

GROUNDING, RESILIENT, & RESPONSIBLE

Responding and Organizing in Authoritarian Times



Note from Nicole Pressley, Director of Organizing Strategy, Side With Love

Hello friends,

Today, we understand what we are up against. The plans outlined in Project 2025 are rolling out daily. Nationalism, racism, transphobia, and patriarchy are reordering our world in material, ideological, and spiritual ways. But today, we must also understand who we are called to be and what we are called to do in this moment.

As we have said before, ours is long-haul work. It is about finding our lane, taking our shift, learning, growing, and transforming in our struggle for a just, loving, and liberated world. It is about using every moment in service to that North Star.

Faith leaders have a critical role in resisting authoritarianism. In times of crisis, our communities look to us for guidance. My friends, this is not easy. It requires practice. It requires spiritual maturity. And it requires learning and support along the way.

This guide is designed to offer practical support in this chaotic environment. It provides clear guidance and resources to help you engage in this moment prophetically, responsibly, and sustainably. If you find yourself asking, “What should or shouldn’t I post on social media?”, “Whose lead should I follow?” or “Is this safe?”—this guide is for you. It is a reference for navigating a fast-moving landscape that demands both immediate action and long-term strategy while making space for rest and renewal. This is a living document and will be updated on a regular basis.

Some of the guidance is specific to the urgent threats we face today—deportations, attacks on trans communities, and the unconstitutional actions of this administration. Other parts offer time-tested tools for organizing and activism in accountable solidarity.

That is why we must remain grounded, resilient, and responsible. We will need to lean on one another, to draw from deep wells of wisdom, and to find courage we never imagined we had. Sometimes, we will falter. Other times, we will rise. **Through it all, we will keep moving forward—because that is what love and justice require of us.**

In faith and solidarity,

Nicole Pressley

[Image description for cover image: “Grounded, Resilient, & Responsible: Responding and Organizing in Authoritarian Times” in black text on a recycled brown paper background. Below the text is a thick squiggle revealing a crowd of people rallying in a street. The Side With Love logo is at the bottom.]

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Note on humble stewardship

We share resources and tools from movement organizations and coalitions. All resources not created by the UUA are directly cited and include links. Please support their work by joining or to financially support their work and communities.

Who is the guide for?

This guide is for groups and individuals who are ready to take action and need support in navigating organizing and activism in this political terrain. **It is especially for leaders (social justice group leaders, ministers, people using public platforms, people representing their organization in coalitions) as you hold the responsibility of modeling grounded, resilient, and responsible actions in your sphere of influence.**

Who is this not for?

This is not for folks looking for content on messaging to share on social media or to use in worship. This is not for people looking for a deep dive into or actions related to any particular issue. For resources on political analysis check out the [Side With Love Action Center](#) for weekly issue updates and actions. There are some resources and guidance that directly relate some specific issues. That content is indicated with a  symbol.

How should you use this?

You should use this guide to establish (new) best practices, to utilize organizing tools, and follow the work of coalitions and organizations led by impacted people. For example you may use this guide to:

- **Review with your group or congregation to find where you can take actions and development protocols that promote grounded, resilient and responsible justice work.**
- Develop social media content that amplifies your values without making yourself or your congregation a target for violence.
- Work on implementing more secure digital practice for your group or organization.
- Discern participation in a protest and/or review practices that help keep people safe at a protest.

1. Spiritual Care and Grounded Organizing

Over the last decade, our faith community has grown wiser, stronger, and more organized. Our work to Stop Line 3, Stop Cop City, immigrant accompaniment, UU the Vote electoral engagement, and more has equipped us to rise to this moment. We have just barely glimpsed the power of our faith. Unitarian Universalists possess abundant human, spiritual, and material resources to contribute to the movement, and we have the moral responsibility to do so prophetically, responsibly, and sustainably.

