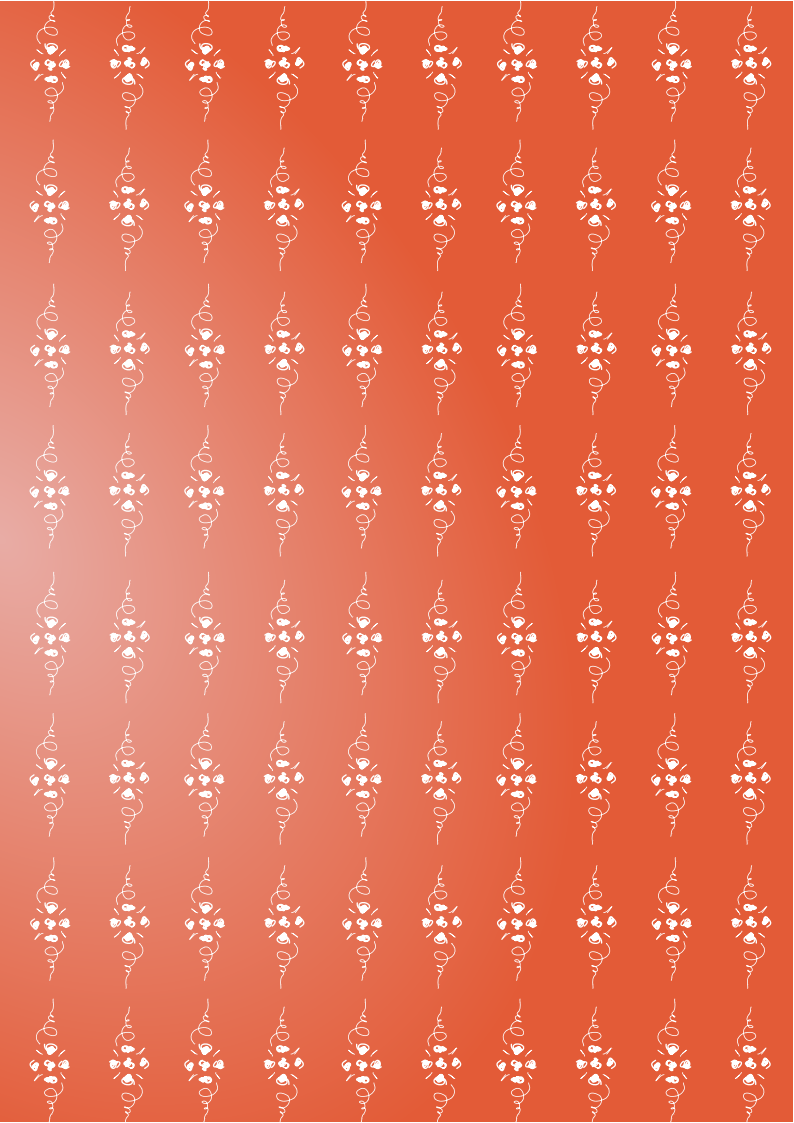
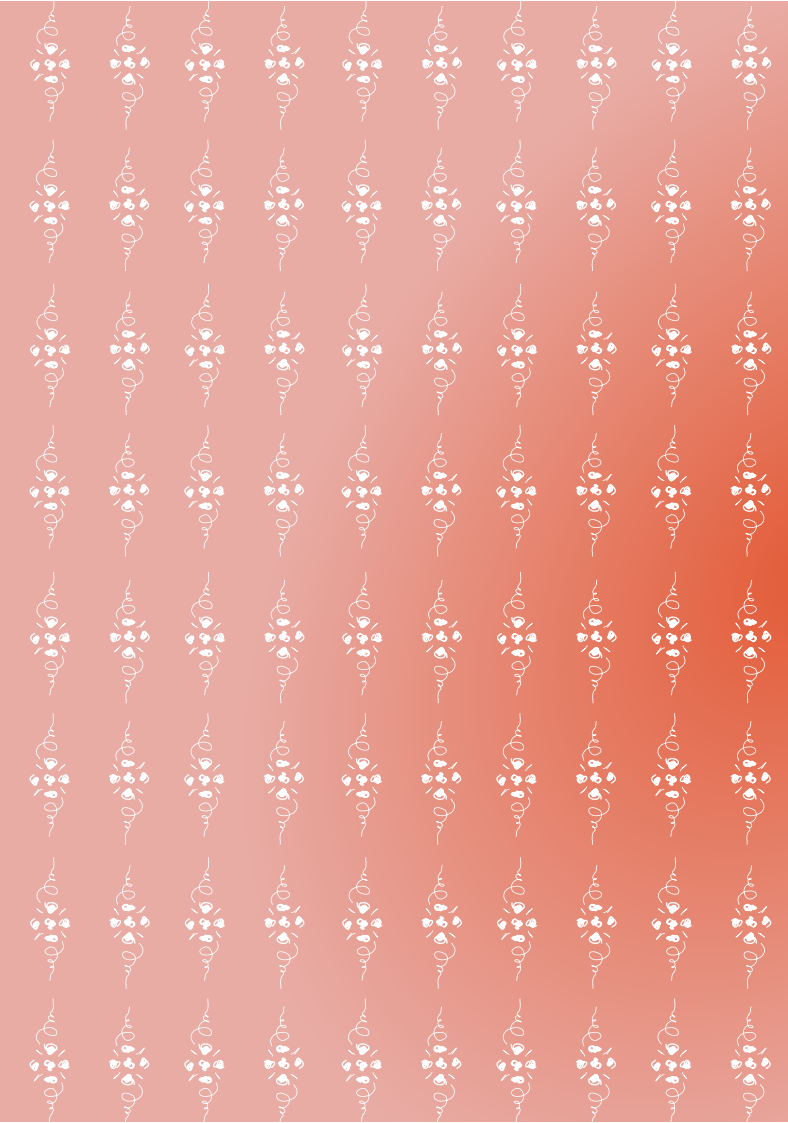


