

Praise for the Mentorship Program

What an honor it was to learn from Kai and complete his Bass Mentorship program. After 108 days of practicing bass, I can confidently say that my overall musicianship has improved. I have strengthened many facets of my playing and have a more complete understanding of my bass. Doing anything everyday in this day and age can be difficult with so many distractions. Kai's course gave me the discipline to "learn" the bass by repeating lessons daily. I was astonished by how quickly my ear improved and it was a real treat to learn some of Kai's wonderful tips on harmony and rhythm. I will continue to expand my knowledge of the bass and I thank Kai for giving me the opportunity to study with him. If you want to improve your understanding of the bass guitar and structure good habits for practicing, then Kai's mentorship is right up your alley. Enjoy!

Ryan Stasik - bass - Umphrey's McGee

Hello Kai-

I think it's safe to say that I've had what could be considered a breakthru over the past few days! I played shows this Friday and Saturday with my blues/soul band (4 hours each night!). I felt more connected to my bass and the music that naturally flowed out of me, than I have in a LONG time! I feel that it has to be a direct result of a month of practicing every day. I've logged more personal practice time on my bass lately than I have in many years, and it shows...and will continue to show!

Brady Millard-Kish

Ray Spencer

I'm feeling great about the mentorship. It's been an eye-opener and my playing has definitely improved in ways I hoped it would when I started. The free-play portion of the sessions has been a great exercise for me and has transferred over to how I approach improvisational playing with my band.. just what I was hoping for!

Thanks again Kai.
Ray

Joseph Veloz

Hello Kai,
First I would like to thank you for such a great plan and all the helpful tools you have giving to me. I have finished my 108 days and it was some of the best concentrated work and production I have done in a while. Thank you again!
Joseph Veloz

Hello Kai!

In the last 118 (ten late) days I have improved more than the previous year. The fundamental practices you have presented to me have helped me gain control, dexterity, clarity, dynamics and articulation in my playing. I thank you so much! My solos are much more clear and fluid now. I apologize for placing in my daily practice scores so late. I have begun the habit of recording on paper, it helps keep an idea of how to practice the next day.

Thank you again!

-Alex Kalicinski

Wow..108 days..

The benefits of this program are so much greater than my stated goal of "playing with pick" although I did make big improvements there too. I committed to 30mins per day, but averaged an hour. By making the program the first thing I do every day (starting at 5am..while the little ones are still sleeping) it always gets done and I feel better about myself for having done it.

Here is what I learned during this program:

#1 - "The journey is the reward." I like to practice now! I haven't enjoyed practicing in 16 years...and I never had a consistent practice routine until now and I've been playing music since I was 6.

#2 - "If you want to find water dig one deep well, not a bunch of shallow ones." I have had that quote hanging around for years, but never successfully lived it until this program.

#3 - "If you want to know, you have to go." Henry Rollins said that referring to understanding what people were like in different countries. Don't rely on the words of someone else, but I think it applies equally to learning. sure you can take lessons, watch dvds, and read instructional books. They all contain good material, but the true learning and knowledge comes from actually doing the work and finding your own answers to questions. This program was great for that.

I also learned when I did not need more information from you. For the first 70 days I did the Konnakol stuff which was great for gaining dexterity with the pick, but I new at the end that I really needed to focus on getting the subdivisions to feel and sound like what a drummer would play. Your original lesson about playing less variety in the groove and working on varying the intensity was enough direction.

Jeff Smith

Some "extra" things I did or learned during the program:

- At first, I was trading off between a couple of basses...one day of the P-Bass, another on the 5-string, etc. By practicing the "play every note on every string" example I could quickly see how the variation was making more work for myself. From the second week on I played only one instrument. Consistency is a good thing.
- I am getting ready for grad school auditions and have been pulling the requirements together. I shedded all the modes of the major scale, plus the jazz minor, melodic minor, and harmonic minor scales, and all 7th and 9th chord arpeggios (up to 8th notes at 140bpm).
- I transcribed Gary Willis' solo on "Say Never" from Actual Fiction. That took about a month. It's a great example of building intensity through rhythm.
- I learned Jimmy Haslip's solo on "Downtown" from Live Wires. It has been one of my favorite solos for 19 years...so melodic.
- I became more comfortable using my computer as a practice and composition tool. Transcribe and Sibelius for transcriptions, Ableton Live and EZDrummer for writing tunes. Also.. check out bestmetronome.com. An invaluable and free practice aid.

Benjamin Rose

I have really enjoyed this program and am looking forward the next level. I plan on starting on September 1st and will send you a separate email outlining what I want to work on.

This is a great program for bass players and all musicians. I participated in an early form of the mentorship program and indeed I experienced profound transformation in myself and my bass playing (all one). It's hard to describe what it was like to transform as it happened very slowly and in subtle ways. Try it for yourself and see--it is the best way to know.

Josh Atlas

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Greetings Kai,

Things are going great here in Cambridge. I am getting started and am very happy with the new things to learn. Lights are coming on **all over the place and in all directions**. It is good to be a student !
I am working on getting to know my practice and the new challenges. Lots to learn!
I waited to do the ear training exercise until last and it really got me! I have a lot to learn and will report more as I figure out what is going on here. Ditto for the chromatic scale. Let's say I got ten right but saw that there was a pattern going on here. Will get better as I get more comfortable for sure.

