Survival or Thrival
Are We Preparing Our Students in Band and Beyond, Or Are We Preparing Them for Contest?

CLINICIAN:
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HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
Survival
Or
Thrival

Are we preparing students for success in band and beyond; or are we preparing them for contest

Texas Bandmasters Association
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Characteristics of Survival

- Academic bulimia
- Attaining the lowest threshold
- Avoiding embarrassment
- Avoidance of mistakes
- Avoidance of failure
- Avoidance of responsibility
- Lowering standards to succeed
- Accepting the low hanging excuses
- Low expectations
- False sense of accomplishment
- Being on life support
- Insecurity
- Shifting responsibility away
- Creating false standards
- Accepting false standards
- When mediocrity becomes your excellence…
Characteristics of Thrival

Converting knowledge to wisdom
Developing critical thinking skills
Developing critical listening skills
Creating professional standards
Developing professional expectations
Growth past the accumulation of information
Creativity
Responsiveness
Surpassing your comfort level
Learning how to fail successfully

Developing consistency
Many work to survive
Few seek to thrive

How do you go from survival to thrival?
CRITICAL THINKING:

*Critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating with a view to improving it.*

Factual – objective
Intuitional – subjective

Using intellect as a starting point
Curiosity – asking why
Comparative analysis
Looking at an issue from many angles
Setting – creating- expanding standards
How does it work/What does it mean
Researching/Verifying
Independent thought
Questioning
Recognizing consequences/ Considering out-comes
Setting priorities
Developing thought processes
Continually changing standards

“If you don’t think too good, don’t think too much”

Ted Williams
CRITICAL LISTENING:

Awareness of surroundings – radar
Powers of observation
Sorting through different strata of information
Comparative (listening)
   Comparing against an expected standard
Developing a standard
What to listen for (awareness)
Developing the art of “filtering” –
   What’s relevant
   What’s not
Making judgments/ Decision making
Subjective application of objective criteria
Is it working - assessment
Is progress being made – evaluation
Comparing to incremental goals
Feedback/Making a decision about feedback
INDEPENDENT ACTION:

Drawing on knowledge to act
Applying knowledge
Doing it without outside influence/developing independence
Making a decision
Acting on a decision
Developing confidence of actions
Individual skill development – refinement – application
Dissecting a problem and addressing it
Giving your-self permission to fail
Empowering your-self to succeed

“When you come to a fork in the road, take it”

Yogi Berra

“When Education is a preparation for life, not a preparation for school”

Tom Magliozzi
EXTEMPORANEOUS COMPROMISE:

Changing responses to constantly changing circumstances
Flexibility
Calling on all resources simultaneously
  (multi-tasking)
Compromising
Instantaneous decision-making - with consequences
Going off script/Planned improvisation
Making changes without prompting
Learning to lead
Learning to follow
Giving permission to fail
Accepting permission to fail
Dealing with consequences

Everyone must fill the role of:

Givers and Takers
**Pulse givers**

Who is giving pulse?
How are they giving it?
Are you giving the pulse?
How are you giving it?
When?
How?
Can you use it?
Can it be used by others?

**Pulse takers**

Who must take the pulse?
How must you take the pulse?
Are you taking the pulse?
When?
How?
**Pitch givers**

Who is giving the pitch?
How are they giving it?
Are you giving the pitch?
Who are you giving it to?
When?
How?
Can it be used by others?
What does “playing in tune” mean

**Pitch takers**

Who is giving the pitch?
How are they giving it?
Are you taking the pitch?
How are you taking it?
How can pitch takers develop a better sense of where to listen?
What does “playing in tune” mean
Style
What is the style
What creates the style
  Attack
  Duration
  Space
  Quality
Who initiates the style
Are you following it
Are they consistent
Are you consistent
If there is disagreement, who must change

Character of sonority
What is balance
What is blend (sonority)
Do dynamics play a role
How do you contribute
How do you detract
How do you interpret written guidelines
Ensemble/Interactivity

What is your role in the music
How you determine your role
How you lead
How you follow
When you lead
When you follow
Why – is it working

Becoming the “performer-listener”

What is your level of curiosity
What is you level of rigidity
What is your level of flexibility
How do you interface with the whole
Is your character one of:

Survival or Thrival