

Title: The American Dream: Not Dead Yet

Specific Purpose: To commemorate the idea of the American Dream.

Central Idea: The American Dream has brought hope to Americans, American immigrants, and will continue to bring hope to Americans in the future.

Introduction

I've often heard in my life that the American Dream that millions of Americans believe in is already dead. This is all but false. The American Dream is alive! According to The Heritage Foundation,

“[Twelve](#) percent of the population will reach the top 1 percent of income earners at least once. And 39 percent of Americans will spend time in the top 5 percent of earners, 56 percent will be in the top 10 percent and a whopping 73 percent will spend at least a year in the top 20 percent of earners.”

Meaning, most Americans will spend at least some time in the top 20 percent of earners. Without a doubt, the American dream is alive and well. Whether you're a man or a woman, white or black, a natural born American or an immigrant; in America you can be successful. This ideal that every citizen in America has equal opportunity to achieve success and fulfillment through their hard work and determination motivates and inspires millions of Americans every day, including me. You might debate if this idea is 100% accurate or not, but the idea itself is something that should be celebrated. The American Dream has brought hope to Americans throughout history, brings hope to American immigrants, and will continue to bring hope to Americans in the future.

Body

Transition: Let's begin by talking about the hope that the American Dream has brought to the hearts of millions of American citizens.

I. Across history, the American Dream has inspired and motivated Americans to work hard for their success.

A. In 1776, when America gained its independence, the American Dream was born, not in name but in spirit.

1. The American government was organized in a way so that its citizens were given rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
2. Thus started the journey of those millions of Americans, who worked with blood, sweat, and tears to pursue that mystifying happiness and success.

B. In 1865, when Lincoln passed the 13th Amendment, African Americans were given the liberty that they were promised, free to pursue the American Dream.

1. Many hardships were ahead of them, but they trudged on through the adversity.
2. Millions of those same African Americans found success in the same America that oppressed them.

C. Present day, people of all backgrounds are still chasing that same American dream.

1. We've all seen the many success stories on tv, or the people who have become famous from social media.
2. This has instilled this belief of a "If they did it, I can make do it too" attitude in most Americans.
3. Therefore, the American Dream is brighter today than it's ever been.

Transition: That light that shines so bright is seen by millions of foreigners that hope one day to call themselves Americans.

- II. The American Dream brings hope to immigrants wanting to become citizens of the U.S.
 - A. There is no question why America has the highest number of immigrants in the world.
 - 1. Millions of people see the opportunities provided by America and its people.
 - 2. They share that same dream of finding success in America like many of us.
 - B. Many of the biggest success stories in history have been immigrants who came to America looking for a better life.
 - 1. American immigrants like Elon Musk, Andrew Carnegie, and Yao Ming are all living examples of the American Dream in action.
 - C. Some foreigners see the opportunities in America to be so enticing that they immigrate here illegally.
 - 1. Sadly, some of these illegal immigrants must go through brutal conditions across the border to make it into America.
 - 2. In knowing this, us natural born Americans should all appreciate the opportunities given to us and the American Dream a little more.

Transition: In this appreciation, let's all look to the future with a brighter outlook.

- III. The American Dream will continue to bring hope to millions of Americans.
 - A. Although, we all will eventually have to decide whether to believe in this elusive American Dream or not.
 - 1. Some say this dream is dead, but I just can't bring myself to believe that.
 - 2. When I see the countless examples of individuals who rose through great adversity, past and present, I'm sure that this dream lives on in all Americans, and I'm pretty sure you do too.

B. Think about it; why are any of us even in this room right now?

1. To be educated? To pass this class? Maybe because your parents wish you to not skip any classes?
2. No. Most of us are in this room because we believe in the bigger picture; we believe that our hard work will eventually pay off in success; we believe in the American Dream.

Conclusion

In conclusion, through the hardships and adversities of life, some people choose to stop believing in the American Dream. They continue their life believing that their surroundings ultimately dictate their fate. I strongly advise all of you to never stop believing in the American Dream. Ask yourself, are your adversities greater than the revolutionaries who liberated America from Britain, the African Americans who found great success after the atrocities of slavery, or the millions of immigrants who went through great hardships to make it to America. If they did it, you can do it too. So, let's all celebrate and appreciate the American dream that brought hope to Americans throughout history, brings hope to American immigrants and foreigners of all backgrounds, and will continue to bring hope to millions of people in the future. (and) Remember, never stop dreaming. Thank you.

Bibliography

Tyrrell, Patrick. "Many Americans Will Be the 1% in One Year." *The Heritage Foundation*, 8 Apr. 2015, www.heritage.org/taxes/commentary/many-americans-will-be-the-1-one-year#:~:text=Twelve%20percent%20of%20the%20population,top%20%20percent%20of%20e arners.

Moslimani, Mohamad, and Jeffrey S. Passel. "Key Findings About U.S. Immigrants." *Pew Research Center*, 27 Sept. 2024, www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2024/09/27/key-findings-about-us-immigrants/#:~:text=The%20United%20States%20has%20long,of%20the%20world's%20intern ational%20migrants.