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Music as the Guide on the Pathway to Empowerment and Wellbeing. A Narrative on an arts-based Holistic Health Solution.

Sabine Adler
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Music as the Guide on the Pathway to Empowerment and Wellbeing.
A Narrative on an arts-based Holistic Health Solution.

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Spring 2017
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Abstract

This study explored music as the guide on the pathway to empowerment and wellbeing at a nonprofit organization called Durban Music School. Using narrative inquiry, I have collected stories from different people involved with Durban Music school as well my own observations and reflections. Through finding empowerment through music myself, I was able to add in my personal experiences to compliment the experience of others. Using informal interviews and conversations, direct observations, journaling, and playing guitar as a method of inner reflection, I looked to explore through stories how underprivileged individuals have found empowerment through their musical journey. Out of the nine participants that participated, only three are current students at Durban Music School. The other participants are the teachers and the CEO at Durban Music School as well as one parent. Main themes from the stories include the importance of voice, vision, discipline, value, and community. Overall, there seemed to be evidence of positive impacts on the student’s self-image and self-worth. Previous studies and literature are included in the study that emphasize the same findings. While this study was not in-depth or significant enough to make any conclusions about health behavior change, the positive impacts cannot be overlooked or ignored. This project adds personal stories to complement existing research on this topic.
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I would also like to thank my music teachers Melia and Phil who were instrumental in my music journey. Thank you for always encouraging me, and guiding me.

There are no words in this world that could represent the gratitude and love that I have for my parents, siblings, family, and friends. To my Mom and Dad, thank you for always believing in me and for supporting my musical journey as well as my journey here. I love you both very much. To my friends back home, thank you for always listening to my rants and my new songs, there will be plenty of both when I get home.

Lastly, I would like thank music for coming into my life and bringing joy, strength, tears, courage, and peace.
First Thoughts

When I think about music, I think about everything. Music is in everyone and everything. From the crashes of the ocean to the honking cars, to your favorite Beatles song. When I think about what music means to me and how it has taken such a huge place in my life, I think of moments. Moments in time where I felt lost in the song, where I felt protected, where I felt free.

I remember sitting on my couch and recognizing this new dark figure sitting in the corner of the room. I picked it up and realized my Dad just bought a guitar. He bought it for himself to learn, but little did he know six years later I would be sitting here on a balcony in South Africa playing guitar to center myself so I can finally write. I took it to my room and I felt somewhere inside me that it was my fate, my destiny to play the guitar. I remember holding this new instrument, and trying to play a song. It sounded terrible. I was so discouraged, frustrated, and I began to cry. A few weeks later I stepped into the room where I would meet my guitar teacher. She was young, spunky, and had purple hair. I was so nervous, unsure on this new musical journey.

My musical journey began during my first years of life, I remember my Mom singing Moonshadow by Cat Stevens, I remember playing the tiny wooden piano, and dancing in our living room. I took piano lessons, played the trumpet for many years, and sang at the top of my lungs when no one was home. I started chorus my first year of high school, around the same time I started guitar and voice lessons with my teacher Melia. About a year later I started piano and drum lessons with my teacher Phil. All the while listening to music from the ancient CD player to the iPod Nano, to the Smart Phone. Music was not just a leisure activity, it was a calling to me, it was something I could identify with. Even more than that, I saw incredible potential in the powerful effects of music. I found myself, my self-confidence, my empowerment through music. Empowerment can be defined as “the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights.” (Definition of Empowerment, n.d.)

Through my personal journey with music, I became inspired to explore the possibilities of applying music to different settings. My first experience using music as a means to create a positive outcome in a research setting was using music to teach English to children from
Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Afghanistan at a nonprofit in upstate New York. These sessions were not only educational but provided a space for creativity and healing. I saw incredible results as the mood of the students brightened and their language skills improved immensely. In college, I am currently President of a club called Healing Through Musical Companionship. The mission of our club is to use recorded and live music with Alzheimer’s and Dementia residents to create meaningful intergenerational relationships at nursing homes that have insufficient recreation budgets. Music is a very useful tool amongst this population because it has the ability to stimulate emotion, recall memories, and allow a space for the residents to express themselves and engage in an activity.

When I sat down and thought about what topic of interest I would like to explore in Durban, I was a little overwhelmed. There are so many amazing things going on in this incredibly diverse city, how could I choose just one topic to explore? Music was always in the back of my mind, but at first, I was hesitant because whenever I get the opportunity to do a project, I do something with music. I realized then that I could not pass up the opportunity to explore the ways music is used in Durban for at-risk populations. The project idea came to me when we went to visit an NGO called Blue Roof. This organization is transitioning from an HIV/Aids clinic to a youth center. We got to talk to a social worker from the organization. She focused the discussion on the lack of progress of HIV prevention amongst youth. We discussed many different factors of why this population has not had any progress with prevention and the conversation turned to the importance of empowerment and the lack thereof in this community (Potgieter, Personal Communication, 2017). If there is an overwhelming presence of negative self-image, little self-worth, and complete loss of empowerment, how could somebody possibly look forward to their future and make healthy life decisions? The organization has an art program that focuses on empowering the youth of the community in a creative expressive setting. It was then that I thought to myself, there has to be somewhere in Durban that is doing this work with music. Thus, the research began.

I first hear about Durban Music School (DMS) when I had a meeting with my professor Clive Bruzas. I told him about what I wanted to center my project around and he suggested this organization. I looked up the website and read about their mission, goals, why they teach, and just how I instinctively knew I had to play guitar, I knew I had to do my project here. After a few weeks of no replies, I started to come to the reality that I may not be able to do my project at
DMS. I started looking into community drum circles and local ensembles and then I got the email. My heart was racing as I was waiting for the email to download. When it finally did, I read an enthusiastic email from the CEO of Durban Music School, Kim Matthews. The next thing I know I am sitting in the waiting room of DMS waiting to meet with Kim.

As I get out of the van and wave goodbye to Thula, I step outside to see a rather large building with music notes all over it. I knew this is where I am supposed to be. I get buzzed in and awkwardly go to the front desk and say I have an appointment with Kim Matthews. I sit down in the waiting room and look around in this unfamiliar space.

The building is very large. It is a calming open space, with natural light shining in and trees moving in the wind, peering through the window. A few minutes later, I walk down the hall and into the room and introduce myself to Kim. I was obviously a little nervous, but filled with excitement for the possibilities of this project. I tell her what I am thinking of doing and why I wanted to do this project. She was thrilled and very excited about this project. Weeks of uncertainty are gone and there is only this moment now that matters.

Durban Music School currently hosts about 580-600 students and of those, 500 students are on full bursaries (money received that cover the cost of tuition). These 500 students come from the local community, townships, informal settlements, and surrounding rural areas. These students come from underprivileged areas and disadvantaged backgrounds. The school provides the instrument of the child’s choice, individual lessons, ensemble opportunities, transportation, sheet music, uniforms, and hot meals for the students from the rural areas. It is the mission of DMS that there are no costs at all for the students on bursaries. DMS also runs programs with the local Crèche Primary School and the Open Air School for disabilities. DMS is based in Albert Park which is a very unprivileged area which struggles with drug addiction, prostitution, rape, HIV, and gang violence. The school is purposely placed here to make an impact on the community, especially the children of this area. (Kim Matthews, Pers. Comm. 28 April, 2017).
Background

The South African population faces many issues in regards to the burden of disease, as well as socioeconomic, racial, and gender inequalities. Though there have been many efforts to combat these issues, unfortunately, these issues are still very prevalent. This project looked to explore an arts-based holistic health solution that is primarily focused on disadvantaged individuals in South Africa. The prevalence rate of HIV in South Africa is 12.7% of the total population, and the highest burden of HIV is in sexually active women ages 15-49 (Statistics, 2016, p7). South Africa has one of the highest prevalence rates of HIV amongst youth in the world. (Kaufman, 2014, p1661).

The Black South African population makes up 80.7% of South Africa’s population (Statistics, 2016, p2). Due to South Africa’s history of Apartheid, racial and socioeconomic inequalities are highly correlated. In 2011, a study was conducted which found 37.5% of Black South-Africans are below the census food poverty line and 54.0% of Black South-Africans are below the upper-bound poverty line (Day, 2016, p255). Black South-Africans have the highest proportion of citizens living in poverty in comparison to the other racial groups in South Africa. This is relevant in regards to health as a longitudinal study focusing on socioeconomic burdens on health from 2002 to 2008 in South Africa found that “The distributions of cases of HIV and diarrhea indicate that the bottom 40% of the population bears about 56% of the burden compared to 11% for the top 40%.” (Ataguba, 2011, p4).

Black Africans also suffer from the highest rates of unemployment. The unemployment rate in Quarter three of 2015 of Black Africans was 28.8% (Day, 2016, p255). A United States study was done in 2012 on the mental and physical impacts of unemployment and the results showed that “all the unemployed, with either less or greater than one year of unemployment, reported significantly worse perceived mental health scores as compared to employed participants… This finding is supportive of work that suggests that there is a relationship between one’s work status and mental health and implies that people attach at least some of their self-worth to being productive, working members of society.” (Pharr, 2012, p4). The study also found that “unemployment is associated with unhealthy behaviors such as increased alcohol and tobacco consumption and decreased physical activity”. (Pharr, 2012, p1). A South African study was conducted in 2012 in informal settlements in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth on the risky
behavior of youth. The study identifies at-risk populations in the informal settlements which include

“nearly one in three males aged 15–24 reporting having more than one partner in the last year. Hazardous and harmful alcohol use, which is associated with increased HIV risk and with increased sexual risk behavior among young people, is also very common in South Africa, with 40–50% of adult men screening positive for risky drinking in urban settings. Intimate-partner violence, which is also associated with HIV prevalence, presents another key risk factor for HIV in South Africa, with more than one in four men reporting having ever perpetrated rape and the vast majority of them starting before the age of 20. Orphan status has also been found to be associated with sexual risk behavior among South African adolescents.” (Kaufman, 2014, p1662).

Black Africans living in informal settlements seem to reap the worst burdens of poverty and could benefit from programs focusing on life skills and empowerment. This project is significant to the South African community because it proposes a solution to breaking down the cycle of the mentality of poverty which enables poor health and high-risk decisions. Providing a space for self-empowerment and value on wellbeing through acquiring an artistic skill may be one possible solution to work to prevent risk-taking decisions amongst people who are more likely to make those high-risk decisions.

