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This issue is dedicated to Daniel Joseph Paul. Rest in power.
To my quad-processing binary
Turing machine,

To my machine language
Interpreter,

To My discrete algorithm
Analyzer,

To my multi-thread
Processing module,

Your cache
Your chassis
Your solid state drive
Your motherboard

Electrify my cerebral pathways
In ways that no programming language
Can express.

I am stuck in an endless loop of
Stroking your keyboard
While you enthrall my
Cerebrum with
Pixel-based gestures
On your 4k display.

You rescued me
From a carbon based
Dystopian reality
And uploaded me into your
Domain
Where we now reside
In our castle of
Bits and bytes

Cinderella and the Prince
Together at last
Happily-Ever-After.
REMEMBERING DANIEL JOSEPH PAUL

Dan Paul, an urban survivalist and magical street performer, has departed for his next grand adventure. He passed away on August 12, 2022. Dan was born November 11, 1970 in Seattle, Wash. into a loving family. He spent his early years at his home in Enumclaw, finishing out his youth in Huntsville, Ala. While a young adult, Dan felt crowded and claustrophobic trying to adjust to the demands of a conforming life and decided to take to the streets, ending up in San Francisco at the age of 18.

Although he traveled a bit, his heart was shared between the San Francisco Bay and the Wasatch Front of Utah, where his family resides. Some people would classify Dan as homeless, but that was not the case. Dan felt very much at home most of his life. Whether surfing on the California coast, flying on rigging in the streets of Salt Lake City, cavoring with a kite in a stubborn gale, or camping on the Pensacola Gulf amid looming tornados, Dan was in his element.

Ironically, although “houseless” himself, Dan’s passion was helping others find a place of their own. Dan used his carpentry skills to bring Berkeley co-op housing up to code for Berkeley students, fought off mosquitoes in Belize to improve campgrounds, and offered his assistance to many friends looking to improve their own dwellings. Dan was an advocate for true artistic freedom, and was a Burning Man old-timer. Although Dan loved dancing with fire, his great comfort was as he played the didgeridoo, letting the deep notes rattle his soul. He cherished his home on the Albany Bulb and the Berkeley community he grew to know as family. Dan’s spirit soars.

IMMIGRATION AND HOMELESSNESS

I was born in the rural areas of a country in Africa, I did my studies and finally I was able to secure a job as a nurse in the capital city. Life was good—not to the extent I wanted, but at least I was able to make ends meet. Working for the government sometimes is not a walk in the park. Loads of work with odd shifts and low salaries that might even take months to be paid out. This is what makes people take some drastic steps that sometimes lead to even more crazy situations.

One day as I was going through the papers, I saw an advert for American jobs. To make things better, they were nursing positions. This was not an opportunity I would let go of. I sent my application through the procedure explained in the advertisement. Little did I know my naivety would cost me a fortune. One early morning I got a call from the employment agency informing me that my experience in the nursing field had just landed me a job in the United States. I went to their offices, did my interview, passed, and the paperwork began. I was expected to pay $3,000 in agency fees besides the usual visa application fee. I gathered all my savings and then took a loan to cover everything.

Before my visa interview date, I went back to the offices for some coaching on what to say during the interview. I was not to mention anything about work, but rather say I was just visiting for a while. The agency had a ready host, Martin, in San Francisco. He would take care of me until I was ready to live by myself. I wasn’t sure how the interview would go, but fortunately, I was accepted. This was like a dream come true. It was time to change my life completely.

Everything else was easy. I still had funds from the loan I had acquired. I got myself an air ticket and off I went to the U.S. On landing, Martin picked me up and showed me all the way to San Francisco. We went to a small house that was not even fully furnished. This was a red flag for me, but he said it was just the beginning—more people were coming so we would get the house furnished or even get a bigger house. The start date for my work came but I was informed that there was still paperwork to be done and I should be patient.

