

Why did I Receive a Coffee from Someone I Expected to ask ME for something?

My name is Steve Daniels, and I was chosen to be a Community Change Agent through the Greater Moncton Chamber of Commerce's Mission Possible initiative. Along with 10 other people in the city, I was given \$100.00 and 30 days to help make a difference in my community.

First off, I just wanted to make your day. I remember the first day that my mechanic worked on my car. As I was leaving, he flipped me a Toonie, and said "Hey, have a coffee on me...have a great day!" This may have been a small gesture to him, but it completely made my day! I have always remembered this and do not bring my car anywhere else because of this gesture.

On top of making your day, I also wanted to provide a bit of shock value, and get people to examine the way that they look at those who are less fortunate. Do you avoid them? Do you pretend not to hear them? Was your first reaction to try to avoid Terry when he approached you?

The gentleman who gave you the coffee is named Terry. He is one of the kindest people I know, and although he does not share some of the same resources as many of us, he is quite possibly one of the most giving people I know. He is a regular volunteer at Harvest House, and a blessing to anyone who gets to know him.

Contrary to popular belief, people are not homeless because they choose to be!

Over 90% of the time, homelessness issues boil down to mental illness, lack of life skills, substance abuse, fleeing violent situations, stagnant or declining incomes, rapidly growing shelter costs, and a reduction in social assistance.

I spent a night experiencing homelessness at the "Help Heat Harvest House" campaign (Jenn Marr's Mission Possible Event) this past weekend. I thought

I had an understanding of what people go through, but wow was I wrong!

The cold was only a small piece of the experience. I expected the cold, but didn't necessarily expect some of the deeper experiences. Security was a big concern; every little noise, the lack of noises, the uncertainty of the situation. If the cold hadn't created the inability to sleep, the fear certainly would have.

After a night of no sleep, frigid temperatures, and heightened fear, another learning experience came in the disconnect I found the next day from people in general that just didn't understand my (wait did I say my?) experience. Wasn't this just supposed to be a glimpse into one night? I'm not really homeless....

I can't imagine my one night experience of homelessness as a day in and day out reality. I feel like I now understand at least a fraction of not just what people go through physically, but also the emotion that comes out of the experience.

I chose Harvest House as the recipient of my Mission because of all that they do to help those who are homeless get back on their feet. While I hope that I managed to make your day, it is my hope that you might consider "paying it forward" to this wonderful organization. Give them a call to book a tour, donate online, volunteer.....challenge yourself to step out of your comfort zone.....outside of that zone, you may find some of the most fulfillment in your own life.

Thanks for taking the Time to Check out My Mission! I hope you have a wonderful and successful day!

Steve Daniels

Change Agent

Mission Possible

GMCC

Steve Daniels is a person that has a natural ability to inspire leadership qualities within the people surrounding him. He takes great pride in being able to help individuals and organizations make great leaps toward measurable change. Helping them better themselves through changing both behaviour and habits of thought that affect their results and subsequently, their level of success. If you would like to contact him, he can be reached at 506-878-1631, or sdaniels@lmicanada.com.