



## H O M E L E S S

*"I live on the streets. I live from day to day and I have no roof over my head. No restroom to visit, no kitchen to make a coffee. I own very little and I owe a lot more and I am homeless."*

# C H E C K M E O U T

*The Human Library lets you CHECK OUT a person and hear THEIR story – just don't JUDGE these BOOKS by their COVERS.*

WORDS CHLOE WALKER

**H**ow are we to understand each other if we don't have the opportunity to talk to each other?" This is the question Ronni Abergel, a Danish journalist and one of the creators of the Human Library, posed.

In 2000, Ronni and his brother, Dany, held the first Human Library event in Copenhagen as part of Roskilde Festival. Fifty people made themselves available as 'books' to be borrowed, and more than 1000 'readers' checked them out over four days. Now, there are chapters of the Human Library around the globe and events have been held in 70 countries.

The idea of the library is to foster conversations between people who wouldn't ordinarily come into contact with one another in order to break down stereotypes, reduce stigma and create social cohesion within the community.

Readers can borrow 'books' on topics such as depression, body modification, HIV and homelessness. Tough questions are not just tolerated, they're welcomed.

A Human Library TV show debuted in Denmark this year, and a series of posters depicting their 'global bestsellers' was produced in partnership with Danish communications agency Kommunikationsbureauet København to celebrate 15 years of the project spreading around the world.

Meet some of the 'books'...

## **BORROW A CO-WORKER**

Want to improve communication and camaraderie in your company? The Human Library Organization offers a workplace version of their program called Borrow a Co-worker. The idea is similar to the Human Library concept, but instead of borrowing someone who represents a stigmatised group of people in the community, readers can borrow their own colleagues. The team from the Human Library facilitate so that employees can borrow co-workers they might not normally work with, and discover their hidden talents and knowledge about the business. Borrow a Co-worker is currently in trial mode, with the Human Library's corporate arm looking for businesses to partner with as case studies.



EXTREME  
BODY MOD

*"I am not someone to be afraid of, and I fully understand that my look can be overwhelming to some people. But then, don't be shy, come on over and ask me. I am not going to bite."*



COLLECTIVE HUB

PHOTO  
SERIES

HUMAN LIBRARY

REFUGEE

*"I left my childhood photos of a life I will never get back, and I didn't have the choice to leave, behind. I left a beautiful place that I called my home."*



## DEAF - BLIND

*"I am not angry about my situation. I don't even get angry with cab drivers that refuse to pick me up because of my guide dog. But I think it's important to give people a chance to understand what life looks like through my eyes."*



COLLECTIVE HUB

PHOTO  
SERIES

HUMAN LIBRARY

AUTISM  
SPECTRUM  
DISORDER

*"I find it very difficult to find love and to build relations. I wish more people would give me a bigger chance and not be so fast to cut relations. I often wonder how much the 'autism' is part of that, and just wish one day I could find a girl."*