



Volunteering at Soup kitchens and Pantries, Not just once a year On Thanksgiving, We eat Every Day.

I first want to thank everyone that actively goes to soup kitchens and pantries to help out and lend a helping hand. You truly are a gem and I hope more people can follow you when they are able to.

Now onto the topic at hand, it is widely advertised that you should help soup kitchens, pantries, and other places that are donating to the homeless during the holidays because you don't want them to have a bad Thanksgiving, Christmas, whatever holiday. One of the downsides of this is, you then get the misguided idea that the homeless only need this help one or two days out of the year. Wouldn't it be weird if your friends and family (if they do) only celebrated you on your birthday, not for anything else you ever do? This is the mindset that people only deserve this specific type of kindness once a year. This is the main problem: no human deserves human decency once a year.

I can't blame everyone though, it's commonly shown in media people more volunteering during holiday times. This gives off the illusion that that's the best time not to say it isn't, but these are people that need to eat every day of the week, like you and me. The homeless have needs and wants just like you and me. You can't strip them of that just by only wanting to help during one time a year. Now if you can't always help and that's the main time you can then that's fine but only doing during these two months because that's what looks good is humiliating. My reason for saying this is because you can't stop thinking that they need this help every day. You truly believe helping out a few times a week for two months isn't okay.

These are people who aren't as fortunate to what we have and our resources, we could try to envision ourselves in their shoes. What would you want someone to do for you if you were struggling and needed help? If you were trying your hardest to keep alive and someone thought it would be fun or cute to help out in some of your places of living and eating once or twice a year. Not actually caring if you are safe or wanting to help, just being able to say they did it and brag or use it for some humanitarian points. That's how I see it when you only volunteer for those reasons it's just an easy way to get humanitarian, that's just wrong using someone else's situation to gain conversation points. You should at least try to at least get to know the people and their stories, what happened if they wish to share.

If you read that and felt some kind of way about it because it made you realize that maybe yourself or someone you know is currently doing this, take a moment to realize you can still try harder and help out in different ways or more often. There are more than just soup kitchens. If you go out and try to find different ways to help, you'll realize that there's more depth to helping the homeless. You can learn stuff you never knew and get different understandings of things you'd never thought about before.

As for the people who actively or when they have time to help with soup kitchens and pantries, I want to say thank you. It's nice to have people who are helping because they understand that not everyone has the same chances as them and they wanna do what they can to help and support others. Some people may not see the reason for helping the homeless because to them, they got themselves in that situation, so they don't deserve or need their help. They should find a way out of their predicament by themselves. This is where I consider T's 4 Hopes helpful to come in. There are so many different ways that some can become homeless and with the articles and resources here you can see that. Basically, if you're going to contribute and help please do it for the actual purpose of helping and not just to look cool or have something to say.

Until next time, Niah (They/She)