

## Music for People

# RETURN TO CHILD PROJECT

In August of 2004 Music for People completed a major revision of our curriculum book, *Return to Child* under the guidance of Jim Oshinsky. *Return to Child* now consists of three sections: Musicianship, Leadership, and Appendices, with the appendices containing information about bringing MfP content into schools.

As we discover how best to use the new material in *Return to Child* and integrate it with the activities that are already in the MLP notebooks, we are requesting your input and feedback throughout this material.

### Create Your Own Homeplays

- Optional for Improvisors (but we encourage you to participate)

You have the opportunity to create some of your own “homeplay” assignments based on the new material in *Return to Child*. For each homeplay, create one new “Practice” and one new “Recording” assignment, based on the following new material in the Musicianship section:

1. The Music for People mantras in the “It’s YOU!” article (introduction, page i)
2. Listening and sound awareness (musicianship, page 4)
3. Cultivating an attitude of No Wrong Notes (musicianship, page 5)
4. Silence in improvisation (musicianship, page 6)
5. Letting go of inner criticism (musicianship, page 7)
6. Warming up - creating space and a relaxed attitude (musicianship, page 11)
7. Shadowing - close listening in duets (musicianship, page 23)
8. Groove in a Box - holding your own rhythm in an ensemble (musicianship, page 25)
9. Open Chords - chord voicings (musicianship, page 28)
10. Arpeggiation and Small Changes - minimalism and etudes (musicianship, page 28)
11. Solkattu - rhythm language (musicianship, page 35)
12. Polyrythm practice (musicianship, page 36)
13. Success for all - ensemble improvisation guidelines (musicianship, page 41)
14. Drumming on Guitar - strums and picking patterns (musicianship, page 44)
15. Parallel Fourths - jazz chords with ambiguous centers (musicianship, pages 48, 54)
16. Black Key Piano - a simple pentatonic scale (musicianship, page 50)
17. Blues forms - rhythms, motifs, and chord changes (musicianship, page 55)
18. Gospel piano accompaniment - fast and slow (musicianship, page 59)
19. Bluegrass form (musicianship, page 62)

Some familiar activities in the Musicianship section have received new explanations or elaborations - Oooh energy, Yea energy, One Quality Sound, Singing in Thirds, Descending Scale, Hand Counting, Fugue. See whether the new material clarifies the

concepts and give us your reactions.

In the course of your reading, when you come across material and your reaction is, “Cool! I want to try that!” - you are actually helping us add to the “Practice” and “Recording” parts of future homeplay assignments. Write down what you were inspired to add to your practicing and warm up routines. Create new activities based on the readings, and record yourself. Write up the experience as clearly as possible and email the Return to Child Project Staff ([rtc@musicforpeople.org](mailto:rtc@musicforpeople.org)) the results of your exploration.

Homeplay is a combination of activities that stretch your ears and your fingers, bringing you to new ways of playing your instrument and of appreciating your sounds. When you construct new homeplays, we encourage you to include some activities that are outside your typical “comfort zone.” As in yoga, you have the most to gain by trying stretches that gradually bring you into new positions.

## Developing Leadership Skills

The biggest concentration of new material is in the Leadership section. You may notice that you look at improvisation classes and breakouts with new eyes and ears after reading this material. We are interested in knowing which parts you find most useful and which may need further clarification. Make note of your “Aha” experiences where you make connections between your time as a workshop participant, solo improviser, performer, and workshop facilitator. As you progress through the program and start to lead groups, let us know which of the readings influenced you.

New material for reading in the Leadership section includes:

1. Each One, Teach One - MfP philosophy applied to leading (page 68)
2. Hosting a Musical Gathering - revised version of our guidelines (page 69)
3. Developing Session Skills - openings, middles, closings, transitions (page 74)
4. Developing Communication Skills - positive feedback guidelines (page 79)
5. Interview with David Darling (page 98)
6. Are You Ready for Anything? - scenarios contributed by MfP members (page 89)

The Leadership section concludes with a comprehensive Glossary of Group Facilitation Concepts (page 109). Read this section along with the sections on Developing Session Skills (page 74) and Developing Personal Qualities (page 81). Together, these sections give us a common vocabulary for describing what goes on in workshops of all kinds, how to develop leading “antennae” for being sensitive to the changing needs of the groups we lead, and where our own personal buttons and edges affect our leading.

The book concludes with appendices on using Music for People techniques in schools. We would welcome any feedback from participants working in this forum.

In addition to the homeplay assignments, the staff welcomes all of your reactions to the new *Return to Child* text. We look at it as a work-in-progress, and your contributions will be seriously and gratefully considered. ([rtc@musicforpeople.org](mailto:rtc@musicforpeople.org))