

So You Are Living In A Dystopia What Next?

**Are You Being Ruled Over By A Dictator?
Help Is At Hand!**



NⒶTE

Life Under Dystopia

This is a fictional survival guide for people living under the oppressive reign of a future galactic emperor, any similarities to any similar situations on earth are purely coincidental, as on this planet you are expected to obey all laws no matter how repressive, express no doubts in your faith no matter how unfounded its claims, and serve your masters obediently no matter how despotic.

Let's imagine for a moment that your country or planet just voted into the highest office someone who intent on being an evil dictator for life, and setting up a repressive dictatorship that will potentially outlive them. We have seen such situations happen on Coruscant (Palpatine, Star Wars) and in Panem (Coriolanus Snow, Hunger Games), as well as in alternative timeline America (The Sons Of Jacob from Handmaid's Tale)¹ and England (Norsefire from V For Vendetta)².

But for the sake of this example I'll stick with the alternative America of Octavia Butler's 1998 'Parable of Talents'³, which featured a presidential candidate named Andrew Steele Jarret who won the election running on a 'Make America Great Again'⁴ platform before establishing a Christian fundamentalist authoritarian state. It is such a far fetched fictional idea that there is no danger for it being mistaken for any real world scenario.

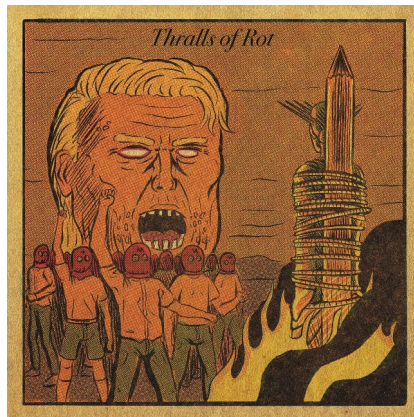


Image by @sabretooth1100

Now when authoritarian changes begin, maybe nothing seems to personally affect you at first. You might even start to relax, even if you hear troubling reports about new regulations or administrative detentions, but they affect other communities. You sympathise but it's hard to verify information now that independent media outlets are being muzzled.

So you keep your head down and try to fit in. This won't be so hard if you're part of the demographic majority, if you have the right background and connections, and if maybe you work in a position where you don't have to make difficult choices, just process the paperwork that crosses your desk. Lucky you.

But suppose the situation intensifies. The history books show us what can follow. Maybe you're required to attend mandatory civic education sessions or party rallies. You learn to participate enough to avoid attention, memorising the expected responses and songs.

You may not like having to display the approved symbols to avoid harassment, or being volunteered for community surveillance duties, but maybe you'll be lucky and avoid being asked to report on your neighbours or colleagues for suspicious behaviours.

You'll hate having to attend the public trials and sentencings, naturally applauding at the right moments, but it won't mean anything you tell yourself. At least until your children's youth group leader asks them to write essays about their parents' daily activities and private conversations. But is this really how you want to live, and could you live with yourself if you did live this way?

I was once told by a stage hypnotist that the most important part of his job was figuring out who to avoid calling on, as most people were either easy influenced or go along with his suggestions, but picking people who were already determined to not give an inch, not to join in, and not to do anything silly or funny that contravened their values, would spoil a show by not playing the part or taking part.

I asked him if he avoided religious people for this reason, and as someone who was pretty religious at the time I was surprised at his answer, 'No, religious people can be easy. If they are the sort who follow their leaders, and do what they are told.'

He did say that there were exceptions, if someone was so committed to their beliefs and prepared to defend them, even to the point of disobeying their leaders or losing their friends for sticking by their

principles, then those people weren't susceptible to suggestion. Their beliefs could of course be wrong, but they had become such an integral part of that person - intellectually and morally - that they wouldn't contravene them without great pressure, and might even die for them. This was true of people very committed to political ideals too, to the point they would oppose their political party if that party opposed their ideals.

In the Octavia Butler's story many of those who would have considered themselves Christians ultimately accepted very unchristian acts, because their loyalty to their culturally Christian group or it's leader was greater than their own understanding of and commitment to their beliefs. In her story some of his followers do have a limit, and there is a point at which they no longer accept his hypocrisy. But it is fiction, in reality many would still go along with it, until it hurts them or those they love personally, rather than risk standing out.

