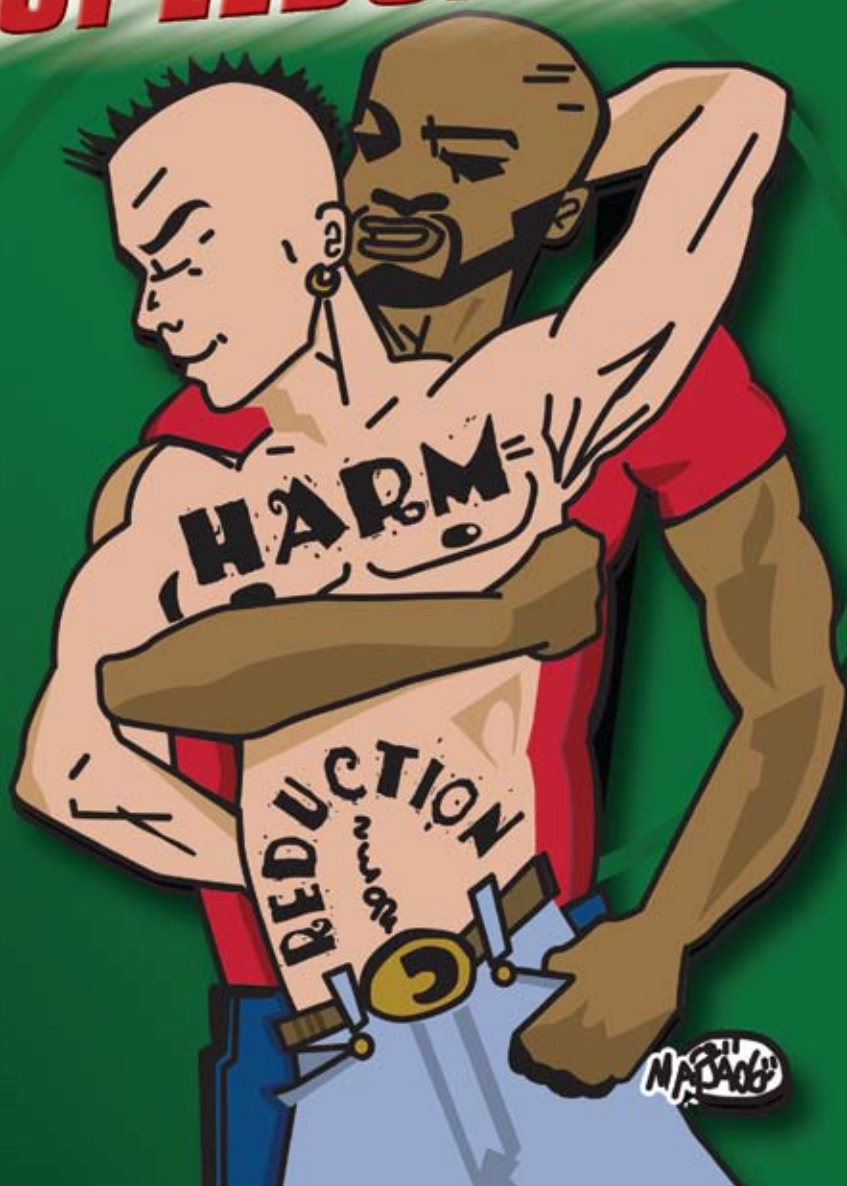


ISSUE NUMBER 13



SPEEDOMETER



WARNING!

WELCOME!

Speedometer is a publication put together by participants of the Speed Project of the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

Speedometer is a harm reduction publication for gay, bi, and heteroflexible men who snort, smoke, hot rail, booty bump, or inject crystal meth. This zine contains some sexually explicit material and is intended only for adult gay and bisexual men.



This zine is not intended for anyone else. So please help us by keeping it in the family.

The Speed Project is a harm reduction program and see's drug use as a health issue and believe that people who use drugs have a right to be treated with dignity and respect and should have access to information that will help them make decisions about their health.

We believe that men who have experience using speed are best suited to share their stories and strategies with other men who use about what works for them in terms of reducing the spread of HIV, STDs, and other harms related to the use of crystal.

This zine contains personal stories, opinions, artwork, poetry, and articles by people who use (or used to use) crystal meth and by local health, social service and drug treatment providers.

You might not like or agree with everything you read or see. We do not edit, censor, or change people's submissions. The views expressed are those of the author or artist, not the San Francisco AIDS Foundation.

If you are trying to quit or cut down and would like support, please check out the resources in the back of the zine or call the Stonewall Project at 415-487-3100.

Thanks to all the men who volunteer to help guide content, write articles, and have shared their personal stories and experiences practicing harm reduction in their lives. You rock!

Please call the Speed Project with comments, questions, or suggestions at 415-788-5433. You are welcome to email submissions to tmorris@sfaf.org

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What are you looking for out there?



I was raised in New York. I moved out of my parents' house at 19 and found my first apartment in the Bronx. I moved to California in 2000 and have been in San Francisco since 2004.

I used to deejay for private parties. I have a lot of audio equipment, CDs and dance music at my place. When my neighbors see me they'll come up and say "You were jamming the other night. It sounded really nice!"

I was a total pothead when I moved to California. I've never been into alcohol. One night I was hanging out with a friend thinking we would get together and smoke a little pot. I met him at Steamworks; he's a very, very nice guy and really upbeat. We smoked a little pot and he says well, "Let's do Ecstasy later." We took the Ecstasy and were talking and talking. Later, he started smoking from a little pipe- I thought it was a fancy way of doing crack. But it wasn't. I asked "What is that?" Because I don't like doing crack." He said, "It's Tina." I knew nothing about speed. In fact, I thought speed was a pill.

I said "Tina?" Then he passed it to me. I said "No, no!"

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because it just kept reminding me of crack. "No, no, I don't want any." Every now and then he'd ask "You want to try it?" And I kept saying "Not really." After awhile, I tried it. I took a puff off the pipe. By that time I had already taken the Ecstasy but didn't feel it yet. I kept asking him, "What am I supposed to feel?" and he kept asking me "Do you feel it yet, do you feel it?" I said "No, I don't." Once the Ecstasy kicked in everything was extended and a more intense experience.

I don't know if I felt the Tina, we were smoking and doing a little of everything. We had really hot sex that day. It was very intense, very long. That was about seven years ago. My first experience with speed was a very nice, very high experience.

The last time I had sex with a woman I was 29. I'm in my forties now. Women, especially black women, oh my God, if you have sex and she likes your sex, she's going to be following you. I had to draw a line. I love men. I've always, always liked men. When you're growing up you sort of fall into the uniform way of doing things, but I would see men through the corner of my eye and always thought men were beautiful. The male species is just...makes you glad to be a man, you know? As a kid I had crushes on certain male figures on TV, celebrities. I liked Tom Selleck, Eric Estrada, and Duane Nelson from "What's Happening".

Back in New York when I was 16 I worked a summer job in the World Trade Center. I met this guy named Dennis. He was 26 years old and I was 16. I remember one day he was walking toward me and had these really nice slacks and shirt on. Very sexy. He had his own apartment. I was still living at home. He gave me his number, and one day he asked me to come by. That was my first full-out experience having sex. We had some really good times.

It was not long after I remember first hearing about AIDS. I

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was at my boyfriend's place, we had just woken up, and we were talking. We were talking about gonorrhea or syphilis or something. And he said "Shit, now there's this new disease out called AIDS." He said, "People are dying from it." I said, "Dying?!?" I had heard nothing about it. I didn't really pay much attention to it cause, I just didn't think it applied to me.

So, it went on- you were hearing stories. For some reason, during the whole early epidemic, I didn't practice safe sex all the time. I didn't feel I was going to be hit with AIDS. I know a lot of young people feel that way. I had some friends and



acquaintances that died from it, but not like others around me. I had just come out into the gay movement and hadn't had a chance to meet and establish a lot of major friendships. My boyfriend knew more people who he was close with that he told me about. As AIDS progressed I had some closer friends

die, but when it first hit like an explosion- I wasn't too afraid. I was a little apprehensive, but I wasn't thrust into multiple losses like other men I've heard stories about who were engulfed in the experience.

I was out just for a short time before AIDS hit. Shortly after that- everybody had to wear condoms. Sometimes I used condoms, sometimes I didn't. It depended. A lot of times the person would request it or I would request it and then there was times where, you know, it doesn't happen. You try and be leery, you try to be aware of what's going on and the possibility of getting in trouble with diseases. Sometimes I wouldn't want to use condoms and sometimes he wouldn't want it. There's always those times when you don't. And during the times when I don't, I don't go crazy. I kind of take it easy. You just have to use good judgment and common sense if you are going to go around the rules. It's a little more risky. There are certain things you don't do if you don't use a condom. Like fucking like rabbits. You go gentle and for not as long. If I'm not using condoms I use lots and lots of lube. As soon as we stop, I freshen up- shower or wash up- which helps as a little- it's a bit of harm reduction- the extra hygiene thing.

I'm 100% top, but as I've gotten older, now and then I become versatile, but I love to top. There's nothing more beautiful than a man's ass...I think the rear end is a very sexy part of the body.

I love ass play, nipple play, eye contact. I like to hear the moans and groans of a partner. I love porn in the background. Not too loud, the visual in the background. I like doing things you see in porno's- experimenting with new things I've never done before. When you party, it puts you in that frame of mind, you want to explore. You have to be in the right setting and with the right person. As I've gotten older I want to try new things. Basically, if I'm with a regular partner, I know

what their limits are. When you meet somebody new, it's time to talk- like "OK, let's try this and let's try that." Or "Sit on my face" or "Let's go on the roof!" And they'll say "yes" or "no".

I prefer one on one. Groups are sort of hard; they can scatter it- your attention is going all over the place. I prefer guys I know to guys I just met. I think, if someone has the ability to exchange good sex with another person- that ability carries into other areas of a connection with that person. If that person can give you good sex, there's something else good about that person. That's why I always want to develop friendships with guys I interact with sexually. Some people don't see it that way. It seems like nowadays lots of people need the allure of something new or fresh. It seems to be the driving thing- people are spending more time looking than



actually hooking up. I'd rather have a regular! Fuck all this. I'll do what I know!

