LISTEN to STREET SPEAK: Episode 9 explores the importance of Shelter-In-Place Hotels through the perspectives of healthcare workers, who say the program has saved lives. Listen at streetsheet.org/street-speak-podcast/
Ooh, a storm is threatening
My very life today
If I don't get some shelter
Oh yeah, I'm gonna fade away

“Gimme Shelter” - Jagger/Richards

Last weekend, San Francisco endured record rainfall during its first major rainstorm of the year, receiving over 4 inches of rain within the roughly 48 hours that it lasted. The storm had been forecast for over a week and was all over television, internet and radio. For most locals, news of upcoming rain was good news, as the Bay Area was in the middle of a lengthy statewide drought. The raging wildfires that razed through entire bone-dry North Bay communities in recent years are still fresh in many people’s memories, and a prolonged drought would likely have multiple negative impacts on a state economy already hit hard by the extended pandemic. We needed the water, and the sooner, the better. The storm was forecast to begin on Saturday and subside by Tuesday, and by Friday afternoon before the storm, most San Franciscans had resigned themselves to prepare for a weekend spent indoors with little fuss or fanfare. Slow cooker recipes were downloaded during lunch breaks, Instacart grocery orders were placed, and Netflix queues were added to.

But the city’s homeless people and advocates, along with staff at the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), were getting nervous. The storm was expected to bring high winds, flooding and near-freezing temperatures to the Bay Area, a combination which can be deadly for anyone caught outside and is always absolutely miserable. The first rains were projected to start falling around noon on Saturday, with the heaviest rains and winds beginning on Sunday morning and lasting through Tuesday morning. Advocates and service providers tend to estimate San Francisco’s unhoused population to be 10,000 or more, though the Point-In-Time (PIT) count offers a more conservative estimate of 8,000. Many of these folks lack access to TV or radio. Internet-enabled mobile phones tend to get lost or stolen pretty easily on the street. Mother Nature was about to blow some serious chaos at SF’s most vulnerable residents, and many of them might not be aware she was coming. Even those who did had little chance of getting out of her way and members of the Homeless Outreach Team (SFHOT) along with the City’s service providers had already spent days and nights focusing efforts on spreading warnings of the upcoming storm to folks in encampments and doorways all across the City, along with distributing emergency food, water, ponchos, blankets and socks. With the storm less than 24 hours away, City leaders had elected to try to open the first inclement weather shelter expansion in over a year that weekend, but were still scrambling to nail down staffing and logistics. It was almost 9 p.m. on Friday by the time HSH was able to announce the emergency expansion of shelter to their email list, long after most of the City’s service providers and outreach workers had gone home for the weekend.

Shelter from the storm was available, along with hot meals and opportunities to link up with services, but how the hell were people going to find out? The City hadn’t had an inclement weather expansion for two years, and no one outdoors was expecting one to come. HSH’s Twitter feed doesn’t exactly link up with SFHOT along with the City’s service providers, but once they were doled out months before, had only gone so far. Many of those who weren’t lucky enough to be able to ride the storm out in one of the City’s FEMA-funded hotel rooms, which had been doled out months before, had learned to expect little in terms of meaningful relief from the City over the last year and a half, and few were going to spend much time looking for any. If the City wanted people to know help was available, the City was going to have to bring that message to them in person. They wouldn’t be easy to reach, as years of enforcement against public encampments had taught them to spread and scatter in order to escape the City’s police cruisers and crusher trucks, and many had hunkered down in out-of-the-way places in advance of the storm. The City would have to find them first. SFHOT had the advantage continues on page 4...
As City Closes Hotels, Advocates Say “Keep Hotels Open”

On October 20, the Tilden Hotel in San Francisco’s Tenderloin neighborhood saw more people outside its doors on a damp, dreary afternoon than were inside. About two dozen activists from the Coalition on Homelessness, Senior & Disability Action and other allies and members of the city’s unsheltered community rallied outside the nine-story hotel that, until that week, was used as a shelter-in-place (SIP) hotel to protect homeless people from COVID-19.

The advocates demanded that SIP hotels funded and operated by the City stay open, and that they take in more unsheltered San Franciscans while the pandemic persists.

A man who identified himself as the hotel manager told them that the Tilden was now empty: Every resident had already left ahead of the October 22 closing date. The ground-floor windows of the 118-unit hotel were boarded up, but the activists, who brought their own sound system, a brass band and plenty of signs, made their appeal nonetheless.

