

It starts with a single note: constant, unwavering. Then it builds, both in volume and intensity. The sound transforms, like a great debate between the low and high pitches. The tempo and mood shift from gentle to powerful. Under all of the complex and intertwined layers is a beat. That beat flows from the ear to the rest of the body, and it soon takes over the heart. The pulse begins to match the rhythm of the beat. What could possibly create this connection between person and sound? Music.

Music has always been a part of my life. I distinctly remember my childhood years of singing along to the radio in the car, whether it be to the classic rock hits or my mother's favorite contemporary Christian songs. When I went to bed every night, I would not fall asleep unless my favorite Sesame Street cassette tape was playing. With time, I eventually grew out of this phase and began to develop a musical style of my own, which is still changing today.

However, the role of music in my life has altered dramatically in the last decade. I am no longer restricted to the listening aspect of music. I now play the cello, and this experience has greatly influenced how I feel about music. When I perform, whether at a concert, recital, or a family gathering, I feel a connection: to the instrument, to the piece, and to the audience. Music is the easiest way I have found to express my emotions and to communicate with other people. Now that I am familiar with this connection, I find myself able to experience the same thing while listening to a piece of music.

I believe in the power of music. I believe in the simplicity of music. I believe music is the strongest form of communication. I believe music creates a bond between the performer, the audience, and the song. In a world of emails, text messaging, and ever-changing technology, I believe we are all struggling to keep our connections to people and to nature. Music is the one thing we can always rely on to fill our hunger for these connections. Music brings people together. It does not matter what genre, instrument, tempo or mood, there is a form of music for everyone.

So, next time you tap your foot to a song on your iPod, sing along to the car radio, or listen to a cellist from the tenth row of a crowded auditorium, recognize and embrace the power of the music as it comes over you like a wave in the ocean. Listen to what the music is trying to express, open your ears and prepare your mind for communication. Get connected.