

# SELF MANAGEMENT BOOK

(by John Clayton- used with permission)  
(with thanks to Paul Ellison)

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL



## GOALS

### **I. LONG RANGE (5 yrs. +)**

A. MUSICAL (accomplishments, repertoire, transcriptions, degrees, etc.)

**Complete book of 20 horn & guitar solos.**

**Take own group on tour 7 months per year.**

**Record group regularly.**

**Give 3 recitals per year.**

B. VENUES (names of groups you'll play in, your own group-- be specific: instrumentation, names of musicians, etc.)

**Play theaters, colleges, festivals, better clubs.**

C. EQUIPMENT

**Buy bass trunk for traveling.**

### **II. MID RANGE (1 - 3 yrs)**

A. MUSICAL (repertoire, performance experiences, etc.)

**Learn Brandford Marsalis' tunes. Hear group as often as poss. After 15 tunes learned, let Brandford know you exist.**

**Learn Cedar Walton tunes.**

**Start quintet. Build repertoire and record group for release on CD. (list musicians, tune styles, composers, etc.)**

B. EDUCATION (degrees, teachers, recordings to learn from)

**Play 3 recitals per year (in churches, schools, retirement homes, etc.)**

**Do senior recital.**

C. EQUIPMENT

**Buy microphone.**

**Buy new amplifier.**

### **III. SHORT TERM (6 mo. - 1 yr.)**

A. MUSICAL (be explicit, i.e. how many transcriptions, scales, solos, etc.)

**Learn all major & minor scales, 2 & 3 octaves.**

**Learn all chords.**

**Make up arpeggio exercises and write down for possible book.**

**Transcribe 15 bass lines, 6 solos.**

**Join community orchestra.**

B. EDUCATION (completions, results, abilities)

**Take piano lessons.**

**Enter local community college because combo instruction there is good.**

C. EQUIPMENT

**Buy new set of strings.**

**Have sound post adjusted.**

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# DAILY CHECKLIST

(WITH THANKS TO PAUL ELLISON)

**STRETCH** - upper body, neck, shoulders, upper arms, forearms,  
wrists, hands, fingers

**RELAX**

**MIND CLEARING** - creating begins from nothing and silence

**Decide on today's goals, objectives, materials, & work time.**

1. In what areas will you see growth today
2. What music will you know by the end of today's work?
3. Choose today's scales (key and numbers), arpeggios, chords, etc.
4. Which bowings will you do today?
  - A. Will you stress scales today?
  - B. Will you stress bowings today?
  - C. Will you mix and match today?
  - D. Which of the bowings - staccato, spiccato, multiples, accented, slurred, legato, dotted rhythms - will you stress today?
5. How much of your transcription will you do today?
6. Which transcriptions will you play today (solos or lines)?  
How many times?
7. What new tunes/pieces have you added to your repertoire?

**Complete today's work.**

1. Have you done what you said you would?
2. Are you clear about what is complete and what you will continue?
3. Review what you've done. Think about your growth and what you will do at your next work session.
4. Are you on purpose with your long and short term goals?
5. Write down questions or comments for your next lesson or bass class.
6. Acknowledge yourself.

**Your own Daily Checklist entries:**

LESSON (Date\_\_\_\_\_Time\_\_\_\_\_)

I. Repertoire (be specific...etudes, scales + which fingerings, solos--  
whole or part, tunes, etc.)

II. Your Questions (be specific and exact--physical, musical,  
professional)

III. Your Comments/Observations (progress musically, new life  
situations)

IV. Evaluation

1. Lesson items complete?
2. Do you see or experience your growth?
3. Are you working to your potential?      What %?

## BASS NOTES

WE ALL PLAY THE SAME INSTRUMENT, WE ALL HAVE MANY OF THE SAME PROBLEMS. Through the years, I've found that I, understandably, repeat myself in lessons. I'm hoping that the list below will be an organized aid for you and me to help remember some of the things I repeatedly say. It is not meant to be stiff or intimidating. It's just a guide to help us move along more quickly to our goal of playing the bass more comfortably!

**FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME AT ANY TIME:**

[www.johnclaytonjazz.com](http://www.johnclaytonjazz.com)

### GENERAL

*-long tones!*

-start everything from totally relaxed state and add what is needed to get desired effect

-sing everything played

-know what each note will sound like before you play it

-PRACTICE IN FRONT OF A MIRROR

**-if it hurts, STOP!**

-look forward

-maintain good posture

-keep shoulders straight

-make the audience comfortable; make playing look "a breeze"

-let bass rest on body

-contact between bass and stomach, ALWAYS

-bass works for you

-stand more behind bass than on side of bass

-use vibrato as a means of warmth

-left elbow as pivot point

-left elbow up for vibrato

-hold note firmly with finger and keep supple wrist for vibrato

-play each note as if it is the last note of a concerto

-play in tune

-play harmonics pointedly with left hand. feel harmonics

-**CONCENTRATE:** from count off to cut off

- think about where each note/phrase is going
- to find fingerings, start with top note and work back
- know what pitch & quality of note is before you play it
- imagine accompaniment playing with you when playing alone

## SCALES

- know all scales with correct fingerings & alternate fingerings

## ARCO

- move bow from shoulder
- arm weight into bass
- add thumb and forefinger as you approach tip
- use full bow (from frog to tip)
- right arm = comfortably straight
- keep bow parallel to bridge
- move bow faster at beginning of each note
- if it hurts, STOP!**
- connect notes, even when playing separate bows
- taper ends of phrases
- "Play" rests; don't stop moving
- piano (soft) sections = lots of bow, little pressure
- feel notes with thumb and forefinger
- have feeling you are pushing tip of bow toward floor but keep bow parallel to bridge
- maintain point of contact (stay in your lane)

## LEFT HAND

- keep fingers close to strings
- hold notes down firmly
- if it hurts, STOP!**
- IGOR!
- ROBO left hand
- make smooth, effortless shifts
- left wrist = straight
- left elbow as pivot point
- "grab" notes with left hand; imagine nails as fingertips
- 4th finger down = all fingers down

## JAZZ

- pat foot on beats one and three
- play transcriptions exactly as record. Become "one" with the record
- bigger walking sound by playing close to end of fingerboard
- put your head into the instruments around you. don't "listen" to yourself
- learn lots of tunes. become flexible
- don't use a fake book**
- don't buy a fake book**

## JAZZ (cont.)

- pull with fingers only (pizz); quiet right arm motion
- play accent-less bass lines (ex., not consistently on beats 2 & 4)
- set groove before adding fills
- solos = lighter than walking
- use open strings when possible
- dampen strings not meant to ring through
- match intensity/volume of tune
- be someone else

# PRACTICAL TIPS FOR GETTING AHEAD

ATTITUDE: "...with MY luck..."

GET STARTED - Overcome procrastination

1. Plot it out on paper
2. Break it up into smaller components
3. Do first step immediately
4. Make sure you CAN do it (set realistic goals)
5. Remind self of how good you are
6. Begin day with worst task (not esp. for bassists)
7. Visualize completion
8. Begin project by doing it for at least 10 min.
9. Commit publicly
10. Reward/bribe yourself

HANDLE STRESS - STAY COOL UNDER PRESSURE

Mistakes:

1. Stay graceful under pressure
2. Admit failure and bounce back
3. Ask "what's the worse that could happen?"
4. Don't react...RESPOND!
5. Take time to clear head (walk, lay down, etc.)
6. FEEL the pain (good therapy)
7. Find opportunity in mistakes
8. Do something to change situation immediately
9. Talk to someone

10. Don't cover it up
11. Show remorse

## MANAGE STRESS

1. Eat right, eat light
2. Cut vices
3. Fit in your environment or change job (in other words, DON'T BITCH!)
4. Indulge in guilt-free leisure  
(only rule: don't think of work)
5. Take a walk (also good for combating fatigue)
6. Say NO - don't do more than you can do well
7. EXERCISE
8. Take 10 minute break (no tel. calls, no thoughts)
9. Get a pal, be a pal
10. Change one thing at a time

SOME OF THE CONCEPTS BELOW DON'T FIT WELL INTO OUR WORLD OF ART.  
READ AND DECIDE FOR YOURSELF WHICH POINTS MAY BE HELPFUL TO YOU.  
(the following is from Brian Tracey's "Secrets")

- S - Source of purpose; be goal oriented. Know exactly what you want, determine price and pay it.
- a. Quantify goals. Know exactly, measurably how much you'll make
  - b. Write down above and plan of action.
  - c. Plan your work.
- E - Make a commitment to excellence (be "the best")  
THERE ARE NO SUPERIOR REWARDS FOR AVERAGE PERFORMANCES.
- C - Focus on contribution.
- a. Giving to world, family, friends.
  - b. Serve others.
  - c. Improve on established products
- R - Except responsibility. Feel responsible in work situations.
- E - Effort. Hard work. Work on yourself everyday.
- T - Time management.
- a. Develop sense of urgency.
  - b. Set priorities
  - c. Concentrate on one thing at a time
  - d. Keep life in balance. Take time out for family, etc.