✓ DO'S:

1. **Stay informed, but set boundaries.** Keep up with reputable news sources, but limit doom-scrolling to protect your spiritual and mental well-being.
2. **Focus on what you can do.** Action is the antidote to our fear, despair, and sense of powerlessness. It is in the work where we renew our hope and experience our individual and collective power.
3. **Lean into community.** Stay connected with friends, family, and social action groups that share your values and are taking action. Give and receive support and nourishment through care and connection.
4. **Practice mindfulness.** Engage in activities like meditation, journaling, or deep breathing, and other spiritual practices to stay present and balanced. We are a part of a long lineage of people who have responded to moments such as these.
5. **Gratitude.** Honor the blessings in your own life and take the time to express gratitude to others who are doing the work of justice. Gratitude is an infinite resource always at our fingertips. Use it.
6. **Engage in creative outlets.** Express emotions through art, music, writing, movement, or any form of creative expression.
7. **Find joy.** In the words of Toi Derricotte, "Joy is an act of resistance."

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't get consumed by social media.** Endless scrolling can fuel anxiety and misinformation; set limits on your usage.
2. **Don't engage in unproductive arguments.** Debating online or with unwilling participants often drains energy without changing minds.
3. **Don't isolate yourself.** Staying connected with loved ones helps maintain perspective and emotional stability.
4. **Don't let fear dictate your actions.** Stay informed, but don't make decisions based on panic or sensationalism.
5. **Don't lose focus of the big picture.** This is long-haul work, and we inhabit a single moment on the long arc of history.
6. **Don't let hopelessness take over.** Find ways to contribute positively, no matter how small, to stay motivated and engaged.

Resources

- [Sign up for Side With Love Newsletter](#)
- [UUA Community Resilience HUB](#)

2. Social Media

Social media is a large part of our lives. It is a place where communities connect to share information, tell stories, amplify calls to action, and more. It is also deeply flawed. The major social media platforms are led by billionaires who are actively subverting democracy and the constitution. Currently, we have not joined any calls to boycott or remove our presence from these platforms. However, we are aware of dangerous practices like eliminating fact checks, politically biased moderation of content, and surveillance. Given that, we are shifting what content we choose to share on some platforms, assessing our paid advertising practices, and exploring other emerging platforms such as [Bluesky](#). We encourage everyone to make decisions that make sense for your personal and organizational needs and values. No matter what, there are some simple measures you can take and things you should consider to engage on social media as safely and ethically as possible.

✓ DO'S:

1. Use time management apps to limit your time on social media.
2. Remove personal/location information to protect against doxing.
3. Engage in constructive discussions rather than fueling online arguments.
4. Say what you are for, not just what you are against.
5. Use the power of social media to amplify important public information and events, including Know Your Rights Trainings.
6. Verify information before sharing to prevent the spread of misinformation.
7. Use content warnings and trigger warnings when appropriate.
8. Support and uplift marginalized voices by sharing their perspectives and experiences.

✗ DON'TS:

1. Doom scroll.
2. Share names, faces, locations, or any identifying information without explicit permission.
3. Share sensitive and personal information.
4. Declare intentions to engage in any illegal activity.
5. Share fatalistic messages that only contribute to despair and inaction.
6. Engage in public callouts without first assessing the situation and impact.
7. **Use hate speech, harassment, or inflammatory language (even if it's to call out hypocrisy or injustice).**
8. Participate in performative activism without taking real-world action.
9. Click on or share suspicious links that could be phishing attempts or scams.
10. Assume privacy—always consider that what you post may be screenshotted or archived.

Resources

- [Freedom over Facism Toolkit](#), by Political Research Associates
- [Faith out Loud](#), Side With Love Skill Up (Recorded training)
- [Amplifying our Values & Actions on Social Media](#), Side With Love Skill Up (Recorded training)

3. Direct Action/Protests

It is essential to protect yourself, your community, and the integrity of the action. Protests and direct actions are powerful tools for change, but they also come with risks, including law enforcement response, counter-protester threats, and surveillance. Understanding the goals of the action, being prepared, and respecting organizers' guidelines help ensure that the demonstration remains effective and as safe as possible. At the same time, we can prevent unnecessary harm by avoiding actions that escalate tension, endanger others, or compromise security. By staying informed, acting with intention, and prioritizing collective well-being, we can strengthen movements and create safer, more impactful demonstrations.

