

JESSE DOCHNAHL

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My Teaching Philosophy: Facilitating Personal Discovery

It is absolutely impossible to travel anywhere in the world without hearing the joyful creation of music. Music is social life; it identifies a country, a culture, and an individual. Truly thoughtful musicians explore music beyond superficial awareness. Through involved performance and analysis, one can delve into the deeper evocations of music that inspire the performer intellectually and emotionally. The supreme art of a music teacher is to awaken a student's joy in the deeper understanding of musical expression and knowledge.

To study music is to study one's own self and the potential to express that self. The teacher should nurture the student's ability to understand, feel, react to, and communicate the music. This process not only promotes a student's sensitivity to music, but improves students' abilities to make intuitive decisions.

It is my responsibility as an educator to open the students' minds to the larger realm of music, including art, history, and culture. Teachers have the ability to open the door for personal discovery and to reveal that there is more to the world than meets the eye... and ear. Fulfilling the national standards of a music education actively promotes performance with greater understanding, which is essential. The music teacher must transcend the mechanics of performance and nurture the curiosity of a person through exploration of the unfamiliar.

It is the duty of the educator to share expertise with all learners. Everybody has unique needs and abilities; each individual deserves a fair and quality education with expectations for significant learning and growth. Learning must take place in a consistently positive and trusting learning environment where goals are developed and communicated with honesty and clarity. By upholding kindness, caring, and respect, the teacher can encourage the collaboration among students that is so essential to exploration and learning. Music groups are environments highly conducive to mutual growth. In a trusting and positive setting, people can work together by simultaneously learning and teaching, thus achieving excellence, both individually and collectively.