

HOMELESS INSIDER

July 2019 Edition



Homelessness and issues in mental health services

Health is a necessary part of our lives that should be maintained both physically and mentally. Recently parts of society have taken a leap in helping humans receive services to help them maintain their mental health. Attention is being given to research to update older and recognize newer mental health issues and causes, as well as improved services according to a recipients needs.

Much is being understood about mental health in general. There is one population though that is constantly being swept under the rug. A population that is constantly exposed to traumas and factors that increase the chances of developing mental health issues, the homeless population. I personally believe from my own experiences with homelessness that the homeless population deserves their own section of any health facility or center that is dedicated to the improvement of their communities health. It is traumatic when a normal days goal is searching for a meal or a semi-safe environment to sleep for the night which won't be disturbed by city officials like deputies who in a normal setting would be looked at as service providers ready to protect and serve but as a homeless individual could seem like mortal enemies giving out a vibe of prejudice.

Experiences like these and others along with the constant badgering on the mind that it causes will take its toll, especially in the frequency that it happens while homeless. It is one thing for one human to receive mental health support for any issues then be able to reflect on their day in the safety and comfort of their own home and with other kinds of ready support and another entirely for one who suffers from homelessness attends their appointments and then must return to a living situation constantly filled with uncertainty and stress.

Housing is looked at as a priority for homeless individuals. It is a limited resource and shouldn't be made the only resource for a population that lives under constant judgment and stigmas created by fellow human beings and is forced to be its own society while being labeled as a problem rather than a population of fellow human beings with a problem.

This lack of understanding needs to be addressed and resources need to be centered around compassion, not paperwork. At the end of the day, no matter where someone sleeps every human is an individual with specific needs and some require more help than others based on different factors in their life. No one is a case number or client ID and that level of compassion should be given out evenly to all no matter if they live in a building or out in the open. No matter where you work everyone can be understanding of another and still perform their occupation reasonably. Compassion is one quality that makes us human why let it go to waste.

I believe officials in the mental health industry should put more focus on providing relief of the stress and trauma caused by homelessness regardless of if the individual is on their way to being housed or a while off with the understanding that accommodations should be provided because these are people who are suffering from an experience that most humans will never endure and no human should ever have to endure.

My personal advice is don't let bureaucracy numb compassion, a quality that makes community support effective especially for one part of our community that needs it more.

Written by Anthony Mobarez.

Why a homeless newsletter?



First editorial meeting.

There are several reasons we started this homeless newsletter.

The main reason is to provide a view on the homeless community in the Lancaster area and to clear up some misconceptions about the homeless people. People tend to have a stereotypical view of homeless people in general, but the truth is that many of these people have great skills, attitudes, and want to show what they can do. The fact that they don't have a home complicates matters quite a bit, and the difficulties of getting around, hygiene, and the way people view them cause great difficulties in getting a job, staying warm/cold and staying safe.

Other reasons for this newsletter are to show news about things going on in the Lancaster area from a homeless person's perspective. Provide resources, tips and suggestions like job opportunities, events that could help the community, share opinions and views. Bring people together to possibly make something great and helpful.

We are just starting this newsletter and would appreciate any comments, ideas, suggestions, questions, collaborations. and articles, if you have any of these please send them to info@streetcompany.org

Written by Marco van den Heuvel (Street Company).

PROJECT Black hat

Presents Homeless Hacks
and Helpful Hints for Surviving The Streets

It's Summertime in the Antelope Valley which means unbearably hot temperatures that can exceed 100° Fahrenheit. There are those fortunate enough to beat the heat inside air-conditioned cars and homes, with access to snacks and refreshments and showers. Simple things that average society may take for granted. Anyone currently experiencing homelessness or anybody that has ever experienced homelessness during the extreme heat, are all too acquainted with the fact that simple things such as bathing, filling a bottle with cold water, or even retrieving a bag of ice are luxuries.

Imagine walking all afternoon outside exposed to the unrelenting heat, soaked and drenched with sweat, pushing your body to its limits, severely even dangerously dehydrated, having no place to rest and no place to shower, trudging tirelessly till locating a nice patch of shade in the middle of a park. Getting out of the sun is mandatory, although it must be temporary because staying in one place could cause problems. Resting proves difficult, fighting against yourself from falling asleep after being exposed to the sun. After a short nap in the shade, you awake to find your shoes were stolen right off your feet, you wish circumstances were different, however, you have to find a pair of shoes first.

This scenario may sound extreme, but this is the reality of life on the streets, I personally am familiar because I experienced it myself and will be sharing my survival tips and homeless hacks in upcoming Homeless Insider newsletter.

Written by Sarah Odum.

Homeless Insider is a newsletter by the homeless community of Lancaster published by Street Company. If you have any questions, comments, suggestions or article contributions please send an email to info@streetcompany.org. Street Company is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization created by homeless people and their supporters.

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