A nonprofit organization called the Music Therapy Community Clinic run by professional Music Therapists offers their skills to help disadvantaged and previously marginalized communities in South Africa. This group was asked to come into a community and work in a local hospital to use Music Therapy with Tuberculosis patients. The Music Therapists did a qualitative study using narratives on the empowerment of patients through the use of music. Helen Oosthuizen, the author of the article in the journal, was one of the two Music Therapists at the hospital. She writes,

“By offering patients access to music, and experiences of making music together within the hospital, we aim to offer patients access to social relationships, community and to encourage them to participate actively and contribute to this social community. In this way, through music, we aim to empower patients.” (Oosthuizen, 2012, p180-181).

Oosthuizen explains the importance of empowerment in health by discussing individual and communal empowerment. She discusses the interdependent relationship between being an
empowered individual and being empowered as a community. She claims, “being healthy is empowering (as good health enables easier access to social and communal life), it is an empowered individual living in an empowered community who will have the resources that afford the possibility of living an optimally healthy lifestyle”. (Oosthuizen, 2012, p181).

Oosthuizen and her colleague see their role as empowering individual patients, but also empowering the community of patients in the hospital by facilitating group interactive sessions.

In one of Oosthuizen’s narratives, she tells the story of her time working with a two-year-old girl named Emihle who suffers from HIV and Tuberculosis. Emihle did not have the physical capabilities of producing much sound from the instruments but the independence, control, and participation in an interactive activity was very beneficial to her well-being and empowered her as an individual (Oosthuizen, 2012, p181). This activity which engages the individual to be able to have independence, control, and the ability to participate is something quite valuable and could have very beneficial outcomes if applied on the community scale. Due to the burden of disease and social determinants of health which often control individuals and communities like the one Emihle comes from, these essential tools for empowerment are not usually accessible.

A study done in the United States on the use of rap music and the empowerment of today’s youth also looked at the power of the relationship of individual empowerment and communal empowerment. Raphael Travis writes “The empowered individual is actively working to fulfill their perceived potential by using their existing knowledge, positive attitudes, and interpersonal skills. At the community level, empowered adults and youth work to ‘envision change in the broader social, political and economic system and their role in creating positive change’”. (Travis, 2013, p144). Travis defines empowerment as “the process by which adolescents develop the consciousness, skills, and power necessary to envision personal or collective wellbeing and understand their role within opportunities to transform social conditions to achieve that well-being.” (Travis, 2013, p144).

Within the South African context, there is not very much research on the effects of music with at-risk, underprivileged populations. While there are organizations that use music to empower individuals and communities that suffer from the social determinants of health, there is not a lot of formal research to validate and provide credible insight of the work of these institutions. A study in Germany focused on using music to bring empowerment to underprivileged children and to aid in social rehabilitation. Mastnak states “music also has huge
preventive and rehabilitative potential, which can be beneficial to various risk populations and people in need. Due to its nature, music can be understood as a holistic means of health care and socio-medical prevention, rehabilitation, resocialization, and inclusion.” (Mastnak, 2016, p52). This finding would be incredibly influential in the South African context if further research is done on these types of organizations. This project hopes to begin to explore the legitimacy of music and empowerment in disadvantaged communities through the use of narratives.
Methodologies

Narrative Inquiry-

“These lived and told stories and the talk about the stories are one of the ways that we fill our world with meaning and enlist one another’s assistance in building lives and communities.” (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p35).

For the purposes of my project, I used Narrative Inquiry to collect and analyze data. Narrative Inquiry is not a new concept in the discovery of human realities. Stories are a method of communication of the human experience which has existed for as long as humans had the ability to communicate with language. Narrative Inquiry has become new in terms of research methods in social sciences. (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p35-36). Due to the complexity of human behavior as well as the project topic of empowerment and wellbeing, using a quantitative method of inquiry would severely lack in depth of the participant’s experience. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth personal approach to data. Narratives take into consideration the fact that the human experience is very flexible and ever-changing. Narratives recognize where the participant is in their current state and allows for the story to develop and grow in different forms and not necessarily in chronological order (Clandinin & Huber, n.d., p1-24). I was drawn to this new form of research, this new way of thinking about the lived experience. I was nervous, and a bit lost in this new venture of research I was taking. There is no defined way, no strict rules or guidelines to collecting narratives. I was never a person who was keen to like numbers, understanding and analyzing them into meaningful data. Narratives do require you, however, to work with and connect with the fellow being you are seeking information from. As I sat there lost with endless possibilities of the ways I could design my study, I thought about why I wanted to experience this type of research.

I remember sitting in the woods with my best friend Danny, we always sit in the woods and talk for hours about the environment. I remember him asking me a question that now seems to be instrumental in my current life journey. He asked: “If you love the environment so much, and feel so connected to nature, why are you choosing a career that works with humans?”. I sat there in silence for a few minutes, my thoughts were
everywhere until they settled and I knew the answer. I told him that my greatest strengths lie with people. I felt I had the capabilities to understand, connect, and touch the people around me. That is where I need to be because the world cannot be healed without people.

**Sampling Method**

“We never make the journey we think we are making.” (Okri, 2003)

This quote was repeated to us by our wise professor Clive Bruzas in relation to our ISPs, as most students do not end up doing what they originally set out to do. I was one of those students. My intended plan for this study was to gather narratives from students at Durban Music School who come from disadvantaged communities who have had personal experience gaining empowerment through the use of music. The desired age range was 16-25. I was able to interview three junior teachers who are also current students at DMS. Unfortunately, time limitations due to school closures, as well as ethical logistics, I was not able to interview any other students. I shifted my focus onto teachers at DMS. I interviewed three teachers that taught at DMS as well as the music program at the Open Air School for disabilities, the CEO of DMS, and a parent of a child who was involved in a boy’s gospel choir instructed by one of the teachers. The participants were not chosen based on gender but were selected on account of their age due to the limitations stated above. Despite this study limitation, the information learned from the small sample size can open up the conversation for further research into this topic. Kim Matthews, the CEO of Durban Music School, was the facilitator for recruiting and contacting the appropriate participants. The narratives were collected at DMS as well as Open Air School. The time span for the development and collection of the narratives was nine days due to the holidays and school closures.

**Data Collection Instruments and Methods**

The nature of narrative inquiry centers around the individual learner as the instrument for data collection. Through facilitated conversations between myself and the participant, I used a clear head and an open mind to receive the personal narratives. Clandinin and Huber discuss three dimensions of narratives that the listener must keep in mind when writing narratives. The first dimension is temporality which consists of understanding the unique time and place
of the participant when receiving their narrative. This aspect takes into consideration that humans change and reflect their narrative as they live their life and this narrative account is taken from one point in the participant’s life and can and will later change. Sociality, the second dimension, allows the listener to take into consideration the personal and social conditions of the participant when receiving, writing, and analyzing their narrative (Clandinin & Huber, n.d., p4). Place, the last dimension, recognizes the importance of knowing the participant’s sense of place and relationship with it as, “our identities are inextricably linked with our experiences in a particular place or in places and with the stories we tell of these experiences.” (Clandinin & Huber, n.d., p4).

Depending on the situation, if it was appropriate and consent was given, I used a voice recorder for the participant’s narrative. Journaling was an important part of the data collection as my reflections and observations are found in the journal entries. The journal entries were written every day for the entire duration of the nine days to ensure rich reflection. I purchased a guitar at a local guitar shop to play during the duration of my ISP experience and then was donated to DMS. Being able to play guitar was an essential tool in reflecting, processing, relating, and expressing my experiences. Playing guitar and singing added to the process of my study because it allowed me to connect with my topic on a deeper and personal level.

Formal interviews were not used as it could take away from the significance of using narrative as inquiry. Depending on the nature of the participant, different methods of approaching the start of the narrative were being taken. For the teachers, the conversation was started by my asking about how they got involved with DMS and Open Air and their experience as a teacher. Some of the participants required more guiding questions directly asking about self-worth and empowerment. There were no prior questions that I had prepared, the conversations were purely subjective on the context and of the participant.

**Data Analysis**

Narrative Inquiry is a very nontraditional research method compared to quantitative methods and traditional qualitative methods. The data lies within the human experience of the story and the voice of the participant. Chase writes, “the open-ended interview offers the opportunity for an authentic gaze into the soul of another” (Chase, 2005, p661). This approach to data cannot be traditionally analyzed as this can take away from the power of the story rather than create meaningful data analysis. Rather, the analysis was done through the
presentation of the stories themselves as well as my journal reflections on the narratives. It is important to note in the analysis the time, background, place, and social conditions from which I am constructed that will contextualize the data that I claim to be meaningful from my perspective. The narrative analysis allows for the meaning to lie in the voice, Chase states, “Rather than locating distinct themes across interviews, narrative researchers listen first to the voices within each narrative” (Chase, 2005, p663). It is essential to discuss the voices presented but also the voices that were not able to be presented through the narratives in this study. Discussion on the voices will guide in making meaning of the stories as their context is necessary for understanding the significance of the findings. The story is an essential part part of the analysis. Chase expresses that, “the stories people tell constitute the empirical material that interviewers need if they are to understand how people create meanings out of events in their lives” (Chase, 2005, p660). To create my own meaning in the narratives I collected, it was necessary to understand how the participants create meaning on the subject of music, empowerment, and wellbeing.

I used a thematic based approach from the narratives solely for the relationship between music and empowerment. From identifying common themes in the narratives while also comparing the differing subjective views on empowerment I attempted to make a meaningful analysis of whether the participants have discovered empowerment and wellbeing through music.

