

There is a saying...

A black and white photograph of a turtle's head and shell, with the text overlaid. The turtle is facing right, and its head is partially visible. The shell is large and textured, with a pattern of dark and light spots. The text is written in a stylized, cursive font with a thick black outline and is centered over the shell.

*Building
the
New Society
within the
Shell
of the Old**

***Preamble to the 1908 I.W.W. Constitution**



Living the future we want in the here and now is not a new idea; it is the foundation of anarchist politics.

There is no need to wait around for some glorious revolution to appear on the horizon and 'fix' everything.


What is needed is for us to *prefigure* the future by creating the world we desire in the present, to not only challenge current injustices, but also create lasting social alternatives.

Many specific issues are worthy of protest: this includes resource extraction projects on Indigenous territories, inadequate affordable social housing, depleted addictions services, and few accountability measures to curb greed, secrecy, and corruption.

Successful protests can make an impact towards social change by creating a groundswell of opposition, inspiring feelings of empowerment, and they may even influence public policy...

But it is not enough to reactively protest social negatives if the only purpose is to foster *pressure politics* against a governing authority.





Individuals dedicated to realizing social change assume a double duty: to concurrently oppose systems of social oppression while also creating the foundations of the society we want.

Participation at opposition events, such as lighting a candle at a vigil or donning a black mask at a protest, is important because it situates our resistance, but these practices should be coupled with prefigurative politics to sustain and grow communities.

Prefigurative Politics grows from individual commitments to non-hierarchical co-operation to attain collective goals. Every aspect of the work is shaped according to processes, which emerge organically as participants adapt the outcomes desired to reflect their values and desires.

The practices may assume multiple forms, from individual endeavours to small-scale affinity groups, to federations of collectives who meet at spokescouncils.

They fulfil diverse social needs including education, food security, housing, art, communications, and whatever else participants want to create in their lives.

The projects are both immediate and long-term: they exist as long they are required or can be maintained, considering that anarchists sometimes face aggressive social forces trying to undermine their work in addition to dealing with the 'normal' pressures of sustaining a project.

For someone harbouring the stereotype of anarchists as disorganized, unaccountable agents of chaos...

prefigurative politics or 'anarchist institution building' as I like to call it, may seem an oxymoron, but it is essential to realize the future we want to live in now.

*Embrace the chaos.
Organize!*