

## Frank Almond: On Work, Fun, and the Importance of Both in Dealing with Adversity

### Description

NBA coaching great Phil Jackson once said “Not only is there more to life than basketball, there’s a lot more to basketball than basketball.”

I think the same could be said for music.

It’s easy to get sucked into the daily grind of warmups, scales, etudes, metronome work, slow practice, and simply think of it as warmups, scales, etc. But consider what is happening under the surface while we’re navigating impossible shifts and solving vexing intonation issues.

We’re developing the ability to set goals and self-monitor progress towards them. Prioritize. Manage time. Be patient. Persevere, and develop a high tolerance for frustration. Become self-motivated. Solve complex problems. Concentrate. Focus. And remain resilient in the face of setbacks and adversity.

These are all valuable skills not just in the practice room but *outside* as well. Perhaps even more so, because as someone<sup>1</sup> once said, “Life is what happens to us while we are making other plans.”

### Say hello to Frank Almond

Violinist [Frank Almond](#) has enjoyed a varied and diverse career, from being one of the youngest prizewinners in the history of the Paganini Competition in Italy at age 17, to his longstanding role as Concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony, [chamber musician](#), and [columnist](#).

If you’re thinking his name is familiar, it may also be that you read about the violin he plays on – the “ex-Lipinski” Stradivari – and [the story of how he came to be connected to this instrument](#). Or perhaps, more recently, how Frank was tased in the parking lot after a performance and [had the violin stolen from him](#).

Either way, you’ll gain some valuable insights about what it takes to become, and what it means to be a musician in the interview with Frank that follows. But also, I hope you get a sense of who he is – a thoughtful artist who takes his craft seriously mashed up with that cool guy you’d enjoy eating wings and watching a game with.

Which at least to me, suggests that being a pro doesn’t necessarily mean we should always spend 12 hours a day locked up in a room surrounded by scores and recordings with single-minded focus. That while we *could* do this (and perhaps must on occasion) – it might also be ok to explore our diverse natural curiosities and discover how they intersect with our craft.

## Listen now

Click the play button below to listen, or use the download link to get it onto your computer or iDevice.

<https://bulletproofmusician.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/FrankAlmond041916.mp3>

## Things you'll learn

- Frank's "origin story," or how he got started with the violin, and found his path: [0:20]
- The two things it takes to do anything on a high level: [12:43]
- That there are different kinds of practice – like "deliberate play": [15:41]
- The importance of having fun in music, and how he does this for himself: [18:55]
- The "play Bach every day" principle, and why he thinks this is a good idea: [21:08]
- A touching story which illustrates how we form emotional connections to our instruments, and how they almost have a life story all their own<sup>2</sup>: [32:19]
- The one thing Frank wishes he would have learned earlier in his career: [35:11]
- Thoughts on how to bounce back from bad performances: [42:34]

## Want more Frank?

We spoke a bit about Frank's violin, its previous owners, and the recordings that Frank has made of/with the violin.

That latest recording – Volume 2 of A Violin's Life – will be released this coming **Friday, May 6th<sup>3</sup>**, which you can learn more about here: [A Violin's Life, Vol. 2](#); or pre-order directly here: [Pre-order AVL2 @Amazon](#)

For more about the violin, its history, and Vol. 1 of A Violin's Life, check out the violin's website: [A Violin's Life](#)

*Photo credit: [Jennifer Brindley](#)*

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