

The Doctor is in: Tips for Keeping a Healthy and Happy Ensemble

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Musicians spend hours sitting in a rehearsal or in a practice room in a sitting or standing position. These experiences can cause tension and sometimes injury. For example, when working with violinists, the position of the chin rest can impact neck posture and the neck muscles and the thumb rest for clarinetist can provide pressure and tension on the right wrist. Additionally, it has been suggested that the greatest risk factor for injury amongst musicians is the psychological stress (Colwell, Hewitt, & Fonder, 2018). By taking time to integrate exercises and activities to focus on stretching before a rehearsal or practice session, breathing techniques to assist with performance anxiety, and focus exercises in the classroom, teachers and students can have a productive, healthy, and fun musical experience.

1. Pain & Tension (Demonstrations and Photographs included in Presentation)
 - a. Finger & Wrists Exercises (Hot Chicken, Finger Tents, Tension & Release)
 - b. Shoulder Compressions
 - c. Lower Back Releases
 - d. Hip Openers for Lower Back Tension

2. Focus
 - a. Meditation Jar Visual Aids
 - i. Create your own with a Mason jar, glitter, clear glue, water, and food coloring
 - b. Breathing Visual Aids
 - i. <https://youtu.be/Wdbbtgf05Ek>
 - ii. <https://youtu.be/5f5N6YFjvVc>
 - c. Deep Listening Exercises
 - i. Be fully present
 - ii. Try not to control or judge the situation
 - iii. Remove background noise
 - iv. Similar to listening to your breath during a meditative practice
 - v. Apply skills to musical examples

3. Performance anxiety
 - a. Meditation & Visualization
 - i. Guided Meditation
 - ii. Balloon Visualization
 - iii. Visualization in Performance Spaces
 - b. Calming Breath Exercises
 - i. Alternate Nostril Breathing
 - ii. Three Part Breath
 - c. Legs Elevated Above Heart
4. Resources
 - a. Guided Meditation: Simple Habit App
 - b. Adolphe: The. Mind's Ear
 - c. Yoga Pretzel Cards



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