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What it Means to Me to Live in the United States of America

If there is a word that describes me, this word is faith. Not an unfruitful faith, but a faith that when we believe in something and we fight for that, without never giving up, we succeed. My obstinacy already took me far away... so far that the little girl born in a small town in the state of São Paulo, Brazil, could never imagine. In 2000 I was admitted to the School of Journalism in one of the most recognized high education institutions in the country, the Pontificia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro, in the 20th place of the general institution rank, which granted me a scholarship for the entire course.

Born to a family that immigrated to Brazil, daughter of divorced parents, and had already lived in four different cities, in ten distinct houses, moving has been a part of my life. Change for me means a new opportunity to learn something new and to acquire a new point of view. On the contrary of many people, I was not a little girl brought to the United States by my parents while a child. The American dream was dreamt by me. I was 21 when I came on my own, driven by a dream of a better life and sure about what I wanted for my future.

God always taught us to respect the foreigner. Deuteronomy 10:18-19: "God defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing. And you are to love those who are aliens, for you yourselves were aliens in Egypt". In one way or another the history of immigration to the United States of America is also the history of the United States itself, and the journey from beyond the sea is an element found in the American myth. The reality is even more amazing than the myth in some ways as the succeeding generations learn how to

cooperate or at least tolerate each other to build a strong system of shared core beliefs that has succeeded far beyond its original founders would have ever believed possible.

I believe nowadays the same spirit still sounds among the fearless immigrants that here, in the Uncle Sam land, arrive. What does not mean it is an easy experience. We have to face obstacles during the adaptation process, such as the language barriers, cultural differences, being apart from the family or even eating habits and weather differences. In addition, there is the discrimination against the immigrants and the unfavorable laws that makes the journey much harder. It is necessary an overwhelming amount of strength to overcome all the hardship.

At the same time, the enriching opportunities encountered in America are a treasure for the rest of our lives. The move to the United States taught me important lessons about world and social issues that I will keep forever. It gave me a hunger for knowledge and the chance to grow intellectually, to experience American values as democracy, freedom of expression and religion and learn more about different cultures, especially in a diverse city like Miami. Here I could understand what it is like to be an immigrant and learn how to have an open mind and to be a multitasked person.

Therefore, living in the United States as an immigrant is an unique experience that besides the drawbacks is a challenging opportunity to achieve self-advancement and to improve as a human being. As the American eagle, the immigrant is a survivor who needs to hunt for opportunities in a foreign land, have force and be sharp in a territory full of adversities.