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Guest Blog: Jamie Tworkowski of To Write Love On Her Arms



If someone gave you a microphone and a stage, what would you say and what would you sing? Whether the crowd was 10 people or 10,000, what would you make with the moment?

I was going to write a letter to the frontmen--the folks who sing in bands. I was going to say that there should be a system or some classes where they would be reminded that music is a very special thing; something not unlike a miracle, rich with history and the potential to move people and change lives. They would learn about urgency and honesty, the value of a moment and a song's unique ability to cause people to feel, to remind them that they're alive and that life is worth living.

And it crossed my mind to say those things because lately, it seems like there's been moments when everyone is forgetting. I'm bored with watching guys play to thousands of people and it

feels like everyone says the same thing in saying nothing: "How you motherf****s doing?" is followed by a request for the world's largest circle pit. Congratulations. You are the fourth band in a row to say the exact same thing.

Are you kidding me? You beat the odds by making it and they hand you this electronic thing that makes your voice louder and that's the best you could come up with? That's what you wanted to tell the world? The stage is sacred. It's above the ground so that people can see the magic when it happens; so that people can see something bigger than the sum of its parts; something louder than the same dumb joke, brighter than the latest neon trend. Tell us your story. Show us your heart. Remind us of our own. Point to something. In the silence between songs, point to something that matters, some question or problem that steals your sleep at night. Invite us to be part of the solution.

But maybe the lessons are not just for the guys with microphones. Maybe this stuff applies to all of us. It's been said that all the world's a stage and that maybe we all have some kind of influence and opportunities to say real things and move people. The stage in front of the crowd is this obvious place where it happens, but maybe it's true that we each have our songs to sing and venues to play. We each get a few people who listen and a few people to listen *to*. We each have our jobs and our schools and all the places where

life happens. We live in a world filled with needs and opportunities. Every person has a story. There's plenty of room for meaning, depth and change. Don't buy the lie that says there's only room for jokes and it's cooler not to care about anything. The bar has been set way too low. There's room for magic and inspiration. There's room to live a better story.

The show starts now. **alt**

Jamie Tworkowski is the founder of [To Write Love On Her Arms](http://www.twloha.com), a non-profit movement dedicated to presenting hope and finding help for people struggling with depression, addiction, self-injury and suicide. Since 2006, TWLOHA has responded to 100,000 messages from over 100 countries. They've also given \$500,000 directly to treatment and recovery. Tworkowski will be speaking at universities across America this fall. Visit www.twloha.com for more info.

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