✓ DO'S:

1. **Understand the goal of the action.** For example, is it to display public disapproval, shift the narrative, prevent harm, or provide community defense?
2. **Train members of your congregation or group in community safety roles** that support direct actions and protests, including safety marshals, street medics, movement chaplains, and de-escalators.
3. **Create a safety plan.** Assess exits, evacuation routes, and safe meet-up locations in case of emergency.
4. **Bring others with you if the mobilization is public.** Ensure accountability by staying in pairs or groups, and don't leave anyone behind.
5. **Recognize and support valuable roles beyond the event itself**, such as child care, legal support, jail support, food distribution, and emotional support.
6. **Know your rights.** Familiarize yourself with local protest laws and understand what to do if detained or arrested.
7. **Dress appropriately.** Wear comfortable, non-distinct clothing, sturdy shoes, and consider bringing protective gear like masks, goggles, and gloves.
8. **Carry essential supplies.** Water, snacks, a first-aid kit, a backup phone battery, and cash for transportation can be helpful.
9. **Write down legal aid numbers.** Keep them on your body in case your phone is lost or confiscated.
10. **Stay aware of your surroundings.** Monitor law enforcement presence, exits, and potential threats from counter-protesters.
11. **Disable facial recognition and fingerprint unlock features on your phone.** Using these features could potentially allow law enforcement to easily access your phone's data without a warrant.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Think all protests are the same.** Different organizations have different political aims, safety provisions, and strategies. Always research before attending.
2. **Make others unsafe by escalating law enforcement or counter-protester reactions.** Follow the lead of organizers regarding tactics and response strategies.

3. **Talk to the press unless trained and designated as a media liaison.** Avoid statements that could be misquoted or misrepresented.
4. **Take and post photos of participants without consent.** This can endanger people, especially those facing surveillance, legal risks, or threats.
5. **Make signs or start chants that contradict or are unrelated to the purpose of the mobilization.** Stay on message to maintain solidarity and effectiveness.
6. **Bring weapons or anything that could be perceived as a weapon.** This can escalate situations and increase legal risks.
7. **Post real-time updates on social media.** Law enforcement and opposition groups monitor posts to track protest movements.
8. **Engage with agitators or counter-protesters.** Avoid confrontations that can escalate and put participants at risk.
9. **Rely on your phone for everything.** Network shutdowns, battery failure, or confiscation can happen—have a backup plan.
10. **Ignore your instincts.** If something feels off or unsafe, prioritize your well-being and that of those around you.

Resources

- [Risk, Courage and Discernment](#) By Elizabeth Nguyen
- [Risk Discernment for Congregations](#), Side With Love Skill Up (Recorded training)

4. Partnerships

Our power resides in our relationships. We cannot do this work alone. Communities and organizations have been in various struggles for justice for a long time and they have immense knowledge, resources, and strategies that are critical to building a powerful movement that can win and keep people safe. Right now, local and state partners are critical to navigating the current landscape. The actions of this administration will impact communities differently. National guidance and briefing are very useful, but grassroots action should be done in collaboration with community partners and coalitions.

✓ DO'S:

1. **Provide trusted partners with a clear list of what you can offer**, such as volunteer support, access to physical infrastructure, financial contributions, or advocacy assistance. Refer to tools like [Congregational Asset Mapping](#) to identify your strengths.
2. **Ask partners how they would like you to publicly promote their efforts**. Some may prefer limited, secure communication channels for safety reasons. Always respect their requests.
3. **Designate one or a few trusted individuals to be the main points of contact** with partners. This ensures clear and consistent communication with your congregation without overwhelming the partners.
4. **Center the needs and goals of your partners**. Listen actively and let them lead the way in determining what kind of support is most helpful.
5. **Show up for your partners**. Attend their events, protests, and training rather than expecting them to come to you.
6. **Be reliable and follow through on commitments**. Social justice work depends on trust—only promise what you can realistically provide.
7. **Be transparent about your capacity**. If you can't meet a request, communicate that clearly rather than overextending and under-delivering.
8. **Educate your own community**. Provide background information, history, and context so members of your congregation understand the broader struggle and avoid placing an educational burden on your partners.
9. **Be mindful of power dynamics**. If your congregation has more resources or institutional privilege, use that power to uplift rather than dominate the partnership.
10. **Express gratitude**. Acknowledge and appreciate the labor of your partners, and ensure that collaboration is rooted in mutual respect and reciprocity.
11. **Become a more nimble institution**. Be ready to respond to urgent requests from partners to use your space. Develop policies and procedures to quickly approve the use of church facilities and mobilize volunteers to help host an emergency training, community meeting, etc.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't share a partner's contact information** unless they explicitly request it. Many partners are already overwhelmed with emails and calls—help protect their bandwidth.
2. **Don't ask partners to come to you unless they request to do so.** Instead, engage with them on their terms, attending their events, actions, and trainings.
3. **Don't center your own organization's image over the work.** Partnerships should not be about performative allyship or visibility but about real, meaningful support.
4. **Don't assume you know what's best for a partner organization.** Always ask what they need rather than imposing solutions.
5. **Don't expect immediate responses.** Many grassroots groups operate with limited capacity—be patient and respectful of their time.
6. **Don't dictate the terms of engagement.** Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of your partners, even if it means shifting your initial plans.
7. **Don't engage in extractive relationships.** If you're benefiting from the partnership (e.g., learning from their expertise), find ways to give back tangibly.
8. **Don't expect recognition or credit.** Social justice work isn't about accolades—show up because it's the right thing to do, not for validation.
9. **Don't rely on partners for all the emotional and educational labor.** Do your own research, training, and internal work to minimize the burden on them.
10. **Don't abandon the partnership when the moment passes.** Justice work is long-term—stay engaged beyond one-time actions or crises.

Resources

- [UU Congregational Asset Mapping Tool](#)
- [Asset Mapping: Leveraging Congregational Resources for the Movement](#), Side With Love Skill Up (Recorded training)

5. Resourcing the Work

This is where we reimagine how we show up in the world with time, talent, and treasure.

✓ DO'S:

1. **Encourage your congregation to support mutual aid funds.** Educate members about how mutual aid works, emphasizing that it is rooted in solidarity, not charity. Ground this practice in a theology of mutuality and abundance.
2. **Examine your congregation's existing financial norms with curiosity.** Be open to dedicating funds and physical spaces to resourcing social justice efforts.
3. **Support measures that allow leadership to respond quickly and confidentiality to time-sensitive asks.** You may want to expand use and scope of Minister's Discretionary funds.
4. **Prioritize giving with as few barriers as possible.** Reduce bureaucratic hurdles and trust recipients to use funds as needed.
5. **Center the leadership of those most impacted.** Support mutual aid efforts led by communities directly affected by the issue at hand.
6. **Give proactively and consistently.** Move beyond one-time emergency giving and commit to sustained financial support.
7. **Advocate for structural change alongside mutual aid.** While direct support is essential, also work to address systemic injustices that create the need for mutual aid.
8. **Become a more nimble institution.** Develop policies and procedures that allow your congregation to quickly authorize and distribute resources.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't ask partners or potential partners to do more work.** If you offer to raise money for an organization, don't require them to attend events or meetings to receive it. Invitations are fine, but participation should never be a condition.
2. **Don't require organizations to complete extensive applications or questionnaires.** Avoid unnecessary bureaucracy—do your own research and just give the money.
3. **Don't start your own mutual aid fund if trusted, values-aligned partners already have one.** Support existing efforts rather than duplicating or diverting resources.
4. **Don't interrogate how the mutual aid funding is being distributed.** Mutual aid is about trust—if you're questioning how funds are used, you've missed the point.
5. **Don't impose restrictive conditions on how donations can be used.** Allow communities to determine their own priorities.
6. **Don't prioritize donor comfort over community needs.** The goal is to meet urgent needs, not to make funders feel good about giving.
7. **Don't assume one-time giving is enough.** Ongoing support is critical to sustaining mutual aid efforts.
8. **Don't center the narrative on your organization's generosity.** Shift the focus to the needs and leadership of those organizing and receiving the funds.

