say, "Don't."

Put yourself into the students' place. Of these instruction pairs, which teaches better? "Please, slowly, quietly, close the door" or "Don't slam the door!" For string players "Separate bows", or "No slur". Which is a positive stimulant to the imagination?

Demonstrate what you want them to do while giving the uncomplicated directive of **one positive "to-do" image**. Students can follow our natural instinct to imitate, without having to do a psychological turn-around in trying not to imitate the negative image then somehow come up with a different, positive image. **Demonstrate** staying on the sidewalk as you instruct.

Point out with gratitude when they comply, so they know they are doing it right. Say with enthusiasm and appreciation, "Thank you for staying on the sidewalk!" Describe the positive activity you are pleased to see, so they know what they did right and what to continue doing. Then they know what to do, feel inspired to do it, feel your appreciation, and feel good! **Is it good to feel good in learning?**

Mother Tongue learning- how babies learn to **talk and walk**- is Dr. Suzuki's basic model. All healthy babies learn their mother tongue fluently. Babies begin learning language and music before birth, listening for months before birth. (Please sing for your baby). Every human can develop a high level of language and music ability with the same method. Think of what this method is, the Mother Tongue Method. Every human can develop "musical talent" given adults who nurture. Babies listen and observe, reacting internally, seemingly passive, for a long time. Babies imitate our model eventually, when they want to, not always at our command. They utter new words at their own pace and in their own order. Their first steps come when they choose. We provide a stimulating environment of the whole of adult language PLUS we single out words and phrases to repeat. Our talking and walking are models for them. We walk and talk with them. They choose their response.

We trust in Nature that babies eventually will become fluent talkers and walkers, and **we don't criticize** their timing, speed, choices, or technique. We show delight in their efforts. And we keep demonstrating. **We approach the Positive for babywalk and babytalk**. Can we remember all this when we teach?

If we **thank each other** for each thing done, this appreciation **feeds motivation**. Even if the thing done is expected, paid for, routine, if it's received with gratitude, the doer can keep enthusiasm. We do better what we have enthusiasm for. And let's **show appreciation for the intention, and the effort**, as well as for the actual achievement. Acknowledge not only the skill demonstrated, but also the willingness to try. This inspires further good intention and effort. After each effort, find a successful aspect of it to point out so they **feel** success and encouragement. Then **choose one point to ask to change** to further their skill (without making it sound like they'd been doing something wrong). Let your first instruction be positive description of what they're doing "right". Then give a positive description of what you wish for them to do, (rather than "correcting their "mistakes". If they want to think in terms of "mistakes", let that come from their own assessment). They thus keep courage.

If students feel successful, they keep interest. If they feel failure, they may say they "don't like it", "aren't interested", "want to quit" (to protect themselves from bad feelings of being judged unsuccessful). **Dr. Haruko Kataoka says if students are resisting, you may be asking too much; ask them to do something you know they can do well, acknowledge it, then let them be done.** Success creates more interest. Success breeds success. Let them experience each step as successful learning, and they'll gain courage to continue as the challenges change and grow.

Dr. Suzuki said to observe everything the student does, noticing all the "bad" points, but without telling, so as not to demoralize, overwhelm, distract. **Acknowledge first** what they are doing "right", "**good**" points, so they feel validated, AND know what to keep doing. Then choose **one point** for practice that would be most helpful to progress. There may be many aspects you want to change, but knowing that humans generally can pay attention to change only one new thing at a time, you decide which of these points is the likely gateway to the eventual change of the others, in a line. Demonstrate that one point as a **positive model (rather than as a correction)**, "Now will you please try *this*?" Even if you've asked for this same thing before, show it anew, as if it's new, without making them feel guilty, so they can work clearly with pure attention (undistracted by emotional turmoil).

