

## Taking Risks (College Admission Essay Sample 2)

### Law School Personal Statement

By Benjamin Tripp

Risks are the essence of life. In the beginning, they are our instinct. We learn to crawl despite the bruises on our knees and elbows. We learn to walk despite the many falls we endure. But as we get older and gain a greater consciousness of the world around us, somewhere along the way we are presented with failure; at that point, many people try to eliminate most risks from their life. But where would we be without our sense of exploration, our willingness to and to try new things despite the pitfalls that await us? That attitude is characteristic of all great thinkers and innovators in our society.

I come from a family that has had to take major risks in order to bring me to the place I am today. My parents grew up in Shardew and Yelnitza, two small towns in the Carpathian Mountains, once a part of the Soviet Union, now located in the Ukraine. As children of Holocaust survivors, they were dedicated to giving their children a promising future in the free and promising land of America. Having been discriminated against from a young age, they adapted themselves to a risk-taking way of life in order to preserve the traditions of Judaism: they joined an underground Jewish community and held secret prayer groups at night when they knew they wouldn't be found.

My parents came to this country with their two year-old daughter in November of 1979 against the advice of all their friends. They had decided that leaving was their only true hope of preserving their identity and raising a Jewish family despite their unfamiliarity with English and the uncertainty of where and how they would live. They were risk takers because they sought a better, freer life.

That was their generation. And now I, too, am at a critical juncture of my life on —one that is quite different from my parents' but fraught with difficult choices nonetheless.

Dedicating the next three years of my life to a legal education is a risk. Certainly, paying for law school will be a hardship; however, I must also question whether my study of the law will give me the intellectual fulfillment I seek in my post-college life. This is an inquiry I've made to myself countless times. I now know that, given my varied experiences and the direction I've found myself taking, law school is my only true option.

For one, I am an advocate. I have never been ashamed to stand up before a group to defend a cause. For example, while I was studying politics at Boston University, I took a course in American Politics taught by the chairperson of the department. This professor lectured for an hour and fifteen minutes at a time solely from power point presentations, paying no attention to any questions the students had for her. In addition, she never made herself available during office hours. I, along with many of my peers, was infuriated. After hearing complaint after complaint, I decided something had to be done. So, I drafted a seven-page formal complaint, which I submitted for review to six different deans at Boston University. I stated in the letter that I had no problem with the professor personally and that I was not trying to attack her character, but that my peers and I were only seeking a fair opportunity to learn. The letter made such an impact on the deans that one of them met with me personally to discuss the matter. Ultimately, the professor was censured and put on probationary review for the following year.

I hope to one day be able to use my ambition and sense of justice to help others that are being treated unfairly. My parents and grandparents' experiences have left a mark on my life and I will not feel fulfilled until I am able to help others that have been in similarly trying situations.

My interest in the law also stems from my fascination with the music and entertainment businesses. I am a self-taught guitar player with a great knowledge and appreciation for many kinds of music. Over the years, I have

partaken in job experiences from various sectors of the entertainment and business worlds and would love to increase my understanding of the two fields by learning their legal aspects. I have also worked with lawyers over the years and have always admired the precise reasoning they use to attack their projects and problems. I see that skill as a unique and powerful tool, and long to be able to attribute it to myself at the end of my education.

Finally, studying politics at Boston University has developed in me a real interest in politics. I aspire to run for local or state office later in life, so that I can help the underprivileged immigrant populations in places like the one in which I grew up. I would also like to reform outdated laws and make advances in healthcare in our country. In my view, every person deserves the chance to realize his or her dream.

I am confident that by admitting me to your JD program I will add energy, ambition, and most importantly, a risk-taking attitude to your student population. Take a chance on me and I can assure you, it will prove to be your only “true” choice.

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