

A PLEA FOR A SOBER SOBRIETY

You can feed my habit or you can feed my recovery, give your money to me on the street or give it to the Hope Mission.

I feel compelled to write this due to all of the media lately on the homeless. I think that people should be more educated on the organizations helping combat the problem. Personally I would like to call your attention to the Hope Mission.

My story with the Hope Mission has been developing for a few years now. You see, I like the people I have seen and recognized in the media, have been battling addiction. You may have passed me, maybe you felt pity and gave me money for something to eat. If you did, I didn't buy something to nourish my body. I bought "food" for my addiction. I got what nourished my body for free at the Hope Mission, the Marian Centre, the Mustard Seed Church, the Boyle Street Co-op, The Bissell Centre, the Victory Church, The Salvation Army, Hosea Ministries etc. I lived a life of misery and I heard the people at the Hope Mission say there was hope for me.

ONE DAY I LISTENED TO THEM.

I am now a grateful resident of their "Breakout Recovery Community". I am a volunteer six days a week, becoming a part of the solution, not the problem. The problem is not going away. The Hope Mission takes care of my necessities for life. They are investing a lot of time, energy, and money in my recovery. All that they have asked of me in return is that I try to live up to my potential. What a glorious gift they are giving to me. Words cannot express my full gratitude. I believe if everybody cared about everybody else, you wouldn't have to worry about yourself. Where I am right now, everybody cares about me, I am worried though about the people who are going to fall through the cracks. The Hope Mission does not have a ton of money. They only have so much room in our Recovery Community. It is a non-profit organization that relies partially on government grants and largely on private donation. You can give to me, lying to you in the streets, or you can give to the Hope Mission so I can lie in bed at night and plan and dream a more productive future.

So here is what is keeping me awake at night now. I am not better, or more unique than those that are still suffering in their addiction. I had the good fortune to come across the good people at Hope Mission. The "Breakout Recovery Community" is pretty much advertised by word of mouth. As it stands now they would not be able to bear the burden of bringing all the people who are in need and who would help flourish the community. What a shame, how many are lost in addictions and the criminal element that evolves out of them. As my focus in life is now shifting from helping myself to helping others, I am left wondering how I have committed myself to "Breakout Recovery Community" for one year. In this time, I cannot work for my own purposes. The focus for me is volunteering, giving to a society that I took advantage of. I have survived, albeit miserably, on the generosity of others. I appreciate the charity I have received and I want to pass it on. Great things are happening at the Hope Mission. People are being

rehabilitated and reintroduced as productive members of our society. There have been many success stories in the Hope Mission. The “Breakout Recovery Community” has helped many people, before, and around me. Society, you, me, us, can decide to help the many to receive hope for the future. When I look around at the success stories, I imagine we can do more. The space that we have is limited. We should not have to turn people away who are looking to put an end to their destructive patterns of behavior. We could keep opening more mat rooms in the city, since we are such a rich province. Currently it seems kind of like were putting a band-aid on a cut that requires stitches. We should be focusing on the problems, when I am ready to step outside the safety of the “Breakout Recovery Community.” I am not going to sleep on a mat. I was at a stage where I was very thankful to have a mat to sleep on. The good people at the Hope Mission had the resources at that time to say we can give you more. We have space in our community for you to work through your problems with us. Welcome, they said, we would like you to realize your potential.

What a wonderful opportunity for me, I no longer have to lie, cheat and steal to feed addiction. Now, when I see you on the street I can just smile and say hi. I no longer need a handout from you. The Hope Mission has given me more than you could carry in your purse.

They have helped me to change inside; I think that you will like me much better now. I encourage you, if you really want to change someone with change, give it to the Hope Mission. With help, the “Breakout Recovery Community” will continue to grow. This city has a wonderful legacy of care and compassion success stories. It is one of the reasons it is such a great city, a city of champions. Please donate to the Hope Mission and know, you are making a tremendous difference in our lives. Let’s help them, help us all.

God bless your hearts,

Steven Derek Ackland