



*Piano Amore!*

**A Few Words:  
you need to hEAR**

[by David Longo](#)



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The ability to play music by ear, for some, is viewed upon as a talent to be enjoyed only by a select few. "Sure it comes easy to him/her, but me? I only wish..."

The idea of sitting at the piano and playing by ear is such an attractive idea to almost anyone. Along with the ability to play music by ear goes a special kind of confidence that results from having the freedom to hear (or imagine) pleasant sounds (chords, melodies, songs, etc.) and being able to convert them to reality... in short, "hear it and play it!"

An important point I would like to emphasize is this: For too many people, the very "idea" of "playing by ear" seems to be a concept of the future. In other words, the basic thought they subscribe to is: "Someday I would like to be able to play by ear."

I'd like to share my perspective on this with you... I think this type of thinking can lead to self-

sabotage. You see, your subconscious mind always delivers to you more of what you feed it. What I mean to say here, in simple terms, is this: the more you think that you can't do something, the more you will believe it. What you have to grasp onto right here and now, if you would indeed like to be open to more possibility for yourself, is that you have a choice - think you can, or think you can't.

American writer Richard Bach put it quite simply and profoundly:

**"He who argues for his limitations gets to keep them."**

Why not let today be a new beginning for yourself? Whether it's playing piano by ear, learning how to add more professionalism to your piano playing, or simply making your mind up to enjoy what you are doing more... believe in YOU! Those who are involved in [ProProach](#) often hear me say, "Appreciate where you're at, and build upon that!" In short, accept your situation right now and make up your mind that you'll enjoy the journey and be open to discovery and opportunity from this point on...

As I consider how this pertains to playing music by ear, consider this... you already have developed your musical ears to a point. Rather than respond to that statement with "Well, I'm no where near where I'd like to be..." change that thinking to "I sure have, and my ears are improving each and every day. Today I will do something, however small, that will lead to further improvement in this area that I have a genuine passion for!"

It's true, you are training your ears every single day, each and every time you listen to the radio, a favorite CD, or yourself tickling a few of those ivories. You see, your brain is always making distinctions when you listen... "sound distinctions" ... whether you're listening to a rendition of Beethoven's 5th or playing a few chords on the piano. In addition, you can make this experience an even more rewarding one for yourself. I'd like to share with you an excerpt directly quoted from the guidebook that compliments my [Piano Chords 101 video on triads](#):

**"...Even at the early stage of playing chords, I think it's very beneficial to place a strong focus on listening. You see, "ear training" is an on going process. Whether intentionally or not, you are training those "musical ears" of yours each and every time you hear. But you can enhance this process by placing a special focus on the process. Here's what I mean:**

**You are playing a C Major chord right now. Listen to it. Appreciate what it sounds like. You may even associate a color or texture, or even an image with the sound of this chord. This is a good thing. What's even better news is that there is no right or wrong color, texture, or image. Your imagination comes into play here. Whatever association the sound of this chord creates for you is right for you!**

**You see, I want you to get the most fun out of your endeavors. Learn to appreciate these sounds, and as you learn the other three types of triads, you will definitely want to spend time listening to each as they compare to the others. Making these comparisons is a big part of the fun of learning new chords!..."**

Since we already know that your brain is capable of making distinctions in sound, you can play

music by ear. If your brain can distinguish the sound of a running lawn mower from a train whistle, then it certainly has what it takes to distinguish one type of chord from another. It may take a little nurturing, but it is certainly totally possible. **It's the quality and level of your focus that makes all the difference.** And by taking the very easy yet important step of appreciating every music sound you hear, as mentioned above, you are focusing in a way that is conducive to your success!

Now, referring back to what I mentioned earlier, if your mind is focused on statements such as, "Playing by ear is difficult," "It's easy for some but not for me," "I only wish I could..." how can it focus on what is, in fact, really possible?!!

