

I am an active pianist from Perth with a busy performing and accompanying schedule, as well as a teacher and chamber musician. During the course of my degree I went through a serious bout of injuries from my hand right up to my neck which prevented me from playing, and had to defer a semester of my final performance year. In desperation I jumped on the medical bandwagon and began the very expensive and time-consuming process of trying nearly every therapy under the sun, e.g. physiotherapists, chiropractors, neurologists, acupuncture, drugs, rest, heat, exercises, etc. I was fortunate enough to stumble across a wonderful Alexander Technique teacher who put me in good-enough shape to be able to play my final recital pain-free and with very good results.

After I finished my degree, I changed piano teachers. Due to the stress of my increased performance commitments, more challenging repertoire, and a toxic combination of finger-isolation exercises, large stretches and very low wrists, I had several more bouts of injury recurring more frequently. I had to take the odd month off in hopes that my body would recover, as all of the medical 'experts' would recommend, constantly cancelling more gigs and teaching left-handed only. I would be in so much pain that I often could not pick up an empty cup. However time and rest seemed playing manageable enough to persist, so I continued to push my body as if all were well and treated business as usual.

After a year or two of this constant cycle, I was approaching a very big concert. This was a Beethoven marathon in which all 32 sonatas were to be performed in a single day with different pianists. Injury struck again, but this time much worse. I suddenly had no control over my 4th finger and cramps in my hand that caused my 4th and 5th fingers to feel very weak and numb, and involuntarily beginning to curl in, causing me to miss notes, not be able to grip and occasionally drop things. As I had learnt my allocated sonata quite early in the year, I planned to practice as little as possible, take some painkillers on the day and hope for the best, a strategy I was quite doubtful about. In passing conversation with another pianist I was incredibly fortunate to learn of Therese and the Taubman Approach. I started working with Therese August 2014, at a point where I had to cancel virtually all of my numerous performance commitments bar this Beethoven concert. After 2-3 sessions she remarkably had me out of pain over Skype. I continued to work with her regularly over Skype until the Beethoven performance, which I played completely pain-free and probably with more facility than had I been healthy to begin with.

Since going through that ordeal I knew intrinsically that there was something much deeper in the Taubman work. I went to Brisbane and had a couple of weeks of intensive lessons rebuilding my technique from the ground up, continuing after with regular Skype lessons. Therese finds ways to solve the unsolvable and continuously surprises me (in a good way!). I still have so much to learn but I am incredibly grateful and fortunate to have stumbled across Therese, and to have her on call as both a teacher and a mentor is one of the best resources anyone could wish for! She has inspired me and motivated me so much that I aspire to become an accredited Taubman practitioner here in Australia. So many of these skills can fortunately be acquired over Skype (although you cannot beat in person lessons), and to have the ability to create

access to someone with these skills (especially in Perth, the most isolated city on earth) is a very exciting prospect.

During the past year I attended the intensive Summer Symposium for the Taubman Approach at the Golandsky Institute, U.S.A, in which I was lucky enough to have regular hands on lessons with Therese again. It was such an amazing experience that I have already paid for my next trip for this year's Symposium. I am just starting to tackle some of the repertoire on my 'impossible' list with relative ease and with a heap more technical facility than when I began lessons with Therese a year and a half ago. My ability to teach successfully has also really improved since learning with Therese. She is a true blessing, a passionate teacher and a terrific artist whom I cannot regard highly enough.