Generally the ones I hook up with are the ones I already know. Half of them are HIV negative, half of them are HIV positive. Generally, the ones that are positive, like to be on the receiving end. And the ones that are negative can be tops, too. But generally, I'm really open. When I first meet guys, we talk about HIV, but after we are regulars- not so much.

Every now and then if I meet a new guy, he'll ask, "What's your status?" or they'll say "I'm positive" and I'll say, "Yeah, I'm negative." Sometimes they'll say it over the phone. But that's like half the time. Sometimes we don't mention it.

In general, in the community, there is a willingness to be open and talk about it. There are guys that are open and that's really good. I'd say it's a 50/50 percentage or a little higher, as far as people talking about status. At least, you know, glossing over it.

When I get into speed, I like to have sex. If it's a situation where I'm looking for sex on the phone or online and the timeframe moves over into the time when I have to take care of my responsibilities, that's when it gets hard to manage.

When I first started using speed, it was good, but I would come down hard. I would get really, really depressed. So I didn't really look for it. Every now and then it would come around and before you knew it, my body would have the urge for it. After awhile, the depression from the come down stopped. I guess my body got used to it. Now I just come down, I'm mellow.

Over a period of time I learned how to maintain myself. It depends how much you love yourself or how you feel about yourself. I make sure I eat and replenish. The main thing is, if you are going to get high, it's very important to do something. Whether it be sex or not- move- have your blood circulate.

Because if you're just sitting- it's a waste of time. Move around your body around so your body will let you know what it needs. Drink water. Know your body innately, whatever urge it wants, listen to it. If it is telling you to open a window and have fresh air coming in when you're partying- listen to it. I go through sweating a lot, and then I'll cool down, take a break, and eat.

I've done a lot of exercise all my life. I've always been into some sort of athletics- either riding or swimming laps at the pool. Which has helped me to know my body, and that my body needs this and that. So being in your body is important.

I am also into meditation and prayer. Be into something! Some discipline that makes you come back to your center. Doing drugs can work on your mind if you don't have something that can get you back. It could be hanging with good friends or with somebody close to you that makes you feel like "I can move down with all my feelings back here". I tend to spend a lot of downtime at my place- not around a lot of people all the time. I do meditation. I sit and imagine energy is coming at me and healing me and it's worked. It's totally worked.

If you have that setup when you take crystal, you do whatever pleasure things you like to do, it's not time wasted and you're not spending extra time looking for whatever you're looking for. It's hard to accomplish that. And it's almost like a fantasy- but I truly believe that it's possible to have a partner or an inner circle of friends that looks out for each other and makes each other feel good. There's time for that during our recreational time. I totally believe that. And I believe that there are times where you have to take care of your responsibilities.

I mostly smoke it. There are times when I like to inject it. When I'm down for it, when it's a planned evening, when I'm with somebody that I know, and I know we'll have some fun- then

I'll slam. But when I'm by myself- I mostly smoke. When I inject, I'll bring injection supplies with me.

A lot of people don't pay attention- they know they need a clean point, but they forget about all the other supplies that you also need to be clean, you know? When people slam, the whole process can be a little tedious from point A to point B. So that's why a lot of people skip steps- and skip the wrong things.

Some people don't like to use the cotton or the alcohol pads. A lot of people have no problem using tap water. I use the sterile water and I like to clean my dope. I always strain it, especially if I'm going to do a large amount. I like to use that little cotton and strain it. You know, some people don't even like to put the tourniquet on. Sometimes I'll be cleaning off the table in someone else's house just setting stuff up, but being clean is important to me. And a lot of times, if I bring stuff with me, other people will end up using it too. I think all this has helped me stay HIV negative. I think it's also kept me from getting cotton fever or other things that can go wrong.



I get all my supplies from the needle exchange. Thank God for them. Before I would go to Walgreen's and buy a 10-pack. I'd go to the counter and ask for them. But after being introduced to the Speed Project, it's like real laid-back getting supplies, like "Hey, what do you need?"

I go to City Clinic every once in a while to get checked- to see if I have any STD's or HIV. It's such a good feeling, walking out of the clinic when you have nothing. So you walk out of the clinic and you totally have nothing. It's sort of like "Okay, well now... from this point, maybe I'll be more diligent or I won't do that or I won't be so lax in this or that area." Overall, it's a good feeling.

I was thinking, a lot of gay men in the community, need to stop worrying about the negative things that they see. You meet a good guy. You can make and create families and start caring about each other. Develop tight-knit groups of family of



friends. Start caring about each other and doing things with each other, instead of being on a computer forever or being on the phone trying to hook up. The people that you know are already good-these are good guys. What are you looking

for out there? If you got good people, you can nurture that. If you have good people in your life, work with that. It can't all be about sex. We have to do things with each other, you know?

I want to do skydiving. I want to bungee jump. I definitely want to hang out with some guys that want to do that. You got to do stuff. You know, do things! It's always a prerequisite for good sex. I need a reliable income to do things, go places, go on trips, and be a part of a group of gay men who are working and doing things with their life. You have to give back. I want to be working and be around other guys that are doing the same thing.

I imagine working fulltime and partying on the weekends. Once I get off of work and know I have a couple of days to do all the little things I need to take care of- I can set up what I need to do and know when to stop partying. Partying would definitely be more structured.



BERNARD'S BRIEFS

"There's a boy I know, he's the boy I'm dreaming of..."
Whitney Houston's song, "How Will I Know" poses a very real question. How will I know when the love I've found is real?

I am a very lonely person. Like most lonely people, I seem to always seek attention from all the wrong sources.

Looking for love at the local dope spot is not the answer.

Trading dope or using the speed to attract companionship is not the same thing as intimacy! We are substituting hired sex for love.

The reason that it almost never works out, is because by doing this, we are exposing our desperate need for affection. In other words, we become very vulnerable to the players waiting in the dark to pounce on the lonely and desperate.

The desire to be held is not the same as the urges to give good head after you have taken a full pull. The euphoria we feel when getting high usually leaves us in state of craving for good sex.



Although this is not always a bad thing, it is very frustrating when it is the only time that you get lucky and get some.

The need for intimacy is a natural human feeling. Some of us are not fortunate enough to have a constant supply. So, we find ourselves willing to do almost anything to fill that void. There have been times when we don't even feel like getting high. We may be trying to avoid all that downsides and negative affects of our use, but the need to feel love overpowers us, and it seems to be the only way we know how to attract the love we seek. What are we to do!?

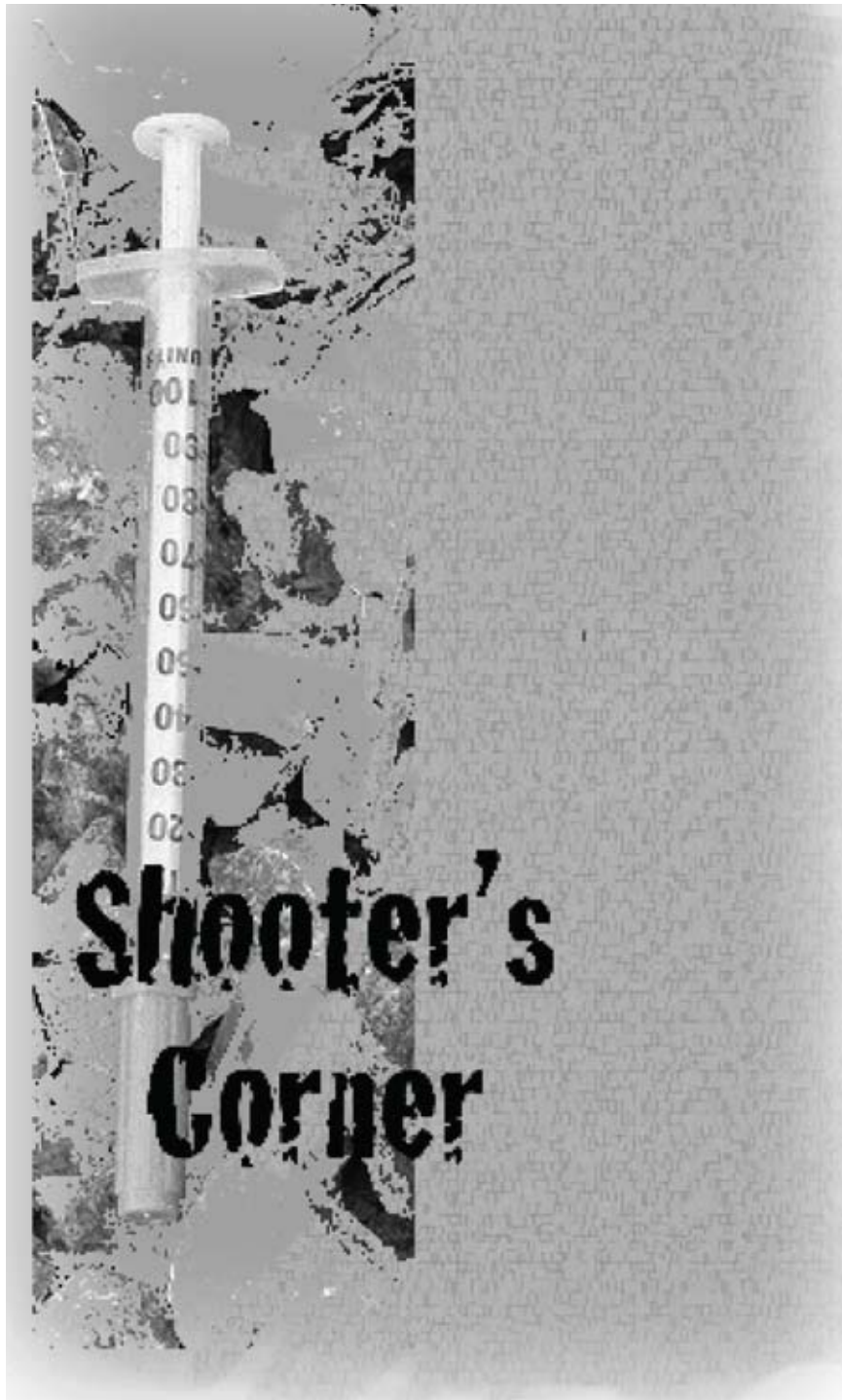
First, let's realize that there really is someone for everyone. No one is so flawed that they must pay for affection. Everyone is special, beautiful, and worthy to be loved. All of us can find the love that we need by simply taking that first major step.

