



Episode 64: Music Practice, Finding Resources & Making Progress Tangible, A Conversation with Meret Bitticks

Welcome to episode 64! This week I'm excited to welcome what I believe is our first flutist to the podcast! This conversation was such a treat~ Meret is a performer, music educator - through the Music Institute of Chicago and is on faculty at Lake Forest College and DePaul University, and Flute Teacher trainer through the Suzuki Association of the Americas and author of a new book on Working with Young Flutists.

In our conversation we talk about her journey as a musician and what practice looked like for her when she started in middle school band at school, making our practice progress tangible, and about practice from teacher, parent and student perspective.

I hope you enjoy this conversation as much as I did!

Christine Goodner :

Welcome everyone. I'm excited today to be talking to Meret Bitticks and Meret I'm hoping you could start by introducing people to who you are and what you do in the world of music.

Meret Bitticks:

That is a short question with a long answer. Yes, sure. I am a flutist and professional performer, but the bulk of what I do is I'm an educator. I am a registered teacher trainer with the Suzuki Association of the Americas. There's really a small handful of us flutists out there who can do that work. So I teach teachers how to teach. I also teach kids how to play the flute, so I have a Suzuki studio at the Music Institute of Chicago, and I also teach at a few high schools just to get some daytime teaching in. I have been the

flute methods instructor at DePaul University for almost 15 years now, so almost a generation of band and orchestra directors, and I'm also the applied flute teacher at Lake Forest College, and I've just added author to my resume and I'm a parent, so that's keeping me busy.

Christine Goodner :

Sounds like plenty to keep you busy. I love it. Well, that's wonderful, and we'll talk more about what you're doing now and your book and all of that. I'm excited to get into that. And we were talking before I hit record, I think you're the first flutist I've had on the podcast, so this is exciting. Yes. I'm glad to have you sharing your perspective, and I wondered if we could zoom back in time to when you first started learning music. Do you remember what age you were and did you start on the flute? Would love to hear your origin story. I always talk.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh, yes, yes. I love talking about my origin story, and I especially love talking about it to string players because I feel like my origin story is actually pretty common for wind and brass players and fairly unusual for string players. I started in sixth grade with sixth grade band. I did not play flute before then. I had heard the flute on Sesame Street when I was little. I loved the sound of it and I wanted to learn it, but when you're little, you think your parents know everything, and so I assumed that they knew I wanted to play the flute and I never asked.

Christine Goodner :

Oh Interesting.

Meret Bitticks:

So when I got registered for my classes as a sixth grader in middle school and they put me in band the first day, the band director said, if you already play an instrument, great, you can play it. Otherwise bring nine bucks and you can be a percussionist. I'll give you some drumsticks. And I came home and I said, the band director says I have to get a flute. And so my parents took me to the rental place and we picked out a flute and I looked at it and I had absolutely no idea how to put it together. I had no idea how to get a sound out of it, and that was my introduction to flute. I was part of a band. I did not have a private teacher. There was a trumpet player who came in and worked with us in small groups, and he helped me figure it out a little bit.

And then in seventh grade, my band program was actually cut and my band director used to let me practice in the hallway, and so I took all of my music down in Octave because the other classroom teachers complained that I was too loud. So I spent a year in the very lowest register of the flute, which is pretty unusual for a flute player, but by eighth grade, I really didn't sound very good. I had bigger fish to fry. I thought I was going to quit, but through a fluke of the lottery system in Milwaukee for the public schools, I ended up on waiting lists for every possible major at the public arts high school. So I was on the waiting list for dance. I was on the waiting list for theater. My mom said, I don't care what you have to do. We're getting you into this school, and band came up first.

Christine Goodner :

Oh, wow.

