Everyday Actions Are Direct Action

A Direct Action Handbook

Black Lives Matter

A Guide To Organizing & Protesting Safely

Radical Movements Toward A More Just Future
SECOND AID KIT

PROTECTION
- Shatterproof glasses
- Water gloves
- Face mask
- Tear gas canisters
- Extra Latex Gloves

A HELPING HAND
- Pen Markers
- First Aid
- Antiseptic
- Medical Tape
- Assortment of bandages and gauze

ESSENTIALS
- Lots of water!!
  - for hydration and for wounds
- Liquid Energy like Gatorade or electrolyte
- Rescue Remedy
- Shatterproof container with ice for keeping ice packs
- Bandana soaked in vinegar or salt

what to bring to a protest:
- Water for drinking and to flush
- Sharpie (write emergency #’s on your arm)
- Washcloth
- Power Bar
- Snacks
- Essential meds (EpiPen, inhaler, etc)

what to wear:
- Goggles
- Bandana
- Layers
- Sneakers or Boots

Don’t wear:
- Jewelry
- Easily identifiable clothing
- Open-toed shoes
- Makeup
- Oil-based lotion or Vaseline
- Contact lenses
- Tampons

If you bring your phone:
- Turn off touch/facial id
- Turn off cellular data
- Go on airplane mode
- Download the Signal app (encrypted texts) to keep in touch with friends

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LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

Tension is inherent in a protest. Here are some useful tips to keep in mind if you find yourself mediating conflicts that arise from this tension.

**ASSESS**
- Are you able to handle this right now?
- Do you have a safe space to talk?

**BREATHE**
- Introduce yourself!
- Pause. Stay calm. Observe.
- Move slowly & deliberately.

**LISTEN**
- Notice body language.
- Active listening.
- What are their needs?
- Ask clarifying questions.

**EMPATHIZE**
- Reflect back words & emotions.
- Don’t blame or accuse.

**SPEAK YOUR TRUTH**
- What are your needs?
- Use “I” Statements.
- (I feel that...)

**CONNECT**
- Feeling overwhelmed.
- Talking in circles.
- Person is hostile or escalating.
- Misunderstanding.
- Evident health issues or distress.

Remember we are all human and we’re all (un)learning. You don’t need to agree to validate their emotional experience. Hold space and let them share.

IF YOU ARE ARRESTED

- Remain calm, do not physically resist.
- Ask if you can leave. If the answer is yes, calmly walk away.
- If you can’t leave, remember your right to remain silent.
- Be sure to write the number of your local bail out organization on your arm.
- Have a private lawyer on speed dial. National Lawyers Guild has low cost & pro bono lawyers.

MANAGING FEAR THROUGH MEDITATION

When inciting fear is used as an oppressive and repressive tactic, the act of facing and experiencing fear itself becomes a revolutionary act. Daily meditation helps your mind habituate the process of breaking down fear. “Fear comes and goes, goes and comes, while the mind sees both the going and the coming. [Mind] recognizing fear in that instant is free of fear. So as your mind recognizes fear and self-grasping, lean into that awareness... rest in an instant of freedom of mind.” -Barbara Du Bois, “Brave, Generous, Undefended: Heart Teachings on the 37 Bodhisattva Practices”

“I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain.” -Litany Against Fear, “Dune”
AFOFUMIUSM

AND OUR FUTURE

AFROFUTURISM

https://www.aclu.org/fact-sheet/kinetic-impact-projectiles

A note to all you street medic artists:

Protect yourself; honey.

The series

FACE PROTECTION

面膜/防毒面具

Protect your skin.

Garbage

Note: these images include a mask with protective goggle.

PEPPER SPRAY

PESTICIDES

PESTICIDES

TEAR GAS

Protest.

Can we leverage unfolding events or
new developments as opportunities?

Does the political moment hold potential for our
opportunities or

Duty of verifiable for our opponents?

Are we working in coalition where does the action connect to come from?

Celebrate how the successes in your work
celebrate how different or successful strategies

What were the action’s highlights?

How did the planning deeper of strain
participants in the campaign?

How did the action impact the base of people
whether was there room for improvement?

What small they seem, it will keep the momentum going!

Cultivate:

What are the key pieces of building
relationships across difference? cultivate now.

Resources:

How do we distribute labor equally?

Timing:

Will the energy attract or reps people we want to engage?

Tone:

Will the action be solemn, jubilant, angry or calm?

Message:

How will the tactics carry a persuasive story?

To our target or to the community?

Does what will the tactics communicate to our audience?

How do you make complicated issues understandable?
PLANNING AN ACTION/PROTEST: TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

**STRATEGY**
- Before you start: how does this tactic fit into your broader strategy and campaign plan?
- After you finish: how do the lessons learned from debriefing the action reshape your campaign plan or make visible assumptions you’ve had in your strategy?