LOVE YOURSELF FIRST!!!!!!

How can we expect someone to see the high value in us when we don't see and acknowledge it ourselves? Until you can look in the mirror, and recognize the beauty in the person you see, no one else will be able to. Also, try something different. There is a lot of love waiting to be found at the local library, the park, museums, movies, even the local shopping malls. Give the local drug infested hangouts a break.

Look for love where love is looking for you.

Bernard



Roundtable on Shootin' Outdoors

SPEEDOMETER: *Thank you so much for coming to share your experiences for this Shooter's Corner article. The theme of today's roundtable is coping with homelessness and its impact on injector health.*

Thanks to Bob, Ed, Medford, Stu, Xerox, Frog, Ricky, August and Greg who have life experience dealing with homelessness and injecting speed. All of the questions came from members of the zine planning group. Speedometer readers, enjoy!

Here is the first question. ***How did/does homelessness affect your attitude and outlook?***

BOB: When I was homeless I was very frustrated, I hated homelessness.

FROG: Homelessness is like getting harassed all the time... by people and the police... and getting caught and going to jail for it.

ED: For me the hardest thing is being around people that are negative all the time. That type of attitude drags you down, that's when I have to get high.

STU: When I was homeless I had to lie a lot because I didn't want to deal with people's projections and opinions- so I lied and let people think I was housed. I wasn't homeless for long- but it was exhausting; it takes a toll. You can't tell the truth, even to yourself sometimes...it becomes this sick game.

How long can I go without sleep and still look normal? You get a distorted perception of reality. When you do use drugs it's a release for a little while. You don't have to think about anything. It's an escape. But when I was high I worried about my choices, doing something stupid, getting pegged by the police.

Being homeless takes more energy than I would have ever, ever imagined. People say that if you are homeless you don't care and you're irresponsible- when in reality, if you're

The following is a breakdown of possible injection sites, beginning with the safest options and moving toward the least safe ones.

- 1. Upper Arm - safer**
- 2. Lower Arm - safer**
- 3. Hands - somewhat less safe**
Hands are somewhat less safe because the veins are smaller and more delicate and more likely to get damaged. Circulation slower so hands take longer to heal.
- 4. Legs - less safe**
Veins on the legs are more likely than those in the arms to develop clots that can obstruct circulation and eventually break off and lodge in the lungs or heart.
- 5. Feet - less safe**
As with the hands the veins on the feet are smaller than in other parts of the body and close to nerves, cartilage and tendons which you want to avoid hitting when you inject. Blood circulates more slowly at the feet and they take a longer time to heal. Also, foot sores and dry sores can prevent wounds from healing and increase the chance of infection from bacteria.
- 6. Groin - risky**
The femoral vein in the groin area is large and fairly easy to access, but its location near the femoral nerve and the femoral artery make it a quite risky place to inject. Among the three, the femoral vein is located closest to the groin with the artery and the nerve located as you move outward. If you're going to inject into the femoral vein, first locate your femoral artery - where you don't want to inject - by finding the pulse. Then, move a short distance toward the inside of your leg to find the femoral vein. It's pretty deep so you probably won't be able to see it but will have to inject into a "blind."
- 7. Neck - riskiest**
The jugular vein in the neck is the riskiest place to inject because it is very close to the carotid artery, a single blood vessel that brings blood directly to the brain. Accidentally hitting the carotid artery could be fatal, and damaging the jugular vein can interfere with blood circulation in the brain.

SAFEST INJECTING LOCATION: THE ARM

MEDFORD: When I was homeless I felt like it shouldn't infringe on my right to get high. I tried to be discrete and be in places that people couldn't see me, especially kids.

AUGUST: I would find myself getting high more often. You really don't give a damn; you don't think about the future. In some ways using is a lot easier for me when I am homeless because I don't have responsibilities or any financial obligations.

XEROX: I've been homeless for several months. Homelessness has given me three weeks of clean time. Normally when I get to this point (being homeless) I've made

SF NEEDLE EXCHANGE sites, current 7/10/08

Mon	1 pm - 3 pm	4720 - 3 rd St. (btw Newcomb & Oakdale), BAYVIEW hpp
Mon	5 pm - 7 pm	584 Cole St. (btw Haight & Page), [youth] HAIGHT sfne ✨ + ♡
Mon	7 pm - 9 pm	Ivy St. (nr. Polk & Grove, Tom Waddell), CIVIC CNTR hpp
Tues	10 am - 12 n	117-A 6th St. (btw Mission & Howard), TL/SoMa hpp ✨ +
Tues	1 pm - 6 pm	1372 Mission x10th, St. James Infirmary (for SW's), SoMa ✨ ✨ +
*Tues	6 pm - 8 pm	Duboce St. (nr. Church & Mkt., in bikeway), CASTRO hpp ✨ (MD every other wk.) †
Wed	6 pm - 8 pm	183 Golden Gate (@ Leavenworth, in TLHealth), TL tl ✨ + ♡
Wed	5 pm - 7 pm	584 Cole St. (btw Haight & Page), [youth] HAIGHT sfne ✨ + ♡
Wed	6 pm - 8 pm	427 So. Van Ness St. (btw 15 th & 16 th St's.) hpp
	-LAST Wed's only	3:30- 5:30 pm 117-A 6th St. [for gay/bi guys] hpp/Speed Proj.
*Thurs	4 pm - 6 pm	Cesar Chavez (nr. underpass), @ Hampshire, BAYSHORE hpp
*Thurs	7 pm - 9 pm	Hemlock Alley, (btw Post & Sutter, off Polk), TL hpp
Thurs	4 pm - 6 pm	815 Hyde St. @ Sutter, 2 nd Floor, TRANS thrive, TL stj ♡
Thurs	6 pm - 8 pm	"Ladies' Night" @ MNRC, 165 Capp (btw 16 th & 17 th St's.), (for women and transwomen only), MISSION mnrc/sfne ✨ + ♡
Fri	12 n - 2 pm	117-A 6th St. (btw Mission & Howard), TL/SoMa hpp
Fri	5 pm - 7 pm	584 Cole St. (btw Haight & Page), [youth] HAIGHT sfne ✨ + ♡
Fri	6 pm - 8 pm	234 Eddy St. (btw Jones & Taylor, nr Windsor Hotel) hpp
Sat	3 pm - 11 pm	LATE! 117-A 6th St. (btw Mission & Howard), TL/SoMa hpp ♡
Sun	2 pm - 4 pm	183 Golden Gate Ave. (@ Leavenworth, in TLHealth), TL tl ♡

* = outdoor sites ✨ = nurse present + = wound-care ♡ = hiv testing
 hpp = 241-5100 sfne = 630-0744 st. James 554-8494 tl (health) = 431-7476

homeless it's an incredible responsibility.

some mistakes. Right now, I can't even keep a storage locker, much less an apartment or a room, because of my behavior on

meth.

Being homeless allows me to check myself and say "Hey, wait a minute! I really need to take a look at my behavior. I can't afford this right now." I'm presently back in that reality zone where I know using isn't a good option. When I am homeless I can curtail my meth use. When I'm homeless -that's a signal my behavior is off the hook. When I'm homeless- I shut it down. When I'm not homeless I can be real sloppy using.

STU: Something that was really emotionally challenging for me, was handling the disappointment. When someone says "You can sleep on my couch" or "You can call me anytime" and I do and they don't pick up the phone or have some excuse- it was hard. I was surprised at the number of people that were willing to help- so long as I didn't really ask. It was very disheartening and sad; you get to know who your friends really are. I don't judge them. Because of that experience I am very careful when I offer something to someone- that I'm willing to make sure I can provide it- otherwise I don't offer. Because now I know what it feels like to want somebody to pick up the phone and they don't.

MEDFORD: Having been on both sides of that fence myself- it's really hard to have someone stay over a night or two and then say to them, "Now you can leave". It's very hard to kick someone out.

SPEEDOMETER: *Are your reasons for using, or your motivations for using, different when you're out on the street as opposed to when you have a home?*

BOB: When you're homeless, using is more important because people will roll you if you're asleep, they will roll you quick as a dog. Being asleep when you're homeless is terrifying. I've heard horror stories about people having their

heads smashed in while you're asleep. So speed to me is like medicine for being outdoors because it keeps you awake and safe from being rolled.



MEDFORD:

I lost my apartment right around the time I got disability-so I had my check coming in. When I was homeless my use really went up- I had more money. It took me at least a year to bring my using down after I got housing back- it really skyrocketed when I was on the street- most of my money went to using. That really can be a nightmare. I remember one time I passed out in the library, because I had been up for like two

weeks. I laid back in a chair thinking I was going to close my eyes for a minute- the next thing I knew I was on a stretcher- sound asleep. I think a lot of people out there use speed as a way to deal with being homeless, so you don't have to go to a shelter.

SPEEDOMETER: *If you are fixing in a public space, what precautions do you take to make it safer?*

FROG: I've got to have someone watching my back- watching for people, kids, and the police.

XEROX: I don't like doing it outdoors- if I have to do it outdoors; I do it in a bush or a dumpster and hold a flashlight in my mouth or under my chin.

RICKY: The little battery operated flashlights you can clip to your collar work perfect.

MEDFORD: I used to try and use the free toilets but invariably somebody would be knocking on the door bang, bang, bang! "What's taking you so long?!!" You yell back "I have 20 minutes in here before the door opens up!" They yell "I've got to go to the bathroom, hurry up, hurry up!!!" That tends to makes me real nervous. My tip is, don't use those



public toilets, they just attract attention because someone's banging on the door. Once someone called the cops on me. Also, there's this button in the space toilet that will call 911- so say you're getting really spun and accidentally hit the button- it's not really cool. You're already paranoid and then this voice comes over, "Hello, it's the police. Can I help you?" FUCK NO!

