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INDEPENDENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE COALITION ON HOMELESSNESS SINCE 1989

NOVEMBER 15, 2021 | COVID BI-MONTHLY | STREET SHEET.ORG

WE DEDICATE THIS ISSUE TO BRIAN EDWARDS WHO WAS AND WILL ALWAYS BE PART OF OUR FAMILY. HE Fought TIRELESSLY AND BITTERLY FOR JUSTICE FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE AND DRUG USERS IN SAN FRANCISCO.

REST IN POWER.

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LISTEN to STREET SPEAK: Episode 10 asks—What is the overdose crisis? A harm reduction worker explores the stigma people who use drugs face and tells us why we should ALL carry Narcan! Listen at streetsheet.org/street-speak-podcast/
On October 19, real estate developers and some Japantown residents slid a knife into plans for permanent, supportive housing for homeless people. Instead of converting the failed 131-room tourist Buchanan Hotel into long-term housing for people who need it, the City is backing off thanks to a misinformation campaign spread in part by other Japanese Americans.

According to a statement that has been shared by many Japantown nonprofits, San Francisco’s Japantown is under attack by anti-homeless misinformation campaign spread in part by other Japanese Americans.

We are Japanese Americans who are long-time residents of indigenous Ohlone-Lisjan and Ramaytush land (a.k.a. the Bay Area). We need other Japanese Americans and allies to understand that this dangerous, anti-homeless misinformation campaign that began in August will increase suffering for the majority of San Franciscans. Ultimately, it’s a campaign that will make the rich richer, as it cynically misuses the recent attention around racist, anti-Asian violence, and also rewrites the history of continues on page 3...

Safer Consumption Sites (also referred to as Safer Injection Facilities, Overdose Prevention Programs, Supervised Consumption Services) have been a hot topic nationwide, with especially here in San Francisco. There are over 25,000 people who inject drugs in San Francisco alone and the overdose crisis has only worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many see the rising overdose statistics as a result of fentanyl, despite it being prevalent on the West Coast since around 2014. Those working in drug policy, harm reduction and general substance use tend to recognize that overdose rates rising during quarantine has more to do with resources (including housing, mental health, harm reduction and hygiene) being ripped away from our communities rather than the drug supply itself.

More lives have been lost to overdose than to COVID-19 both last and this year, according to data from the San Francisco Department of Public Health. San Francisco nonprofits, grassroots organizations and community members gather to push for more to be done. Safer Consumption Sites (SCS) work by having naloxone, oxygen and medical staff available to minimize overdose risks. SCS also provides a safe and clean place, without stigma or the pressure to rush. In addition to issues of safety regarding overdose death prevention, SCS offer several other benefits to people who use drugs and to our communities such as reducing public and visible drug use, reducing risk for abscesses, endocarditis and bacterial infections, reducing risk of infection diseases including Hepatitis C and HIV, reducing improperly discarded syringes; decreasing surrounded criminal activity, improving linkage to other services and resources, encouraging marginalized communities to accessible healthcare; and, of course, one of the most swaying benefits to the City and County: saving millions of dollars in medical expenses.

There are over 120 SCS operating worldwide successfully. Evidence has shown SCS have consistently been effective at reaching their goals including reducing death and harm, reducing public drug use and connecting clients to further services. Also, it has been shown that these sites do not lead to increased crime or injection drug use, but rather the opposite. Most importantly, to this day there have been no instances of overdose deaths in any SCS worldwide. In spite of overwhelming evidence, critics grasp onto myths that people who use drugs won’t use the services provided, that the money is better spent on punitive approaches, or that SCS will cause an increase in neighborhood littering and crime.

It has been a long and arduous fight for SCS in San Francisco. The first city-wide symposium on SCS was the Alliance for Saving Lives in 2007 at The Women’s Building. The policy fight for SCS began as a SB 57 introduced by Susan Talamantes Eggman, before more supervisors voted unanimously to support it and urged the public health state of emergency will push this movement forward by demonstrating strong local support for public health measures rather than criminalization.

There are many ways to get involved and show support in this movement. Organizations and coalitions such as Safer Inside Coalition, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, GLIDE Memorial Church and St. James Infirmary Advocacy work done so far has included demonstrations across the city on Overdose Awareness Day, mobilization at City Hall (including a hunger strike by Gary McCoy as well as a die-in), teach-ins, film screenings and public comment to supervisors. Supervisor Matt Haney has provided tremendous support. His office drafted the resolution calling for a public health state of emergency. The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to support it and urged the mayor to as well. Ideally, declaring a public health state of emergency will push this movement forward by demonstrating strong local support for public health measures rather than criminalization.

