

# Dreams

In a world burdened by mediocrity and unconcern, it is imperative that you begin to dream dreams and fantasize about how your unique talents and skills will help others and enrich your life in the process.

You must recognize education as the path to your dreams - as the path to a better world. Value each of your days in school as an invitation to opportunity and an avenue to success. Commit yourself to greater academic involvement at the expense of leisure time, ease, and convenience. Remember that excellence is not a product of happenstance; it is the result of studied effort. As you begin to pursue your dreams, you will find that there is no substitute for hard work. It is the only key to a great many achievements that seem, at first, beyond our reach, but after having been won are regarded as mere stepping stones to even nobler attainments. Work leads to success and success to self-confidence and continued growth.

Enter the arena of academic competition and dream about reading better than, writing better than, and speaking better than. Dream about establishing the best level of performance in your classes. Come to school every day with a receptive attitude towards learning and a self-discipline that will not allow you to be drawn off course. Strive to do the best you can on achievement and college entrance tests. Set educa-

tional goals as well as life goals and develop a love for that will harness your dreams. You, as well as the adults who work with you, should set the highest possible standards of performance and remain unsatisfied until these expectations are met and subsequently exceeded.

Get in touch with the valuable person you are. Your parents and teachers realize your worth, but **you** must feel it. You must sense your potential and be guided by its wonderful presence. You alone will determine your success or failure. Your developing the self-esteem, self-respect, and self-discipline that lead to self-actualization and improved performance is essential to your personal evolution.

After you've become number one among your peers, don't become complacent; compete with yourself by setting even higher standards. Break your own records of performance. Push yourself to continued academic and personal growth. Become the independent thinker and doer who goes beyond the classwork to introduce new ideas in the school and in the community. As you become an academic leader, demonstrate a concern for others by challenging your classmates to aspire. Use peer pressure in a positive way by encouraging your friends to achieve with you and become fellow competitors.

Life is not ordinary. You are not like anyone else. You have so many assets that you're not even aware of them all. The

unique way you walk, smile, think, and talk has special meaning. You are meant to share your personality and experiences by contributing to others. You are not meant to fall prey to statistics. You are not supposed to be one of the 40% of American teenage girls becoming pregnant annually. You are not supposed to be one of the black males who contributes to a high rate of unemployment or who becomes a victim of homicide. You are not meant to be dulled or deceived by drugs or alcohol. You are not meant to be the one out of high school in this country. You are meant to be a leader. You are meant to be the president of the bank, the senator, the attorney, the judge, the doctor, the professor, the teacher, the engineer, the scientist. I am daring you to dream of becoming President of the United States. You are meant to be one person who makes a difference in a world that is fraught with need. You are the answer to the world's problems.

Above all, as you reach for your dreams, do so with honesty, fairness, and forthrightness. Grow with a transcending love of humanity and a sense of how one person can better the world.

If you "shoot for the moon" you may not reach it, but as you fall back on a star you will still be on high.

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