

Ignite the Fire in Your Heart Through Compassion.

I walked into the urban corner café seeking spiritual nourishment. The 20's style, high-ceilinged room had an open kitchen and a scattering of customers chatting at a dozen tables. A sign listed eggs and toast, whole plates for \$1.25, coffee and beverages 75 cents. People out on the city street on bikes and with shopping carts felt part of the quiet connected atmosphere inside the Café called the "Sisters of the Road", a non-profit serving the homeless in Portland Oregon for the past 30 years.

My Subud sister Monica (Sisters of the Road executive director for the past 8 years) originally offered me lunch, but instead fed and nourished me with epiphanies.

While waiting for her, I briefly read the forward to the Sisters signature book 'Voices from the Streets' offering a quote from Dorothy Day - an early century, rights worker.

"Love and ever more love is the only solution to every problem that comes up. If we love each other enough, we will accept - with each other's faults and burdens. If we are brave enough we are going to light a fire in the hearts of others. And it is love that will burn out the sins and hatred that saddens us. It is love that will make us want to do great thing for each other. No sacrifice and no suffering will seem too much"

I silently wept in their commons room. Grief, pain, hope and emptiness welling up out of nowhere.

It is these things that open our hearts wide to hold both pain and joy .

Monica embraced me and she helped me easily enter into the flow of her equal community. One that is diverse, based on personal integrity and non violence. We sat on an old fashioned window skirting at the entrance of the café, as customers and co-workers acknowledged each other with a silent grace.

The Sisters organizational model is non hierarchal, one that empowers equality, responsibility, dignity and non-judgment. The core values of their community create safety and a foundation to support the recovery, healing and self worth that each of us reveres and is searching for.

On any given night, hundred of millions of our fellow human beings are homeless. 'Stories of the Road' documents 600 stories that are really about you and me.

Jose now works at the Café. "My situation is different, I am more speaking English. God helps me every day. My life... I'm okay. I'm healthy.. I'm working as a part time day laborer. The change for me is humility. I help people because they're the same homeless. I like to help everybody."

Judy, "Becoming homeless made me look into the way I deal with God' every single day I walk with God. You know, I thank God for my blessings. I thank God for the air I breathe. I thank God for the lessons I learn. I thank God for inspirational people come back on my path every single day."

A Sisters founder shares, "As a society we are spiritually bereft. I could never say this about the people out on the street and in the care shelters. They walk in with the knowledge that there is a power greater than them and that's how they get through their lives."

The epiphanies at SISTERS truly nourish ones soul and re-ignite the fire in ones heart. I invite to you to support the work of SUSILA DHARMA or your preferred charity. May your life be transformed into success and significance through compassion and action in your life.

Your brother
Haris