

IN THE MIDDLE: Freedom valuable to all of us

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Freedom: n., the state of being free or at liberty rather than in confinement or under physical restraint

For me, freedom goes much further than the dictionary definition, as it should for every American. I don't think real freedom can be completely described in words.

Everyone has a different take on freedom; some might believe it's feeling safe but in free reign. Or maybe just being able to express opinions freely without being gunned down. Others might just believe it's a right and leave it at that without a second thought.

My personal feeling with freedom is that it shouldn't be taken for granted. We're lucky for every bit of freedom we have. From giving a speech about gay rights, listening to music, or even just buying the brand of chocolates you like, freedom is an important aspect of everyday life. Having an opinion isn't freedom, being able to express it is. You can live in the strictest society and still have an opinion on everything.

Freedom helps you find your true self. Restraint makes a fake you. Ability, flexibility, leeway, liberty, independence, all synonyms of freedom. Maybe

"something that you shouldn't take for granted" should be in there. Probably 98 percent of Americans take freedom for granted every day. But it makes sense, that's how us Americans are raised, right? Freedom is no big deal for us, but it could be a North Korean's biggest dream.

Let's not forget that freedom is what soldiers have fought for. Many losses have been sacrificed for freedom. Soldiers that fight for the freedom and independence of America are killed too often. Families and friends suffer every day because of the loss. And another brave man or woman will take their place, then the cycle will happen again, and again, and again.

Tomorrow our freedom could be taken away. ISIS or some other terrorist group could succeed in their plans and take over America. We would give anything to have that independence back, wouldn't we? We need to remember how valuable freedom really is, and how our lives would change for the



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worse without it.

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