S - Stay with it. No matter how rough: COURAGE. Take calculated risks. To be successful: double failure rate.  
READ 30 MINUTES PER DAY

LEARN VIA AUTO CASSETTES (strategic thinking, health, management, etc.)(AND, OF COURSE, MUSIC!!)

### PRACTICE TIPS FOR LEARNING A PIECE

Begin with 5 - 10 minutes of LONG TONES.

\* Before playing a piece, start with scale related to piece, listening, adjusting carefully each note...IF needed.

Pick tempo at which you can comfortably play the piece and FORCE yourself to play it even slower. Play piece once through.

Remember where you make mistakes but do not stop.

Sing the piece through without playing it. Go over any sections that need special attention to correct rhythms and/or intervals that you may be singing incorrectly.

\* Play the piece a second time (and third if desired) at slow tempo. After second (or third) playing, mark in fingerings

and bowings.

DISSECT:

Take the first 2 - 4 bars.

Play them ridiculously slow...5 times.

Be listening for intervals that are a problem.

Isolate Problem intervals.

\* Play interval 10 - 20 times with a pause between each playing.

Play 2 - 4 notes before and after problem interval (this is all still done in slow tempo).

\* Play first 2 - 4 bars slightly faster, 5 times (w/metronome).

\* " " " " " " " "

\* " " " " " " " "

\* = Check in mirror to see if everything looks comfortable.

Punctuate notes with fingers of left hand (hold securely, no sliding).

## PRACTICE TIPS (Page 2)

### SUGGESTION:

Avoid, at all costs, putting the bass down after having played it, with a feeling of "I've had enough for today!" Always, but always put it down with the feeling that you're being forced to stop. As if you could go on for another hour or so. Keep your practicing interesting/enjoyable by practicing projects, NOT an AMOUNT of time. For instance, if you would like to learn an etude in one week, divide the amount of bars in the etude by six (days)(relax the 7th day ). Practice ONLY THAT AMOUNT of bars each day (it is o.k. to include the first note of the bar thereafter if it concludes the musical phrase; but only the first note). You'll be finished amazingly soon. Even though you know you are able to learn two or three times the amount of music you have just practiced, DON'T GO ON! There will be other days that require quite a bit more time. If you want to continue playing, play some other things. Learn the amount you've agreed to learn well. Don't be satisfied with a mediocre daily chore. LEARN IT! If you find that the piece is coming along very quickly (too quickly), expand your daily work load.

Divide the piece by four days instead of by six, for instance. The above must be done daily, much like an athlete training for an event. The athlete works out daily when trying to tone, condition reflexes, strengthen, etc. Failure would result in trying to squeeze in the training that was missed for three days during the week into an intensive weekend. The same is true for you. If strengthening your hands is also a concern, expand your work load. Please don't over-work yourself. PAIN is your body telling you to *cool it*. Allowing yourself a day off during the week is a must.

## **JIGGS WHIGHAM'S SEVEN STEPS TO HEAVEN**

### **1. GET TO KNOW THE MUSIC!**

Is it a standard? Be-bop? Ballad? Modal?

**LEARN THE CHANGES AND THE MELODY!** What does the tune say?

Is it "happy", "sad?" What did the composer intend? Get a feel for the piece.

### **2. Learn the structure of the piece. Is it a Blues? II-V-I?**

AABA? 32 measures? etc.

**3. Learn how the changes relate to each other!** Along with walking a line through the changes, also play through them slowly using scales and arpeggios. Do this over and over and over and over until you feel at home. Repeat any passages that may require extra work.

### **4. Begin to improvise playing a simple 3-5 note pattern.**

Play this pattern through the whole piece. Try to be as consistent as possible.

### **5. Play long lines. Use eighth notes and triplets to create movement.**

Keep the lines flowing.

### **6. In direct contrast to step 5, play long notes and "play" long rests.**

Maintain intensity and concentration from begin to end. Make each note and space meaningful.

### **7. Make use of double-time and a feeling of double-time, tempo permitting!**

Having done the seven steps above, you are now **FREE** to make **MUSIC** and to be **CREATIVE**. The Seven Steps are tools and only tools to enable you to play **CREATIVELY**. Play, be free, and remember that Improvisation is **INSTANTANEOUS, INSTINCTIVE COMPOSITION**.

