# **Ostrich**

### For when your head is buried in the sand

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[1](https://femmefuturescooperative.substack.com/p/ostrich/comments)

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Hi y’all,

For the last couple of weeks I have buried my head in the sand in terms of all things American politics. I’d still rather not talk about it because if I think about it too long, I will spiral. However, as someone who has worked in fundraising for my entire (2.5 year) professional career, the news this week about federal grant and loan pauses struck closer to me than I’m comfortable with.

Each morning when I check the news, it feels like looking for fallen trees after a storm. Each tree that has crashed into a house or a car feel like a tragedy, but quietly, I am thankful that it is not my house or my car. For each minority status I hold, I equally hold the card that lets me dodge the worst of this xenophobia/homophobia/hate. It’s like having a carport. For that reason, I bury my head and hope that the storm passes me by.

At the same time, I ache to have a hand in making the world better. To do so, however, feels nearly impossible. I refuse to give up, but I do want to give myself the same grace that I would if I was startled by the crack of trees falling in a storm. We are allowed to be scared and shocked — we will still clear the streets as soon as we can.

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In this need to foster a better world, I have gravitated towards mission-driven work. Specifically nonprofits. My first couple of roles were in grant development and writing. I have spent time working on federal grants. Trust me, those are a time suck and incredibly unfun, but such a major funder behind the important work going on not only in the US addressing countless social issues, but globally as well.

Another impact that I am feeling? I work for a leading research university — one for whom a massive portion of our funding for research comes from government agencies. The thing that I am able to hang my hat on is the fact that everyday, my work keeps this institution open to world class researchers. One of my favorite stories to tell is that of Professor Laura Dalton. She is a geologist who is working to develop cement that can sequester carbon from the air. Her work is made possible by federal funding. Work like hers is being threatened.

All of this is to say that I designed the Femme Futures Cooperative for people who are passionate to build a world they want to see — on whatever scale that might be. If your scale is that of national and global activism, I want you to remember this: it makes sense to be overwhelmed right now, and the impulse to put your head in the sand does not make you a bad person; when you have the energy to lift your head from the sand, start small, take care of yourself, practice trusting your gut.

All of that is much easier said than done. Every morning when I struggle to engage in conversations about the news, I feel shame from the part of me that wants to be an active participant in making the world better. In the last Trump administration, I watched myself put all of my reactions and feelings behind a dam, one that would inevitably break, leaving me sobbing over a broken world. In my case, that is part of what it means to care. Caring might look different for you. Whatever the case is, try not to stop caring.



artist unknown

**How to retreat instead of going numb:**

* Step into the sunshine. Literally. Take a minute to feel the warmth on your skin. Take a deep breath and acknowledge the pain and then acknowledge the goodness of whatever feels good right now.
* Rant to a friend. A lot of shit is very sucky right now, but luckily, you are not the only one witnessing it. Phone a friend, rant together. Build a community of people who are enraged by the same shit you are.
* Turn off your phone. Stick your head in the sand. I promise, there will be something to get angry about when you manage to pull your head out of the sand again.

This whole note is me trying to practice what I am preaching. I have so much work to do.

Ciao for now, my ostriches!

Best,

Zoe

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P.S. Keep your eye out for a note about how to make the most of the Femme Futures Cooperative being on Substack!