Who Goes Nazi

People's acceptance of or opposition to state violence and atrocities typically operates along two key axes:

Dehumanisation Distance:

1. The more 'othered' or dehumanised the victims are, the more likely people are to accept violence against them.
2. This operates through social, cultural, and ideological mechanisms that create psychological distance.
3. For example, how colonial powers justified violence against indigenous peoples, or how fascist regimes frame minority groups.

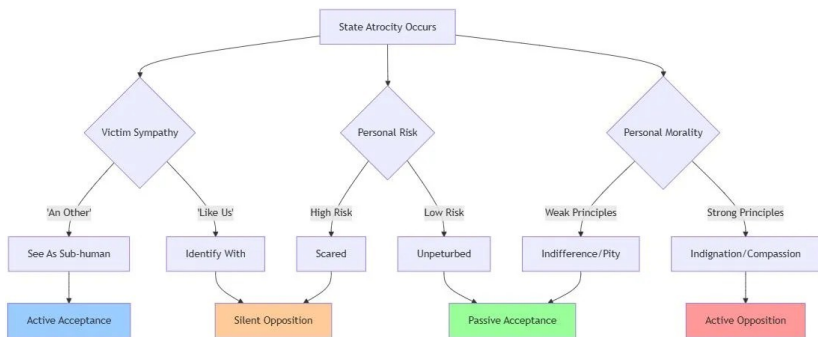
Personal Risk Assessment:

1. People's willingness to oppose atrocities is inversely proportional to their perceived risk of becoming victims themselves.

2. When people feel personally threatened by state repression, they're more likely to remain silent.
3. Conversely, those who feel insulated from consequences are more likely to voice opposition.

This creates a dynamic where:

- Atrocities against those seen as 'like us' or within our circle of moral concern generate stronger opposition.
- People are more likely to speak out when they feel protected from retaliation.
- Dictatorial state power often deliberately exploits both axes - dehumanising targets whilst simultaneously creating fear of becoming a target.



Where these tendencies of dehumanisation and fear are subverted is when people have strong moral integrity - a deeply held commitment to human dignity and solidarity that transcends both social distance and personal risk. This moral axis operates through several key mechanisms:

Weak Principles (Leading to Indifference/Pity):

1. Superficial moral framework easily overwhelmed by social pressure or fear.
2. Often reflects liberal 'thoughts and prayers' responses.

3. May acknowledge wrongness but avoid meaningful action.
4. Can manifest as performative concern without material support.

Strong Principles (Leading to Indignation/Compassion):

1. Overrides the ‘othering’ process through recognition of universal human dignity.
2. Generates moral courage that can overcome personal fear.
3. Often rooted in class consciousness or internationalist principles.
4. Manifests as both emotional response (moral outrage) and practical solidarity.

The crucial distinction is that strong moral principles don't just generate feeling but drive action - transforming sympathy into solidarity, and concern into concrete resistance. This is why revolutionary movements emphasise moral education alongside political consciousness.

Of course there are exceptions all along these lines, people whose conscience is pricked, because the repression or violence passes a certain level, or through personal experiences that break through their psychological defences - a friend becoming a victim, witnessing violence first hand, encountering horrific stories, recognising parallels with past historical atrocities, or simply reaching a breaking point where they can no longer maintain the cognitive dissonance required to ignore state violence. Sometimes it's as simple as a powerful image or story that manages to bypass their usual rationalisations, and forces them to confront the humanity of those they've previously othered or overlooked.

Just Following Orders

In Stanley Milgram's original 1961-1962 experiments at Yale, volunteers were told they were participating in a learning experiment where they had to administer increasingly powerful electric shocks to a ‘learner’ when they gave wrong answers. The experiment was

prompted by the trial of Nazi war criminal Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem in 1961, whose primary defence was that he was ‘just following orders’.

The fact that two-thirds of participants carried out such a contrived punishment has been seen as proof of our moral malleability, but it was really an experiment of how far people will follow authority. The test was given to people who had been brought up to respect authority figures, and many of the participants would have been used to obeying orders as soldiers in the war less than a couple decades before.