**ALWAYS MAKE BEAUTIFUL MUSIC  
USE DYNAMICS. SING. SWING!**

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## **ARRANGING/COMPOSING THOUGHTS (John Clayton)**

Absorb colors needed to handle all situations (vocabulary expansion).

Write transposed so that transposing becomes 2nd nature.

Nothing mediocre. Simple, o.k. Mediocre, never.

Meditate on the music. Hear how things will be before writing. Be

as specific as possible. Write down the thoughts you have, however few, however many and use these as a guideline. Write thoughts using words or music or a combination. Edit at will.

Don't be dumb. Know your strengths. Forget weaknesses. Add to strengths.

Write away from the piano.

Write clearly for the ear:

What should the ear do? Where do you want it to go?

Start with smaller instrumentation.

Dovetail.

Clear dissonance.

Expanding playing possibilities expands writing possibilities.

Tension & release.

Research backgrounds of influences.

Self management book.

Plot your ideas out on paper.

Organize group(s) to play your music.

Involve yourself only in things you love (life's too short to analyze stuff that's good for you).

Most of your favorite composers were probably self taught and/or did not learn writing from books. Even if there is more than one way to skin a cat, there *is* an important lesson to be learned here.

Create moods with your music.

Find recorded examples of the textures you are going to write for and absorb.

Create obtainable goals for yourself.

Visualize instrument families/sections.

" textures.

Underline the soloist or melody if this is the desired effect.

SING ALL OF YOUR LINES.

Be aware of all lead voices (lead trumpet, trombone, sax, flute, etc.).

Clarify melody, dissonances, rhythms.

Be aware (and beware!) of writing from rules.

Learn the different kinds of colors the instruments you are writing for can make.

### **SKETCHES:**

Write a sketch in words of the musical sketch you are about to write.

Format manuscript paper with 1) instrument family/families,

2) chords, 3) rhythm section, 4) soloist.

Length of piece (roughly or detailed. How many bars, how many choruses, intro, ending, etc.).

Try something new (color combinations, rhythms, voicings, etc.).

Edit. Eliminate. Thin out. Throw out.

### **REHEARSING**

Ask for "more"...stay positive.

Encourage. Compliment with sincerity.

SING tricky parts

Know how to sing any part (if slowly)

Point out things to be repeated if morale and self confidence are low.

Allow sections to hear themselves.

Encourage musicians to make suggestions, experiment and contribute

to your music.

Allow for human error.

## **CONDUCTING**

Posture.

Practice in mirror: Preparation/hands/face/body language.

Invite with gestures.

Be open to get openness.

Arm movements must reflect mood of music.

SING melody before starting to conduct.

Eye contact without staring.

Clarity first.

***Add things that you want to work on to this list of thoughts.***

### **Also:**

***SOME REFERENCE BOOKS:***

THE CONTEMPORARY ARRANGER by Don Sebesky, Alfred  
Publishing

SOUNDS AND SCORES by Henry Mancini, Northridge Music

ARRANGED BY NELSON RIDDLE, Warner Bros. Publications

COMPOSING FOR THE JAZZ ORCHESTRA by William Russo,  
University

of Chicago Press

ON THE TRACK by Karlin/Wright, Schirmer Books

SCORING FOR FILMS by Earle Hagen, Criterion Music

*Martha Graham to Agnes De Milles:*

There is a vitality, a life force, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique.

And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost. The world will not have it. It is not your business to determine how good it is: nor how valuable it is; nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours, clearly and directly; to keep the channel open.

You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep open and aware directly to the urges that motivate YOU.

Keep the channel open....

No artist is pleased....

There is no satisfaction whatever at any time. There is only queer, divine dissatisfaction; a

blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive than the others.

# THOUGHTS

€If one advances confidently in the direction of their dreams and endeavors to lead a life which they have imagined, they will meet with a success unexpected in common hours. --THOREAU

€The key to happiness is having dreams. The key to success is making dreams come true.

€DO IT NOW. You become successful the moment you start moving toward a worthwhile goal.

€RISK. You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.

€Success is a journey, NOT a destination.

€Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your mind off your goals.

€ATTITUDE. If it is to be, it is up to me.

€EXCELLENCE. The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is the little extra.

€EXCELLENCE can be obtained if you...

€Risk more than others think is safe.

€Dream more than others think is practical.

€Expect more than others think is possible.

€SUCCESS. The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will. --VINCE LOMBARDI

€PERSISTENCE. Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.

--CALVIN COOLIDGE