

## Living Patriotism Every Day of the Year

What does it mean to be patriotic? This question I often ask myself when nearing the "patriotic" holidays: however should patriotism be felt all year round?

I was born in China, and although I embrace my Chinese heritage, I am proud to be an American. As an American citizen I have so much to be grateful for. I feel blessed every day that I live in a country full of opportunity. A country where I can attend school, defend topics I care about, and share my faith freely with others. For these reasons I love the country that has given me so much.

Patriotism is supporting all of America's endeavors, in war and peace. I am thankful for what America's values, history, and people have taught me, and I would defend her in any situation to continue her legacy. Patriotism is honoring everything that represents America. Reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, singing the National Anthem, and respecting her leaders are all actions to show one's patriotism. These seemingly small actions show loyalty, honor, and humility not only to America, but also to the men and women who have fought to keep her free. Patriotism is recognizing that the blessings I have as an American should not be taken for granted. These blessings were fought for with blood, sweat and tears. Patriotism is a simple "thank you" to a soldier or veteran. I want to make a conscious effort every day to thank those who made sacrifices to protect our country, defend America's values, and ensure our freedoms.

Even though China is my birth place, America is my home. Respecting America as an American citizen through my thoughts, words, and actions every day is what patriotism means to me. I remind myself that patriotism is not hosting a cookout, shopping the sales, or posting a flag on social media. Rather, patriotism is a continual attitude of gratitude towards those who have kept America free, supporting her foundational values, and adopting a lifestyle that shows that appreciation in all situations.