

At the Crossroads



Listen to the audio and order the paragraphs from 1 to 10.	Number
The question is: Why? What would make someone take off like that? Nick had a comfortable life. He had a good income, a house, a new car, and a new motorcycle. He was moving forward with his life. By society's standards he should have been happy—but he wasn't.	
On September 29, after an epic 2,500-mile walk across the North American continent, Nick managed to make it all the way to Huntington Beach, California. More than a hundred family members, friends and well-wishers were waiting for him. During the six months of his journey, he destroyed five pairs of shoes and lost about 55 pounds.	
Nick, who was not exactly prepared, had nothing in the way of survival skills, so he planned to survive on the goodness of the people he met on the road.	
Nick was in a rut. His life felt repetitive and boring. It lacked a higher purpose. He felt he wasn't growing as a person. He had "things" but didn't appreciate them. "It got to the point where I couldn't deal with everything anymore," Nick said later. "I felt a lot of pressure, stress, and anxiety and decided to get out."	
In the future, Nick plans to do another cross-country trip. "The point is always to give more than you take," he says, adding that "the biggest takeaway from this experience is to have realized that mankind is better than I ever dreamed."	
Even with help, it was a hard journey. Nick would sometimes go days without food, or search dumpsters for things to eat. But whenever he felt that he had more than he needed, he decided to "pay it forward" by giving to other folks he encountered on his way. Paying it forward was one of Nick's goals on his journey—giving more than he received. If he was offered money or a gift card he didn't need, he gave it away to people who did. He was surprised at people's generosity along the way. There was a time in Mississippi when the cars actually pulled over to the side of	

the road to check on him and give him money. The experience taught him a valuable lesson: if you share what you have, and help others as much as possible, you will never be stranded.	
Using the handle "Hobo Nick," Nick began his journey on April 5, leaving Jacksonville with a backpack, a sleeping bag, and a travel kit. He also had an iPod and the ability to receive Internet service. Throughout the journey, he would document his experience in minute detail and send daily updates to his mother, who'd post them on his blog.	
In April of 2012, 25-year-old Nick Kleckner was working as an electrician and cabdriver in northern California. And then, suddenly, he found himself at a crossroads. He left it all—his job, his family, his friends—and bought a one-way plane ticket to Jacksonville, Florida. He had a bold plan in mind. He was going to walk to California with virtually nothing on his back. He hoped the journey would change his life, but he had no idea how!	
In his blog, Nick chronicled the important changes brought about by his selfless lifestyle and rejection of material things. He has learned to live in the moment and to be thankful for everything he has.	
As Hobo Nick, he trekked across miles of scorched desert and endured nights of pounding rain. In the towns and cities, he slept on the street, where he knew that there were people to help him out.	