**HISTORY**
- What has your group or other groups done before to address the issue?
- How have activist groups taking action in the past affected the communities living near your action location?
- What have the organizational or coalition relationships been like in the past?

**COLLABORATION**
- What relationships need to be developed in order to create a collaborative direct action?
- Is the imperative for the action coming from the directly affected community themselves? If not, how do you plan to propose it?
- How will the affected constituency be involved in decision-making?

**ALLIES**
- How will the tactic affect your allies (the ones not working on this particular action) or potential allies?
- How does it affect community stakeholders? How will they receive it?
- Will it strengthen your relationship or jeopardize it?

**AUDIENCE**
- Who do we want to reach with our tactic?
- What response do we want to inspire with them?

**TARGET**
- What message will the tactic send to the people who have power to meet our demands?
- Will it pressure them to capitulate? Or enable them to dismiss us or retaliate?
- How will you know if you have impacted your target?

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**TEAR GAS**
- **DO** get to a well-ventilated area
- **DO** cough & spit, allow fluids to leave the body
- **DO** monitor breathing - if the person has asthma bring them to a medic
- **DO** flap arms/body to dispel tear gas powder
- **DO** bend over to rise hair & face
- **DO** try to keep eyes open
- **DO NOT** touch your face
- **DO NOT** wear contact lenses
- **DO NOT** remain in the direction the wind is blowing
- **DO NOT** pick up tear gas canisters without using heat-resistant gloves

**PEPPERSPRAY**
- **DO** immediately blink
- **DO** use water/saline to wash the eyes
- **DO** wash face with non-oil based soap
- **DO NOT** rub or touch the eyes!
- **DO NOT** wear contact lenses
- **DO NOT** pour the decontamination solution over the forehead
- **DO NOT** wear oil-based sunscreen or lotion
EMOTIONAL REGULATION

BEFORE!
- Meet with your comrades in a safe place to get centered.
- If you have time, meditate and take some collective deep breaths to calm your nervous system. Try doing this for at least 5 minutes together.
- Share why you are protesting, why it matters to you, so you can connect and feel rooted in your purpose and that of your comrades.
- State your boundaries: at what point would you leave, whether you live with mental illness or not, make an exit plan.
- If tear gas is deployed, if police presence intensifies, get emotionally overwhelmed, or need to leave for any reason.

SET INTENTIONS - WHAT KIND OF INVOLVEMENT ARE YOU PLANNING (BEING ON THE FRONTLINES, MEDIC, MUTUAL AID, CHANTING, MARCHING, Etc.)?

IN CASE YOU OR YOUR COMRADES HAVE A PARANOID ATTACK, GET PROVIDE SOME EMOTIONAL SECURITY IN WHAT WILL ALWAYS BE AN UNCERTAIN CONTEXT (THE PROTEST).

DURING!
- Your breath is your bf - remember to breathe!!!
- Breathing techniques - slow down and breathe in 1 second, then inhale through your nose, exhale 2 second out the mouth, then inhale 2 sec, exhale 2 sec, then up to 3, 4 second intervals.
- Staff can be traumatizing, empowering, triggering, cathartic. It’s normal to feel a spectrum of feelings. If it is okay to leave at any time, if you want to stay, you cannot leave, if it is not safe, utilize breathing techniques - slow down and breathe in 1 second breathing techniques.
- Rest and reflect with your comrades + by yourself.
- *AFTER*
- Think about your body/difficult experiences, rest, take care of your body/sleep, eat nourishing foods, nap, rest, write in your journal, be gentle with yourself.

DO NOT TAKE THE MIC. THE MIC IS NOT ABOUT YOU! IF YOU ARE A BLACK PERSON, SAY HE/SHE/HER.

DO NOT START SHIT: YOU WILL NOT BE A MAJORITY OF THE CONSEQUENCES.

HEY WHITE PROTESTERS (AND NON-BLACK)

DO PUT YOUR BODY BETWEEN THE COPS AND BLACK PEOPLE AND
do not take the mic.

DO NOT TAKE THE MIC. THIS IS NOT ABOUT YOU. IF YOU ARE A BLACK PERSON, SAY HE/SHE/HER.

DO NOT START SHIT: YOU WILL NOT BE A MAJORITY OF THE CONSEQUENCES.
HERBAL FIRST AID

Tinctures or capsules are more convenient than teas. Consult an herbalist prior to building your kit.

YARROW or SHEPHERDS PURSE
Homeostatic/styptic. Powder herb in a coffee grinder, put a few pinches on wounds to staunch bloodflow. When bleeding has stopped, remove with witch hazel disinfect.

VALERIAN TINCTURE
Sedative, nerve, muscle relaxant, analgesic, anti-spasmodic. Use for panic, trauma, insomnia.

WILLO BARK TINCTURE
Anesthetic, anti-inflammatory. For headaches, pain relief, inflammation. Not a sedative.

GINSENG
Nervine, stimulant. Use for low energy situations when you have trouble concentrating.

