

DIRT



IN A COG

SMALL WAYS TO RESIST FASCISM
THAT MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE

Invisible
Histories

WHAT DOES DIRT IN A COG MEAN?

Dirt in a cog refers to the way machinery cogs (gears) will slow, jam up, go crooked, and otherwise not work right if they're dirty. It may not totally shut down the machine, but it will make it a hell of a lot harder to run.

That's what this zine is. Of course protests, community organizing, and large acts of resistance are critical to fight against fascist and authoritarian regimes. This is not a way to avoid that. We must engage in those. BUT there are also ways we can resist in our everyday lives.

We can be dirt in the cog.

This zine provides some practical ways you can push back and help create a better world for us all in your day-to-day life.

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ACT

Be Kind to People in Public

Fascism thrives when people hate each other. A kinder world is a better world.* Practice random acts of compliments to people you see on the streets. Hold doors open for folks. Say “thank you” often.

*This does not apply to Nazis. Always punch a Nazi.

Treat Houseless Folks with Dignity

Acknowledge people on the street. Fight against rhetoric and cultural norms that try to dehumanize houseless folks. Get involved in your local homeless volunteer program.

Prioritize Accessibility

Disabled people are first on the chopping block under alt-right movements. Make sure you’re prioritizing accessibility in your own life. Use Alt Text on social media images. Wear a mask in public especially if you’re sick. Return carts to holders in parking lots. Add captions on videos. Ask for and comply with the accessibility needs of others.



Know and Check on Your Neighbors

Community is one of the most important tools we have against hate filled rhetoric. Be a good neighbor, attend neighborhood meetings. Wave at and talk to people who live near you. Help create the world you want to live in.



LEARN

Get a Library Card and Use It

Check out your local library, get a library card, and use it often! Not only will this increase your knowledge and entertainment, you'll be supporting one of our most important communal institutions, libraries! You can't go wrong. They have movies and tv too if reading isn't your thing.

Learn Basic Words in Other Languages

Find out what are the top languages spoken in your area and learn basic conversational words in all of them.

Learn basic greetings, how to say thank you , and how to quickly describe the presence of ICE or other threats.

Attend Talks and Presentations

Knowledge is power. Learn all the things! Attend online and in-person lectures, presentations, and events. Find out what's local to you and what you can join virtually. Support people doing important work by showing up for their events.

Learn About Other Countries and Cultures

Challenging our own biases is important. We all have them. We've all been affected by propaganda and misinformation. Learn about other the countries and cultures that are not your own from primary sources. Follow creators from those countries and cultures. Sign up for newsletters from foreign press. You can do a lot with google translate!

LEARN



Read! Read! Read!

Read it all. Read fiction, nonfiction, articles, books, blogs. Reading has always been a tool of resistance. Buy banned books. Support small and independent writers. Tell people about the things you read. Journal about them. Make videos.

Research Your Local History

What's something you don't know about your city or state? Write it down and find out. What were the struggles in your community? The movements? Learn more about your local community and tell people the fun facts you know!

Learn About Movement Leaders

Make sure you know who the below people are. All of them. Do a basic google search or dive deep and read books about their work. Learn from their fight and don't let their legacies die.

Here are some people you should know:

Fannie Lou Hamer, Eddie Sandifer, Pauli Murray, Audre Lorde, Fred Hampton, Minnie Bruce Pratt, Leslie Feinberg, Sylvia Rivera, Miss Major, Yuri Kochiyama, Nikki Giovanni, James Bladwin, Marsha P Johnson, Cesar Chavez, Jody Suzanne Ford, Maxine Doyle Perkins

This is just a starting point. Make your own list and research them too!

CREATE

Keep a Journal

Write about your experiences. Make it a habit. You can do this on your technology, but writing by hand is a great tool to improve your memory if you're able. Plus, notebooks and paper will be vital for future historians looking back on these times. Reflect on the world.

Start a Commonplace Book

A commonplace book is a pocket notebook you carry around with you to write down important ideas, experiences, quotes, and more! Keep a small notebook on you at all times and record things you encounter everyday.

Create & Appreciate Art

Not good at art? Yes you are! Be creative, learn a new hobby, make all the things! Art is and always has been a voice for the marginalized. Learn about art and visit a local museum. Support local and independent artists by purchasing their work.

Plant a Garden

If you're able, plant a garden and share food with your community. Even a small garden on your apartment balcony is a start. Food is life and you can share that with others.



SPEND



Shop Small and Buy Local

If possible, avoid big box stores and giant online corporations in favor of local and small businesses (that represent your values). The prices can be higher, but the quality is often better and you're helping people in your local community. Particularly avoid companies pulling their DEIA initiatives. Let your money talk. Stop consuming so much. Save those dollars.

