

Going thru "it"

The worse type of of any type of change is the type of change that occurs at the speed of life. I haven't done this in a very long time. The first time "*it*" (Actually it was a slightly smarter friends' suggestion.) and "*it*" didn't go too bad, and at times, "*it*" was invigorating. I was just turning twenty-five, so that is what twenty-five year-old men seem to be primed for.

I am not going to fill in any blanks for you, but it has been quite a fortnight since I was 25, and life has given me some lessons that would give one in their right mind a moratorium to think "*it*" over a little longer.

The funny thing about "*it*" is that "*it*" happens no matter what you do to stop "*it*". When you are at work, or in court, or just standing somewhere waist-deep in "*it*", "*it*" is no joke. Even if "*it*" is a molehill, "*it*" feels like a mountain. There has never been occasion where I would have the occasion to memorialize an occasion of such personal application.

To be honest, there has never been an occasion on where I would share these kinds of things with just anyone, but sometimes just knowing someone else went through it, and made it out in one piece, helps keep the measure of your own strength in mind. Add any benefits from your own personal beliefs on top of that, and you may very well be onto something.

I have to add last night to the list of challenges that makes one really explore places inside him or her that they may not know existed.

Last night was a very rainy evening, and as I dealt with the challenges of being stuck in it, and being alone, I discovered the place where your heart ends and your soul begins.

I think the best way to describe it would be like this. Have you ever gone through something, or maybe seen something on the news, which is so traumatic, or saddening, that you can't help but to cry, but you don't want anyone to see? It's that feeling of surrender to tears, just before your eyes start welling up with water. To me, that may be the place where your heart ends and your soul begin.

I wish I could give sunny updates of things happening here and there, but the only things I can report are a set of amazingly frustrating, and disappointing occurrences that make me choke back anger, frustration, and tears.

It seems that your heart and soul are somewhat connected, but as I am trying to hypothesize, it also seems that they are separated by a thin layer of emotion and psychology.

I may have discovered this last night, or should I say this morning somewhere around 3a.m. as I was sitting in the rain, and my patience and faith felt like I had shelved them for the moment. Water seems to distract me easily, especially when it is cold, and it seems that no relief is in sight for several hours.

I am still waiting for my feet to warm up, but I am not too hungry, and I am not in Nevada anymore, so it can't get much worse.

In case any of you are sensitive about me trashing Nevada, get used to it! As a former 30-year resident, I think I am entitled to trash Nevada. In case you missed it, Nevada is at the bottom of every negative list, and has one of the worst education systems in the nation.

I have paid my share in sales taxes and municipal fines for jay-walking, a DUI, and other various moving violations. This subject is a whole different story, and I could write for months about the ills of Nevada, especially Southern Nevada. For now, let's just stick to the basics of going thru "*it*".

In days past, a good Friday night would involve getting dressed up and going someplace where pretty females usually travel through. Most of the time, I was inebriated in some form, and all I got to do was watch them travel through.

This Friday night, I was sticking halfway out the opening of my make-shift tent, and as the operation of handing out snacks to hungry people under the bridge was winding down, the volunteers sort of bottlenecked towards the end of the street I was occupying.

At first I felt somewhat embarrassed, but then I noticed that they seemed to be happy to be hanging around. It was as though they didn't mind at all. But then I noticed something as my vision focused in a little better. These were mostly young (18 – 28 years old) women, and they were *beautiful*. There was one young lady that seemed a bit closer to my age (Within 12 to 15 years, maybe.) who was stunning.

They had cute voices, and they seemed to genuinely be intrigued that some of us went to a little bit of college, and didn't spew vocal sludge. That is the impression I got because as I spoke to them, they would gather closer like babies when they discover that puppies are safe animals. I felt like Bosley from the television show, "Charlie's Angels", on a Friday night, looking up at these young Christian angels feeding the poor. I enjoyed their enthusiasm, and sincerity, and my gratitude was genuine as well. I guess I just enjoyed feeling like a human and not being treated like a social disease.

The following Monday was a special wake-up call for me. I awoke to the sound of screeching tires, and the commotion of what I thought was an immigration raid, then I remembered that I was born here, and I have valid ID. As I looked up, I saw several police cars, and officers yelling, "You can't sleep here!"

As I rose to roll up my gear and bounce, an officer approached me and asked my name and date of birth. If you give them false info, in the event that they cite you for illegal lodging, you will also be charged with providing false information, which will result in an additional 7 to 10 days of jail time, or a \$300.00 fine.

After I gave him my name, I explained that there were no beds available in any area shelters, and I did not have the money for a motel.

