



Original Transcript from Gurustu's Radio Show, presented in its entirety

There's no place like home... there's no place like home... there's no place like home. There is no place like home, especially if you don't have one. Do you know that there is an estimated three million people living out there on the streets. For three millions different reasons, these people are forced to make it on their own, without a home to shelter them... without food to fill their empty bellies.

In the comfort of our own home... lying there cozy under that warm comforter, it's easy to see nothing... but the situation is getting worse. There's no time left for the invisible... because what we can't see **can** hurt us all. The Homeless, the Hopeless and the Helpless... They're no longer the Invisible few.

You know, before moving to Los Angeles, I lived in New York City — a perfect example of a problem gone awry. There is no denying that the homeless are there, everywhere you look, every corner you turn there's an outstretched hand, but what amazed me the most was not the problem of the homeless... it was the problem of the people who went past. It really was as if these poor people were invisible. People even bumped into the homeless and instead of saying "excuse me" simply hunched over further and quickened their pace.

It couldn't be this bad anywhere else, I said to myself before I tucked in further and got on the next plane out of town. Certainly California, with all its bright shiny people and its well-to-do movie moguls, would treat its homeless much differently...

But, alas, people are people wherever you go. Problems don't go away when you do, and people react similarly when faced with similar situations.

There are good people and bad people, and caring people and others too busy with their noses buried in their own problems to notice anything. What I noticed though is a trend growing here, like in New York. With the highest unemployment in the country, with the recession turning into a depression for everyone, those on the lowest rung are simply now just being ignored.

It's true. When times are really tough for you, it isn't always so easy to help another.

But I believe that there is a lot that we can still do to help, even if it's not with money... because if we allow ourselves to become callous to the plight of others, we're the ones who will suffer in the end.



No Longer Invisible

By Gurustu

So what can we do?

I'm glad you asked.

First of all, it's very important that we remember that these are people out there on the street. People, like you and me. They don't want to be there, they certainly don't deserve to be there. Some have already gone through hell enough as it is. Just being alive might be all they have going for them.

Some of them were once honored citizens — owners of businesses, veterans of war, respected family members. Somehow, somewhere along the way their luck ran out, things turn bad for them. Turn after bad turn left only the streets open to them... they had no choice but to take `em.

Others are actually safer on the streets, if you can believe that. Those are the runaways, the outcasts... the kids whose lives at home were so unbearable that their lives are actually spared by getting out. That doesn't make it any better though, as you know, since the promise of a bright future dims with every passing moment. Every passing adult who shows that they don't care makes it that much more difficult for the kids to make it til tomorrow.

And then there are those who are the truly helpless. They've lost the ability to care for themselves. Their physical conditions prevent them from moving ahead under their own power... or their mental facilities cut short their understanding. These are the ones who need the most help, yet due to budget problems or overcrowding, they're allowed to wander helplessly alone.

The homeless, the hopeless and the helpless. The only thing that sets them apart from us is that they have *less*.

Do you understand the power of acknowledgement? Sure, these people could use cold, hard cash, but the last thing they need from you is a cold, hard stare. Recognizing that these are your brothers and sisters elevates you both above the situation. It at least brings in a little hope. Hasn't someone else's smile ever brightened your day, just a little bit more?

Hope is a good place to start, by keeping it inside yourself and by instilling it in others... but it doesn't fill the minds and bodies of those in need. Should you give them money? If you could and you really felt that it would help, sure... but you could give something even more precious... your time. There are a lot of volunteer organizations out there already set up and ready to help those in need. Why not give a couple of hours a week to anyone of them. You could be on the



No Longer Invisible

By Gurustu

line feeding them or handing out articles of clothing... then you would really see what's going on down there. Or, if your heart doesn't want to be wretched, maybe help in one of their offices, filing or answering phones. Just a few hours could make such a difference, not just in their lives, but in your own. I know quite a lot of people who have found so much meaning in their lives just by helping another in need.

A gift from the heart is worth far more than anything you can find on the shelf.

It comes down to touching lives, one to one... it starts by looking in the mirror and making those changes in you.

Compassion comes from within, but can only been seen when given to another.