Freddie Martin, a housing organizer with Senior & Disability Action, spoke to participants and passersby of the City’s pandemic-era homelessness approach—and where it falls short.

“We had an opportunity to house 8,500 unsheltered people in San Francisco, and only 2,500 [hotel rooms] got used,” he told them. “Over 600 rooms are vacant right now, and they’re trying to close more. It doesn’t make any sense!”

The City has already shuttered seven of its 30 SIP hotels, despite assurances of continued funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Why doesn’t it keep providing unsheltered people with a roof over their heads—not to mention a private bed and bathroom—as long as the money is available?

Equally mystifying to SIP resident Roberto Hernandez, who also spoke at the action, is what the future might hold when he and other remaining occupants must check out.

“I’m thankful for having a room, but I’m scared of what’s gonna happen,” he said in Spanish, through an interpreter. “I just want to know what’s going on with the City. Nobody knows what’s going to happen to us. There’s some people staying here, sleeping there. They’re not prepared for after because there’s nowhere to go.”

Where will they go?
Several days after the protest outside the Tilden Hotel, The Chronicle reported that City officials had announced that the Shelter-In-Place Hotel would be extended by three months, with the final hotel sheltering in September 2022. The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) says the extension will cost $67 million, most of which would be covered by FEMA funding.

But the department announced that two more SIPs will close by year’s end. Residents at the Cova Hotel in the Tenderloin and the Good Hotel in South of Market were notified that both hotels are slated for closure. The department’s policy for SIP closures is to give 90 days’ notice to the hotels and staff from nonprofits operating there.

Advocates still fear for SIP residents returning to congregate shelters, where COVID-19 and its variants could spread much more easily.

Street Sheet contacted the Homelessness Department, which maintained that it’s taking a careful approach to “demobilization,” its term for hotel closures, and rehousing SIP residents.

“As we move into recovery and we’re looking for FEMA dollars to end, we’re doing it in a slow, deliberate and client-centered way so as not to end the program abruptly,” said deputy communications director Emily Cohen.

Cohen also provided the Homelessness Department’s breakdown of where residents of the closed hotels have ended up: 66% have transferred to other SIPs, 23% moved into permanent supportive housing units, 3% are now in non-congregate shelters or “stabilization” sites, 2% were medically discharged, and 2% were presumed to be back on the streets.

Cohen says that only a “very small percentage” of people are likely to be living on the streets again. “We’re making an assumption. We think that’s where we think they went, we’re not sure,” she said.

When pressed on upcoming closures, Cohen said that there will be two more scheduled by December 31, but added that she didn’t know which ones. As of publication time, Cohen didn’t respond to Street Sheet’s questions asking why the City doesn’t keep SIPs open and move more homeless people into vacant rooms.

Supervisor Matt Haney asked a similar question of Cohen and her colleague Noelle Simmons, chief deputy director of the Homelessness Department, at a Budget and Finance Committee hearing on October 27.

Simmons told the panel that intaking SIP guests and adding staff took time, as did waiting for funding from the City budget, which was approved in July. “The reality is that we just had several months of a slow ramp-up,” Simmons said.

Cohen added that SIP residents have the option to view up to three housing offers before exiting the hotel, either into housing or otherwise, and that the City doesn’t want to kick them out if they’ve seen only one unit. “(People are) in mid-process of an ongoing engagement” of being rehoused, she said.

As for backfilling vacant SIP rooms, Simmons said that staff at SIPs are continues on page 5...
Unhoused residents and volunteers from Coalition calling and advocating for clients and patients. Hospital social workers who had been forwarded storm was going to add to that pile. With its unhoused residents, and it looked like this on Saturday night. San Francisco has a history of folks don’t want help or resources,” I texted a friend shelters during this storm prove that homeless City employee says in a Zoom that the empty rain funds not enough. By Saturday morning, Signal groups SFHOT weren’t alone. SF’s advocates and service providers are long used to filling in the gaps and finding ways to collaborate and complement the efforts of a frustratingly under-resourced City. Many of us also have blunted work-life boundaries and social lives that barely exist, so weekends mean little. By Saturday morning. Signal groups and inboxes began filling up across the City with messages notifying friends, neighbors and co-workers of the additional resources available. Some nonprofits also had staff scheduled to work over the weekend and began to join the efforts. The rains began on time Saturday afternoon, though, and by the time SFHOT’s end its shift on Saturday evening and went home, thousands of unhoused San Franciscans hadn’t been reached, and fewer than a dozen people had elected to take advantage of a mat indoors away from the rain.

It didn’t look good.

