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Suzuki
Piano
Basics
foundation News

To facilitate, promote, and educate the public on the way of teaching and playing the piano taught at the Talent Education Research Institute in Matsumoto, Japan by Dr. Haruko Kataoka

Knowledge
versus
Character

By Haruko Kataoka

**Piano Basics
Foundation News**

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Next Deadline: February 15, 2017

From the Matsumoto Suzuki Piano
Newsletter

Vol. 5 No 11, April 18, 1996

Translated by Chisa Aoki and
Teri Paradero

Edited by Karen Hagberg

In the dictionary, knowledge is defined as “the factual understanding of a subject” and character as: 1) personality, 2) heart, 3) morals, and 4) principle.

Knowledge is very important and useful for human beings. Of all life on earth, humans are the only beings to be bestowed the ability to possess knowledge. Since the Stone Age, mankind has put great effort towards acquiring knowledge and passing it down to younger generations who, in turn, continue to pass down what they have learned, leading to an even higher level of accumulated information. Over many thousands of years this process has produced civilization as we know it today.

Concurrently, I feel that education of Character has been handed down from grandparents to parents, then to children and then to grandchildren with great care and value.

However, fifty years ago, since the post-war period, Japanese society has come to value only Knowledge education. This attitude has escalated to the point where in many households, mothers are obsessed with their children's school grades.

As I said earlier, there is no doubt that knowledge is important and useful. Comparatively speaking, however, if there are ten things that are important for human beings, knowledge would only be one of those ten things. It is not the end all.

Because we are human beings we possess a marvelous, splendid Character that is vitally important to nurture. The development of our character is necessary because it is indispensable to life; indispensable to living. Within society as citizens, and within households as family members, in order for life to run smoothly there must be manners, basic rules for living with others, and consideration of others.

In adulthood, regardless of the field of work, merely having knowledge does not ensure that one can do a good job at work. Proof is in the newspapers and in the news on television where they are bustling with reports of bribery allegations involving the Housing Loan Corporation and the Ministry of Finance, the HIV lawsuit and the Ministry of Health and Welfare, and physicians and managers of pharmaceutical companies. They lack the common sense that normal people possess. What they are doing is beyond belief.

All these people have attended the highest institutes of education and have exhibited high academic achievement. In other words, they have incredible credentials as far as knowledge is concerned but would earn a zero when rating their character as human beings. It has often been said that character has nothing to do with knowledge. This is true.

We must take all children born into this world and raise them properly as human beings of character. In order to do this, we must steer away from the overemphasis on knowledge manners, morals, and rules, and furthermore, to engender a loving, caring heart together with the sense of appreciation for the arts.

While mulling over these thoughts, I was approached by a mother of one of my students, "The other day, my daughter in high school received her third semester final report card. She came home ecstatic. She had the highest grades in her class. However, that same day I had been very upset by her recent insolent behavior and negativity at home. So I scolded her vehemently. She snapped back, "In normal homes, when kids come home with good grades, parents are happy and reward their kids with more allowance. So unfair!" Then she stomped off to her grandmother's. Sensei, was I wrong?" Without much thought, I replied, "Admirable!"

In our present day and age, what is most important for human beings? It is hard to find parents who have the courage to think logically. It was not this way in the pre-war era because it was the norm for parents to be sensible. It was unthinkable that you would be rewarded for good grades.

At this point, it is time to calm the spirit and listen to lots of wonderful music. If we don't change the way we think, I am worried about the future. What will become of our precious children whom we love so much in this country of Japan.

What's Happening?

"Bullying in Schools"

From the Matsumoto Suzuki Piano Newsletter
Vol. 5 No 11, April 18, 1996
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Teri Paradero
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Mr. Kamata, known for his research on bullying, was recently featured on late-night television with a class of sixth graders in the city of Nagoya who were graduating in March.