Meret Bitticks:

The rest is kind of history. Halfway through my freshman year, I got an actual flute teacher and everything she said made so much sense. I sounded better immediately. I fixed some really bad habits that now I know sometimes can take kids a long time to fix, but it just clicked. Why wouldn't you do the thing that made you sound better? And so I got better right away and by the middle of my junior year, I was starting to think about being a music major, so it was really pretty fast in the end. So very unusual for string players, but it turns out that I've met a lot of wind and brass players who have had similar trajectories to mine. Sure.

Christine Goodner :

I think school programs where kids get to participate in music and have this opportunity is really, it always just gets reinforced to me how important those programs are because so many people wouldn't have music in their lives without that.

Meret Bitticks:

My band director just, I truly, I'm so grateful for him because I was so enthusiastic as a sixth grader, and he ran with that enthusiasm. He arranged a Paul Simon song as a duet for both of us, and we performed it together. He wasn't a particularly great flute player either. That wasn't his main instrument, but we performed it together. He didn't have to do that.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah. Well, and you had some tenacity there to be like, no, I'm not going to go home and tell my parents to send \$9 for percussion sticks or whatever. That's

Meret Bitticks:

Right. Yeah. And it wasn't that my parents were unwilling to have paid for private lessons earlier. They just didn't know. We just didn't know. I think if I had gone to them when I was five, even though there was already Suzuki flute in this country at that time, I think they would've just said, well, you're too young to play flute. I think they wouldn't have known, and even in sixth grade, they didn't know where to look for a good teacher. It wasn't until I was in high school that the high school director said, I recommend this person. I have a lot of students who study with them that that's when we got the teacher.

Christine Goodner :

Oh, that's great. That's great. No, I think that's a really important origin story to tell because there are a lot, I do talk to a lot of people who began later, then they sort of feel like, oh, I was so late. And I think it's also good to dispel that myth that it's too late. For example, in middle school is really, you're very young still in middle school.

Meret Bitticks:

It's really true. But I do think it's interesting how many teachers I've met who have started late and like me, they sort of skipped a lot of that intermediate level where they went from really being pretty beginner. I went from being really very beginner to a very short time in intermediate repertoire to all of a sudden I was working on things for college auditions.

Christine Goodner :

So very interesting. It just looks different when we start at that age, but I think there's also something to be said for when you've wanted to do it for a really long time and you finally get the chance. There's a lot of motivation there that

Meret Bitticks:

That's true.

Christine Goodner :

Maybe others don't have when they started so young in the same way.

Meret Bitticks:

Not

Christine Goodner :

For everybody, but yeah, I imagine it's different.

Meret Bitticks:

I wish I had known more about practicing when I was, that was the thing that I don't know how much good practicing would've done me because I don't know that I would've known when you don't sound very good. It's not because you don't want to sound good, it's because you don't know how to sound better. So practicing sounding not very good. Maybe wouldn't have been, but still would've shoulda could have, but it would've been nice.

Christine Goodner :

Right. Yeah. What do you remember about practicing those early days? Like say in the hallway, I realize you remember that you were too loud for some of the teachers.

Meret Bitticks:

That's right. That's right. That's right. Yeah. I just remember because the band program had been cut at that point, it came back my eighth grade year, but for one year the band program was cut, and I took my old band book that I had, because again, I had no teacher. There was nobody feeding me repertoire, and I would just try to figure things out, and I don't know how successful I was at that. Actually. I remember in eighth grade I had a different band director and we had maybe a sectional or a one-on-one or something together, and I said, just tell me how to play 16th notes. If you can tell me how to play 16th notes, then I think I can get it. Just how fast are they? And he said, well, it depends. And I said, no, no. The 16th notes just tell me how fast 16th notes are and I'll be okay.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah, you didn't know what you didn't know.

Meret Bitticks:

That's right. That's right. So who knows exactly what I was playing out there, but I was playing it all in the lowest register of the flute.

Christine Goodner :

I feel like there's probably a lot of people that would not have stuck with it through that. There's some real internal motivation there that you even tried.