RICKY: I agree. I don't like the pay toilets at all. It's a hassle to get into one in the first place to do your hit. They're so disgusting. Usually I go to a secluded area of the park, or a restroom there- preferably I have a friend that can keep an eye open for me while I go in and do it. I make sure I get all my things from the Needle Exchange- fresh water, plenty of alcohol wipes, clean points. I don't use a cooker. I just put mine into the syringe- cold shake it and slam it. Its best to carry something to put your used works in after you get done- don't leave it out. That makes it bad on everybody.

BOB: I get so frustrated sometimes that I snort it. I don't mind snorting it. They say once you inject you'll never go back to snorting, that's not true. Sometimes I wait to do it until I can get inside to inject- I'm happy I can save my hit. Saving your hit is good; if you can save it for when you can do it in a place you feel comfortable, that's cool.

AUGUST: If you've got used points on you and you do get harassed by the police- the best advice I can give you is to go ahead and tell them. Because if they search you and find them- it's going to be a lot worse. Just say, "Oh by the way I've got ten points here" They'll probably give you a break.

SPEEDOMETER: *What is a comfortable place to inject?*

BOB: My favorite place to inject is the dirty book store. I feel safe because with the light from the movie, I'm able to

see, plus I'm watching a movie, and the rush is really good.

AUGUST: Bathrooms at parks. But you have to be careful when you're in public places that you don't do such a big hit it makes you rocket out the door. You don't want to go in there real mellow and then all of a sudden burst out, vroom!!! Maybe do half as much.

GREG: I tended to like one block alleys that are one way streets. So if a cop or any car is coming you can see them because it's a short street. Knowing your rights is real important. You're allowed to have up to ten hypodermic needles. I advise homeless people to go to the Homeless Advocacy Project and talk to them about what your rights are. They're really good.

MEDFORD: A spot that I used to use at night- is the stairs to the MUNI underground because they have a gate that shuts it off. I wouldn't do it at a downtown station. If you go down to the bottom of the stairs there is light. The only problem is that other homeless people want you to share your stuff.

RICKY: When I can afford it, one of my favorite places to do my hit is a sex club. If you go early enough before its crowded you have privacy and can do your hit. Then you're right there in the middle of the action. There are some clubs that you can do that at and some you can't. That's very important to keep in mind.

RICKY: Never try to do your hit at the beach. I lost my hit- I put it down in the sand and lost it- I was digging in the sand forever. It's still there. I'm convinced.

SPEEDOMETER: Typically, how do you make an injection more sanitary and how do you handle clean

up and disposal in public spaces?

AUGUST: I always try to have everything I need. Like toilet paper, alcohol pads, and water. You should have all that with you and be prepared just in case you bleed a lot- it does happen.

SPEEDOMETER: What do you do with your used rigs and supplies?

AUGUST: I take it with me.

MEDFORD: When I was out there a couple years ago, they didn't have those small black sharps containers they have now. I would use a thick plastic or glass bottle with a reusable cap. If I had to, I would throw the bottle in a garbage can instead of taking it with me. I know that's not a cool thing to do, but sometimes you just do what you've got to do. If it's in a bottle, at least no one's going to get stuck.

FROG: I put my used ones in the gutter (sewer), I don't throw it on the street because kids walk around barefoot and that's not cool.

RICKY: I always carried a sharps container. Now most of the time I shoot in restrooms that have sharps containers on the wall, so there's no reason not to dispose of it properly.

SPEEDOMETER: When you compare injecting indoors versus outside how is your experience injecting different?

FROG: When I inject indoors I take my time. When I'm outdoors I've got to rush it. Hopefully I don't miss, when I'm outside I usually do miss. I don't like missing.

RICKY: When I'm shooting up outside it affects my tweak because I like to experience sex as soon as I do my hit. If I'm inside that's no problem, but if I'm outside it's not always so easy. So I'll go looking for stuff on the street instead.

BOB: I agree with Ricky, when I injected outdoors my tweak was totally different. I'm so animal- I'd go through the trash and dig in- I'd walk so much I'd get blisters on my feet- going into neighborhoods I've never been in. I try to force myself to stop walking, and just can't, I keep going and going and going like a wind up doll. Indoors my tweak is totally different. Inside I love getting naked and watching movies or dirty books.

XEROX: My tweak is definitely different inside versus out. Although, I will cop to the fact that I've been naked in every venue. Regarding the question, I can miss just as easily outdoors as I can indoors. I'm a hard stick. And it takes me forever. A lot of times I'll purposely mind fuck myself into thinking that I'm in the vein and push it in because I get frustrated after so many sticks.

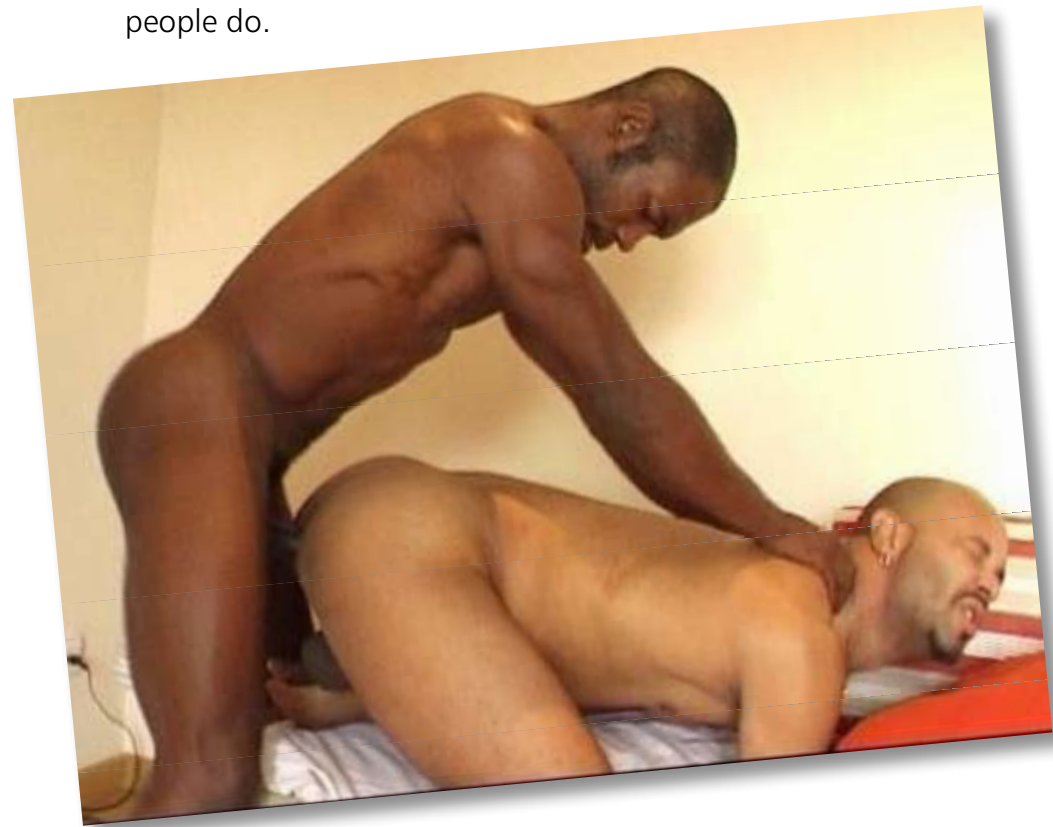
SPEEDOMETER: Is your injecting technique any different outside versus inside?

BOB: Yes. Indoors, I'm able to calmly do my hit, mix it up right, I have all my supplies. I've been getting better about keeping supplies handy.

RICKY: I've been shooting for like 20 years. If I haven't gotten my technique down pat by now, I'm never going to. If I am having any problems, I'm mind fucking myself. Even outside or in a public place- I take my time. There's a certain process you have to go through to get it done right. If you don't respect that, you're upping your risk of missing or messing up. Taking your time and doing it right is, in actuality

time saving.

RICKY: If you're outside you have to worry about being noticed so you're in more of a rush to get it done, you're more likely to make a mistake as far a miss. If you're inside you can take your time, and if you do have a miss you're able to get a hot compress instead of just letting that speed sit there and really fucking yourself up. Fortunately I've got great veins so I don't have to worry about that much- but a lot of people do.



SPEEDOMETER: Well guys, thank you SO MUCH for sharing your experience for this article.

Speed Limit.

Substance Use Management

**Welcome to Speed Limit,
Speedometer's substance use
management column.** This

feature invites you to think about the ways you already manage your speed use and ways you might like to manage your use in the future.

SPEED LIMIT includes interviews with a person or people who have life experience managing their speed use, interviews with counseling programs in the city, or features tools that might be helpful to those who would like to make some changes. **If you are someone who would like to be interviewed about how you manage your use for this feature, please call Terry at (415) 487-8043.** Please enjoy this issue's Speed Limit...

A conversation with SF's own Goddess of Harm Reduction Therapy... Jeannie Little!!

SPEEDOMETER: Hello Speedometer

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readers. We are very excited to be here talking with Jeannie Little. Jeannie is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Certified Group Psychotherapist with over 25 years experience. Jeannie specializes in group therapy with clients who have psychiatric and drug problems (dual diagnosis). Jeannie also trains and provides consultation to many San Francisco agencies to help them use harm reduction counseling to work better with clients who use drugs and have mental health concerns. Jeannie is an expert on harm reduction psychotherapy, motivational interviewing, and group therapy.

Jeannie is co-author of the book, **"Over the Influence, The Harm Reduction Approach for Managing Drugs and Alcohol"** an amazing book the Speed Project highly recommends to anyone who parties or loves somebody who does. Jeannie's work is grounded in a deep respect for people who use drugs and is about as nonjudgmental and real-deal harm reduction as you can get. The zine planning group came up with the following questions to ask Jeannie, beginning with this one-which is a little nosey.