The data analysis lives the display, presentation, and reflection of the written narratives and observations. The power of story within the written narrative of the participants will speak for itself but the personal reflection from journal entries and thematic analysis of ideas around empowerment and wellbeing was added to complement the meaningful data to engage in relevant analysis. The narrative section will be broken down into different parts. The observations will be in the standard paragraph structure and will start with the date of the day. My story written throughout will be italicized and will be tabbed for the entire paragraph. The narratives will be written from a separate point of view referring to myself as “she”. This will help to bring out the subject’s voice instead of my own. The narrative section will focus mainly on direct quotes from the subject as this will provide rich material for the reader to understand the work being done. I chose to do this because I think their words speak for themselves. Reflections on the narratives will be in standard form and will follow after the narratives.
Limitations and Biases-

As I mentioned previously, there were many limitations to this study. Durban Music School follows the public school calendar and was closed during the first week of the three-week available period to conduct my study. The school opened on the following Tuesday and was open until Wednesday as Thursday, Friday, and Monday are national holidays. This was a huge setback and greatly impacted the number of narratives and personal observations I was able to collect. Also, as an outsider coming in for a brief period of time, there was a huge limitation in the amount of time I could connect with my participants and take the time to establish relationships.

Another limitation was ethical considerations and logistics. In order to talk to minors, I needed a parent consent and minor assent form signed. A significant portion of the students at DMS either does not have a reliable parent or guardian that would be able to sign the consent form. With more time to get that done in advance, I would have been able to collect narratives from more students.

Since this study is drawing data from humans, there naturally will be bias in the way information is perceived. There may have been bias in the answers of the students and the parent as I asked about empowerment and if their lives have changed because of music. The participants may have answered in a way that they might not have on their own if I did not ask any guiding questions. For example, I asked if music changed the way they saw themselves. The participants may have answered yes when I asked this specific question but when I asked about what music has brought them, this may not have come up, so music might not be a strong influence in terms of how they see themselves. I introduced myself as a student from the United States doing a project here on the influences of music on empowerment. This may have affected their answers as they might be more inclined to tell me what they think I would like to hear. Since I had to refocus my shift to the teachers and CEO at DMS, there were new possible biases in this study. The participants may have exaggerated their experiences on account of my interviewing them and wanted to share positive light on their work and the organization. The teachers told stories of students and how they found empowerment through music and because they are telling the story, they could make statements about the child that they child would not make themselves if they told their own story. The participants came from the facilitator the CEO of DMS, and the small sample size of participants could represent a different opinion than the rest of the students and
teachers at DMS and Open Air School. The last possible bias is my own bias as the researcher. As a passionate musician myself, I strongly believe in the influences music can have on empowerment. The definition of empowerment is entirely subjective to the individual and their own experience. I did not use the term empowerment in my guiding questions so there may be bias in the way I define empowerment and the way the participant defines empowerment. This could affect how I interpreted the stories from the participants and how I wrote their narratives. All of these biases were greatly considered in the design of and writing of my findings and discussion.

Ethics

Since my original plan consisted of interviewing minors, I went through a full review and was approved by the local review board. I was not able to talk to any minors so those ethical considerations were not relevant to this study. Before I conducted my interviews with the participants, I had them sign the adult consent form and explained to them the purpose of this study. I then went through their rights to privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality. I also informed the participants that at any point before, during, or after the interview they can choose to not participate and have until May 2nd to withdraw from participation. There were no sensitive questions asked, but I made it clear that the participants did not have to share anything they did not feel comfortable sharing. Since I will be using stories of students from a second party, the subject will remain completely anonymous. I used my phone to record the interviews as long as prior consent was given. The recordings were stored on my password protected phone and the transcriptions were stored on my password protected computer. There was no paid compensation to the participants, but I did donate a guitar to DMS as a thank you for allowing me to do my project there.
Narratives of Durban Music School

“why music is interesting is: you can call people, you can shout to people the reality, and they dance it. I mean, shout to the people the reality, and they dance it!” (Radelius, 2016)

Tuesday, 18th of April.

I find myself sitting in the same chair again in Durban Music School on my first day of my project waiting to meet with the artistic director and a teacher/music therapist. This time I hear faint sounds of instruments. I hear the sweet soothing sound of the saxophone, and the bright tune of the trumpet. I can feel the vibrations of the drummer upstairs, and I can see the energy of the sound swirling around in air. I am suddenly called out of this musical trance and I walk down a familiar hallway to meet Maxine and Marijke. Maxine is the daughter of the CEO Kim Matthews and is the current artistic director as well as teacher. Marijke works as a combination of teacher and music therapist. I tell them about my project, why I am researching this topic, and how I hopefully plan to collect my narratives. I lost track of time, but it must have been about thirty minutes of listening, talking, and sharing mutual excitement for the impacts music can have on individuals and communities. It was in this moment where I felt that everything I have believed in about music is true, and I knew that even in one week I would be able to take away something great. We planned out the next week and discussed the logistics of my study. I found out that getting minors to be able to get their parents or guardians to sign the consent form was virtually impossible. It was an upsetting loss, but I knew there was still so much here that I can do, that I could learn, I just wish I had two years to do it. The next day, it was time for my first interview. I was going to meet with junior teachers who are also current students. I set myself up in the chapel room, gathered my papers, my recorder, and my thoughts. I hear the echoing of footsteps down the hall and I look back, smile, and introduce myself to my first interviewee: Junior Teacher A.
Junior Teacher A, B, and C

Junior Teacher A (JTA) sits on the steps of the chapel stage, the junior teacher seem a bit unsure of what she will be asking of them and what this strange American girl is doing here. JTA listens to her explain what this project is about. She begins by asking them how they became a musician, JTA answers, “Firstly, I started, at the foundation called the Field Foundation, it kind of like a marching band thing because it is a full band. We used to play with around hundreds in the field and I played snare drum there. Cause I play drums.. yeah, it was earlier while I was in primary. And when I got into high school I left the field band because of school work, yeah. And then lately as of 2013, I found the DMS and I came here and asked to play drums and they gave me a drum kit.” JTA’s voice picks up and gets more excited as they talk about the places they have traveled to. JTA talks about China, Scotland, Mauritius, and their latest adventure to New York City. They pause for a second and their voice becomes a bit more serious as they say, “I love music, I love music, that is what I want to do, yeah.” She smiles, and nods because she knows exactly how they feel.

She then goes on to ask about their experience at DMS. JTA says, “Okay, I am still a student and I am a junior teacher as well, us as student teachers we are helping the others who are behind us, so we are helping getting the information to them. To play drum kit I started here, to tell you the truth I didn’t know nothing about drum kits but now you can see the difference, huge difference, yeah it is quite nice.” She takes a few moments to think about how to form her next question, she decides to ask, “Do you feel like you have changed a lot since being a student here?” They take a little bit longer on this question to answer, and they slowly explain, “Yeah a lot, cause I um I chose music because I love it but I didn’t know I would go this far and I am still going to go far, while I am still learning every day, we learn new things every day, it is not like okay you know the thing and now you good, we keep learning every day. I am not going to lie, cause I love what I do now. Yeah, and yeah it is a good school cause I didn’t have money to go to university and I found school and they help a lot.”

The conversation went back to the experience of getting to travel internationally. JTA speaks about the ability to read music and the importance of this and now musicians from other countries will view them as professionals and will invite them to play with them and they will be able to because they can read and play the scores. The conversation around this topic carried on for quite some time, but she really wanted to get down to the heart of this project.
After a period of silence, she decided it was the right time to ask the question she has been wanting to know the answer to for weeks now: She wanted to know what music has done for JTA’s life. JTA answered, “Okay, to be honest, it helped me stay out of trouble, because I am here fulltime, every day, so I don’t think of something else, I think of music okay, and I go to school, come back late, even if I come back early I go straight home, and listen to music if I am still busy with other things.” All of the sudden JTA interrupts their response and greets the other junior teacher who has just arrived into the room. She briefly introduces herself and her project to Junior Teacher B (JTB).

She starts from the beginning of her questions and learns that JTB plays the tuba. As she is just starting to get his story, loud echoes of footsteps interrupt JTB, and a third junior teacher (JTC) walks into the room. She goes through the process again with JTC and becomes very worried she has lost the natural flow and beat to the conversation. She decides to ask questions to the group as the last two junior teacher’s stories were interrupted multiple times. She found JTA’s answer very interesting to her question about what music has brought into their life. She decided to ask this question to the group. Both JTB and JTC responded with similar answers. JTB responded, with “Discipline, you can smoke and drink but that is it, and be fine but you can’t go a do drugs. No friends outside of music, all the friends are musicians.” JTC responded, “Yeah, yeah, I think so, a few years ago I was different, I could have been arrested or killed, and there is not a lot of money but as long as you are doing it to be able to make enough to survive.” After about ten minutes of talking about their general experience at DMS, she stood in the awkward silence and did not know what to ask or where to lead the conversation next. She started to think about music in her own life and finally looked up and asked, “is music a big way in which you describe yourself?” They all responded with the same answer, “yeah, I love being a musician.” She then replied with another question, “has it changed the way you see yourself?” JTA answered, “more better”. JTB and JTC nodded in agreement and after a few moments, she felt that it was the natural time to end the interview. She thanked them, shut off the recorder, and continued to talk to them for quite some time after. (Junior Teacher A, Pers. Comm. 19 April 2017). (Junior Teacher B, Pers. Comm. 19 April 2017). (Junior Teacher C, Pers. Comm. 19 April 2017).
It was about a few years after my first guitar lesson. I was a junior in high school, and I felt a sudden change in my voice. It felt stronger, and then there was that moment. The moment where something in how I saw myself changed. I had been practicing a song I learned about a year back, Green Eyes by Coldplay. I decided to play it for Melia during our lesson. When I first learned the song, I really struggled to sing the bridge because it was a little too high for my voice. But that day, when I played, it was different. I looked up after I finished the song and she just replied “wow”. Even if she did not say anything, I could see it on her face and I could hear it in my voice. I felt strong, beautiful, and talented, something an insecure self-conscious teenager struggles to feel. It was the first time in a long time that I saw myself as a musician. Learning guitar took patience, commitment and passion. My voice was always there, but it needed time and support, and love from myself to allow it to grow.