Meret Bitticks:

Yeah. Yeah. I guess in retrospect at the time, you just do it. And again, to that band director's credit, he let me, he made it work.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah. How about when you started working with that teacher that you finally connected with the private teacher? Do you remember anything about practice at that point?

Meret Bitticks:

Well, she had to teach me everything. I remember her giving us all the idea of practice journals. She wanted us to have a practice journal, so it didn't how our practice journals looked were individual to us. She didn't give us, say, sheets that were printed out or anything like that, but she was very explicit in her note taking on exactly what she wanted us to work on or me to work on. And particularly in the beginning, I really needed that. As I started learning what I didn't know, it was easier to be more self-directed,

But I still have my old practice journals from that time, and both of my parents are visual artists, and so I drew a lot in my practice journals and I would make charts and things for scales to keep track of how fast they would go. And as I would reach a certain tempo goal, I could do things like color in the apples on the tree that I had drawn or color in. I had some of my minor scales had an octopus with tentacles coming down, and so the suckers on the octopus's tentacles I could color in. It was just this extra added motivation to get there because then I was able to also complete a work of art. It wasn't just that I was able to do this technical thing. And I also think my teacher, she had a plan. She understood what she wanted from each aude, and she also had, I hate to say it like this, but she hadn't had a reward system. And I'm telling you what I would do as a sophomore to get a sticker on an aude, if I was able to play it to her satisfaction on the first go, it would get a sticker and to be able to flip through the book and have the sticker. That was the biggest motivator I think of all, believe it or not, and as a high school student senior, I still did it as a senior. It didn't matter. I'm a firm believer in stickers as an educator now.

Christine Goodner :

I love it.

Yeah. It's interesting because a lot of discussion about rewards and how they impact us, but I got to have a conversation with BJ Fog who wrote that book about habits, and I asked him about that a little bit. I had done a research project with a colleague about what motivates students, and they said they remember rewards really motivating them like you. And I asked him about this. I was like, how do we reconcile this with what we see in this literature about punished by rewards and all of this? And he just said he likes to call them incentives. Adults go to work for the incentive of a paycheck. Incentives are just human nature. We don't have to shame ourselves that we like incentives or that our child needs incentives. This is perfectly normal.

Meret Bitticks:

Well, and I don't think that all rewards or incentives are created equal.

Christine Goodner :

Of course,

Meret Bitticks:

A sticker is a far cry from a gaming system or something like that. Mean,

Christine Goodner :

Yeah.

Meret Bitticks:

And even without a paycheck, I reward myself now too. Being able to say if I'm keeping track of how fast I'm working something up to, I like to see it visually. I like to see my own progress, and the stickers are just really a manifestation of that I did this. Boom.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah. I think it's an interesting thing to talk about, and I always think if for parents who are listening, think of a reward that fits in your value system. Whatever our thing we're doing, maybe with a young child, we bake your favorite dessert together on the weekend, or we go to the library and we pick out the book, something that feeds the parent child cooperative relationship or quality time together can be a great reward. Or like you're saying, just something visual like coloring something in. We're not talking about buying something expensive. We're just talking about

Meret Bitticks:

Acknowledging

Christine Goodner :

That we've done this thing that maybe took a lot of hard work. And I think it's important to acknowledge

Meret Bitticks:

And that maybe is intangible otherwise.

Christine Goodner :

Yes.

Meret Bitticks:

Right? Yes. So true. Besides the knowledge that you can play your scales at one 20, there's really nothing else that you can't carry it around with you and show people, look what I can do. Unless you force 'em to sit down and listen to you play all of your scales at one 20. I personally think that the stickers are a better choice that way.

Christine Goodner :

No, I think there's something to be said for that. That's a very good point. Just we're capturing something intangible in either a visual way or a let's celebrate way.

And yeah, again, neither of us are talking about buying anything or something that costs a lot of money. This is very different than that kind of incentive. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So interesting to think about. We can talk more about nuts and bolts of practicing as we go, but you have a new book out that I want to make sure we have time to talk about working with Young Flutists, and I would love you to just tell a little bit about what your book is about and what your vision is for it, or who you're hoping it's going to help.

