**Homelessness**

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# Homelessness is a topic that has received a lot of media attention and is a focus of many nonprofit organization and is a topic that I too find interest in. Individuals can be considered homeless if they are living on streets, living in their car, or moving between temporary shelters or as others may call it couch surfing. Homelessness has been a problem for many years and continues today to be an even bigger issue, as it has been reported that over half a million people are considered homeless. There are many different reasons that individuals experience homelessness ranging from job loss or unemployment, mental issues, lack of affordable housing, and substance abuse. Many studies have reported that mental illness is one of the leading causes of homelessness in the Western Countries according to Nishio, Horita & Et. Al (2017). It is further study some of the most prevalent illness that homeless individuals face are; malnutrition, mental disability, alcoholism, drug addiction, tuberculosis, HIV, and now COVID-19 (Canoso, 2021).

# Individuals experiencing homelessness suffer from many personal factors, undergo limited opportunities and some have long family history of living in poverty (Synovec, 2020). Homelessness can be a difficult cycle of life that some individuals may find themselves in due to the lack of opportunities and the lack of knowledge of how to get out of that situation. All of these things can cause an individual to become depressed and slip further down into a dark place that becomes almost impossible to dig their way out.

Growing up as a child I experienced poverty my whole life and from the age of 12 to 16 years old my family and I were homeless. I can remember many days of not having food, living in homeless shelters, living with relatives, sleeping on the floor, not having running water and electricity. My childhood is scared with the difficulties of not having my basic needs met. Everyone has a story to tell and every story is different. Growing up in poverty and experiencing homelessness for those years of my childhood increases my passion to help others who are currently experiencing it.

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