“I can’t wait until I can shut down whatever City employee says in a Zoom that the empty rain shelters during this storm prove that homeless folks don’t want help or resources,” I texted a friend on Saturday night. San Francisco has a history of failed attempts at messaging and communication with its unhoused residents, and it looked like this storm was going to add to that pile. But Sunday was a new day. Case managers and hospital social workers who had been forwarded one of Saturday’s emails or text messages began calling and advocating for clients and patients. Unhoused residents and volunteers from Coalition on Homelessness workgroups and mutual aid organizations joined staff from local nonprofits, including Glide, Mother Brown’s and Urban Alchemy in the push to get the word out. The rain and the winds kicked up harder, but SFHOT’s skeleton crew of outreach workers battled downed trees and flooded streets throughout the afternoon to connect with more people, and at 5:30 p.m., I got a text message from the SFHOT manager: “Moscone Full.” I was going to have to wait for a different opportunity to shout at a City employee on Zoom.

In the end, 100 San Franciscans were able to get relief from the wind and rain at an Urban Alchemy-staffed emergency pop-up shelter located inside the Moscone Center, plus 40 more at ECA’s Sanctuary shelter in SOMA. Filling a pop-up shelter to capacity is difficult even outside of a pandemic and with triple the amount of time and resources available. Last weekend, with a fairly sizable assist from the community, SFHOT knocked it out of the ballpark, and Mayor London Breed and HSH Director Shireen McFadden owe them a round of drinks.

For thousands more, though, last weekend was just like any other during the last 18 months, and they were screwed — left outside to freeze and soak. Dozens of beds at the City’s regular congregate shelter sites were empty on each night of the storm and weren’t available to be filled. And unless the City makes a major change to the way they allot and fill shelter beds, anyone living outside on whatever day you’re reading this has a tiny fraction of the chance of getting a shelter bed that they would have had during any night of the storm.

With multiple emergency shelter sites closing down at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the rest reducing capacity by 50% or more, San Francisco’s congregate shelter system has long been a failure, translated to “stranded in place” on whatever day you’re reading this has a tiny fraction of the chance of getting a shelter bed that they would have had during any night of the storm.

For most of the first year of the pandemic, shutting off congregate shelters to self-referral made sense. Outbreaks at shelter sites across the country and in Europe showed that congregate settings were not places to be. Through the Healthy Streets Operation Center (HSOC), the City pivoted to mainly offering two new forms of emergency shelter for a while — hotel rooms and Safe Sleep sites, where individuals or pairs of people live in separate tents. Both were wildly popular among homeless residents, with rooms in San Francisco’s SIP hotels having a 97% acceptance rate among those who were offered one, according to a presentation made by former HSOC director Jeff Kositsky. But new intakes to the SIP hotels ended earlier this year, and several sites have already closed down, with about 1,400 people remaining inside, according to testimony shared at the Board of Supervisors Budget and Finance Committee meeting on October 27. More sites are scheduled to close later this year, and advocates and policy makers are currently locked in a battle to get the City to extend, and expand the program beyond its September 2022 sunset date. Safe Sleep sites fill up fast, and once filled, reservations at all City sites are now open-ended instead of limited to a maximum of 90 days. That means more security for the folks placed inside of it, but also leads to less turnover, and openings at Safe Sleep sites are extremely rare. These openings are managed directly through HSOC and offered almost exclusively to folks facing immediate displacement due an encampment sweep. While the lifting of the statewide and local SIP orders earlier this year has allowed providers and businesses to reopen and offer unhoused folks more opportunity, the City, SD’s pop hotel rooms and ended after they made data on how many exist — the 20% COVID safety net, and has been focused on 10% for years. But even a significant rise in the first year of the national and is ongoing, along with universal and local eviction moratoriums expire at the end of the month, San Francisco’s unhoused population, according to the 2019 PIT count. COVID’s effect on the system, along with the safety and respite it offered was almost immediate and has been devastating. New intakes at sites were halted within days of the March 17, 2021, SIP order — if you weren’t already in the system, you weren’t getting in, and subsequent outbreaks at multiple sites soon showed that “in” didn’t necessarily mean “safe.” With intakes halted, the City quietly eliminated the single adult shelter waitlist and moved the shelter sites onto a new occupancy management database. Unhoused residents could no longer call 311, drop in Glide, or check in with a County Adult Assistance Program worker for a shelter bed. In fact, all self-referral pathways to a spot at one of the City’s alternative emergency shelter sites were gone, and nearly a year and a half later, the City shows little sign of any intent to restore a low-barrier self-directed pathway from the streets into a traditional or Navigation Center shelter bed. The system that could once accommodate 2,000 is now limited to 962 as of this writing.