SPEEDOMETER: Jeannie, what got you into this field?

JEANNIE LITTLE: I've been an advocate for people who are marginalized since I first became conscious of discrimination when I was 12 years old. I got into social work after I graduated college. I really didn't have a clue what I wanted to do when I grew up. Through a friend I heard about a battered women's shelter in London that sounded absolutely incredible. So I worked about six jobs that summer and made enough money to buy a one-way ticket. I got on the plane with my bicycle, arrived in London, walked in the front door of this shelter and said "I'm here." This enormous woman sitting on a grungy floor knitting, surrounded by about 30 women and kids, looked up and said "Who are you?" I said "I'm Jeannie and I've come to work here," and she said okay.

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SPEEDOMETER: Nice.

JEANNIE LITTLE: Before the Director started this shelter, there was nothing like it- she coined the term 'domestic violence'. It was very overcrowded. We broke every fire and safety law and lost our public funding. This was back in the 70's so some families were shipped over from Ireland escaping extreme danger due to their families' involvement with the IRA or otherwise being involved in community violence. Women and children were coming out of war zones in Belfast and Dublin **and** unimaginable family violence. This was a really, really, really low threshold shelter with about 150 women and kids. It was the most chaotic shelter in the United Kingdom and attracted really, really, really chaotic families. That was my baptism by fire into the social work profession. I worked there for a couple of years.

What I discovered were the phenomenal strengths of people who had been through absolutely atrocious personal, family, and community trauma. I learned about how strong people are. The stories were horrible. And I was so amazed at the kids. How resilient the kids were and how quickly they could adapt to people who actually cared for them. So I was a convert. It's one of the finest experiences of my life- and I'm now celebrating my 30th year as a social worker.

As a therapist, I got into harm reduction because I was naturally attracted to working with people with dual diagnosis and working with people who had been excluded from substance abuse **and** mental health treatment. Both substance abuse and mental health treatment are too high threshold and make too many demands on people who need their services. They demand that they drop their symptoms at the door in order to be treated and...

SPEEDOMETER: Would you tease that out for readers a little bit...when you say they ask people to drop their symptoms at the door, what do you mean?

JEANNIE LITTLE: Well, the substance abuse field has decided that in order to be eligible for drug treatment you have to stop using drugs. "Substance Abuse" is the only mental health diagnosis (**and it is a mental health diagnosis according to the psychiatric manual**) that requires people stop the symptoms of their diagnosis before they are eligible for the treatment, which is fucking outrageous.

And for the last 70 years the mental health and psychiatric profession have had it beaten into their heads that they don't know shit about drugs and 'substance abuse' and they have just meekly followed suit. **Consequently, by and large, in the United States today, psychiatric patients can't actually get psychiatric care if they're using drugs.**

So now you've got two treatment fields that exclude people who are exhibiting symptoms of one of their diseases- if you choose to call "substance abuse" a disease, which I prefer not to.

SPEEDOMETER: Jeannie, could you tell me why it is that you prefer not to call 'substance abuse' a disease?

JEANNIE LITTLE: Calling it a disease oversimplifies 'substance abuse' and locates 'the problem' in the drug user. First off, most people who use drugs are not dealing with substance abuse, most people who use drugs do not get into trouble with drugs, **The folks I work with are people who have self-identified as having 'a problem' with drugs or they are people who have been identified by somebody else (i.e. the court system, a family member, a case manager) as having 'a problem' and they're willing to go along with it for now.**

For people **who do** get into trouble with drugs, the harm reduction field prefers a biopsychosocial model called Drug, Set, Setting" which was developed by a Harvard researcher named Norman Zinberg. This model says that the problem with drugs emerges in the interaction between the drug itself (its chemical properties, the way it's used), the person (their unique characteristics, their motivations for using), and the setting (the setting in which one uses, the general environment, what the person's peers are doing)

Drug, Set, Setting doesn't exclusively locate the problem in any of those three places, but rather in a complex interaction of those factors. This enables harm reductionists to completely and totally individualize people's problems with drugs. **Problems with drugs are not a uniform phenomenon, but each person has what we like to call a unique relationship with drugs.**

SPEEDOMETER: The zine planning group was interested in hearing you talk about harm reduction groups. How would you describe what a harm reduction group does? What the hell is a harm reduction group?

JEANNIE LITTLE: There are really only a few in the country. So far, it's a low threshold welcoming drop-in group that invites anybody who (for **any** reason) **wants to think about their relationship with drugs.** A harm reduction group is a supportive group which specifically discourages confrontation and practices a variety of harm reduction interventions, all of which are supportive of the user.

SPEEDOMETER: Okay, so if I'm someone who's using and I decide I want to go to a group, what's it going to feel like in the room to me? What can I expect?

JEANNIE LITTLE: You can expect a wide diversity of people. You can expect a very kind and welcoming leader. If it's an established group, you can expect a culture of welcome-

people are glad to see you. You'll find people who are using and people who are not using. You'll find people at different stages of change in terms of **what they want to do** about using. You would see that the leader **and the group** helps each person to understand why they use, that we really believe that **why people use is important information,** because we believe that **people are seeking something** and **some people just happen to have found drugs as a way in their path to seeking.**

So, in a harm reduction group you'll find people are really interested in everybody's experience with drugs and relationship with drugs. What you won't find is what is sometimes referred to as people telling 'war stories'. It's not about war stories. It's really about exploration. The group leader and the group will check in with people and make sure that people who seem to be vulnerable are handling the conversation okay.

In a harm reduction group you'll also find that **any topic is acceptable.** People will talk about their relationships with other people. They'll talk about what happened on the bus that morning. They'll talk about why they hate their psych meds. They will talk to the voices in their head. You'll find people in group who are actively psychotic and whose contribution to the group is sometimes not well understood by the rest of the group members, but it's still respected.

SPEEDOMETER: Could you talk to readers about how in general, a group can be helpful to someone? What happens when you're in a room and you're in a group? What's going on?

JEANNIE LITTLE: Well, some of the main therapeutic effects of groups are that you have an **immediate experience of "I'm not alone"**. Other people have problems that are similar to mine. That can be comforting. **My favorite**

but to be “the helper”, so by its very nature a group is a strength-based therapeutic endeavor.

Because everybody in the group has something to offer and a group leader will get at that and will actually encourage people to be ‘the helped’ and ‘the helper’. The leader will say “I know you have had experience with that. Do you have any wisdom to offer?” And just by using words like that, and implying that they know you have wisdom, builds up self efficacy. Self efficacy is the belief that I’m competent and I can do things- and it’s actually one of the single most powerful phenomena and it’s one of the most important factors to changing behavior. Groups give people a million opportunities to demonstrate to themselves and other people that they can do things, that they can make a contribution to another person, to the group, to the world.

Another value of groups is that the therapist or the group leader doesn’t have to be “the expert” and that’s really a good thing, because we can never really know what somebody else’s experience is. Our job as group leaders is to ask good questions and to facilitate group members to talk to each other. In a group of ten you have a collective wisdom that is thousands of times more powerful than the perspective of just one person- you’ve got each person playing off nine other people and you multiply all that together and it’s just phenomenal. Which actually makes groups rather difficult to run, because they’re really complicated, and it’s actually not physically possible to track all of the interactions that are happening in a group, so a group leader is often just making their best guess as to what’s the most important thing happening in the room in the moment that they need to pay attention to as the group facilitator.

SPEEDOMETER: Are groups for everybody?

JEANNIE LITTLE: I think they can be. I’m biased because I love them. In my harm reduction group, which has now been running for 14 years, I had one person who truly couldn’t handle it and I asked him to take a break for two weeks; one person out of 100 new people joining the group every year.

Now, 10% of people who joined the group every year didn’t come back a second time, so one might presume that they decided that a group wasn’t for them. But that 90% is a huge return rate. I think if you allow people to fill the space and you set your clock to the tenor and pace of the people who are in the room, you are running your group with a view to accommodate all of the vulnerabilities of their members.

So some groups might go really slowly and other groups might feel chaotic because everyone is talking at once- and rather than trying to control that chaos or try to get people to talk if they’re not talking, or trying to stop people from talking all at once- the group leader sets their clock and tries to join with the energy of the group and be with it, rather than fight it.

SPEEDOMETER: I think deciding to go to a group is kind of a brave decision, you know?

JEANNIE LITTLE: There’s a very important reason for that, which is shame. Groups are very exposing, because a lot of people are watching. Yes, it’s a fact that in a group lots of people are watching, and despite our best efforts, lots of people are judging too. And on top of that, in a harm reduction group, we are inviting people in who are practicing a stigmatized behavior.

SPEEDOMETER: Drug use.

JEANNIE LITTLE: Their use, yes- drug use. And most people have internalized that stigma.

SPEEDOMETER: So a part of them feels like...

JEANNIE LITTLE: They should be beaten up and punished and told what to do and shamed and humiliated and they feel like shit and for goodness sake, when somebody walks into a harm reduction group lots of people have already told them that they're fucking up, and they believe it. They believe it, so it's extremely difficult. People are scared of groups.

SPEEDOMETER: Well, maybe this interview will speak to guys who are thinking a group might be helpful to them! Thanks to the zine planning group members who suggested this interview! Jeannie, thank you so much.

THE HARM REDUCTION THERAPY CENTER

Harm Reduction therapy is a non-judgmental approach to helping substance users reduce the negative impact of drugs and alcohol have on their lives. It respects that people use drugs for a variety of reasons. <http://www.harmreductiontherapy.org/>

Drop-In One on One Counseling

- ✓ **HRTC at Tenderloin Health**
(187 Golden Gate), Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9AM-12 noon.
- ✓ **HRTC at Hospitality House**
(290 Turk) on Mon., Tues., Wed., and Fri.
from 1 to 5pm.

