

Prison Solidarity and Organizing

Thanks to Starhawk and the Rant Collective (www.rantcollective.org)

HOW SOLIDARITY WORKS:

We have more power when we act together than when we act alone. Solidarity is the way we protect each other in our struggles, share the consequences and mitigate the suffering we encounter when confronting oppressive power. The purpose of solidarity is to build our movement, and to embody our mutual care and concern for justice.

Solidarity works best when we respect each other's differing needs and life circumstances, understand that there are many ways of being in solidarity, and co-ordinate our responses. It does not work when we attempt to coerce, shame or inflict guilt upon each other, even subtly.

Through solidarity, we can pressure the system to treat us fairly and justly, to protect the physical safety and health of jailed protestors, to treat arrested protestors equally, to prevent individuals from being singled out, to improve jail conditions, to resist harsh or unequal punishment or sentences that would constrict our future freedom.

Solidarity puts pressure on the system by raising the social and political costs of its oppressive acts, raising the economic costs of holding us in jail or bringing us to trial, and by interfering with the smooth running of the system.

Solidarity can be extremely effective, but it is always exercised at a cost. Before deciding on a solidarity strategy, we need to know what our intentions and goals are for any given action.

OUTSIDE SUPPORT:

For any form of solidarity to work, supporters are vital. Their job is to bring to bear political pressure on the authorities: calling, writing letters, sending emails, holding vigils at the jail, contacting the media, and organizing others to do all of the same. Released prisoners can be in solidarity with those still in jail by participating in outside support. Support should be organized ahead of time for all actions.

LEGAL SUPPORT:

Solidarity negotiations are most often carried out by the legal team, who need to understand the protestors' strategy, be willing to furnish information and help with communications, and to understand that a solidarity strategy may be very different from a usual legal strategy. Solidarity choices need to be made by the activists, not by the lawyers. The legal team does not make decisions for the protestors, but serves as their messenger and mouthpiece.

Protestors need to understand that legal teams for actions are made up of volunteers who do not have unlimited resources. If solidarity continues for a long time, if it moves into court or cases go to trial, additional legal support will be necessary and so will fundraising to pay for it.

STRATEGIC CHOICES

There are many ways to exercise solidarity, and many choices to make along the way. The key choice that needs to be discussed before the action is:

Stay in jail or not:

In-jail solidarity uses our strength of numbers to raise the political and economic costs of the system.

It costs the authorities both economically and politically to keep large numbers of people locked up after an action, especially if we can mobilize outside pressure. Large numbers of people in jail can give us lots of leverage with the system.

But stay-in-jail strategies are very costly to us, as well. In situations where jail conditions are extremely hazardous to the very life and safety of protestors, we want to get people out of jail as quickly as possible and mobilize pressure in other ways. In an extended action, or when the authorities use preemptive arrests to undercut our numbers, we may want to get people back on the street quickly. When legal consequences of an action are likely to be minor, an in-jail strategy may not be worth the cost. And people may also have individual reasons for getting out of jail as fast as they can: family responsibilities, medical conditions that put them at risk in a jail situation, work responsibilities, etc.

Stay-in-jail strategies work best with larger numbers, but they do not require unanimity to work. We want to encourage people to do actions whether or not they can stay in jail afterwards. Solidarity is no longer effective movement building if the costs of an action become so high that only the extremely heroic or the chronically unemployed can do actions. When people feel judged or coerced into solidarity stands, they often react against the whole idea and may be reluctant to do future actions. When people feel supported in their choices, they will often make great personal sacrifices to support the group.

If we're trying to keep people out on the street for an extended action, we might want to take opportunities to get quickly released from custody. If we have people to protect: individuals who might be singled out, internationals who face immigration issues, etc., we might employ a strategy that involves staying in jail. Or if we are asked to make unacceptable compromises in order to be released, for example, posting high bail or accepting conditions that might prevent us from doing future actions, we may need to use in-jail solidarity.

A stay-in-jail solidarity strategy needs some coordination before the action, so that people are prepared and know what choices to make under the stressful conditions of arrest.
How to Stay in Jail:

Refuse to sign out:

In mass actions, authorities are often willing to release most people if they sign a promise to appear for a court date, or if they post a reasonable bail.