Mr. Kamata is a famous author of many books on the subject of bullying in schools. Children are so candid that when asked for a show of hands of those who were bullied, half the class raised their hands. When asked for a show of hands of those who did the bullying, over half the class raised their hands. It was not so bad at this point, but what came next was alarming. The students admitted that they were not happy about entering middle school in April and that they were worried about being bullied by upper classmen. Was my shock a sign of my old age, of being old-fashioned, of being behind the times, or out-of-date? Mr. Kamata observed that until recent times schools were 'education factories' but now they are more like detention facilities.

It made me feel bad for big cities. They have all the best modern conveniences and everything is on the cutting edge, and they are in the lead even with something bad like bullying. On that matter, our city of Matsumoto is so lucky. Here in the countryside there is no such thing as fear of children entering middle school. Or so I thought.

But then, just the other day one of my students came wearing her new middle school uniform. When I congratulated her, she told me that she was not so happy about it. When I asked why, she replied, "Upper classmen are so scary that I really worry a lot about leaving the classroom." I was flabbergasted! How can what I witnessed on television be happening to our bucolic Azumino surrounded by the richness of nature...

Suzuki Piano Basics Web Site and discussion group:

<http://core.ecu.edu/hist/wilburnk/SuzukiPianoBasics>

PATIENCE

From the Matsumoto Suzuki Piano Newsletter
Vol. 5 No 11, April 18, 1996
Translated by Chisa Aoki and
Teri Paradero
Edited by Karen Hagberg

Suzuki Method, as developed and taught by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki, a violinist, became a success after many years. His Method is based on the “mother-tongue” approach to learning. Everyone must re-read Dr. Suzuki’s book, *Nurtured by Love*. There is an incredible feeling of hope found in these pages. However, on one hand a person can read the book and say, “Yes, of course it all makes sense but how do we accomplish this?” Another person can read it and say, “Yes, but that was then and this is now.”

I believe there are constant changes in our lives all around the world. But, the fact remains that unless there is some unfortunate illness or brain injury, all babies still learn to talk their native language and walk on two legs. It takes passion, dreams, hard work, focus and concentration, good health and patience to accomplish many things in life.

Dr. Suzuki was a violinist so he proved his theory through teaching the violin. In those days, it was thought that you perform the music of the Western classical composers only if you were born in Western Europe. As you have read in Dr. Suzuki’s book, that belief was disproven.

We, as Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation members play and teach piano. It is our job to learn how to use the body so the piano can sing. Dr. Haruko Kataoka worked very hard to find the most natural way of playing piano to produce the most beautiful tone. As young students ourselves, most of us did not learn how to use our whole body naturally. Now that we are “teaching” the piano, we must change any and all of our bad habits because our students become our mirror image.

As adults and teachers we have egos. It is easy to make an excuse for the students who do not practice and move along as we would like. But, are we not better than that? Let’s learn to nurture. Let’s nurture the whole child. There is good in every child. While we work to teach children how to play the piano, let’s become good human beings ourselves.

Talking about how to play the piano and talking about how to be a better human being is just that; only talk. It does not mean that we have to become professional pianists and learn the Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto, but it does mean that we learn how to demonstrate good sound as opposed to not good sound from the piano and be able to show students how to create good sound. And it does not mean that we have to become saints, but it does mean that we have to learn how to nurture and not make excuses.

To develop an ability takes great patience and perseverance. Let’s not revert back to the “Traditional” ways of teaching.

Linda Nakagawa



Kataoka Research Scholarship: Planning for 2018

With the start of 2017, we welcome Senseis Ogiwara and Kawamura back to the United States for our Piano Basics Workshops! In February they will take place in Louisville and in Orange County, California, and in August in Philadelphia and Sacramento. Thanks to your contributions, the SPBF provided its first full tuition scholarship to Christine Darling of San Diego, California. Christine will be attending the Orange County Workshop.