Drop-In groups

Facilitated by professional clinicians from the Harm Reduction Therapy Center. All groups are **FREE and CONFIDENTIAL**

- ✓ **Drop-in HRTC Groups at the Self Help Center**
288 Turk at Leavenworth
When: Mon, Tue, Wed, and Fri. 1:30-2:30PM

- ✓ **Drop-in HRTC Groups at Tenderloin Health**
187 Golden Gate at Leavenworth

Harm Reduction Drop In Group

Wed 9:30-10:30AM, Thurs. 2PM-3PM, and
Wed. 6:15PM-7:15PM

Hi-V group (Harm Reduction group for HIV+ folks)

Fridays 9:30AM-10:30AM

Bupe Group (buprenorphine hydrochloride-

A harm reduction group about this option for opiate substitution therapy) Thursdays 10:30-11:30



The Headline

by Metatron

He walked into the room with the newspaper. The headline read **"Gay Marriage Legalized in California"**.

"Can you believe it, he said?"

I couldn't. Not for the first minute or two. My boyfriend and I had been up all night at a gay resort in Palm Springs, having fun, and I had just taken a short nap on a lounge chair, by the pool, under the stars. After about 20 minutes of napping he woke me up because he found a dealer who would give us a bump. We went to his hotel room, and there he gave us each a line while he injected his meth. Then he injected his friend, who was hanging out with him.

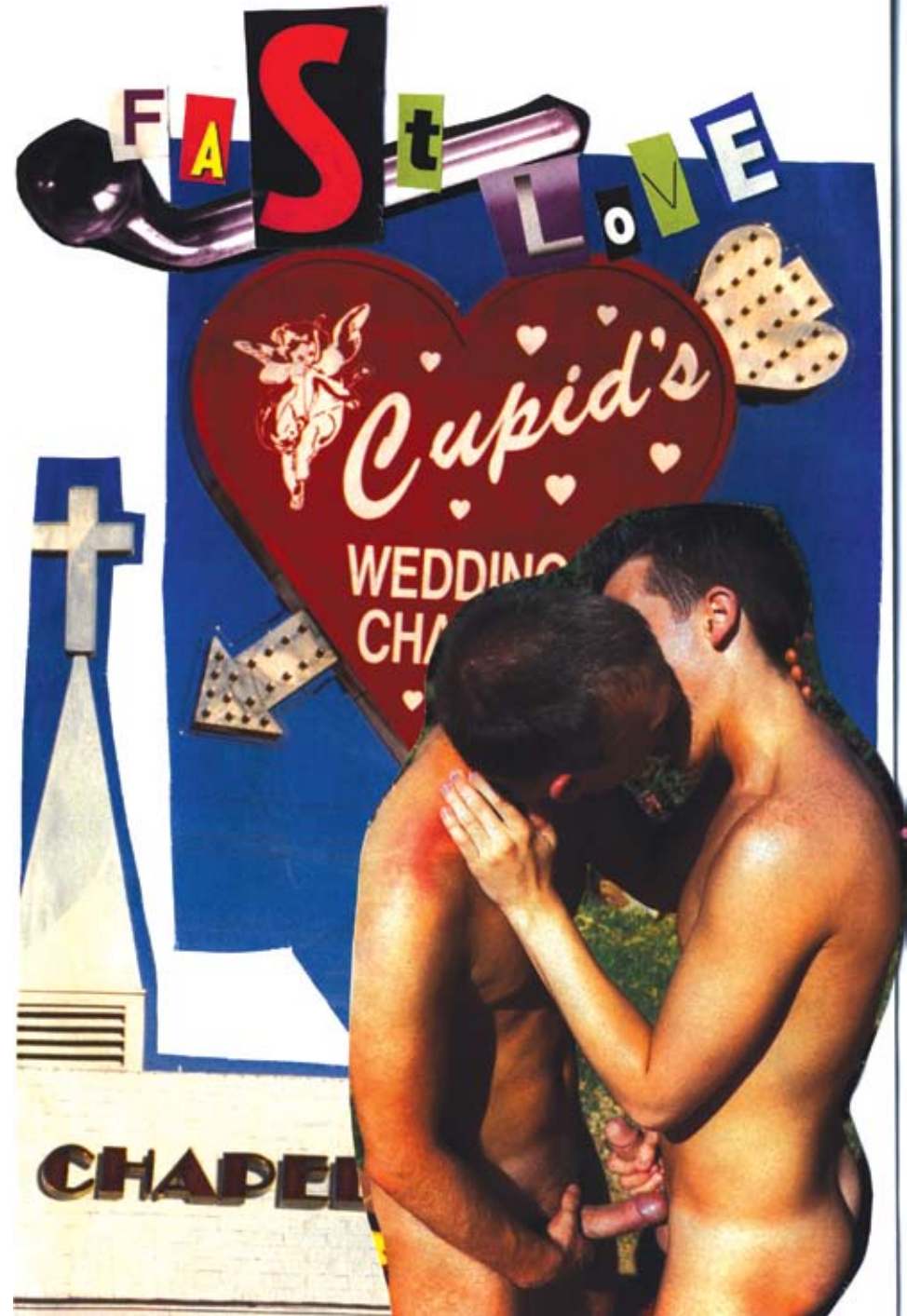
My boyfriend stared, fascinated, as the needles sank into their arms.

I looked away. I've seen it plenty of times and even tried it once myself. It's too intense of a high for me. I prefer smoking it ...

which is why I snort when I do it now. This is one of the ways I practice harm reduction, choosing my least favorite way to get high, so I'm less likely to party on, and on, and on. And it does in fact work for me.

Anyway, our host left for awhile to get a drink and came back with the newspaper. We all stared for a moment, silent, thinking about what the news meant to us. Then I was struck by the significance of it.

It was one of those moments like when JFK was shot, or the space shuttle exploded ... or maybe, more accurately, like the



news that a war has ended, that there will be peace, that there will be equality.

Then, I looked at my new friends, the scars on their arms, their cheeks sunken in, and I did not see their bodies ravaged by drugs, but people ravaged by oppression and persecution for being honest about who they love.

"I'm from India, so I'm Hindu", our host said. "But Krishna is very much like Jesus."

One of my favorite things to talk about when I'm high is spirituality. As soon as he said this, I jumped on his train of thought. I've spent some time in the past on this topic, considering it, and asked him if he'd seen "Zeitgeist, The Movie"? You can find it online, and Part I draws compelling parallels between Jesus, and Krishna, and Horus the Egyptian sun god, and others. To me, basically, they're all the same ... they are saviors. But they don't exist to be worshipped. These stories exist to help us find the savior within ourselves.

So, of course, harm reduction appeals to me. Here, I am not told that I'll be saved by group meetings, a sponsor, 12 steps, Jesus, or anything outside of myself. I don't have to do what other people tell me to get better. I have to do what I know will make me better ... like snorting, instead of smoking, or not judging other people for what they do to ease their pain.

Judgment is such an insidious trap. Having been judged for who I love my entire life, from adolescence, into puberty and those damned erections in the locker room with other boys my age, to faking heterosexuality and dating girls and their suspicion, to coming out to my father after years of listening to him use the word "faggot", YES, it was all painful. And YES, meth helped ease that deeply rooted, fucked up

emotional pain. Not being equal in the eyes of your peers, your parents, or your government is painful. Don't tell me not to use meth. Inequality has been like an emotional cancer to my heart, my hopes, my innocence, and my faith in myself.

But then, sitting there, in that hotel room, with lines and needles sitting on the table was the headline "Gay Marriage Legalized in California".

Why I do it
Why I started
The eternal questions
Wishing I could turn
Back time
And not take that
First one for free.
And be strong enough
To just walk away
-anonymous

Jail, Prison, & Criminal Justice System

Roundtable Discussion

SPEEDOMETER: Welcome Speedometer readers, to this roundtable discussion with Cisco, Donald Duck, Xerox, Gangster Gay Boy, and Mark. We're here to talk about people's experiences with the police and criminal justice system. The questions came from guys who come to the zine planning group.

The first question is: If you've had an encounter with the police what happened?

XEROX: With the exception of two arrests back when I was a teenager for things like stealing 8-track tape decks (that's how far back I go) out of cars... all of my arrests have been when I'm either high on speed or I'm on a dope mission. So I'm either doing something to get speed or I'm already on speed and my judgment is impaired.

As far as getting busted- a lot of stuff has bounced off me- I've been really really lucky. If the system was fair, I would be in prison serving a lot of time. I either don't

get caught for stuff or I have to be doing really stupid shit. Lately I've been doing some stupid shit. Over the last three years, it's gotten progressively worse and it's all linked to my behavior on meth.

Fairly recently I have come to the conclusion that at this point, harm reduction for me, is to take meth off the list of substances that I choose to do. And stick with things I'm able to control and handle. I'm over it and I'm determined to change my behavior. The only way I can do it is to put speed on the shelf right now.

ED: Four years ago I had long dreadlocks and a big backpack- just about to get high- and for no reason I get stopped. Police in San Francisco stereotype people. "Can we see your ID? Where you going? Where you headed?" So I say "Look, I got weed in my backpack." They were cool. I've never had a bad experience with cops here.

XEROX: The last time I was arrested, I was on the rooftop of a hotel thinking I had a pretty secluded, sunny space. And I did, for about two hours. Most of the time when I am naked in public I don't get hassled. But this time I was a little bit too cavalier and a little too sloppy and they came up on me. I was very high. I was sweaty. I had a big bottle of baby oil up there, I was covered from head to toe, I was naked, and there was a used syringe on top of my clothes. I paid the price. Good beginning, bad ending.

The police got up on the roof the same way I did, by ladder and observed me for a minute. They acted like I was crazy and treated me with kid gloves. They are trained to be social workers, parents, and more. Even though I was wired like a mad rabbit, I toned it down.

Through experience I know how to shift gears-I backed off a gear and they backed off a gear and it was all good. I'm sure they thought I was crazy, because by the time I got down the off that roof and was handcuffed ...I'm not exaggerating... there were two dozen fire and police officers there. For just one naked sweaty guy jerking off on a rooftop.

It was not the way I wanted to spend that hit. This experience exemplifies what I said earlier about my desire to change my behavior- and that my meth use juxtaposes with my arrests. The charge was eventually dismissed, but the handwriting is on the wall for me. It was a wakeup call that my behavior is getting too crazy, even for me, on this drug. So I am taking steps to change my meth use.