Demonstrations and policy demands have been championed by the Safer Inside Coalition, a collection of local nonprofits comprising HealthRight860, The Gubbio Project, San Francisco AIDS Foundation, GLIDE Memorial Church and St. James Infirmary. Advocacy work done so far has included demonstrations across the city on Overdose Awareness Day, mobilization at City Hall (including a hunger strike by Gary McCoy as well as a die-in), teach-ins, film screenings and public comment to supervisors. Supervisor Matt Haney has provided tremendous support. His office drafted the resolution calling for a public health state of emergency. The Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to support it and urged the mayor to as well. Ideally, declaring a public health state of emergency will push this movement forward by demonstrating strong local support for public health measures rather than criminalization.

There are many ways to get involved and show support in this movement. Organizations and coalitions such as Safer Inside Coalition, San Francisco AIDS Foundation’s HIV Advocacy Network and Yes to SCS California offer updates, petitions and further resources. Being active in community meetings and general conversations is another helpful way to have your voice heard. Anytime issues come up around HIV and Hepatitis C, homelessness, harm reduction, hygiene and/or mental health, bring up and tie in the discussion in your public comment to SCS and normalize those intersections. Finally, the simplest way to get involved is to empower and educate yourself about harm reduction and harm reduction culture.
If it accomplishes its goal, the anti-homeless campaign will benefit landlords and real estate developers most of all. If leaders in Japantown are truly concerned about the loss of Japanese American culture, they are choosing the wrong target, and erasing the fact that there are Japanese Americans who are currently or formerly homeless—like Japanese American World War II incarceration survivors, who often left the camps after the war with nowhere to go. Breed’s anti-homeless policies make it impossible for people to gain stability, as rents and other belongings are taken away during a pandemic with no end in sight.

Not all Japanese Americans believe that poor people are the problem. Some of us actually understand that the real estate industry is the true predator and villain in this story. However, board members and some staff of Japantown nonprofits don’t agree, and they’re making it seem like there is only one voice in Japantown. The statements they’ve made co-opt the very real concern of anti-Asian violence, and the haunted histories of Japanese American World War II incarceration and redevelopment, egregiously using these issues to stop supportive, permanent homeless housing in the neighborhood. They also erase Japanese Americans who are currently or formerly homeless—like Japanese American World War II incarceration survivors, who often left the camps after the war with nowhere to go, having been evicted from their homes by landlords and local sheriff departments at the onset of internment. As descendants of incarceration survivors, we refuse to see our community’s trauma used to harm other communities.

Another actual threat to the community are the investors in Beverly Hills who own the Japan Center mall. In 2006, two Southern California-based companies purchased much of the mall. They signed a 15-year agreement, brokered by the city, stating that they would not attempt to convert the space into condos during that time. However, that agreement expires this year and has not yet been renewed. Even before COVID-19, Japan Center’s owners were slowly bleaching the place empty. The owners are not interested in preserving community. Langdon Street Capital “seeks to acquire, manage, develop and finance value-add urban infill real estate through syndication of equity and joint venture partnerships,” and its partner 3D Invest “prides itself on providing attractive investment opportunities for investors from all over the globe.” Langdon and 3D have refused to negotiate rents with small businesses, resulting in the nearly dead mall that Japan Center is today. In 2007, Japan Center owners began working with architects to draw up plans for condos to replace the mall. Because of the mall owner’s unwillingness to provide more than six months rent forgiveness for small businesses, we saw a number of these community shops shut down. So who is truly a threat to the culture of Japan Center?

During the early days of the pandemic, the city only partially followed guidance from medical professionals who advised how to contain the spread of the virus and its stronger variants. The city set up contracts with companies to provide living wages for people here, and until our unhoused neighbors have access to a permanent roof to sleep under, we aren’t interested in recreating the “Disneyfied” Japanen
towns designed by mid-1900s urban planners to appeal to tourists.

Corporate real estate investors like 3D and Langdon are buying up available housing units and leaving them empty, while some of these same landlords are getting ready to make deals with their tenants. If anti-homeless campaign leaders are interested in stopping violence, helping small businesses, and preserving local Japanese American culture, then they should demand that the city help homeless and low-income San Franciscans—Japanese American or not—by purchasing as many empty buildings as possible to provide permanent supportive housing. Some landlords are already selling lots of hotels and residential buildings to the owners of the Majestic Hotel, a couple of blocks east of the Buchanan, are also ready to sell to the City. Before redevelopment, the block where The Buchanan Hotel now stands was residential housing. Back then, the city used “eminent domain” policies to take over Japanese American (and Black and Filipina) homes. Today the City could use eminent domain to take back land from rich tax-eaters and use it to shelter San Francisco’s most vulnerable residents.