Help them to **concentrate** from a naturally **aligned** body with a **relaxed face-forehead**, eyebrows, eyes, eyelids, cheeks, jaws, teeth, lips- for easy focus of awareness. And please **ask** them (not demand). When they can do it correctly, ask them to repeat it correctly many times until it **becomes easy** and "intuitive". Let them rest when they need to rest or change activity. (If correcting little errors, tell the correct way first. If you want to specify the error, do it afterwards, then show the right way again.)

Explain how the **body needs many repetitions to incorporate what the mind already "knows"**. And the body needs **daily** repetitions, just as it does for walking, to develop its ease and mastery, and to keep this ease. In addition, if there is a "bad habit" to overcome, the way is to build a new habit which is stronger than the old habit. The body needs many more repetitions of the "right" way than it had of the "wrong" way. Then the body will serve up the preferred way rather than the unwanted old habit. Dr. Kataoka said to do the "right" way three times more than you've ever done the "old" way to make it the stronger way. You may not be able to erase an old habit, but you can build a new habit strong enough to win out!

When you show students what to do and skillfully inspire them to do this work, with your enthusiasm, appreciation, and positive approach, most **kids want to do the right thing**, and happily do it. The positive approach can be used everywhere. Show them what you want (not what you don't).

When you say **children's names**, do it for their doing good things (not for shame, as taught even in dog training, or the dog won't want to come to its name). **Let them save face, and feel respected**, feel proud. They want to be respected. They want also to be actively learning in a way appropriate to their childhood level. They want to learn.

If they feel disrespected, however, kids may opt out of trying to learn, to avoid feeling bad. Abandon any impulses to label kids "You are...rude-bad-lazy-disrespectful, bad, horrible, awful, noisy, late, not trying, not listening, not worthy, wrong, messy, disorganized, inconsiderate, a failure,

not paying attention, mean, no good, incorrigible, a disappointment, driving me crazy, wasting my time..." Instead refer to positive ideal behavior. Say, "Let's be...polite, kind, attentive, respectful..." BE the positive ideal in your own consistent good example. Keep giving and showing the ideals, breathing freely and relaxed, and give easy strategies for students to achieve the ideals.

Respecting them means also allowing them to **respond personally in their own ways**. Let them work uninterrupted after you help them plan what to work on. Allow them time for the trial and error which makes learning their own. Let them catch their breath with the distractions of their choice. Give them space and time. Respect their personal focus. Appreciate their creativity.

We adults need to keep finding ways to **skillfully inspire children** to want to learn more. Most important, during study, **play the piece for them** (or a recording) **right before they play it**, enough times to remember it easily. **Listening during practice time** is key to learning. Listen too at other times for memorizing the study piece and future pieces, and for retaining already-learned pieces to inspire their playing with increasing ease and musical qualities. For pianists, have the recordings always at the piano for instant listening right before playing. **Even pieces they already "know" need listening** to an ideal model, for keeping accuracy as well as memory and inspiration.

And remember that children need lots of **physical movement and healthy breathing**. Adults do too. "Busy hands are happy hands". "The hand develops the brain." (If you force them to sit still, unmoving, the body may be there, but you may lose their attention. They may even fall asleep. To a child, sitting still may be negative). Allow them frequently to move happily, and their attention will be more with us.

Praise a group rather than only individuals. **Create group pride (not individual competition)**. Create an environment where the children and parents help each other (rather than compete). Teach in a supportive group, the "**individual lesson group**". Dr. Suzuki asked us to have children and parents of different families together watching each other's lessons (not teacher-child-parent alone- not just a triangle- not just a "private" lesson). Develop the circle around the triangle (the circle of the support group around the individual lesson). **Observation of others** boosts learning. To see great artists perform is needed, and to see other students trying is important also for parents. A study of cats watching other **cats trying to open boxes** showed that the cats who watched novices could open boxes sooner than the cats who watched only "experts". We learn from the trial and error of others.

When you say, "I see three people who are doing a beautiful job with..." it tells them what you want them to do, reinforces the good, gives praise, and inspires all the children to want to do the same (without singling out anyone to be embarrassed). This was Brenda Reid's way (our inspiring first grade teacher at Burns Park School in Ann Arbor).