What's Love* Got To Do With

INTIMACY



A REFLECTION ON





SEPTEMBER 2024

To those who dare to see themselves,
thus, allow themselves to be seen, and
see others.

What's Love* Got To Do With _____

is a monthly zine series published on Project Theory Probe, discovering the many ways that love has been overlooked and undercooked in our daily lives, then proposing alternatives to our intimacy-deprived, love-confused existence.

WHAT'S LOVE* GOT TO DO WITH

INTIMACY

what's inside

Together we will create brave space
Because there is no such thing as a
“safe space”

We exist in the
real world

We all carry scars and we
have all caused wounds.

In this space
We seek to turn down the volume of the
outside world

We amplify voices that
fight to be heard elsewhere

We call
each other to more truth and love

We have the right to start
somewhere and
continue to grow.

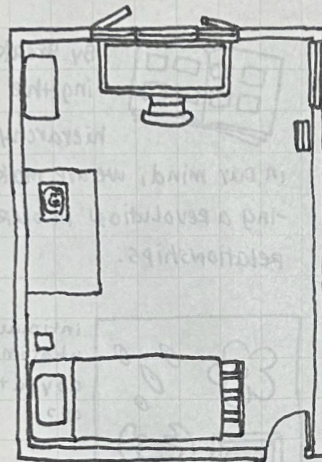
We have the
responsibility to examine what we think
we know.

We will not be perfect.
This space will not be perfect.
It will not always be what we
wish it to be
But it will be our brave space
together and we will work on it side
by side.

– Micky ScottBey Jones (copied from
kaalo101.org)

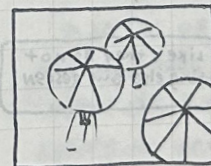


Photo: a page from my notebook →



This is my ROOM at Ka alo.
 in the early morning, i woke
 up to sounds of Bells, Barks,
 objects dangling together,
 roosters, and BIRDS. usually,
 i decided to Be up at 6-some
 -thing, going to the kitchen
 space downstairs and made
 myself a houjicha Latte.
 why? to avoid Running into
 another person.

