

Freedom's Feast INDEPENDENCE DAY



We hold these truths to be self-evident... that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, 1776

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN
16TH U.S. PRESIDENT,
1809-1865
FROM THE GETTYSBURG
ADDRESS**

Happiness is not a goal...it's a product of a life well-lived.

**ELEANOR ROOSEVELT
FIRST LADY, HUMAN
RIGHTS ADVOCATE
1922-2000**

MAKE YOUR OWN AMERICAN DREAM QUILT!

The American Dream of Independence was declared by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The Declaration of Independence contains many remarkable ideas. Among them is the notion that we are born with certain “unalienable rights.” In America, our system of government would ensure that all citizens would have equal access to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Many believe that this commitment, though unfulfilled in 1776, lies at the heart of the American Dream. That is why centuries later, the United States of America remains a dream destination for immigrants everywhere.

The Idea

Create an American Dream Quilt that reflects your family’s or group’s history. Enjoy your keepsake for years to come!

Why?

Just as Americans gather for barnraisings, we also come together to make quilts. Americans in rural communities developed the traditions of the quilting bee, to help complete one or more quilts in a single day. More recently, entire communities have made giant patchwork quilts for AIDS and other causes.

What It Is

A quilt is a multi-layered cloth cover with a top, filler, and a back. Crafted in many styles - patchwork, embroidered, applique, and used for many purposes - bedcover, wall hangings for warmth or decoration, given as wedding and baby gifts. Quilts have become a unique and cherished form of American folk art.

What You Will Need

- 6” x 6” paper squares in red, white, and blue (sturdy paper)
- Yarn, cord or ribbon to stitch together
- Images of American symbols or ideas
- Beads, sparkle, buttons, other red, white, silver and gold embellishments
- Copies of:
 - family photos
 - special letters
 - family documents: diplomas, awards, citizenship papers or other important records of your American story
- Glue stick, white school glue, archival glue (depending on materials chosen)
- Hole punch



AIDS Quilt on the National Mall. Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress.



A portion of the "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" Quilt made by CMOM visitors.

The U.S. Constitution does not guarantee happiness, only the pursuit of it. You have to catch up with it yourself.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
FOUNDING FATHER
1706-1790

When I hear somebody sigh, "Life is hard," I am always tempted to ask, "Compared to what?"

SYDNEY HARRIS
JOURNALIST, 1917-1986

You are not judged by the height you have risen, but from the depth you have climbed.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS
AUTHOR, ORATOR,
ACTIVIST 1818-1895

The greatest part of our happiness depends on our dispositions, not our circumstances.

MARTHA WASHINGTON
1ST U.S. FIRST LADY,
1731-1802

Humanity has won its battle. Liberty now has a country.

MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE
REVOLUTIONARY WAR
GENERAL, 1737-1854

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women were created equal.

**ELIZABETH CADY
CANTON**
ABOLITIONIST, WOMEN'S
RIGHTS LEADER
1815-1902

Be yourself. No one can say you are doing it wrong.

CHARLES SCHULZ
CARTOONIST
1922-2000

Directions

Each family member or person at your July 4 gathering creates their own quilt square to express their vision of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

1. *To Begin*

Use Table Talk: “Celebrating Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” to learn about a significant member of your family and their American story. Families may have been here for generations or recently arrived to the United States to begin a life in this country. Table Talk helps to guide the conversation around the themes of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Responses can help you to design your quilt and learn about your family’s history and their Fourth of July holiday memories.

2. *Be Creative*

- Look for and cut out American symbols and images in magazines, online resources or make your own.
- Add special family photos, mementos, or draw your own special representations.

- When each person has finished their square, assemble them together with the yarn, cord, or ribbon by punching holes in squares and connecting them in a patchwork pattern.
- Consider laminating each section to preserve your quilt.
- Display the beautiful quilt in your home as a reminder of what you appreciate about the promise of the American ideal: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- If you prefer, turn the pages into an American Dream scrapbook instead of a quilt.

3. *Enjoy learning and creating together!*

Post photos and share a virtual version of your quilt with family and friends. Ask them to add their squares.

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