

Preface from the Author

I teach lawyers to play the piano. Not only lawyers, but the majority of my adult students are lawyers. Whoever hears about that for the first time is surprised. What a weird thing! Why do lawyers want to learn to play the piano? At first sight jurisprudence, with its exhaustive logic, rules and standard tasks, is poles apart from the sensual world of music, but in reality it just seems so.

Professional musicians possess well developed analytical skills and spatial, abstract and creative thinking. Music is not only feelings. Music is feelings and logic, creativity and planning, unpredictability and all about meeting expectations. When adults who have a stable personality and a wide range of knowledge and habits begin studying music they re-discover themselves, find new aspects of their personality and begin to think and behave in a more effective manner.

While listening to music, the limbic system, which controls emotions and feelings, is activated. When you learn to play a musical instrument, your logic, responsible for information planning, analysis and synthesis, starts operating. When creating music, logic, abstract and creative thinking are activated and emotions and feelings are set in motion. Music develops emotional intellect and protects you from emotional exhaustion. Continually evoking new images and emotions, it forms new neuronal connections and improves the interaction between the cerebral hemispheres.

We use the same movements in everyday life and while working. Our motions are of a repetitive kind on a daily basis. Some muscles work more, others work less and some are out of use. The same activity makes us both act and think in the same way. We get used to thinking in non-random patterns. After all everything that is repeated several times becomes either a thinking pattern or a behavioural one.

Neurobiological studies show that the fabric of the brain of a musician is different from that of a non-musician. Each of us looks at the world through the eyes of the profession that takes up most of our time. If you look at the world through the eyes of a lawyer, an engineer, a teacher, a biologist, a psychologist or other profession, you can widen your horizons by trying to see the world through the eyes of a musician. Just start studying music!

We are used to using existing patterns but in order to develop thinking we need to search for new activities and learn them. Learning to play the piano is learning new movements with two hands working at the same time. Non-typical movements form new connections between the brain cells, and that is the reason why we start to move in an atypical way and also why we start to think that way. Music influences us physically, it changes our perception and thinking, and that is the reason that learning to play the piano at an adult age expands the brain, decreases pain and delays the aging process.

Music is my life, my love and my profession. Not everybody can think in this way. After all we are all very different, but I know that music is like sport, it can be for everybody.

Each can engage in music in a different way and with a different purpose, and it is available for everybody. My youngest student to date was four and the oldest was 85. Studying music at any age with any experience develops musical thinking, the primary characteristic of which is flexibility.

Music is an artistic reflection of life, a way of communication, a way of cultural study and self-development. In this book I will explain how and why children and adults learn music and how it effects health, intellect, studying, work, business and daily routine. I will describe my method of teaching the piano, which takes into consideration students' fundamental thinking skills. Not everything is about music, and not everything is understood through personal experience, so I explore scientific research and use the data gleaned therefrom while teaching students to play the piano. I would like to share the most important elements of that data with you.