Suzuki Method promotes this type of positive approach. Mrs. Evans said that **children** subconsciously **imitate** everything you show them. Recent science supports this observation. Even subliminal images or words have effects. If you underline bad or wrong behavior, you are reinforcing it. You are teaching it. You perpetuate the bad if you point it out. If you ignore the bad, it forgets itself once the new skill is built. We need not identify with bad: let it be forgotten.

Let the **focus be on the good**. Point it out first and frequently, with happiness, smiles and laughter. Notice your **relaxed, accepting tone of voice**. Cultivate a light mood in practice and **good humor**.

Let praise be a description of the good activity. "See how fingers are learning to move nicely" (rather than referring to personal success: "you did well" implies possible failure- "you did badly before or may do badly next time"). Let kids save face. Remove the personal ego from threat so the **attention is free to focus** on the activity, like hands shaping clay. Let students devise ways to "teach heels to stay down under knees". They become active teachers.

Anthropomorphize body parts ("elbow has learned to follow"). Let students feel like coaches/teachers for their own hands, feet, eyes, ears, minds. They then can be interested in the progress of all these skills without feeling like failures when hands/feet/eyes/ears/mind are still in the working stages and not yet in mastery of the tasks.

Kids are sweet and sensitive. Preserve their sense of dignity with positive approach to help them develop ability. Children are hungry to learn and **hungry for the self-respect which comes from accomplishment**. Remember, we are helping the students to **build high ability** though listening, observing, and practicing. **Positive approach frees** students to work to **mastery and ease**, for the joy of it, and for the sharing and greater good. Positive approach is for more than feeling pleasant with people. It helps people develop their abilities.

Please **remember to be positive**. Say "**remember...**" (instead of "don't forget"). Watch out! Stop yourself from negative habits; before you speak, **stop to imagine** what it is you want them to do. Say, "Please do **this**" (instead of "don't"). **Once they know what to do, minimize your direction to the slightest reminder, or to a question**. Give them time to retrieve the answers. **Foster their freedom to feel direction coming from within them**. Let them do it themselves, to not feel bossed.

Examine your own assumptions about **what motivates**. Do they include these following? Music motivates; listening to the recordings and seeing others play motivates. Hearing great artists play motivates. Seeing others play who are the same age as us motivates. Our number one basic way of learning during study by **listening to the piece right before playing it** teaches and motivates. Hearing oneself play, feelings one's growing abilities motivates. Knowing that our "old friend" pieces get better and better as we keep playing them (review) motivates.

Following Dr. Suzuki's request to "Build your ability on a piece you can play " motivates because playing gets easier, more fluid, more musical with "review", and confidence grows in awareness of this. Smiling acceptance of the children's every effort motivates. Calm, serene, pleasant practice sessions motivate. Presenting the tasks clearly in small enough steps that they seem easy to try motivates. Acknowledging each accomplishment with **gratitude** motivates. Gentle feelings motivate. The **beauty** and the **fun** of the music motivate. The **expressiveness** of the music motivates. **The support group** of kids and parents and teacher together in the **camaraderie** of the individual **lesson group** motivates. Hearing wonderful music ahead in the repertoire motivates. Feeling appreciated motivates.

Negative motivations may yield compliance, but they depress the spirit. They create resentment. **Please abandon any impulse to use shame as a motivator**, or any other negative whip. Let our music study, lessons and practice, and performing, be associated only with happy social feelings. **There's enough inherent struggle and frustration in our study of our art form. We need to give courage** constantly. Please abandon any impulse to add psychological burden to the spirits. Be the **sunshine smiling** Buddha, happy and encouraging. For long-term study and practice, positive motivation is the truly rewarding inspiration. **So please reject the negative approaches.** When we keep creating the positive nurturing environment of our positive attitudes always flowing, the children respond positively sooner or later. They need to **feel we believe in them**, and we trust them; **they will live up to this** within the wholly positive rich environment, in their own way and in **their own time.**

