DISCOVER YOUR TRUE PERFORMING POTENTIAL

an exercise by

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WELCOME...

To discover your true performing potential, you need to optimize how you use your body, your mind, your ears, and your emotional energy at the piano. It can definitely be a daunting project! But this short exercise can give you a fresh start in your practicing. It's designed to help you release tension in your body and mind, so that you gain a stronger connection with your instrument and with your sound.

You can do the exercise right before you practice, or whenever you find yourself frustrated in a practice session. It will give you a little taste of my approach to breaking free of limited or toxic practicing, so that you bring more of your natural inspiration and creative energy to making music.

I hope you enjoy it!

Madeline

To begin, play a C major chord on the piano with both hands. Notice how it sounds, and how it feels to put the keys down. Now play a C minor chord and notice how that sounds and feels different.

> Now, sitting comfortably upright on the bench with your hands resting on your legs, do the following 4-step mindfulness practice:

1. Take three slow, **deep breaths.**
2. Close your eyes and do a **body scan** as follows ...

> Take a minute to notice how the soles of your feet feel....
> Then the tops of your feet...
> Ankles and lower legs...
> Knees and upper legs...
> Hips and lower torso...
> Upper torso...
> Shoulders and upper arms...
> Elbows, forearms, and hands...
> Your neck...
> Back of your head...
> Sides of your head...
> Top of your head...
> Your whole face...
> And your throat.

3.Gently open your eyes, and with your gaze slightly lowered and relaxed, not trying to focus on anything, do two minutes of **mindfulness meditation** as follows:

Simply sit still and notice your breathing.
When your mind wanders from your breathing, gently bring it back.

4.Take several seconds to **notice each of your five sense perceptions** in this way:

Notice what you're hearing now
Now, what you're seeing
Smelling
Tasting
And touching

Now play the same C major chord again and notice how it sounds and feels. Pause a moment. Then play the C minor chord and notice how that sounds and feels in contrast.

What is the difference in your experience of playing the chords before and after doing the 4-step mindfulness practice?

Write down what you noticed.

Remember: This level of connection and listening is *always* available to you.

I'd love to hear about your experience. And if you'd like to discover more ways to unlock your performing potential—including efficient piano technique and listening and rhythmic techniques--I'm happy to see you for a **complimentary consultation**.