

I look up in the sky and see the daytime moon, floating like a marble in the blue air. It brings me back to the days when I would play marbles with my older brother and make wishes on the moon. I am reminded of a simpler time in my life when freedom meant playing outside in the hot, sweaty summer and not having an early bed time. Life was uncomplicated and the eyes of a child see the world in a very effortless way.

If I was born in the Punjab district of Pakistan my childhood experience would have been very different. I may have been forced into making stitched rugs, musical instruments or soccer balls instead of being able to go to school and have a dream for my future. I may have thought this was "normal" and be thankful that I was not being bought and sold like some of the others. I may have thought I had freedom because I was allowed to have only six hours a day for myself.

Freedom is not just about your right to vote, speak freely, what religion you are or what gender you are allowed to marry. Freedom is bigger than just these things. Freedom is also bigger than our communities and our country. Those of us who have privilege in this world have a higher responsibility to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. We need to be the voice for those who are truly not free, for the children who are working in the gold mines as slaves in Zimbabwe, or the child soldiers in Sudan. The fight for freedom should not stop at the borders of our country. If we only concern ourselves with the individual freedoms that we have, we are missing out on an opportunity to make the world a better place. Freedom should be for all people, not just citizens within our country.

If you believe in freedom you should do whatever it is you can to help advance it not only in our country but over the world. Your efforts do not have to be extravagant or expensive. It is doing what you can. That could mean speaking up and reaching out to those in your community who may be oppressed, donating time or funds to a program such as UNICEF who fight to give children rights across the world. It

could even mean taking the time to research politicians who run for office to see where they stand on protecting the rights of all people. If everyone could do a small part, the communities we live in, our country and the world could be a better place. Simple and small changes done by many people would create a ripple effect that could grow and grow until the entire world has been effected. Each ring of the ripple would reach farther and farther out into the world and over time we could make improvements. Perhaps the child in Pakistan could go to school, get an education and have freedom to choose his life path. If a child doesn't want to do that at all, however, he or she should have the freedom to make that decision for themselves. If we could protect the freedom of young people in Sudan it could give those children options for their futures.

My hope is that we all choose something small to help those who do not have the freedoms that we have in America. It starts with each individual taking the time to help those less fortunate. It can truly make an impact to those in need if we all do our part. The children in these parts of the world should be able to look up into the sky, see the daytime moon and have the opportunity to make their wishes come true. If we "believe in freedom" we "cannot rest until it comes."