He just shrugged, and said, "Yeah, well, you can't sleep here." I wish I could say bummer, or lament about the harassment of the man, but *I was* violating the law, and if I were in Clark County, Nevada, I would be writing about how jail is after Metro arrests someone, and throws all their life's belongings in the trash, without as much as explanation why.

Being able to walk away with all my belongings, and not be cited was a plus. Not being harassed was very professional. I'll explain why I say that.

Just as I was scurrying away like a groggy six-foot pigeon, I walked past a long haired man who was still lying in his bedroll. As an officer was standing next to him, he casually fished for his cigarettes as though he was having a relaxing early morning smoke.

"Are we having a cigarette break, or are we leaving?" The officer standing next to this man said with a tone of sarcasm and disbelief. Then down the sidewalk, I hear another officer lament, "We drive by, you give us the finger."

As the saying goes, the police usually spend their time taking out the trash, or cleaning up a mess they didn't make. I can't say they had anything to do with my financial situation, so why direct my malice or disdain toward them?

Apparently some of my colleagues in poverty management seem convinced that antagonizing the representatives of law enforcement somehow helps a situation that could go either for or against them. I'm not taking sides, and I don't want to seem like a friend of the police, but on the street, you may actually need them someday. Fighting them seems like a bad idea to me, but that's just my thinking, and if it was all that great, I wouldn't likely have this predicament to write about.

So, anyway, you would think Tuesday would give us a break, but our dismal friend, rain came back and I knew I had to stay dry somehow, and had already set up under a bridge. For some reason, I was more aware of the law enforcement wake-up call, so paranoia woke me up at about 3:45 a.m. Since I did not actually have to be anywhere until 6 a.m., I laid back down, and before I knew it, the sweet sound of the law enforced wakeup call was upon our makeshift camp under the bridge.

Because of my previous encounter with San Diego's finest, I had a different motif going altogether. The rain had ruined parts of my blankets, so what was left was a smaller, less cumbersome sleep set. It was, in fact a small, tight bed roll, because when those cops boots hit the ground to get out of their car, I had rolled up my blankets, packed them into a bag, and was strolling across the street and halfway down the block. ***There would be no name and date of birth today.*** One more day of rest and shelter from the rain.

A lot of times, the people who support the harassment, and elimination of homeless, displaced workers, seem to hinge their argument on the assumption that many of us deserve this treatment because our past behavior. Though that could very well be the case for some of us out here, some of us out here are here because we enjoy flora, and the Pacific Ocean, and miscalculated the cost to survive in Southern California.

It's Wednesday, and several days with no shower, and little hope since the last time I wrote an entry. This includes an appointment with a local organization after 10 days of getting by, in which I was "officially" placed on a 3 to 4 week waiting list. It left me scratching my head as to what the first 10 days were, simply a prelude of pain, or a formality in which I will return only to be given some sort of excuse as to why I need to violate more local ordinances simply to try and get some rest, since sitting in one place is really not an option.

As I look around, I see faces that may not represent any type of resurgence in hiring, and it seems clear in many cases how those individuals became homeless. (Ah, the everlasting legacy of Ronald Reagan's cost cutting genius.) Some are simply people not aware that more sociable behavior would contribute to success in the workplace, others are in no way equipped to even examine the discussion of that possibility, and still others, like me need further steps of humility to find that formula of success through self-examination, and discipline.

No matter how many entries I add to this, and how many examples I add of the brutality of this type of existence, I am not sure I can really convey the real soul-gutting feel of any amount of time spent this way. I try to get as much biblical, and spiritual encouragement throughout the day, the morning brings a bleak and empty hopelessness of lacking.

A lacking of resources needed to do just about anything to create, or discover opportunity. No it's no one's fault, but I would guess that the loss of jobs and the devastation of that loss is as stunning to the system for everyone else as it is for me, because this is the max.

I cannot equate anything to it, and everyday something happens that either makes me shake my head. Political Ideas of grandeur to disperse us into thin air, add both injury, and insult to a situation that is at best, **grim**. Today, I am feeling the pain of hunger, the

depressing hue of the overcast marine layer, as well as the crush of humanity all in one place with the same needs, and the same pains.

These same pains are pretty universal, and seem to be at the core of many conflicts. It seems today, a lot of us are in this frame of mind, and that cannot be healthy for them or for me. We stumble around, whether to try to get a drink of water, or simply use the bathroom wondering how to get by, and in large part, get through. This is one of those times when the commonality of humanity hits home. It is like the feel you get from doing the wave at a sporting event, except, it is the exact opposite of a good thing, or a good feeling. It would be more akin, and not to be insensitive, to a human tsunami.