

RELEASE PRESSURE AND STRESS WHILE STUDYING

Structure Your Practice Session

Allow yourself the time and space to fully absorb everything you work on during practice.

Avoid revisiting the same material twice in a single day, as this can sometimes lead to frustration—what felt solid in the morning may feel less secure by evening.

Instead, give your mind and body time to rest and integrate. A good night's sleep often leads to noticeable improvement the next day, making your efforts feel more natural and effortless.

You might consider organizing your practice like this:

- Morning session
- Evening session (focused on different material)

Shift Your Practice Mindset

Transform the way you approach your practice by shifting from a mindset of self-judgment or victimhood to one of ownership and self-compassion.

Instead of feeling guilt, frustration, or pressure to meet unrealistic expectations, remind yourself that practice is an opportunity for growth—not a test of your worth.

Everything you do—whether it's practicing, studying, or working—is a chance to develop and learn. With this attitude, not only will your progress become more consistent, but your experience during practice will feel lighter, calmer, and more encouraging.

Speak to yourself kindly. Celebrate small wins. And when something still doesn't quite work, acknowledge that you've done your best for today—and trust that with time and care, it will come.

Piano study demands not only consistent effort but also emotional resilience. Between the pressure of daily practice, teacher expectations, and looming performance deadlines, it's easy to accumulate tension and stress. If left unaddressed, this pressure builds—and as performance day nears, you may feel anxious, frozen, or even question your abilities and path as a musician.

Often, we unconsciously turn this frustration inward. This can lead to unhealthy outbursts—like hitting the keyboard, your hands, or tearing up scores.

Instead of letting this frustration boil over, give it a safe outlet.

Allow yourself to feel and release your anger. Shout into a pillow or punch it—channel your pain, frustration, and even tears. These simple physical acts can clear emotional pressure in a healthy way. You can also use a boxing bag if you prefer. Let this be part of your practice routine when needed—without shame or guilt.

Afterwards, while your external circumstances may be unchanged, internally you'll feel lighter, calmer, and more centered.

And remember: sometimes the best way to release tension is through laughter, friendship, and sharing joyful moments with others. Connection can be one of the most powerful forms of emotional release.



HONORING YOUR PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

One of the most important lessons I've learned as a pianist is this: caring for your physical and emotional well-being is just as essential as refining your technique.

Your state of body and mind has a direct impact on your ability to practice consistently, and to approach performances, auditions, or exams with clarity and confidence.

There are times when this balance can be disrupted—leading to stress, instability, or anxiety about important events. I'm not a medical professional, and what I share here is based solely on personal experience. If you already have a routine that works well for you, trust it. But if you've been searching for something that truly helps and haven't yet found it, perhaps something here will resonate with you.



Cold & Flu Prevention: Staying Reliable for Performances

Being dependable as a performer means being well enough to show up. Over time, I've learned that any virus can often be prevented, or stopped in its earliest stages, with a few simple habits:

- Gargling – Use salt water with a few drops of oregano or artemisia oil to cleanse your throat.
- Hydration – Drink at least 8 cups of water daily. A pinch of salt and a few drops of lemon help maintain electrolyte balance and prevent headaches. Proper hydration supports your immune system by efficiently flushing out viruses.
- Garlic with Meals – Take this powerful antiviral with food to avoid stomach discomfort.
- Steam Inhalation with Essential Oil – One drop of oregano and one drop of artemisia oil in hot water can be incredibly effective. However, be mindful:
 - Hold the pot securely to avoid spills.
 - Keep your eyes closed to prevent irritation.
 - Inhale gently, keeping a safe distance at first.
 - After steaming, cover your mouth with a towel and breathe warm air for a few minutes before returning to room temperature air.

This steaming method was life-changing for me. After suffering from COVID and persistent coughing for two months, I tried adding artemisia oil to my steam routine. After just two sessions, my cough and sore throat were gone. This ritual is not only effective but also incredibly soothing – like a healing sauna for your lungs.

Stop a Cold Before It Starts

The key to preventing a full-blown cold or flu is acting immediately when the first symptoms appear.

Early signs to watch for:

- Waking up feeling heavy and fatigued
- Loss of normal appetite
- Unusual sensitivity to cold air on your skin
- Feeling cold despite a warm environment
- A slight sore throat (optional)
- Feeling unusually energized the day before

Start your recovery routine right away:

- Gargle with salt water + oregano or artemisia oil.
- Eat 2 cloves of garlic with food to protect your stomach once.

