



From top left, clockwise:

Fresh fruit (such as delicious strawberries!) is a rare treat for many of our friends; Sandra fills plates for our friends who couldn't make it to lunch; Ali serves his homemade spaghetti and meatballs; Bill shares his voice and gift for music.

## May 2013 News

"Self-realization I hold to be impossible without service of, and identification with, the poorest."

Mohandas Gandhi

We have reached a beautiful point in our charity initiative. The news of our service has spread amongst the homeless in the Greater Boston area. Some have individually contacted the House of Sufism directly for help in variety of ways. Mohammad himself has been able to distribute the salad, fruit, and baked goods that are not used during the weekly brunch.

Because of the generous donations we've received and the ever-increasing number of volunteers, we are able to expand what we can provide. This is the greatest joy in community service: to be approached by those in need and to be able to provide comprehensive care. In the past months, we have been able to go beyond just the single weekly lunch and provide cell phones, clothing, transportation, furniture, a TV, et c. We have hope to have the pleasure of providing even more: bedding (such as pillows, sheets, and blankets), basic health care, pro bono legal assistance, particularly from an immigration lawyer, and so on. Of course, more food, especially fruit and food that can be reheated, and Charlie Cards are always appreciated. In the coming summer months, it is important our friends stay hydrated, and so we need bags of ice, bottled water, and fruit juices.



## Updates, continued

Our work with our friends is filled with joy, but there are sometimes currents of sadness that cannot be avoided. This month, we played games, chatted with all our friends, listened to music, celebrated birthdays, and shared smiles around the room.

Our friends shared their appreciation for the food, which included granola, chocolate chip cookies, many salads and soups, and other vegetable dishes such as broccoli, mashed potatoes, and spinach. Throughout the month, we had four amazing meals: Fazi made lamb and chopped grilled beef, Mary made chicken and vegetarian pot pies, Jeremiah made Caribbean chicken and rice, and Ali made spaghetti and meatballs with soup. One friend exclaimed that we had a "mouthwatering menu", another, "the ingredients are top-notch!"

However, as always, there were times when we had to face the reality of the struggles our friends face. One said to us, pointing to a bag of sliced bread, *"I lived on a bag of rice for last week, and I have this for this week until next Sunday when you come back."* Similar sentiments were shared: *"I have not eaten for three weeks."*



Featured on this page are the delicious main courses of the month.



## Updates, continued

Some of our friends took a more open, personal tone. One shared how grateful they were for the companionship, saying we were providing support for those would be "otherwise locked in their rooms with no one to talk to!" At one point, Mohammad asked one of our friends if he was alright, as we hadn't seen him in weeks. He replied, "I was severely depressed. My siblings abandoned me. My wife abandoned me, and she made my children to abandon me too. I worked hard for three decades. *I did not miss a day of work. I did heavy duty lifting. And now this severe depression and lonesomeness?*" There is much that feeding the homeless and formerly homeless cannot fix, but we are moved by such statements to try and provide support in all ways, including on a deep emotional level.

"Helping, fixing and serving represent three different ways of seeing life. When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as broken. When you serve, you see life as whole. Fixing and helping may be the work of the ego, and service the work of the soul."

Rachel Remen, MD



### How to get involved

1: Volunteer! It is a time commitment of only two hours: 2-4 PM on Sundays. Help us cook and clean or just spend time with our friends!

2: Monetary donations: If you would like to make a contribution to the House of Sufism Charity Initiative, you can write a check (payable to KN), use any credit card, or wire money through PayPal. All your donations are tax-deductible.

### Contact

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