

# The 5 whys

Rather than letting the tricky section get you down, try experimenting with a technique from the business world called the “5 Whys” that could spare you some frustration and discouragement.

The 5 Whys technique is based on the premise that underlying the missed notes or other technical glitches you are struggling with, is a root cause. That there is something you are doing (or not doing) that produces the undesirable result you are getting out of your instrument – but which may not be immediately apparent.

And when it comes to creating a recipe for frustration, there’s nothing quite like diving in to fix the problem without first taking a moment to identify the underlying cause.

As one of my advisors in grad school liked to say, “If you misdiagnose the problem, you’re probably going to misdiagnose the solution.”

Often, “diagnosing” the problem is not nearly as difficult as you might think. And once you’ve identified the root cause, you will be able to identify the solution – and once you’ve got the solution, frustration recedes into the background, and you’re back on track, being productive in the practice room.