

Today I present a challenge to my readers....

On what stage do you stand and what audience do you speak to? When you say you are grateful, do you just say it – or do you realize it and pay it forward? Are you speaking to an audience or are you just looking into the mirror?

Giving is not about money – no matter how many ways you slice it – it is the passion in which you write your signature on the check that is the power – how many zeroes has little to do with it.

My cause is people like me – the mentally ill, what is yours? Is your cause for something bigger than yourself? Do you sacrifice any of your gifts? Do you share your gifts with those that have a void for something you have? Can you read and write? – Maybe you should find someone that can't – and share that gift!

This weekend, while in training and a conference – I met 17 people that humbled me to a place that I was so empowered and enlightened I was astounded. People that make my recovery process look like a walk in the park. People that were born with severe mental illnesses as well as poverty and environments conducive to destroying a balanced person let alone someone chemically imbalanced. I was taken aback by their passion, their willingness to share their stories – their ability to communicate when once some couldn't even write.

Many of these people started their race in life in the middle of the ocean – alone. It wasn't until they were 30 years of age or so before they even hit land or paved roads or nourishment for their bodies and minds. My race started at the starting gate with every facility available in this world to allow me to run the best race possible. I am truly humbled.

I have met many who have started where they did, not even knowing if land was in their future – however, in my life and my work I have counseled and prayed and communicated with them in the hopes that they would one day reach land. This weekend I met 17 people that when they did hit land – THEY RAN – OH HAVE THE RUN! They are all standing at that finish line cheering you on – sharing their stories, their fight and their encouragement and empowering you to run the race – and run through the ribbon! I encourage you all to go to this site: [In Our Own Voice](#)

There is no power bigger than helping your fellow human being. Sharing your gifts with those who might not have that gift. Stop looking in the mirror – stop using words like “I want” and become aware of what you have and what others don't. I don't care what your cause is – but find one!

I have lived with people on the streets, homeless shelters and prisons – I have seen their potential and their hearts and talents. Society in general has turned their heads – I have seen the backs of more people than I have ever seen the helping hand. This weekend I saw just exactly what a helping hand does and it exemplifies the human spirit and to see the human spirit flourish and celebrate is more powerful than any experience I have ever had.

Just think what you could do.