When I thought of empowerment, the term identity did not specifically come up in my mind. I thought of self-image, self-esteem, self-worth, and I guess now looking back all of these things are encompassed in your identity. To my surprise, there is a lot of literature and research done on the importance and significance of musical identities. My empowerment came from my musical journey, and my identity as a musician. After talking to Junior Teachers A, B, and C, I realized that I am not alone. In the chapter Musical Identities, the authors write, “In terms of signaling to the world fundamental aspects about a young person’s sense of self, music is often used as a kind of “badge of identity”. Furthermore, there is growing evidence that music remains a fundamental part of our identity across the life span.” (MacDonald, 2009, p462). There is something quite special about being able to call yourself a musician. Music is something that everybody enjoys, and participates in, and we as a society look to musicians to move us, to entertain us, to teach us. Becoming a good musician often relies on the advice, guidance, and opinions of others. In my case, receiving positive feedback from others, especially other musicians greatly influences on how I view my own talent. A different chapter focusing on Musical Identities discusses this idea, “Self-esteem can involve overall evaluations of ourselves,
e.g. as a musician, or of very specific aspects of our self-image, such as our aptitude as a piano improviser. The factors that influence self-esteem and its development have been studied extensively, and one of the key findings is the importance of the influence that other people can have on an individual’s sense of worth.” (Hargreaves, 2002, p8). In the case of the Junior Teachers, I could see in their faces, and in their tone how proud they were when talking about how musicians from other countries viewed them as equals, as professionals. This opportunity that DMS provides gives students international recognition for their amazing talent and work, and that to me it absolutely priceless.
Thursday, 20th of April.

I found myself yet again waiting in the DMS waiting room waiting for Marijke to arrive, so we drive together to the Open Air School where I will be observing for the morning. In the car ride over, we talk about the work she has been doing at Open Air School as well as the private school she works at. We soon arrive at the school and we walk inside to find her classroom. After thirty seconds I can already tell that this school is incredible. There is this beautiful courtyard outside of the classroom we will be this morning. This strong magnificent tree is standing proud in the center on this beautiful sunny day. I take a few moments to breathe it in, and then I enter the classroom.

She sets up as I sit and look around the room and smile at the students. A student comes up to me and takes out a phone and presses the button that says “hello, my name is ____”. The student was mute and their way of communicating was through this device. I smiled, said hello back and told them my name. A few minutes later, it is time for class to begin. The first group of the morning are students with Autism. Marijke begins the class by welcoming everyone back from break and asking what everyone did for Easter. She then introduced me to the class. Every term she chooses a theme to work towards with her students. This past term was feelings. She used the characters from the Pixar movie Inside Out. Each character from this story represented different emotions. There is joy, sadness, anger, fear, and disgust. She asks the students to look inside them and see what feeling is there today. They take about a minute and then come back to the class. The students share what feeling was visiting with them today and what they talked about when they were visiting. Almost all of the students replied that joy had visited them today. When it came to the student who walked up to me, they said that something visited them today, but Marjike could not make it out what the device said. The students were able to understand and said that they were visited by anger today. The student sat, and stared with alert and tense eyes.

Marjike asked to students to now work on their breathing. The students had to imagine their favorite color balloon and picture their tummy being that balloon. She had them take slow deep breaths, and then suddenly she would have the students quickly pop their balloons to keep them engaged and excited. Now it was time for music. The first song was called Abladee, Ablada. The lyrics of the song talked about how life goes on, and how the parents pay the bills
and the children play outside. The next song was from the movie Zootropolis and it is called Try Everything. These are the lyrics:

I messed up tonight, I lost another fight
I still mess up but I’ll just start again
I keep falling down, I keep on hitting the ground
I always get up now to see what’s next
Birds don’t just fly, they fall down and get up
Nobody learns without getting it wrong
I won’t give up, no I won’t give in
Till I reach the end, and then I’ll start again
No I won’t leave, I wanna try everything
I wanna try even though I could fail
I won’t give up, no I won’t give in
Till I reach the end, and then I’ll start again
No I won’t leave, I wanna try everything
I wanna try even though I could fail

This song incorporated instruments, and each student had their own instrument. It was the first time I had heard this song, and after the first time of listening to it, I smiled and thought, wow, I wish someone had sung this to me when I was a child. It was a really beautiful moment, to see these students brighten up as they sang, to see how excited they were to participate in a collective song. Since the one student is mute, they are unable to participate in songs that just involve singing. When it came to Try Everything and they were put on the triangle part that had a solo at the beginning, their whole demeanor changed. Their eyes were softer, and relaxed and it seemed as though they were now being visited by Joy.

The last song before the end of the class was a movement song that was played off of a laptop called I’m Better When I am Dancing by Meghan Trainor. There were some choreographed dance moves, but there was space for free style and the student’s own unique dance moves. As I am coming out of a 360, I see one of the students hiding behind the door. I remember Marijke telling me a story about this student who for whatever reason cannot handle movement and music. The student used to run out of the classroom, but now they go behind the
door and peer their head out now and then. This was the first week Marijke told me where the student rejoined the group after the song was over to finish out the session (Marijke, Pers. Comm. 20 April 2017). We sing a goodbye song and the session is over. Time for the next group!

The second group to come in are students with physical disabilities. The session was very similar to the last. The same songs were played and the discussion was fairly similar. When it came to the movement song, the dance moves were adapted to the abilities of the students. There were more head, hand, and shoulder movements. I was happy to see that no child was left out and that they could all participate and enjoy the activities.

The last group to come in were students with sight impairments. This was the largest group by far and it was a little bit more difficult to control the wild energy in the room. These students breezed through the songs and their music ability was incredible. Marijke talked about how important it is as the facilitator to read each and every classroom for their mood and their abilities, and though the structure is the same for all of the groups, they each express themselves in different ways and go at their own pace.

After talking for a little while, it was time to head back to DMS where she will be instructing a grade R class from the Crèche Primary School which is located in Albert Park. When we get to the school, we go upstairs to this large room that holds orchestra rehearsals. It is a very open space. It is the kind of space that amplifies any sound, and can hold an immense amount of energy. It is quiet as we sit by the piano and talk until I hear the footsteps and laughter of 40 children walking up the steps. The students pour in and I can already feel the huge shift in energy of the room. The students sit in a large circle and wait excitedly for the music session to begin. Marijke used the same songs from her previous sessions at Open Air, and also added a few new ones. One of the songs brought back memories from my childhood. It was You’ve Got a Friend in Me from the movie Toy Story. What is incredible about the work that Marijke is doing is that these songs are fun, joyful, and engage the students, but the lyrics and meanings behind the songs are teaching kids wonderful life lessons. These sessions are also teaching the students how to work as a group to create a collective sound. After this kids left, we had a short conversation and she invited me to come observe the boys’ gospel choir she works with on Saturdays. I said I would love to, and then it was time to head back home.
Friday, 21st of April.

I arrive at Durban Music School around 3:00pm. I go to the front desk to see who is around today. I then find myself back in the chapel room waiting to interview Max, the guitar teacher at Durban Music School, and Open Air School. After the interview, I sat in on the Junior Band Rehearsal. When Maxine told me about the conductor of the band, she told me that they address the band in Zulu, and although they are not a fully trained conductor, they do a fantastic job (Maxine. Pers. Comm. 18 April 2017). When I walked into the room I saw one of the Junior Teachers sitting at the conductor stand. I talked to them for a little while I then I asked if they were the conductor. To my surprise it turned out that they were. After the band set themselves up, I introduce myself to the band and say I would be listening in today to their rehearsal. I listen and observe as they tune their instruments, and then they start their pieces. All of the sudden I hear the opening song to Aladdin and realize that this piece is a medley of the Disney movie sound track. I smiled, sat back, closed my eyes and was transported back again to my childhood to my young days as a music lover. It was amazing to see how the conductor lead this group, they students were respectful and obedient. It was a wonderful Friday afternoon at Durban Music School.
Max

She sets up in the chapel again, she is more confident in this familiar place. She is more comfortable with her role as the interviewer. She looks up and sees him walking towards her. He introduces himself, his name is Max. She shakes his hand and thanks him for taking the time to talk to her. She introduces her project and what she is hoping to learn during this next week. She asks him just to talk about how he got involved with the Durban Music School and what settings he teaches in. Max smiles and says, “I started in August, 2015. Well I am a trustee, of global arts trust, which sponsors DMS, I am a musician and a teacher, and um was kind of leaping into an abyss and I was not looking for another job and they were actually looking for another guitar teacher, and kind of long story short I ended up teaching here. Through DMS I also teach at the Open Air School. And I think the Open Air School being the most challenging and rewarding. It is quite nice to see the contrast, I have very different environments. DMS, which most of my students are a lot of people from inner city, and around here, and that is completely different, cross section of people, and then Open Air, which are handicapped kids, and one of the class I teach is called senior bridging, and they are kind of the holding tank of Open Air, the kids who, fail who are kind of, don’t take to academics, who have physical disabilities as well.”

She is very intrigued to hear more, and she asks him to go on with his experience at Open Air School. He shakes his head and goes on, “The most challenging really, are the two groups in the senior bridging classes and the primary bridging classes. And for them, it is actually incredible, to see the change that music can bring. It has really given them a sense of taking ownership of something, because now they are actually making something that they were not being dictated to although I try and steer them but it is pretty impossible to teach formally in that situation, so I steer them. And one guy has got like one stump and they were told that they couldn’t take any music but they always wanted to play guitar. So I have just tried to overcome the obstacles with that so um whether it be playing with one hand or tuning the guitar in a certain way so it sounds nice, or playing with both thumbs, or a variety of different ways. So for them it is something that they have chosen to do, um and they have taken ownership of something and that they have created within themselves, as theirs, and also they become more part of this group, it has enabled group interaction because I take those as a group and others I take individually, so it is another form of communication for them. So for those who can barely talk it has integrated them into the group um, it’s shown them, it’s given them a sense of self attitude, and self-image in the sense that they
always kind of whether directly or indirectly being told they can’t do anything. So it’s kind of, it’s demonstrating to them that they actually have an ability, um to create something themselves, and it’s their own, and also they can be instructed and they can take instruction and they actually can develop a skill, that’s the way they feel about it.”

She cannot hide her enthusiasm, and quite frankly it seems as though neither can he. He continues on, “the senior bridging class put on a performance, um at the heritage day festival we had here, and I mean these kids, I think 18 of them, they performed, and it went down so well, the school screamed and shouted, and those kids when they left there, it was like they were suddenly accepted by their peers because you know they viewed them as useless and respected by their peers, which I think was probably the main benefits of that and um they came out of there and you could just see their self-image just boosted completely by that.”