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nities to seek relief indoors during rush to get folks off the streets into sanctioned encampments largely the first 3,000 were placed. Current any people remain outdoors doesn’t a 2021 PIT count was cancelled due to concerns, and the City’s own data revealed, instead of individuals even conservative estimates project in homelessness nationwide after of the pandemic. As COVID-related local eviction moratoriums expire unemployment and other financial number of people forced out onto roofs to rise before it falls. As an SF will have no sleeping outside at night in tents parks, sidewalks and doorways. try that there isn’t space for more left from the streets. San Francisco’s shelter system hasn’t had a major last year, and by my estimate vacancy rate since July. But spots are still offered a handful at a General Hospital often getting the day’s available placements for those who are being discharged. Unemployment for much of what’s left over, Safe Sleep placements, offer their assuively to those facing displacement pment resolutions. Anything left city fewer than five beds per day — by SFHOT, who have multiple other angle, including locating folks outside system who are eligible to receive responding to calls about people in might think that a City with more unhoused residents would have an endless line, but SFHOT numbers the City asks a lot of them in the best expectations and responsibilities facing COVID can be overwhelming to even watch. The 311 waitlist, and workers at drop-ins and other used nonprofits are still without reservations at any of the City’s Unhoused San Franciscans seeking an advocating for them can leave a SFHOT, and if they’re lucky enough good — they can connect with an effort to land one of the few spots that are given away daily on any given day. SFHOT’s practice of following up on calls they receive other advocates and I have worked ceaselessly dozens of times this year to residents into alternative shelter. But we’ve on the streets for years, and always been so diligent. Those folks are in their own throes, and most people aren’t even aware that there is a need to call. Also, there’s no guarantee be a spot. Often, the surest way for person to get into one of the City’s beds is to be in an encampment for displacement. SF is burning out key resources, while shutting out its partners and letting 20 percent of its unserved each night.

It’s also a step backwards towards worked for no one. Before a phone call I had lived in 2014, people would often have to waste half a day in one spot waiting, just to see if there was a spot available for him that evening. Many evenings there wasn’t. “It was bullshit,” he said.

That system changed in 2012 when former SF homeless czar Bevan Dufty convened the Shelter Access Groupwork, which included providers and unhoused residents from across the city. “With extensive input from unhoused shelter users, lines and waiting rooms were eliminated, and the system changed to the 311 call-in system that made it simple to request a bed that fit your needs,” said Coalition on Homelessness Executive Director Jennifer Friedenbach. “Just a few years later, there is not even a line to wait in, let alone a toll-free number. There’s no way to get in beyond the sheer luck of being in the right place at the right time when a City outreach worker happens to both run into you and have a bed to offer. Unhoused people absolutely must have a way to request shelter themselves.”

The good news is the City already has that way — it’s simple, has worked before and can work again — which brings me back to the storm at the beginning of this article. During the storm, folks were able to walk up to the sites at Moscone Center and be served. Sanctuary without a reservation, and as long as there was space available, they got in. That’s key. Homeless folks should have as much agency and authority over the resources they accept as the city employees and nonprofit workers who offer them. When you give folks the ability to get into a bed without having SFHOT handle the reservation, you allow folks to make their own decisions at their own speed and on their own terms, and that leads to better outcomes for everyone. Beds fill up fast. The City already has some of the best nonprofit, public health and outreach workers in the world — seriously, they’re fucking rock. And it has shelters beds. By unbundling SFHOT from being the lone gatekeeper and including community and provider nonprofits in the shelter allocation and distribution process, everyone involved can better use their own resources to complement each other’s efforts, and beds end up occupied by folks who want them, instead of folks being pressured into them under the shadow of an SF Public Works crusher truck.

Most things aren’t this simple, but this is. I doubt that Mayor Breed or Director McPadden will read this, but just in case.

Restore the single adult shelter waitlist. Let folks call 311, or walk back into Glide or Mother Brown’s to get on it, and start filling those vacant beds, and give ‘em shelter like The Rolling Stones advise. Let service providers and SFHOT each do the things that they’re best at, so they can collaborate and function together as a true community/government partnership. Bring unhoused residents back to the center of the policies and procedures that impact and service them and restore a bit of the sanity we all lost during the pandemic back to the system we live, work or advocate.