Ask yourself – do you look relaxed, happy, grateful, and loving when you work with your child (or do you appear angry, annoyed, irritated, exasperated, at the end of your rope, accusatory)? Is your tone of voice soothing and encouraging (or sharp, punching, scolding,)? Do you feel your spirit as expansive (or do you feel tight, rushing and pushing your child)? Do you find you are smiling and letting your child smile (or are you scowling, and is your child's face tense)? Do you know that good work can come from good feelings, from enjoying the work (or do you think that you have to be "strict"= mean)? Do you know that you can communicate and foster work toward the highest ideals while smiling, relaxed, and kind?

What do "strict teacher" and "strict parent" mean to you? Are these what you want? (Do you believe that to make children achieve, they have to be pushed, hit, even made to cry?) **Can you choose a new path**, and reject recreating mean things that may have been done to you in your own childhood, and not imitate them, and not do them to your own children and students? Do you believe that serious study can take place in a happy atmosphere? Do you think it is good to "have fun" while studying?

Do you let your child have a "breather" when they want to, a rest, a change of pace of their choice, to do something totally different for the brain and body to be stimulated and relaxed in a healing way (or do you drive them forward, relentlessly pushing)? Do you respect their feelings? their needs? their opinions? Do you know that the body, brain, and feelings can become fatigued, and performance can be hindered if there is not enough attention to feelings, rest and change of pace? Do you know that work can proceed better, and be more effective over time if we allow breaks?

Do you remember that our bodies need full vigorous movement often, freely and with exuberance? Do you allow students to "let go" freely in their own way to truly recover from their efforts (or do you make them practice their instrument for long periods without allowing them to "let go" often)? Do you, on a performance day, let them preserve their energy and enthusiasm for the actual performance by using practice time carefully and sparingly, with attention to physical and emotional feelings, so they always feel good (and not hurt)? **Do you know that playing an instrument should always feel comfortable, and never hurt?** That if it hurts, something has to be changed in the use of the body?

Do you say, "The solo starts on the first beat. Let's count one, two, three, four, ONE" (rather than "you were late" or "early")? Do you focus on the **doing** and **show how** (rather than sending a demoralizing, incriminating "you" message)? Do you say, "Those little notes can be evenly spaced, and sound clear, like this", and sing the example (rather than "You did that wrong")?

Remember, students need to listen enough to their study piece right before they play it. They need to know exactly what the piece sounds like, to refresh their memory as they start to play it. If they already know the piece, they can help their performance by taking time to breathe slowly, even a few times or more, come to a peace within themselves, then focus, **and hear the piece in their minds** before they actually prepare to play their first note. Positive approach will help them learn only when they hear their piece enough, and are allowed time before beginning a piece to clear their minds and bodies, and to focus their attention and spirit, and feel truly, happily, "ready".

Please **treasure the feelings** of the children so you will feel **compassion** most of all, **be understanding**, and always guard their dignity. Relax your face so they can relax theirs. Have sympathy for their situations. Notice what you're saying, also what you're **feeling, and your body language**. Let your kindly words be coming from kindly feelings. Your feelings will be felt by the children regardless of your words. The way you treat them will come back to you. Good for good...

Please **abandon any impulse to** threaten, judge, intimidate, humiliate, ridicule, scare, worry, shock, embarrass, shame, ignore, criticize, chastise, belittle, put them down, hurt their feelings, make them lose face, feel bad or suffer, rush them, compare them unfavorably (to negative or positive models "Why can't you be like your sister? You used to be able to...Don't be a wimp"...), be sarcastic, be punitive, frown, roll your eyes, give them dirty looks, stern, critical, sharp, mad, frustrated, suffering, or exasperated looks, complain, moan, swear, curse, compare them even favorably to others, promote competition with others, show disrespect to their efforts or to their past, present or future, or to their very being, make them feel small and unworthy, demoralize, depress, or overpower them, make them feel guilty, blame, stress, insult or demean them, take revenge on them, label, force or coerce them, make them nervous, tense or sad, yell, scream, throw things, walk out, hurt, hit them, spank them, punish, abuse, abandon, disgrace, or dishonor them. Allow to wither away any impulse to say, "I already told you that." Kindly teach the point again as new.

