

THEY WILL GROW STILL BETTER IF THEY LISTEN MORE

By Shinichi Suzuki

I consider it natural that every child can grow with outstanding musical sensitivity. It is a plain fact, nothing to marvel at. If we expose children daily to records of superior music as well as those of the teaching materials, one of them will surely acquire fine musical sensitivity.

To become a human being with beautifully refined musical sensitivity --what happiness this must mean to the child's whole life. This is the same thing as the growth of a beautiful heart. Musical sensitivity is a great human value as important as a beautiful mind.

Who else can give this important treasure of life to the child but the parents.

It suffices to let the child listen every day. It's just a matter of your attitude. And yet, this simple thing is not easily done. Perhaps it's because the parents lack or don't understand its importance. Because they don't tell themselves, "I will raise my child with rich musical sense and beautiful sensibility." In their heart there still remains the traditional attitude which makes them think, "Play the records every day? That won't change what's inborn." Yet in time past, those parents who became aware are of the importance of listening were able to foster musicality in their children. It has been a splendid gift from the parents to the children. For it is natural that what is nurtured will grow.

Children learn by listening daily to the dialect of the region they live in. Every child masters the dialect. Children who grow up in Yamagata all speak that dialect. Those who grow up in Osaka all become speakers of Osaka dialect. What does this fact imply? Why is it that you don't foster beautiful musical sensitivity in your precious child? Why don't you understand this? This has been my unflagging appeal for the past

thirty years. I have constantly repeated it. How happy the parents will be if their child grows up with musical sensitivity. It is now known that this quality is not inborn. Nevertheless, I am sad that few parents resolve to foster children with high musicality.

Please foster your children as people with a wealth of music. If you don't foster your children who else will?

In some later generation a world may emerge in which every child grows up with superior musical sensitivity. That is natural. I won't think it at all strange.

Today people still think, "After all, that child's special," when they hear a highly musical child perform. However no one thinks, "They are children with a special inborn gift," when hearing a hundred, a thousand, or ten-thousand children speak Osaka dialect fluently. This is because it is natural. It's the same in music, too. So, why do they separate music?

Few adults seriously consider the wonderful potential children have to learn. The majority of contemporary people are ignorant of how to foster their own children. We have just started to awaken and criticize ourselves.

Please give thought to what I am saying. Resolve to raise your children to be musically sensitive by your efforts to let them listen every day.

It's for the sake of your children's happiness.

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