Saying that permanent supportive housing will destroy the community rewrites the history of Japanese American activism and tenant organizing, twisting it to push a pro-redevelopment industry message. In 1960, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA) was run by a notoriously cruel leader, Justin Herman, who called the land “too valuable to permit poor people to park on it.” Backed by groups like SFUR, Herman urged politicians to move the city’s population “closer to standard white Anglo-Saxon Protestant characteristics.” They succeeded in displacing hundreds of Japanese Americans, not to mention destroying Black community in the nearby Fillmore District, and almost completely leveling the Filipinx neighborhood once known as Manilatown. The City promised anyone displaced financial help to relocate, but failed to deliver. It took grassroots tenant groups like the Committee Against Nihonmachi Evictions (CANE) to save Japantown from total demolition by the SFRA and a Japan-based investment company, Kintetsu Enterprises. CANE stepped in where the City failed, managing to rehouse some of the Japanese American residents who were made homeless through the city’s racist policies.

In the 1980s, Japanese Americans became the only ethnic group to receive significant universal financial reparations from the US government, after a 30-year campaign resulted in $20,000 in reparations for incarcerated persons. Those who say they want to preserve Japantown’s culture need to start with the people first, and we could learn a lot from the work CANE did in the 1980s, as well as movements like Save Our Seniors in LA, and the J-Town Action and Solidarity Network LA. San Francisco, Seattle organizers repped West Coast Japantowns on a September panel on displacement, and released its own statement demanding “the immediate commandeering of unoccupied hotel units and their conversion into free housing for all who lack hous
ing.” There’s also the work of indigenous Lujan-Okinabe people who are currently working on projects like the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust, to rematriate some of the Bay Area that was taken from native tribes that were killed and enslaved by European settlers during their brutal coloniza
tion of the West Coast.

 Stable housing is a basic need, and permanent housing could be a form of reparations for people who are currently unhoused, and who have suffered and continue to suffer because San Francisco’s government, and the real estate industry that funds local political campaigns, is very intentionally causing more suffering. We hope that Japanese Americans will join us and already existing movements to end the silence around this. Speak out with us and our homeless friends, family, and neighbors.
An Acrostic to Brian

Brian
Remained
imaginative
And
neighborly
Especially to
Dykes
While
always
 ranting, drinking, swearing...
From the Dykes who Love Brian Fan Club

A Haiku for Brian

Damn, Brian
That's what we all say
Miss you everyday

By Olivia Glowacki

A Limerick for Brian

(Cuz He Was Irish)

He left us way too soon,
After the big monsoon,
And while we wept,
On he slept,
As the cow jumped over the moon

By Olivia Glowacki

Most of the chaos that characterized most of this year has subsided, thank God...I feel like I finally have at least the illusion of control of my life back. If there's chaos or drama these days, it's usually coming from my 14 month old puppy.

—Brian Edwards, October 29th

I can't believe that this amazing, sarcastic, hilarious, fiercely dedicated human is no longer with us. I fucking love you Brian Edwards. Only you could make my blood boil and make me laugh at the same time. We couldn't have done the Stolen Belonging project without you. Seriously, you threw down so hard. Always did. We will continue to fight to stop the sweeps and city theft, and for unhoused folks to get the housing, respect and dignity they deserve in your honor.

Down with the corrupt politicians and city workers treating people like trash and stealing all their possessions. Up with a boldly militant and creative fight for housing as a human right!

Love and gratitude that I got to be in the struggle with you,
Leslie

Brian was a larger than life personality, with a wicked sense of humor, sharp analysis and a nose for sniffing out injustices, which he never left alone. His enormous heart, which he wore unapologetically on his sleeve, had space to share love with his community, to make new friends and to give a hand to really anyone he happened to meet.

Brian built an extensive network of relationships in the homeless community and was always the first to hear about changes to City policy. He was able to get the dynamics during the pandemic and keep both community and unhoused folks informed. Among his many accomplishments, Brian got the shelter monitoring committee going, garnering a number of endorsements for starting back up self-referral to shelter including from the Local Homeless Coordinating Board.

