

Ten Reasons Why Everyone Should Learn To Play Musical Instrument

Views:34402 , Posted 1 year, 9 months ago

Can you imagine living your life without music? It would be very hard to do so, as music has been hard-wired into our very existence as human beings. While everyone enjoys listening to good music, not many of us are what the world calls 'musicians'- the ones with the ability to play a musical instrument. This could be due to not having the opportunity to learn as kids or simply due to lack of inclination or proper instruction. However, music is something that is never too late to learn. And here are 10 good reasons as to why everyone should learn to play a musical instrument.

1. Playing a musical instrument relieves stress

Researchers studying the benefits of music have reported that playing a musical instrument on a regular basis can help bring down stress. Studies show that playing an instrument helps in lowering the heart rate and blood pressure, which in turn lowers the stress hormone cortisol, thus making us feel relaxed. While just listening to music also helps, learning to play an instrument brings with it a comforting routine of daily practice that helps in keeping the stress hormones away. Michael Jolkovski, a psychologist who specializes in musicians, feels that music also helps in bringing down stress by helping people connect with others. "It (music) can satisfy the need to unwind from the worries of life, but unlike the other things people often use for this purpose, such as excessive eating, drinking, or TV or aimless web browsing, it makes people more alive and connected with one another."

2. Playing a musical instrument makes you smarter

People who have received a music education are generally smarter than their non-musical counterparts are. Extensive research done in this area has proved that children who learn to play a musical instrument do better in academics. Shaw, Rauscher, Levine, Wright, Dennis and Newcomb, in their research paper titled Music Training Causes Long-Term Enhancement Of Preschool Children's Spatial-Temporal Reasoning, speak about, "a research team exploring the link between music and intelligence reported that music training is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills, the skills necessary for learning math and science."

3. Playing a musical instrument improves your social life

Music helps you connect. Learning an instrument enlarges your social circle since you get to meet more people than you usually would. In children, music can help develop social skills. Maestro Eduardo Marturet, a conductor, composer and musical director for the Miami Symphony Orchestra, who also oversees the MISO Young Artist program in South Florida, has observed the effect that music has on a child's social skills. "Socially, children who become involved in a musical group or ensemble learn important life skills, such as how to relate to others, how to work as a team and appreciate the rewards that come from working together, and the development of leadership skills and discipline."

4. Playing a musical instrument helps build confidence

Choosing to take music lessons can help build confidence. Once you are aware that you are able to do something well, like play the flute for instance, you naturally become more confident of your skills. Learning to play an instrument can help both children and adults who face confidence issues. Elizabeth Dotson-Westphalen, a music teacher and performer, has found that music has helped many of students develop confidence. "They find that once they can develop a skill by themselves that they can get better and better."

5. Playing a musical instrument teaches patience

Music teachers feel that music can help teach patience. In a world of instant gratification, learning to play an instrument is not something that can happen overnight. It is the daily effort of everyday practice that can help a musician learn how to play without mistakes. This in turn develops patience. Most musicians go through years of regular practice that includes daily musical exercises and the tackling of progressively difficult musical pieces, which in turn helps them conquer the virtue of patience.

6. Playing a musical instrument fosters creativity

Stuck in everyday routine lives, many of us lose touch with our creative side. Learning to play a musical instrument, especially when you reach advanced levels, can foster that lost creativity. Since music education plays on your mental, emotional and cognitive abilities, the brain is stimulated to think out of the ordinary, which results in improved creativity.

7. Playing a musical instrument improves memory

Music and memory go hand in hand. Learning to play a musical instrument makes you use both parts of your brain and this in turn boosts memory power. Maestro Eduardo Marturet, reiterates this point when he says, "Further research has shown that participation in music at an early age can help improve a child's learning ability and memory by stimulating different patterns of brain development." Music education is also linked to higher IQ levels and the physical development of certain parts of the brain.

8. Playing a musical instrument develops discipline

Music requires dedication and regular practice. Allotting a specific amount of time to practice music daily develops discipline in the learner. This can prove to be extremely advantageous in children. Mira Stulberg-Halpert, of 3D Learner Inc., who works with children who have ADHD, has seen music discipline children when everything else fails. She has this to say on the effect of music on kids. "Exposing kids to musical instruments is the key. They are naturally curious and excited about them-and the discipline that parents and kids learn by sticking with it is a lesson in itself."

9. Playing a musical instrument gives you a sense of achievement

Learning to play a musical instrument gives you an immense sense of achievement. Pianist Emily Singers, in her article titled, 12 Reasons You Should Learn to Play the Piano, writes that piano playing can bring true satisfaction. "It's truly one of the most satisfying things you can do," she says. "There's no feeling like playing a difficult song and playing it flawlessly. (It is) Quite an ego-boost." This feeling of satisfaction leads to a tremendous sense of self-achievement that can help you accomplish more in other areas of your life.

10. Playing a musical instrument is fun

Lastly, learning to play a musical instrument is fun. "The art of music is so deep and profound that it has to be approached with a bit of intensity laced with great affectionate joy", says noted singer, musician and Bollywood film music composer Shankar Mahadevan. Playing a musical instrument can bring back the fun factor into your life. Music has the special quality to bring joy, peace and fulfillment that helps lift the spirit and make life enjoyable for everyone involved.

Learn Music Online:

Spreading the immense joy that music brings to all who wish to learn, has motivated Shankar Mahadevan to set up an online music academy with the aim of helping aspiring people learn music. The Shankar Mahadevan Academy, has been offering quality online music education via its website www.shankarmahadevanacademy.com and through regular classes conducted in schools for both vocal and instrument training. Online singing classes are conducted for Classical, Hindustani and Bollywood music through self-study OM (online music) books or with the aid of expert teachers. You can also choose to learn Indian musical instruments like the flute and tabla through online classes in the convenience of your home.

Did you know that learning to play a musical instrument has many benefits including the ability to bring down stress, improve memory power and increase confidence levels?

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