Cello Tone Clinic Handout:

The Janos Starker Tone Axiom:

Good Sound = Bowspeed balanced with arm weight. (energy) (friction)

As you seek to change DYNAMICS, or TONE COLOR, these must remain balanced.

Additional variables:

1) Mass of String

2) Pitch

3) Contact Point

Tone Exercise and Variations:

Exercise version 1) GRAB and WIGGLE (static friction)

Exercise version 2) From Ex 1, BEND, then RELEASE INTO STROKE Maintain feel of bow grabbing string FEEL texture of string vibrating under stroke, resistance of str to mvmt. HEAR Clear and textured sound IF AWARE of these things, string will tell you what bowspeed to use.

Exercise version 3) GRAB and WIGGLE with changes in variables!

-Dynamic (piano and forte)

-Range

More advanced:

-Tone color variations

-Contact point variations (avoid fingerboard though)

Other exercises -

-World's shortest note -Long bow competitions (GS closer to bridge) -Play Scales and Simple Melodies listening for ALWAYS CLEAR AND TEXTURED tone, regardless of any other goals!

Good Sound in a Cello Section:

PROBLEM: Fuzzy tone causes balance issues, leading to "the hand."
"Hand" leads to lighter bows, leading to even fuzzier tone.
Downward spiral to NO TONE.
Short term - section frustration, loss of cello voice in that passage.
Long term - apathy, chronic underbalance, chronic poor tone.

SOLUTION: Break the cycle! Balance using good tone and listening. Listen/feel CLEAR, TEXTURED tone, even in piano, or in accompaniment. Focus on dynamics as energy, rather than volume. Be QUALITATIVE rather than quantitative whenever possible. LISTEN FOR BALANCE!

BLEND: Match each other, and PLAY!

Matching is visual! What part of bow? Which bow? How much? Other Details? Then don't hide! Play so you can hear yourself, AND the section.

Please feel free to reach out to me anytime you have questions!

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