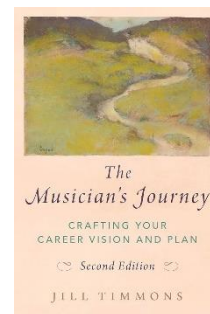


BOOK REVIEW

The musician's journey: Crafting your career vision and plan (2nd ed.) (Timmons)

Reviewed by Natalie Jack

Independent scholar, Australia



Title: The musician's journey: Crafting your career vision and plan (2nd ed.) **Author:** Jill Timmons **Publication Year:** 2023 **Publisher:** Oxford University Press **Pages:** 232 **ISBN:** 9780197578520

REVIEWER BIOGRAPHY

Natalie Jack is an Australian Registered Music Therapist based in Melbourne. In her over 25 years as a music therapist, she has worked clinically across a variety of adult and paediatric populations in both Australia and Canada, developing an interest in working in forensic mental health. Currently, Natalie runs a private practice providing supervision, professional development and Mental Health First Aid courses to allied health and other professionals. In addition to her music therapy qualification Natalie holds a Diploma of Business, a Diploma of Counselling and a Master of Mental Health. [natalie@nataliejack.com]

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Can a book about using entrepreneurship to create and sustain a career as a music performer and teacher be relevant and useful for music therapists? This is the question I set out to answer when reading *The Musician's Journey: Crafting Your Career Vision and Plan* (2023, 2nd Ed.) by Jill Timmons. Timmons is a renowned performing artist, teacher, author, entrepreneur, and mentor. Born and raised in the USA, she now holds dual citizenship in both America and France (Arts Mentor, 2023).

The Musician's Journey begins with an explanation of who and what musicians are, acknowledging that musicians of all types are fearless and courageous. Timmons emphasises the multifaceted roles musicians often play, including advocacy, finance, marketing, and technology. For music therapists too, this multifaceted approach is particularly relevant. Music therapists often need to wear multiple hats – clinician, business owner, performer, and advocate – requiring a diverse skill set similar to that of entrepreneurial musicians.

The concept of career dissatisfaction is thoroughly explored: a concept Timmons calls “soul loss” (p.11). She describes her own journey to entrepreneurship, transforming her career to support musicians and other artists. This notion of “soul loss” and subsequent reinvention will unfortunately resonate deeply with music therapists, especially those who experience burnout or disenchantment with the profession and might seek to diversify or completely change their careers. Timmons encourages readers to reconsider preconceived notions of a music career, which is crucial for music therapists looking to innovate within their field. Perhaps as a direct counter to the experience of career dissatisfaction, Timmons argues that musicians should embrace entrepreneurship, defining it as “the ability to create and sustain a viable career in the music industry” (p.19). This entrepreneurial mindset is essential for music therapists striving to build sustainable business and practices. By adopting entrepreneurial strategies as described in this book, music therapists can enhance their

professional autonomy and financial stability and ultimately provide superior outcomes for their clients and communities.

A strong focus in *The Musician's Journey* is on inspiring creativity and confidence in creating a career vision. Timmons draws on science, mental health, and ancient wisdom to guide readers toward their "inner Muse" (p.39). For music therapists, this holistic approach underscores the importance of self-awareness and personal growth, crucial for effective therapeutic practice. Techniques like retreats, therapy, journaling, and mentorship are valuable tools for music therapists to maintain their own well-being and professional development, and these tools can also be incredibly useful when focused on business development and entrepreneurial skills. One specific section, entitled *From Vision to Plan*, is pivotal, bridging a gap between the somewhat intangible 'vision' and the more concrete business strategies. Interestingly, Timmons differentiates between a 'job' and a 'career', noting that sometimes deciding to take a 'day job', potentially outside of your chosen profession, is a fantastic strategy for being able to devote time to your actual career – the activities that you are passionate about and that keep you inspired. This advice in effect advocates for a multifaceted and creative approach to entrepreneurship. This is particularly relevant for music therapists who often juggle multiple roles and income streams. Timmons' advice to embrace various creative and professional pursuits aligns with the diverse career paths many music therapists navigate.

The Musician's Journey provides robust and detailed business knowledge, including how to build a strong business plan, including mission statements, legal identity, financial plans, marketing, management, and timelines. This practical guidance is invaluable for music therapists establishing private practices or expanding their services. The included business plan checklist can serve as a roadmap for creating a sustainable and impactful business practice. Timmons also dedicates significant space to grant writing, offering insights that, while USA-centric, are adaptable to other contexts and cultures. Music therapists often rely on grants for at least partially funding their business models, making this section particularly beneficial. Similarly, the information on academic roles, though centred on the USA, provides a framework for those in academia globally, offering strategies to secure positions and navigate academic systems.

The topic that particularly speaks to Timmons' experience discusses integrating entrepreneurial skills into undergraduate music education, a concept that can be adapted to training programs for music therapists. By incorporating these skills early, future therapists can be better prepared for the diverse demands of their careers. Timmons also shares twelve stories of musician-entrepreneurs, illustrating how creativity and entrepreneurship can lead to fulfilling careers. These generous real-life examples can inspire music therapists to explore new directions and innovative practices in their own careers. In future editions of this book, it would be wonderful to see stories of music therapist entrepreneurs included, to complement the stories of other music-based professionals.

The Musician's Journey offers a wealth of insights and practical advice that music therapists can apply to their careers. From embracing entrepreneurship to building a sustainable practice, Timmons' guidance is both relevant and inspiring. Music therapists will find the discussions on soul, passion, creativity, self-awareness, business planning, marketing, and finance particularly useful. I highly recommend this book to any music therapist seeking to enhance their business, career and professional and personal fulfilment.

REFERENCES

Arts Mentor. (2023). Info. <https://artsmentor.com/info>