

Selections from: **Effortless Mastery**  
By Kenny Werner  
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p. 77-80:

(1) There is a place inside each of us where perfection exists. ...

From this space, there is great compassion, and great love, as well as great detachment. A person becomes the supreme enjoyer, observer, and doer. His involvement in life is total. He fully participates in the world, yet is not ensnared by it. *There is no fear, because he is not attached to the results of actions.* [Emphasis added.]

(2) Practice takes no patience, since there is no burning need to reach a goal. There is simply the celebration of the doing, the learning, the achieving and enjoying. To be sure, he experiences the entire range of emotions, but he is not attached. Therefore, he can live his life and make his moves in harmony with his inner self and the outer universe. (3) He frequently receives intuition about what to do next, and he follows it fearlessly. Paradoxically, detachment causes his actions to have great purpose and result in great success. The abundance of the universe tends to rain on such a person; however, if it does not, that too is all right. ...

(4) Detachment is an essential quality for one to become established in that space. Expectations create agitation in the mind, and then merging with one's self is not possible. Swami Chidvilasananda has said, "Expectation exists when there is fear." (5) The fear of not getting what we want is predominant in Western society, but the never-ending quest to satisfy our "needs" masks our deepest desire: oneness with the divine force. ... We think that if we have enough of what we want, we will be safe. But from the inner space, one realizes that everything one needs and desires already exists within. ...

(6) The Inner Space is the place where joy, pleasure and fulfillment – worldly and otherwise – are available in unlimited supply. Acceptance of these gifts allows the flow to increase. Performances given from this state are said to be greatly inspired, leaving their audiences profoundly moved. A concert given by a performer who has attained this state is regarded as an event not to be missed. ...

(7) A true master is not just a master of technique or language, but of himself. He can sit serenely in the center of that space while performing his actions to perfection. This is a state of selflessness and absolute concentration, called *samadhi* (三摩地: 「定」) by Hindus and Buddhists. Meditation is the tool most often used to achieve this state. Once *samadhi* is achieved, *one may perform all actions in that state.* ...

(8) ... The goal is to get beyond the mind, that noisy little stream of thoughts, and merge into the ocean of consciousness. From there, you experience an absence of things – an absence of effort, of caring, the absence of desire or of needs. Things become quite simple.

(9) If you have experienced this space even for moment, you become determined to get there again. You're amazed that you've spent so much of your life tyrannized by your mind when this "space" existed. (Wow – I can actually feel like this without cognac?) (10) In the inner space there are no conditions, no requirements; you just are. You are making conscious contact, forming an informational highway, with the higher, or inner self. This is the spiritual connection that many artists speak of as the primary force in their art.

p. 102:

(11) If one's life depends on doing something right, as in the case of the tightrope walker, one will practice on a much deeper level. But in fact, many students and professionals are not properly rehearsed in the basics, and so for them music seems much more difficult to play. (12) There are many reasons for this improper preparation. The educational system is partly responsible. As I stated before, we are rushed along through one concept after another.... Only a relatively small percentage of students make it through those hurdles. (13) Many fall by the wayside who might otherwise succeed. But the main culprit is the dysfunctional, fear-based practicing I referred to earlier. That "little voice in your head" won't let you stay with a subject long enough to master it.

(14) ... It is good to view things as familiar or unfamiliar, rather than as difficult or easy. If you give yourself the message, "This is difficult," the piece may discourage you, and it will still be difficult to play even after you've learned it. However, if you believe that *all music is easy*, then you'll assume that you are unfamiliar with the piece because "*it hasn't become easy yet*".

(15) Sometimes you hear yourself botching things up that you've practiced, and you don't even question it. That's because the mistakes actually agree with your belief that "*I am not a master*", and "*music is hard*." In fact, the material has not been practiced to the proper level of ease. ***Music has to become easy. That's the secret!***

p. 117:

(16) Great patience and objectivity emanate from the inner space. You can see clearly what functions well and what doesn't. Also, from that space, you don't berate yourself for lapses in your playing. Without indulging in useless drama, you systematically chip away at your weak points. (17) Longtime problems start to clear up, and you feel on track, perhaps for the first time. The thing is, *it's okay, no matter how long it takes*. If, in trying to move faster, you learn on mediocre levels, what can you expect? Mediocrity, of course.

(18) Remember: barreling through material works for only a very few. The rest are clearly overwhelmed by that pace and fail to develop a relationship to the music, supporting the belief that they are not meant to play well, that they're not very talented. But by practicing small amounts, chewing fully and digesting everything from the lesson, extracting from it all the vitamins possible, one becomes mighty!

(19) *Summary*

Mastery is comprised of two things:

***1) Staying out of the way and letting music play itself.***

I accept whatever wants to come out. I accept it *with love*. I accept the good and the bad with *equal love*. Without the drama of needing to sound good, I play from an effortless space. This takes deprogramming and reprogramming.

(20)

***2) Being able to play the material perfectly every time without thought.***

I practice thoroughly and patiently until *the material plays itself*. The ego no longer terrorizes me. When the material is properly digested, it comes out in an organic way and manifests as *my voice*.

Effortless technique, effortless language, total acceptance of what wants to come out: these are the components of the "master space".