

The Power of Music

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Sounds of beat, rhythm, and harmony. Music. I love music. Do you like it? If you're like me, you do. I don't think there are many people who say, "I don't like it." However, I didn't like it when I was a child. I would like to tell you why I didn't like music.

My mother was a piano teacher. When I entered elementary school, my mother told me to learn the *electone* - an electronic piano. And she bought me a large *electone* with a two-tiered keyboard equipped with a pedal board. I used to practice the *electone* everyday as hard as I could. But my mother asked me to play more and more because she really wanted me to become a good player. Now I can understand her feelings. But at that time, I couldn't understand her at all and as she forced me to practice, I became tired of it.

When I became a junior high school student, I told mother I wanted to quit *electone* practice. I gave the excuse that in junior high school, club activities were so important that I had to join a tennis club as some of my friends did. My mother told me that I should reconsider, but I never listened to her. I knew my attitude disappointed her, but I just didn't want to continue *electone* practice no matter what she said - my club activities seemed more important.

In the fall of that year, a very sad thing happened. My mother died of cancer, and there was no one to play the *electone* anymore. I was depressed for a long time. I thought about what could have been. I thought about what would have happened if I hadn't rejected her advice. Maybe I could have done the *electone* as well as club activities.

It was my father that brought me back to the music world. He plays rock music such as "Led Zeppelin" when he has free time. One day, he recommended "Billy Joel" to me. I appreciated his music, which fused the piano into rock music. His music eliminated my bias that a piano was used only for classical music. I started to practice the *electone* again, hoping to play his music. That was the first time that I truly wanted to play music. Billy Joel is now one of my favorite artists and the one whom I respect.

Then I entered Asahikawa Kosen, starting to live in the dormitory. The life in the dormitory opened up a new world of music. Friends there asked me to join the band and to play together. Joining the band, I heard and played many different kinds of music there. The band activity gave me very exciting experiences and I enjoyed things like listening to concerts.

Although it is enjoyable to play the piano alone, playing together with other instruments is more enjoyable and I feel more emotion when playing music. Through these experiences, I

could finally understand why my mother forced me to play the piano and the *electone*. Now I think my mother taught me the supreme joy of my life.

Music can touch the hearts of people, conveying emotions over language barriers. Music can evoke emotions among people even when it cannot be verbalized in music like classical or Celtic music. I appreciate my mother who gave me an opportunity to be exposed to music, and my father who gave me a chance to know the pleasure of music. So, I would like to do the same for people as my mother and father did for me. If I could please someone with my performance; if I could show them the power of music - how nice and cool it would be.

Besides performing, I am beginning to think of another way to help people enjoy music. I would like to design and develop a musical instrument using the knowledge I have learned at my school. After graduating from the college, I would like to use this knowledge and work as an engineer and design and develop electronic musical instruments. I have a dream that I would like to create an electronic musical instrument using scientific techniques to make people feel warmth and compassion. Music can create these feelings. Some of you here may laugh at my dream. Others may say it is an impossible dream. But I think there might also be some people who think that it is possible.

These days we often hear of sad news from every corner of the world. I think we need something that can cheer people up - something so that we can feel peace. The power of music. That is what my mother taught me when I was a child. If I could make people happy with my musical instrument, that would be great. If many people could make more people happy with my musical instrument, that would be more than great. I would like to bring about peace to people by performing music with my electronic musical instrument – to show them the power of music.