

The switch



After my second year in high school, I made a decision that would turn out to be life changing. This decision wasn't life changing in the way that getting married or going to college would be, but I really learned a lot about myself that summer. What I'm about to tell you is what happened when I switched from Marching Band to Football. I will explain to you why this switch was such a big deal to me and what I learned about myself from it. Switching from Marching Band to Football after my

Sophomore year of high school changed the way I saw myself because I found I have a strong enough will to follow my heart despite controversy with others, I have a strong desire to be in control of my life, and I have an aggressive side that had not shown itself before. While making the decision to change from one activity to another, my own self-reliance and confidence really took over and helped me to deal with the controversy among my friends and teammates. My friends and band director wanted me to stay in the marching band because I was a section leader with three years of experience and was up for the Drum Major position.

Naturally, this put me under a lot of social pressure. On top of that, my new teammates on the football team weren't exactly thrilled to have a tuba player trying out for the team. They used to make fun of me quite a bit, until I proved myself out on the field, that is. Another significant hurdle was telling my parents that I wanted to switch. I knew that my parents said they would support me in any decision I make, that isn't life threatening, but I wasn't sure if they would condone me playing football, which is probably one of the most dangerous sports in the world if you don't practice proper technique.

The fact that I was able to deal with all this and still stick to my guns showed me I was strong enough to follow my heart and cut my own path. Especially after considering the craziest part out of this whole thing, before this I never had been one to go against the grain. I had been a people pleaser my whole life and was afraid of making anyone mad at me. So, now that I've explained the situation I found myself in, the reason I put myself in that position was because of a realization I had while sitting in the stands with the and at a football game during my sophomore year.

I realized that I didn't enjoy sitting on the sidelines watching the action happen. I wanted to be out there in the middle of it. It made me think about how I always took the path of least resistance in every aspect of my life. I was always trying to make everyone around me happy when I wasn't completely happy myself. Watching that football game, I felt like I was the stands watching it go by, powerless to influence to course of fate. This mindset is what helped me to strengthen my will to follow my heart and do what I wanted to do. That night, I discovered my desire to have control of the direction my life was going in.

On top of wanting to steer my life in the direction I wanted, that night I also discovered that I have an aggressive side that makes want to prove what I'm worth, fight to win, and be remembered. In every sport I'd ever done up to that point in my life, from Baseball to Karate to Wrestling, every single one of my coaches I'd ever had told me that I don't have a mean bone in my body, and I thought they were right. I always had a hard time with being competitive because I didn't want to hurt anyone and I was somewhat content to sit in the dugout or on the sidelines unless subbed in.

That is, until I had this self-realization one day in the stands. After that, a fire lit in my belly that hadn't been there before and I was ready to show everyone what I could do. This fire didn't go away and, actually, still hasn't to this day. And so, I joined the football team and said good bye to the marching band as my first official act of taking control of my life. Looking back, I don't regret being in the marching band for three years, but I do wish I had played football all four years of my high school career.

Unfortunately, I never felt the urge to play until that moment of self-realization that my life would pass me by if I didn't take hold, that night in the stands. And I never would have had the determination to follow my heart without that fiery passion in my gut that was ignited that night. In the grand scheme of things, this decision was very minor in nature, switching from one extracurricular activity to another. However, for me, it was a very momentous and self-awakening experience where I discovered how strong I can be.