Purpose: to show the audience that the career I am pursuing as a professional musician is a way of living out and creating what most people would consider to be only a dream.

Theme: “An escape from reality”

Introduction:

1/2. Since this is a public speaking class, I figure there’s no better place to discuss the concept of stage fright. Everybody gets nervous when they have to get up and do something in front of their peers, right? Well actually I’ve found one exception... me. In fact, not only do I not get scared in front of an audience, but I actually become markedly more confident in front of a crowd than I am in person. It’s like the opposite of stage fright to the highest degree!

3. I first noticed this when, at the age of 8, I gave my first performance ever on violin in front of my entire elementary school at a talent show... And in the 11 years since that I’ve spent practicing and performing as a musician, I have constantly been trying to figure out why this guy, shy, introverted, and socially reserved, suddenly turns into a showboating ham when you put him on a stage in front of a massive crowd. Honestly, I’m still not totally sure why exactly, but I think that somewhere, somehow, whether it was at that first performance or even something before, I figured out that once I get up on stage, I have the opportunity to be somebody different from my normal self. The opportunity to break away from the real world and do something extraordinary.

4. And that is why I have chosen to pursue music not only as a hobby, but as my career. In being a professional musician, I would have the opportunity to create an escape from reality both for myself and for my audience. Even though it’s the type of job that most people would consider to be only a dream, it still plays an important role in the world today, and it’s a dream that I think is attainable.

Body:

I. Being a musician allows me to escape from the stresses of day-to-day life.

A. Music has always been my “release” from normalcy
   1. I live life almost as 2 different people. The “Dr. Jekyll,” an introverted, left-brained stress nut vs. “Mr. Hyde” the musician, much more artistic, flamboyant, and spontaneous. Personally I like the second guy better
   2. Whenever I’m run down with schoolwork, social stresses, or whatever, I use practicing and performing to help put that aside and relax.
3. When I'm up on stage, things just feel more natural to me than when in other social situations
4. "*WebMD Magazine*- casual music making actually is capable of short-circuiting stress responses in the brain"

B. Nashville/Belmont gave me the opportunity to do bigger things with my career
   1. Growing up going to high school in central Missouri. Not exactly a rich musical community; a career in the entertainment industry more of a pipe dream
   2. When I left MO to go to Belmont, basically left all of my friends and family behind, going out completely on my own. Most people would be sad, but I saw it as the ultimate escape.
   3. Now in Nashville, I live somewhere that is on the cutting edge of modern entertainment. Already have met countless people who are/have been in the industry, learned more about music (and about the world in general) in just a year than in most of the rest of my life.
   4. Returning home feels like waking up from a dream; impossible to describe my "new life" to friends and family (like Alice in Wonderland)
   5. That is what I want to do with my life, not to stay in the safe zone back home working a 9-5 job that I dislike. *CBS News Article*- study by Right Management found in 2011 that 84% of workers were looking to leave their current job* If I make it as a musician, I could have the opportunity to travel the world, to have some kind of an impact on thousands of people from who knows where! Sounds like a better option than what 84% of those “real” people have

Transition: Music is undoubtably a great avenue for me to make my “escape from reality,” but what I love about it even more is that I can use it to give that escape to many other people besides myself.

II. As an entertainer, I can give “real world” audiences the opportunity to experience my escape whenever I perform.
   1. As mentioned before, I would love a job where I can have an impact on others’ lives
   2. Currently the people living “real world” lives are under a lot of stress *USA Today Study*- about 70% of Americans say they are under significant stress due to money, work, or the economy* People need a way to unwind and temporarily let go of stress before it crushes them, making this a time in history where the entertainment industry is actually an important part of keeping people sane!
   3. No better feeling for me than watching my audience let go of their troubles at shows and really enjoy themselves. Knowing there are people out there who may be in tough times; seeing people in the crowd who have recently lost their job, or a loved one, or have just been under a lot of pressure, and seeing them smile or laugh as you tear into the show really makes you feel like you’re doing something good.
   4. Played with Man in the Ring for a couple years, still remember vividly times like a benefit show for parents/kids at MU’s children’s hospital, dedicating a song to
one of our biggest fans that passed away suddenly, or playing the national anthem for a U.S. Army soldier that had just returned home from active duty.
5. Sometimes when the world seems bleak, all people need is a little escape, and being a full-time musician would allow me to share that with as many people as I can. Making other people’s lives better (even if only for a little bit) is the best part of any “dream job.”

**Conclusion:**
For every great dream, there will always be people trying to drag you back down to reality, and music certainly doesn’t fit most people’s definition of a “real job.”
-A career options survey that I recently took here at Belmont told me that I would be better suited with a promising career as a hydraulic engineer.

1. As careers go, successfully being a full-time musician is certainly among the more far-fetched, but if I can succeed, it truly does let me escape from the stresses of a typical modern lifestyle, from the limits of staying in my hometown for my whole life, and to escape from my normally reserved personality to be the person that I know I want to be. But most importantly, it lets me share the release that I get from music with the people who really need it most, and bring a little bit of happiness to places where it may be in short supply.

2. A friend of mine once told me several years ago, “if there’s ever a chance that you can make a living doing something that most people call ‘playing,’ then you better go for it.” So if music lets me help the world have a little bit more fun, then you better believe I’m gonna give everything I’ve got to make my escape and my reality be one and the same.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**


Jayson, Sharon. "Americans are stressed, but we’re getting used to it." *USA Today* 11 Jan 2012, Web. 8 Sep 2012