PLANTAIN INFUSION
Vulnerary, emollient. Soothes and repairs chemically irritated skin (after decontamination treatments) or road rash.

LORELLA, GRENDELIA, SKUNK CABBAGE TINCTURE BLEND
Bronchitis. For difficulties breathing, asthma attacks, etc. CAUTION! Lorelila is best for this but it is emetic, it is a vomit inducer.

LAVENDER and or ALOE ESSENTIAL OIL
Emollient. For burns caused by heat or friction. Apply after the wound has been cooled down with water. For headaches, apply lavender to temple and between eyes.

TEA TREE/TYME ESSENTIAL OILS
Antiseptic, anti-microbial. Use these oils to disinfect wounds.

CHAMOMILE/EYEBRIGHT INFUSION
Eyglass. After ocular weapon decontamination treatment, this is a good secondary treatment for soothing and repairing ocular tissue.

WITCH HAZEL
Distilled. It works as an astringent, anti-inflammatory. Good for removing particles from wounds before disinfecting and slowing bleeding. Good primary treatment for bruises, sprains, contusions, abrasions, inflammation and nose bleeds.

YARROW or SHEPHERDS PURSE
Homeostatic/styptic. Powder herb in a coffee grinder, put a few pinches on wounds to staunch bloodflow. When bleeding has stopped, remove with witch hazel disinfect.

TECH TIPS

BEFORE A PROTEST

Think about leaving your phone at home. US police use stingray devices that impersonate cell towers & trick cell phones into transmitting their locations & identifying info

If you do bring your phone:
- Disable Touch & Face ID
- Turn off location services
- For Android users: turn on Encryption Services
- Keep your phone off as much as possible
- Use encrypted messaging apps like Signal
- Faraday bags block remote alteration of wireless devices

Minimize your surveillance risk:
- Wear clothing without logos, bright colors, etc.
- Wear a face mask/bandana & sunglasses
- Cover any tattoos or distinguishing features

Why do you want to record this protest?

Protests are not photoshoots

AFTER A PROTEST

- Don't post photos while the protest going on
- Remove identifying features & faces in your photos. Do not blur faces, etch them out with black
- Screenshot the photos you want to post to social media. This removes the metadata that lists your coordinates (or check out the app Image Scrubber)
- Use a VPN to post
PROTEST COMMUNICATION

Movements will develop their own communication strategies and verbal and non-verbal signs. The FIRST STEP to successful communication is to listen to the organizers. LISTEN to Black voices!

One important symbol is the RAISED FIST.
The raised fist is a symbol of POWER, RESISTANCE and SOLIDARITY. But borrowed from rescue efforts in natural disasters, it also has a very practical use: it has become a sign used to request TOTAL SILENCE (as a communal pause or to hear an announcement).

We must mention there have been efforts to coopt this as a symbol of White Supremacy – but we shall not be erased. Let us honor historic struggles and not give in to cooption.

So, again LISTEN, be aware of the crowd, look around to see if this means CHANTING or TOTAL SILENCE. And if you feel uncomfortable raising a fist because of the implications of Whiteness, raise a palm or a peace sign.

MIC CHECK!
A great tool we can borrow from Occupy Wall Street is the people’s microphone. This is a way to deliver a speech to a large group. The speaker begins by saying “MIC CHECK”; people nearby RESPOND “mic check”, the speaker says a SHORT PHRASE, then pauses. Those that can hear what the speaker has said repeat the phrase in UNISON. After the first wave is finished, if the crowd is very large, this may require two or three waves of repetition. When everyone is finished the speaker says another phrase, then pauses again as people respond (repeat), until the message is complete. This amplifies the speaker’s voice without need for equipment.

ADDITIONAL READINGS/RESOURCES

- www.nationalbailout.org National Bailout
- https://bailproject.org/ The Bail Project
- NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund (212)-965-2200
- https://www.knowyourrights.org/ Know Your Rights Initiative
- https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights/ Protester’s Rights
- https://www.nlglaw.org/massdefenseprogram/ National Lawyers Guild

Look online to find your local NLG chapter and their phone number, as well as:
- “Know your rights” trainings/workshops;
- Meetings with, and advice to, organizers about protest actions, and legal consequences;
- Legal Observers at protests and other actions;
- Help with setting up and running jail and bail support programs;
- Legal representation in case of protest arrests

https://docs.google.com/document/u/1?hl=en&pid=0%20lSta22Af128g&usp=sharing -- Protesting Safety, Therapy, Mindfulness, Anti-Racism Readings
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fGqGvKvOvz2b-Y8JbTgf8S4wUxHmM19Aqd9QD4d4/NFLw -- National Resources List
https://docs.google.com/document/u/6?hl=en&pid=0%20lSta22Af128g&usp=sharing -- Black Lives Matter Resources and Readings
https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1Trqsf8P8cRiC58584-CVS58H0Kq6 -- Free PDF copies of Black texts by Black Writers/Activists.