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COMM 111 – 10 am  
Self-Introduction/Confidence Preparation Outline  
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## Introduction

I. Attention-getter: People from Russia are totally crazy. My grandpa speaks 7 different languages, and translates poetry for fun, after coming home from his job as a doctor. You always see those videos from Russian dash cams where a guy gets his bumper hit, and all of a sudden he's pulling the dude out of his car like it's grand theft auto five. Something about being totally nuts makes for really great teachers though. My brother learned how to be a ballet dancer from a woman named Damara. He laughs about it now but he's like "haha yeah I would always be on the verge of bursting into tears when she scolded me." Now he gets paid to dance in the San Francisco Ballet. Russian teachers really value tough love and it somehow works really well. And so when I wanted to play the piano, you know who I called? Bella Shyenkman

II. Thesis idea: Oftentimes, some tough love is exactly what we need to get where we want to go.

40-50 seconds

## Body

I. 1<sup>st</sup> main point: But I didn't like tough love at first. Every week I was **so** lazy. I was always too lazy to practice the piano. I just wanted to do other things that were more useful (like playing video games, procrastinating on homework, and napping) But because of this I was so afraid to have my lesson, dreading having to get yelled at by bella. I'd go over to her place, stumble through a piece, then mentally get prepared for the worst. "WHAAAT YOU ONLY PRACTICE ONE DAY???? WHY???", I'm like 'dude im trying to be a teenager having my coming of age story', I'm having my own version of the breakfast club out here I'm not playing the piano'. But of course, I would never think of saying that to her face so I'm like "no reason". Week after week I would be lazy and get yelled at. It was an unbreakable cycle.

II. 2<sup>nd</sup> main point: Or was it? I noticed something... the more work I put in, the less I would dread going to see her. So little by little, I figured out how to actually get work done. Baby steps. I started with an extra little practicing in the morning. Heck, maybe I'll play 2 pieces instead of 1 piece. And slowly but surely, the piano lessons got less and less dreadful. Instead of getting yelled at, I might get loudly talked at. Sometimes I would even get a 'this one sounds fine how about the other ones'. It sounds FINE?!! This was huge for me, an impossible change had occurred. That's like if the sky decided to be green one day, like if Lil Pump went sober, or if Professor Ana stopped playing videos of owls. I thought to myself, "This is crazy! This 'approval' thing is dope, where can I get more of that?"

III. 3<sup>rd</sup> main point: Major success when I really tried: But then I tried very hard, and actually got results. So I really went for it, I decided I would prepare 7 pieces totally memorized by the end of the school year in order to get my piano diploma. It was certainly a struggle. I thought I would quit and be done or I would say to Bella that I was sick for multiple weeks in a row. And while there were plenty of weeks where bella made me feel like a total idiot for not practicing, I was making progress. The work was paying off. The end of the year comes, I walk into michelle's pianos, say hi to the proctor person and I take the test. I play each of the 7 pieces, they weren't perfect, but I certainly worked hard on them. And I passed! The proctor lady said out of all her years doing this exam she had never heard the beethoven played that well before. I even got a "veyyy good" from Bella

### Conclusion

I. Summary: So it worked, I got yelled at and I did the thing. This kind of discipline can be harder for some to find than others. And knowing that I can endure the dread and the scolding and the shame that Russians are so good at, gives me confidence and courage to do anything moving forward.

II. Memorable ending: Anything except take another lesson with Bella Sheynkman. I would rather be murdered and have my body turned into one of those Russian doll things.