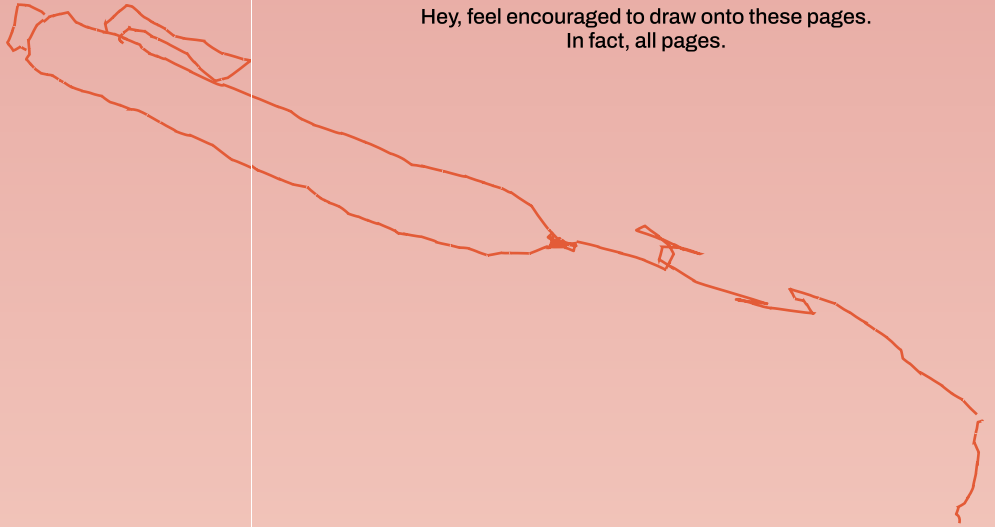
idk how to verbalize it in a Beautiful stream of
 meaningful words yet. But those words, those
 images are living within my body. and i can
 catch them, with my mind's eyes and emotional
 web.



Fr 27 sep 24

RAINY day. we hop
 From 1 place to
 another, getting
 wet in the cold!

Step 1: Draw a rectangle.



Hey, feel encouraged to draw onto these pages.
In fact, all pages.

Step 2: This rectangle is the community. When you felt rejected, where are you compared to this rectangle?

Step 3: Where are you compared to the rectangle when you feel belonged and comfortable?

I am making this zine from Kathmandu, hopping from one cafe to another. For one week, I stayed at an artistic residence called Kaalo 101. The name kaalo (कालो) means black in Nepali.

My table at Kaalo.



Every year since 2019, I have wanted to revisit Nepal. Back then, I was trained in a landscape architecture project that used participatory design while in my spare time, hanging out with Nepali artists to create an ethnographic film.

It was mysterious to me at that time, but I was already investigating love and intimacy. The quest continually deepens throughout my life. Nepal was where I specifically was trained to build intimacy before every design and creation, to detect intimate threads through mundane facets of life.

We spent weeks dialoging with the 16 households of Bhangal community, learning about their favorite colors, struggles, and dreams.

Photo: the participatory, landscape design I was a part of in 2019. From Christy Liao website. →



With a hookah in hands, Sabin Ninglekhu, who was one of my university instructors, said to me in an evening hangout,

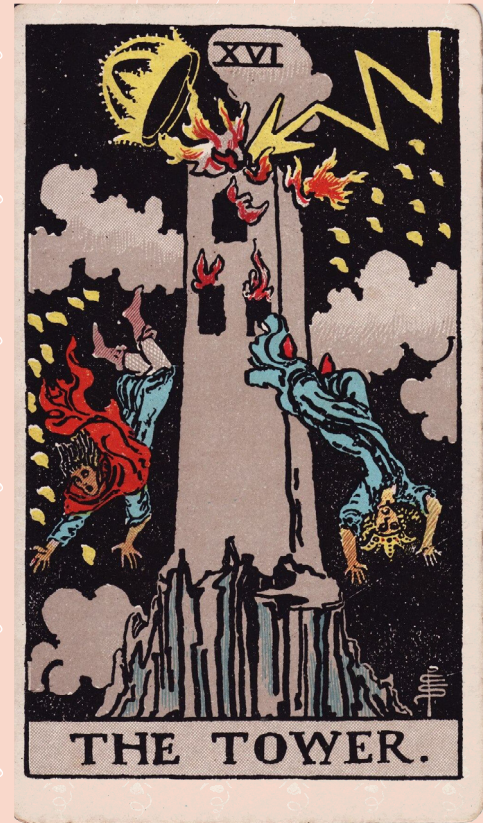


09

Why is it that we become the very thing we try to fight against? He was referring to the Communist Party of Nepal. After coming to power, they became the corruption they raged a war against.



Do all revolutions contain its own seeds of destruction, like the god Shiva, perpetually destroying their own creations to allow for renewal and rebirth?

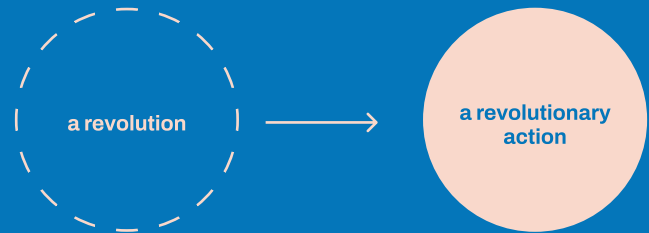


No, I refuse to think so.

