

Report: Recommendations For Us Right Now From A Future

By adriennemareebrown

They stood by the heat, watching the wood pop open to unveil sunlight. Noemi was the teacher tonight, sifting through the memory to find wisdom, to find some guidance. It had been an exhausting long day after months, years of pushing beyond the limits of their bodies.

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Task: Be revolutionary.

Need: The changes we are responsible for shaping are profound. When we can see the end of our species on the horizon, we must operate at a scale that extends our life beyond the horizon.

Mantra: We root the work we do and the ways we do it in love, in being an extension of love in the world.

Context: Even if we don't have a clear sense of the exact solutions to fix the future, we should have a clear sense of how we want to feel in ourselves, in our relationships with each other, in community, and in relationship to the planet. Those feelings aren't for the far off future, they are guidance to what we must be seeding and practicing now, right now.

Practice: If we believe that we are miraculous, we must treat ourselves and each other that way.

Practice: If we believe in community, then we must get curious about the ways we need to grow and communicate in order to truly be a part of community. Not just one community, but the multitude of communities we intersect with.

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Task: We must become scholars of belonging.

Need: Separation weakens. It is the main way we are kept (and keep each other) in conditions of oppression.

Truth: Belonging doesn't begin with other people accepting us. It begins with our acceptance of ourselves. Of the particular life and skin each of us was born into, and the work that that particular birth entails.

Mantra: Where we are born into privilege, we are charged with dismantling any myth of supremacy. Where we are born into struggle, we are charged with claiming our dignity, joy and liberation.

Possibility: From that deep place of belonging to ourselves, we can understand that we are inherently worthy of each other. Even when we make mistakes, harm each other, lose our way, we are worthy.

Practice: Learn to apologize. A proper apology is rooted in this worthiness - "I was at my worst. Even at my worst, I am worthy, so I will grow."

Practice: Move towards spaces that value us, let ourselves belong to those communities that know they want us, know they need us, know we have worth, know we deserve more than transactional care.

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Task: Care for ourselves and each other as a revolutionary practice.

Need: This is a world of wonder and wounds. Both are always with us. If we ignore the wonder, we lose our will to live - not just individually, but our collective will to continue our species. If we ignore the wounds, they fester into unspoken needs and inhumane policy.

Mantra: We are each other's medicine.

Context: We must be clear that caring for each other is a fundamental piece of any future we will build. This doesn't displace struggle, critique, or conflict, but rather deepens and softens these necessary human experiences, makes them part of belonging instead of a precursor to exile.

Practice: Question any strategies that don't account for care. Especially when such strategies are housed in the work of reforming existing oppression, making it slightly less harmful. That is not care, it's complicity.

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Warning: We must understand it is advanced work to wield any master's tools — most of the time we become the shape we shift into, we forget why we entered the big house, and that we still come and go through the back door. We cannot dabble in reformist work under the guise of revolution, we must be looking directly at the ways oppression has coiled itself at the stem of our work for social justice. We must seek comprehensive change from the roots of the world to the sky.

Standard: This means we must have a very clear reason in our organizing work any time we delay or reject cooperation, consensus, democracy, socialism, abolition or transformation. (Ex. "we are redistributing funds from the wealthy to the poor in the only way that the wealthy will currently relinquish these funds, aka charity.") We must know these reasons barely justify the methods, and approach such work as temporary and dangerous tactical movement. Otherwise our rejection of these liberation technologies must be understood as compliance with oppression and, perhaps, a terror of freedom.

Context: It is ok to be afraid. It is logical. We were just slaves and slave owners a minute ago. We were just segregated a few seconds ago. Both of those systems morphed without dying;

they live on in us, in practice. It is daunting to carry the dream of freedom in an imprisoned body, it is terrifying to truly face the vast scope of heartbreak and othering that permeates our species. It requires looking within as deeply as we look without, and it is scary to see oppression inside ourselves.

Mantra: We place our collective freedom before our individual fears.

Pivot: To fight does not always mean to move against. It also means we need to be investing our energy, attention and resources in generating alternative and sustainable methods of supporting our work. Our attention is as precious and precise as sunlight. If we put it on each other's flaws, we can burn each other out of existence. But if we put it on the best of us, on the lessons, on the children, on our practices - we will grow.

Practice: Identify the front lines within us and bear down with love. We are the microcosm. Self reflect and adapt.

Practice: Identify the front lines of toxic behavior in the world and bring all our tools for the detox. Do not assume we can use the same approach in every battle.

Practice: Know the difference between fighting an enemy and struggling with a comrade. Let our goal be the elimination of the concept of enemy, the need for an enemy - rather than the obliteration of specific enemies. We must make our current enemy our future forgiven neighbor, we must be capable of this kind of complex cohabitation, or we will ruin the possibility of life.

Practice: We cannot change others, but we can be honest with each other, and celebrate the work we do to change ourselves. Applaud the work wealthy people do to organize and educate their own community out of cursory charity and into transformative solidarity.* Or that white people do to unlearn supremacy.** Or that men do to extract patriarchy.

Practice: Remember we are miraculous and interconnected, and anything less is not worthy of the life-gift we have been given.

Practice: Feel pleasure every day. Don't let your body, your heart, forget why we fight - to feel aliveness and togetherness. We will grow.

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*[Resource Generation](#) organizes young people with wealth and class privilege in the U.S. to become transformative leaders working towards the equitable distribution of wealth, land and power.

**[Catalyst Project](#) helps to build powerful multiracial movements that can win collective liberation. In the service of this vision, they organize, train and mentor white people to take collective action to end racism, war and empire, and to support efforts to build power in working-class communities of color.