Encouragement to Interrupt Power
starting now, where you already are.
GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING
requires skills, but you already have the most important ones.

you just have to care deeply (which you do) and be willing to work closely with other people who care deeply.

you will need to offer at least one of your talents to the public good, which means that you have to acknowledge your ability to make a meaningful contribution. and that’s all you need to start.

want more permission?

the following pages contain ways to start from the lives of experienced organizers.
“The kind of role that I tried to play was to pick up pieces or put together pieces out of which I hoped organization might come. My theory is, strong people don’t need strong leaders.”

Ella Baker
organizer of non-hierarchical leadership in Black Liberation
you have permission to:

- be inefficient
- slowly gather what you need
- get to know people deeply and try to understand them (and yourself)
- feed many possibilities
- use your values (instead of a specific end goal) as your guide
“It was a movement of people, and that meant elders and children, families. So whenever we decided to go anywhere, everybody was involved that wanted to be involved and have a say so.”

“It would’ve been easier for me to travel around and play militant and stick my kids in school, and let someone else take care of them. But...we had our own school, because that’s what my children wanted.”

Madonna Thunder Hawk
organizer of grassroots indigenous resistance
you have permission to:

✧ organize around your own life, needs, and communities

✧ create new ways of organizing that suit you better than what you’ve seen done

✧ root your organizing/change-making in your dearest responsibilities

✧ prioritize the ideas and thoughts of children!
“Begin by doing small things at the local level. That is how change takes place in living systems, not from above but from within, from many local actions occurring simultaneously”

GRACE LEE BOGGS
multi-movement social justice organizer
you have permission to:

❖ see your work as part of an interconnected whole

❖ get inspiration from what you see happening in other places, no matter how different they seem compared to where you are

❖ start small (and stay small if you want!)

❖ start now
“We didn’t have any idea of what was happening or why... but we decided that we would have to take responsibility for our neighborhood... At each meeting we’d kind of figure out what was the most pressing issue... We just chugged along trying to manage to do something about what was happening to us. We just did what we had to do.”

DELORES LINTEL
neighborhood organizer in Lincoln, NE
you have permission to:

- act without having all the information you wish you had
- step up to leadership (and back again, as needed)
- think on your feet, improvise, reassess, and modify your approach
- try something, even if there are reasons it might not work how you want
“Fear not, the power is in you. The problems that we have are not going to end if we continue being afraid.”

Magda Ramirez Castañeda
Chicana cultural and anti-gentrification activist
you have permission to:

- say what you feel is true to anyone
- draw strength from your identity and experience
- demand answers and explanations from people in power
- feel confident that the work you do with your community will result in meaningful change
Very Short Biographies of organizers quoted in this zine

**Ella Baker** was a purposefully behind-the-scenes leader of the Black Liberation movement. She advocated for participatory (instead of representative) democracy & mentored young organizers (in the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) throughout the 60’s.

**Madonna Thunder Hawk** was part of the American Indian Movement (AIM) as an organizer, a facilitator of an improvised and revolutionary “survival school”/group home on her family’s land in South Dakota, and continues to lead resistance as part of the Lakota People’s Law Project.
Grace Lee Boggs spent 80 years in movement activism, from tenant’s and labor rights, to civil rights, to neighborhood self-determination (in Detroit), to anti-war and ecological justice struggles.

Delores Lintel started organizing over coffee around her kitchen table in Lincoln, NE’s Clinton neighborhood, whose self-advocacy organization she helped found.

Magda Ramirez Castañeda was a Chicana organizer and longtime resident of Chicago’s Pilsen Neighborhood. Starting in the late 90’s she became a leading voice against gentrification there.
MY NAME IS AMANDA and i made this zine because i am a volunteer organizer in my spare time (what’s left over after doing paid work to survive). i’ve spent 4 years trying, meeting, discussing, emailing, studying, holding space, calling bullshit, and building relationships with my neighbors, and i am still learning how to impact my surroundings.

let’s connect. email me: a.r.huckins@gmail.com