To begin, recalling history in the shapes of Revolutions, like the Agricultural Revolution, Digital Revolution and so forth, implies that there will be the next Big Revolution which shakes up everything. Such perspective also implies that changes are brought by a momentous breakthrough, usually by white men or those who fit white men's fantasies, instead of a continual process by gazillion contributors.

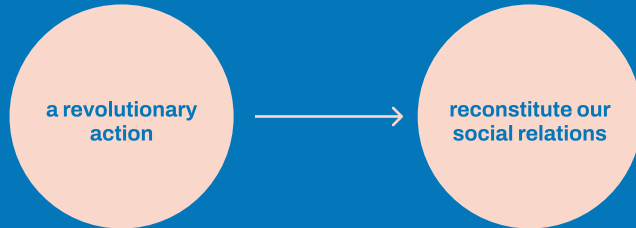
Attributing the Revolution to some key dominant figures and tell the world's narrative in terms of Western thinking depress the voices of many.

Instead, empowerment and awareness can arise naturally when we shift cataclysmic thinking to "becoming ontology":



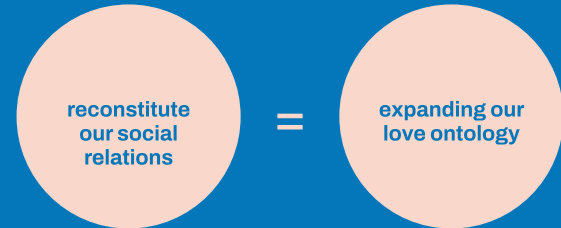
A revolutionary action, Graeber wrote in the wonderful and tiny book, Fragments of An Anarchist Anthropology,

“is any collective action which rejects, and therefore confronts, some form of power or domination and in doing so, reconstitutes social relations--even within the collectivity--in that light.”



When we think in terms of process, the means is the goal in itself. We no longer coerce people in the name of freedom, but freedom comes from an accumulation of liberating actions.

To maintain a continuation of liberating actions, we are required to honestly reconstitute the way we relate to each other in ways that are different from the domination in which we oppose. I call such a process **the expansion of love ontology**.



In Graeber’s determination that a revolutionary action must reconstitute our social relations in the light of the kindness that we are trying to realize, I found the language to express my quest for love and intimacy.