Meret Bitticks:

Sure, sure. It actually started the kernel of the idea for the book started as so many things seem to have done these days in 2020, in March of 2020 when I was preparing for my DePaul methods class, it always meets in the spring and the world shut down, I think two weeks before I was supposed to start teaching this course. So I had to move everything completely online and completely asynchronous in two weeks time. And I ended up making a bunch of videos for the course. And then, I don't know, a few months later, a friend, a Suzuki flute teacher friend of mine emailed and said that one of her friends who was a band director was having trouble working with his flute players online. And she wondered if I had any advice or resources. I sent him a couple of these videos that I had made for the DePaul class. Without going into it, I don't tend to put many videos just out into the world unlisted. I really find a lot of them helpful in how to do your hair or if you want to fix something. But I'm really mindful of, I dunno, not taking work away from working musicians by telling people that I can show them to do stuff

Christine Goodner :

When

Meret Bitticks:

I'm not in person or something like that. But on a limited basis, I was happy to share, and it got me to thinking that when I speak to band directors and they find out that I'm a flutist, almost always their response to me is, flute was my worst instrument in my ED degree, or it took me so long to get a sound out of the flu, or I still can't get a sound out of the flute or whatever it is. And I thought, well, I'm so grateful to my band directors if I can give them a resource to help them quickly help the kid that's in front of them with a very specific problem. So I set my book up to be kind of like an encyclopedia where there are larger topics and then smaller subtopics. So if a kid in front of you could play just fine, and then they got braces and all of a sudden they can't get a sound out of the flute, you go to tone, you go to braces, and then I give you just a paragraph of what to do.

And there's also a little bit more than 30 videos that are linked in the book as well. In the physical copies, it's a QR code, but in the ebook, it'll just go straight to a video. And so you can see and hear what I'm doing as well if you decide you want more information or sometimes it's just really helpful with music to hear the sound of what the problem sounds like and what the better solution sounds like or how it looks when the person is doing it. So really, my initial focus for the book is music educators in a classroom setting.

I also think that potentially flute teachers could get something out of it just as an easy reference. But actually my husband was helping me edit the book a little bit, and we have a five-year-old flutist in our house right now. She really wants to be like mommy. And I never thought that I would teach my own child. I've never wanted to teach my own child, but here we are. And my husband said, actually, this is really good for parents too, because sometimes I'm at home and you are not home, and I'm trying to help our daughter with something and I don't know what to tell her. So hopefully the book will help anyone who is working with Young Flutists.

Christine Goodner :

I love that. That sounds like it's such a great resource, a very practical,

Meret Bitticks:

That's my hope. When a kid is having trouble, the sooner you can help them, the easier it is to avoid frustration or meltdowns or however a kid reacts to having a problem. So I really tried to make it as concise as possible so that whoever is working with the flute player can get some ideas of things to try right away and hopefully work through it and have the kid on their way.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah, that's great. Well, yeah, hearing you describe this reminds me, Brad Monague is this artist I love, and he has this quote, be who you needed when you were younger. And I feel like this sounds like what you needed when you were younger too.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh, for sure. The book is not directed towards the students themselves, but I probably would've poured over this book,

Christine Goodner :

Or you needed your band teacher to have it.

Meret Bitticks:

That's right. If my band teacher had had it, maybe

Christine Goodner :

Yes,

Meret Bitticks:

I wouldn't have had to undo all of the bad habits that I, or at least some of the bad habits.

Christine Goodner :

No, I love that. I think sometimes when we just realize, oh, I wish either I had this or someone who was helping me have this,

Meret Bitticks:

That's

Christine Goodner :

When we really can create something that's helping a lot of people. So I love that.