And buy those outreach workers from last weekend a beer.

If you don’t listen to me, listen to Hospitality House director Joe Wilson. “There’s no excuse for people being without shelter in San Francisco. None. We should make it easier — not harder — for people to come inside from the cold. We can do better, and we must, in the City of St. Francis.”

Cheers, Joe.
I’ve been fighting an eviction since 2019. After living in my apartment for 20 years, always paying the rent on time, never bothering our landlords, they sold the two-unit building. The two rent-controlled units paid off their mortgage (maybe several times over), and now in retirement they cashed in on San Francisco’s nouveau riche market.

The new buyer, of course, wants to kick us out. They are exploiting a legal loophole that allows for “owner-move-in” evictions—meaning that they can legally force us from our home as long as they or members of their family intend to live in it for 36 months.

The new owners knew our family intended to stay, intended to fight. We made sure of that. We hung the posters I had designed for the Tenants Union on the front door and all over the apartment. Those posters are still here. “This is our home,” they say. “We are organized. We will fight. We are not leaving.” We handed each buyer a letter as they came in, before they tramped through our living room and kitchen and bedrooms. “Welcome, new landlords. We know our rights. We intend to stay.”

But the system teaches these people that the only thing that matters is money. As though our people’s homes are just play pieces on a Monopoly board. They are used to a world where everything can be bought.

The buyer’s parents, Peter Omran and Tanya Omran, run a Christian missionary organization, Heart of Mercy International, offering aid to people in Palestine and Jordan. Her brothers, Michael Omran and Christopher Omran, are partners in a supposedly “socially responsible” coffee plantation in Ethiopia, Abana Coffee Plantation, selling to fancy coffee roasters in the Bay Area and elsewhere. Tatiana Omran, “Tatters” to her friends, is the one who saw our house and decided she wanted it for herself.

I want to give them the benefit of the doubt. I don’t think these people are evil the way serial evictors who build buildings full of seniors to clear them out and flip them at a profit are evil. The Omrans’ actions are the banal sort of evil, caught up in the ways capitalism and colonialism molds all of us, everyday injustices ingrained into a system that tells them it’s all right to do this, even if they are religious people, even if they think of themselves as socially responsible, even if they have their own historic ties to the impacts of colonial dispossession and displacement. The system tells them that it’s alright to buy people’s homes and force them out just because you want their homes. The system tells them money makes it alright.

They’re probably confused by us. They are probably thinking, “Why won’t they just take our money? Are they just trying to negotiate for a bigger buyout?” To them, our fight is simply a negotiation for a buyout, a line item in their financial calculations.

As I write this, I’m sitting on my couch, observing the “for sale” sign across the street in the unit under my neighbor Richard’s house. Why don’t they buy that unit? Three doors down, above an architects’ office, is a two-unit building that has been empty for the 20 years I’ve been here. I hear the owner has finally decided to sell. Why don’t they go for that building? We know there are ten to forty thousand vacant units in the city. We know the Omrans ran corporate rentals out of one of their buildings that would have made a fine home for Tatiana. We know they inherited other properties. Tatiana could live in any of those. We joke with our 12-year old about the empty apartment for sale across the street, “Tatters could buy that unit, and then we could just walk across the street to hand her our rent.”

I would hope as people of faith, as people who have suffered under colonialism and displacement, that they would do the right thing. But in a system that tells the owners of property that they have all the power, we have to organize, we have to fight back, in the streets and in courts, to remind them of what’s right.

Now they and their money are taking us to court. We don’t have their millions, but we have community and we have what’s right on our side. This process has been all-consuming. Meeting with tenant counselors and lawyers, researching our options, organizing with our community, preparing for depositions. Going to trial takes over your life, your time, your mental space, your reserves. The rich count on that. The system is built on that.

It’s no wonder tenants rarely take it this far. Who has the time or the energy to keep going? The fear of deportation or harassment or how an eviction affects your future prospects, of losing your job, of losing precious time, of how it affects your mental health. I’ve started waking at 3 a.m., mulling over all the angles, or how I will get my work done.

We are tremendously lucky to be part of a community that has our backs. I can’t imagine doing this alone. Whatever happens, we will land on our feet, we will survive, even if it means losing our home and maybe losing our city and losing our schools. We will adapt. Many others are not so lucky. They end up in far-flung locations, separated from community and social networks, or end up on the streets, in tents or in cars or RVs, by no choice of their own.