Thanks again for taking me on as a student. I feel great and the timing is right on.

All best, Scott Barnes (silver) 6/14/11

I learned and grew a lot as a bass player these past few months. All in all the journey of discovery was all there in front of me
Thanks for all you have provided, it really was terrific.
best to you and your family,

Richard Silberg

Good morning!

Yes the daily routine is a trip! I really do like the mental challenge. I have had a couple dreadful practices, but i just push on knowing that without struggle where is satisfaction, or something like that;) Your program is pretty amazing! I can not believe how much I have improved already! My major 3rds are Coming along. I should be able to send that video soon.
Thank you for all the awesomeness!
Have a nice day!
•Melissa Dorres•

Thanks for all you've taught me this past session. I can definitely tell the difference in my ability to identify and play different time signatures. In fact, I listened to Frank Zappa's Don't Eat the Yellow Snow for the first time in a long time and immediately heard that it was in 7/8 time. There's no way I would have known that before! I have also become much more comfortable with rhythm changes in jam sessions and the ear training exercises have made following guitar and keyboard players much easier. I will continue to work on the true polyrhythm exercises and I hope to have at least the 5's done by the time I'm ready to start our next session.

Joshua Cauley 12/21/12

Did want to let you know again how much your mentorship program is helping me deal with life at a deeper level. I can actually feel my brain changing :)

TL Mazumdar 12/11/13

I really appreciate the spiritual aspect to the mentorship--it takes away the competitiveness, judgmental, gamey aspects of practice on the instrument and makes it positive

Marc Sichel 2/3/13

Wanted to share with you that our work on intervals and rhythms (Say Hello to the Notes, Say Hello to the Intervals and Say Hello to the Rhythms) continues to transform my playing and my ability to adapt to any musical situation I come across. This is truly a revolution in music study that I believe any musician at any level can use to grow their skills and abilities. More specifically, having a firm understanding of the intervals and how they function on an electric bass has positively influenced how I use scales, arpeggios and building bass-lines from these elements.

Josh Atlas (pt2)

I never thought I would know as much of the fingerboard as I do or be able to play with my fingers nearly as fast as I can with a pick.

David Lenci 5/8/13

i must say your lessons really helping me to see things another way, which i never knew before. i'm writing some music. thanks a lot. :)

Manas Chowdhary

My picking has significantly improved from doing the pyramid thats for sure. And picking has always been one of my greatest challenges.
Just wanted to thank you for all your words and advice. You are a great resource of knowledge.

-John Skalecki

I feel so much better about myself as a player after these past two sessions with you and look forward to a third session, probably hit you up with that in the next few months :)
Thank you for being a major player in my education!
As far as positive sentences about the program you can use anything from above and here are some more! The program has been priceless to me! I have built the confidence to develop my own bass lines. I have grown so much from this program, it just clicks, it works! Everyone has noticed my skills and confidence improve.

-Melissa Dorres

The structure really transformed my playing, and discipline.
My favorite aspects were the measurable progress, and playing. Your feedback, and mentoring was just right pushing me along when I needed it.

-Kit

T.L Mazumdar

I've really missed the discipline and noticed that the lack of it has crept up on me a bit and taken a bit of a toll internally. Your system has helped a lot to give me so much perspective on the long haul of things and I feel very happy and relieved to get back into it.

Well, here we go.

First of all, I never really got bored. As you can see I skipped only four days and only because I had planned for the chilla to happen in the evening and something unexpected happened. I have played acoustic fretless at night, I brought my bass and Korg Pandora to the hotel when I was on vacation, I played early in the morning as you suggested.

Practice was important to me, also because it meant half an hour by myself and concentrating on something I find inspiring. I really needed this and it helped me regain some balance in a pretty stressing period. Ergo, my prompt renewal. I hope we can walk together for some more.

What really changed my playing, in my opinion, was the "free nonstop practice" segment. And it happened one day I started to play a bass part non stop for 10 minutes (15 was too much! that time i devoted the other five to soloing). It was a simple question/answer type of thing, nothing too avantgarde. After some repetition, you have this light bulb moment and you realize that the part is warping a little bit and adapting itself. I don't want to sound overtly Zen, but you do feel one with the part after a while. And that's what changed my approach. I've always been the player who "needs to know where things are heading" , but sometimes it's just better to find a rythmic idea that goes and just play! after a little while all pieces fall into place. Nice!

Well, the method works for me. I'm more confident and I sound way better than when I started.

so a big thank you!
Nicola Franceschini

Maciek Pysz

Dear Kai

I think your programme is wonderful. It certainly helped me to bring more focus and necessary routine back into my practice. I can honestly say that my playing have improved over the course of last three months and that my confidence and also ability to extract emotions and listen to the 'self' has grown. Thank you! I think the way the system works is very good

Kenny Wilcox

The 15 minutes of non-stop free play has yielded some new songs that I'm going to record and publish eventually. Furthermore, the exercises that you taught me I do at the beginning of every practice session and will continue to do until I can't.