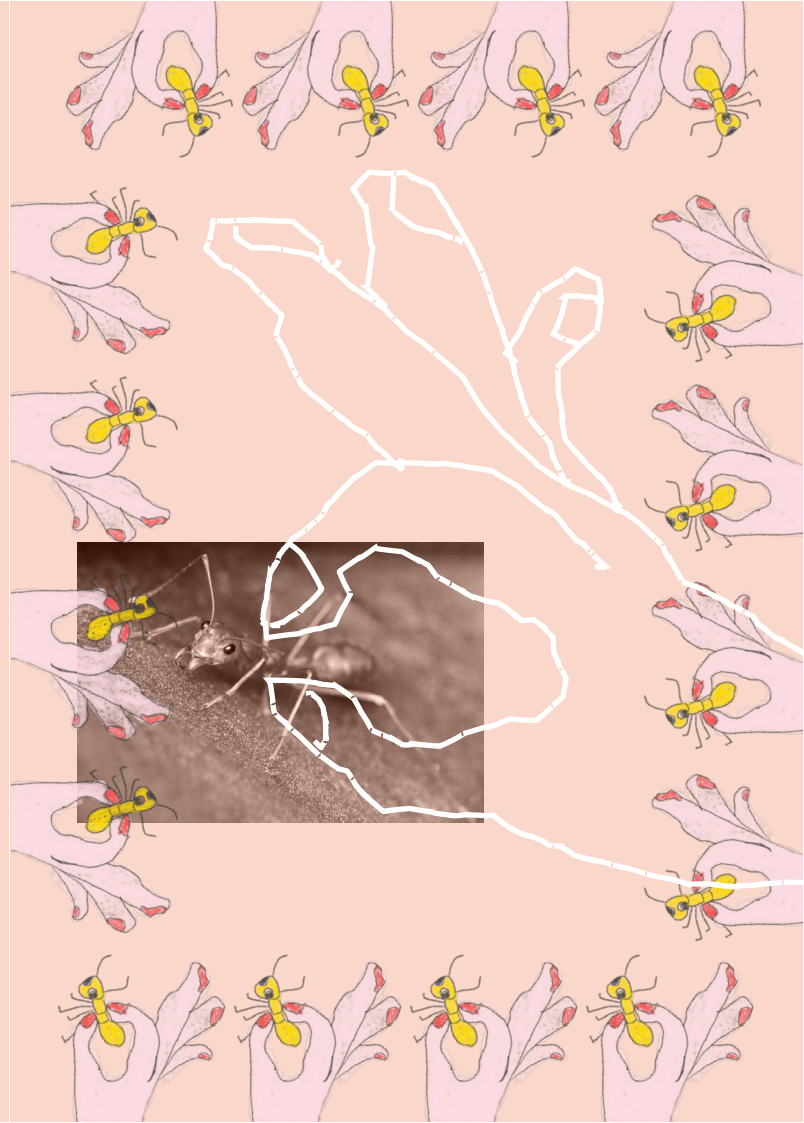


In 2016, I chose to become vegan. It was not a dietary choice. To me, being vegan is a decision to reconstitute my relations with other non-human species and the earth.

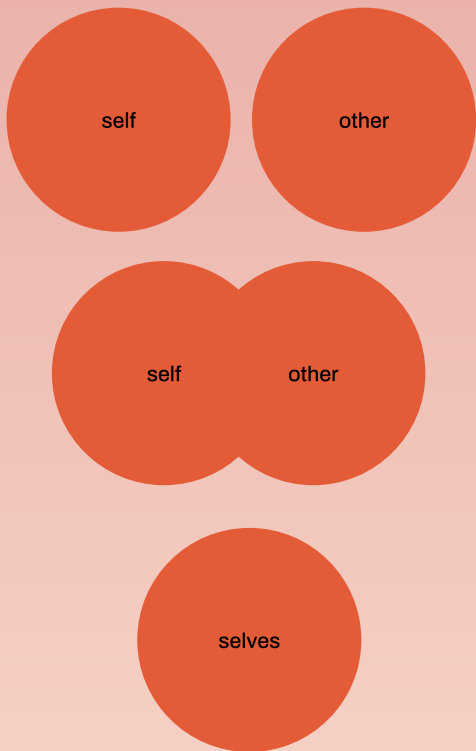
Nowadays, it's not that I cannot kill an ant. I do occasionally by rashness, and I feel immense sorrow and remorse, acknowledging that I have oppressed another living being for my own comfort.

When people encounter kindness in previously unimaginable ways, their lives forever changed. And if they continue to live with that unimaginable kindness, the lives around them also change.

Replace the word kindness with freedom, care, creativity, autonomy, and so forth, the rule still applies.

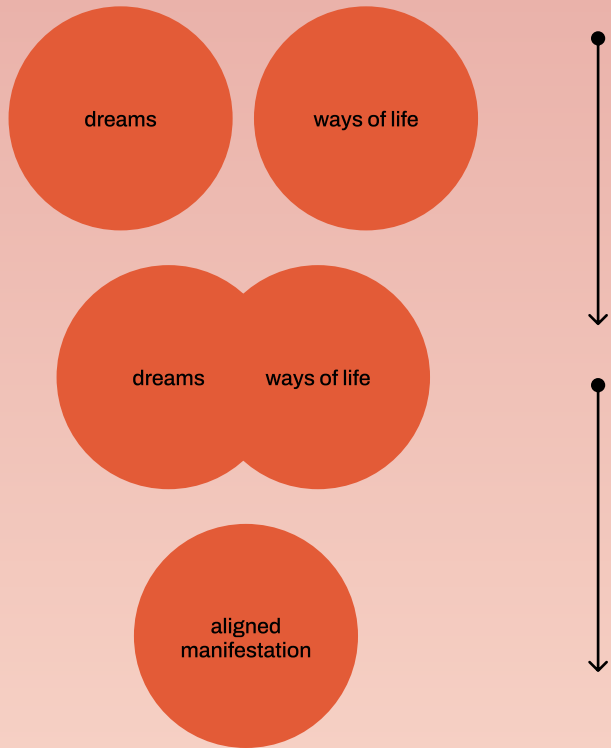


The deepening of revolutionary actions bring about the closure between self and other:



The state of "oneness" mentioned in many spiritual discourses.