Now is the time to start planning for 2018. The Kataoka Research Scholarship is designed to provide funding for teachers who wish to attend events featuring Senseis Ogiwara and Kawamura. *Any teacher may submit an application!* Teachers who are in their initial stages may apply to attend a workshop or 10-Piano Concert held in the United States. Teachers with more experience may also apply for

scholarships toward events in Japan.

Applications for 2018 events are due on **September 1, 2017**. Please submit all inquiries and requests for application materials to Hannah Hall, Chair of the Scholarship Committee: correctthecause@gmail.com.

To donate to the scholarship fund, simply add it to your SPBF renewal, or mail your gift to:

Piano Basics Foundation, 242 River Acres Dr., Sacramento, CA 95831. Please notate "Scholarship" in the memo portion of your check.

Your donation, no matter how small, fosters community and helps the world of Piano Basics grow ever better. Without your gifts, SPBF will not be able to grant this great opportunity. Thank you again for your continued generosity.

Hannah Hall, Chair Scholarship Committee

To Our Members

All membership in Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation is for a calendar year. Therefore, now is the time for *all* of us to renew our membership.

Dues for the calendar year 2017 are due and payable between now and February 15, 2017. Members whose dues are not received by March 15 will not appear in our 2017 Directory. The fee for teacher members is \$40, and family membership is \$25. **We encourage all teachers to require family membership in your studio so that we may continue to relieve workshop directors from airfare fluctuations when we invite teachers from Japan.**

As usual, we do not routinely send out separate bills to individuals, trusting our members to renew in time to appear in our annual directory. Please send checks (we do not accept credit-card payments) payable to Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation, and send to Linda Nakagawa, Treasurer, 242 River Acres Drive, Sacramento, CA 95831. Thank you for all your continued support!

Piano Basics Foundation – General Meeting August 3, 2016

Sacramento, California

Attending:

Renee Eckis
Rita Burns
Rae Kate Shen
Naomi Wysong
Jacki Block
Ann Taylor
Linda Nakagawa
Shirlee Rickman
Jo Shannon

Renee Eckis called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Attending members were noted and Rae Kate Shen read the minutes from the 2015 meeting, which had taken place at the Suzuki Piano Institute held at the University of Louisville, KY. Rita Burns moved to approve the 2015 minutes and Ann Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer Linda Nakagawa asked everyone to refer to the last newsletter for the 2015 Treasurer's report.

Linda also reported there is \$610.00 in the Scholarship fund, a good start.

Nominations

Jacki Block was nominated by Rita Burns to replace Renee Eckis as Vice President, seconded by Ann Taylor. The motion passed. The proposed new slate of officers for 2016/2017 is:

Renee Eckis – President
Jacki Block – Vice President
Linda Nakagawa – Treasurer
Rae Kate Shen – Secretary

Jo Shannon moved to accept the proposed slate of 2016/2017 officers. Naomi Wysong seconded and the motion was approved.

Old Business

Members were reminded to pass on videos of Dr. Kataoka teaching from past workshops, to Ken Wilburn, before the videos deteriorate further. Details can be found in the May/June Piano Basics Newsletter.

New Business

The first new business was to remind members that teacher and student applications for 2017 Japan's 10-Piano are due August 30, 2016. Teachers are to email Karen Hagberg for registration applications. Some teachers mentioned they had already emailed Karen, but have received no response back yet. It was suggested they nag Karen.

The second new business was to mention the board was looking for a member to setup a Gateway Website. Jo Shannon volunteered and she was directed to contact Karen Hagberg regarding this.

Other Business

Applications for Scholarship funds from the Piano Basics Foundation are due September 1, 2016. It was mentioned that teachers with some experience teaching should apply. Interested teachers should contact Hannah Hall for information and application forms. More donations are needed for the scholarship fund. Teachers were encouraged to ask their studio families as well as anyone else they know for donations.

Details about the Scholarship fund are also in the July/August Piano Basics Newsletter.

Finally, members at this meeting wanted more clarification about the difference between the Board of Directors and Officers, what their job descriptions are, and a list again of whom they are.