CISCO: I've never been arrested, but I've had some interactions with the San Francisco Police Department. I've been harassed because they assumed I was homeless. Since I've been using speed, sometimes I hang out with a different crowd. I've noticed, especially in the Castro, that the beat cops treat me differently now. I get an attitude from them I never used to get.

Where they used to say, "Hi," and walk by, now they stop and look at how I'm dressed. Depending upon who I'm with, sometimes they come up and sarcastically ask, "Well, how you doing?" "What's going on?" They don't do that to other people on the street. When you're disrespected, that shifts attitudes. Respect gets respect. I wouldn't want their job, by any means, but I think a lot of people get harassed unnecessarily because of misconceptions around drug use.

SPEEDOMETER: Any advice for Speedometer readers who have never been arrested?

ED: If it's your first time getting arrested, just be quiet. Don't say anything. Give respect- you get respect. It's taken me like 18 years to realize that. I'm not going to fight with a cop over some dope that's in my bag saying, "No, it's not mine." That's stupid.

XEROX: Rule number one, if you're under the influence of meth, keep in mind that the drug makes us feel like we're the center of the universe. There's usually some paranoia attached to that. Like, the whole universe knows I'm doing illegal things, carrying dope, acting stupid, have a syringe in my back pocket, you name it. Keep in mind that despite that paranoia, by and large, it's not true.

In reality, as individuals walking down the street we're not all that important. It seems like we're under a spotlight, but that spotlight exists only in our heads. If you just behave "as if" and don't draw attention to yourself, you're not going to get arrested, even on meth.

PIP: A top fear of SFPD officers is becoming infected with HIV, understandably, they're very afraid of sticking themselves. They will ask, "Do you have any needles on you?" If there's a syringe involved, my advice is to be very forthright. "Officer, it's in my pocket- it's covered- and I have some new ones in my backpack," Once you disclose that you got an outfit, it will score you a point with the police, in my opinion- it'll help in your arrest. Trust me, if you're already being arrested, the paraphernalia charge isn't going to

stick.

I wouldn't be too candid about anything beyond that if you're holding dope; unless **you know** you're going to jail, they're going to search you, and **you know** they're going to come across it. If they get you for possession it might get dismissed- depending on how much you have- and depending on your record. If it's your first time, it's pretty likely it is going to get dismissed.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: When they say, "If you have some dope on you, tell us now." It's a trap. If you deny that you got dope on you, they might find it-you may go to jail. If you admit it, you're definitely going. When it comes to issues of police safety, with rigs or weapons or guns, **you have to tell them.** Those things you admit to. Because if they find a gun or weapon and you didn't declare it- it's a whole different procedure.

But if you got a dime bag in your pocket or your shoe, personally, I would not just admit that. Be respectful- let them do the talking, and don't offer more information than what they're asking for. A lot of people have talked themselves into jail when they were on their way out.

CISCO: I've been in situations where you feel pressured or even afraid, and you want to try and make it easier on yourself, so you'll say things that you normally wouldn't say. That information gets twisted around and other people can be implicated and suffer severe consequences due to your words. Be careful of what you say, don't give out information if you don't need to.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: Say they stop and ask you what you're doing...you say "I was across the street, now I am waiting on the bus," Because you said you were across the street, he'll say, "Well, across the street is where they sell dope." And now you've given them probable cause. You end up telling on yourself. They are professionals; you have to remember they are professionally trained to read your body language, to tell when you're lying. They're looking to see if you're high, if you're nervous. Just answer their questions, "no sir", "yes sir", or "I'm waiting on the bus." Period. That's it.

CISCO: Know your rights. Until recently I didn't really understand what my rights were. I thought that the cops could pretty much do or say anything they wanted and search my things, and I found out that they really can't do that in some situations. I strongly suggest that you check out the information at the end of this article so you're better prepared in a police encounter.

XEROX: If you are on **parole** they don't need probable cause. They can search you for any or no reason. If your **probation** comes with a 1035, which is a search condition, then they don't need probable cause either, and they can search you for any or no reason. However, if you're not on parole, or probation, and especially if you're a piker that hasn't been arrested before, or you have a squeaky clean record, you have rights around being searched. If you're not handcuffed and they're not already searching you, **say no to a search** and see how they respond. Don't be afraid to piss off the

police and say, "No." That's not going to come back to haunt you, even if they find something. If they end up searching you anyway, it means that they had probable cause.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: If they ask can they search you, and you say no, just saying no doesn't give them the probable cause to search you. When they ask, "What, you got something hide? Why can't I search you?" Don't be fooled by that either.

If you are going to jail for the first time, my advice is to be yourself. Don't try to take on no roles. If you a flaming homosexual, tell the cops "Yes, put me with the girls". If you a gay boy thinking that jail is one great big adventure and your going in to have a dick party- it really isn't, because sometimes you get locked up with some seriously sick individuals. It really is no plaything. Whatever you do, be yourself.

XEROX: Another relevant thing for first timers in jail is, especially if you have a high-profile type personality or like to talk a lot- is to scale all of that back and be very circumspect. Try and observe more than to talk. Don't give information away to people about your arrests, why you're there. Somebody can take what you say and spin it a different way. If your charges are sexually sensitive they can be twisted, turned and stigmatized by people and suddenly you find yourself in a situation.

So... need as little as possible. Ask for as little as possible. Even offer as little as possible, if asked. Jail is a very oppressive environment that can be

misleading and trickish. And before you know it, you're caught up in the oppression. The closer to your chest you play your cards overall in jail, the better.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: My best advice is, don't talk to people about your case. It'll throw your focus, it'll make you stressed, and it'll make your time harder. Your case is between you and your lawyer. When you are talking with your lawyer, make sure you listen to everything they have to say. Ask as many questions as you need to ask, and make sure that you understand.

If your lawyer says, "I talked with the DA, you can go home today with a felony and four years probation" After he said "go home today" you stopped hearing and didn't catch that four years probation deal, you didn't catch the felony conviction. You don't realize that with a felony you're no longer eligible for GA. What if that's your only source of income? You just made yourself homeless.

And when the judge asks "Did anybody make any promises to you in order to make this deal?" You say, "Yes, your honor," and tell the judge what you understand the deal to be. Make sure you understand everything that's going on, and everything that's agreed on. If there is something that you didn't understand and the judge doesn't correct it, that's a point in your favor.

Whatever you do, don't sign away your freedom. Don't take a felony conviction just that easy. Those things hurt, those things come back to haunt you, in ways you never imagined.

SPEEDOMETER: If you have felony convictions, what obstacles have you encountered, and how do you deal with it?

GANGSTER GAY BOY: It is very hard to get any kind of decent job with a felony conviction. It really is. Always ask your lawyer, "Do you think we can beat this?" Before you take any kind of plea bargain deal.

XEROX: Every person the DA decides to prosecute has the option to be judged by a jury of 12 of their peers. The truth of the matter is that the public defender system is vastly overworked. Because of that and other reasons, the public defenders are trained to offer deals and the DAs are trained to compromise. The reality is, there are not enough people like us to sit in judgment of one another and jury trials are very expensive. I'm a veteran of six jury trials and it's one of the reasons I've been able to stay felony free- I've taken felonies to jury trial and I've beaten felonies.

Don't take the deal. The deal is designed to make things easier for the system- that's what they're trained to do, to say, "Here, all you have to do is plead guilty to this felony, you can go home today, three years adult supervised probation." When they have opened the door for me I say, "No deal," because it involves a felony.

You have to do time (in jail) on the front end a lot of times, in order to have a good outcome on the back end. If you're the type who just doesn't want to do any jail time, go for the deal. Otherwise, just sit tight- you might only have to do one or two more court

appearances and frequently the charges roll off your back. But you got to stay in jail and stay vigilant and say, "No, I'm going to take this to jury trial," if you don't like the deal. Don't be afraid of standing your guns.

SPEEDOMETER: If you have dealt with felonies convictions, what's it like to be on probation or parole? What's it like emotionally? What does it do to your lifestyle?

GANGSTER GAY BOY: It's a bitch! When we are kids, we pay for our mistakes with time-outs, spankings, punishments and bad grades in school. When you get older, seems like you pay for your mistakes in freedoms. Gosh I'm about to get emotional. You have no idea what it's like to have somebody half your age tell you that you can't go out of town for a family members funeral because you pee'd dirty last week. The embarrassment of having to go to the bathroom while somebody's watches you pee in a bottle is humiliating. It's degrading. On top of the stress that the pee better be clean.

You have somebody who can talk any way they want to talk to you and there's not a damn thing you can do about it. It's hurtful. It's something to be avoided at all costs. Because once you're in that system, the worst thing you can do is run from it. That only prolongs it, it only makes it worse. You're talking to someone who took 13 years to get his CDC number back on when I should have been able to do it in one. Not worth it.

You are not in control of your life. Even when you're released home, that's still incarceration.

When the parole or probation officer comes into your house, that's count time. When they say they want you home on Saturday- that's yard recall. You're still incarcerated. You still have your liberties restrained- you are still not free.

My advice, if you find yourself on probation or parole, whatever they tell you you need to do get out of it, baby do that. If you feel like you can't do it- if you can't stay clean- if you can't stay off the streets- hide in the local rehab program. You'll do a lot better to be incarcerated in that rehab program for a year than to go back behind bars violating.

XEROX: I've been a deal taker before; that's why I can talk about rejecting them so authoritatively. For me, probation was the bottom that scared me straight, at least for the period of probation. A period of time I was able to pay the restitution, visit my probation officer for so many months until he or she put me on a longer leash. They want to see people jump through their hoops for a period of time. If you jump, act like you're living in fear- they back off real easy because the system is overloaded. The probation officer doesn't need to see you every month, nor do they want to see you. So if you demonstrate you're taking care of business and that you're doing what you agreed to do- you'll pass the test and you're not going to have to do the whole probation time.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: Don't agree to something you can't do. If they offer you Prop 36 and you know you're not going to be able to stay clean for that alternative sentence- don't do it. My purpose for mentioning this

is that I live with a lot of pain as a result of past incarcerations for things I did, and things I couldn't do or didn't do and it was all due to the fact that I was using and didn't know why, or didn't know how to stop, but wanted to.