Because you want to know the truth of the matter? Homelessness is not a problem. No matter what anyone else tells you... they can give you the facts and figure about low housing, no funds and whatever else there is, but I'm here to tell you it's all an illusion. NO, these people are not lying to you. They don't have cash available nor adequate places to put these people. The **situation** is very real, but the **problem** of homeless is the illusion.

The problem is not one of **Housing**. You can drive anywhere in this town and find dozens of empty apartments... big "For Rent" signs across the front. Even in New York City I would walk past a very large, perfectly grand apartment building that stood **completely** empty, while several elderly homeless people slept on the grating outside. the houses are out there.

The problem is not one of **Funding**. We have a multi-**trillion** dollar debt, we say, yet we were able to send off **billions** of dollars to Russia recently. The funds are out there.

The problem is one of **Caring**... is the caring out there? "It's just not our problem, we work hard for our money, we try to get by like everyone else, no one else seems to give **us** a break... so why should we care?"

I say, it's not a question of "Why?" We shouldn't have to justify compassion in this world. We shouldn't have to... what we should have to justify is "Why Not?" Can you justify why you don't care, why you allow suffering to go on... and even to get worse?

There is a saying, "The way for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing." can you afford to do nothing?



No Longer Invisible

By Gurustu

You don't have to change the whole world, you know. You don't have to take on all the world's problems... but you can make some difference. You make a difference now, so why not make a change towards something positive?

And don't tell me now that the problem is greedy landlords and that's not your problem. Believe me, it is your problem. The problem is greed, yes, very much so, but it's not the landlords. You see, Landlords have a lot of expenses too. They feel justified in charging you what they do because it covers what they have to spend. they think it's the plumbers that are greedy, and the plumbers think the suppliers are greedy and the suppliers think the manufacturers are greedy... but you see, the manufacturers have to pay rent sometimes and their landlords, you know, well... they're so greedy. Passing the blame doesn't stop you from paying your dues.

If at any time you've found yourself pushing your price up a little bit more, just because you could... just because it was a little nicer to have a little bit more... then, well, welcome to that circle.

No one person is to blame, although greed is definitely a cause. And even if you're not a greedy person, you are still playing a major role in some form. As long as you pay those prices, they're going to stay... and they're going to grow.

Live your life fairly... treat others fairly as well. You've got life, so give a little back.

I gave you suggestions on how you can help... and I'm sure if you think hard enough, you can come up with a few of your own. All it takes is commitment. All it takes is a conviction of the heart...

We have a chance to make a big difference here... by overcoming our own indifference. Survival does not require callousing over, it requires cooperation. We're all in this together... and together we can help get those in trouble out of there.

Let's all get in touch with our humanity... because after all, humanity begins with human. Let's get past our personal problems and our own greed and selfishness, before we so ruthlessly judge others for theirs.

Let's reach out a helping hand to our brothers and sisters out on the streets. Show them we care through our time or our money... and if we can't do that, at least greet them with a smile.

Let's get the kids off the streets and back on their feet where they belong. We all need to care



No Longer Invisible

By Gurustu

for the children because they are who we are. Let's help them get to where we are now... hopefully beyond that too. Support the programs that support the kids. Your local Covenant House is a great place to start.

And don't stop there. There is enough money out there, with an awful lot of hands in the till. Get involved in the Political Arena. Make your vote count so that your voice can be heard. Elect those who will help the hopeless. Get the bills passed that will make the changes. We have opportunities here, People. Don't pass them up like they're some bum on the street. One of these days we might need help ourselves.

If you are in need right now, get help now. Don't be ashamed or too proud. Contact your local crisis intervention services in your local yellow pages.

And here's what the rest of us can do:

- 1) Open our eyes, recognize the problem.
- 2) Change ourselves to suit that problem.
- 3) Commit to that change.
- 4) Get involved.
- 5) Work together to solve the problem, don't do it alone.
- & 6) If there are people or policies in the way of making this world a better place, get `em out and make that change.

For more information write to:

The National Coalition for the Homeless.
105 E. 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010
1-(212)-460-8110

And most importantly, most importantly, remember to Keep That Light On.