

**Me and my brother** are exactly one year and one day apart. We look like twins: people confuse us, but we couldn't be any more different. As children, we wore the same clothes and received the same haircut. By the time we got to middle school, it was clear that my older brother **kind of** preferred quiet, indoor activities, while I was a born performer who preferred the theatrical, even when off stage. I **took** his relative silence to be disinterested and found it offensive. To the chagrin of my parents, we simply didn't get along.

I didn't mind having a **stiff** relationship with my brother because I was involved **in** school. In particular, I delved into the world of musical theater in addition to regularly singing solos at our high school choir concerts. I spent hours after school preparing for shows, and when I came home, I practiced as well, falling into a rigorous routine I thought I needed to remain at my best and be competitive for parts.

My bedroom was far enough from my parents so as not to disturb them, but space to practice became an issue with my brother because, well, we shared a room. Imagine him meditating on a **window** seat while I am belting, trying to sustain a high note. Needless to say, this created tension between us. **From my point of view**, he could have **mediated** in the living room or while I was at practice, but he wasn't willing to budge. From his **point of view**, high school was hard enough without the constant sound of Glee arrangements.

At the start of the semester, I practiced "Circle of Life" for a concert audition. While I could sing it fine in its original key, I had a hard time singing it along with the music because the arrangement of the song we were working on had a key change that was out of my range. I couldn't change the key without my voice cracking as I switched to a head voice. This was the first time I struggled to learn a song, and I was a week from the audition. I was **irritable and salty** during that period and stopped practicing, declaring I had reached the height of my singing career. My brother **experienced** quiet when I got home for the first time in years.

After **a couple of days** of this, when I got home, he asked me to join him in meditation. And feeling my anger at my inability to navigate this song gracefully, I did. It was difficult at first; **the vibes were off**. I was trying to clear my head. Later my brother told me that wasn't the point. When your mind drifts away, you simply come back, with no judgment. I liked the sound of that, and it became my new philosophy. I kept trying at the song, no longer getting angry at myself, and just in time for the audition, I was able to maintain power in my voice despite the **change**. It was important for me to learn you don't have **to always** get everything right the first time and that good things come with continual effort. As for my brother, we no longer argue. I now understand why he prefers the quiet.