

Brian Chesky

If you told my teachers growing up that one of their students would be a signatory of this pledge, I don't think any of them would have picked me. I wouldn't have blamed them. I was a little disruptive in class, to say the least.

Like most young children, I had an intense imagination. I believed I could become anything. But like most kids, as I grew, I began editing my imagination. I started to become "more realistic." By the time I graduated high school and decided to go to art school, my main goal was to one day get a job with health insurance.

This is where my journey would have ended had it not been for people who believed in me. Growing up, my parents believed I could do anything I set my mind to. In high school, I had a teacher who saw what others did not and recommended I go to art school. At RISD, professors taught me that I could design the kind of world I want to live in. I met one of my co-founders Joe, and he convinced me to move to San Francisco to start a company, a move that would change my life.

I am only able to write this letter because a few people saw in me what at times I have not seen in myself. I am not special, but I had special people in my life.

We all live with unknown potential. The younger you are, the more unknown it is. But the clock ticks by each day of your life. And each day someone young isn't exposed to what is possible, their potential slowly dims.

You can have a lot of impact on someone just by showing them what is possible. If you were never exposed to something, you cannot dream of becoming it. I never met a CEO or entrepreneur growing up, so I never dreamed of becoming one myself. I was a small kid from a small town, and I rarely saw the world of possibilities outside.

There is a saying that a great trip can set you down a path that doesn't end when you return. With this pledge, I want to help more kids realize the kind of journey I have had. I want to show them that their dreams are not bounded by what they can see in front of them. Their limits are not so limited. Walt Disney once said, "If you can dream it, you can do it." I would like to help them dream.


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