9. **Don't treat mutual aid as a substitute for broader systemic change.** While essential, mutual aid should go hand in hand with advocacy for policies that reduce inequities.
10. **Don't let perfectionism delay action.** If funds are needed urgently, move quickly—imperfect but timely giving is better than delayed, overly scrutinized donations.

Resources

- [Study guide of Dean Spade's 2020 book 'Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis](#), by Radical In Progress
- [Art of the Ask](#), Side With Love Skill Up (Recorded Training)

6. Digital Security

Online spaces are increasingly monitored, targeted, and weaponized against movements for justice. Activists face threats from government surveillance, doxing, hacking, and misinformation campaigns designed to undermine their work. Protecting communication, securing personal data, and using encrypted tools can prevent harassment, legal risks, and infiltration by bad actors. Strong digital security practices—such as using encrypted messaging apps, enabling two-factor authentication, and minimizing personal information online—help activists operate safely and effectively. In an era where digital footprints can have real-world consequences, prioritizing cybersecurity is not just about privacy—it’s about survival, trust, and the ability to sustain long-term movements for change.

✓ DO’S:

1. **Use encrypted communication tools** like Signal, ProtonMail, or other secure messaging and email platforms for sensitive conversations.
2. **Enable two-factor authentication (2FA)** on all accounts, especially for email, social media, and organizational tools.
3. **Regularly update passwords** and use a password manager to store them securely. Avoid reusing passwords across platforms.
4. **Limit personal information on public profiles.** Remove details like your home address, phone number, and other identifying information that could be used for doxing.
5. **Use a VPN (Virtual Private Network)** to encrypt your internet traffic, especially when using public Wi-Fi.
6. **Audit and manage access to shared documents and accounts.** Regularly review who has access and revoke permissions when necessary.
7. **Be mindful of metadata in files and photos.** Remove location data before sharing images and scrub metadata from sensitive documents.
8. **Regularly backup important files and communications** to a secure, encrypted location to prevent data loss.
9. **Educate your team on phishing scams and malware.** Be wary of suspicious emails, links, or attachments, even if they appear to come from trusted contacts.
10. **Have a security plan in place.** Know what steps to take if accounts are compromised, including who to contact and how to mitigate damage.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't use personal social media accounts for organizing sensitive actions.** Create separate accounts with minimal personal information.
2. **Don't store sensitive information on cloud services without encryption.** Use secure, privacy-focused storage options when necessary.
3. **Don't click on unknown or suspicious links**—especially in emails or direct messages from unfamiliar sources.

4. **Don't share login credentials via unencrypted communication.** Use a password manager or encrypted channels to share access when necessary.
5. **Don't rely solely on social media for communication.** Platforms can be monitored, restricted, or shut down—have alternative communication methods.
6. **Don't assume deleted messages or posts are truly erased.** Many platforms retain data even after deletion. Think before posting or sending sensitive information.
7. **Don't install unnecessary apps or software,** especially from unknown sources, as they may contain spyware or vulnerabilities.
8. **Don't use biometric logins (e.g., fingerprint, facial recognition) in high-risk situations.** These can be forced open—use strong passwords instead.
9. **Don't ignore software updates.** Keeping your device's operating system, browsers, and security software up to date is crucial for protection.
10. **Don't assume privacy—always operate under the assumption that digital spaces are being monitored.** Take necessary precautions to safeguard your communications and data.
11. **Practice email list hygiene:** check subscribers and for suspicious emails—especially those who have subscribed since the start of the new administration. For example, check for government emails (.gov), and emails with domain names connected to groups that are not value-aligned. Search your database for slurs and swear words in the first and last name fields, too.

