**Big Questions**

How do we identify desired outcomes? Who decides?

What are the limits of my ability to help or serve?

Must action, to be meaningful, always lead to social change?

What kind of change am I making?

What kind of change does the world need?

**Opening Exercise/Activity**

The below options 1 -4 can be done: 1) individually only; or 2) individually and then in pairs, small groups or large groups:

*Option 1*

Take a few minutes to think about an individual who has made meaningful social change. How did you hear about this person? What strikes you as meaningful about what this person has done?

*Option 2*

Fill in the blank with ONE WORD OR PHRASE. “Change is…” Don’t explain it, just write, draw, and/or say it**.**

*Option 3*

Think back to when you decided to join AmeriCorps or this program. What was the change you wanted to see happen? Has that answer changed since you began your service?

*Option 4*

Discuss a time (either personally or professionally) when they were not able to help someone as much as they would have liked to.

Option 5

Break into groups of 3 with the people around you.  Take a few minutes to think about a time in your service this year when you felt like you were making a difference. What were you doing? Who were you serving? Why did you feel like you were making a difference?

**Clarification Questions**

1. Who is telling this story?
2. What was the tone of this story?
3. Who is the man the author is talking about? Do you have a sense of who he is? And what he’s doing?  Can you describe the scene as you envision it?
4. What is the man on the street doing? What is his appeal to passersby?
5. Why does the man in the poem solicit help for the homeless by standing outside in the winter weather?
6. In speaking of the men who have a bed for the night, why does the narrator say that the snow is “meant for them”?
7. What kind of change is the man making? Is what he is doing worthwhile?
8. What about these lines – it won’t change the world, it won’t end the age of exploitation, it won’t change relations among men.” What do make of them?
9. Why does the author keep repeating these lines?  What seems significant about that?
10. What does the narrator mean by “don’t put the book down on reading this, man?” What is the tone? Who is being spoken to? What does it mean? What is different about what happens before this sentence and what happens after it?
11. Why does the narrator make a point of telling us that a bed for the night “won't change the world… won't improve relations among men… will not shorten the age of exploitation”? What do you think this means?
12. Who do you identify with most in the poem—the man on the street, the narrator, the passersby, or the homeless? Why?

**Significance and Implication Questions**

1. Where do you see yourself in this poem? What resonates for you and your own work?
2. Is the kind of service you provide changing the world? Changing people?
3. Is service about “changing the world”? Why or why not?
4. What kind of change is possible? And how do you know if you’re making change?
5. Specifically thinking about people who are homeless, is “giving them a bed” enough? Important?
6. What motivates people to try to put themselves into situations similar to those of people they would help? Is this useful?
7. What relations need to be improved among humans?
8. Do you see exploitation in your work?
9. How do you feel about what you have done in this year?

**Closing Exercise/Activity**

The below options can be done: 1) individually only; or 2) individually and then in pairs, small groups or large groups:

*Option 1*

What question do you take away from this discussion/reading? Please write it on the note card and turn over as you leave. (we will ask a few people to share)

*Option 2*

What is one question about impact that you are taking with you from this discussion/reading?

*Option 3*

What’s one question that this discussion raises for you about your own service?  Take a minute to think about it, then we’re going to go around and share.

Option 4

What book will you not put down when you leave this year of service?