

Ask Mike!

Stressed about an upcoming gig? Work got you singing the blues? Local 47 member Michael I. Goode can help!



In my last column, in January, we talked about why you have to run your own race and dress right for the job. Today, we are going to talk about health problems while playing, the importance of exercise, diet, seeing your doctor, and how to manage an overflow of private teaching with your playing schedule.

Q: Dear Mr. Goode, I am a professional in the area who makes a nice living playing for the studios. Unfortunately, I have been getting out of breath when playing and being excessively tired. My other colleagues my age don't seem to have such problems. How big of an impact do you think diet and exercise have on your playing?

A: First of all, PLEASE immediately go to your physician first and get yourself checked out! Shortness of breath and excessive exhaustion can

indicate serious health issues. Only your doctor can verify that this is the case. If you get a clean bill of health from your doctor and he or she says it is simply a question of being out of physical shape, ask your doctor if he or she thinks that you are healthy enough to start exercising and changing your eating habits on a regular basis. Changes in your eating habits and regular exercise can make a HUGE difference. When I regularly exercise, my range on the trumpet goes up by at least half an octave or more. When I eat a lighter diet, the same thing happens. My sight-reading, my artistic interpretation, all these things go way up, when I take care of myself. All the excess fat and salt in the standard American diet has been proven to drag down our neurological response, in other words, our nervous system slows down, which could be catastrophic for our playing. A great and easy book for changing your diet is "Eat More, Weigh Less" by Dean Ornish, M.D. He also has some exercise suggestions. It will help your playing, and could save your life!

Q: Hey Mike, I have so many private students I am getting burned out. I have to keep juggling lesson times with the gigs I play and it's getting to be too much. I don't want to abandon my students but there is no way that I can possibly teach them all anymore, practice and play the gigs I have. What do I do without making the students feel like I am dumping them?

A: One way to handle this kindly is to look through your list of students carefully and decide who might be fine with being taught by your best college student or one of your pro students. They may charge less, and if you have taught your protégé well, they will be able to pass on the same concepts that you have passed on to them. This way, some parents will be delighted to pay a little less and won't mind, and you won't have to turn anybody away; you can just send them to your protégé. You can also check in with your protégé every time you have a lesson with him or her and ask how their students are doing. This way you can reassure the parents that

you will essentially be supervising your protégé's teaching on a regular basis. You can also tell the parents that at a less busy time, if they wish, you can still squeeze them in the schedule for the occasional lesson with you if need be and if your protégé is comfortable with the idea. This has worked great in the past and is a win-win situation for everybody concerned! You get a break in your schedule, and the overflow students get to continue learning the same basic concepts they have been taught by you through your protégé. It's important to pass on what we know as much as possible to as many people as possible!

Send your questions to: Ask Mike!, Trumpetworks Press, P.O. Box 11574, Marina del Rey, CA 90295 or you can check out my website at www.trumpetworkspress.com and see information on my book, "Stage Fright in Music Performance and Its Relationship to the Unconscious" and my upcoming book, "Your True Self." All names are confidential and will not be published. © 2009

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