He worked closely with us here at the Coalition on Homelessness on human rights issues, was a member of the Shelter Monitoring Committee, spent his time as needed with Faithful Fools, Glide and Code Tenderloin, to name just a few orgs he threw down in service to ensuring folks on the streets got their needs met.

Brian was loved by many, and centered his life struggling in solidarity with folks on the streets.

Brian is survived by loving family members including his parents, his cat Jeff, his dog Dahmer and an entire community who adored him.

—Michael Rouppet

NOV 15, 2021

We are saddened to announce one of our family members passed on November 4. Brian Edwards, a member of the Shelter Monitoring Committee, spent his time as needed with Faithful Fools, Glide and Code Tenderloin, to name just a few orgs he threw down in service to ensuring folks on the streets got their needs met.

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in the most Brian approach I can imagine.

Like, it’s such a clusterfuck that you can’t help but laugh, and some people are also

pissed at my involvement, and that kind of
denial you feel is a needed one.

This is exactly how your death feels to me.

It is such a fucking clusterfuck, but it’s
tough to laugh this time. It couldn’t be

more of a fucked up cluster fuckin’ fuck FUCK! But even if your heart would be

breathing knowing about the pain you’ve left behind, I’d like to think that you can’t help

laugh. It’s such a fucking clusterfuck, I’m

very pissed of your involvement in this, and I

hope that makes you kind of delighted. That

would be very much like you. asshole.

I’m pissed off by the loss of you, and I can’t

find the words to describe it. Devastated

comes to mind. If I told you that, your

response would probably be a comment about

outrageous accent. You’d be snarky and rude and I would feel more

loved than I do with most of my friends

on a regular Thursday. For you, the time or

title of the day was of less relevance. You

would drink with me at 10 a.m. and call me

at 4 p.m. when you knew I was probably

upset about the truth regardless of the situation at hand. Now you’re dead, and I’m quite certain

I will never know a person like you again.

In my lifetime. You held that space in me.

You told me about every single time someone

missed.

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I narrowly escaped foster care when I was 15

I owe an incredible debt to Huckleberry House.
I’ve always considered myself an open person, but this is not a part of my life I am comfortable talking about. It’s taken me several tries to get my thoughts out, but I believe that if my story can shed light on the need for our government to invest in social services, and soften the heart of even just one of our legislators, perhaps my experiences were not in vain.

My relationship with my family has always been complicated. I grew up as the oldest of four in the Outer Mission in San Francisco. My parents were very strict, Conservative, and deeply religious. As punishment my father would hit us with a large stick he used to keep on the window sill, but one day that stick broke while he was hitting my brother and he began to use a black braided belt instead.

The physical punishments became a lot worse once I started high school. I attended George Washington in the Richmond District, which is on the other side of the City from where I lived (an hour and a half bus ride). Oftentimes after a long day at school and exhausting bus ride home, I didn’t want to do anything except take a nap before driving into my homework and repeating it all over again the next day. But that was unacceptable to my father, who demanded that I finish my chores before I start on any homework.

In retrospect things would have been a lot easier had I just listened, but I was a stubborn, outspoken adolescent. My brothers were much more obedient and a stubborn, outspoken adolescent. My

I held onto the center divider with all my strength. Eventually the table broke and he put all his weight on me. As he sat on me, I looked up and watched my mother pick up my little sister and exit the house, leaving me alone with him.

Another time I came home and my father didn’t like the pants I was wearing. In a fit of rage, he tore them off of me and then proceeded to rip them to shreds. I never knew what was waiting for me when I got home and it was beginning to affect my grades and mental health.

I was at school one day when I realized that I didn’t want to return home. In Health class, I had learned about a place called Huckleberry House, a shelter for runaway and homeless youth. The first of its kind, it was started in 1967 during the Summer of Love right here in San Francisco. While on my lunch break, I met with the school nurse and asked her to help me make an appointment with Huckleberry. I did not return home that afternoon.

Things got better for a little while.

Huckleberry connected me with a social worker who made my father sign paperwork promising not to hit us anymore. Eventually he resorted to taking my belongings. He began confiscating my textbooks and schoolwork, and eventually started to take my clothes and shoes too. By this time, my family had a relationship with the local police department.

When I disobeyed, my parents would call the police, and asked them to send certain officers who they knew would take the side. I stayed at Huckleberry House two or three more times.

