

"Don't cry for us. We have given our todays for your tomorrows." This quote from the sign at the 4th Marine Division Cemetery on Iwo Jima embodies patriotism...the ultimate patriotism! The ultimate sacrifice is giving up one's life for others. These acts show loyalty, respect and love for a country and its people. Not everyone will join the military and die for America, but we can all have patriotism. Our hearts and minds can hold dear everything for which Americans have stood and sacrificed.

Patriotism is loyalty. Loyalty to the meaning and purpose of America. If the government is not accurately representing American values, it is one's duty to speak up or vote the American way. Loyalty shows pride and purpose. If someone bears another talking disrespectfully about their country, it is patriotic to be loyal and stand up for one's beliefs.

Respect for one's country shows great patriotism. Not only is it ethical, it shows pride. Respect is giving thanks to a veteran. It is saying the pledge, and holding a hand over one's heart while the National Anthem is playing. This shows respect and honor for the memory and meaning of the country.

Love is the heart of patriotism. Without love for one's country, it is difficult to hold loyalty and respect for it. This does not mean someone has to love everything the government does. This means that one should love what the country represents and those who have fought for her. It means to love and honor the sacrifice of all men and women who never returned home.

Patriotism can be a powerful force. Many people take The United States for granted. They do not realize the sacrifices that were made. I, however, do recognize the ultimate sacrifices, and want to honor them. I want to show loyalty, respect, and love for my country. Through their patriotism, our founding fathers were a powerful force for good. It is my hope that someday, I can make even a fraction of a difference in my world through my patriotism for this great country in which we live.