If you feel you're "losing patience", if you're about to do or say something negative and hurtful, stop yourself. Do something to calm yourself. Figure out a better way. Reconsider. Wait! Imagine the ideal outcome, feelings, and best interaction, and imagine what ultimate effect you wish for. Take slow deep breaths. Take the time to find good feelings. Speak and act from good feelings instead. Know that people can learn (and teach!) better when they feel respected and worthy of respect, and while they are relaxed (not when feeling intimidated, rushed, and embarrassed).

One adult observer put it, from experience in his new job, "Being worried about screwing up is not a very good method." Our music study is best associated with good feelings, socially and individually. **Why would people even continue** in this challenging and endless venture of striving to artistic accomplishment if it brings abuse upon them?

Find compassion and understanding, toward yourself too. (Delete anger). Draw slow breaths in and slow breaths out. We collect ourselves with slow in-breath; we let go of tension with slow out-breath. Find calm, peace, serenity, for yourself and for the other. Relax your face. During practice and lessons, breathe together. Look into each other's eyes, eyes like the clear smooth surface of a quiet pond, reflecting, calmly. Find relaxation together. Laugh! Be open.

Honor always their personal **dignity**. Eliminate the concept of revenge. Develop forgiveness. And patience. Count your blessings. Find things to be grateful for each morning before leaving your bed. Allow a gentle approach daily to others and also to yourself. **Use positive approach for yourself too.** Forgive yourself, accept yourself, then you can be generous to others.

Please take the time to discover how to be skillful and encouraging rather than clumsy and hurtful in your efforts to lead them to study. **Be patient to let them feel unrushed, calm and relaxed, for clear focus, and study.**

"Skillfully inspire them to practice" said Dr. Suzuki. Teach them to be this way with each other and with themselves! Always look for a good thing to say, and something to be grateful for. What was good about it? **Set a good example** in your every human interaction, within your family and with others.

Notice, respect and understand the children's instincts and impulses, and figure out how to **work with these** (rather than to step on them). **Work with nature, patiently teaching.** Win their attention so they can learn from you (not forcing). **Give them time** to feel focused to comply with your suggestions (abandon impulses to rush them and push them. Instead, let them find their own comfortable speed). **Let them have time to "digest"**. We "eat", then we "digest". **Help make their "meal" appetizing for true nourishment (not just gobbling to indigestion).**

Dr. Suzuki decided to abandon the ability to be angry, so he could retain calm and compassion. Throw away anger and impatience, throw away complaining, and **replace them with compassion.** Cultivate the ability to remain relaxed during working together, during practice and lessons. Find **light-hearted** approaches and responses like laughing and saying **"Whoops"**! Practice **slow in-breathing** for body/spirit alignment and **slow out-breathing** for release and relaxation. Practice **smiling** and laughing. Develop eye contact before and after mutual bows.

Find how to **eliminate every negative word or implication.** "Let's try this" "Please do try this" (instead of "Why don't you...would you mind...you didn't...why didn't you...you didn't even..."). Find how to **reword every comment** to exclude the words "no, not, don't, didn't, won't and but, bad, worse, awful, terrible, horrible, wrong, incorrect, but, and even better, which implies worse"! Even saying "good" can imply "bad". You can say, "Yes, that's it! That's the way" (rather than "that was good"). Negative words and ideas depress. Positive words encourage. Please consider this every day at home as well as at lesson. Beware hidden negative implications such as in "That was more smooth, but..." because "but" communicates criticism. It's best to say "and now" instead of "but". "And now let's listen to this part for the quality of..."

