

**Topic:** Working Hard to Achieve the American Dream

**Abstract:** As a child my father always taught me how to work hard for what I've wanted. Through hard work and dedication my father was able to give me and my family a better life. Hard work is the main point of this essay. With the help of God and the sense of unity and discipline he installs in me I've been able to accomplish many things I would have never even imagined I could. Through hard work and dedication we achieve the American Dream.

### Working Hard to Achieve the American Dream

Nobody said life was going to be easy, but for those who work hard to obtain what they want; life can be fulfilling and bring a sense of pride to the heart. My family comes from Michoacán Mexico, both mother and father decided to come to the United States to work and obtain the all American dream. For many people that immigrate to the United States seeking this American dream is the biggest accomplishment in their lives. I know this because my dad is always saying "Gracias a dios que nos dio una oportunidad de progresar" My dad came to the US to work and make hard earned money, simply by starting to take those heat killing jobs in the fields, migrating from place to place seeking the cash crops that this Country grows. His dirty cracked beaten hands were a symbol of hard work and dedication to me and the rest of my family. My mother has always been the one to take care of me and see me take those first steps and hear my baby talk go from words to sentences. I love my mother to death because she's always been there for me when my dad was doing what he could to bring the bread to the table. Out of both parents, I believe my dad has had the biggest impact on my life. He's shown me many life lessons, has shown me that even though we may not have all the money we should be thankful for the things Gods has blessed us with, and he's helped me function on my own in the real world and learn to make decisions.

It's really hard to believe that at the age of seven my father was all ready working selling packs of gum in the street corners in Mexico to provide for his many brothers and sisters. He grew up without a father so he had to take charge of the family and help his mother. I thought I had a rough childhood growing up. When I hear my father's stories about him growing up and the struggles that he went through as a child, I thank god for giving me a dad and a better life. The struggles that my father has been through have made him into the man he is right now. A hard working individual who will do what it takes to provide for the family and help me by reminding me that there are worse things in life then the little problems I'm going through.

People have always told me that I resemble my father, but I've never been able to see the resemblance. For a while I looked and didn't find much; just the eyes. As I began to mature more I realized that even though I am not the same replica of him, I obtained the same amount of courage, respect towards others and humility he has. The reason I say humility is because even though I don't have a Ferrari or a huge house in the hills I'm thank full for those things that God has blessed me with. My family is the biggest blessing that I've received because I'm fortunate to have both parents still around, unlike my father who only had his mother. My dad isn't the only person who's had a bad childhood, many people grow up being beaten by their parents, sometimes homeless in the streets which leads them to doing drugs and getting with the wrong people. Many people decide to grow up and pass on their childhood issues to their children. My dad decided to be a better person by always providing for my mother and my sister; he didn't let his childhood and struggles get in the way of being a better person than his dad. He showed me and my brothers the love that he never got as a child and never let his childhood memories affect him as a parent. I admire that about my dad because many people decide to have children and take their frustration out on their children. When people ask them "Why are you so cold" "why

do u mistreat your kids” they say “because that’s how I grew up” My dad never let that happen. He has given me a better life than the one he had and for that I’m thankful.

As a child growing up, and having to share my mom and dad with five other brothers, it was really hard to get new things like clothing, shoes, and school supplies. Most times I would have to get my older brothers old clothes and shoes because the money was really tight around the house. I remember as a child, not being able to have the nicest things made me take really good care of the things that I already had; Even if they were handed down from other people. I remember one Christmas getting a pair of white converse shoes. I made those shoes last two years. Right after school I would take them off and clean them with an old toothbrush and water. I’m really thankful that I was able to learn life lessons and a small kid because now that I’m an adult, I don’t take things for granted; Being brought up in a poor family made me learn the value of a dollar and the importance of getting an education to succeed in life. I learned the same lesson my dad learned when he was a child. At the age of fourteen, I began working at the flea markets unloading boxes of candies and boxes of flowers. In one day I would earn 25.00 dollars. Out of the twenty five dollars I would make, I would keep five for me and the rest give it to my mom for groceries. As soon as I had enough money for something that I really wanted to buy, I would go into my savings and buy it.

At this point in my life I can’t complain about how my life has turned out. I still don’t have a huge house or a Ferrari. But what I do have is a bigger apartment in a better area in town; I have a really nice 2008 Honda civic with rims and a better paying job. My car, I have been able to pay it off with no help from my parents, I was able to buy the rims with some money I had saved up for almost a year. A week doesn’t go by were I don’t maintain my car clean and dust free. My rims are always nice and clean because I take really good care of them. I know what my

car is worth and every bit of hard work that ive done reflects a lot on my car. A person takes better care of their personal belongings when he or she worked hard to get them. If my car was given to me, I don't think I would spend so much time and effort cleaning it, doing the oil change when it needs it and performing the regular maintenance requirements on it. When I finally become a father, I want my children to learn the value of hard work (not labor) but learning what it takes to the things they want without me have to give it to them. I feel like they're going to appreciate it more if they work for it. The same lesson my dad learned as a child, the lesson I learned I want my children to learn. Nothing in this life is free; it takes hard work to obtain a good education, a house, a car, a family. I have always been thankful for the things I have, and as I succeed in life and make more money, I'm going to continue to be thankful and not change the way I think.

After high school and graduating with a GPA of 3.8 I decided to give back to my country. It was a decision that didn't take much thought. I knew I wanted to do it and I knew my parents were going to be proud of me no matter what. I decided to join the Army, not only was I going to help my country in its time of need, I was also going to gain more experience than any other person that I know and set me apart from others. As a child I was always willing to put my part and help my family out, now I'm doing the same thing and helping my country. In me flows Mexican and American blood. The blood of a soldier that isn't scared to die for what he believes in. My family was able to come to this nation and find jobs and a better way of life for me and my siblings. By me joining the military, I'm saying thanks to my country for giving my parents the chance to progress and have a better life here than they did in Mexico.

I've come a long way as a person. I was fortunate enough to have a family who loves me and cares about me. My father has always been there for me and has never steered me wrong. He

has given me long talks about life and advice on how to be a better person. I've taken his advice and I've realized that I'm really fortunate to have someone like him in my life. A child learns a lot from his family, I've learned how to maintain discipline in a time of stress. An important lesson that I learned is that if I ever trip, to not stay of the ground, but get up and keep on moving. Life is only as great as you make it. I will never forget where my roots come from and never will I forget the life my dad had as a child. I thank him for making me into the man that I am know and teaching me so much about hard work, the value of a dollar and to never give up. I once heard my drill sergeant say "when a soldier gets shot and gives up on living, he or she has given up on living." Those words stayed engraved in my head because they made me think a lot about my dad and how he never gave up in trying to obtain a better life. If he would have given up and stopped trying to better himself I don't think I would be here right now writing this paper. I don't think I would have had the courage and honor to join the military. I wouldn't be the man that I am now. He never gave up on giving me and my brothers a better life and I will never give up. There is always room for progress and improvement. I won't settle for the minimum.