She could not help herself but say wow almost ten times in one minute. She was absolutely thrilled with these stories, and asked Max to talk about teaching at Durban Music School, because she had to hear more. Max nodded and responded, “A lot of the younger students, who come from inner city, and um then they work hard, they really do work hard at it. And they come from completely dysfunctional families, broken homes, and usually their mother is supporting like 4 or 5 other kids, with no support from the husband or family, the kids don’t hardly see their parents because they are working shifts or whatever, and there they are looking for emotional support. So teaching takes on, really a whole lot more than sitting in the classroom and teaching someone really formally, that’s like far down the list, that I do at the private school. Um, but when it comes for teaching, for me in the broader sense, I am dealing with, I’m a sort of prop for kids to allow them to feel comfortable with somebody else, to express themselves, and maybe even express issues outside of the school, outside of lessons that are bothering them. Um and, the same things, to learn music and express, self-morale, you know boosting self-morale. Um, so it’s, a very like holistic kind of thing.”

She experienced another genuine moment where she thought to herself, “I have really got something here”. She turned off the recorder and just talked to Max for a little longer, sharing her story and her mutual love for guitar. He offered her to come and observe with him on Wednesday at the Open Air School, she thought that he would never ask. She thanked him, took a few breaths, and walked to the next room to hear the junior band play. (Max. Pers. Comm. 21 April 2017).
In my original plan for my project, I did not think about exploring the possibilities of music and disability. It occurred to me in this conversation how important music can be within this marginalized population. In an article written about research on using music with children with disabilities, the authors state, “From the hundreds of contacts that the service has had in the last eight years, it is evident that there is a widespread belief that music has a special value for children with disabilities, both as a unique medium of self-expression, and as a means of promoting wider learning, development and well-being. (Ockelford, 2000, p3). Max’s stories and experiences from his work at Open Air School support the findings of this claim and provide living stories of this conclusion. Expression is often associated with communication as both deal with sharing your voice with others in some form. If music can be an outlet for expression, can it also be an accessible outlet for communication? The chapter on Musical Identities addresses this and claims, “Music is a fundamental channel of communication: it provides a means by which people can share emotions, intentions and meanings even though their spoken languages may be mutually incomprehensible. It can also provide a vital lifeline to human interaction for those whose special needs make other means of communication difficult. Music can exert powerful physical effects, and can produce deep and profound emotions within us.” (Hargreaves, 2002, p1). As humans, we place so much of our importance, our worth on what we can provide to society. Providing a tool such as music for those with disabilities can allow people to be able to participate and express themselves in a group and communicate in setting they are comfortable in. The Open Air School music program provides this space and the opportunities for students to value their abilities.
Saturday, 22nd of April.

I walk through the front door and am greeted by Marijke. Today, I will observe the boys’ gospel choir. We walk upstairs and she starts to tell me a story about one of the boys in the choir. She started individual lessons with him back in January and only until a month later started working with the group. The choir is made up of four boys. She explains to me that he took on a leadership role with the other boys and he constantly helps them with their parts. Another one of the boys taught himself piano and has become skilled enough to accompany the choir for two different songs (Marijke, Pers. Comm. 22 April 2017). The first boy enters the room and immediately smiles at me and introduces himself. We talk for a little while about his involvement in the choir and his love for music. The second boy enters the room with his mother. He looks very young, he was very quiet and shy. After about forty-five minutes of waiting, the other two boys finally show up and the rehearsal begins! The young, quiet boy starts the first song. My jaw completely drops as he sings. He has the most incredible voice. The rest of the boys join in and I can feel their passion in my bones. Their sound is truly incredible. I am not one to sit down and listen to gospel music but I could listen to these boys sing all day.

During the break, I get a chance to sit down with the mother of the young quiet boy with the powerful voice.

Q: Has he always been interested in music?

A: Yeah, yeah he is, he has always loved music. And you can see that. That is why I always support him. But sometimes it is not easy, it is a lot of trouble to come her.

Q: Have you seen a change in him in the last year.

A: Yeah, since he doing this, yes, yes there is change, oh he can sing now, even on Sunday last week, he went to the Church they all were like Wow!

Q: What is it like to come every week and hear him sing?

A: Well sometimes, it is like really good. I wish that he can change, you see outside it is bad, so it is better when he is doing music, gospel music.

Q: Was he part of the group that won last year?
A: Yes, it was exciting, but I knew it that he will make it. Cause I know him and he loves music, and when he is doing it you can see that he is feeling it. So I knew it that whatever, he would make it. (Mother. Pers. Comm. 22 April 2017).

After talking to the mother, the rehearsal begins again and I relax and admire their sound for the next thirty minutes. The boys are preparing for a performance that is planned for the 28th of April. I send the boys home with forms for their parents or guardians to sign so I can interview them at the performance. I wish them all well and collect my things and go home for the rest of the weekend.
Marijke

She walks into a practice room at Durban Music School and greets and hugs her next participant. Her name is Marijke. She is especially excited for this interview because she has been observing Marijke for some days now and is ready to get everything she has said recorded down. She presses the recording button and asks Marijke to talk about what does and the program she started. Marijke softly smiles and says, “the program that I am running her at DMS, and also at Open Air, and other school, it is called Little Big Voices, which is a communication based program for kids which uses music as a tool to teach them about self-worth, about value, about communication, about valuing their words, about valuing who they are and through the use of music, movement, and sometimes creating instruments or introducing music-based science experiments to keep their minds interested and active, we explore different themes every term and with that we, with that they all differ in how they communicate so it really depends on each class and every group, in each term where the group goes. There will be a basic theme but we kind of have to listen to the essence of the class and decide from there where to, what is that they need support with that I can facilitate within this theme and within this context of music, because music is vibrational and has the ability to shift a lot within students.”

She asks her how she got the idea for this program. Marijke does not hesitate to answer, “from doing voice training as a teacher I found that students had a lot of difficulty expressing themselves or had a real difficulty expressing themselves, or the sound of who they are. I honestly believe that everyone has their own sound, and has their own voice, but we are in a society where we try to imitate or be something that we are not or try to fit in somewhere, so a lot of the work that I was doing in my voice training lessons was trying to help them find their way back to themselves, and obviously with some breath work and sound work, then I just felt, and I had kids from grade one and grade two that would have emotional breakdowns because they couldn’t cope with everything they were going through um so I spend a lot of time counselling and nurturing so that is where the idea of really creating something for kids to grasp onto from a very young age and learn about the value of who they are and self-soothing techniques, sometimes we even use breath work to imitate emotion to help them release it and then we move forward from there, and I found that as much as I can do it on an individual level, doing it as a group also creates like a community where the kids learn to trust one another because we are in a society also we are taught we need to be really careful around people around us, we can’t trust them, and through the techniques that I use in the class,
they get to know how they can trust someone, how they can find out about a person without making
themselves super vulnerable, and then when they really open up, and it’s okay for them to take
their time to do it, but no one has to be a specific way.”

She has heard Marijke explain her program a few times now, but every time without fail she still
gets chills. She asks her to go on to describe her work at DMS and Open Air. Marijke begins, “so
here at the DMS, with these kids, it is about really teaching them about the value of who they really
are, in our communities, because they are separated so much from their parents, like the discipline,
is really intense and quite aggressive, and a lot of kids don’t respond well to it, so within this space,
I teach them self-soothing techniques, and just about knowing that they can create their own joy
whatever kind of circumstance that they are in. Then I teach at the Open Air school, which is
another school with disabilities, so whether it is a physical disability, or mental disability like
Autism, they have no vision or they can’t speak, here I adapt the class to either work with vibration
for them, for those who can’t see or I use descriptions, so we get a lot more into the sensory field
of music and again it is working on value that because of their circumstances, does not mean they
are less valued, they are more valuable in other ways, their senses are special, because they are so
exhilarated in other ways, and allowing them to know that.”

She asks if Marijke can tell her a story of one of her students. She smiles and goes on, “at Open
Air, last year I had a little boy who used to sit at the back of the class and rock back and forth and
that was his capacity of participation, and I had to honor and respect that and so did the class and
at first they would go “why are you, you should, he should”, he does not need to do anything, he
just needs to be who he is, and so it was with everyone else, in boundaries, some of the children
are always going to challenge his boundaries, with that, as the term progressed, he started to lift
his head, he started to open up his body, he started to move a little bit closer, and then close up a
little bit, but he came to draw himself closer to the group, and by the end of the term, he ended up
sitting right next to me, and allowed me to touch his shoulder so I could talk to him and he would
look at me, obviously for as long as it was comfortable for him, and he would respond, he would
start to pick up instruments, he loved rhythm sticks, he would get involved and start talking to me,
and at the end of the term, we built such a wonderful relationship with the class, and especially
with him, he gave me such a wonderful hug at the end of the term, and the teacher says to me that
he has never actually physically touched anyone in the school before. Um and, I think it’s just
simply because I gave him the space to develop as he needed to, even in a group context, and with
that, the group also came supportive of him cause I have to lead by example as well, how I speak to the children, how I treat every single one, there has to be fairness.” She smiles, and says amazing about three times.

She asks her to describe why this program is important. Marijke takes a few seconds, smiles, and starts again, “it is just allowing their sensitivities, you know to be witnessed and allowed, and not judged, and not be angry about it because that is what kids are so scared of, is that they are constantly being battered, verbally or emotionally and they don’t know what to do with these emotions, so that’s again why I have the program to again teach them how to self sooth, how to really connect with what they have within them, so music in that sense is so powerful so they can go even if I’m alone even if I feel really upset, where am I feeling this, why am I feeling this, can I change this, can I sit with how I feel and is that okay. And it is absolutely okay, but no one has told them that it’s okay. So this is why this program really needs to be there for these kids. At Open Air, and with the program as well at the end of the term I also do like a small pledge, whether it being a communication warrior, or an emotional warrior. Warrior is often a very strong word that I like to use because it makes them feel brave and it is something they have worked towards, and that’s enlightening. It is very important to me as a facilitator, it is about a rhythmic experience with each class, you have got to find their heartbeat, and you have got to work with them, you can’t expect all of these beings to follow just what you need them to do. These music classes are not about me, or any facilitator, it is really about witnessing and making sure the kids get what they need, so there is a basic skeletal structure but everything is determined by the group.”

