



Continued Education and Maintaining Enthusiasm

by Joan Cupp and Wesley Schaum

(Adapted from "Keyboard Teaching with Greater Success and Satisfaction")

To be a good teacher involves a constant process of learning from which you never graduate. Maintaining and improving your own musicianship, seeking new ideas and resources, and attending musical events all stimulate your effectiveness as a teacher. Here are some possible ways to advance your own education and help maintain a fresh outlook toward your students.

From a practical point of view, the expenses of fees, tuition, membership and subscriptions may often be justified as a tax deduction when they are for professional development and continued education. Consult your tax advisor for confirmation.

Private Lessons

Teachers often take lessons, either from another private teacher who is more advanced, or by enrolling at a nearby college, university or conservatory. A lesson can often be scheduled just once a month (more frequently if you can afford the expense and time). These lessons can be fun, if only to refresh what you had learned some time ago - or can be a time of learning completely new teaching techniques, repertoire and information that can be passed on to your students.

Workshops

There are many workshops for keyboard teachers offered throughout the country during the year. Many are short, half-day sessions sponsored by local music dealers and offered without charge or for a small fee. Others are held at a college campus or conservatory. The length varies from one to four days, usually with a registration fee. If this is out of town, there will be expenses for a dormitory or motel. Sometimes meals are included.

Auditing classes

If you want to augment or review your knowledge of music theory, harmony, pedagogy, history or music literature, a college, university or conservatory may have classes that you can attend as an "auditor." The tuition



Satisfactions and Obligations of Teaching

by Joan Cupp and Wesley Schaum

As you have discovered, there are many intangible rewards that come from teaching. Seeing your students grow from those first A-B-C's to playing beautiful pieces, performing for music classes in school, talent shows, or bringing special music to a religious program all bring great satisfaction. You may have some students who become able to accompany a church choir or school choral group. A few may even aspire to a musical career.

A student's response to our playing brings another special kind of joy to both of you. We may forget that our students are constantly looking at us as a model. So beware of complacency! We should evaluate our own musical progress and outlook as well as that of our students. A little soul-searching is needed. A teacher who appears tired, bored, uninspired or preoccupied with "something more important" is inviting student dropouts!

Obviously, we should regularly devote time to maintaining and improving our own musical skills and knowledge. This requires self-discipline to make time for our own regular practice. Even ten or fifteen minutes of uninterrupted, focused practice can do wonders.



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is less, and although you get no credit toward a degree, you are not obligated to do all the homework assignments. Instead, you may find a private teacher who is able to offer help in theory, harmony, improvising, etc.

Professional organizations

Local, county or regional music teacher organizations offer opportunities for membership. They are variously called music clubs, associations or teacher guilds. A group of private music teachers (rather than public school teachers) would probably be of most benefit to you.

These organizations enable you to meet other teachers and to exchange ideas and solutions to teaching problems. Some groups sponsor local music festivals or competitions for students. Some are affiliated with state or national groups that have organized teacher training and certification programs.

The more active groups will gather once a month or bimonthly, often for a luncheon or dinner meeting. Membership dues and eligibility requirements vary with each group. Your local music dealer is usually able to provide information on these organizations.

Libraries

There are many textbook resources for the keyboard teacher. Because of the specialized nature of the subject, helpful books are more likely to be found in a college library than in a public library.

Periodicals

Music magazines with emphasis on keyboard information, such as *American Music Teacher*, *American Organist*, *Clavier* and *Keyboard Companion* are all helpful sources. If you cannot find a web site, your public library may be able to assist. Otherwise, a local music dealer may have sample copies or tell you where they may be obtained.

Concerts

Recitals, concerts and other musical events offer opportunities to enrich your background as a teacher. Attending grade school, middle school and high school performances will help keep you attuned to local musical interests and achievements. Colleges, universities, conservatories and churches offer many performances at modest cost. If your town does not offer any professional concerts, you can ask to be put on a mailing list of colleges or concert venues in nearby cities.



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Outlook Toward Teaching

Teaching should not be taken lightly! It is not merely a hobby, something to pass the time, or simply a means of making money. With this profession comes the awesome responsibility of nurturing young people into teenage years and sometimes beyond. As a conscientious teacher, your influence should extend to a student's personal development as well as music instruction.

The talent needed for success at the keyboard is a blend of many abilities. Obviously, a musical ear, good memory, and feeling for rhythm are necessary. Also needed is the coordination of ears, eyes, fingers, and muscles. The students you get will have a mixture of such blessings. It will be up to you to help each pupil make the best of his/her natural endowments. The Schaum teaching system enables you to accommodate students of varying abilities.

The primary purpose of the private teacher is to make music and the keyboard an enjoyable and rewarding experience for as many students as possible, regardless of their musical abilities. A slogan, which has become part of John W. Schaum's teaching philosophy, applies here. **"It's not what the child does for music, but what music does for the child."**

Don't dismiss students who seem to have little musical talent. It sometimes takes many months for a child to respond to private teaching. If the parents are understanding, your work at the keyboard can be of great emotional and personal benefit, even though the musical results may be very limited.

