

The Great American Dream/Nightmare?

Was I awake, or asleep? I don't think I ever really went to sleep. I dreamed the dream; there was something inside of me that said - do it, time's running out, if you don't do it now, it will be too late. So I lived the dream. So many people had dreamed the dream for so long that it was the natural thing to do, at least it seemed appropriate at the time - I had lived a lot of other dreams - so why not the *Great American Dream*? Did I have to go to sleep to do it? Maybe part of me did, or maybe it was a deep meditation - a metamorphic state from which I would emerge a beautiful butterfly. All I can say is I showed up, paid attention and was completely conscious and focused - an A+ - no more B's for this kid, not when it came to living the dream and leaving a legacy.

So I made a promise. I would leave the world a better place. I would give it something, something bright, healthy in mind, body and spirit; something that could carry on the high ideals my family had dreamed of for generations.

That promise committed me to a course that enmeshed me in the American Dream and I walked resolutely toward fulfilling my promise, realizing that the dream was a nightmare and that those most at risk were the very gifts I had promised.

Everyone wanted the dream to be everything they were told it was - a panacea, a lofty, lovely prize attainable by the lucky few who could escape the backlash of the empty promises. But when the whole house of cards is founded on a false premise even wall-to-wall carpeting won't give it a strong foundation.

I gave it everything I had. I created an island of sanity in a crazy world wherever and whenever I could - desperately held on to *my* dream, standing fast against the rising tide of unconscious, thoughtless behavior that wanted to eat my babies for breakfast.

And everyone thought *I* was crazy. Crazy for wanting to be sane, for wanting a childhood for my children and an exciting, productive life and education for my teenagers.

The dream was a nightmare - could anyone tell? Couldn't they figure it out when the children started checking out - emotionally, physically, mentally? A.D.D.-ritalin, prozac, drugs, alcohol - doped up kids so they won't tell us the truth that we've been drinking booze, taking prozac, working ourselves to death to avoid hearing - that the expectations of the great dream are untenable and do not serve the hearts, minds and spirit of that incredible piece of creation - the human being.

But not my kids - not if I have anything to say about it. They know they're connected to a loving, abundant universe that shows up for them and gives them everything they need and want. That their family extends way beyond the blood lines. They know they have value simply because they are alive and they know how to say "no" and "thank you", "this is what I want" and "this is who I am". Do you know what it takes to nurture this in an unconscious world? It takes paying attention, it takes listening - very carefully - and responding to what you hear. And that, my friends is a gargantuan task. It takes walking way out on the edge, and being conscious and focused all the time - it takes showing up - wherever and whenever and however you are asked, and you are asked in the most interesting ways.

All so you can give the gift of life, of courage, of freedom from fear and self-doubt - and perhaps one day contribute to making the world a wonderful place to grow in.