Meret Bitticks:

Yeah, I love that.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah, that's great. And I know we were going to talk a little bit too about just ways you think parents and caregivers, whoever's supporting a young student in their journey, how they can collect a set of resources for themselves, maybe through their lessons or through, I remember practicing with my own kids who are in their twenties now, and it feels like a lot, and they do have a lot of big emotions when they're frustrated or feel stuck, and we want to help as the adults in the room trying to support them. And sometimes we don't know where to go for that information. So I'd love to hear any advice you have about that and what resources parents and family members can find.

Meret Bitticks:

Yeah. Now that I'm the parent of two Suzuki students, it's really been a peak behind the curtain for me. I remember as a young teacher thinking that I had all the answers and just assigning things to parents and sending them off, okay, you figure it out. This is what needs to happen. I don't care how it happens, it just needs to happen. And I probably owe some apologies to some people, but I think one of the things we say in Suzuki education quite a lot is that the teacher is the expert on the instrument, and the parent is the expert on the child, or the caregiver is the expert on the child. And so I think it's really easy, especially if you are working with a young musician as a caregiver, and especially if you don't have experience on that instrument or musical experience at all, to remember that your role isn't to be the expert on the instrument, it is to be the expert on the kid. And that things that work in other situations will probably work with the instrument as well. And that in the end, it's really about your relationship with that young musician more than getting any particular goal done.

That said, I think the more self-aware we can be about our own learning styles and how we learn, the more we can ask our musicians, teachers for support and feedback in a way that's meaningful to us. So if I'm really visual, then maybe I ask the teacher if it's okay if I take photos and video snippets in the lesson, or I'm somebody who I have to write it all down in order to remember it. The act of physically writing it out on paper is how I process things. So when I'm the one who's in the lesson with my son, the notes are very copious, and it's part of how I also stay engaged in the lesson, because of course, I am completely addicted to my phone, and I'm sure my hands would start twitching even though I'm there and I want to be present for my kid,

Christine Goodner :

Of course.

Meret Bitticks:

So that's my way of coping with remembering what needs to happen, and also being able to relay that to my husband, who's the practice parent. Usually for my son, however, that's not the way my husband's brain works. And so when the roles are reversed and I have to practice with our son, sometimes I look at the notes and I think, well, this isn't helpful at all. I would also say, just as an aside to any teachers who are listening that, again, we think a lot about how to frame things in different ways to make it understandable for the student. So sometimes that means doing something physical or sometimes that means doing something visual and presenting the information in a few different ways. And that's true for their caregivers as well. And their caregiver might not. What works the best for the student might not be a good strategy for the caregivers. So obviously as a teacher, your first priority is the student in front of you, but if you can be mindful of that and work together with the parent or caregiver, I think that really it just strengthens all the relationships and helps minimize frustration, understanding that into every life, several meltdowns will fall.

Yeah,

Christine Goodner :

I think that's very true, because sometimes the parents or caregivers's learning style is really different, but I also want them to help with whatever it is at home in certain cases.

Meret Bitticks:

That's

Christine Goodner :

Right. And I have learned the hard way to make sure I am communicating it in a way that the parent can help when they get home. If I'm asking them to do something specific, especially sometimes it's, oh, if I want 'em to physically help in some way, then I need them to do that in front of me, or I want them to do that in front of me because they might watch me do it and think, oh, that looks easy. And then when it's time for them to help their child, it's like, wait, I don't understand this. I'm a hands-on learner and I just watch you and that actually I can't do it now.

Meret Bitticks:

That's right. Yes. Yeah, that's absolutely right. And also just, I think this comes actually from all the observations I did when I was doing my Suzuki training, and now even still, I love watching people teach. It's, oh my gosh, I love watching people teach. So when I do get to be the person in the room with my son and his teacher, I'm always evaluating and considering how is his teacher doing this? Is this something that we can replicate at home? Or how can we do something similar at home? Is this an activity that would be good for practicing? I think one thing that Suzuki teachers do extraordinarily well is repetition in a way that works for young children. And that the more whatever caregiver is in the lesson with them, the more that caregiver looks at the nuts and bolts of how the thing is happening, I think the more resources they'll have for themselves when the time comes to sit down with the kid and practice.

