



(Adapted from an interview that I gave for one of my students)

Did you always know that you would be a musician?

I have always *been* a musician. I have always loved to sing.

My family used to sing as we drove to Edmonton and back. We did this often.

I was taught harmonies by my Mom, and it came quite naturally to me to sing them against my brothers and sister.

My kindergarten teacher told my Mom that I had a beautiful voice and that I should get singing lessons.

So, I did 😊

but, did I know I would have a career in it? No.

Did think that I would be a teacher? Actually, I always thought that I would, but I pictured teaching in a school.

Never did I think I would teach music. I thought... perhaps English... :)

Why did you choose to become a musician?

I didn't become one, I *am* a musician.

There was the point in my life where I realized that I had tried many, many things, but hadn't mastered anything.

I had pursued Musical studies, but had quit for a time. I realized that this was something I could pick up again.

That's when I chose to *pursue it* as a career.

Did you ever have doubts?

Of course! I was warned, many times, about how difficult life could be as a musician.

There was a time when I thought I could do something in medicine. But my older sister was such a great nurse. Being a wee bit competitive, I decided to do something else.

I already had a head start in Singing, because I had completed my Grade 8 level of voice exams.

So, I decided to combine my love of singing with my need to make money.

I read what I could, gathered information, made the decision to pursue this career and then went for it.

Were there any specific people that helped you develop as a musician?

Yes, my strongest supporters have always been my parents (especially my Mom), school teachers, music teachers and my best friend who all believed in me.

So many more people come to mind, as well...my leaders in Girl Guides, music camps, choirs, Young Canadians of the Calgary Stampede, Calgary Opera...people from these, all impacted my life.

What were some of the difficulties and/or struggles to becoming a musician?

Some challenges were ...Making time to study (by the time I decided to go for a degree I had two children)

Finding the money to pay for the studies, was difficult. (Going full time to University was not an option for me because of my children and my marriage.)

I took private lessons and completed my degree, course by course.

It took 10 years to complete.

I taught singing to pay for my own lessons.

Even finding the right teachers were challenging.

My first singing teacher was an organist who, although a fine musician, was not a singing teacher.

I had natural ability, but when I began to tackle more difficult music, he couldn't tell me how to sing properly and I began to suffer from vocal problems. I almost ruined my voice.

Fortunately, after a series of events in my life, I was able to find a different teacher.

Once I did, things went better.

I also took theory from a woman who had a great reputation as a theory teacher. However, I was barely passing my exams.

I was very frustrated and thought that I should quit. Then someone whom I respected, asked me if I had considered that *this teacher didn't teach in the way that I learned*. I was stunned! She recommended a different teacher, and I thrived under his direction.

He could answer the WHY questions that I had. What a difference!

If you had one piece of advice for young musicians, what would it be?

Diversify! You cannot make it in the industry by studying only one instrument.

What are some of the skills required for your career?

Well, things that I personally bring to this career are:

The love and knowledge of the mechanics of singing...

-The discipline of practice.

-The ability to teach people with different styles of learning. (Some students understand by visualizing, some by imitating, some by understanding the body, some by ``doing``)

Every student I instruct teaches me something more about teaching.

What qualities are needed in a person to be a musician?

You need talent, as well as intellect.

You must have the desire to share of yourself.

-To love music.

-The ability to focus, and study.

-The ability to self-direct.

-The desire to improve.

And finally, you need the courage to try things, to fail, to try again, to fail again, and to try again...to succeed☺

Would you change anything about your journey?

I love my journey...I am who I am, because of the path I took!!

But I am aware, that had I gone to University, I would have had my degree much sooner.

My whole life would have been much different...not necessarily better...but most certainly different!

What education do you have in music?

Education comes in so many forms!

I have My ARCT through the Royal Conservatory in Toronto.

I have taught for 25+ years. This kind of *education* continues :)

I also take courses in the summer months...there is so much to learn!

What is the hardest part of being a musician?

Being a Perfectionist!

One can never be perfect, but to be good you must reach for it!

It can lead to a feeling of failure if you let it.

What is the most rewarding part of being a musician?

As a singer, it is rewarding to sing to an audience and connect with their emotions.

Smiles or tears, laughter or foot tapping, all mean that they are listening and engaged.

As a teacher, I love it when I hear a student walking from their lesson to the car, and they are singing out loud!

When past students keep in touch...I feel rewarded :) And many do ☺

How have the arts influenced your life?

Just to answer this question could take hours :) Lol!!

Suffice to say, I am a better person because of the arts. I appreciate beauty, emotions, birds, animals, and children more, because of the arts.

It enriches my life in a way that nothing else does or can.