

Family Synergy: Being In Tune

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I play flute in a community band and it brings me a great deal of pleasure. From the time I was in 5th grade, I have enjoyed the challenge of improving my sound and technique and learning to play with others.

Any person with an instrument can make lovely music but it is in a group that true synergy happens. Playing in both small groups -- trios and quartets -- as well as large concert and jazz bands, I have come to appreciate the almost indescribable way that music can move us to tears, inspire us to higher virtues and transport us to somewhere beyond the present.

Bruce Springsteen spoke about "those three minutes of perfection--when time stands still and the music just washes over you...." Of course, getting to this point represents a lot of perseverance and hard work behind the scenes.

Reflecting on what I have learned from my fifty years of playing my flute, I was struck by a few key lessons.

It takes commitment to practice, to keep working on a difficult passage in order to get it right.

As a group, no instrument is more important than another. All contribute to making the music whole and complete.

Even when I am counting the rests, I am still a part of the ensemble.

In order to play in tune, I need to pay attention and listen to those around me.

My phone app allows me to check if I am in tune. If I am out-of-tune, it isn't a judgment. It is an opportunity for me to adjust.

In the end, the goal is synergy -- the beautiful thing that takes a common goal, teamwork, communication and respect and cannot be done alone.

As I reflect on these lessons, I realize that they apply to the dynamics of our families as well. A successful, cohesive family helps every member have a role in its success. Tune in next week to learn tools that support you as parents in increasing your family synergy.