

## Expanding the Ranges in Both Directions/Flexibility

Why is flexibility so important to the trombonist?

- Number of notes per position + fast passages = need for increased facility
- Strength building (endurance)
- Slurring through partials provides a beautiful model for legato playing
- Provides player with the same kind of training as long distance running, as opposed to long tones that provide weight training. Bulk (long tones) without lean muscle (flexibility) is only half of the equation.
- Aids in development of:
  - Breath control
  - Consistent embouchure regardless of range
  - Consistent timbre and quality of tone
- Progression from half notes in band and long, sustained parts in orchestra (accompanimental role) to soloist requires the ability to “get around the horn” like a violinist, trumpet or other standard solo instrument.
- \*\*\*I happen to believe that if the player is doing flexibility exercises correctly, and the result is of high quality, then many embouchure issues tend to “iron” themselves out.\*\*\*

How can flexibility help expand ranges?

- The addition of another solid partial as you ascend is like reaching another rung on the ladder. Once you have developed a “sure footing” on the newly acquired partial, the next highest can be reached for.
- The addition of lower notes will help develop more “core” and “focus” to the sound, and can be relaxing after a taxing upper register workout.
- By working from a comfortable middle note out in both directions, you are providing balance to your practice...think of this process as keeping a scale balanced on either side.

Points to remember:

- With the exception of the range between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> partial, the embouchure should remain more or less the same without any major shifts. This may not always be the case, and it should be judged on a case by case basis. However, this is a good guideline to follow.

- Quality breathing is of utmost importance.
- Knowing what you want to sound like is also very important.
- A drop can cure, a teaspoon can kill. Everything in moderation!