Rita Burns motioned to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Ann Taylor.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

These minutes approved by:

Renee Eckis

Ann Taylor

Respectfully submitted by Rae Kate Shen

August 3, 2016

Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation: The People

Here is a list of persons responsible for the various workings of our organization. Please feel free to contact any of us with your questions and concerns or to volunteer your help. We always welcome written input from any and all of our members to share in this newsletter. What is on your mind? Don't put off writing that article!

Board of Directors:

Karen Hagberg, Chair
Hannah Hall, Recording Secretary
Bruce Boiney
Linda Nakagawa
Keiko Ogiwara, Honorary Life Member

Officers:

Renee Eckis, President
Jacki Block, Vice President
Rae Kate Shen, Secretary
Linda Nakagawa, Treasurer

Nominations Committee:

Ann Taylor, Chair

Scholarship Committee:

Hannah Hall, Chair

Newsletter:

Karen Hagberg, Editor
Teri Paradero, Design & Layout
Teri Paradero & Chisa Aoki, Translation
Linda Nakagawa, Printing and Mailing

Membership Services:

Linda Nakagawa, Directory Editor
Linda Nakagawa, Educational Materials Order
Fulfillment Manager

Suzuki Piano Basics Web Site:

Prof. Kenneth Wilburn, Web Master
Carol Wunderle, Content Editor

If you would like to assume responsibility for any part of the workings of the Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation, or if you know someone who would, please contact our Nominations Committee Chairperson, Ann Taylor, before June 15.

Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation 2016 Annual Report

January 1, 2016 through January 10, 2017

Starting Balance:	\$ 5,444.66	minus \$215 (Scholarship fund-see below) =
	\$5,229.66	
Income:	+\$12,398.36	
Expenses:	<u>-\$13,589.39</u>	
Ending Balance:	\$ 4,038.63	

Expenses

Legal/Accounting	\$1,360.00
Materials	\$1,307.00
Supplies	\$63.46
Postage	\$1,502.93
Printing	\$2,000.00
Travel	\$3,111.00
Taxes	\$45.00
Compensations	<u>\$4,200.00</u>
Total	\$13,589.39

Income

Dues	\$7,160.00
Donations	\$2,150.00
Memorial Fund	\$595.00
Materials	<u>\$2,493.36</u>
Total	\$12,398.36

Scholarship Fund

Brought forward:	\$215.00
Income:	\$395.00
Expenses:	<u>\$365.00</u>
Balance:	\$245.

Respectfully submitted by Linda Nakagawa, Treasure

Piano Basics Foundation Upcoming Workshops/Events

April 30, 2017

Matsumoto, Japan

Suzuki Piano Basics International 10-Piano Concert

Contact Karen Hagberg, 585-978-0600

kh@hagbergsuzuki.com

Deadline for registration has passed.

July 7-10, 2017

Tacoma, Washington

Suzuki Piano Basics Festival

with Rae Kate Shen

Contact: Jacki Block 253-759-7213

jblock@ups.edu

**PLEASE NOTE: AUGUST WORKSHOP DATES REVISED FROM
THOSE PRINTED IN SEPT/OCT NEWSLETTER**

August 3-7, 2017

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Suzuki Piano Basics International Teacher Training Workshop
with Keiko Kawamura and Keiko Ogiwara

Contact: Janet Kaido 267-251-0429

janet@alumni.curtis.edu

August 10-14, 2017

Sacramento, California

Suzuki Piano Basics International Teacher Training Workshop
with Keiko Kawamura and Keiko Ogiwara

Contact: Linda Nakagawa 916-422-2952

g.nakagawa@comcast.net

The events listed above are for the information of Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation members and others. Suzuki Piano Basics Foundation does not endorse, sanction, or sponsor events.

To add or change items on this list and on the Suzuki Piano Basics website, contact
Karen Hagberg (kh@hagbergsuzuki.com, 585-978-0600).
