



A Resource for All, by Many – The NFA Performance Healthcare Committee Webpage & Work

Shared by GPFS Member BJ Nicoletti

The [NFA Performance Health Care Committee](#) is dedicated to serving the needs of flutists of all ages and backgrounds by connecting them with resources to help treat and prevent performance-based injuries, promote mental health awareness, and encourage and foster a community of support and awareness for the various issues musicians face on a daily basis. The committee includes a group of medical professionals, researchers in the field of performing arts health, teachers, and clinicians that provide year-round resources to members of the National Flute Association, as well as organize and present many performing arts health-related workshops and clinics and host a booth in the exhibition hall at the annual convention. (Source - NFA committee website)

Why This Article?

The purpose of this article is to kick off the theme of Performance Wellness through *The Portland Piper* by sharing, reviewing, and providing some personal take-aways from the NFA's Performance Health Care Committees's webpage of resources. Why?

Our physical, emotional and mental wellness as musicians is core to our growth and joy as musicians.

At some point, we all have the persistent or occasional ache or discomfort, worry, anxiety or other such matter. We share the personal goal of prevention or injury management as well as wanting the joy of playing to outweigh the stressors of playing.

Therefore, this year, GPFS will have a bit (not a sole focus, just a focus) of a performance anxiety and performance wellness theme running through the activities of the year and in *The Portland Piper*! There will be webinars, in-person workshops, educational articles, and reviews of books and other resources. We hope you will share your ideas and interests along the way - newsletter@gpfs.org.

As an example, member Donna Maebori will be providing another Feldenkrais online workshop. And, at the turn of the new calendar year, there will be a half day online webinar planned and provided by members that will focus on performance anxiety and wellness. The webinar will include a workshop providing information and strategies for managing anxiety, an interactive panel presentation and participant discussion, and a refreshing workshop on the benefits of Alexander

Technique and keeping those practices alive in our musical and regular life, including a review of constructive rest practice.

My Personal Take-Aways from the NFA Performance Health Care Webpage

- In short, this NFA Committee’s webpage presents a simple, but robust list of select web-based resources, books, and articles.
- This is a resource of very well-considered content by a range of knowledgeable and experienced professionals. I never found myself dubious about the choices and respected the quality of the presentation of those resources. It all felt current, timely and well done.
- It is accessible and, for the most part, user-friendly.
- It is a resource that can be used in small or large doses and several steps in between.
- The range of topics feels adequate – yoga practice, mindfulness/meditation, body mapping, performance anxiety, breathe work, pain insights,
- It can certainly serve as a starting point for anyone wanting to dive into learning about these topics for the first time or serve as a refresh or be an introduction to new resources.
- It is not an exhaustive list by any means but intended to be a manageable portal/mini-clearinghouse so to speak.
- If the list is overwhelming, which it can feel once one starts clicking into the links, then consider selecting one or two of more immediate interest and then come back to it later, an approach that I found helpful given how new this topic is to me.
- Also, there are many opportunities to sign-up for newsletters/blogs etc. I found I had to backtrack on those options as there is no way I can keep up with it all. I concentrated on “following” a couple of resources that seemed most important and embraceable to me right now in my playing and learning curve. I felt I should try to connect in a way that could lead to growth, behavior change, and be rejuvenating versus try to gain a broad set of knowledge.

So, bingo! Having spent some time on this webpage myself, I have two recommendations that may be appealing to you. This said, I am confident you will find your own way through it. These are just a couple of the resources that I had a meaningful and practical connection with.

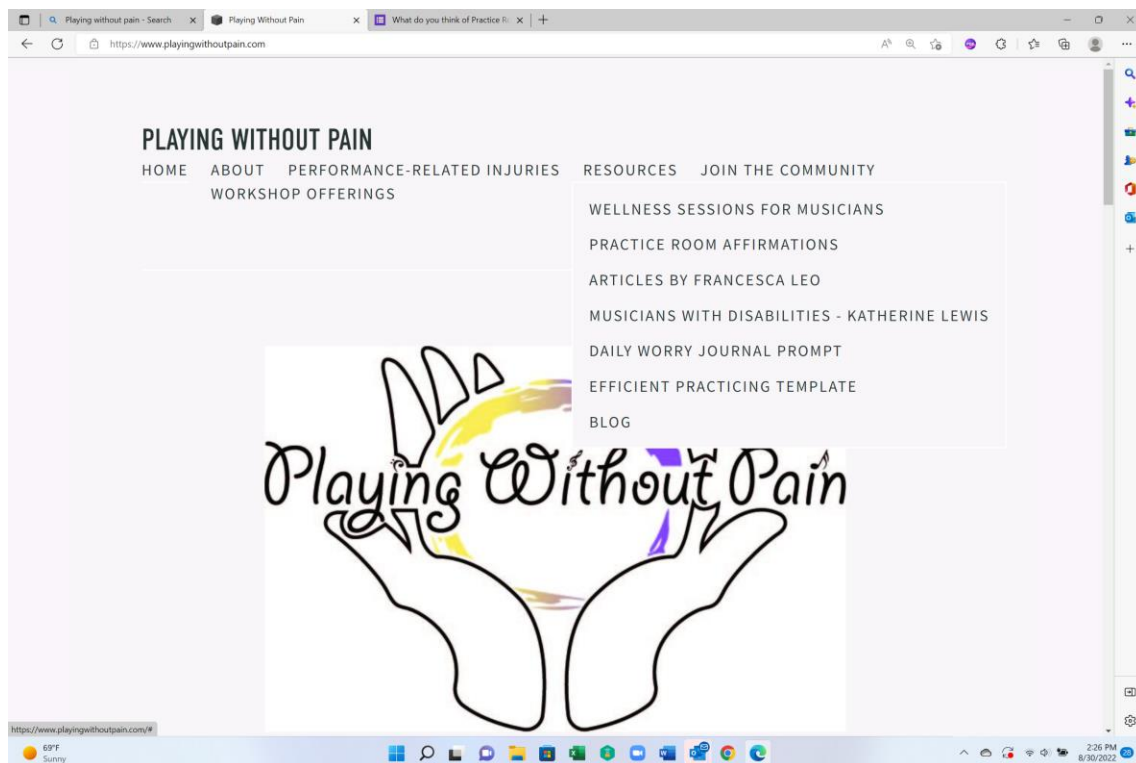
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1. [Playing Without Pain](#) – This is a site that provides lots of user-friendly information through handouts, well-done YouTube videos, meditation guidance/sessions, the occasional facilitated “worry group” and a blog – all by a flutist. This resource is informational as well as meant to engage and connect people. It is a vibrant site by which I mean it refreshes content and keeps the conversation going.

