



A Declaration

The American Export

Edmund Zheng, The American Hypnotist · Published as America turns 250 · July 2026

What is America's greatest export?

Not its military. Not the U.S. Dollar. Not Hollywood.

It is the belief that you can **change the circumstances of your life.**

"The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind."

William James, father of American psychology

As the American Hypnotist, I believe three things.

- I. The world is lonely, stressed, and hungry for purpose.
- II. The most powerful gift you can give someone is the ability to change their life. That gift has a name: hypnosis.
- III. The American Dream is that same gift at a civilizational scale, and it deserves to be spread far and wide.

I. The world is lonely, stressed, and hungry for purpose

Walk through any city on Earth right now and you can feel it. People are silently searching for more in their lives.

- 871,000 deaths a year are linked to loneliness, about 100 every hour. WHO, 2025. Lacking connection carries a health risk compared to smoking up to 15 cigarettes a day.
- 37% of adults worldwide felt a lot of stress yesterday; 39% felt a lot of worry. Gallup World Poll. Global employee engagement fell to 20% in 2025, its lowest since 2020, costing ~\$10 trillion in lost productivity, about 9% of global GDP.
- 58% of young adults said they lacked meaning or purpose in the past month. Harvard, Making Caring Common. Young adults without purpose reported more than double the anxiety and depression of those who have it: 54% vs 25%.

But stress is only the surface. Underneath it is something quieter and more dangerous: people are losing the belief that their circumstances can change at all. Global employee engagement has sunk to 20%, its lowest since 2020, costing roughly \$10 trillion in lost productivity, about 9% of global GDP. Among young adults, nearly three in five report lacking meaning or purpose in the last month. Those without purpose suffer more than double the anxiety and depression of those who have it.

Nowhere is the lost belief clearer than in the country that invented the promise. Belief that the American Dream still holds true has fallen from 53% in 2012 to 31% in 2025, the lowest in roughly fifteen years of polling. Only 25% of Americans think they have a good chance of improving their standard of living, a record low since the question was first asked in 1987.

A stressed world is a market for relief. A world that has stopped believing it can change is a calling. That is the gap this work exists to close.

II. The most powerful gift you can give someone is the ability to change their life. That gift has a name: hypnosis.

So goes the old line, “Give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.” Hypnosis isn’t some temporary fix to whatever ailment one has, rather it permanently changes how one can view and tackle life.

Hypnosis isn’t sleep. It’s not mind control, and it’s not for the weak-minded. It is a state of focused attention and heightened responsiveness to suggestion: closer to being absorbed in a film than to being asleep, and nothing like losing control. It is also measurable: hypnotizability is a stable, testable human trait, distributed through the population like any other. Roughly two-thirds of adults are at least moderately hypnotizable, and 10–15% are highly so. Stanford’s David Spiegel calls it as stable a trait in adult life as IQ.

What the brain scans show

For the doubters: hypnosis is visible on a brain scan. In a landmark Stanford study, researchers screened 545 people, then scanned the brains of highly and minimally hypnotizable participants. Under hypnosis, and only under hypnosis, and only in the hypnotizable, activity shifted in three specific brain regions governing attention, self-consciousness, and the connection between mind and body. In 2024, Stanford went further: 92 seconds of targeted brain stimulation temporarily increased hypnotizability itself, moving a trait that had resisted change for a century of research. Whatever hypnosis is, it is not pretending.

What the clinics prove

- **Quitting smoking:** 2× the abstinence rate of nicotine patches at 6 months: 36.6% vs 18% (Hasan et al., Complementary Therapies in Medicine (2014))
- **Public speaking:** 70%+ of clients doing the same therapy without hypnosis were outperformed by the average client who added it (Kirsch, Montgomery & Sapirstein, Journal of Consulting & Clinical Psychology (1995))
- **Language learning:** 21 new Spanish words learned under hypnosis were recalled better, both immediately and a week later (American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis (2016))
- **Anxiety:** 79% of untreated people ended up more anxious than the average patient treated with hypnosis (Valentine et al., International Journal of Clinical & Experimental Hypnosis (2019))

- **Pain:** 42% less pain with direct suggestion, across 85 controlled trials (Thompson et al., Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews (2019))
- **Deep sleep:** +81% more slow-wave sleep after a hypnotic suggestion, measured by EEG (Cordi et al., SLEEP (2014), University of Zurich)

Witnesses

Some of the most scrutinized performers alive have said publicly that hypnosis helped them change something real.