But we have choices. The Omrans have choices. They can choose to harden their stance. They can choose to act as though our lives and livelihoods are simply commodities to be bought off. Or they can consider the ethical and social consequences of their actions, make connections between our common histories of colonialism and choose to do the right thing. It’s their choice.

We weigh our options, not alone, but with our community. Our choice, our community’s choice, is to fight this.

Even if these particular people do the right thing, the system will continue to condone this behavior, one after another, in workplaces or home places, treating people as currency. There’s a system built on greed, built on displacement and dispossession. From Palestine to Ohlone lands, colonialism follows us. The fight is for all of us tenants, who believe we have our own right to the city, a right that doesn’t depend on how much wealth we have. The fight is to change the system and build a more ethical structure where this kind of banal evil is no longer a pillar of the system.
I have not been homeless in almost a decade. But my homelessness was deeply influenced by the fact that my mother was homeless before me, for many years.

I loved her so much. When your own mother hits the streets, you learn something. When she was homeless, a part of me was homeless.

That is actually how the Buddha sees homelessness: If you suffer, I can embrace that. This is not an embrace as if it is a burden. I remember just wondering why the world did not do a good job of showing love to my mommy.

I am not Buddha, but I do spend time reminding myself that there really is not all that much of a difference between self and other. I do not think of people as homeless; I think of people as having been betrayed. I think of it this way because when someone has been betrayed, you try and not betray them. You do not see them as walking failures or losers.

I want to write about a man or a woman. I want to write about a soul and not a homeless person. I want to write about my friend Sam. I want to write about the fact that his mother died and he feels lonely. Yes, he is on the street, but his loneliness bothers me even more. I want to write about the fact that I gave him my old laptop because he is a writer. I want to write about the fact that after that, he invited me to breakfast at a nearby McDonalds. And I want to write about the politics of poverty or homelessness at the time. I still talk to my mom. She is still a vibrant living presence in my life.

I never really thought much about the politics of poverty or homelessness at the time. I still don’t. This was the woman who held me in her womb. This was the woman who would bake banana bread for me. And now she was hurting. And I wanted her to be loved and I wanted her to be held and I wanted her to be held enough to be happy enough to hold me as well.

I am still that young boy just wanting to wrap my arms around my mother. Innocent clarity, I call it. Why would anybody not want to wrap their arms around another lonely, tired, angry, scared human being? Is there any reason not to?

I don’t think anybody is homeless in the lap of God. And I do not think anybody is homeless in your lap if your lap is the lap of compassion as well. Do you see that the lap you hold another in is the same body that you sit within your solitude? The presence you have when with yourself is the same presence you are able to give to others. And so when we sit we are in our own laps. And so when I am with myself I am with you and when I am with you I am with myself. For in the embrace of love the fact that you woke up behind a cardboard box and I woke up in a one-bedroom apartment means little and our shared humaness means a lot.

To liberate the “homeless” is to embrace them so radically that we destroy the very “theness” we used to find “them.”

I still talk to my mom. She is still a vibrant living presence in my life and soul and heart. She was my first home. A womb with a view, I tell myself.

We fumble around trying to love and free and fight and champion and rescue only because we are not Buddha. We can not yet look at a tired man who is filled with feelings of misery and hatred and liberate him with a glance. And so we give people blankets or money or a cup of coffee.

I guess there are no homeless people. There are just endless souls, each one who had a mother and each one who had the original face before they were born. Got it?
STREET SPEAK

**EPIsODE 9: Keep SIP Hotels Open**

At the height of the Delta variant spike, the City of San Francisco announced plans to close down the Shelter in Place Hotels that had kept about 2,000 people safe and off the streets over the course of the past year.

We spoke with Lina Khoeur, a fourth year medical student at UCSF, and with Naomi Shoenfeld, a medical anthropologist and nurse practitioner who has been working and researching in the SIP hotels. Both of them shared what they have seen of the benefits the SIP hotel program has offered to tenants, and why they are asking the City to #KeepHotelsOpen.

Get Involved!
Sign up for the Coalition on Homelessness ACTION ALERTS here: https://www.cohsf.org/take-action/

Weather report brought to you by Bella Hangnail, off her new album Mask Era. Listen to the full album here: https://bellahangnail.bandcamp.com/

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**JOIN THE VIGIL**

In silence, in prayer, in song we’ll remember them; honor them, mourn our losses, reach out to each other for comfort and hope, and show our solidarity in working for change.

Watch the Vigil online on 12/17 starting at 5:30 PM (PST) at:
facebook.com/sanfranciscoungministy/live/

Share this event, spread the word, and join us!