

Seven Assumptions For Work In The Group.

1. Intention.

Our entry to the group is intentional.

One simple, practical example: when entering the room, crossing the liminal threshold into the space of the group, we pay attention to our first footfall.

Our attendance is not by accident, nor is our participation arbitrary. This implies that we have an aim.

2. Presence.

We cultivate a sense and awareness of our personal presence, of the group and our place within it. This is determined and governed by the quality of our volitional attention.

3. Goodwill.

We participate in a spirit of goodwill. We leave any negativity at the door, outside the room, and enter holding goodwill towards the others in the group: without judgment, without criticism, without hostility.

The quality of our feeling lives is revealed in the quality of sound we produce from our instrument: the depth and richness of timbre. This is the personal correspondence to playing in tone.

4. Commonality.

We assume familiarity and a sufficiency of competence in the elements of our musical aims and a commonality in our professional comportment:

a studied understanding of the role of Silence and of Doing Nothing,

specific guitar techniques, as found in the group repertoire,

entering, moving within, and exiting the group,

every note played should be with intention,

circulating and other open structures,

know the basics: major/minor scales,

understanding the physics of sound

5. Playing in tune.

This is indicative of our personal state.

6. Playing in time.

This is indicative of our personal harmony.

One practical example: punctuality.

7. Listening.

This is indicative of our station; i.e. our level of Being.

If we can't listen to ourselves while speaking, we're not quite present with what we are saying.

If we are absent from our speaking, our words are empty: there is nothing to be said.

If we have nothing to say, better to say nothing. For some, this is very hard.

So, if we don't listen to ourselves while speaking, better to be quiet.

(This is part of the practice of Necessary Speaking employed in our rehearsals).

If this is true of words, how much more of music?

The Eighth Assumption:

The Assumption of Virtue.

freely adapted from The Guitar Circle Book by Robert Fripp