Hannah Malhan

ENGL&102

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Research Paper Working Outline

**Topic:** Homelessness is a very real social issue, an issue society can help cut the rates of if each person makes even the smallest contribution.

1. *Thesis Statement:* We as a society need to do more to get the homeless fed and off the street. We constantly shy away from the homeless, not even acknowledging their existence or the issue of homelessness. We need to realize everyone hits rough points in their lives, some worse than others, and they don’t always have the access or assistance to get help. We can offer them resources and if everyone pitches in just a little bit, we can tremendously change the rates of homelessness and the way they are view in society.

**II.** Causes of Homelessness

**A.** There are many causes of homelessness. While some people may have lost their homes or jobs because of their own wrong doings, there are many people who have become homeless due to factors they couldn’t control.

**1.** Addiction

**2.** Unemployment

**3.** Domestic Violence

**4.** Mental Illness

**5.** Divorce/Family Problems

**6.** Disability

**7.** Living on the poverty line and an unexpected expense occurs

**III.** Effects of Homelessness

**A.** Being/becoming homeless can lead to a number of different effects. It can take a toll on a person mentally, physically, financially, as well as on their family, friends, and pets.

**1.** It can cause mental illness

**2.** It can take a toll on a person’s health, not having access to medical care or having a consistent food and water intake, plus the weather conditions

**3.** Easy to become dependent on alcohol or drugs

**4.** Crimes committed out of desperation

**IV.** Personal Stories

**A.** *On Dumpster Diving,* Lars Eighner, page 139

**1.** Discusses firsthand living out of a dumpster with his dog

**2.** How/what he survived on

**3.** How he got into/made it out of that life

**B.** *On Compassion,* Barbara Lazear Ascher, Page 46

**1.** How society views homeless, or someone who appears to be

**2.** Her own experience, story of the homeless person she saw and people’s reactions to him.

**3.** Why did people look at him that way? Why were they scared?

**V.** People’s success stories on what they did to help, and what we can do

**A.** Guest on Ellen Degeners Show

**1.** Owned his own small pizza shop

**2.** Customers started a pay it forward system

**3.** The homeless respected the system as well as his pizza shop

**4.** Didn’t cost him anything

**5.** Solely run by customers, and by choice, barely a cost

**B.** Interviews/stories from people who were previously homeless on what saved them

**1.** What programs/resources helped

**C.** What we can do to help

**VI.** Conclusion

Homelessness can have many causes and many effects. Many people who become homeless don’t have the access to resources or help to get out of that situation. We as a society have different things we can do to help, even some of the smallest things can make a huge difference.