Resources

- [ABCs of Security Zine](#)
- [A Troublemaker's Guide: Principles for Racial Justice Activists in the Face of State Repression](#), Catalyst Project
- [Digital Security Guide Library](#) from Digital Defense Fund

7. Safety/Risk

Unitarian Universalism calls us to embrace a framework of community safety in which no one is disposable. We are called to imagine a world beyond policing, and live into the belief that we keep us safe. We do this through developing the skills and relationships to meaningfully contribute to networks of community safety in our area. We must also interrogate the policies and procedures of our own congregations, including our relationship with law enforcement.

The Trump administration has rescinded the policy which regarded places of worship, schools and healthcare facilities as protected areas that immigration authorities should not enter. A wave of new laws passed at a local and state level infringe on our constitutional right to exercise free speech through protest. These have commonly been a reaction to moments of uprising, and include harsher penalties for protest-related offenses, stricture limits to sound volume, and broad parameters for who can be charged as a “rioter.” Make sure you know the laws in your city and state around protesting and understand the risk (to you and those around you) of your actions.

✓ DO’S:

1. **Promote and offer to host Know Your Rights Trainings** through trusted groups like the ACLU to ensure that individuals understand their legal protections.
2. **Prioritize the safety of a community over your visible support of them.** Sometimes, stepping back or offering support in less visible ways is the most responsible choice.
3. **Know your rights personally**, including how to engage with law enforcement, your right to protest, and legal protections for activists. The ACLU and other legal advocacy groups can provide guidance.
4. **Keep all personal and organizational documents organized and in a safe place.** Encourage others to do the same to prepare for potential legal challenges or emergency situations.
5. **Understand the laws and policies affecting your institution** as a faith-based or nonprofit entity, including IRS restrictions on political activity and changes in policies regarding ICE and law enforcement engagement. 🚨
6. **Assess risk based on clear values, mission, and strategy.** Discuss with leadership and community members what risks align with your commitments and what precautions should be taken.
7. **Tap into organizations that provide accurate threat assessments** to inform your risk discernment with facts and trusted intel.
8. **Discuss and define responsible leadership in moments of crisis.** Weigh the protection of physical assets against the ethical responsibility to stand up for justice.
9. **Create an emergency plan for legal and security risks.** Identify legal counsel, establish protocols for detainment or arrests, and develop crisis communication plans.
10. **Regularly re-evaluate risks as conditions change.** Stay informed about new laws, enforcement patterns, and political shifts that may affect activism and organizing.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't make decisions around risk-taking based on vague fears.** Gather facts, seek expert assessments, and ground decisions in clear strategy and values.
2. **Don't assume that past protections still apply.** Laws and policies change—what was once considered a “safe” action may now carry different risks.
3. **Don't put individuals at risk without their consent.** Ensure that all participants understand the risks involved before engaging in direct action.
4. **Don't ignore legal and financial implications of activism.** Consider potential consequences for individuals and organizations before taking action.
5. **Don't let urgency override thoughtful planning.** While timely action is important, rushing into decisions without assessing risks can lead to unintended harm.
6. **Don't rely solely on informal networks for legal or security advice.** Seek input from trained professionals to ensure your information is accurate and up-to-date.
7. **Don't overlook digital security risks.** Online activism and organizing can make individuals vulnerable to surveillance, hacking, or harassment.
8. **Don't assume law enforcement will act fairly or predictably.** Be prepared for a range of responses and know your legal rights in case of encounters.
9. **Don't assume all community members have the same risk level.** Marginalized groups often face heightened threats, so tailor risk assessments to different identities and experiences.
10. **Don't let fear deter meaningful action.** Risk is inherent in activism, but informed, strategic, and courageous choices can minimize unnecessary harm while advancing justice.
11. **Do not engage in partisan political work.** Protect your 501(c)3 status.
12. **Don't use AI for sensitive documentation or transcription.**

Resources

- [Prophetic Not Partisan, UU the Vote Training](#) 📢
- [ICE and Immigration Enforcement in Congregations](#) 📢
- [ACLU](#) – The American Civil Liberties Union has state affiliates across the country that can support you in knowing your rights. [Click here](#) to find your local ACLU
- [UUA Side With Love – Facilitation Guide for Congregational Conversations about Risk Discernment](#)
- [Side With Love: Responding to Far Right/White Christian Nationalist Threats](#)
- [Vision Change Win](#): tools and trainings on safety and security

8. Crisis/Tragedy Communications

In moments of crisis, clear and responsible communication is essential. The way an organization or individual responds can shape public perception, build trust, and ensure that those most impacted receive the support they need. These do's and don'ts support effective crisis communication, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and values-driven messaging. By centering accurate information, maintaining ethical responsibility, and avoiding reactionary pitfalls, communicators can navigate crises with integrity and purpose.