Our private lives must change in accordance to the change we wish to bring in the world:

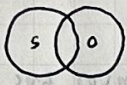
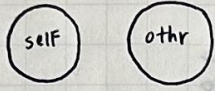


Such an alignment is the deeper meaning of the so-called "manifestation". The construct of our relations is the clearest manifestation of the world we are creating.

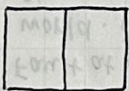
revolution is



- Donna haraway
 - Eva DONGUL
 - Leaders
- humble



the state called oneness in spiritual discourses



Sabin asked me in 2019, why is it that they/we become the very thing we try to fight against? he was referring to Nepali's communist party.

"manifestation"

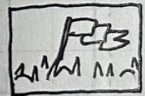
MEANS = END
 DREAMS = REALITY

where means become ends, dreams are reality. this is the deeper meaning of the so-called "manifestation".

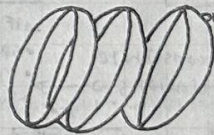
By reconstituting our relations, we become the clearest manifestation of the world we want to live in.

in a way, we are working on revolutions. But do not fool ourselves with thinking revolutions are momentous, catalytic events. ~~their~~ deconstructing revolutions, we have the humbling, down-to-earth perspective, that each action counts: a revolutionary action

- Like building a new neural pathway
- if there's a shock → path made instantly
- But life lasting changes → day-in-day-out

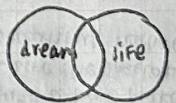
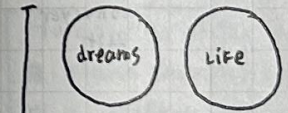


MEANS = END GOAL

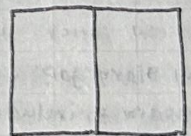


The quality of our bonds determines the revolution we are building up to.

e.g. Wuwei is a bad example of the revolution that its founder is trying to make.

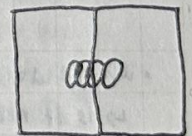


P40 "less alienating ways of organizing life"



diary: meeting Helena

- hug
- everyone loves Helena



we have to have eradicated much fear within ourselves to be at the point

When I came to Nepal 5 years ago, that was the first time I could join a protest and was surrounded by a web of people who cared about other species so profoundly. Such engagement with life expanded the possibilities of care for me. It forever expanded my love ontology.



Environmental activism against the construction of an airport in Nijgad, 2019.

Being within spaces of activism,
regardless of the field (science, art,
technology, education, urban design...),

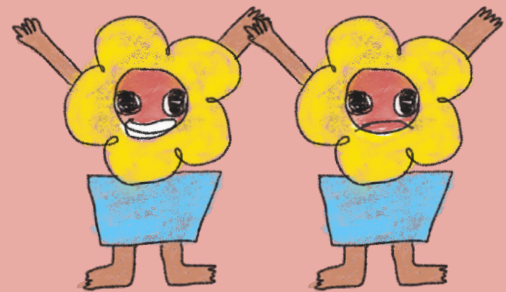
I see so closely the link between
our commitment to revolutionary actions
and the capacity for intimacy.

- Intimacy is simply to make ourselves be known by the other: Transparency is its nature.
- But our capacity for transparency or intimacy depends on the depth of which we see and understand ourselves.
- Such clarity and transparency of our inner self is only achieved through hard dialogues, continual observation, and brave introspection.
- From that wealth of self-knowledge, we offer that to another person, revealing ourselves meaningfully, thus, a moment of intimate closure is brought about.
- When this moment stretches into continuations, we form a self-actualizing intimate relationship.



Kitty, Abish, and Ly dancing
to imaginary music at
Namlo Music school ...

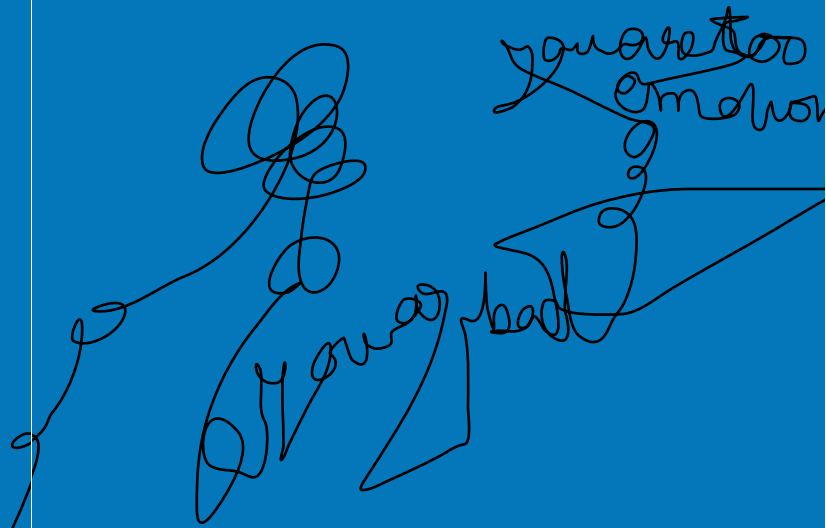
When you go through a shock, a struggle, or pain, do you have someone to go to and process it with you?



