

## This I Believe : Live Life in ALL CAPS

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As I begin my senior year with overwhelming comfort, excitement, fear, nerves, and everything in between, I find myself reflecting on what I think to be the most important lesson I've learned here at Central and in the A Cappella Choir. I have only been able to grow and develop here due to the enormous efforts of peers, friends, professors, and YOU, my A Cappella Choir family. 3 major changes, many life crises, quitting jobs and starting new ones, mental health issues, and coming out. I'm telling you, it's a miracle I'm still standing here today.

To all you new members: welcome. You **belong** here. You deserve to be here, and you **are** good enough. This is and will be a safe space for you to grow, make mistakes, challenge yourself, and find a **home** here at Central. You just gained over 60 new singing family members and even a quirky old grandpa to guide you over the next 4 years. I mean family, because you won't like everyone in this room, you won't always get along, but you **WILL** always be supported here. It is through all of this support and guidance that I have learned my own most important life lesson: **LIVE LIFE IN ALL CAPS**.

I'm a graphic design snob, so it's only fitting I talk about typography. Go **ALL IN** in everything that you do—in choir, at work, and with your friends. Be **BOLD**, maybe even be *ITALICIZED* if you're feelin' frisky. Try to avoid being UNDERLINED, because I think it looks silly, and whatever you do, **NEVER USE COMIC SANS** unless you teach kindergarten.

Central has taught me to give everything I have in whatever I do. To do this, you may need to pick your priorities and find the things you love most. As Babs would say, "Everyone has a list. Are the right things on it? Should you add or drop things? Do they need to be reordered?" As you new members, and even you returners continue in your Central career, you will need to revisit and modify this list frequently. Do some need to be size 56 font, and others size 12? These are the questions that will keep you up at night. I found myself with a list too large my first few years here at Central, but over time, I have selected the things that I **can** and **want** to do **IN ALL CAPS**, and I am loving every minute of it. Get ready for the wildest ride of your life. I'm Tristan Miedema, and I believe in **LIVING LIFE IN ALL CAPS**.