The authorities may also ask people to sign statements saying they will not return to a certain action or area.

To stay in jail, refuse to sign or to post bail. Bail is one of the ways the poor are kept incarcerated and people with money get released. Some activists refuse to post bail as part of their moral or political stand. For others, the choice may depend upon the situation.

Refuse to give names:

Authorities are generally reluctant to free prisoners without knowing who we are. For this tactic to be effective, protestors should not carry identification to the action. For this reason, it needs to be coordinated ahead of time. This tactic also greatly interferes with the smooth running of the jail system, and is a tactic generally hated by the authorities. It can be a powerful bargaining point in solidarity negotiations.

However, it's a bargaining point we most often concede in the end. Protestors should not hold the illusion that they will be able to go through the entire system and be released without giving names. Occasionally this happens, but generally not. Supporters should hold the I.D. of those arrested and be prepared to bring it to jail or court, if necessary.

For some activists, giving their name is a matter of pride and principle, an integral part of their understanding of nonviolence, and of being willing to stand behind their actions.

Protestors who need medication may not be able to employ this tactic, as generally to receive meds you need a name and a prescription.

Additional tactics:

Refuse to cooperate with other aspects of processing: not furnishing information, fingerprints, etc.

Refuse to voluntarily go to or cooperate with court appearances or to enter pleas.

RESISTANCE IN JAIL:

In jail, many forms of resistance can be employed to protect other protestors from being isolated, singled out, or physically hurt, to pressure the authorities to provide physical necessities, medical care, interpreters, phone calls, access to lawyers, etc. They range from refusing to move voluntarily or cooperate with jail procedures, singing, going limp, physically protecting individuals ('puppy piling'), refusing to answer questions or to speak, fasting, etc. Resistance can be stressful and dangerous, and it's wise to choose your battles and conserve energy for issues that are truly important.

A liaison to the guards is often helpful in jail, as they will feel more comfortable negotiating with one person. However, that role should rotate often so that individuals aren't targeted as leaders. To organize in jail, keep a neutral profile and avoid confronting the guards. Guards fear riots, and are always on the lookout for potential instigators. They will often single out aggressive individuals. Whatever your views are on violence and nonviolence, fighting the guards inside jail will simply get you isolated, hurt, and possibly result in extra charges.

Fasting can be a powerful strategic tool, but it will rapidly cloud your judgment and make decision-making extremely difficult. It's most effective when there is outside support and media attention. Consider appointing a 'designated eater' to help care for and monitor the health of fasters. Resistance inside jail can also be creative. We can use the time to share skills, teach each other organizing tools, hold political discussions, plan the next action. We can also at times share songs, rituals, poems, jokes, stories, and many forms of mutual support and healing. And of course, to hold meetings to decide upon our strategy. But don't meet all the time: endless meetings can be exhausting and counterproductive.

Remember that jail cells and phones are monitored. Jail is not the place to regale your fellow protestors with tales of your fifty-three previous arrests. If people are withholding names, try to avoid discussing details that could identify you. Support people should know ahead of time what jail name you will use, so they can be prepared to receive collect calls from 'Muffie'.

SOLIDARITY DEMANDS

There are many demands that we might make through solidarity, but generally they involve pressure for equal and fair treatment in jail and in sentencing, for dropped or reduced charges or for a plea bargain we can accept that will not be a deterrent to future actions. The legal system operates like a giant game in which deals are made every day for people's lives. Most people caught in the system do not have the leverage and resources we do. As we negotiate our demands, we will have many choices to make, and we should bear in mind that we may not be able to achieve all of our demands.

Pressure for equal treatment or sentencing is most effective when people have all done roughly the same thing. In most legal systems, there is a big divide between acts considered as freedom of expression and acts of property destruction or aggression. Often the authorities falsely accuse people of violent acts, or charge a victim of their violence with assault on an officer. When they do not have a solid case, they can often be pressured to drop or reduce charges. But if they actually have evidence against an individual, they may be unwilling to reduce charges regardless of the strength of our

solidarity.

If police have been injured or seriously lost face in an action, they may close ranks in their own form of solidarity and become adamantly intent on punishing somebody.

