

In my words

By: April Lawyer @Aplawy

I suppose I hadn't realized that I've lived about half of my life in this school the past four years until about a week ago. Think of it. Most of us are here seven hours a day, five days a week, for three-fourths of the year. That is an incredible amount of time. It makes sense that this place would have some kind of impact on us. Positive? That depends on who you are. Not everyone thrives in a high school environment. But me? I flourished. These last four years have been monumental for me. There have been good times and bad, but overall I can't say I regret going here. Linn-Mar was slightly closer geographically, but I don't think I could have ever gone anywhere else than Marion High School.

I have some advice for all of the freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and those who will inevitably be super-seniors next year: try new things, and quit doing the stuff you hate. I was stupid enough to not put myself out there in freshmen year, and stupider to not quit doing the things I hated until sophomore year. You have absolutely NO obligation to continue being a part of things you have no passion for. As long as you're doing the thing that you enjoy, and what pushes you to be a more complete person, you can't go wrong. It doesn't even have to be school-related. Don't like any of the clubs here? Get a hobby. A good hobby that challenges you is in no way "less" than any extracurricular. In fact, it

shows you have the initiative to do stuff at home, on your own time. So get out

there and find what you like.

Another piece of advice is to always look for opportunity. That can be academic opportunity or any number of things. If you plan on going to an out of state school, specifically a prestigious one that's difficult to get into, don't sleep on this. The earlier you start building your resume, the better it will be. Ask around about internships, research opportunities at local colleges, and competitions. It was my mistake to not do this early enough. If I had put in the time and effort to do this in freshman year, rather than junior and senior, I would have been much more prepared for the college application process.

I want to thank everyone in the Journalism Team for dealing with my antics for the last two years, and for doing their best not to yell at me to shut up. I can't imagine what it was like having to listen to off-key, improvised songs and ramblings about dinosaurs, Lego Ninjago, and the intelligence of dolphins. You guys always treated me like an adult despite my strange and sometimes obnoxious behavior, and I thank you all for that. I only ask that you remember me not by what I did, but by what I didn't say. That is, try not to think of the fact that I once went on an hour tangent about how vinyls are boring, but that I never went on an hour tangent about how much I hated kittens, or something evil like that. The absence of wickedness is the presence of goodness, as I always never said. Since I never said that, you can also remember me as someone who wasn't good with idioms.

I have nothing else I can give you. These are just a few things I've learned after four years of schooling at Marion. Even then, I have a lot to learn.



No more shame, no more fear, no more dread.

By: Kyle Melhberger @KMehlberger

I always sucked at goodbyes. Ends, endings, it's all so concrete, the last note to end on forever. It can be hard to decide which things to say, which to retain, all the things you wish for the world, the school, going forward as people take my space, and people take those people's spaces, and so on and so on. This story will be read by only a few people. Maybe some curious soul is here, on the back pages of this newspaper reading these words now, but that seems like a fever dream. This will be forgotten by those who hear it as fast as the next thing comes along to take its place. The concept of oblivion is one hell of a drug in that matter, the idea that remembrance is a finite, nonrenewable resource, which each person's legacy will run out of after their

end, as they fade into obscurity from the world at large. It can be applied to many ends, but here at this moment, I feel it most with high school. These yearbooks, this newspaper, I'll be another face in a line of faces that'll take over my spot for as long as such a spot is there. This revelation is quite an ominous knife in the back, cutting deep into every squiggle of the brain.

Whenever I feel all wrapped up in that idea, those thoughts, a lot of other thoughts battle and quell them. If people will forget me eventually, why be anything other than myself? What purpose would there be in trying to tailor myself to what others want, if they will eventually all view me as a distant relic, until I am so far away that I am nothing at all. Above all, if the world will forget eventually, why let yourself forget who you are as well? I have had a time in this school, a time that can be described in a million different conflicting adjectives that will never ever work to accurately convey it. And now, it ends, now, the only adjective left is



"finished." My grade will cycle out, another will take its place, but the time I had in this place will stick with me, as I hope it will for others I have had the pleasure of interacting with over the years, and others I have had the misery of interacting with too, for that matter. The end might be hard, but it's also something not to dwell on, as a journey lived to the fullest is the only one worth it. I still have a long way to go in discovering who I am, believe me, but I know I'll figure it out, and I know that no matter what I end up as, eventually nobody will care otherwise, so why give a damn about them? Before everything ends, there's really only one life motto worth living, one that I muttered under my breath so many times. During panic attacks, as the final drops of rain trickled down from a devastating storm, during each struggle with myself I've managed to overcome. It keeps me on the right track, this simple phrase:

"No more shame, no more fear, no more dread."

