

To be American is...

**To attend to life with complete zeal
To fail toward success**

**To secede from apathy, ordinary and bore
To reveal the true self, beauty and humanity in others**

**To gather around us dear friends and inevitable family
To commune oft enough to choke out isolation**

**To forgive those we oppose
To live in respect of those who gave all**

**To divide clearly the subjective and the resolute
To honor the wise and the child**

**To give of tender, self and goods
To form bold stories and share completely**

**To be a patriot, a heretic, a soldier, a poet
To serve in defense of the few and the many**

**To believe our strengths fragile and our inequities beautiful
To risk what we love, create what we will and do what we know**

This is to be American.