

## How to Prepare for a Direct Action

### BEFORE THE ACTION

- **Be clear on the physical demands of the action.** Will you be moving around a lot? Will you be standing for a long time? Will you be carrying a backpack with supplies? Reflect on what kind of physical activity you feel comfortable doing and what you're less comfortable doing. Communicate that to your AG. Make sure you have clothes that fit what you'll be doing, especially shoes.
- **Be weather conscious.** If it's raining, a lightweight poncho or small umbrella can be helpful. If it's going to be hot, a small handheld fan can be a lifesaver. Know what supplies you'll want with you.
- **Eat, sleep, and drink water.** You want to be fully present for the action and getting enough rest, food, and water is essential for that to happen.
- **Practice informed consent.** Actions sometimes require physical touch, either with your AG, police, or others. As an AG, be aware that people have different histories and experiences with physical boundaries and practice informed consent and be very clear on what you're asking people to do, while also honoring that actions can be unpredictable, can't be fully planned, and it often isn't possible for everyone to know every detail. Personally, be clear on what would be comfortable, uncomfortable, or off limits for you.
- **Reflect on why you're participating.** Why is this action important to you? What roles do you want to play in the action? Journaling before the action can be a helpful way to ground yourself. Ask other people in your AG why they're participating as well.
- **Build a support system.** Actions can be nerve wracking and exciting at the same time. It's helpful to have a trusted friend or two who you can share your questions, concerns, and excitement with. It's a best practice to 'buddy up' and have someone in your AG who can support you and vice versa. It can also be helpful to have someone who you can check in and debrief with after the action is over.
- **Practice your anti-oppression values.** We shut things down so that we can open the space to create something new. Direct actions should model the just, inclusive, and equitable community that we're building. Be familiar with [anti-oppression values](#) and aware of your own identity within the action.
- **Be honest about your questions and concerns, build trust with each other, and listen actively.** There should be space to voice your questions and concerns before the action. We all have different risk levels and it's important to acknowledge that. Actively listening to each other's questions and concerns can help make sure everyone is clear on the action. At the same time, it might not be necessary to know all of the details of the action, which is why it's important to build trust within the AG.
- **What are your other responsibilities?** We all have lives outside of the action. Do you have plans in place if you can't go to work the next day? If you have pets, have you

made sure someone is taking care of them? Taking care of these details as far in advance of the action as possible will clear up your mental and emotional space.

## DURING THE ACTION

- **Be flexible and willing to change plans as the day goes on.** The best actions are both structured and organic!
- **Give yourself the freedom to act in the moment while following the agreements of the group.** You might find yourself willing to take more risks than you anticipated and that's okay. We're acting boldly together.
- **Check in with yourself regularly.** Make sure you're staying hydrated, eating food, and being aware of how you feel.
- **Check in with those around you regularly.** We're a community taking action together. Ask people how they're doing and if they need anything.

## AFTER THE ACTION

- **Post-action adrenaline is real.** Body focused meditations can be helpful, as your adrenaline will still be pumping long after you're finished. Practice using [grounding techniques](#), [yoga](#), [somatic exercises](#), and other [embodiment practices](#). Light exercise, whether it is going for a run, bike ride, working out, or a walk, can also help your body release the tension and adrenaline it has built up.
- **Check in with your support system and buddy.** Post action dinners can be a powerful way to reflect on the experience that you just shared. It can also be helpful to have someone who wasn't at the action who is able to listen to you share about the experience.
- **Reflect on the action.** Journaling can be helpful here. What was invigorating and inspiring? What was challenging? What were meaningful moments for you? It can be helpful to have an immediate reflection about how you felt during the action and then return to reflection a few days later.
- **Think about your next steps.** Now that the action is over, what's next for you? Can you do a report back to a group, write something online about it, or plan a meet up with participants from your region? The action is just the beginning!
- **Eat, sleep, and drink water.** You might feel invincible after shutting down that intersection, but your body still needs to eat, drink, and sleep. Focus on meeting those basic physical needs.
- **Stay in touch with your AG.** You've just shared a powerful and unique experience together. Staying in touch, whether that's having a video call a month after the action, having a potluck, or planning more actions, can help with the post-action blues (yes, these are real).