✓ DO'S:

1. **Be a trusted messenger.** Speak with credibility, honesty, and transparency to maintain trust in moments of crisis.
2. **Lead with shared values and assert them unapologetically.** Ground your messaging in the principles that unite your community.
3. **Be patient and wait for accurate information.** Spreading misinformation can cause harm and weaken your credibility.
4. **Understand potential risks.** Assess how messaging might impact safety, legal standing, or ongoing advocacy efforts.
5. **Center the most impacted.** Prioritize the voices and needs of those directly affected by the crisis in your response.
6. **Craft clear, concise, and actionable messages.** Confusion can spread quickly in a crisis—communicate in a way that helps people understand the situation and take meaningful action.
7. **Prepare in advance.** Have a crisis communication plan in place, including designated spokespeople and response protocols.
8. **Correct misinformation when necessary.** If false narratives are spreading, provide verified facts to counteract them.
9. **Acknowledge harm when it occurs.** If your organization makes a mistake, take responsibility, correct it, and demonstrate accountability.
10. **Maintain confidentiality when required.** Respect privacy, security, and the safety of those affected, especially in legal or high-risk situations.

✗ DON'TS:

1. **Don't share unconfirmed or speculative information.** Spreading rumors can create panic and confusion. This includes rumors of ICE raids.
2. **Don't blame victims or celebrate harm, even toward opponents.** Dehumanization and cruelty contradict the values of justice and solidarity.
3. **Don't give up your power or use reactionary messaging.** Avoid defensive framing—assert your stance confidently and with purpose.
4. **Don't use framing that “punches down”** or relies on homo/transphobia, fatphobia, ableism, or other oppressive language to “make a point” (e.g., mocking someone's appearance instead of critiquing their harmful actions).

5. **Don't forget consent.** Before sharing personal stories, images, or experiences, ensure you have explicit permission from those affected.
6. **Don't engage in public disputes that distract from the crisis response.** Stay focused on the bigger picture and avoid unnecessary conflict.
7. **Don't assume that silence is neutral.** Failing to speak out in a crisis can allow harmful narratives to take hold.
8. **Don't let urgency lead to recklessness.** While rapid response is important, unvetted messaging can do more harm than good.
9. **Don't neglect emotional and community well-being.** Acknowledge grief, fear, and anger while fostering hope and resilience.
10. **Don't let external pressure dictate your response.** Craft messages that align with your values, not just what's trending or expected.

9. Conclusion

Justice work is a lifelong commitment—one that requires courage, strategy, and deep solidarity. This toolkit is here to support you in navigating complex and urgent moments with clarity and accountability. As we confront systemic injustice, we must remain grounded in our values, committed to learning, and willing to take action in ways that are both effective and sustainable. There will be challenges, and there will be victories, but through it all, we must continue to show up for one another and for a just, loving, and liberated world. May this guide support grounded, resilient, and responsible actions in the days ahead as we move forward—together.

Additional Resources

- [Side With Love Skill Up Training Library](#)
- [Side With Love Organizing School](#) (9-Session Organizing Training)
- [Community Resilience Hub](#): Through this hub, we offer guidance and resources on how to take action now, support each other, and build a resilient community that stands firm in the face of uncertainty. This includes a community resilience checklist and resources.
- [Social Change Ecosystem Map](#) by Deepa Iyer
- [Take Action: God's Love Knows No Borders](#) Gaza Action Guide by Mennonite Action 🚨
- [Defend and Recruit Playbook](#), Siembra NC 🚨
- [Side With Love Green Sanctuary Materials](#) 🚨