Meanwhile, I was still staying with Martin at the same house and was spending the remainder of my savings for survival. A month later, two other victims from my country had come in through the same process. Time flew, days turned to weeks, weeks turned to months as we grew impatient and Martin kept telling us it was all about time and documentation. It was also rather worrying considering we had extended our stay, but Martin said that wouldn’t be a problem. More people were still coming in and the house was getting rather uncomfortable.

Then one day, my worst fears were confirmed. Martin took off without a word. That’s when we realized this was a whole scam. We had been swindled out of our money. Some people were lucky, because their visas were still valid and they were able to head back home. For those of us who had overstayed our visas, it was a choice between being deported or hanging around to find jobs under the radar. That is how we became homeless without money to pay for rent and with no one to assist us. This was and forever will be my worst nightmare.

Join us in memorializing Dan at our website and find out more information on an in person memorial on the SF Bay at WeLoveYouDanPaul.com

DID YOU KNOW WE HAVE A PODCAST?

Listen to STREET SPEAK, the podcast answering your burning questions about poverty and homelessness in San Francisco. Created by the editors of Street Sheet, this podcast brings you the word on the street. Find the latest episodes on our website and wherever you listen to podcasts.
Governor Gavin Newsom’s CARE Courts are now law.

Senate Bill 1338, a Newsom proposal, will create a specialized mental health court where judges can compel people with mental health disabilities and substance use conditions into treatment. The bill allows a broad list of “specified individuals” to refer somebody for conservatorship, and sets a similarly broad set of conditions qualifying them for CARE Court.

The list of “specified individuals” includes police officers, and the criteria for placing a person under “care” include being on the spectrum for schizophrenia and not having decision-making capacity for medical care.

By August 18, when the Anti-Police Terror Project staged a teach-in on SB 1338 outside San Francisco City Hall and the Superior Court, the legislation was already well on its way to passage with an overwhelming majority. James Burch, the Project’s deputy director, told a crowd of some 40 people, “We’re trying to make sure everybody knows how messed up it is and mobilize some popular energy so that we can resist implementation locally.

For all the lip service paid to “care” in the bill, none of the $65 million set aside for the program will fund behavioral health services.

“Evidence shows that providing housing and adequately-resourced, voluntary outpatient treatment—not court-ordered treatment—is most effective for treating the population CARE Court seeks to care for,” says Yessica Hernandez, an organizer for the Coalition on Homelessness, which publishes the Street Sheet. “California don’t need another racist court system and mental health consumers don’t need another politician stoking fear and pushing fake solutions for political gain.”

The CARE Courts would also perpetuate existing racial disparities, according to APTP. One thing that the legal, mental health and homeless systems share is the disproportionate number of Black people caught up in them. Lopsided arrest and incarceration rates among Black people are already well documented. In California, Black people only make up 6.5% of the general population, but account for nearly 40% of the general population. A 2014 study in the World Journal of Psychiatry reported that Black people in the U.S. are diagnosed with schizophrenia at three times the rate of white people.

APTP Executive Director Cat Brooks also noted the overlap between race, mental health disabilities and victimization from state violence.

“With an estimated quarter of police shootings involving people with mental health disabilities, the idea of having police force Black and brown folks into treatment is a recipe for more police terror on people of color,” she said.

San Francisco is among the first of seven counties that will pilot the CARE Courts by October 1, 2023; California’s remaining counties will implement them by December 1, 2024.
MONKEYPOX
Its effects on the disabled communities in San Francisco
BY @TALLASIANCHICK

MONKEYPOX
MP has affected the disabled communities of San Francisco due to misinformation, homophobia, racism, and governmental neglect.

Misinformation
Misinformation is the biggest spreader of MP. Straight people are NOT immune! MP is caused by a virus that can transfer through blood, saliva, and sexual fluids, meaning ANYONE can catch the virus.

Homophobia
We see that numbers of injected individuals are usually men who have sex with men (MSM), but the reason numbers are so high due to slow spread of real facts and only being relayed to those specific communities. Society presumes that straight people are immune, causing less testing within straight communities.

Racism
During initial COVID outbreaks, rise in AAPI hate affected Asian communities and similarly, racists and ignorant people began to blame black folks, simply because of the name.