Specific descriptions like "That sounded more smooth" are better than value judgments like "That was better" which imply that the earlier effort was its opposite- "worse". "Worse" is a negative

term, depressing and demoralizing. Describe the **activity** (rather than saying, "You...should do or didn't do...") Saying, "**That part was more smooth. Now let's try** also to make it more singing by feeling the full length and direction of each long note" keeps the spirit happy and forward-looking, optimistic and excited about the next effort, while giving a reasonable strategy for achieving.

Break each task into small enough pieces for easy grasp, repetition to mastery, and feeling of success.

Also, say, "Let's do this" which is a group effort and implies support rather than commanding "Do this" which leaves them alone.

Our musical study is not easy. It keeps becoming more complicated. It's not like learning to tie your shoe, which might be hard at first, but then is the same every time. Music study keeps changing, advancing, growing ever more and more challenging. We see farther, our standards raise higher, to our ideals of our art. To keep working and playing, we need reasonable tasks, and flexible, helpful, encouraging environments and attitudes. We adults create that environment for the children and for each other. We can **be honest** with each other **and still be kind, respectful and generous**. The most effective way of being honest is with kind helpful instruction. (Being honest doesn't have to mean being hurtful.) First take a moment to decide upon what effect you want, and carefully **choose** your words.

If mean words come out of your mouth, or even just to your mind, you can stop to reconsider your assumptions before you continue. Question your own approach. To say you are sorry for mistaken behavior, to ask them to forgive you, is a relief, for them and for you, and a model for humane communication.

Mrs. Haruko Kataoka said to patiently keep teaching the same thing over and over as long as it's needed. Tell them what to **DO**. This is the forward-looking inspiring way. Please abandon any habits of blame.

And please **thank** each other. And please remember to say, "**please**" before giving instructions (who likes being bossed?). Please, (rather than commanding), **ASK** them to comply. Can you imagine if *all* humans and human groups interacted like this? Spouses, nations...

When **children express themselves**, if we **listen and watch attentively**, with **respect**, (rather than telling them to be quiet), we find out their concerns and interests, and their feelings. We can be more effective teachers/parents. We're able to relate to them to help them. Each of us is a unique individual, yet every person wants to feel respected. When we are attentive to them, respectfully, **they return the attentive respect**, sooner or later, in their own way. Their own personal concerns are important to them. When we take them seriously, we help them manage their worlds, and can gently guide them in the process for their ability development.

At lesson, parents can relax and trust that the teacher and children are developing relationships of mutual respect and attention. Parents can just become quiet students of the teacher's approach at lesson, **letting the teacher decide how to win attention**, and letting the children respond from within themselves to the teacher's offerings. At lesson, if teacher requests something and the

child doesn't comply, parents can just wait quietly. **Parents can let the teachers WIN** the children's attention to themselves, and compliance. Parents don't need to repeat the teacher's requests (unless asked), don't need to try to force compliance, for it distracts from the teacher's efforts to win the students' attention then and there. (If parents interrupt, children's attention will go back to parents instead of to the teachers. Children naturally are attentive to parents, it's their default mode. At lessons a "new normal" is needed, with parents changing their roles, and becoming students in the studio, so that students can turn attention toward teachers).

The **students' willing compliance grows naturally** (shouldn't be forced). As Dr. Suzuki said, we **plant the seed**, and **faithfully water it**: play the reference recordings enough, practice small enough chunks in one-point focus, in positive approach, watch other's lessons, attend and participate in recitals. We don't dig the seed up to see how it's growing. We have to **patiently keep nurturing** in a positive way, without forcing or hurrying, yet always continuing.

Dear parents, and teachers, please take long slow breaths, in, wait, and out, wait, relax, count your blessings, smile, and allow ability to grow in its own way and time.

Motivation is strong and learning grows **when students feel they are agreeing** to something, or even **better yet, when they feel it's their OWN IDEA**.

Please figure out how you can **create the environment** which stimulates them to have the idea themselves, and to decide to follow it on their own, starting from their own feeling that they want lessons, having **listened** to the recordings **so much** that they already know the music when they start **watching** lessons.

All babies **want** to try to talk and walk. What kind of environment stimulates this?