

Today I began my morning much like any other Wednesday. As I sat in my room procrastinating, eating Golden Grahams and watching Parks and Recreation, I suddenly remembered that I had agreed to do This I Believe this afternoon at choir. Oops. I'd be lying if I said I didn't panic a little bit. I mean, I've never done one of these before. What do I write about? What if I do something someone else has already done? After about a minute of this, I said to myself: Don't Mooze out about this. What is a Mooze, you may ask? Well I'm going to tell you, and then I won't have to worry about whether or not you'll laugh at me. You will. For those of you who don't know, Mooze is a nickname given to me by my roommate early on my freshman year. Nobody knows exactly how it started, but since then it has come to mean "generally trying so hard to be cool and calm that you make things worse, typically by tripping over them". It would take about a year to tell you every Mooze story I have, and trust me this is going to be long enough as it is, so I'll just give you the highlights as examples.

My senior year of high school, I was really nervous about playing first chair flute in our conference honor band. I was in the front row, on the end where everyone could see me. Right before the last piece, the director began giving a speech about how all the parents should be so proud of us for becoming hard-working young men and women. That was about the time that I, for no apparent reason, shot my flute across the gym and sent it clattering to the floor several feet away. Don't worry, my dad has the whole thing on video.

Or my first ever dress rehearsal in the theater department here at Central during Murdered to Death. I tried to be calm and not draw too much attention to myself as we were quickly trying to change scenes on a completely dark stage. I finally found the arm of the chair I was to be sitting in at the beginning of the scene, and casually sat down...directly on the floor. Good thing I was wearing high heels and grabbed the curtain for support during my fall so that everyone knew it was me.

So, basically I'm a klutz. I wasn't cast as the scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz for nothing. I mean, if you invite me to your house, I guarantee I'll knock something off the wall. Mr. Babcock, I'm lookin' at you. Remember the time we all stopped by your house after Voces 8? There was a minor incident with a clock. Don't worry, I caught it. I am also a constant worrier who over-thinks everything. I came to Central with very little confidence, onstage and off. What if I trip? What if I say something stupid? What if my singing voice sounds weird or I forget my lines onstage? What if everyone throws tomatoes at me? I'd probably slip and fall...Anyway, I thought every performance, presentation, and project had to be perfect, and obviously it never was. Finally, I began to realize that I could never get any better if I didn't take a chill pill and learn to laugh at myself. I might trip and fall sometimes, and probably before I'm done talking to you today. I might run full-speed into the bar backstage during a production of Ah! Wilderness. I might trip and try to steady myself on a table with wheels. I might casually open the door to the restroom at the Des Moines Civic Center and throw my keys in the toilet. Yup, I threw them. But, so what? That's a part of who I am and it generally entertains people.

I guess what I'm saying is I believe in laughing at myself. In not taking things so seriously that you don't enjoy them. Since my first semester here, I've gotten so much better at just going with the flow (not completely, of course. I still Mooze out more often than I care to admit). But I do know that I'm never going to be perfect, and I shouldn't expect to be. I need to just do what I can to the best of my ability. I might mess up, but it also might be awesome. So don't Mooze out about finals, or graduation, or music juries, or whatever you have in your near future. If you find yourself taking things to seriously in the next week or so, just remember that I once tried to be a good citizen by hurrying across the street for four impatient cars at an intersection, and fell face first in the middle of the crosswalk. My name is Lexie Waymire, or Mooze if you prefer, and I believe in chilling out and laughing at yourself.