I’ll never forget the day I stopped living at home. I got up early that morning to meet with a childhood friend who had just returned from a summer in China. When I got back home, it was still early so I went back to sleep and put my cell phone on my pillow next to me. While I was asleep, my little brother gave my phone to my mom, who tried to use it as leverage to get me to do some chore I hadn’t completed yet. Eventually someone called the police, and so I decided to sit in the bathroom while I waited for them. Thinking nothing of it, I took a cutting board, cantaloupe, and knife into the bathroom with me. I figured I’d have a snack while waiting for the police to show up. To this day I still shudder when I think about how badly this could have ended up.

When the police arrived, they separated us into different rooms and I went into my bedroom. One cop was particularly nice to me. He told me that he could tell I was a smart kid and that I just needed to use my parents and their resources for a couple more years until I made it to college. He allowed me to pack a bag with some clothes, and looked through it to make sure I didn’t pack any contraband items. When it came time for me to leave for Huckleberry House, he motioned for me to lead the way, and so I grabbed my bag and walked toward the front door of the house.

Then in one swift motion, Mr. Nice Cop slammed me against the wall, made me drop my bag, and placed me into handcuffs.

And then just like a common criminal, I was escorted out of the house I grew up in, and placed into the police car waiting out front, for the entire neighborhood to see.

The police took me to Huckleberry House, and I wore the pajamas I arrived in for three days before I was able to access any of my clothing. This ended up being my final and longest stay at the shelter. My social worker tried to convince me to return home with my parents, but I adamantly refused, anything was better than living at home. He warned me that there was a good chance I would end up in a group home. He made the appointment and I braced myself for what was going to happen next.

Thankfully my grandmother across the bay in the city of Richmond allowed me to come live with her. And even though it meant I had to wake up at 4:35 every morning to make it to school on time, I was incredibly grateful that I was able to continue going to Washington High. I knew that getting into college was my best shot at bettering my situation, and two years later I left San Francisco to attend UCLA.

I have the opportunity to advocate for the homeless LGBTQ and BIPOC youth, many of whom make their way through San Francisco, and many of whom were not offered the opportunities I was. Finally, I’d like to make a plea to our elected officials for the necessity of social services such as Huckleberry House. It is frightening to see that abortion rights, paid leave, affordable child care and healthcare are not priorities to the people we put in office.

When you invest in billonaires and corporations, stockholders see the returns. But when you invest in the American people, they turn around and re-invest in their families and communities. At a time when we are experiencing the highest level of wealth inequality in history, I hope our elected officials realize this before it’s too late.

Eric Curry is an author, activist, and small business owner. Follow him on Twitter @ericcurrysf and Instagram @ericcurryco.

Eric Curry

Join the Vigil live in-person, with pandemic protocols, at Civic Center plaza by City Hall starting 5:00 PM on 12/16.

Join us—people of all faiths, or no faith—to remember our neighbors who have died this year while living on the streets and on the margins of San Francisco.

Watch the Vigil live online on 12/16 starting at 5:30 PM (PST) at: facebook.com/sanfranciscogrighthministry/live/

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

Share this event, spread the word, and join us!
The Forever Home

It is difficult for me to write about the topic of homelessness because it brings up many upsetting emotions and past experiences. But I will write anyway and simply accept the pain that will arise.

I ask myself what can I say about this issue that has not yet been said? What contribution can I make?

I was homeless for 15 plus years. I have personal experiences with the injustices that often cause one to live without housing and I also am aware of the ongoing oppression that happens when you are living on the street. Too many human beings in this society are repeatedly victimized in so many ways. And it is late in the day to end this dehumanizing, alienating dynamic.

However, part of what I have learned about my own efforts towards personal and societal liberation is that those most victimized are also those with the deepest knowledge and insights as to the nature of society.

It is one thing to have been victimized. It is another thing to define one’s self as a victim. And the difference is in one’s relation to power. A person who believes they are a victim does not have a powerful relation-ship to the world around them. And this is a problem because one needs to be powerful in order to move forward in one’s own personal life and equally important one needs to be in a place of power in relation to the oppressive society.

I see no reason why those currently homeless and those who have been can not be at the leading edge of all human liberation move-ments.

In my own personal life there are very real issues that must get addressed for me to be doing the leadership work in the world that I know I am capable of. I need better housing and I need to deal with some physical health issues and I also need to heal from major traumas.

And yet I am also very clear that on a soul level absolutely nothing needs to change. My soul has never been homeless and never will be. My soul was never abused and is unbreakable. My soul has never lived in poverty and never will. That is the nature of the soul.