Marijke pauses, and is briefly interrupted by a phone call. Marijke comes back, takes a few breaths, centers herself and then goes on to say, “It is the ability I am hoping to just give people whether facilitate older people or kids at school or little people, just to know their value. That is probably the most important if our society can learn how to do that we would be much healthier as a society. That also would be my goal, is really getting our lives back to a space where we can continuously be a community of people where we really witness people, where we are really present with them.”

She takes a few minutes to share how grateful she feels to have been able to work with Marjike over this week. She walked away knowing that in her heart that this is the work that she needs to do for the rest of her life. (Marijke. Pers. Comm. 25 April 2017).
There was a case study done on the synergies and challenges between music, youth empowerment, sustainable development, and social change in the Gambia. The study project focused on “young musicians from different backgrounds who wrote and recorded their own songs during workshops with established musicians.” (Radelius, 2016, p1). The findings from this study were incredible and very relevant to what I have observed at Durban Music School. Previous literature cited in this study states, “Shared musical experiences are powerful channels of identity formation or disidentification. Collective musical practices nurture values that can be helpful when integrated within sustainability oriented worldviews: cooperation, listening and tuning in to each other, and sharing responsibilities towards common desires.” (Radelius, 2016, p23). Marijke’s program is all about the essence of human connection and the ideals of her program and what she teaches reflects this statement. The study broke down its findings on the impact of music on sustainability into three sections: the individual level, group level, and society level. The study concludes, “On an individual level music-making fosters resilience, self-exploration and identity formation and affects the youth’s well-being. Music becomes a way to respond to personal crisis, and to communicate their hopes, dreams and other messages. The study shows how music-making, and even music-listening affects their well-being and that it can bring them joy, self-confidence and the feelings of being “free-minded…On a group level the study shows how music-making during the workshops becomes a source of encouragement, group cohesion and oneness, and that it requires cooperation and the sharing of responsibilities amongst the participants. These values demonstrate the need to look at music-as-form-of-community-life rather than music-as-object to better understand the real effects on a group level.” (Radelius, 2016, p39). Marijke’s story and the conclusions from this study just begin to show the real and incredible impacts music can have.

I was sitting on the balcony in my flat in Durban playing guitar. I love to play on balconies. There is something about playing music and looking down on the world as a sort of serperate but yet connected figure. Music is a way for me to see the world, to experience it. I was playing a song I just wrote the other day about being on this trip and
I thought to myself, wow my voice feels so strong. When I sing in the empty flat, my voice feels huge and fills up the room. When I sing in the empty elevator my voice feels strong, supported, deep. When I sing my song on the balcony, I feel complete. I begin to question whether my voice actually improved or if there was something else inside me that felt different. Is it just the natural biological growth of my voice or is there something else that I am missing?
Wednesday, 26\textsuperscript{th} of April.

Today is my second to last day of my project. I get out of my uber and try to find the entrance to the Open Air School. I see the teacher I will be interviewing get out of her car so I decide to introduce myself now. Also, I had no idea how to enter the building by myself. We walk in together and exchange in some small talk. We sit down outside facing the beautiful courtyard. I talk with her for about an hour and then she goes off to start her lessons. I get ready as this morning I will be observing the senior bridging class with Max. I am reading the news on my phone when I hear my name being called, I turn behind me and I see Max. I smile and get up to greet him. We are talking in the hallway when an announcement comes on the speakers and says there is a mandatory student assembly. I look at Max confused and he says that unfortunately this means there will be no class today (Max. Pers. Comm. 26 April 2017). We are both very disappointed, but I thank him for giving his time to talk to me and for inviting me to observe his class. We wish each other well and I go back to the table. It is now time to meet with some therapists at Open Air School.

I talk to a Speech Therapist for a little while but she did not really know anything about the music program. We talked about speech therapy and occupational therapy for a bit and then we parted ways. It was not the morning I thought it would be, but I knew that this was bound to happen when you only have a week to do your project. I head back to my apartment for a little bit and journal for a while.

Next thing I know it is already late afternoon and it is time to go to the Durban Music School on the last day before the next holiday. I sit in on the jazz band rehearsal. Two of the junior teachers were in the ensemble and it was nice to know familiar faces here. I closed my eyes and let my body move to the music. There is something about jazz that consumes me. I can get lost in the music forever and let my mind drift away while my body stays present, swaying to the beat. I am drumming on my legs, my feet are tapping to the beat, and I am silently humming along adding a voice harmony in my head. I clap after each song and thank them for letting me listen in. I walk out of Durban Music School slowly knowing the next time will be my last as I go to interview Kim Matthews.
They sit at a table outside, there is a subtle chill in the air. She is about to interview the third and final teacher, her name is Thomis. She starts like she always does and asks about her experience and how she got involved with DMS. Thomis nods her head and starts, “I started teaching at DMS, just a few students to start, and um now I have been doing that for 6 and a half years, um it has been a really interesting journey, I am quite lucky, because I am not only at the Durban Music School, um I teach at a few private schools around Durban, and um and I think, it is very lucky, it has taught me a lot as well you learn so much, you know, obviously you can’t teach a kid who comes from you know, they are all from different backgrounds, you can’t teach them the same, um on all different spheres, and like yeah, sometimes it is in language barrier, in cultural barrier, it is a really interesting process, so that’s been great, it has taught me a lot of, you really have to understand a person first before you go through any formal process. So yeah, I have been at the Open Air School since they started this program, this is also an incredible school.”

She goes on naturally to talk about teaching music and talks about the importance of discipline. She says, “Any art is a discipline. And I think that is what a lot of people do not understand. Um, I think that it is arty farty and fun all the time, and yes it is supposed to be fun eventually, but it is a lot, a huge commitment, if you want to do things properly and really learn your craft correctly, and I think that is what we try, especially in this program here, and uh in many others to instill in students, even though if not everybody is going to become the next Mozart, but um discipline is sort of especially in the world we live in now at the touch of a button instant gratification, discipline has sort of gone out the window, it is losing its you know, so that is something that I really like to instill in my students is that nothing comes for free, you really have to, if you want to be good at something that is going to last you forever you have to put in the time, and it can be fun while you do it but the whole process and I like how obviously it can be translated into any part of your life.”

I ask her about her experience as a teacher and she pauses for a few seconds and responds, “Someone once told me um you know, as a music teacher, or I suppose any arts teacher, say you have 100 students, they are not all going to become professional artists and musicians, even if you effect 1 in 20, that is you know, that is what you are there for. It is students by that 1 who actually go further with the natural talent that they have so that is what we do. Try to identify that, and grow it.”
They do not have much time left, but she asks Thomis why this work is so important. Thomis now has a wide grin and shares, “Our schools don’t any longer have functional arts programs, especially in this province, I don’t know why, they have fallen away, you can’t just not have these things available. The cultural side of it, it has such a natural musical side to the people of this country that it is just so prevalent in their everyday lives the song and dance, it is literally so natural it is amazing to see, so what a pity, it is in fact that so many of these people, and not that classical music training is the be all and end all but when you put people that have this natural talent in that environment with access to things like that, the things that come out are just incredible. So because instruments and lessons are so expensive, the list goes on and on there are just so few places for people to have access to this. That is why I find DMS work so important and especially the location, right in town. The emphasis is that it is a funded. If it is just person that really wants it and has the natural talent and takes it further, you see it in some of the students at DMS they are incredibly talented, and if they did not have access to DMS they probably would not, and now they can have careers out of it.”

She talks for a little bit about her experience with music and what she has found doing this project. They carry on the conversation for a little while until it is now time for Thomis to start her lessons. She shares her gratitude and then takes some time to reflect and enjoy the beautiful day. (Thomis. Pers. Comm. 26 April 2017).
Friday, 28th of April.

Today is the last day of my project. I am extremely grateful to be able to have such an incredible and influential week. I wish that I could spend the next year here doing extensive research on this topic. I walk into Kim Matthew’s office to get an official recorded interview and to thank her for not just allowing me to do this project but for greatly helping me along the way. I flash back to the first time when I came to DMS to talk to Kim Matthews. It was only about a month ago but it feels as though so much was learned and so much has changed. I walk down the familiar hallway to her office and walk in comfortably, no nerves today. I sit down and we talk for about 45 minutes. She asks me what I thought about the school and the work that is being done here. I did not hold back my enthusiasm. After the conversation, she invites me to listen in on the jazz band rehearsal before I have to go. She follows me and says she would love to get a picture with me and the band. I walk in and say hello to the familiar faces. We take the picture and I listen for a little while until it is time for me to go and start writing. I get a text from Marijke that says the gospel performance is postponed until the following week so I will not be able to interview the boys. I am disappointed again, but I don’t let myself stay upset. I look around, breathe in the music, take my last few gulps of the energy of the building. I look to the tree outside that first brought me comfort on the first day. I listen to the echo of my footsteps and appreciate how much sound this building can absorb. I smile and turn to go, I will never forget this school, the people, and the sound.
Kim Matthews

She first starts by getting settled at the desk in this office she has been in just a few times before. She starts the conversation by thanking Kim Matthews for making this project a reality. She asks her just to start by explaining how she got involved with DMS. Kim starts, “I joined the DMS in 2005, because my daughter Maxine was taking lessons here. So I was here a lot, and I was really involved in the school and I became the fundraiser for the school in 2005, in about 2007 I became the student coordinator, and then in 2012, the CEO died of Cancer, and the board asked me to take over. So since about 2013, I have been running the school. When I came here in 2005, the school was not focused on people with disabilities or children who were vulnerable or orphans, all that it was focused on was having teachers who then gave lessons to fee paying students, we had a few bursaries, mainly through an arts trust, um there were only 32 at that stage, and I saw potential in this establishment to change that. And I saw as you said, we could give a voice to many, many young people. So I started raising funds mainly for bursaries, and through our bursary program we have been able to have children from rural areas here, mainly from Inchanga and areas about 50 KM outside of Durban. Um and then we have been able to go into schools in townships as well, Umlazi, KwaMashu, and in the townships we take the teachers to the townships.”

