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# Perfect Wrong Note - Learning To Trust Your Musical Self (Softcover)



## Synopsis

(Amadeus). In this groundbreaking book, prize-winning pianist and noted educator William Westney helps readers discover their own path to the natural, transcendent fulfillment of making music. Drawing on experience, psychological insight, and wisdom ancient and modern, Westney shows how to trust yourself and set your own musicality free. He offers healthy alternatives for lifelong learning and suggests significant change in the way music is taught. For example, playing a wrong note can be constructive, useful, even enlightening. The creator of the acclaimed Un-Master Class workshop also explores the special potential of group work, outlining the basics of his revelatory workshop that has transformed the music experience for participants the world over. Practicing, in Westney's view, is a lively, honest, adventurous, and spiritually rewarding enterprise, and it can (and should) meet with daily success, which empowers us to grow even more. Teachers, professionals, and students of any instrument will benefit from this unique guide, which brings artistic vitality, freedom, and confidence within everyone's reach.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Clearly the work of a master teacher who has deep knowledge of his subject and enormous empathy for his students and readers." - Betty Edwards, author of *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* --Betty Edwards

William Westney is a past winner of the Geneva International Competition, concert pianist, teacher,

and educational innovator. A distinguished professor and artist-in-residence, he has been honoured with many awards and his groundbreaking Un-Master Class performance workshop is in great demand around the world.

Excellent! As a piano teacher and an enthusiastic amateur pianist, I appreciate the perspective of this book. Since most of the work of progressing in our art comes not in the lesson, sitting beside the teacher, but at home, alone on the bench, how we approach and think about our practice is all important. And perfectionism is the insidious enemy. Many teachers actively cultivate it in their students, and many never question it. But in *The Perfect Wrong Note*, Westney demonstrates just how corrosive and paralyzing it is, offering a surprising alternative viewpoint. This is one of the most readable and helpful of the many books on piano playing that line my bookshelf, and I plan to recommend it to my adult and teen students.

This book was a game changer for me in the best possible way. I was weeks away from a major recital, and was resigned to dropping a piece because I couldn't get it to come together - so I had nothing to lose. So I chose that piece for my experiment. I followed his (implausible) advice & in a few days I'd corrected problems I hadn't been able to correct in months of tedious work. And they stayed fixed! Practice time flies by, and I find myself feeling productive, refreshed, and pleasantly spent at the end of my practice time. My music is more musical, even if a wrong note occasionally slips in. (& when it does, it is not distressing, just useful information to direct my attention.) Down with the tyranny of the unforgivable wrong note! Up with connecting your inner self to your music! p.s. I waited a while to write this review - I wanted to see if the change was real. It has been. My teacher is strangely contradictory on the whole thing. He thinks it's bad advice that flies in the face of generations of collected wisdom. And he says I'm playing better than I ever have. We've both dropped the topic.

There are few books I'd be willing to pay for twice at full price, but this was one of them. Having played the piano and other instruments virtually my whole life and having never overcome stagefright, this book was a godsend, and I now own it in both paperback and the Kindle edition. I took lessons when I was young, but eventually quit so that I wouldn't have to perform at recitals anymore. As an adult, I returned to study with an excellent piano teacher in my area who recommended this book to me. I can't stress enough how liberating it is to give up the idea of perfection--stilted--controlled playing for this new idea of interpreting wrong notes as new

information, fodder for the body as it learns to move and navigate in its musical space. The reason I wanted it in both editions--paper and Kindle--is because I can't refer back to it enough. When you've spent years incorporating the wrong idea into your practice, it takes years to undo it. I like to have this book available to me anytime the mood strikes or time permits me to review.

This was a wonderful book with lots of eye opening ideas about how to learn music. As an adult learning a new instrument, it was great to have this perspective and also to know that there is a different way to inspire children learning music. I have my own share of horror stories and would love to see more children being inspired instead of intimidated. As a dance teacher, it also gave me some fun ideas for my classes.

Not only piano teachers, but any kind of teacher! There is such good information about how to approach teaching from a positive point of view. I'm a Suzuki teacher and already believe in these principals, but Westney lays this out in such a simple yet profound way that had me nodding all the way thru the book. One of the most important things a music teacher can impart to a student is how to practice their instrument most effectively. This book outlines it step by step in the most helpful set of guidelines I've ever seen. More of us would still be playing the piano, violin, clarinet, etc. if we would have been taught using this approach.

Ten years ago I was struggling through learning "Trois Gymnopedie." The chords have a wonderful voice on their own so I pulled them out of the score and put them in a drawing. I would then look at the drawing and play the chords, looking and listening for interesting cadences and rhythms. I went back to the piece and was able to play it from memory about a week later. I figured I had gotten over a "hump" in my learning music at the piano. Since reading "The Perfect Wrong Note" I have realized that what I did for "Trois Gymnopedie" is something I should do for my entire repertoire. Engage the music creatively, play it backwards, inside out, crazy rhythms, sing it, dance it, draw it. Have fun! William Westney has reopened a door to child like wonder for me and my piano playing. I also found the book very engaging to read. It was hard for me to put it down which books from the "self help" genre usually don't do for me.

So many great insights. Good for anyone, not only for musicians. One of my favorite books.

Lots of useful information

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