It was only when the authority figure (the experimenter) was physically present and giving direct commands, that compliance remained high at around 65%. When the experimenter was replaced by a non-authority figure compliance plummeted to around 20%.

A few people (1.5%) refused to participate at all, and around 35% refused to continue at various points when hearing the victim's distress. The closer the ‘victim’ was physically, the more likely participants were to refuse. When participants saw other people refuse to comply, their own resistance rose to around 90%



Personal Strategies For Survival

Some lessons we can take from this if we want to be among the 35% who refuse to cooperate when we realise how harmful the situation or system is to others are:

Question Everything and Build Critical Awareness

- Train yourself to critically examine orders and authority
- Practise recognizing propaganda and manipulation
- Learn to spot when fear is being manufactured

Trust Your Moral Compass

- Listen to your discomfort - it's signalling something
- Maintain connection to your core values
- Build tolerance for uncertainty without losing principles

Create Distance and Boundaries

- Maintain physical distance from authority figures
- Master showing just enough compliance
- Challenge institutional power while staying safe

Build Direct Connections and Community

- Create solidarity networks across social divisions
- Build strong support networks early
- Develop subtle communication methods

Make Resistance Visible and Viable

- Help make others' resistance visible
- Build support networks for those who refuse compliance &
- Develop skills in collective action

Maintain Joy and Human Connection

- Cultivate genuine connections
- Create safe spaces for authentic expression
- Find beauty in small acts of defiance
- Celebrate small victories together

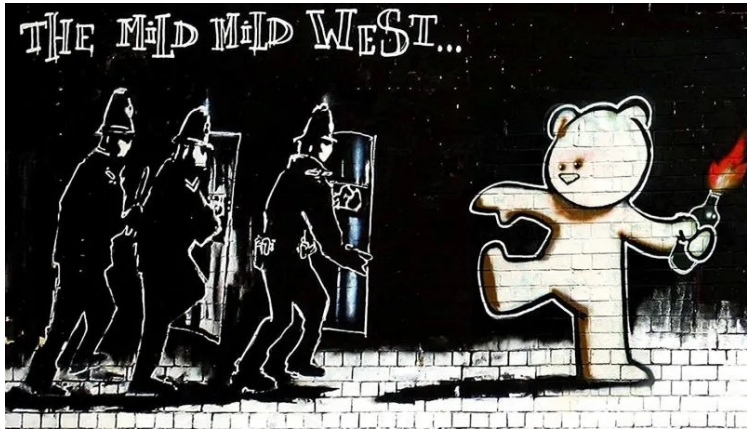
I have purposely focused on the mental preparations and haven't gone into detail regarding the practical ones, because it is within you that rebellion and radicalness starts, and that is where survival under difficult circumstances is determined, more than physical preparations.

A few years ago I attended a talk given by a well known survivalist. He was a smart fellow, who knew how to live in nature and survive disasters, and had created his own line of products that could protect you from dangers natural and man made. I had been dragged along, and although I found his stories interesting, thought that the idea of society collapsing or becoming dystopian was highly unlikely.

When it came to packing up his wares into his van I offered to help, and we got into a conversation about what sort of emergencies he thought might be coming in the near future, and what he told me seems very relevant right now: 'You can have all the equipment you need and then some, and someone else can have none, but I'd place my bet on the person with nothing who is mentally prepared, who doesn't give in to panic and hopelessness, who is adaptable and resourceful. They'll be the one to survive, while someone who has everything they need will fear and flounder and not survive what's coming.'

Now imagine you are one of several people working together to survive an authoritarian regime, to maybe even undermine it, perhaps even fight against it, or give the support that helps make that possible. (Maybe you lack the strength, are too young or too old, you can still be someone who spreads the word, or offer a safe place, or do any number of other things that don't involve physically defending others).

How To Make Friends And Overthrow Regimes



Either way long term survival will require close friends (and hopefully family - those you are born into or those you choose), it will require access to and involvement in networks of support, and it will require allies.

If you can see a dictatorship coming in the distance don't wait until you are in the middle of it's dystopia to do something, by then it will be more difficult and risky to do something. If you are still in a period in which you can speak freely, associate freely, travel freely, then this is the best time to build up your skills and connections, while you can do so safely.