Governmental Neglect
Similar to COVID-19, government response was inadequate, causing unnecessary harm and DEATH amongst the disabled community.

Vaccination Access
Though the monkeypox vaccine is free for all, many folks don’t know where to go. Considering all the aforementioned factors, vaccination may vary from city to city. Please keep the following in mind:

Moving Forward
The past few years have been tough for all marginalized communities. We have experienced immense trauma and still are. We all live in a pre-disabled body (unless born disabled); pre-disability and post-disability. Please know your body and make a decision from there.

- Queer-friendly clinics/nonprofits may have the vaccine.
- Hospitals have the vaccine, but in limited quantities.
- Ask your primary care physician for the vaccine. Legally, they cannot turn you away (unless it’s for legitimate health concerns).
- Do your own research.
- Don’t be afraid to ask for help!
NO A HOMELESSNESS AND MENTAL ILLNESS

It's a rare chilly morning in August, and I'm not fully awake when I hear the sound of a received message on my phone. I force myself to sit up, and grab the phone from the nightstand. I see it's a message from Jeannie, a friend I knew from high school. There's a video attached to the message. Jeannie likes sending me funny videos that she finds on YouTube, and today was no exception. The video is called "Fake Mental Disorder Cringe." Right away, I start to feel uncomfortable.

I have seen some of these videos before. They're compilations of videos made mostly for TikTok by teenagers that claim they have Dissociative Identity Disorder. It's always a teen lip syncing a song while dressed as some anime character that they claim to be one of their "alters." When not lip syncing, they make videos like "to alter switches in 10 minutes" or taste tests for their different identities. It's easy to see that they have no idea what DID is about, and don't understand that this form of mental illness actually destroys lives. I quickly send her laughing emojis, but what I really want to do is tell her that for some people, this kind of mental illness is an everyday struggle. She has no idea that I live with what these kids claim to have.

I've struggled with mental issues for most of my life, and have been recently diagnosed with a serious, but rare disorder. After years of being misdiagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder, Depersonalization and Derealization, and ODD (Other Specified Dissociative Disorder), I was finally diagnosed with Dissociative Identity Disorder, which affects only one to two percent of the population.

Dissociative identity disorder or DID, was previously called "multiple personality disorder." DID is a reaction to severe and constant trauma in the early formative years. It is characterized by the presence of two or more distinct personality identities. Each may have a unique name, personal history, and characteristics. Individuals who have a dissociative disorder are usually misdiagnosed with other illnesses because of its rarity. There are some mental health professionals that don't believe that this disorder is real, and they often dismiss DID sufferers' symptoms as fantasies, and even as ploys for attention. The symptoms of DID include, but are not limited to:

- Memory loss (amnesia) of certain time periods, events, people and personal information
- A sense of being detached from yourself and your emotions
- A perception of the people and things around you as distorted and unreal
- A blurred sense of identity
- Significant stress or problems in your relationships, work or other important areas of your life
- Inability to cope well with emotional or professional stress
- Mental health problems, such as depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors

I've been diagnosed with Depersonalization/Derealization earlier in my life. Depersonalization/Derealization Disorder occurs when you persistently or repeatedly have the feeling that you're observing yourself from outside your body or you have a sense that things around you aren't real, or both. Feelings of depersonalization and derealization can be very disturbing and may feel like you're living in a dream. For some, it can be severe and may interfere with relationships, work and other daily activities.

When I lost my apartment, I became homeless. I was helped by a family friend who recognized me and knew of my Depersonalization Disorder diagnosis. During my period of homelessness, the world around me felt unreal, as if I was watching a TV show about someone who looked like me, but was not me. I hardly ever ate, and there was a constant "narrative" in my mind by what I later learned to be one of my identities. People avoided me, not knowing that I needed help, and I was often screamed at whenever I was too close to them or asked for something to eat. People tend to think that the homeless are on the street because they're all drug addicts, and they have only themselves to blame for their failed lives. It's hard to explain this time in my life to individuals who have never experienced dissociation. I felt "unreal," I didn't exist, both as a human being because of how I was treated by others, and because I was not present in my own reality/life. Unfortunately, there are many homeless who suffer from dissociative disorders, not necessarily DID. Most will not receive any help for their mental issues.

