



XPLORE:
HUMANITY
201902



SEEK
HUMAN
KINDNESS

PURPOSE

I recently heard a story about a woman getting lunch at Whole Foods. As she was at the salad bar, a disheveled man walked in—hood up and hands in his pocket. The woman tried not to make eye contact as he approached the buffet across from her. Suddenly, he scooped up a handful of hot mash potatoes and made a dash for the door. The store manager chased him out. The woman was flooded with emotions and thought, “I wonder if he burned his hands grabbing the potatoes. Did he have to eat the potatoes out of his hands? Or did he drop them before he had the chance? When was the last time he had a hot meal?”

Many of us are inclined to pass judgment onto homeless people. One may think, “They did this to themselves. That’s what you get for being a drug addict.” On top of these thoughts, we struggle to make eye contact with homeless people because looking into their pain reminds us of our own. We look away not because of our fear of helping others but our fear of needing help. This choice not to see someone diminishes our shared humanity.

I want to XPLORE humanity and expand people’s empathy towards the homeless population.





CHARITY
BEGINS
AT HOME.

DESTINATION

My mom raised my siblings and me on the principle that “charity begins at home”. Rather than traveling across the country—or the world—I plan to stay here in Riverside where our co-workers either see or interact with homeless people on a daily basis.

I became passionate about the homeless community after hearing the story on the previous page. It was told by Brené Brown in her book *Rising Strong*. It’s Brené, and other people in the helping profession, that inspired me to pursue my Doctorate in Clinical Psychology (PsyD). I’d like to use my passion for community mental health and knowledge of statistical analysis to make an impact right here in Riverside with employees of our firm.

I have consulted with professors at California Baptist University (CBU)¹ and partnered with the Riverside City Mission to design a study that will expand our firm’s perception of homelessness. My goal is that this increased perception will lead to more empathy and kindness towards this population and an increased sense of humanity as we tackle the homeless crisis.

The funds awarded from the XPLORE program will go towards the cost of conducting my research study and the remainder will be donated to the Riverside City Mission’s efforts to feed, clothe and shelter the homeless.

¹This research study has been evaluated by California Baptist University’s Institutional Review Board. However, results will not be officially published or affiliated with the university.



Riverside City Mission

Riverside City Mission is a Christian not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. Their mission is to provide opportunities for the poor, the homeless, the needy and destitute men and women, to transform their lives. Their strategy is to feed the hungry, help the homeless, provide family food boxes for the poor and needy, and offer referrals to long-term residential discipleship and rehabilitation programs for all who are in need.

The organization agreed to partner in this study on November 6, 2019 and connected me with Anna Gaccione, Assistant Director to schedule interviews with homeless individuals.



DOCUMENTATION

Nov 2019



Partner with Riverside City Mission.

Dec 2019



Get selected as 2019 XPLORE Recipient.

Jul 2020



Administer firm-wide survey measuring attitudes towards homelessness.



Spend the week of PTO interviewing homeless people in Riverside and capturing their stories on video.



Edit stories down to 10 minute video and present at all-staff studio meeting.



Follow-up with the same survey measuring attitudes towards homelessness after learning first hand accounts and stories.



Conduct a repeated measures Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) study to evaluate if learning more about someone's story significantly changes our perception of them.

Aug 2020



Present findings at firm-wide Lunch and Learn and have guest speakers from the Riverside City Mission, homeless population, and CBU research faculty. Provide staff with tools on how to best interact with people experiencing homelessness.



Present check to Riverside City Mission.



Display video and booklet of results at a local art museum such as Mind & Mill, Riverside Art Museum, or Riverside Arts Council.



Independent work



Firm Involvement



Homeless/Community Involvement

Mike

29 years old
Son. Brother. Uncle.
Friend.

**HOMELESSNESS IS A SITUATION,
NOT AN IDENTITY.**





Interview Questions

Informed consent will be obtained for all video interviews. The goal of each interview is to gain a better understanding of each person's unique story. Questions are designed to reveal how they got to where they are, what their daily lives are like, and their feelings towards being homeless. The following questions will serve as a guide, but follow-up questions will be adapted based on responses received.

1. Where are you from?
2. If not Riverside, what brought you here?
3. How did you come to be homeless?
4. How long have you been homeless?
5. Do you remember what it was like your first night on the street?
6. What is a typical day like for you?
7. Where do you eat? How often do you eat?
8. Where do you sleep?
9. What are your relationships like with other homeless people?
10. What are your relationships like with people that are not homeless?
11. What experiences have you had with law enforcement?
12. Do you wish to remain homeless?
13. What would it take for you to not be homeless anymore?
14. What advice would you give to people that are not homeless to better understand you?



PRADA
EYEWEAR

150,000,000

WORLDWIDE

It is estimated that 150 million people are homeless worldwide. Different countries often use different definitions of homelessness, making direct comparisons of numbers complicated.

553,700

USA

According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (2017), more than 553,700 people were homeless on a single night across the United States.

129,972

CALIFORNIA

According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2018), California is ranked #1 in the US for total people experiencing homelessness (129,972). This could be attributed to the high cost of living and percentage of income residents spend on housing.

2,413

RIVERSIDE COUNTY

From 2016 to 2017, there was an 11% increase in the total number of people experiencing homelessness. The most current statistics show 2,413 total people experiencing homelessness in Riverside County (1,351 unsheltered and 814 sheltered).





**“IF WE CAN SHARE OUR
STORY WITH SOMEONE WHO
RESPONDS WITH EMPATHY
AND UNDERSTANDING, SHAME
CANNOT SURVIVE.”**

— Brené Brown —



Thank you for your consideration.

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