Contribute to Mutual Aid

Find your local mutual aid groups. They often have facebook, reddit, or other social media sites. Don't have one local? Check out mutualaidhub.org for ones close.

Buy Food for a Local Food Pantry

Even if it's just one item, adding to food pantries helps keep people fed and that's important. Many neighborhoods have small roadside pantries. Good items include: peanut butter, canned soup, canned meat, canned fruit/veg, pasta, rice, boxed milk/milk alternatives, baby food, and staples like sugar and flour.

Donate to Small and Local Nonprofits

Funding has been slashed for marginalized identity based nonprofits. I am always sincerely touched when we receive a \$5 donation. I know that person really wanted to support our work and that means so much.

Pick 1-2 nonprofits you feel are doing the work and send them \$5-\$100 depending on your financial ability.

SAVE

Download Your Social Media Data

Request your social media data from whatever platform you use. Then download all of that data and save it on your computer, the cloud, or reach out to a local archive like Invisible Histories to see if they'd like to preserve it. Tell you friends and family how to do so as well. Help people save their data.

Save Websites

Take screenshots of sites you often use especially if those sites are at risk of being erased or censored. Store or donate them the same as you would your own data.

You can set up an account with the Internet Archive if you have several sites to preserve.

Download Research

Download any research or datasets you use often. Duplication is vital when information is at risk. Save it, duplicate it, share it. Have physical copies of things that are important.

Make Backups

Backup everything. Print out select photos. Have physical and digital backups. Redundancy saves knowledge. You can't save too much.



GET DIRTY

RESIST

Put Your Pronouns in Emails and Intros

Trans people have been under relentless attacks. Show your solidarity by standing up for trans folks, participating in protests and other resistance movements, but also work to normalize gender diversity. Put your pronouns in your email, your bios, give your pronouns when you introduce yourself.

Push Back on the Overton Window

The Overton Window is, in the most simple terms, the rhetoric and actions socially acceptable by the mainstream. It can be pushed in many directions, but lately, it has gone far right. Make sure you call out things that violate community values. Nazis salutes? Not normal. No exception. Call it out. Resist the normalcy that comes with exposure. Let people know your values and DO NOT COMPLY.

Reject AI

AI is built on theft and the destruction of our environment at the expense of the most marginalized. Turn it off where you can, block people who post AI "art," do not use large language models (ChatGPT), and educate others on the negatives of AI.

Don't Give in to Despair

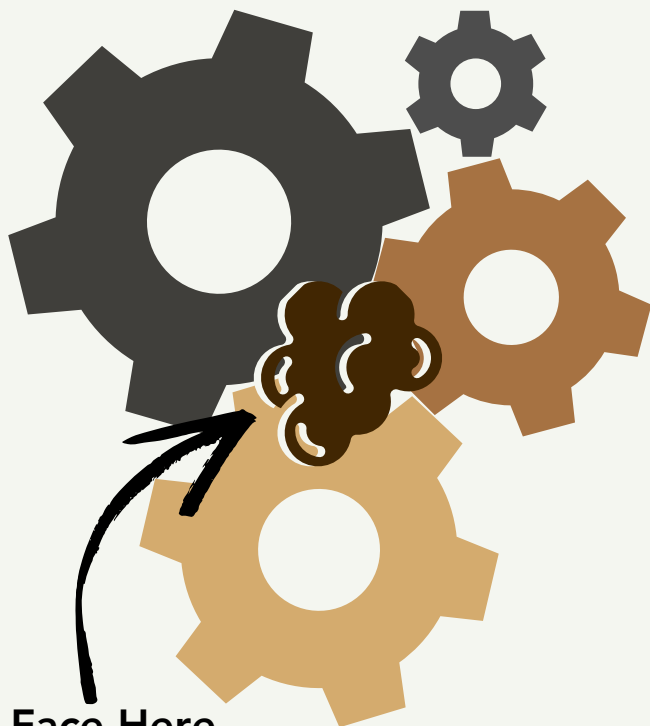
Joy is key to resistance. You matter. You are loved. Exist out of spite if you must, but your presence on this earth fights back against those who would silence and erase you. Don't let them win! Find and make joy even when things seem bleak.

CHALK IT UP

Carry around chalk with you as you walk your neighborhood. Write words of affirmation, support, and resistance on sidewalks. Let people know they're not alone.

GET LOCAL

Show up to your city's city council meeting, the education meeting, a city planning event. Be present. Call your city and county representatives and ask them questions about their priorities. Sign up for city, county, and state emails. Start a writing campaign to your state government. Make some noise. Practice that good trouble. Be dirt in the cog.




Your Face Here

MAKE YOUR OWN LIST

How do you plan to make the world a better place?

Make a list. Have a plan.

[illegible]



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