The quality of closeness and natural care that are achieved by intimacy, I dare say, is a clearest sign of revolutionary actions taking place.

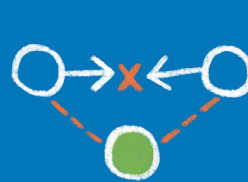
From a psychological perspective, intimacy is imperative to life and death. And our science is catching up.

For but an example, a study of 2000 women over 10 years showed that women that were unhappily married but didn't express their emotions were 4 times likely to die as those women who were also unhappily married but did talk about their emotions.

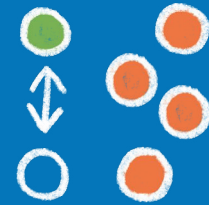


The issue wasn't a lack of happiness, it was a devoid of self expression.

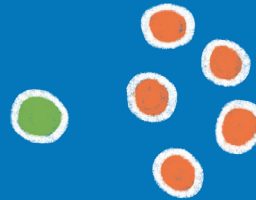
But in reality, fears pervade in so many nooks and spaces wherever I look; hostility and distrust as a norm in many supposedly communities:



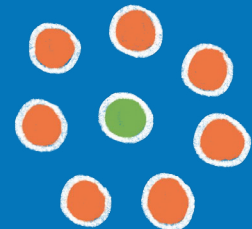
Having to choose a side and discriminate the other.



Being targeted for affiliating with the "wrong" side.



Rejection.
Outcasted.



Discrimination.
Suffocation.

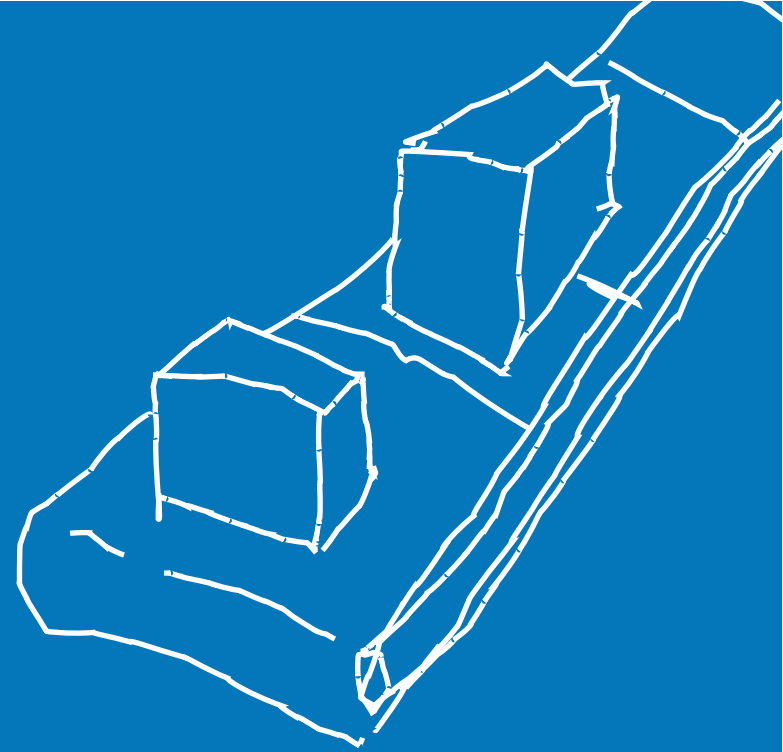
Perhaps my yearnings for change in the sphere of human relationships are in the margin because of my high sensitivity --

and perhaps such a more loving world where we can feel safer, naturally kinder, is not possible.

But since we cannot know a radically different world is not possible, Graeber wrote,

“are we not betraying everyone by insisting on continuing to justify, and reproduce, the mess we have today?”