She asks Kim about the junior teacher program and she responds, “so we got young people here when they joined the school when they were really young, we call them our junior teachers, it is a junior teacher programs, they come when they are 12/13 and then they work for grades and they actually get accreditation and a diploma from us so they can become junior teachers. And then once they have a grade in music, they are allowed to teach, and those are the teachers that I send into the townships, because we work with junior schools, and in the junior schools they are not taught in English, they are taught in Zulu. So our junior teachers are specifically trained to go into township schools and to work with from about the age of 8 to 14.”

She smiles and thinks back on her time spent with the junior teachers. She then goes on to ask about the program at Open Air School. Kim smiles and says, “in 2010, I saw a huge need for children with disabilities to be taught music. Because I sort of a did a study with children with disabilities and they don’t have many extracurricular activities because they can’t do sport. For me my heart is to see a child with disabilities (CWD) mainstreamed. I don’t agree with them being in special schools, I think there is a breakdown there because then a child and also to me a CWD is normal, they just have something different about them, um so when you are talking about normal
schools or schools for disabilities, it really should not be like that. And what I have seen what happens, a child who is in a wheel chair or has a disability in some way, as soon as you bring them into a group where there are so called normal children, and they are treated differently. And if in since birth children grew up mixed together they would not see a CWD as different it is just something different in their body but it wouldn’t, they would know how to handle that person, because to me, I have seen, it’s one of my sadnesses. I have seen through our project that a CWD can be integrated into a normal group of children and all barriers break down, within weeks they are treated just like anyone else. And nobody is embarrassed about their situation, if they need help the children do not even bat an eye to help them get up a stair or settle them or anything like that. It has really been for me one of my main missions to help a CWD. And we have integrated them into our orchestras, we started a wind band at open air, and they really cope well, there is nothing that stops them from doing what another child can do. It is really good, we have made good progress with blind and partially sighted people, they seem to with music, they seem to have a heightened sense and one of our greatest success is this little boy who has been blind since he was two and he is the most amazing musician, he is incredible, he plays the clarinet and you can see he will have a fantastic career in music. He is 12 now or 13, and you can see that this is going to be his life. So we also are able through music to give a person whose careers options are really small, another option. And I have found that the partially sighted and blind children, mostly are interested as doing music as a career. Because it is such an amazing possibility for them, and things like piano tuning, a blind person seems to be a better piano tuner and there are very few piano tuners, and the piano tuner gets paid very well. And that is a career these children never even thought of before they were exposed to music. You know so you are opening up a wide career choice to children who have always sort of wondered what is out there for them.”

Kim continues on to talk about her hopes and goals for this program, and explains that this is one of her biggest passions. She can see the passion in Kim’s eyes, her tone of voice, and the excitement is palpable. She moves the conversation to the work at DMS. Kim starts to talk about the importance of involvement in ensembles. Kim goes on to say, “I start people at a very young age now in our ensembles we got a junior wind band, we’ve got a big band, a jazz band, a KZN youth wind band, we’ve got string ensembles, sax ensembles, all sorts of ensembles here. Through that they learn how to read a conductor so they can get a job, without that they are not going to get a job. So that to me is really important, I push the ensembles, and our
KZN youth wind band is a partner with us, they we work very closely together, I treat it as our senior ensemble, and I feed my top students into that ensemble and I don’t know if you know they went to NYC, because that was amazing. We went to Carnegie Hall where we won such a prestigious competition. It really was incredible, to think a little school like this can produce such high quality is incredible.”

The conversation is now focusing on the empowerment of vulnerable students. Kim shares, “I find when you take a nine year old orphan from a rural and you say here is a violin, here is a French horn, here is something that has a lot of value and you say to them I am trusting you with this, I think you are worthy, I think you can look after this, I think you are going to work hard, it is incredible what it does for their self-esteem, basically for the first time in their life, someone is believing in them, someone is saying we see good in you, we see that you have potential, we see that you have a chance of a bright future. It changes their whole attitude. A lot of our learners are HIV positive, for them as well I have seen and I have had feedback from the children homes we work with and the orphanages we work with that those children’s attitudes changes because of it. It is almost as though they don’t look to the future and see there is nothing, it is almost as though suddenly they are saying, wait a bit, suddenly there is a future for me, maybe I can do something in my life, somebody believed in me, somebody thought I was okay, somebody thought there was potential and the attitudes change, and through that their health changes, it is incredible. Their positiveness, really impacts a child, it really does.”

Kim mentions that the greatest challenge of this organization is to get the funds for the bursaries. After discussing this for a little while, Kim mentions community programs that are offered by the school. Kim explain, “we try and impact more than just a music school but we try to impact holistically on their lives. And take an interest in what they do, and this last year I started two projects for the area and we got a lot of street children in this area, and a lot of people who run around wild in the afternoon and I realized as well that not all children are interested in music, or dance, we have had hip hop dance lessons for many years. So I started a boxing academy, which is held in the bottom parking lot, and that has had a huge response, we have so many kids come and that is every afternoon, so I am then able to impact kids who aren’t interested in music because some children are not artistically inclined and because we have such a huge problem with drugs in this area I want to empower young children, girls and boys take boxing to say no, you know. And through the boxing, the boxing teachers are very much hammering home you do not need to take
drugs, you do not need to turn to prostitution, because those are the two huge things here. And through the boxing, we are trying to really impact on them, we teach them HIV, AIDS protection, we teach them say no to drugs and prostitution and we give them, we are hoping to empower them enough if they just feel they are strong enough to do that, you know. We don’t want to turn out a bunch of boxers as such, we want to give them self-esteem, and through the boxing we teach them discipline, cause it is a mess with discipline. And things like, you aren’t allowed to smoke in the boxing program, and we find that a lot of them have stopped smoking and also the people who teach are in this area, the boxing teachers, so they keep an eye on them through visiting their homes, and knowing them, and the street children they know where they sleep so they keep an eye on them as well, so and then the other thing I started for the children on this area is a chess academy. So we have chess every afternoon again, and again it is a similar thing for but children more inclined to that mathematical thing and we have had a huge response to that as well. So the school for me is a community arts center, it is not just a music school as such and we think of how we can impact in this very, very disadvantaged community. This Albert Park community, about two years ago the Police said it was the most dangerous part of South Africa. It was worse than any other area. There were more rapes, more murder, more gangs, more drugs, more everything. And xenophobia is huge here and in this small area there was a lot more crime in this small area than anywhere else.”

She smiles and shakes her head in disbelief as this organization is above and beyond what she at first thought it was. Kim carries on and says, “Through my community concerts, I hold community concerts, the street festival, we close the street off, the street closes off completely, we set up outside here and we invite the community, and I try to encourage, I am in touch with the Burundi people, and the people from Ghana and the people from Nigeria, and I get in touch with them, and encourage them to bring their people to the festival, so then we have South Africans sitting next to foreigners and they chat and enjoy the music and find out that this person is actually just like me, they also just want to make money, go home, have a full stomach, and go to sleep in a safe place. Our community concerts, we also have Christmas concerts, we have concerts in the hall. It is all to do with trying to impact the community, we don’t want to be this little school that people come and go away from, the whole idea is that the school is a beacon for people to come to for all sorts of things.”
She could sit here and listen all day, but she knows she can’t so she naturally lets the conversation end. Kim ends by saying, “we realize we are not going to get 500 or 600 perfect musicians, we realize that, we turn out children into adults that are empowered, are our future audience, have good self-esteem, that know a lot about an art, and through that we impact other people, so we realized early, that we are not, it is impossible for everyone to turn out a great musician, but it is possible for everybody to be empowered, to have a skill that they can use, they can teach. What we have also been doing very successful in doing her because of me, because I am completely anti-racism, and what we have been able to do is get to a stage where the children when they come here from the beginning, they realize they are all equal. Um and you can see it like in our wind band we have every race here, we got Chinese, Colored, Indian, White, Black, we have got everybody working together as a team, they are all friends, we got girls we got boys, there is no barrier, and at the school as well. We got people well into their 80s, and children as young as three here. The crèche school children are from this area so when they go to school they are invited to come and get a bursary here and then they are put on recorder or violin after a few years they can choose the instrument they want to play so I am hoping that through that program we will impact the babies, so by the time they get to 7 or 8 and somebody is offering them cocaine, or heroin, or whatever, they will be so empowered they will so no, they have been taught, they will say somebody took an interest in me and I am not supposed to do that, I have a future so even that, through that program we are hoping to impact on the youth of this area.”

She stays for a little while longer, taking everything in that was just said. She does not know how to thank Kim enough or how to praise her enough for the work that she is doing. She walks down the hall feeling inspired to write and to go out to the world and bring everything she learned here with her. (Kim Matthews. Pers. Comm. 28 April 2017).
The Gambia study that was mentioned above shares previous literature quoting Bates that says, “The role of music as a means for communication and social commentary is perhaps obvious, but music and music education can also serve to fight poverty, inequality and injustice, even though its application might not seem as obvious. Even if music is not life sustaining in the same sense as food or water, it has the potential to meet important social and psychological needs but identifying the different roles that music can play and how it can be applied and supported is crucial.” (Radelius, 2016, p10). The author goes on to say,

“Looking at music in its ability to invoke creativity and contribute to resilient communities in the face of unsustainable development affecting the community, it offers both possibilities and risks in relation to sustainable development. Resilience requires that communities nurture their creativity and allow for spaces that flourish and cultivates imagination, experimentation and challenging experiences, which in turn can open up for future-oriented perspectives and questions. Fostering creative communities is necessary in order to deal with the complexities and uncertainty that sustainable development demands and music specifically offers important qualities. Music, with its participatory and inclusive qualities, can create cohesion and a collective identity in the most diverse communities. Furthermore, music that promotes pro-social themes increases interpersonal empathy and willingness to help others, and musical contents with positive connotations about particular groups tend to reduce prejudice about these groups. Also, music affects the listener's emotions; that it serves as a medium for self-exploration; a communicative process for identity formation and that it can enhance community and individual resilience as well as contribute to social and cultural sustainability.” (Radelius, 2016, p23).