Every Hour:

- Drink 2 cups of water.
- Inhale steam for 3–5 minutes, adding just one drop of oregano oil and/or artemisia oil. Take care with the hot water—keep a comfortable distance as you breathe.

Rest - sleep or relax for at least half a day.

Most of the time, by lunchtime, you'll wake up feeling fully recovered, with energy and appetite restored.

HONORING YOUR EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Managing Depression & Anxiety

For over 15 years, I've lived alongside depression. Like focal dystonia, I've come to accept that it doesn't simply vanish. But I've also learned to recognize what triggers it—and more importantly, how to prevent it from taking over my life. Depression, anxiety, and low energy can make consistent piano practice feel overwhelming, even impossible.

In my experience, depression often stems from unresolved trauma. When certain neural pathways become affected, the brain may stop producing serotonin as effectively as it should. I noticed this when I experimented with serotonin-supporting supplements: my thoughts remained the same, but my emotional reaction to them changed. The heaviness lifted—not because life had changed, but because my brain chemistry had more support.



If you already have a wellness routine that helps you, trust it. But if conventional methods like antidepressants have left you feeling emotionally numb or disconnected, you might explore some gentle alternatives that worked for me:

- Raw Cacao Nibs Drink

Blend raw cacao nibs with water or unsweetened almond milk. Theobromine in cacao offers a natural, calming uplift without the harsh effects of caffeine.

- Ashwagandha Root Supplements

It helped stabilize my mood swings and gently increased my overall sense of well-being.

- Avoid Alcohol

It may temporarily raise serotonin, but the crash that follows can last for days, increasing anxiety and low mood.

- Reduce Sugar Intake

Blood sugar spikes cause mood swings and fatigue. If you eat fruit, have it after a savory meal to slow absorption and prevent glucose surges.

- Eliminate Processed Carbs

Foods like bread, pasta, potatoes, and oats quickly convert to sugar, leading to an energy crash about 1.5 hours later.

- No Eating After 6 PM

Giving your digestive system a full rest overnight can improve mental clarity, sleep quality, and emotional regulation.

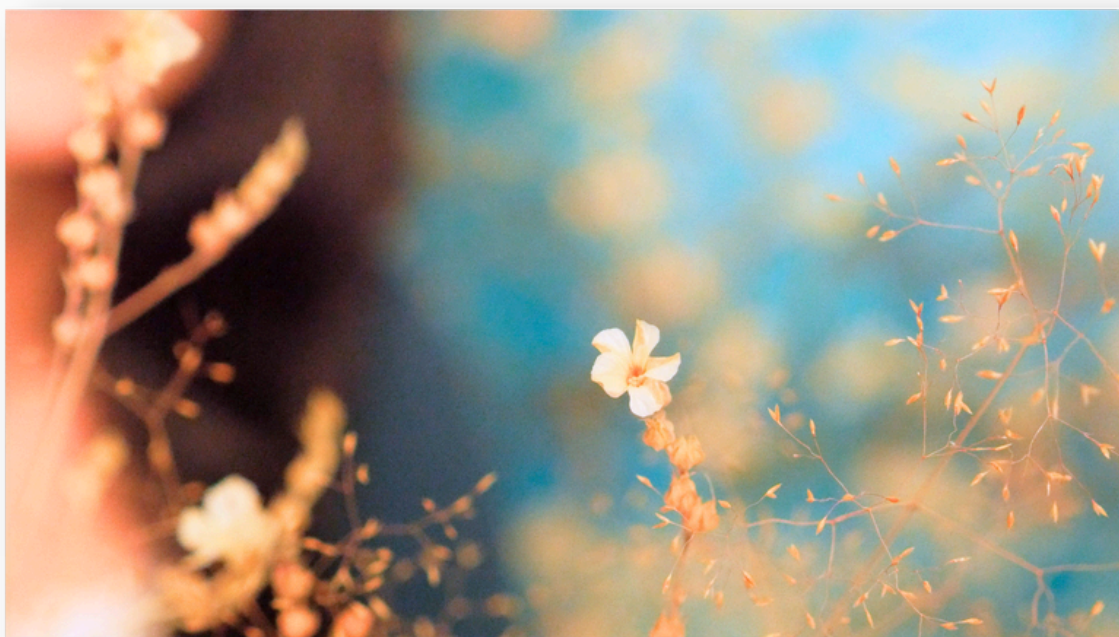
The Role of Medicinal Mushrooms

Microdosing with medicinal mushrooms has gained attention in recent years as a gentle, natural approach to managing depression and anxiety. Research suggests that, unlike traditional antidepressants, microdosing subtly supports the body's own serotonin production—leading to improved mood, emotional balance, and stable energy without altering perception or impairing daily functioning.