At the time, I was not aware that I had Dissociative Identity Disorder. This is not unusual. Individuals with DID are often misdiagnosed for years, sometimes for their whole lives. Many health care professionals never screen for DID because of its rarity. Symptoms of DID often show up in childhood, between the ages of 5 and 10. But parents, teachers or healthcare providers may miss the signs. DID might be confused with other behavioral or learning problems common in children, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The typical patient who is diagnosed with DID is usually at about age 30. A retrospective review of that patient's history typically will reveal onset of dissociative symptoms at ages 5 to 10, with emergence of alters at about the age of 6. There's also some studies that indicate that most DID cases are usually female. I'm not sure about that particular "fact," mainly because much of the information available is outdated.

When I became homeless, it was surreal to me, as if I was watching a TV show about someone who looked like me, but was not me. It's so hard to explain this to the average person because they cannot fathom how I perceived my reality. DID is caused by early childhood trauma, and for many people, dissociation is triggered by it, but that doesn't mean that they will develop DID.

DID is characterized by "switching" to alternate identities. You may feel the presence of two or more people talking or living inside your head. This disorder is often mistaken for schizophrenia because the identities are thought to be hallucinations. However, each identity has a unique name, personal history and characteristics, including obvious differences in voice, gender, and mannerisms. However, even though the identities are all different, for years, they feel everyone they come into contact with into thinking that they are the "core" identity, i.e., the person whose name is on their birth certificate.

I was not aware of my other identities for years. I knew that I'd often have amnesia and I'd lose minutes, hours, and even days. I was told that I said and done things that I have no recollection of ever saying or doing. My friendships never lasted, so I had a very lonely existence. My marriage fell apart, not necessarily because I wouldn't keep a job because of the instability, amnesia, and the stress that came with this disorder. There's a 70% suicide rate for people who suffer from dissociative disorders. PTSD, breaking down of relationships, lack of understanding by people, homelessness, unemployment, depression, anxiety, loneliness, and instability all contribute to the suicide rate. Many sufferers of dissociative disorders self medicate with drugs and alcohol, which makes the problems even worse than before. I have never self medicated, but I have gone into deep depressions that lasted for months on end. Employment has also had its difficulties for me. There are often problems with memory, identity, emotion, perception, behavior and sense of self. Dissociative symptoms can potentially disrupt every area of mental functioning.

We live in a society that still stigmatizes mental illness and the people struggling with it. I've heard people say that individuals "choose" to be mentally ill because they get something out of it, like attention, for example. I can honestly say that I wish I could wake up one morning, and find my mental struggles gone, but it's not as easy as that. The only treatments available for DID are talk therapy, and to treat each issue separately such as depression, dissociation, and anxiety, the nightmares, etc. My therapist suggested screening for DID after I started "switching" identities as I came in for my appointment every week.

The screening was extensive. It involved both physical and psychological tests. During the evaluation, a healthcare provider reviewed my symptoms and my personal health history. They performed tests to rule out underlying physical causes for my symptoms, such as head injuries or brain tumors. After the physical tests, I was given several psychological tests and evaluations.

One of my favorite writers, the late Charles Bukowski, once wrote "I guess the only time most people think about injustice is when it happens to them." (From the novel Ham on Rye). As long as mental disorders are misunderstood and hidden, we will continue to have suicides. The mentally ill homeless will continue to wander without hope or help.

This is the reality and struggle of being "unreal."”
THE HOMELESS, UNHOUSED OR UNSHelterED IN SAN FRANCISCO

To some this is a lived experience and to others just a tall tale. Many homeless people have interacted with on the streets of West Coast cities—either unhoused and unsheltered—have had many painful experiences with the police, or experienced brutality from other people in the neighborhood. Some are not in shelters because they have a reason not to be, like being undocumented. For those living in fear of deportation, avoiding interaction feels like the way to stay unknown and unnoticed, pushing some to try to be nocturnal.

