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The idea of home, to me, is a special place where one feels they can go at the end of the day after all their work and socialisation is done. Home is where they feel the most comfortable being themselves and doing whatever they wish to do, be it creating content for others to share, indulging in hobbies, monitoring the stock market, or anything they find pleasure in. Unfortunately, many millions of people in the United States do not have such a place they can find solace in, and are forced to wander from place to place asking for handouts and trying to avoid repercussions wherever they go. I personally have not experienced homelessness but I know many people who have., and I honestly feel quite ashamed for not being able to experience what afflicts so many Americans every single day of their lives.

Every time I go up to Seattle, I see dozens of tents and hundreds of people experiencing homelessness whilst billionaires like Jeff Bezos and Bill Gates revel in their wealth. It honestly makes me feel bad for the people who have to live like this and disgusted that not very much is being done to help them. Any time I have spare change in my wallet and see someone asking for cash, I give them a few bucks. But it doesn’t help that a lot of people experiencing homelessness have underlying problems like addiction or withdrawal and use that money to fund whatever addictions they may have, if any. I really wish there were more resources dedicated to helping these people get clean and back up on their feet.

Something I assumed about homelessness was that the only definition of it meant that you were an unclean person living in a tent under the freeway, or something similar to that. But what I learnt was that a majority of people experiencing homelessness are so-called “temporary homeless” where their situation resolves in under a year, and only 5-10% are those you see on the streets. Something I never knew was that the government itself was a key catalyst in causing homelessness to become more of an issue. That bit is paradoxically the most surprising and most unsurprising thing I’ve heard in the podcast. Goes to show how far we’ve regressed as a country.

Being a person of colour in a relatively prosperous middle-class family, I’ve never really had the experience of facing homelessness or eviction, so I feel like I won’t be able to deeply relate with people who have actually experienced homelessness, and I fault myself for that. It makes me think that I’m quite selfish for not understanding what these people go through, and honestly makes me think lowly of people who willingly turn a blind eye to this kind of stuff. The fact that it even happens really rubs me the wrong way and makes me wonder how we could have ever let something like this occur. I’m interested in learning more about the causative agents of homelessness and the experiences people facing homelessness have to go through every day, and potentially devising solutions, big or small, that can help alleviate this ever-growing crisis.

The course outcome I’m practising here is composing strategically for a wide variety of audiences, and I aim to accomplish this by keeping my language relatively neutral and only using emphasis on topics that I feel are especially important and pressing in the context of today’s world, and combining anecdotal experiences with my personal opinions on homelessness and relaying that to whomever might read this in the future. I decided to do this so I can learn about writing pieces that are intended for everyone to read, and not just a certain group of people that happen to share my beliefs. Essentially, I’m aiming to write how The New York Times or BBC News would write, and not some propaganda-laden word salad that Fox News or Breitbart would create.