What sets microdosing apart is its long-term effect: the longer it's used, the less the body seems to need it. As mood and brain chemistry rebalance, the dependence naturally decreases.

For those with sensitive digestion, steeping mushrooms into tea with hot water and a squeeze of lemon (for about 30 minutes) offers a soothing and nearly tasteless alternative.

In regions like Europe, microdosing mushrooms are legally available online (for personal use) through reputable sources such as [Zamnesia](#), making them both accessible and easy to integrate into a well-being routine.



HONORING YOUR MENTAL WELL-BEING

The Healing Power of Presence

“Quiet your mind and listen” isn’t just a gentle suggestion—it’s a profound shift in awareness. When our emotional balance is compromised—often due to depleted serotonin levels—the mind begins to spin, searching for solutions, trying to fix what feels broken. But this spiral of overthinking only deepens our disconnection.

The more we turn inward in that state, the more distant the world feels. The path forward isn’t about figuring it all out—it’s about shifting our attention outward. Even when it feels impossible, choosing to engage with life—through listening, observing, and simply being present—can gently begin the healing process.

I came to understand this in my late twenties, after focal dystonia abruptly took away my ability to play. Everyday actions—typing, writing—suddenly became difficult. Everything I had built, every note I’d shaped since childhood, seemed to slip away.

But instead of retreating, I traveled.

I visited sacred spaces, prayed in mosques and churches, sang in gospel choirs, meditated, and connected with people whose presence brought light and kindness. In time, I stopped obsessing over the diagnosis. My identity began to expand. I was no longer only a pianist—I was a human being, present, giving, listening with my eyes and seeing with my ears, breathing, and feeling in a way I had never done before.

The greatest lesson from that chapter of my life was this: healing begins the moment we shift our focus outward. When we reconnect to the world—through listening, presence, and awareness—we reconnect to ourselves.

Peace cannot be chased or acquired. It doesn't come from solving or achieving.

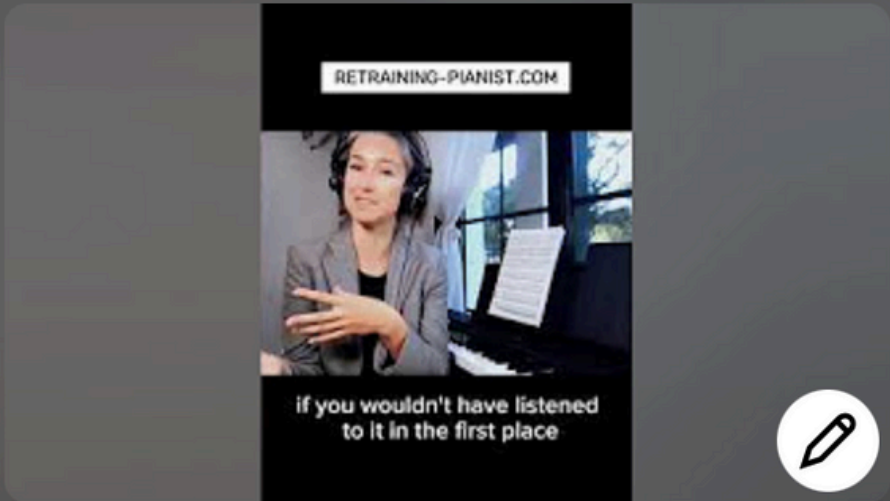
It isn't temporary.

Peace is constant. It's what we are.

Our soul, our consciousness, rests in stillness—it's always here. We only forget it when we disconnect from the world and from our feelings.

But even then, peace is never lost. It remains, like the sun behind the clouds. Our thoughts may pass like weather, obscuring the light—but the sun is always shining. And if darkness falls, perhaps it's not the sun that is missing, but simply our place on the path. The light returns in time, when we're ready to receive it again.

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