

*The* **Highway to Gaddism**  
**A Sticking Conditioner**  
**Drum Calisthenics Series**

**Congratulations on enhancing your journey to becoming a better drummer!**

This book covers essentials such as: sticking patterns, rudiments, weak hand builders, and much more. Drummers will improve their dexterity, accuracy, coordination, pocket groove and speed.

In school our Physical Education class (known as PE or just Gym) we would do calisthenics to warm up our bodies and get ready to play sports. I didn't realize at that time, that I was also developing muscle memory and pathways which would prepare us for the games we would be playing.

When I began training to learn the drums, we would warm up with the Percussive Art Society (PAS) Rudiments and then also learn to apply them to the grooves, fills and rhythms which we would play. They served as the fundamental building blocks to learning drums, developing the physical muscle memory and how to apply the mental energy and develop the pathways needed to play drums.

Upon receiving my copy of legend Steve Gadd's Gaddiments book I realized I needed to study the way he combined the different sticking patterns and rudiments in the book and develop them to a different degree than I had previously. Dr. Gadd takes the sticking combinations and moves them around the musical bar to create fascinating and beautiful rhythms. They were unique to me and I needed a strategy to get them together!

This book is a way to identify and adopt these sticking patterns, those motifs, and separate them in to sections to develop the muscle memory and ability to accept them in to our drumming and musical vocabulary and allow them to help articulate and release the music inside us.

Use of terminology here is similar to the themes in Gaddiments. The motifs also progress in a similar order. Tremendous thought about the motifs and the development

of the ideas throughout Gaddiments is evident and there is great reason to keep them in that order.

It is extremely and highly recommended to have Gaddiments as part of your drumming library, however, this Primer can stand on its own as a good tool to have.

Most of the motif exercises start with the left hand. This is done for several purposes. It is as a way to continue to focus on bettering most's non-dominant stick. It is also a way to show some love for left handed folks. In addition, when starting with their non-dominant stick, some people find their timekeeping and keeping with a metronome to be more challenging, so this was a way to help. Some medical experts might even say that it also makes your brain think a notch more, as well as differently. If it's difficult getting used to starting on the left, most of the exercises have the Right led sticking directly under the Left led sticking, (normally used upon repeating the musical section) so you can begin the exercise with that Right led sticking.

Sticking Conditioner refers to these exercises being something to add to your practice routine or warmup, much like hair conditioner added to shampoo. The idea is that the addition makes the outcome better and more beautiful! There's also the reference to Rinse and Repeat. The best way to adopt these in to your drumming vocabulary and develop the muscle memory and mental drumming pathways needed to play them is through multiple repetitions of each motif. Many successful drummers refer to this type repetition as key to their development and improvement, as an example, George Lawrence Stone has the verbiage of "Repeat each exercise 20 times" in his classic and legendary books Stick Control and Accents and Rebounds.

These exercises should be considered similar to scales and arpeggios used for other instruments, and repetitively drilled as such.

Perfect Practice is the way to absorb these into your drumming vocabulary.

Slight errors upon going through the exercises will dilute the learning process. Your brain and body are listening and remembering what you are doing. The quickest way to form a habit is to do exactly the same thing again and again. So take it slowly at first and get it correct. You'll be able to turn on the speed once you get the notation and sticking correct. Then repeat the exercise enough so that you take the performance of the music from the conscious to subconscious, the point where you don't have to think about the passage and can just play it with true feeling. This is how you get the ability to play the exercise fast and clean. It's not the physical part that holds us back, it's putting the mental and physical together.

If some of this is challenging, it's not because it's unplayable or too difficult, it's because it's new to your brain and body.

Don't get discouraged when first trying some of this.

It takes some time invested to get some of these things going.

Even a little bit helps substantially, if done correctly

Keep with it and you will be successful and once you start to get one thing together it starts to help other things come together.

Just take your time and start at a slow pace and see the rewards of how you're succeeding along the way.

It's not a race IT'S MUSIC!

Everyone starts from the same place, not knowing the basics and there are many paths and ways to get there to create music!

You've got a wide open canvas (or musical staff paper) you're going to be able to draw upon.

And there's great music inside of you!

You're not expected to get everything perfect and especially not initially.

Along the journey, you will however, build the facility to play drums better and more musically and with a greater vocabulary to choose from.

And the bottom line: Enjoying your music and instrument to greater capacity.

There's great rewards throughout the journey and many intimate successes along the way (maybe we miss them sometimes or fail to acknowledge the growth)

**It is tremendously harder to become better without activity.**

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**Groove on!**

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# Gaddism Warmup

Neal Bam Feldman

## Warmup

4/4

L LRLRLRLR L R L L R L R R LRLRLRLR L R L L R L R R L

3

L R L L R L R R L LRLRLRLR L LRLRLRLR L LRLRLRLR L R L L R

5

R RLRLRLRL R L R R L R L L RLRLRLRL R L R R L R L L R

7

R L R R L R L L R RLRLRLRL R RLRLRLRL R L R R L

## Warmup Cont.

L LRLRLRLR L R L L R R L L RLRLRLRL R L R R L L R R L

11

L R L L R R L L R RLRLRLRL R RLRLRLRL R L R R L

13

R RLRLRLRL R L R R L L R R LRLRLRLR L R L L R R L L R

15

R L R R L L R R L LRLRLRLR L LRLRLRLR L R L L R