Ultimately a dictator is unlikely to stand down peacefully, at least not unless surrounded by intimidating numbers at their gates. So change will require being radical, making radical friends, and radicalising the friends and family you already have. It will require knowing how to be secret and knowing who to trust, and knowing when to act and what will be effective.

I believe in the capacity of people to wake up, see the the severity of their situation, and to rebel. But all revolts start small before they turn into revolutions and succeed. There have been countries where

there were no resistance movements at all at first, where such movements were outlawed, and yet such movements have grown from nothing to millions of people in a year or two.

History shows that strength and advanced resources alone don't determine outcomes. Gandhi led a successful nonviolent independence movement against far militarily superior British colonial rule. The Vietnamese people's determination and guerrilla tactics proved effective against a technologically superior American military force. Even the Bay of Pigs invasion was thwarted by factors including challenging terrain and local resistance.

On the subject of Cuba, Fidel overthrew the American backed state with 82 men. Yes, a very large resistance can do more than a very small one, but it only took one person sitting on the forbidden seat on a bus to start the Civil Rights movement⁵, and may have only took one person deciding to stop to get a sandwich that started World War One.⁶

When it comes to internal revolutions - the successful Arab Spring rising in Tunisia took 28 days following the death of one man, Ceaușescu's regime fell from protests to ousting him in two weeks, and Ferdinand Marcos was kicked out in 4 days.

But maybe it will take 20 years, maybe it will take inconveniencing our oppressors enough for long enough will eventually lead to similar results, or maybe we'll make their power irrelevant when we build ours up enough to the point that they would rather run than challenge it.

Maybe you'll find it hard to maintain hope, but you can use that too. Nihilism can help some people to see the extent of the horror and leave them feeling they might as well act radically. Whereas others will gain hope from people acting against the odds, and this will motivate them to rebel. Whereas others are already involved with an insurgency, and have been waiting for you to join and step up their actions strategically.

There was a time when every nation was ruled by kings and multiple countries by emperors, in which most people were slaves or feudal serfs. It had been that way so long few could imagine it changing, and some even argued it was an inevitable law of nature. As Ursula K. Le Guin said, speaking of our system now, 'Its power seems inescapable. So did the divine right of kings. Any human power can be

resisted and changed by human beings.’⁷ That’s what I’ll keep hoping (and working) toward, and I hope you’ll join me.

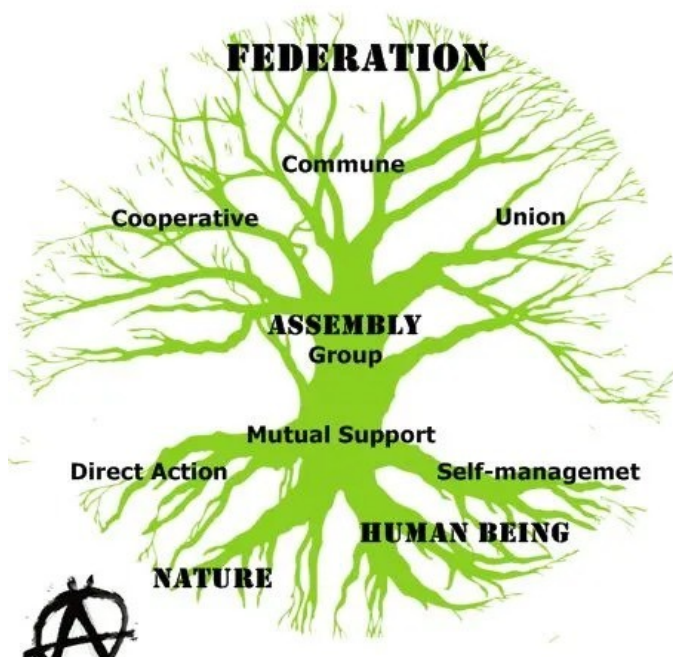
But of course this is all purely fictional. Think of it as an elaborate role playing game, but one in which the stakes are a bit higher, and some of us are playing to win against the dark lord. There’s always room for more players, and if you want to play I’ll be posting more from the rulebook soon.

