

Music. Five letters. Two syllables. A seemingly boring word to most people. Then again, I'm not most people when it comes to music.

As cheesy as it sounds, music became one of the most important peacemakers in my life when it gave me an avenue to express my feelings, and the confidence to do so. I come from a family where we don't really discuss feelings, because everyone is just fine. Almost perfect in fact. Straight A's, high test scores, and AP classes, these are the expectations of my life. While my brothers managed to seemingly breeze through and live up to expectations, I was floundering under the pressure until I found music. To be more specific, I found choir. I found a confidence in vocal performance that I never had growing up, which allows me to express my innermost thoughts without fear of retribution.

I was raised to not speak or act unless I was absolutely sure, because I would be mocked if I did or said anything wrong or different. Singing was way out there on the spectrum of "different" in my parents eyes thus, I was barred from choir class and any vocal performance opportunities that I came across. So there I was, stuck in a never ending loop of high expectations and no creative outlet. My friends used to joke that one day I would explode because I never showed emotion, which actually happened a few times, metaphorically of course. The only time I was able to express myself was with music, which I was restricted from both in public and at home.

By the time I reached high school I was so emotionally frustrated that I signed up for choir despite my parents wishes, and so my journey began. As soon as I stepped into the choir room I felt like I belonged, and from there I flourished. Even though I was only performing in a group and not solo like I had originally wanted, I was fine because I was singing. As the years have gone by throughout high school, I have undergone a major metamorphosis to become a

person confident in myself and my abilities, something I never would have achieved without music. So for now, I am grateful to music for changing my life, and giving me an emotional outlet that I never had. That, readers, is how music has been a peacemaker in my life.