

Freedom Promotes a Better Society

“The truth is I love being alive. And I love feeling free. So if I can't have those things then I feel like a caged animal and I'd rather not be in a cage. I'd rather be dead. And it's real simple. And I think it's not that uncommon.” This statement made by Angelina Jolie sums up a truth that is deep in every human being's soul, the desire to be free and feel alive. We live in a country that “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.” Indeed, we are fortunate to enjoy the liberties guaranteed by First Amendment of the Constitution, such as the freedom of speech, freedom to associate or freedom to assemble, and free exercise of religion. These liberties are hard earned, purchased by the blood of brave men because they believed these principles were worth fighting for: for themselves and for others.

People in many countries do not have these “inalienable rights” that I possess. Who am I referring to? For instance, the Kavi's of the world working in brick kilns in India (1), the Jamie's who were trafficked before going to My Refuge House in the Philippines (2-3), the Anna's before coming to Many Hopes in Kenya (4-5), the Hyeonseo Lee's in North Korea's concentration camps before escaping to freedom (6), and the many sexually exploited and trafficked children around the world including those in our nation's cities. There are also the Malala Yusufzai's in Pakistan, shot for desiring girls' education; the Pastor Saeed Abedini's of the world, imprisoned for his religion; Christian converts and infant children with their

Baha'i mothers, imprisoned in Iran and other countries for their religious beliefs; the Tibetans and Baha'is persecuted for their religious beliefs in China; the Samuel's in Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda, abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army and whose parents were killed by them (7); and many others living in countries experiencing upheaval, such as Syria, Egypt, Nigeria, etc.

Many of the people mentioned above experience “unfreedom,” termed by the 1998 Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen, which includes economic poverty (both as deprivation of basic capabilities and low-ness of income), systematic social deprivation, repressive states, forms of tyranny, and denial of political and civil liberties. Removal of these unfreedoms is necessary for expansion of real freedoms on many levels, which would increase the extent that people can live life, individually and collectively.

Freedom of individuals is the basic building block of Sen's book, *Development as Freedom*, in which he states that “greater freedom enhances the ability of people to help themselves and also to influence the world...” And so it is no surprise that since the beginning, many immigrants flock to the U.S. and other democratic countries, in pursuit of life and liberty, for they know that where there is freedom, there are opportunities socially, economically, politically, etc. Furthermore, where there are political freedoms and democracy, people are able to participate in the enhancement of economic freedom, and elicit responses to the economic needs of those who are involved. With open discussion and expression, the needs of the community can be addressed.

“ We at *Cancer InCytes* strive to shine light on various unfreedoms, working collectively with individuals and organizations around the globe to enhance the freedom and good of others. ”

Hence, freedoms of different kinds strengthen one another to create a better society.

Nelson Mandela once said, “For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” A wise friend of mine mentioned that true freedom does not deprive someone else of what is good for them. I would further add that not only does true freedom not deprive someone else of what is good for them; it enhances what is good for them. We at *Cancer InCytes* strive to shine light on various unfreedoms, working collectively with individuals and organizations around the globe to enhance the freedom and good of others.

Sincerely,



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