

## Beyond the Dream

by

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As we begin the New Year, we focus on our resolutions—our goals. In our vernacular, “goals” carries connotations that are similar to those embodied in “dreams.” Let’s recall what we know about dreams.

Dreams are very much a part of America’s historical landscape.

The nation was founded on a dream of freedom from England, which led to the Revolutionary War and Independence in 1776.

Black slaves’ dreams of freedom were partly realized with the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War in 1865.

In the 1930’s, President Herbert Hoover had a dream: “A Chicken in Every Pot.”

In the 1960’s, Martin Luther King’s had a dream, which was ultimately embraced by many Black and White Americans.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s, the dream was “a house in the suburbs, with two cars in the garage.”

Unfortunately, the dream of too many Black American youth today is to have the celebrity of Rap Music stars along with the bling-bling or of sports icons with the multi-million dollar contract.

I’d like to recommend altering the logic of dreams a little and to focus on “goals” rather than “dreams.” History tells us that successful dreamers plan systematically to achieve their dreams.

Think practically. If one is dreaming, then one is asleep and the particulars of the dream may be distorted. Consider discontinuing the dream; awakening to reality; and formulating concrete goals. Once goals are formulated properly, then they can be operationalized into a “strategic plan” on which action can be taken. In other words, get beyond the dream and get a plan.

Look inside. Identify your special dream—your truest wish. Is this a dream without which you cannot live if it goes unfulfilled? Transform the dream into a goal. Pursue the goal unyieldingly.

It is appropriate that we consider the role of dreams in our lives, given the recent release of the movie “DreamGirls.” Unlike the movie, our dreams do not have to unravel into nightmares. Rest assured that you can transform your dreams into goals and your goals into reality without destroying your life or the lives of those around you.

However, if you are stuck on “dreams,” then consider these words of caution. Only permit correct dreams to surface in your consciousness. Avoid becoming too enamored with your dreams so as to fail to recognize reality. Do not dream a dream too long; know when to move on. Finally, recognize when your dreams have been achieved, and then be certain to formulate new ones.

As for the rest of us, let’s seek to remain wide awake, and to face the cruel realities of a world that recognizes goal setters that plan and become achievers, not dreamers.

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