Endnotes

1. Or Charles Lindbergh from *The Plot Against America*.
2. Or Harold Saxon from *Doctor Who*.
3. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Talents_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parable_of_the_Talents_(novel))
4. Originally used by Ronald Reagan as a campaign slogan in his 1980 presidential campaign (Let’s Make America Great Again).
5. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montgomery_bus_boycott
6. The story claims that Gavrilo Princip went to buy a sandwich at Moritz Schiller’s Delicatessen in Sarajevo after the first assassination attempt on Archduke Franz Ferdinand failed. He then saw the Archduke’s motorcade and came out to shoot. It’s probably not true, but it is true that the assassination of one man was the domino that started World War 1. See <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/gavrilo-princip-sandwich-79480741/>
7. Acceptance speech for the National Book Foundation’s 2014 Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters.

Resisting Oppression & Making Friends

How To Overthrow Dictators & Help People



In [our last section](#) we looked at the imaginary dystopian situation of a wannabe dictator taking power. Maybe something like that couldn't happen here, but it has happened elsewhere in the past, so it might be worth considering this fictional scenario.

It is easy and understandable to feel powerless in the face of systems of power that look like they are becoming increasingly dystopian (or at least threatening to become so).

Luckily would-be dictatorial regimes often fail early on - especially in the face of a populous that doesn't want them there and when led by the braggadocious but incompetent. They may turn out to just be a balloon that will pop when it becomes too big, pierced by the reality of trying to run a country or please its backers or infighting. It may just come undone and fizzle out and float away, when it finds it doesn't

have the support it expected, or lacks the means to carry out its plans, or finds people unwilling to support it enough.

Of course they may end up becoming a repressive authoritarian regime too, so it's best to be prepared and be on the safe side. To this end we should be prepared by: doing a little something, doing some of everything, and being seen by some to do nothing. In other words there are things you should do to resist, normal life things you should be or stay involved in, and things you shouldn't do or should avoid if you can.

Not everyone will be a Luke Skywalker or Leia Organa, Katniss Everdeen or Peeta (or Gale), Neo or Trinity, Sarah or John Connor, Tank Girl or Booga, V or Evey, Cassian Andor or Jyn Erso, Frodo or Éowyn. Some of us will be a Samwise Gamgee (or Pippin Took), R2-D2, Xander Harris, or like one of Doctor Who's less annoying companions.¹ The important thing is to be on the right side. When empires rise in these movies and T.V. shows whose side do you imagine being on? What part do you imagine playing?

Below are six areas in which you can make a difference for yourself and for others, many of which you can do right now, without having to wait for anything worse to happen, and if nothing bad ever does you might gain some useful skills and make some good friends, and maybe realise the potential to make a better world in the near future.²

These are not in order - you shouldn't try to learn everything before you do anything, because there are many things you learn by doing, you shouldn't wait to help someone until you are fully secure and prepared, because they may help you to do this etc. These may seem like a lot of things to work on, but don't think you need to consider or do everything at once. Pick one area at a time to work on, and there is no shame in it being the easiest or quickest, the point is to not feel powerless, and to build your power (where possible with the help of others).

If you're worried realise you are not alone, if you feel unprepared realise you aren't meant to do it all by yourself, if you aren't sure what to do next there are lots of things you can do with others or by yourself.

Learn something, learn everything, learn nothing

Knowledge is both power and protection, but it must be balanced with practical experience and critical thinking. Understanding history, theory, and skills helps us avoid repeating mistakes and recognise patterns as they emerge. However, we must remain flexible in our thinking and learn through direct experience rather than just books.

Learn Something:

- Study core resistance theory and successful movements
- Master essential practical skills (first aid, encryption, growing food)
- Learn your local area (resources, community needs)

Learn Everything:

- Read widely across movements, history, and even speculative fiction
- Develop diverse practical skills and organizational approaches
- Build understanding of interconnected struggles and systems

Learn Nothing:

- Question propaganda and official narratives
- Learn through direct experience rather than just theory
- Stay flexible and avoid dogmatic thinking

Learning Suggestion: Join / start a radical book / movie club

- Find if one already exists and support it - in person or online
- Start one - Find a local radical venue, a library or community centre, a café, or just use your home
- Advertise your group online and IRL - meetup, Facebook, flyers, posters, convincing friends to come along

- Pick books to read / movies to watch between you

Suggestions For Book / Movie / Study Groups

Note: most of these links are to Anarchist resources, presuming that in a dystopia legal political parties will either eventually be illegal or ineffective, and so a hierarchyless decentralised insurgency would be necessary, but if you are introducing less political people to these ideas then more mainstream books and films with themes of rebellion might be better to begin with.

