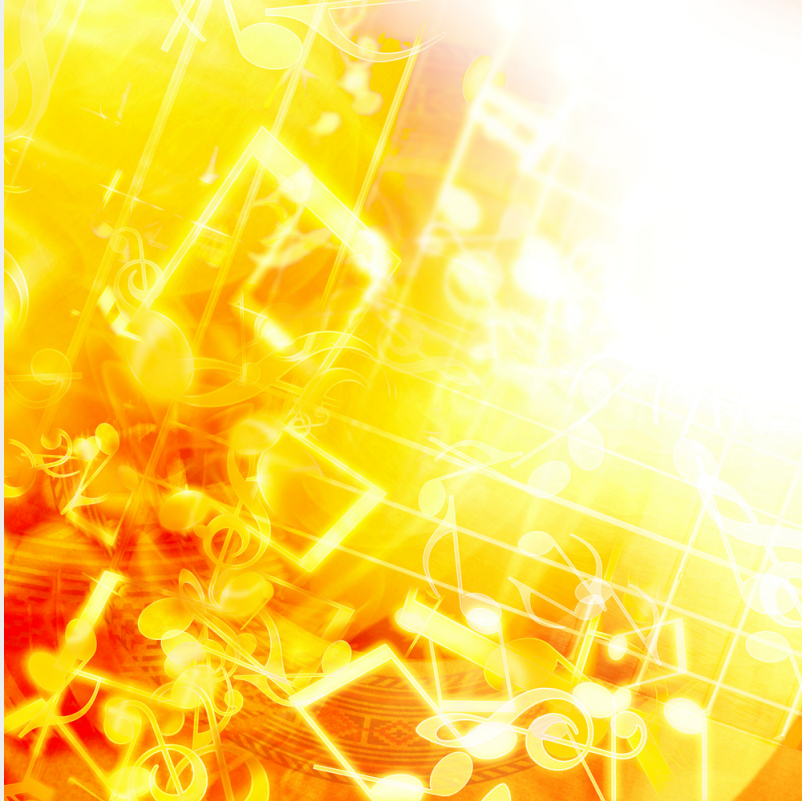


FORTE DEVELOPMENT: THE CRESCENDO

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I believe that [living in your forte](#) is one of the most satisfying places you can be. Never is hard work more personally satisfying and generally it's the place where you would willingly pull from your reserve energy tank. But we don't typically wake up one day living in the brilliance and impact we were uniquely designed for - there are typically hints and clues as to where it is we function best, but in my (admittedly limited experience) forte development appears to be a journey. And beyond that, it can shift for various seasons and various reasons.

I have a beautiful and musically gifted friend, Renee who earned her degree in music. She wrote all the music in her wedding, and plays with such ease you have NO IDEA the level of genius it takes to pull it off. Since no one in my family can carry a note,

we're basically in awe of her. According to Renee:

*"In music, 'Forte' is a dynamic marking which means: 'loud.' Simple as that. Now, a Crescendo is a gradual move to forte. It is often used to make it more interesting. If the whole song was just one dynamic marking then it would be boring, you would lose interest, you'd lose the listener. **A lot of times a crescendo is used to build anticipation as you are building towards a climax.**"*

The parallel could not be more perfect. A crescendo makes music more intriguing. It just makes sense. And if there were no crescendo, no build up - but one monotone, never-changing lifestyle with no surprises, no risk, no variance... we'd be pretty bored, lacking in impact.

If you examine the lives of King David, or the prophet Samuel, or the apostle Paul, (kind of big deals) you might say, "Wow, that's amazing. I'm pretty sure I could never do that." That's OK (they probably felt like that in various seasons too). **God wired you to do something, and each of us were given gifts at varying measures.** I'd sure rather live in my forte at the greatest measure I was created to offer than do nothing because I didn't think I could do much. God's not real pleased with that mindset - because let's be honest, *this is his story*. And truthfully we cannot know what he has planned for the future, but we can make ourselves available for use and watch what he does with it.

I learned something interesting about ascension during scuba diving from [Wikianswers](#): You cannot ascend too quickly otherwise you are at risk for two major problems. "First, you risk a dangerous expansion of the air in your lungs causing them to over expand and potentially tear; known as 'lung overexpansion injury.' Second, you can suffer 'decompression illness,' which is caused by not allowing adequate time to decrease the amount of nitrogen absorbed in your body from breathing compressed air. If you ascend too fast the gas can't escape.. the most common consequence is extreme, debilitating pain..."

Yikes. **When we ascend too fast the temporal accolade can drown out the eternal one.** Our enjoyment of prestige, the applause or even just *acknowledgement* from

onlookers, the financial gain or perceived success or significance from those who do not have the informed authority to define us can be debilitating. It can even render us useless. And I'm guessing arriving at our peak when we haven't been properly equipped by the journey leaves us less room to appropriately enjoy the engagement. It can in fact, incite pain.

I can remember a time in my life when I was itching for... something. Couldn't really put my finger on it, but I was in search for significance. I could tell you the exact spot in my backyard where I was pacing, praying, asking God to use me, "pick me! use me! What do you want to use me for? I'll write a book, yep. Or go on missions to... Africa!" In a moment his loving response and clear direction was this: *"Sweet child, why would I send you to Africa when you don't even know the name of your neighbor? If you are to write a book you will have no doubt as to the topic. Address the obvious needs right in front of you and I'll grow you into what comes next."* And so I began to open my eyes to what was right in front of me.

My wise and dear friend has a cool story about living in your forte and allowing *transition* - and her story is up next.