"I should have done it years ago. It's amazing. I didn't even want cigarettes anymore."

Matt Damon · On quitting smoking after 16 years, via hypnosis. The Tonight Show with Jay Leno.

"I highly recommend it."

Jessica Alba · Founder of The Honest Company, on using HypnoBirthing (self-hypnosis) for the births of her daughters. Marie Claire, TODAY.

"I think I used it enough then that it's inherent in what I do now."

Tiger Woods · Trained from age 13 with psychologist Dr. Jay Brunza, who used hypnosis and taught him self-hypnosis to enter "the zone."

"I'm an exponent of hypnosis. I was raised off of hypnosis since I was 13, 14, until the end of my career. I always had hypnosis before I fought."

Mike Tyson · On his mental preparation under trainer Cus D'Amato. Good Trouble podcast, 2024.

"Hypnosis is the most direct demonstration that a human being is never fixed in circumstance but an ever changing individual whose story can be rewritten at any time. It boosts moods from gloomy to upbeat, encourages the timid to be courageous, and captivates the audience to rethink what's possible."

III. The American Dream is that same gift at a civilizational scale, and it deserves to be spread far and wide

Strip the American Dream down and it is a hypnotic induction, scaled to a nation: *you can change your circumstances*. It is the most valuable idea America ever produced, and the real engine of its soft power. Beneath all of it runs a sentiment, a feeling that has lasted the test of time and is

far more contagious. The belief that you are never a finished individual, that you always have room to change and grow in this life.

The American Dream is an operating system, and it runs in the blood of immigrants who came to America from every corner of the world. Immigration itself is ancient; no nation invented the act of moving. But the U.S. packaged and perfected the idea that you can come from anywhere and become American, until it became the assumed belief of the modern world. Multi-ethnic societies are rare in history. And yet the United States is the most beautiful experiment in diversity that the world has ever produced. “E pluribus unum: Out of many, one,” goes the motto.

It is this operating system, the idea that you can come from any circumstance and live your dream life in America, that is now faltering: at home and abroad.

At home

The Dream’s original definition was economic: each generation out-earning the last. By that measure it has gone from near-certainty to a coin-flip: from roughly 90% of children born in 1940 out-earning their parents to about 50% of those born in 1980. Most dramatic, and in contrast to much of the country’s 250-year history, is the ascendant view that this nation of immigrants is harmed by them. For the first time in at least half a century, America may see near-zero or even negative net migration in 2025 and 2026.

Abroad

If the American Dream stops being spread, the world stops being drawn to hope. America remains the single most-named destination for the world’s would-be migrants, but only 15% now name it as their first choice, down from 24% in 2007–09. In a Nira Data survey of 46,667 people across 85 countries, respondents ranked America the world’s fifth-most-disliked country, viewed more negatively than Russia or China.

Language and Accessibility

Conversations around the idea that you can change your life are largely gatekept in an English-speaking ecosystem, which only 18% of humanity can participate in.

Five languages, a combined reach approaching 3.8 billion people, close to half of humanity before adjusting for overlap. This is the distribution network. Source: Ethnologue 2025.

Part of expanding the American Dream is through 1. Translating it into other languages and 2. Teaching English. Both are made much more efficient through hypnosis. What use is the American Dream if it only benefits those who have moved to the U.S.?

Already underway

- **PT • Portuguese** · Brazil · São Paulo · Performed. A full show in Portuguese.
- **ES • Spanish** · Argentina · Buenos Aires · Performed. A full show in Spanish.
- **Next** · The map is open · The method is proven. The next rooms are being chosen.

America at 250

America is hope.

America is an idea.

America is unfinished.

Optimism is an untapped resource inside of every human being. Our ability to mint it and unlock it in society is what will determine the world's future.

Edmund Zheng, The American Hypnotist, is ready to spread the news of hypnosis and how it can transform your life for the better.

*“Everyone’s in a trance.
Choose yours wisely.”*

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping loops and a long, sweeping underline.

The American Hypnotist

Signed in Paris · July 2026

The full declaration, with sources, figures, and all five languages, lives at theamericanhypnotist.com/declaration