

## The True Meaning of Memorial Day

In a time of confusion and tension one thing remained clear: the dead must be remembered. After the Civil War, when upheaval and despair were constant forces in a war struck country, General John Logan proclaimed Decoration Day to be on May 30th 1868. Decoration Day was a day to honor those who died in the recent conflicts of the war. The true meaning of memorial day, as a remembrance of those lost to war and strife, lies in the hearts of all those who have grieved the loss of an honorable sacrifice for their country.

Memorial Day is not just a day to get off of school; it is an occasion to honor the sacrifice of the men and women who have died in order to secure the freedom of our futures. It is not a holiday to be taken lightly but rather one to be celebrated solemnly. Too many people have forgotten the importance of Memorial Day. Having officially become a national holiday in the northern states of America by 1980, and now being observed on the last monday in May, it is celebrated but not by all. To me Memorial Day is not just a day to remember the fallen in war, it is a day to remember that only because they have fallen may we rise. We live free each and every day due to the sacrifices of our soldiers and the brave men and women who protect our streets, our homes and our lives. It is a day to remind us that everyday we have is a blessing and that we should not waste a minute. It is a day to thank those who have given it all and to thank those who are still giving. We celebrate Memorial Day because we know that every life matters. Even if you have not watched someone you love go to war never to return, even if someone you love has not died in order to protect you, that does not mean that you have no reason to celebrate Memorial Day. Parents often sacrifice a lot for their children, whether they know it or not: time, money, sanity and so much more get sacrificed so that their children may have a better life than

them. Although it began as a remembrance of those who died in the Civil War, Memorial Day's true meaning has spread and grown like a tree that stands as a tall reminder of its many givings. The Civil War its roots, World War I its trunk, and the branches representing all the meanings it could have: remembering veterans; current military members, and anyone who has ever made a sacrifice on our behalf.

On Memorial Day, and everyday, we must pay our respects to all those whose sacrifices have given our life meaning. Take a look at your life, think of the lives that have touched yours, think of the lives you've touched, and think of how many more lives you still can touch. The true meaning of Memorial Day is what you make it; all you have to do is look in your heart and find out.

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