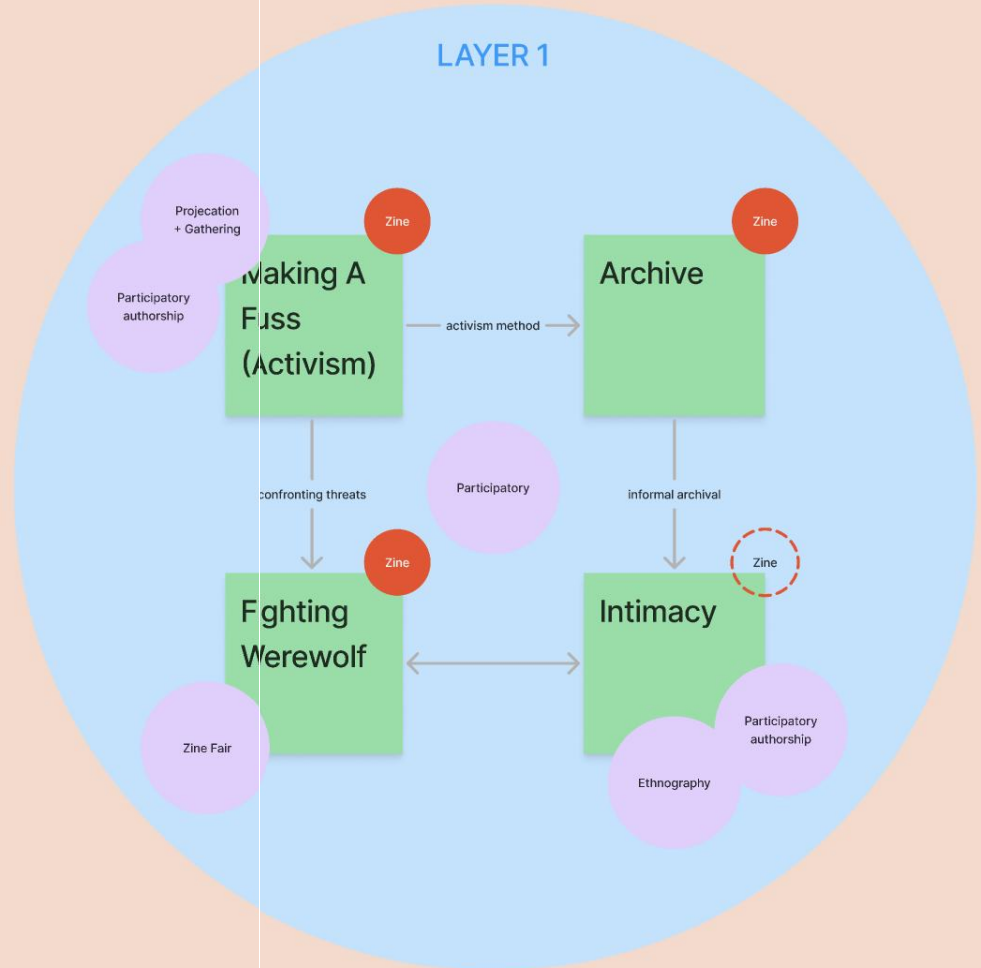
When we are living on a conveyor belt of violence (a love-deprived and intimacy-deprived reality), where silence and disengagement means condoning the violence that is taking place, a commitment to optimism becomes a moral imperative.



**A commitment to
optimism is a moral
imperative.**

In the previous zine issues — Making A Fuss, Daring To Archive, Knowing The Werewolf, we were building the foundation for a shared language of intimate participatory projects.

To be truthful, I don't know if people would care or if our efforts amount to anything. Such an endeavor is but a hopeful lunge into the unknown out of care, curiosity, companionship, and compassion.





Yet, we will keep on forging forward, and this space is only possible because somewhere in our history, the miraculous feeling of love and shared intimacy have touched upon us, and we are perseverant on including as many as possible in such a world. Let that warmth live on in ourselves so we have enough light to continue digging our tunnels, now coalescing, converging, widening.

See you in season 2 of Project Theory Probe.



What's on my shelf in the process of writing this zine:

Books:

- Fragments of An Anarchist Anthropology by David Graeber
- The Public Life of Women: A Feminist Memory Project by Photo Circle, Nepal

Journal:

- Self-Silencing and the Risk of Heart Disease and Death in Women: The Framingham Offspring Study

Visits:

- Kaalo.101
- Ecoversities
- Photo Circle
-



