

# The Weaker Side

## Achieving Technical Balance

By Dom Famularo and Stephane Chamberland

In our global travels, we have met thousands of drummers. The most common challenge they have all asked about is developing equal balance between both their hands and equal balance between feet. *The Weaker Side* is the first step to achieving equal balance between all limbs. Imagine how much more control you would have in your playing if your hands and feet were equal in execution! We decided to write a book called *The Weaker Side*. This is all about programming muscle strength into your weaker side. The ultimate objective is to be able to perform any idea you hear in your head. The better your skill, the easier it is for you to consistently express your musical ideas.

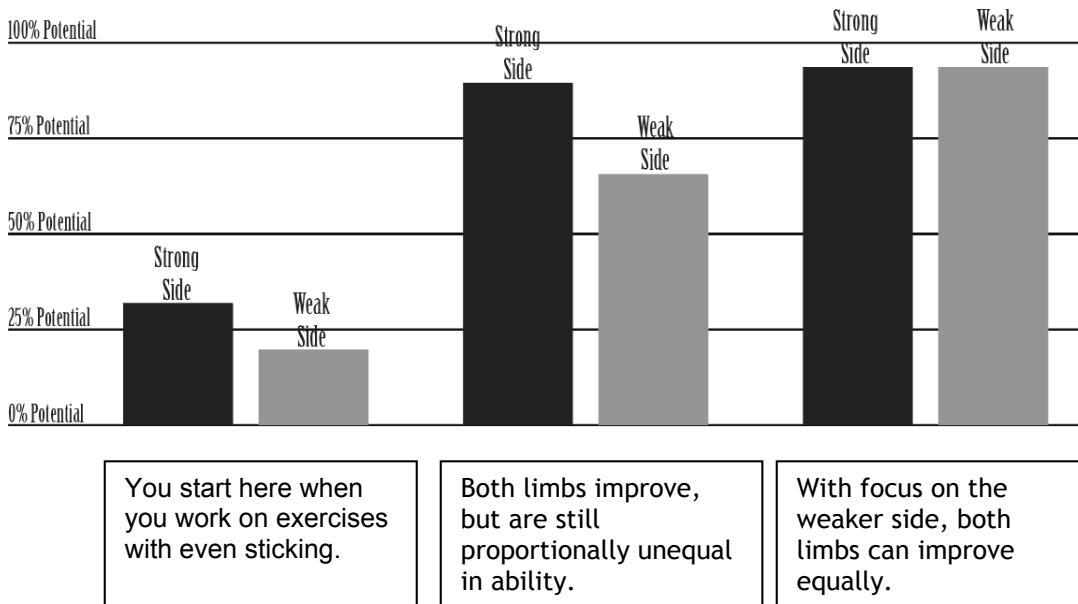
In any art form or sport, it's important to think about technique. Technique is a tool that will help you express what you feel, and good technique will prevent from pain and damaging your muscles. We know a successful technique is better by the results we get from using it. All great drummers have one thing in common in their technique: they can play well with both hands and feet, and they can express freely their musical ideas. A challenge we see with our students is that one hand or one foot is weaker than the other.

We are in an evolution of drumming. With the book *The Weaker Side*, the drummer will focus on the ultimate goal of being able to play everything with both hands and feet equally. This is what we call creative freedom! It affects the way you play, the way you sound and also the way you set up your drums. Performing music creates new challenges. We cannot resolve a challenge without changing the thought process that created the challenge. This book will help you think differently and focus on the most important thing: the weak part of your technique. It is very helpful for musicians to know our strengths and weaknesses. When we acknowledge weakness, it leads to action. But remember, there is no shortcut! It's all about doing a little bit everyday. We must plant the seed, water it every day, and be patient as it grows. But this process will lead to constant and never-ending improvement. Consistency will guarantee your success in technique, drumming, and in life!

It is important to incorporate these exercises into daily practice. The first point is to start using your weaker hand more in your life. Do things like brushing your teeth with your weaker hand, open doors and try writing. The second point is do other stretching exercises in the book *It's Your Move* by Dom Famularo and Joe Bergamini like the Free Stroke and the Moeller Technique. The third point will be to start playing more open-handed style on the drum set. That means, not crossing your arms to play your hi-hat, use your weaker hand and play open. Check out the book *Open Handed-Playing* by Claus Hessler and Dom Famularo.

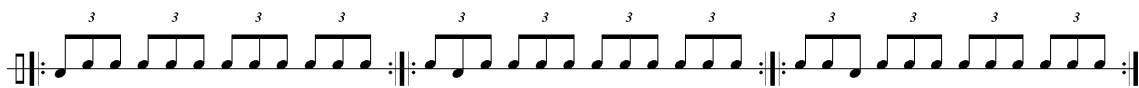
The concept of the book is simple. Fifty two pages, one page a week. That make one full year of working on that aspect. Thirty exercises, one minute minimum each. The primary goal is to work on technique, but you could also use many to develop other skills as well. For example, use the bass drum and hi-hat pedals to play the written sticking while playing the jazz ride pattern in the triplets section. We can easily say that *The Weaker Side* is a follow up to the George Lawrence Stone's book, *Stick Control*. It's better to practice slowly at first and increase the tempo a little bit everyday. While playing the exercises, keep in mind to always watch your technique in the mirror, use a metronome, a clock and keep track of your progress and your improvement. You may want to record yourself to analyze your work.

Here is an observation of many drummers relationship between their stronger and their weaker side.

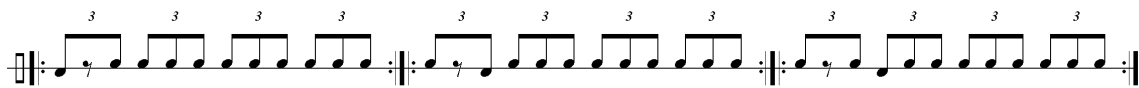


Here are some exercises from the book *The Weaker Side*:

### Straight Triplets



### Broken Triplets



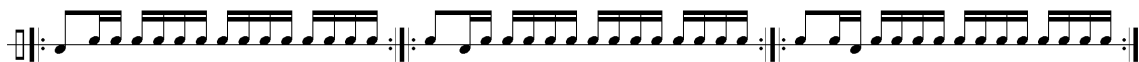
### Flam Triplets



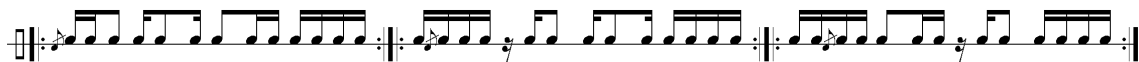
### Straight Sixteenths



### Broken Sixteenths



### Flam Sixteenths



As you can see, this is about balance. Imagine how you would play if both your hands were equal to your stronger hand! Or both your feet were equal also!! You would be able to express whatever was in your head. Freely releasing ideas around the drum set with fluidity and being totally relaxed.

Work on these ideas and follow the book as planned...it is a one year exercise! This is the kind of dedication and focus that will get you to a place you can only imagine. This is where the adventure gets exciting. The harder you work...the more results you feel. Stay with it, follow a plan everyday...every week and the year will pass quickly. As you are playing this month by month, feel how you get around the kit. Mostly....have fun!

For more weaker side exercises check out *The Weaker Side* published by Wizdom Media [www.wizdom-media.com](http://www.wizdom-media.com) exclusively distributed by Alfred [www.alfred.com](http://www.alfred.com). Also check out [www.domfamularo.com](http://www.domfamularo.com) and [www.stephanechamberland.com](http://www.stephanechamberland.com)