Christine Goodner :

And I think watching how your teacher works with your child tells you a lot about how your child learns. Because as a teacher, I am always trying things and does this work for the student, does that work for the student? And I always tell parents too, if you hear advice just out in the world like, oh, this is the one way to practice something, you have to put it through this filter of knowing your child. Like you said, you're the expert.

And it's great to try new things and not have a closed mind about what could work. But also if you see like, oh no, this actually backfires. There's nothing wrong with you or your child, just cross it off your list. Every child is different. You and I both, I mean, we've taught for a while and just each student I feel like comes in, has a different set, a combination of different things that works for them. So we just have to find that for our own child too. And it's a process, but then I think it's really fun to learn that about our kids.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh, for sure. Then

Christine Goodner :

It applies to so many other things on their lives. So it's kind of a gift to learn that. Yeah.

Meret Bitticks:

I tell my students really that, yeah, we're musicians, but we're actually scientists. We're running experiments all the time. And sometimes the experiments, the experiment will always yield a result. Whether it's a result that we want to continue forward with or not is almost immaterial. We're just gathering data that then we can use and use to make decisions and create further experiments in the future.

Christine Goodner :

And I think as a teacher for me, I can feel neutral about that. Okay. I'll just check off. Nope, this didn't work. Yes, this did. It doesn't feel so neutral when it's your own child.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh, absolutely not. No. Yeah, absolutely not.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah, it can feel very frustrating and all of that. So I love what you're saying for parents and caregivers listening, just really notice what's happening in the lesson as far as strategies. Go cry and see what works.

Meret Bitticks:

That's right.

Christine Goodner :

Ask questions. I always want families to come to me if they need more support or more practice advice. That's

Meret Bitticks:

Right. I

Christine Goodner :

Don't need them to pretend everything's going wonderful at home. I actually want to hear where it's going terrible, because I want to help before it feels like a crisis.

Meret Bitticks:

Absolutely. Yeah.

Christine Goodner :

Hopefully we trust our teacher with that information. And as a teacher, I for sure want to help with that. I want to hear when it's hard. And I think also sometimes, like you're saying, it's hard not to be on our phone, just how we all are. We're in line anywhere. We might feel tempted to pull it out. And so I think if you give yourself an assignment, I'm going to look for all the things that are working in this lesson for my child that also helps us stay engaged.

Meret Bitticks:

And also the pacing of the lessons too, I think sometimes help where you may have a child or a student who responds well to lots of short activities, or maybe you have a student who really likes to focus on one thing for a long time and has trouble transitioning from one activity to another. And that's something that a teacher can adapt their teaching style to. And as the teacher gets to know that the student, you'll, you get a sense of the pace of the lessons. And I think that can also really inform how you structure home practice as well.

Christine Goodner :

I think that's important. And I think I have learned to take the should out of practice. Sometimes it feels like it should be only focused or it should look like X, Y, Z, and there's really no shoulds about it. Practice looks like all sorts of things.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh, Christine, every time my husband uses the word, should I tell him he's shoulding all over the place. I do not like that word. It is one of my least favorite words. There is no should. No. Yeah.

Christine Goodner :

And I think if we looked at, I dunno, 10 different professional musicians practice sessions, they would look like all different things too.

Meret Bitticks:

Absolutely. Yeah. And maybe different on different days as well.

Christine Goodner :

Yeah. I think taking some of that off the table maybe helps us all feel as frustrated because we are just showing up today doing what we can do today with what we know. Yeah, I think that's so important. Well, how can people connect with you? Where can they find your book and how can they connect with you if they would like to learn more?