When my use first got out of control I remember my mother saying, "Baby, I found an 18 month program for you." And I was like, "Wha? Mom? 18 months!?" I didn't go to that rehab, but I ended up giving CDC (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation) over 13 years of my life.

When you're in jail, especially in the city of San Francisco, they have resources. They have counselors that can tell you where to go to get help. That does go a long ways in getting out. Those things are recorded, they let the DA and your public defender know, "Hey, he went to this group," or "He's trying to get into this program." Sometimes it can actually get you out of jail. But again, don't say you going to do something that you're not willing or able to do. It only makes the trouble worse.

My hope for you is that you see the fun that you're having is never worth your freedom. When you go to the family reunion and you don't know who the people are any more, that's a lot of pain. I'm not telling you not to use, I'm giving you one more thing to think about when you do or don't. God bless you, here's all my love.

SPEEDOMETER: Okay. Coming to a close here- do you have tips for readers about Jail Prevention- how to say out?

GANGSTER GAY BOY: If your use gets

you to the point where you're literally getting high on the street, on the street corner, in the alley- every time you do that, you're gambling with your freedom. If you find that you can't wait 'til you get to get somewhere safe, you're kind of out of control. You need to evaluate that. Also look at that fact that when you're hanging out. At those spots, you might not be doing anything, but when the police pass by, and they know the regulars, **but don't know you**, they're going to stop you just to find out who you are.

The more you are out there, the more its likely you'll be stopped, or searched, or detained. If you out there selling or using on a constant basis, eventually you will get arrested. Eventually, it is going to happen. Be prepared for that.

CISCO: Listen to your intuition. If something doesn't feel right, get out of there. buddies of mine have gotten busted just because they've been in the wrong place at the wrong time, looking too clean.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: Or with the wrong person.

CISCO: Yeah, so, listen to your intuition, know what you're doing. Don't buy when you're high or you're looking for trouble, is all I have to say.

MARK: If you're going to buy from somebody, and when you get there and there's five people sitting there waiting...

GANGSTER GAY BOY: Get the hell out.

MALE VOICE: Don't buy from them, get out of there. Don't buy in places like apartment complexes, where there's lots of people watching and you're walking in the door- you're being buzzed in at 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock in the morning. Don't do it. It's just one of those things that you can get busted for, 'cause chances are you're being watched.

GANGSTER GAY BOY: If you're going to deal, it's a business, let's just face it, that's the bottom line. You have to think about what you have going on. If you have children in your life and you get arrested for drugs, you could lose your kids, you have to take that into account.

So your harm reduction should always be, "What is the safest way to do what I got to do?" So that if you find a dealer that you like, and you like to do business with that dealer, get him to deliver or meet at neutral place. Don't just keep walking back and forth to the dope spot. You stick out; you're going to be seen.

And if you're walking on the streets, clean cut in a suit and tie, and everybody else is sagging in t-shirts, they're going to know you're there to buy dope. And I hate to play the race card, but if you're a white person hanging with a black person heading to the dope spot, they're going to instantly assume drug transaction. Reduce the fucking harm.

SPEEDOMETER: *Alright! Thanks so much for sharing you wisdom!*

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ROUNDTABLE RESOURCES

1) **The Copwatch Database** is a permanent, searchable repository of complaints filed against police officers.
<http://copwatch.com/>

2) **Picture the Homeless** <http://www.picturethehomeless.org/>

3) **Flex Your Rights** <http://www.flexyourrights.org>
Check out their Frequently Asked Questions section online.



Mmmmmmmmm!

Hot Places to Eat by
Gordon & Ms. Toma's



Our favorite places to eat for free – where the food is good and the volunteers are compassionate!

Kitchens	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Notes
City Team Ministries 164 - 8 th St. (bet. Mission & Howard) 861-8888							Lunch 1-3pm. Hot lunch, clothes, foot care	Dinner: a hot meal. Medical clinic: 2nd & 4th Sat 1-3pm (Aug 9 & 23, Sept 13 & 27).
			Dinner: Tues-Sat arrive 5:45pm for 6pm church service & dinner. Church service is not mandatory, but those who participate are fed first.					
Martin de Porres House of Hospitality 225 Potrero (near 16th St.) 552-0240	*** CLOSED Friday, Aug 1--Sunday, Aug 10. RE-OPENING Monday, Aug 11 for breakfast. ***							Usually a vegetarian alternative. Breakfast: oatmeal & herb tea. Lunch & Brunch: a hearty soup & salad.
	Brunch 9-10:30am	Breakfast 6:30-7:30am	Breakfast 6:30-7:30am Lunch 12-2pm	Lunch 12-2pm	Breakfast 6:30-7:30am Lunch 12-2pm	Breakfast 6:30-7:30am Lunch 12-2pm	Lunch 12-2pm	
St. Peter & Paul Catholic Church 666 Filbert (near Washington Sq.) 421-0809	Sandwich 4-5pm or till food runs out.							A simple sandwich.
Third Baptist Church 1399 McAllister (near Pierce)					Lunch 12:30-1:30pm			Meat, bread, vegetables, salad, punch & dessert.

Kitchens	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	Notes
Episcopal Church Fell St. (between Franklin and Gough)			Lunch at Noon					Meat or Vegetarian
First Baptist Church Octavia & Market (behind LGBTCenter)				Dinner at 5:30pm				Three course Meal
Most Holy Redeemer Church 18 th St. & Diamond St.				Dinner at 6pm		Vegetarian Lunch At 2:30pm		First Come First Served For a three Course meal
Pasquale's Pizza 8 th Ave. & Irving			11:00AM Pizza 3 rd TUE of the month					Once a month (Take the N Outbound)
Church next to the SF Law School Octavia & Haight St.				9:30AM Breakfast - 1 st Saturday of the month				Once a month
Church (on the corner of Oak & Steiner St.)				Noon -2:00pm Lunch - 4 th Saturday of the month				Once a month
Old First Church Sacramento & Van Ness				5:30pm Dinner - 2 nd and 4 th Saturday of the month				Twice a month
Page Street Church Page & Steiner St.				11:00am Breakfast - 1 st and 3 rd Sunday of the month				Twice a month



Ms. Toma's



& Gordon

Resources and Information

HOOK UP ONLINE?

CHECK OUT....

www.dotmen.net

Better cruising through technology! A program of the STOP AIDS Project in San Francisco this amazing website includes tips on writing a great profile, choosing a photo, strategies to protect your health, privacy, possessions and identity, a dictionary of online jargon, information on software, browser ad-ons, tools to help you find directions to a hookups house and much much more!

<http://www.hookinguponline.org>

Advice for how to make hooking up online more enjoyable for everyone.

<http://www.californiamen.net>

An online forum where you can rate cruising sites, read blogs by cruisers, and keep an online 'black book' of your tricks and hookups..



SEXUAL HEALTH RESOURCES...

www.magnetsf.org

Art openings, community events, holistic healing, HIV/STD testing, counseling and more for gay men at a lovely spot in the Castro.

4122 18th St, San Francisco, CA 94114

(415) 581-1600

www.sfcityclinic.org

We're a drop-in clinic providing free and low-cost diagnosis & treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, information about condom use and other STD prevention methods.

356 7th Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

415-487-5500

www.inspot.org

If you discover you have an STD, inSPOT provides a way to anonymously inform your past sex partners via email.

<http://www.hivtest.org>

Enter your zip code and find the nearest location to get tested for HIV. You can search by \$, anonymity, & type of test (oral vs. rapid).

California AIDS Hotline www.aidshotline.org (415) 863-AIDS or 800-367-AIDS

HARM REDUCTION,

Safer Using, & Personal stories

www.tspsf.com This is the Speed Project's site. You will find Speedometer the SF zine by and for gay/bi/heteroflexible guys who party with speed, respectfully offered information and resources, and info about events, workshops, drop in groups and movie night!

www.tweaker.org This site is dedicated to gay guys who use crystal meth. Includes useful information on speed's effects on the body, mental health, tweaker discussion forums, tips for safer using, and strategies for cutting back and quitting.

www.crystalneon.org A program of Seattle Counseling Services this amazing website is home to AMPHETAZINE a zine for gay/bi guys who slam speed. Great info about harm reduction, safer speed use, and making changes.

www.erowid.org Erowid.org is an online library of information about psychoactive plants and chemicals along with other related topics. The information on the site is a compilation of the experiences, words, and efforts of thousands of individuals including users, parents, health professionals, doctors, therapists, chemists, researchers, teachers, and lawyers.

www.harmreduction.org The Harm Reduction Coalition is a national advocacy and capacity-building organization that promotes the health and dignity of individuals and communities impacted by drug use. Overdose prevention, syringe access, safer using. Awesome information for drug users and their loved ones and trainings for professionals who want to work with drug users respectfully.

www.dancesafe.org club drugs!

www.anypositivechange.org

The Chicago Recovery Alliance's awesome site on safer drug use and substance use management.

COUNSELING, CUTTING DOWN,

managing use and/or quitting resources

The Stonewall Project a harm reduction program for gay/bi men (415) 487-3100 www.stonewallsf.org

New Leaf Services (415) 626-7000 for gay/bi/trans/lesbian/queer folks seeking counseling. www.newleafservices.org

Harm Reduction Therapy Center (415) 863-4282
www.harmreductiontherapy.org

PROP Positive Opportunity Reinforcement Project
(415) 355-2000 www.propsf.org for gay/bi men- incentives to quit speed.

Crystal Meth Anonymous www.crystalmeth.org

S.T.O.P. Stimulant Treatment Outpatient Program
(415) 502-5777

Recommended Book:
Over the Influence: The Harm Reduction Guide for Managing Drugs and Alcohol

by Jeannie Little and Patt Denning.

**Back issues
of Speedometer are
online**

www.tspssf.com

**Speed Project
Events:**

415.788.5433