Many displaced people have left the place they used to call home and went to a different city just to try place they used to call home and have not been able to come back. That has affected most U.S. cities and if it continues this way homelessness will only continue to increase. Some people or government agencies may try to help with me, but experience is the best medicine. It is nearly impossible for those on the streets to find employment when they lack supporting documentation or identification. How can you employ someone they cannot prove their identity? And people without documents are also afraid to apply for jobs, some who have tried end up being sent to jail, or fired when their status becomes known. So what can the public do to help homeless folks, especially those without documentation? As you ponder over the answers, think of your personal impact on your unschooled neighbor across the street, the one you send to prison, the one you denied employment, the one you fired, the one you burned, whose identification documents you hid, the one you left behind as you moved to a different home, house or city, the one you sent to the streets due to your own choices. They have lost hope and are afraid of being treated like suspects, thieves, murderers, drug dealers. The majority of arrests of homeless people are of those who don’t know a thing, but were at the wrong place due to circumstance.

The fear of being apprehended without cause, has made some people adopt to the nature of life on the streets by becoming hardcore. This is survival of the fittest and so they grow hardened just to survive the reality of difficult life and conditions. But however much you arrest them, refuse to help them, fight against them, torture them or require impossible conditions to help them, you will not reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in the streets. Instead, the numbers of displaced people will keep on growing until you realize it is your responsibility to help us, to treat homeless people as human beings, as you would your own family member.

These folks need serious rehabilitation. Those you see sleeping in their cars, in tents, under bridges, in corridors and even in shelters have all suffered the same fate, exposed to difficult trauma. Some have experienced death, some have killed and some are into drugs, while others are the distributors. Others are very sick, or in a huge amount of debt. Some are immigrants while others are from here in the U.S. They all need help, be it big or small. Your positive contribution helps them survive one day at a time. I have written this article so that it can reach the many who don’t know what it is like to go without food or medicine, or what it’s like to sleep on cold pavement. Kindly make it your purpose to help us.

DRUNK IN THE DARK

There is no limit to the depth a man may fall. Listen to the man laying on the floor defeated. For he has wisdom to share.

And a story to tell.

Misery lesson.

A shadow so dark.

Cast by a bright red sun.

Ever present, forever constant.

Blanketing me with grief.

Bedding me in pain. An all nighter.

A pauper rich only in emotions.

Until there is no more.

No more pain.

No more grief.

No more joy.

Just numbers.

Indifference.

Stumbling as I ramble.

Fighting the monster.

My only weapon is this bottle.

Sipping sweet nectar.

People point and laugh.

Unaware of what I’ve lost.

Blind to the nobleness of my acts.

Thinking they know.

Ignorant to what really ails me.

Unless you’ve experienced loss.

You’ll never truly understand.

What it is like.

To be drowning in misery.

Batting the monster.

Drunk and consumed by darkness.

BECOME A STREET SHEET VENDOR

STREET SHEET is currently recruiting vendors to sell the newspaper around San Francisco. Vendors pick up the papers for free at our office in the Tenderloin and sell them for $2 apiece at locations across the City. You get to keep all the money they make from sales. Earn extra income while also helping elevate the voices of the homeless writers who make this paper so unique, and promoting the vision of a San Francisco where every human being has a home.

To sign up, visit our office at 280 Turk St from 10-4 on Monday-Thursday and 10-Noon on Friday.

WRITE FOR STREET SHEET

This paper is unique because it is created by homeless people and advocates like you who contribute their stories, artwork, poetry, comic art, and political perspectives. Want to write or create for STREET SHEET? Visit our website for information about how to submit, or to submit something you’ve already created! Or you can submit any content in person at our office. www.streetsheet.org/submit-your-writing.

Novalie Young
Abri (from old French): shelter, refuge, protection

Shelter
Alameda Street near
Showplace Square
San Francisco