- Fiction list - [A Brief History of Anarchist Fiction & Utopian Recommendations](#) & [Wikipedia's Anarchist Fiction List](#)
- Movie list - [Wikipedia's List Of Anarchist Films](#) (most made in the last 30 years are relatively positive)
- Non-Fiction - [Anarchy 101's Anarchist Booklist](#) / [Anarchist FAQ](#)
- Book publishers - [AK Press U.S. or U.K.](#) / [PM Press U.S. or U.K.](#)
- Online libraries - [The Anarchist Library](#) & [LibCom](#) & [Audio Anarchist](#)

Personal study / media / news

- Podcasts - [Srsly Wrong](#) / [Final Straw](#) / [It's Going Down](#) (news) / [The Ex-Worker](#)
- News - [Anarchist Federation newsfeed](#) & [Positive Leftists News](#)
- Video Channels - [Anark](#) / [Andrewism](#) / [Zoe Baker](#) / [Re-education](#) / [Thought Slime](#) / [Veritas et Caritas](#)

Do something, do everything, do nothing

Action gives meaning to knowledge and builds real-world capability. Getting involved in community projects and dual power / prefiguration initiatives creates networks of support and resistance before

they're desperately needed. However, strategic inaction is sometimes as important as action - knowing when to step back, when to rest, and - if already in a dystopia - when to remain invisible.

Do Something:

- Join focused local groups (mutual aid projects, community gardens)
- Take direct action on specific causes you care about
- Join a syndicalist union or similar worker organization

Do Everything:

- Be active in multiple community groups, especially neighbourhood ones
- Support various strikes and protests
- Participate in different mutual aid initiatives

Do Nothing:

- Avoid groups that might morally compromise you
- Know when to step back to prevent burnout
- Stay under the radar when the situation requires it

Doing Suggestion 1: Start / Join An Assembly

- Find or create a regular neighbourhood meeting space
 - Start with small issues that affect local people
 - Practice consensus decision making
 - Build connections between different local groups and issues
 - Create working groups for specific projects
- Here is [Crimethinc's in depth guide to Assemblies](#) & [Extinction Rebellion's one](#)

Doing Suggestion 2: Community Garden Project

- Find unused land or join existing garden / food co-op
- Learn growing skills and share produce
- Build food independence while creating community bonds

- Network with other local gardens and food projects
[Community Farden & Food Coops \(U.S.\)](#)
[Food Co-ops Toolkit \(U.K.\)](#) & [Farm Garden \(U.K.\)](#)

Realise that not everyone is as politically aware as you and may be scared by certain labels and so adapt your interactions to account for this.



General Proactive Group Links:

- Syndicalist Unions - [IWW \(U.S.\)](#) & [IWW \(U.K.\)](#)
- Tenants unions - [Tenants Together \(U.S.\)](#) & [Acorn \(U.K.\)](#) & [Living Rent \(U.K.\)](#)
- Intentional Communities - [Directory](#)

- Anarchist Federations - [Black Rose \(U.S.\)](#) & [U.S. CrimeThinc \(U.S.\)](#) & [Anarchist Fed \(U.K.\)](#) & [Cyber Commune \(Online\)](#)
- Antifacist groups - [Antifa](#) & [Iron Front](#)
- Insurrectionary guides - [CIA Sabotage Manual](#) & [Civil Disobedience Index](#)

Say something, say everything, say nothing

Communication builds solidarity and breaks isolation, helping others realize they're not alone in their concerns. Creating secure channels for sharing information and documenting events is crucial for both current organizing and future reference. Yet - if living under a dystopia - knowing when to remain silent is equally important for protecting yourself and others.

