

# Homeless: You Matter. Have Hope.

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As part of the family of human beings, know that despite your difficulties – you matter. You have a name. You are an important person. You are loved. There is reason to have hope.

You may not think about much other than what you need to do today, or perhaps even what to do to survive, but please take a few moments to read this and reflect on what you might hope for.

You may confront circumstances, even danger, that most people never experience. You may be without money and unable to buy food. You may know what it's like to go hungry and thirsty. You may not have a safe place to live or a comfortable bed to sleep in. You may be ignored by many of your fellow humans as if you aren't there. You may have health issues that go untreated. What you are going through is hard, far harder than the troubles that many people face. It isn't fair. But know this: **YOU MATTER. HAVE HOPE.**

You are a wonderfully unique person. Your individual journey in life has given you knowledge, experience, character, abilities, and a way of thinking that is awesome. People like you who find a good fit for their unique gifts and talents rise above their hardships. You can too. You can overcome your circumstances. You can be more and do more than you possibly know.

You may be thinking about what happened to you or what could have been. Maybe you made some bad decisions. We all do. You may have been unlucky. For no good reason, bad things happen, even to good people. It would be great if the past could be redone, but it can't. The past is over. All you can do is learn from it.

Regardless of what you have been through or are going through, don't give up. Don't give up on what you can do or become. Maybe now is the time to renew your hope, look forward, and prepare to create the future that can be. Think about what will be rather than what was.

If you are ready to rise above your circumstances and create your new future, listed below are some ideas to help you. These apply to everyone, whether homeless, living in poverty, or anyone who wants more for themselves and their families. Apply one idea a day or week until each one becomes a habit:

1. **Accept yourself** as you are, past mistakes and imperfections included. You are not perfect, but no one is. Other people have abilities you don't, but you have abilities too. Don't compare yourself to others. You are uniquely gifted. Have confidence in yourself. You are awesome. Strive to improve yourself, but first accept yourself wherever you are.



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2. **Take responsibility.** You may not have created your circumstances, but you are the one who gets you out of them. Taking care of you is up to you. Improving yourself and your circumstances is a decision you make. Don't wait for someone to help you. Take action for yourself. Make the decision to own your journey. It may not be easy, but is within your control.
3. **Have hope.** Look forward. Consider what you want to do or become that is worth working for. Set a goal such as finding a job, getting a better job, finding a place to live, getting a car, rebuilding a relationship, going back to school, or addressing a health issue – mental or physical. Smaller goals are good too like getting new clothes or finding a temporary shelter.
4. **Seek help.** There are people who believe in you. Find them. Seek the help of others who are trustworthy. Don't try to achieve goals solely on your own. No one achieves anything on their own. Go to a shelter, church, social service agency, Salvation Army, Goodwill, or other organization. Let them know your goals and desires. Ask for help. Offer to help them in return for whatever help they can give.
5. **Start a new daily habit.** Do something daily that takes you in your desired direction. Start a habit that helps you rather than hurts you. Put time back on your side instead of against you. Join a support group. Read a bible each day. Meet with people daily who help you. Go to job tutoring classes. Apply for a job every day. There are people who care about you and will help if you make the effort.
6. **Stop something unhelpful.** If you are knowingly doing something that isn't helpful, stop it for a day. It will be hard, but stop it for today. Tomorrow will come and you can stop it again then, but just avoid it today. You may need to stop an association with someone who is a bad influence on you. Or stop an addiction. Or stop blaming yourself or someone else. Whatever is hurting you or holding you back from your better future, stop it one day at a time.
7. **Make a difference.** Look for opportunities to help others. Offer to work for other people. Do something meaningful for others that earns you respect, earns you money, or makes you feel good about yourself. Now may not be the right time, but someday you will turn your hardship into something good not only for yourself but someone else. What you've been through matters. What you do for yourself, family, and this world matters.
8. **Don't give up.** You may be dealing with people who are not helpful or worse – hurting you. That is sad. You deserve better, but don't give up. Don't let bad people control you. You can overcome. Don't let the ignorance, incompetence, or hatefulness of others stop you from moving forward. Persist in improving yourself and your circumstances. Do your part. Give your best each day and that will be enough. Good things will happen.

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Article written by Mike Hawkins, award-winning author of *Activating Your Ambition: A Guide to Coaching the Best Out of Yourself and Others* ([www.ActivatingYourAmbition.com](http://www.ActivatingYourAmbition.com)), author of the *SCOPE of Leadership* six-book series on coaching leaders to lead as coaches ([www.ScopeOfLeadership.com](http://www.ScopeOfLeadership.com)), and president of Alpine Link Corp ([www.AlpineLink.com](http://www.AlpineLink.com)), a boutique consulting firm specializing in leadership development and sales performance improvement.

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