

## "The Constant Gardener of Patriotism"

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people ..." Lincoln's famous phrase encompasses why I love this country and have inherited a responsibility of keeping America the home of the free. America is a country of great beauty, freedom, and citizens who make this country flourish.

America is a wild, thriving meadow filled with different flowers of ethnicity. I appreciate that there is a variety of people seeded and planted throughout America blooming and growing in the rays of America's warmth and opportunities. Patriots fought for freedom for others from the Revolutionary War to the battles of today. Patriots of today evoke the spirit of Lincoln giving the "last full measure of devotion" whether it be the brave men and women who turned the hijacked plane around, or the soldiers who wait for their allies last breathe.

Because of these brave men and women and for the love of our country, we too have a responsibility to make sure that our freedom and liberties are not plucked and pulled out by the roots but are nurtured and cultivated to grow. Gardening patriotism is not always easy. No one is automatically a patriot as you have to work hard and make many sacrifices. It takes not only hard work and sacrifice to plow through problems and pestilence we may face on America's soil, but each and every one of us has the power to effect change in those around us to make our country grow and succeed.

We must all be Lincolns; gardeners of America's soil fighting against the weeds and blight of hate and prejudice and hoping to preserve the beautiful meadow filled with flowers of individuals, ideas, liberty, and beauty. America, may you continue to prosper and bloom as we tend to you your constant gardeners of patriotism.

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