

Local man and homeless Army veteran bond through common humanity, perspective

"Meet Raymond. Raymond is a homeless Veteran (US Army) living in the City [Fall River], off the beaten path in a tent. I was told of Raymond's story and I had to meet him to hear it for myself, from the source.

I met Raymond early this morning with a friend, and instantly Raymond thanked us for wanting to hear his story.

Raymond told us about his past, one of anxiety and bipolar disorder, a criminal history, and substance abuse to self medicate that ultimately got out of control until a few years back when he decided enough was enough. Unfortunately during recovery, and while living on the streets Raymond was diagnosed with stage 3 neck and brain cancer. Raymond walks 5 days a week halfway across the City to his chemo/radiation appointments and then back to his tent.

Hearing Raymond's story shocked me and upset me at the same time. An Army Veteran, homeless, walking miles upon miles 5 days a week to receive treatment for cancer. This definitely puts life into perspective. It made all of my problems minuscule, almost non-existent.

My friend and I took Ray to breakfast and were able to supply Raymond with a few pairs of shoes/sneakers, along with some warm clothes and cash to be able to take a bus to visit his daughter in the Cape. We then parted ways when we dropped him off at his radiation/cancer treatment at Hudner Oncology.

Ray's story humbled me to say the least. I am happy to say that Ray found out this week he's been accepted into a housing program in the City. I wish Ray all the best.

Ray gave me full permission to share his story so that it 'may help someone else out in his position.'" -Christopher Peckham.