Meret Bitticks:

My publisher is F Flat Books, which is a great small publishing company for mostly eBooks, hence the name, specifically designed for musicians and music educators. So I highly recommend checking out F flat books. Physical copies of my book are also available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. The ebook is only on F flat books, and I'm on Instagram. I wouldn't say I post super regularly, but I'm always happy if you follow me on Instagram, it's at fl spelled like beautiful, but with an F-L-F-L-E-A-U-T-I-F-U-L. And you might see me talking flute stuff. You might see some nice shiny flute pictures, or you could see some pictures of my garden. It's just whatever I'm into that day or week. But I'd love to see you there.

Christine Goodner :

Sounds great. We'll put links to all of those places to find you and your books in our show notes so that people can find that. Well, I always love to wrap up our conversation by leaving listeners with a practice tip of the week. It can be related to something we've said already today, or it can be something totally separate. So I'd love to hear what you'd like to leave listeners with today.

Meret Bitticks:

Oh my gosh. My all time favorite practice tip comes from Kenny Werner's book Effortless Mastery, and he talks about the practice triangle, and he says that there are three variables that make up the corner of the practice triangle, accuracy, speed, and length. And he says that when you are practicing, you can only work on two of the three variables. So with my students, Kenny Warner is a jazz musician, so his definition of accuracy is maybe different than my definition. But for me and my students, I tell my students that accuracy is a non-negotiable. So really the only two factors that they have to play around with is speed and length. Length, meaning how much of what you're playing you play. So if you want to play it accurately and fast, you might only play two or three notes at a time. If you want to play a long chunk of whatever it is that you're working on, then the thing that must be changed will be the speed. So as you get closer to having something polished, then you don't have to make as many compromises on the speed and the length. But that to me was a real revelation that, oh, I can practice this at tempo. It just might mean that I am practicing a very small amount of it at tempo.

Christine Goodner :

Oh, I love that. That's a really interesting way to think about it. I think that's really helpful.

Meret Bitticks:

Yeah. Yeah. I find it especially helpful with some of my more advanced students,

Christine Goodner :

And it's easy to want to get everything

Meret Bitticks:

Improving

Christine Goodner :

At the same moment, which is not possible.

Meret Bitticks:

I should be able to play this page at this tempo. Well, but you can't.

Christine Goodner :

So how do we get there?

Meret Bitticks:

So you need to play, right? You either slow the whole page down or you need to play part of the page at that tempo.

Christine Goodner :

Oh, I love that. Thanks. Thanks. That's good food for thought for everyone as they're thinking about their practice this week. So thank you merit for being here today and for this great conversation. It was really fun to think about practice with you today. So thanks for being here.

Meret Bitticks:

Thank you. Yeah. Thank you for asking me.

Before we go today: here are a few of my take aways from our conversation with Meret Bitticks.

- 1. Stickers and little rewards can be a manifestation of our progress so we can see our work in a tangible way - i loved this way of thinking of it this way and its made me think a lot about how we play something and then because it's sound it disappears and it's hard to see the evidence of our work sometimes - good food for thought!**
- 2. If you are a flute teacher, band director or parent of a flutist - check out Meret's new book on Amazon or F flat books**
- 3. IF you're supporting a young musician with practice, thinking about how YOU Learn so you know how to best take in the information your child needs help with is such a great idea. Ask permission to take videos, write out notes in detail that you may or may not refer back to - yes the lessons are for the child, but we can help them better if we understand how we learn too**

What did you take away from this episode? We'd love you to reach out and let us know! You can find me on instgram or send me an email Christine at [SuzukiTriangle.com](mailto:Christine@SuzukiTriangle.com)

As 2024 winds down I'll be sharing some episodes reflecting on the year and a best of episode or two and then be back in January with new episodes to share with you!

If you're looking for more connection in the new year I will be my community Musical Nest that I run with Barbie Wong where we have monthly live meetings, check ins through out the week, and this January we'll have an engaging practice challenge as well for students & grown ups as well. Come join us there BarbieWong.com/Community

Have a great week Time to Practice Community & Happy Practicing!