My goal is to provide a free, all-encompassing performing arts health education resource that students across the world can access to learn more about different types of performance-related injuries, various methods to treat and prevent these injuries, find treatment centers in their area complete with a list of all accepted insurance types, and connect with fellow students experiencing the same types of pain. -Francesca Leo, Founder

An example, if you or your students are looking to strengthen positivity, here is a list of positive affirmations for the practice room

<https://www.playingwithoutpain.com/practice-room-affirmations>. Simple, but spot on. It pairs nicely with the [worry journal handout](#) daily worry journal to write down your thoughts, worries, doubts and fears. She encourages journal writing on some level as part of the wellness and practice process, including integrating journaling with 5 to 10 minutes of a meditation practice and/or mindful stretching, and/or constructive rest. The expression “carry on keep calm” comes to mind here and this can give learners of all levels and ages a strategy for perspective and refresh.

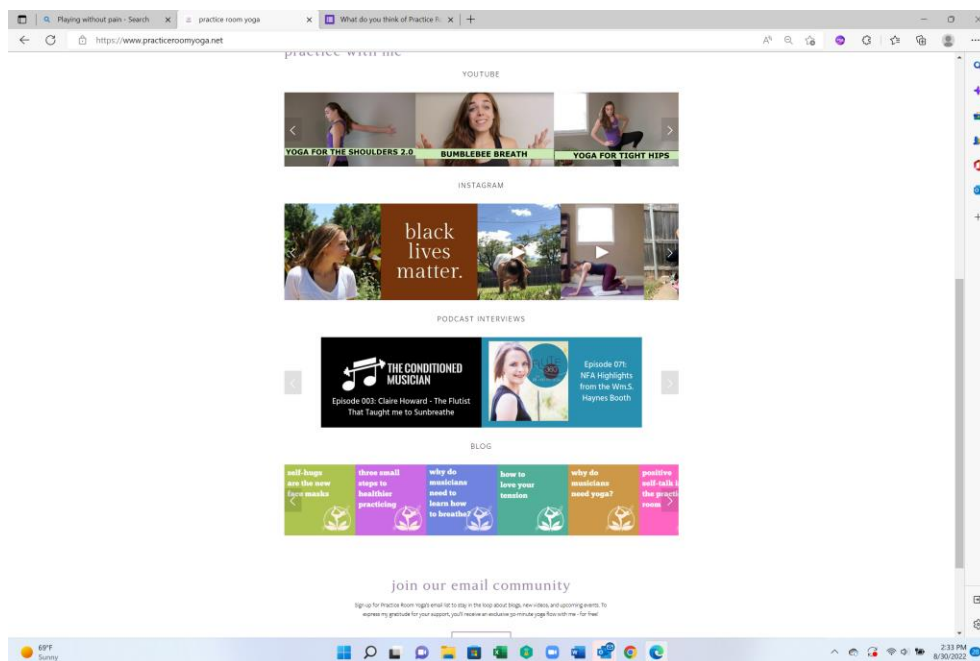


2. [Practice Room Yoga](#) - This site has a few short, targeted yoga and breathing videos. Claire (the site seems to just show her first name), is a flutist who is highly motivated, trained and experienced with the topic and yoga in particular. This is her mission:

Music, movement, and intuitive healing... as a musician, yoga instructor, and wellness educator, I believe deeply in yoga's power to prevent and manage anxiety, depression, and performance-related injury. Yoga gave me tools to change my life, enhance my performance ability, and deepen my relationship with myself. I'm here to provide you with tools to help you unlock your fullest potential.
Claire

This is a very hands-on site. Her online routine yoga sessions are very reasonably priced – comparable if not lower than many studios. [Her YouTube site](#) has short breathing, meditation, and yoga videos. She has a [virtual yoga retreat called Unify](#) which is a resource I will be trying. More on that coming!

This site is another example of a resource with vibrant versus static content. She was interviewed by the [Flute 360 podcast, Episode 071](#). [She has a blog](#) that addresses a range of topics such as [How to Love Your Tension](#).



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