

Tips on modern learning strategies

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Intro

Since the end of the 16th century (the physics of Isaac Newton) the **dualistic** (that is in general, the separation of body and mind) point of view has emerged in all topics of life and is still the central idea of understanding human beings and their surroundings.

In contrary, modern science has found recently (the philosophic ideas of Husserl and Merleaux-Ponty [phenomenology], and modern system theoreticists) what ancient science knew already for a long time: **there is no separation possible between body and mind.**

Please refer for more information on 'modern concepts of body consciousness and learning' to the dedicated literature that is available.

Separation

Since we are raised under the flag of 'science' we are used to concepts of *separation of body and mind, feeling and thinking and subject and object*. Many of our greatest problems have their origin in this.

Therefore you may need to develop special practice strategies to overcome this separation, especially because you are a improviser (or Jazz artist) who draws his inspiration/ability to play from his whole personality. For us the foremost goal is to achieve a **proper state of mind by melting together (again) feeling and thinking**.

The 'state of improvisation' is described as 'ecstasy' of sorts, not 'knowing' what you do at the moment, while time is flying by without you being aware of it. You have to let yourself go, give yourself over, trusting your abilities (mentally and physically).

We all know this feeling, may it be only as a distant glance from childhood. This state is what we as artists strive for. Generations of artists found special 'recepies' for accessing this state such as

- using (destructive) (hallucinatic) drugs
- listening to loud music
- playing the drums (as a non-drummer)
- meditating, yoga etc.

You have to experiment and practice to find out what works best for you.

Our brain

A good way to support this knowledge is to try to get together a **proper practice scheme**. Strangely, a good starting point is to separate (contradictory, isn't it?) our brains into two parts (meant as a clean up / becoming conscious of sorts):

- **the right side of the brain**
(the 'creative' or 'artistic' side, here you think in pictures, you see the whole scene 'from far above', everything happens at 'warp' speed)

- **the left side of the brain**
(the 'analytic' or 'scientific' side, here you think in numbers and calculations, you go into every detail, it can take ages to get a result)

Again: both sides of the brain are vital in being a good musician. There isn't a 'good' or 'bad' side. In our society the left side has more edge over the right one. We have to find a new balance between the two sides.

Practice scheme

This knowledge could result into the following **practice-scheme**:

Most important, **split up your practice day** (or hours) into **two main parts** / or spread the exercises over two days. Find out what works best for you as a 'starter', 'thinking' or 'feeling'.

- The first part deals with the **left side of the brain** (*thinking things*):

- theory stuff
- ear-training stuff
- figuring out fingerings / chord progressions
- analyzing/transcribing solos
- analytic listening to music

- Take a **break** (minimum 1 hour)

- The second part deals with the **right side of the brain** (*feeling things*):

- improvise without interrupting/judging your playing (solo, singing, with a play-along tape, rehearsal, concert)
- listening to music for fun