

Listen to your emotions
ICWF, 2021

Life isn't perfect and we are not perfect. Fortunate and unfortunate experiences will find us throughout our lives. It is easy to celebrate positive and successful experiences. How do we feel about unfortunate experiences, which produce emotions like conflict, trauma, shame, guilt, anger etc.

Perceived negative emotions may be a gift in disguise. Are they present to teach us how to handle difficult situations and our thought process and emotional response? Always look for the silver lining. Negative experiences in our lives give us the opportunity to learn and grow, as long as we assess them through a positive lens.

Bitterness shows you where you need to heal, where you're still holding judgments about others and yourself.

Resentment shows you where you're living in the past and not allowing the present to be as it is.

Discomfort shows you that you need to pay attention right now to what is happening, because you're being given the opportunity to change, to do something different than you typically do it.

Anger shows you what you're passionate about, where your boundaries are, and what you believe needs to change about the world.

Disappointment shows you that you tried, that you did not give in to apathy, that you still care.

Guilt shows you that you're still living life in other people's expectations for what you should do.

Shame shows you that you're internalizing other people's beliefs about who you should be (or who you are) and that you need to reconnect with yourself.

Anxiety shows you that you need to wake up, right now, and that you need to be present, that you're stuck in the past and living in fear of the future.

Sadness shows you the depth of your feeling, the depth of care for others and this world.

Power Performance and Confidence

Mindfulness in your practice is being present and cultivating presence for performance. You maximize your chance for building confidence and success when you do the following –

- Prepare and plan with detail and intention to create artistic freedom. Anything that is not specific lacks presence.
- Practice with intention. What is your purpose here?
- Practice with the appropriate thought process and patience.
- Practice the performance.
- Focus with concentrated energy leading to effortless playing/singing.
- Strip away what you don't need – what is preventing you from being who you deserve to be, personally, artistically, and musically?
- Celebrate your musical, artistic, and personal strengths and build new strengths.
- Practice self-care and compassion. Your thoughts create an environment of success or failure.
- Redirect negative feedback – think of a calming word and go back to it repeatedly.
- Recall childhood music making experiences that captured your love and joy of music and music making. Return to that memory and feeling often!
- Recall recent positive music making experiences. Access these experiences to ensure future positive experiences. Realize why these experiences were so successful!

Homework –

- **Write the story of an early musical experience that got you hooked on music.**
- **Create your own personal mantra.**

Roger Federer

“Once you find that peace, that place of peace and quiet, harmony and confidence, that’s when you start playing your best”.

Novak Djokovic

“I was always dreaming of being the best in tennis. Pressure is a privilege in a way and a big challenge for every professional athlete. It’s just a matter of understanding it and maturing as a player, and getting the necessary experience to use it at the right moments to cope”.