And the world we live in is dedicated to confusing all of us about this. Nobody needs to change anything at all about their life to create their soul. Poverty does not diminish the soul and wealth does not improve it.

I believe this is critically important for the homeless community to understand because the narrative is that we need something from others. And yes we do in a way. Human beings have real material needs in terms of food, shelter, water, health care, and one needs money in order to access vitally neces-sary goods and services.

With that said, nobody has more soul than I do. Nobody. And nobody will ever have a deeper, wiser, more compassionate, more creative, braver soul than you. This truth must be understood and inte-grated into how one lives their daily lives in order to take on the leadership that we are all capable of. Those who victimized me, and there have been many, were lost themselves. They betrayed their soul by harming me. And many people are so deeply alienated that they do not even see how harmful and stuck they are.

And this is where we come in. There is some-thing sacred about knowing one has been horribly hurt. Once you have been repeatedly abused, betrayed, isolated, stigmatized, in-carcerated, drugged, shamed, impoverished, punished and then blamed for why you respond to this ongoing violence you know things about society and you know things about others that are deep, sacred, spiritual insights.

What I am trying to say is that when I go to a social service provider because I need some clothing or food or information about hous-ing that is one thing. I am forced to play a game and to the degree necessary I will play it. But let’s be very clear that this has absolu-tely nothing to do with me as a human be-ing having been repeatedly abused, and that this is the only reason I am even needing any services in the first place.

It would have been good if I had never been abused as a young person. But I was. It would have been good if others had protected me from the abuse after it started but that did not happen either. It would have been good if after I was sexually, emotionally and phys-i-cally abused I was given access to healing modalities. But I wasn’t given that support.

And so now I am forced to go to service providers to get basic needs met. This is what it is and I owe it to myself to re-engage with this society to get goods and services that all human beings deserve. I am not going to live in squallor with horrible housing and barely enough money to wash my clothes in a society in which many have extraordinary wealth.

But I am also very grounded in the truth that this is nothing but me working with a racist, classist, violent, sexist, earth-destroying machine. I spend a great deal of my day returning to the truth of who I really am and the actual conditions I confront every hour of my life. I am kind of wonderfully horrified at how deeply I have internalized self-blame, self-criticism, self-punishment, self-harm.

It is wonderful because I am finally ending that internal dynamic. It is horrifying be-cause I now see just how absolutely chronic the internal diminishment of self is for me and, I assume, for most others.

In fact, the system demands that we dimin-ish ourselves in order to fulfill our basic human needs. The soup kitchens and mental health clinics and shelters and social service agencies and psych hospitals demand, de-mand, demand that we go there acting small and needy and apologetic and full of shame.

I refuse. I go there grounded in my soul as a vital, blessed, brilliant, passionate, creative, yogi poet-guru-self expecting other human beings to treat me with the respect, compas-sion and fundamental decency that I should have been receiving from the day I was born.

And this is the same for you. There is not one iota of difference between who I am at my core and who you are at core. The majority of humanity is asleep at the wheel and we get to do all we can to wake them up. And when they are asleep at the wheel, remember the nature of the vehicle they are driving. It is the vehicle of humanity and by being asleep they betray their own sacred self and betray all other life around them. They drive recklessly and violently and oppressively and cruelly and this needs to stop as soon as possible and it really does not matter what emotions people need to face in order to finally awaken to their fundamental respon-sibility to themselves and to society and to the planet.

We need nothing to decide to become the badasses spiritual radical revolutionary leaders that the planet is crying for. You will never get a job description giving you permission to do this. You will never get hired to do this. You decide to do this because that is your fundamental nature and it is the greatest gift to yourself and your community to live based on who you truly are.

And I promise you the world will notice. The trees will notice and the pigeon flying down the street will notice and the old man sitting on a bus will notice. And once this happens you are finally employed and housed forever because this is your forever work and your forever home.

Jesse Mentken
Angela
A Self-Reflection

You might not fear Angela’s words, but you should never underestimate her silence.

Angela is a rare kind of woman, who keeps many secrets behind her smile.

She is not a sweet talker, but she’d rather be judged for being real than be loved for being fake.

She simply can’t stand fake people and those who only reach out when they need something.

Angela is the kind of person who faces her own problems alone, but she is always there for her loved ones when they need her.

Anyone who is loved by her is the luckiest person, and that’s why losing her would be your biggest regret.

Angela is like a butterfly - beautiful to see but impossible to catch.

Written by Angela R. Underwood
Shared at Golden Gate Park MM Gathering
7 November 2021