

A Patriot



A Patriot: one who loves his or her country. ¹

So what is a patriot? I decided to do some research by asking the question “What does it mean to be a patriot?” to people from different age groups about what was a patriot to them.

First, I asked a 6-year old about what she thinks it means to be a patriot. She told me that a patriot is “proud to fly the flag of their country, vote, and speak out for what is right.” Other countries make it hard to be patriotic when they do not take care of their people. In our country, “I can be a patriot helping our soldiers by doing nice things for them.”

Next, I interviewed a middle-aged adult. “A patriot is someone who takes pride in their country, and shows that through their active involvement as a citizen. Modern-day patriots are those who speak up on behalf of the rights of others who vote regularly and promote causes for the betterment of our country.” As a parent, she feels “it is essential to teach children to be proud of

their country, and find way for them to be involved as good citizens in their community.”

Finally I interviewed two seniors. They defined patriot as “a person who lives in their country and will fight for it. Someone, who will be a good citizen by obeying rules, voting, and participating in public events.” They added, “A patriot believes in the values the country has, protecting the rights of citizens, and would do nothing to undermine those citizens’ rights.” They also emphasized the purpose of setting a good example when interacting with people from other countries, “showing positive national support, so as to not to put a bad light on your country.”

Thanks to the interviews, I now had many definitions. I realized that patriotism is tied to peoples’ personal thoughts and feelings about their country. One cannot just answer the question “What does it mean to be a patriot?” without also answering “What does it mean for ME to be a patriot?”

So now the question is mine. I think that being a patriot means being loyal to your country. It means being actively involved as a citizen. Right now my active

involvement in support of my country is to save a ship called the S.S. United States. The S.S. United States is a passenger liner built in 1952 and is clocked as the fastest ship in the world. For 30 years it has been sitting in a shipyard in Pennsylvania, worn down and forgotten. My dad has been working on its behalf to try to save the ship as an important marker of U.S. history and innovation before it gets carried off and sold for scrap. I want to help because throwing this ship away is like throwing the flag away. For the ship to be saved, enough money needs to be raised to renovate the ship completely. 10 to 12 million dollars is required for the renovation of the exterior.

Everyone has different ideas of what patriotism means to them, and all are right in their own way. I am going to show my patriotism by helping to save the S.S. United States, an important part of American history.