Say Something:

- Speak up about specific issues while you safely can (to help others feel less isolated)
- Share useful information and resources with trusted people
- Document what you witness for future reference

Say Everything:

- Be vocal about issues in safe spaces and trusted circles
- Share stories that need to be heard to build solidarity
- Teach others what you've learned when you can

Say Nothing:

- Know when strategic silence is necessary
- Protect sensitive information about yourself and others
- Avoid oversharing on social media

Speaking Up Suggestion 1: Start a Private Comms Group for Concerned Friends / Family

- Choose secure platforms (Signal, Matrix, etc.)
- Start with trusted friends who share concerns
- Share resources and organize meetups safely
- Create guidelines for security and privacy
- Build trust before expanding membership

Speaking Up Suggestion 2: Start a Local Newsletter/Zine

- Share local news and resources
 - Build connections between different groups
 - Keep it low-tech (printable) for wider access
 - Include practical tips and upcoming events
 - Leave it in cafes, libraries, bookstores, arts & radical spaces
- Example Zines - [Sprout](#) & [Neighbourhood Anarchists](#)

Forums - [Reddit Anarchism](#) / [Anarchism101](#) / [Raddle](#) / [Kolektiva](#)
(Mastodon)

Prepare something, prepare everything, prepare nothing

Preparation provides confidence and capability, but must be balanced against the risks of obvious stockpiling or rigid plans. Building basic readiness through skills and supplies helps weather difficulties, while maintaining flexibility allows adaptation to unexpected challenges.

Prepare Something:

- Protect essential information (encryption, secure devices, safe communications)
- Create basic emergency plans (go-bag, evacuation routes, emergency contacts)
- Stock fundamental supplies and master basic skills

Prepare Everything:

- Build comprehensive security systems (digital security, safe houses, backup systems)
- Establish multiple support networks and communication methods
- Store diverse resources and develop various skills

Prepare Nothing:

- Maintain unpredictable routines and patterns
- Keep some plans deliberately vague and flexible
- Practice strategic insecurity (avoid obvious preparation patterns)

Preparations Suggestion 1: Digital security steps

- Move email to secure providers outside your country
 - Use VPNs and encrypted messaging
 - Join federated social networks like Mastodon
 - Learn about data privacy and security
 - Help others make the switch safely
- See EFF's [Surveillance Self-Defence](#)

Preparations Suggestion 2: Camping trips as emergency prep

[Emergency prep simple kit \(U.S.\)](#) - [General survival readiness \(U.K.\)](#)

- Practice essential skills in a fun context
 - Learn about navigation and foraging
 - Test out emergency equipment
 - Build group cohesion and trust
 - Make preparation feel like an adventure
- See - [Prepping Basics](#) & [Urban Survival](#)

Example 3: Skill-sharing Workshops

- Organize workshops teaching practical skills

- Rotate teachers to share different expertise
- Build community while building capability
- Focus on useful everyday skills that could be vital later

Help something, prepare everything, prepare nothing

Mutual aid and solidarity create resilient communities that can better resist oppression and support each other through difficulties. Building networks of support and sharing resources helps create alternative systems outside official control. However, maintaining boundaries and avoiding burnout ensures sustainable long-term assistance.

Help Someone:

- Support specific causes with targeted skills and resources
- Create safe spaces and share growing spaces/land
- Provide concrete assistance where needed

Help Everyone:

- Build wide support networks and mutual aid systems
- Develop alternative economies and sustainable systems
- Share diverse resources and energy across communities

Help No-one:

- Be selective about assistance (avoid supporting harmful systems)
- Maintain personal boundaries and know your limits
- Keep some resources in reserve for sustainability

Helping Suggestion 1: Food bank/co-op participation

- Volunteer regularly to learn systems
- Build relationships with other volunteers
- Understand local food security issues

- Learn about food distribution and storage
- Connect with other mutual aid projects
See - [Food Not Bombs](#)

Helping Suggestion 2: Tool Library

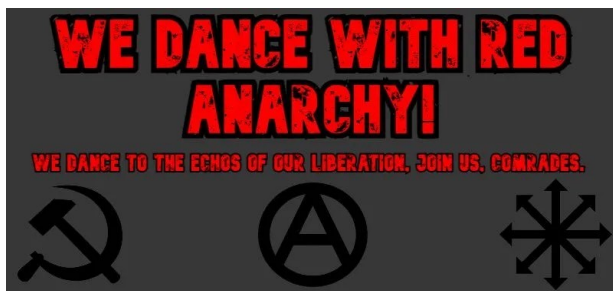
- Collect and share useful tools
- Teach maintenance and repair skills
- Build community self-reliance
- Reduce individual costs while increasing collective resources
See [Library Of Things](#) example

Other Relevant Links

- [Anarchist Black Cross](#) - Anarchist Prisoners & Aid to others
- Consider supporting radical bloggers, podcasters etc. on Substack, patreon etc.

