I've never been one for New Year's resolutions. I've always felt when we identify something we want to change in our lives, we should address it immediately. Sometimes we use New Year's resolutions as a way to put that off. Even worse, we try to fit in an excess of whatever it is we've decided to change before we actually have to take action. Then if we fail in our resolution, it can leave us feeling deflated and disappointed in ourselves, not to mention having eaten way too many cookies in the last week of December. Random Tuesday afternoon resolutions are more powerful than New Year's resolutions if they result in lasting change. We might also feel more motivated to meet failure with renewed resolve if we can then make a random Thursday morning resolution rather than wait for next year.

What I do find valuable are New Year's *reflections*. I enjoy looking back on the past year and asking myself where I struggled, where I found growth, how I surprised myself. Then I like to look forward to the next year and imagine what it might be, how I might apply hard-earned lessons of the past year, what I can do to set myself up for success in achieving my goals.

In that spirit, I have a list of (mostly) musical reflections I'd like you to consider. Think back over 2024. Think from December to January, then January back to December. After taking some time to reflect, please send me your responses digitally or if you are inspired (and have legible handwriting) by pencil or pen. I hope they will bring some unexpected insight and inform where we travel in your musical journey during 2025.

I love the number 3. It's a great number. Maybe the greatest. To verify, I just asked google, "Is 3 the greatest number?" Its "AI overview" told me, "No, 3 is not the greatest number. There are infinitely many numbers larger than 3. In fact, there is no single 'greatest' number because you can always add 1 (or any other number) to any given number to get a larger one." I completely disagree. If anything, this just shows there are plenty of kinks to work out in AI before we become ants under its magnifying glass. Anyway, don't feel you have to limit yourself to just 3 and if you're really straining to answer, less than 3 is acceptable though not preferred. Without further ado…

3

Of my musical weaknesses are:

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Musical goals I had in 2024:

- Did I accomplish them? If not, are they worth reinvesting energy into or moving on from in favor of new goals?

Songs I loved listening to in 2024:

Songs I loved playing in 2024:

Songs I hope to learn in 2025:

Best books I read in 2024:

Things that surprised me about my musical journey in 2024:

Ways my relationship to music have changed since beginning to learn an instrument:

Lessons I've learned from music that would benefit me by applying them to other areas of my life:

Ways I can improve my musical practice in 2025:

Musical goals I have for 2025:

Reasons I make music:

When is your birthday? Just 1 will do here.