Ryan Cameron (creator of [Pitch Master Pro](#), an excellent ear training program) confirms this:

**"...The point is that ANYONE can do it... It is all a matter of the proper technique, and most importantly - BELIEVING IN YOURSELF! You must start to accept the fact that ANYTHING is possible. 'You are only limited by the limits you place on yourself!' Don't ever forget that statement!..."**

In simple terms, what you focus on, you create more of...

Brenda Mitchell, a beginner piano student and follower of Ryan's program eagerly shares this:

**"...Already I have made such huge improvements, I can't wait to get to work on the other areas of the program..."**

You don't have to read that statement twice to realize that Brenda's enthusiasm and focus on getting results is a major factor in the progress she is enjoying.

It's true that engaging yourself in a comprehensive program that has earned high marks like Ryan's will provide you with the essential tools to lead you to realizing your potential (since you are encouraged to focus on the right things!)... however, I think your attitude comes first.

It is my belief that your belief in yourself needs to begin right now... and not a minute later. ..

With this in mind, may I encourage you to take a few moments right now to go to your piano or keyboard? For this brief session, please choose to play something that you simply enjoy... at the very least, something that comes easy to you... it could be a favorite song or it might even just be a couple of chords you find easy to play...

Go ahead and play... as you do so, instead of placing your focus on anything else, such as any habitual thoughts you might have like "I should be playing this better...." or "I don't feel as confident playing this as I would like to..." or whatever... simply do this:

LISTEN...

HEAR...

For the purposes of an example, let's just say you're playing a G Major triad.... then maybe a G minor triad...

LISTEN...

HEAR...

Be aware of "differences" between the two chords without making any effort to label these differences (or distinctions!)... If your brain interprets that G Major chord as a "bright sounding chord" or a "sharp sounding type of chord" or "sound that reminds me of sunlight" ...

Let it be that! Just accept it. Enjoy it. Appreciate it.

When you play that G minor chord, allow yourself to experience it in a similar fashion... maybe it sounds "more sentimental"... or "more blurry"... or perhaps it reminds you of the color "orange" as opposed to the color "green" you thought of when playing that G Major...

Just allow it... accept it... appreciate it...

You see, the very rewarding process of improving your musical ears is referred to as "ear training"... not "ear **S**training" :o) Training your musical ear is not meant to be a forced process at all... it is simply time devoted to allowing yourself to be more aware. It truly is a rewarding experience... and the more you treat yourself to this type of training, the more you're going to absolutely love your time at that piano keyboard! I mean this.

Also, the more you allow yourself to have these experiences, a paradoxical thing occurs... as time goes on, the less you try, the faster your results come! Oh, the joy!!!

What's more is the fact that, even though you are now aware of your progress and you truly know for yourself that your potential is unlimited (you really will get to this point!), you've only touched the surface. Along with this realization, you discover something fascinating about yourself... the more aware you are of your hearing ability, the more aware you become of what you don't know yet ... but you invite this "lack of knowledge" with open arms... oooooops, I mean open EARS!

Truly, you find yourself inviting more and more of this understanding... you are truly engaged in this exciting, never-ending process of enhancing your listening and playing ability! That proverbial quote really makes more and more sense:

**"The more you know, the less you understand."**

So, let's consider this:

Since it's the case that the more you learn, the less you know... where are you right now on this learning scale? You see, you are right where you should be, my friend. The time to start

expanding your awareness is now... not later (which never comes).

You have no reason not to believe in yourself. You have already succeeded up to a point - now, right where you are.

It would thrill me if I could only know that you, reading this at this very moment, will do something positive for yourself today. That one positive thing I am referring to is adopting a mind set that you truly are capable of achieving your goals - a mind set that says "I can just because I declare it to be so!"

**"Yesterday's the past, tomorrow's the future, but today is a gift. That's why it's called the present."**  
- Bil Keane, American artist (creator of the comic strip "Family Circus")

Let today be the day you leave your self-imposed limitations behind you.

**"There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge."**  
- Napoleon Hill, American author

Allow today to be the day where you turn your passion into action.

**"Life is like a piano. What you get out of it depends on how you play it."**  
Tom Lehrer, American singer-songwriter, satirist, pianist, and mathematician

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