Through the music programs as well as the other community programs DMS offers, this school is implementing all of these benefits to the community. I think the stories speak for themselves to show the lived realities.
Reflection

As I went through and wrote my narratives and my discussion on them, I could not help but realize that my paper was flawed. Not ethically flawed, but the nature of research papers is linear. I write top right to left, top to bottom, from one subject to another. As I tied in other literature and studies to the narratives, I realized that these ideas apply to every narrative I wrote. Main themes emerged when I went through and reflected on my observations and the narratives. I sat down one night, it was late and I was writing terribly. I decided to put down my laptop, pick up my journal and write everything that came to my mind without thinking about music. This is what came out:
The most prominent themes from this project are voice, discipline, vision, value, and community.

Voice:
Voice is not just the ability to speak, or even to produce sound. It is the ability to communicate and be heard, understood. Our voice is how we share ourselves, how we respond and engage with the world. As I thought back on my story with music, I realized that the moments when I felt that my musical voice grew stronger, were moments in my life where I started to be true to myself. It was around my junior year of high school where I started to embrace myself. I started to realize my worth, my intelligence, my strength, my compassion, my beauty. I started to separate from the norm and be my true unique self. It was during that time where my musical voice improved immensely. I think about how my voice is the strongest it has ever been now on this trip. I think that is to do with finally being my true self. I have not only recognized my values and my amazing qualities, but I am using them to spread light to others. I have never been more in touch with myself than I have on this trip, and my voice is proof. Voice is incredibly important in how you see yourself and that is why this theme emerged on this project on music and empowerment. The goal of Durban Music School is to give a voice to those previously thought voiceless. Teaching an artistic skill to those with disabilities or those who come from very underprivileged backgrounds provides a space and a tool for these students to have a voice. Sharing your voice allows you to feel a part of the world, and that you are providing something worthy to society.

Discipline:
This topic was not one that I thought would come up during this process, but I am glad it did. Discipline is not seen in this sense as a strict set of rules that one must follow, but it is rather spending time to commit, and develop a skill. I do not think it is the mere absence of time that encourages a someone not to make unhealthy life decisions, but I think it brings purpose to one’s life. Purpose is concept that I think a lot of people struggle with, especially those that are thrown at the bottom of society and are not seen as valued citizens. Becoming a musician can give one purpose, structure, and something to look forward. I think discipline in this case is something that affects one’s wellbeing. In the case of the junior teachers, they attribute staying out of trouble and drug usage to being a musician. This is incredibly important as the Albert Park
community has drug usage problems especially amongst the youth. Getting involved in a skill like this can provide someone with the means and the discipline to say no.

**Vision:**
I would describe vision as the ability to be able to look toward their future. This concept is incredibly important to life decisions. As stated before, South Africa has an HIV epidemic and there has been little to no progress in prevention of HIV amongst youth. Vision plays a key part in this as you are more likely to think about your current life choices if you can envision a future for yourself. Poor disadvantaged citizens tend to have high prevalence and incidence rate of HIV because do to a lack of jobs and quality education systems, citizens are left with skills, and again with purpose or any inclination that they will have a future. This program in instilling in the students that they do have a future as a musician whether it being as a profession or as a hobby. Their mission is to instill in their students that their lives matter, they are worthy, and they will have a bright future. Music can hopefully be a possible solution to providing citizens with vision and the inclination to make healthy life choices now for a healthy future.

**Value:**
This concept includes ideas of self-image, self-esteem, and self-worth. These are incredibly important factors to one’s livelihood and especially one’s mental health. This is something that all people struggle with as they grow into adults. Value can be defined as a deep appreciation and care for something. Valuing oneself, and one’s place in society can come from many different places, and music is one of them. Having a skill and being able to not only share it with others but bring joy to others life with your skill is very influential on how you see yourself. I think purpose also fits in very well here with value. When you have a purpose in life, you feel like a valued member of society as you are contributing something important. Music is special because all humans engage and enjoy music in some aspect and being able to produce music yourself is a very special thing. Teaching children to value their bodies, their voice, their existence is crucially important to how those children will live out the rest of their lives.
Community:
Community is something that we discussed a lot on this program, naturally as the title of this program is community health. I still have not found a holistic definition of community that I love, but my own working definition of community of the context of Durban Music School would be a group of inclusive people working towards a specific collective goal. Based on this definition I think that the group work that Marijke does with her program and the many ensembles at DMS provide an opportunity to teach students how to work together as a group to reach a shared goal. This relies of students valuing their own voices as well as others. It also relies on complete inclusion and acceptance of others regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or disability. I think that the school does a great job of making this a priority. I also think about the community that surrounds Durban Music School, and how these concepts can be applied on a larger level. It would be amazing to follow up later on the see if there is a change in the community as more local members are a part of a program at DMS. Whether it is the music program, or the boxing, dancing, and chess program. I wonder if the community concerts actually enable the process of breaking discriminations and provides a space for inclusion and interaction. I wonder what would be the result of a community filled with empowered individuals and what the further step is to create an empowered community.
Last Thoughts

The interesting thing about this project is that the subject has huge significance in the South African context, but this paper does not. After I submit it I will wish I wrote it differently. I will have new ideas, new reflections, new insights on what I experienced here during these three weeks and also during these three months of being in South Africa. The beautiful thing though is that this paper does not truly matter, what truly matters is what is going to happen after this. I have said it repeatedly in this paper and to my peers, that this topic truly needs time devoted for proper research. That is my advice for further recommendation, time, care, compassion, and devotion. I hope to see and be a part of a movement that enforces the ideas taught by this program. I think of the ideals again: voice, discipline, vision, value, and community. I think of the things I am passionate about and having to decide always which one to focus on. I think about the future possibilities of using music to teach these ideals about caring for the environment. I think of the way we can heal our segregated society with these ideals. This paper does not attempt to conclude that music is the solution to save the world. It is not. I do however believe it is a powerful tool that we can all use to be empowered individuals and in time develop empowered communities. It took only a week to convince me that the work at Durban Music School is an arts based holistic health solution for the community it resides it. I hope this project inspired you the reader as much as it has inspired me. For one week I was lost in the song of Durban Music School and now it is time to carry the beat with me back home.
Works Cited


Hargreaves, D. M. (2002). What are Musical Identities, and why are they Important?


Primary Sources

Junior Teacher A. *Personal Communication*, 19 April 2017 in Durban
Junior Teacher B. *Personal Communication*, 19 April 2017 in Durban
Junior Teacher C. *Personal Communication*, 19 April 2017 in Durban
Kim Matthews. *Personal Communication*, 28 April 2017 in Durban
Marijke. *Personal Communication*, 20 April 2017 in Durban
*Marijke. Personal Communication*, 22 April 2017 in Durban
Maxine. *Personal Communication*, 18 April 2017 in Durban
Max. *Personal Communication*, 21 April 2017 in Durban
Max. *Personal Communication*, 26 April 2017 in Durban
Mother. *Personal Communication*, 19 April 2017 in Durban
Nicole Potgieter. *Personal Communication*, 23 February 2017 in Durban
Thomis. *Personal Communication*, 26 April 2017 in Durban
# Human Subjects Review

## LRB/IRB ACTION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student:</th>
<th>Sabina Adler</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISP Title:</td>
<td>Music as the Guide on the Path to Empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Submitted:</td>
<td>6 April 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program:</td>
<td>Durban Community Health and Social Policy- Spring 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of review:</td>
<td>Expedited</td>
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<tr>
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<th>World Learning Inc.</th>
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<tr>
<td>IRB organization number:</td>
<td>IORG0004408</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRB registration number:</td>
<td>IRB00005219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expires:</td>
<td>9 December 2017</td>
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</tbody>
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**LRB members (print names):**
- John McGladdery
- Clive Bruzas(PhD)
- Francis O’Brien(PhD)

**LRB REVIEW BOARD ACTION:**
- [x] Approved as submitted
- [ ] Approved pending changes
- [ ] Requires full IRB review in Vermont
- [ ] Disapproved

**LRB Chair Signature:**

**Date:** 6 April 2017

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Form below for IRB Vermont use only:

Research requiring full IRB review. **ACTION TAKEN:**
- [ ] approved as submitted
- [ ] approved pending submission or revisions
- [ ] disapproved

**IRB Chairperson’s Signature**

**Date:** 6 April 2017
CONSENT FORM

1. Brief description of the purpose of this project
The purpose of this project is to prove how empowerment and wellbeing can be discovered through the use of music. Narratives and music recordings will be used to collect these stories from the participants. Using your personal story and a recording of you performing a musical piece which best represents your story, a meaningful narrative will be written to show the benefits of music on wellbeing through discovering empowerment.

2. Rights Notice
In an endeavor to uphold the ethical standards of all SIT ISP proposals, this study has been reviewed and approved by a Local Review Board or SIT Institutional Review Board. If at any time, you feel that you are at risk or exposed to unreasonable harm, you may terminate and stop the interview. Please take some time to carefully read the statements provided below.
   a. Privacy - all information you present in this interview may be recorded and safeguarded. If you do not want the information recorded, you need to let the interviewer know.
   b. Anonymity - all names in this study will be kept anonymous unless you choose otherwise.
   c. Confidentiality - all names will remain completely confidential and fully protected by the interviewer. By signing below, you give the interviewer full responsibility to uphold this contract and its contents. The interviewer will also sign a copy of this contract and give it to you.

I understand that I will receive no gift or direct benefit for participating in the study.
I confirm that the learner has given me the address of the nearest School for International Training Study Abroad Office should I wish to go there for information. (404 Cowey Park, Cowey Rd, Durban).
I know that if I have any questions or complaints about this study that I can contact anonymously, if I wish, the Director/s of the SIT South Africa Community Health Program (Zed McGladdery 0846834982)

_________________________  _____________________________
Participant’s name printed  Your signature and date
__________________________  _____________________________
Interviewer’s name printed  Interviewer’s signature and date

4/5/2017

I can read English. If the participant cannot read, the onus is on the project author to ensure that the quality of consent is nonetheless without reproach.
ISP Ethics Review

The ISP paper by Sabine Adler does conform to the Human Subjects Review approval from the Local Review Board, the ethical standards of the local community, and the ethical and academic standards outlined in the SIT student and faculty handbooks.

Completed by: John McGladdery

Academic Director: John McGladdery

Signature: [Signature]

Program: SFH Community Health and Social Policy

Date: 1 May 2017