The American Dream

An excerpt of an essay written by Chris DeMello

Today, many people immigrate to the United States of America in search of the American Dream; freedom, equality, and the opportunity to achieve their personal goals in life that they could not otherwise achieve in their homeland. The American Dream is the pursuit of prosperity and opportunity that drives people to push their own limits and persevere in order to lead successful lives and achieve whatever goals they set. The American Dream is a reality; every citizen of the United States of America has the opportunity of its achievement no matter what prejudices they may face, depending on their perseverance and luck.

The term “The American Dream” has a few interpretations, but one of the most popular is “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence) which is the dream that most Americans strive for. In simpler terms, The American Dream is the opportunity of the pursuit of freedom, opportunity and satisfaction of needs and wants. As Thomas Wolfe said, “...to every man, regardless of his birth, his shining, golden opportunity ...the right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him”. This quote explains how everyone in the United States gets the right to fulfill this American Dream: to function as a member of modern day society and to pursue their hopes and dreams. If you come to America underprivileged or destitute, then you have the chance to turn that around through hard work and determination. As the explanation of the term states, everyone has the opportunity to achieve the American Dream, depending on how
much effort they put in or how fortunate they are. In other words, some people will be able to work hard and achieve their dreams, while others will work hard and not end up being fortunate enough to complete their goals.

Even though the concept of the American Dream is relatively well known, most people don’t realize how long ago it originated or it’s true meaning. The term “The American Dream” was actually coined in 1931 in a book called *The Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams. In this book, Adams states that “The American Dream is ‘that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement’”. Basically, he says that everyone has equal opportunity. So no matter what race, religion, or ethnicity someone is, they all have the same exact chance at success. This, of course, depends on how hard each person works towards their goals. If everyone works hard to achieve their goals and ultimately, their own personal American Dream, then they will succeed in their efforts.

The American Dream is the right of equal opportunity and success for all. It is the freedom everyone in America has to pursue their individual hopes and dreams and to lead rich, full, lives. Even if you come to America as a poor immigrant, you can still have the opportunity to climb the corporate ladder or even become the CEO of your own company. The achievement of the American dream almost always comes down to your own determination and willingness to work as hard as you can towards your goals. If you work hard and have enough perseverance, you may be lucky enough to achieve the success that you seek.