Enjoy something, enjoy everything, enjoy nothing

Joy and celebration are forms of resistance themselves, building community bonds and maintaining morale through difficult times. Creating spaces for genuine connection and happiness helps sustain long-term struggle and reminds us what we're fighting for. Finding internal peace while staying engaged in resistance helps maintain long-term commitment.



Cultivate personal joys

- Personal hobbies and creative outlets - for fun not money
- Shared good times with friends

Find joy in resistance

- Celebrate small victories
- Build joyful communities

Practice detachment

- Don't depend on external happiness
- Find peace in uncertainty

It's okay not to be okay, sadness is part of life too. Hope encourages some people to action, lack of hope encourages others to action instead. Just know that you're not alone and that people care.

Fun Suggestion 1: Dance/Party organizing

- Create safe spaces for community joy
- Use events to build connections
- Raise funds for local causes
- Practice security culture in a fun way
- Build collective joy and resistance

‘If I can’t dance, I don’t want to be part of your revolution’ (*Emma Goldman, attributed*)³

Music Playlists - [Dance](#), [Folk](#), [Folk Punk](#), [Punk](#), [Hip Hop](#), [Anthems](#)

The International (Socialist Anthem) - [Croon](#), [Ballad 1 & 2](#), [Folk](#), [Reggae](#), [Choir](#), [Punk](#)

Fun Suggestion 2: Community Games

- Organize regular games or sports meets - maybe nothing too aggressive
- Build physical fitness and team skills - go to the gym with others
- Practice working together under pressure - outdoors hikes, climbs etc.
- Or if you don't want something so competitive, consider co-operative board games, there are even rebellion and revolution based ones!

[Resistance Based Board Games](#)

[Anarchist Dungeons & Dragons](#)

[BGG's Radical Board Games List](#)

Things to watch out for

- People wanting to establish another dictatorship to combat the one you are increasingly living under.
- People who want to distract you with woo - I'm all for inner peace, but it won't save the world.
- People who want you to join their cult, give them all your money.
- People who want to blow everything up right now - they are usually cops.
- People who tell you the answer to all your problems is sleeping with them - I hate that there are still some sleazy individuals amongst radicals, but be aware in case you meet one. Otherwise form as many joyful consensual relationships as you want, realising that the rebellion often outlasts the relationship.

Maybe nothing bad will happen, or peace and harmony will break out tomorrow with the return of King Arthur. But if things don't get worse then you may have made some good friends and learnt some interesting things, and maybe you'll conclude that the world could be a lot better and helped started the process of making it so.

Endnotes

1. Add your favourite literary or film rebel, or even their sidekick here.
2. There is some overlap with some of the principles from my last post, but I've tried to focus more on the practical actions you can take this time.
3. 'At the dances I was one of the most untiring and gayest. One evening a cousin of Sasha, a young boy, took me aside. With a grave face, as if he were about to announce the death of a dear comrade, he whispered to me that it did not behove an agitator to dance. Certainly not with such reckless abandon, anyway. It was undignified for one who was on the way to become a force in the anarchist movement. My frivolity would only hurt the Cause. I grew furious at the impudent interference of the boy. I told him to mind his own business. I was tired of having the Cause constantly thrown into my face. I did not believe that a Cause which stood for a beautiful ideal, for anarchism, for release and freedom from convention and prejudice, should demand the denial of life and joy. I insisted that our Cause could not expect me to become a nun and that the movement would not be turned into a cloister. If it meant that, I did not want it.' (From *'Living My Life'*, Emma Goldman, 1931. Paraphrased in the *'V For Vendetta'* film as *'A revolution without dancing is a revolution not worth having'*.)

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