

## DETOX ENDURANCE CHALLENGE

When someone's case is refused, the Home Office allows them two weeks notice to leave their accommodation, at which time the financial provision of £37 a week will also be stopped. This is despite often having no means to leave the country either by land, sea or air. Many feel that their good grounds for claiming asylum have been poorly represented or they simply fear returning to their home country & so are forced to begin to live a life of utter destitution.

It is at this stage where government policy on immigration & asylum creates 'LIVING GHOSTS'. They are essentially airbrushed out of existence as 'failed' asylum seekers, but they remain here & this reality goes unnoticed by society at large.

Jesus said "I was hungry & you fed Me, I was thirsty & you gave Me a drink, I was homeless & you gave Me a room . . ."

(Matt 25: 35 & 36)

Some receive support of a basic food parcel from destitution projects across the country - these are often facilitated through the goodwill & charity of faith & community groups working together with the British Red Cross.

Your DETOX ENDURANCE CHALLENGE, if you choose to accept it, is to live the life of a refused person seeking asylum for one week, in order to give you but a just small insight of how these people experience poverty in the UK.

## What does the DETOX ENDURANCE CHALLENGE involve?

You are going to exchange your weekly food budget for a Food Parcel & £3.50 cash which you will live off for one week of Detox 2008 (Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February – Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March)

### Guidelines for task

You will be given an Endurance Journal to record your week:

- ☞ how you are managing
- ☞ mistakes you have made
- ☞ thoughts about those who do not have their own home, job, & family to rely upon

We suggest that in addition that you consider how much each of your household or lifestyle decisions are costing – will your budget stretch:

- ☞ turning on the heating
- ☞ running the dishwasher
- ☞ using the phone or internet
- ☞ using the car
- ☞ do you really have to have that coffee?
- ☞ do you need to buy that magazine/paper?
- ☞ or do you really need that lunch out?

There are reasons for this CHALLENGE being a test of 'ENDURANCE'!

During the week consider how your normal lifestyle differs from that of a 'LIVING GHOST'.

Imagine that your house is no longer your own, but rather a place where you are receiving hospitality from the refugee community.

Could you afford to pay your host for your costs of the heating & other bills?

Where would you sleep?

Where would you cook your food?

For this week all you will have is a Food Parcel & £3.50<sup>1</sup> to your name but are fortunate enough to have a place to sleep & use of cooking facilities.

'LIVING GHOSTS' are not allowed to work – you are not expected to give up your job!

The challenge is about how you make decisions at work & at home, & consider how you would manage.

Also, if household bills have to be paid as a matter of urgency then please do pay them!

Each week at the destitution projects we see many needy cases including mothers with children – one asylum seeker walked from Wigan to Manchester in order to receive a food parcel, an approximate round trip of 40 miles!

### **Don't Panic!**

There will be a 'confession section' in your Endurance Journal entitled 'How I cheated today'

# ENDURANCE DETOX CHALLENGE

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the weekly Food Parcel refused asylum seekers also receive £3.50 for bus fares to the Destitution Project to collect the Food Parcel

## RESPONSE FORM

YES/NO I'm up/not up for the DETOX ENDURANCE CHALLENGE:

Name	
Address	
	Post Code
Tel	Mobile
Email	
I enclose £ . . . . . as a donation to represent my weekly food budget please supply me <sup>2</sup> with a typical Food Parcel <sup>3</sup>	
I enclose £ . . . . . as sponsorship for the Detox Endurance Challenge	
I intend to undertake the Endurance Challenge during the week . . . . . (please indicate dates)	

<sup>2</sup> It may be necessary to issue a typical Food Parcel shopping list rather than an actual Food Parcel

<sup>3</sup> If you have particular dietary or health needs before you undertake the Endurance Challenge we would strongly suggest seeking medical advice

## Other Thoughts

It is worth considering contacting your local newspaper<sup>4</sup> who may well be interested in publishing your Journal (*try ringing up your local paper & ask for the features editor*).

Reflection material will be sent upon receipt of the Response Form as well as other resources on asylum destitution, including case studies, prayers & bags of encouragement & thanks & appreciation from us for taking up this challenge & being in solidarity with people seeking asylum.

If you are serious about taking the challenge, you might want to write to your MP telling them about it & asking them to take part in the challenge as well. Even if they don't agree to participate, at least they know that some people are serious about the issues.

## SUMMARY

So, if you are up for this DETOX ENDURANCE CHALLENGE (*as an individual, couple, family or group*) then don't delay in returning your completed Response Form.

Please return completed Response Form to:

The BOAZ Trust,  
c/o Harpurhey Community Church,  
Carisbrook Street, Harpurhey,  
Manchester  
M9 5UX

☎ (0161) 202 1056

Email: [nigelbiggs@boaztrust.org.uk](mailto:nigelbiggs@boaztrust.org.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Or maybe your church magazine/newsletter



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