COURT AND PLEA SOLIDARITY:

When we do not choose to use a stay-in-jail strategy, or when we agree to move our solidarity out of jail and into the courts, there are still many strategies we can use, but the details are more conditioned by the specific legal procedures of each province, state or country. The principles remain the same: strength in numbers, respect for individual choices, coordination not coercion, raising the system's cost, and bringing to bear outside pressure.

When individuals are singled out in spite of all our efforts, our solidarity can move to support for them as they face trial, in the form of fundraising, political pressure, courtroom vigils, etc.

SOLIDARITY WITH OTHER PRISONERS:

The authorities often try to intimidate us by threatening to throw us in with regular prisoners. They may paint fearful and racist pictures of just how bad those other prisoners can be. Most often, however, other prisoners are supportive or at least neutral toward protestors who behave with respect toward them.

The criminal justice system in both Canada and the U.S. is more criminal than just, and serves as one of the prime ways poor people, people of color and oppressed groups are kept disenfranchised and disempowered. When we enter into this system as a group of protestors, we hold a privileged level of personal and political power. When we exercise that power, we need to keep in mind the impact of our presence on prisoners who do not have our resources. A jail experience can teach us more in a short time about the true workings of oppression than years of study. We have an obligation to use that knowledge, and our rage, to work for true justice for all prisoners..

Jail/Court Solidarity

by Midnight Special and Katya Komisaruk.

Jail/court solidarity is the name for a variety of tactics we use to take care of each other while we're in the legal system. Jail/court solidarity involves a combination of non-cooperation techniques and collective bargaining. Although jails and courts are designed to make us feel powerless, through solidarity we can gain better control over what happens to us, by making decisions as a group; by acting in unity with each other; and by committing ourselves to safeguard each other's well being. Jail/court solidarity has been used effectively in the civil rights, peace, environmental, and other movements to protect activists who were arrested.

Every time there's a choice in the legal process, activists can either cooperate or make things more difficult for the authorities. Solidarity tactics mean that people non-cooperate as a group, unless the authorities agree to their demands. People who've been arrested could demand that everyone receive the same charges and the same sentence, instead of some people (i.e., leaders, minorities, anarchists) being singled out for harsher treatment.

People in custody could demand that a sick or hurt person be given immediate medical treatment. People in jail may want to demand that any person the authorities locked up separately be brought

back and held with the rest of the group. Types of non-cooperation include:

Physical Non-Cooperation Techniques

refusing to follow orders (they say stand, we sit; they say line up, we mill about)

refusing to walk

refusing to hold still

refusing to stop singing or dancing

refusing to eat

refusing to wear clothes

Procedural Non-Cooperation Techniques

not bringing ID and refusing to give name or answer other questions (which forces the authorities to keep us locked up, clogging the jail system)

refusing to promise to appear in court (which also forces the authorities to keep people locked up, clogging the jail system)

demanding to have the court appoint a free attorney to defend every low-income defendant (which creates a vast amount of paperwork for the court and prosecution, as well as a huge expense for the authorities)

refusing to plead guilty (which forces the authorities to hold trials, clogging the court system)

refusing to waive time for a speedy trial (which forces authorities to bring everyone to trial within a month or so of our first court appearance, as opposed to scheduling trials to start long after, at the authorities' convenience)

fighting the case vigorously before trial by submitting a lot of motions (written legal arguments, to which the prosecutor will need to respond) and requiring lots of hearings in court

Remember that physical non-cooperation-as opposed to procedural non-cooperation, could potentially result in charges of resisting an officer-but that's often just threatened and not actually imposed. There are many creative ways to non-cooperate beyond this short list, and it's good to mix-and-match.

Groups should make sure to talk in advance about which solidarity demands and which types of non-cooperation they might want to use. It's not necessary for everyone in the group to participate in a given non-cooperation tactic in order for it to work. And sometimes one or two people may choose to non-cooperate in a particular way by themselves, as their own political statement. (For example, perhaps just one or two people want to go limp when they're arrested, or fast when they're in jail.) However, to use noncooperation as a solidarity tactic effectively you need enough people participating to overwhelm the authorities, forcing them to agree to demands.

The use of jail/court solidarity should not deter anyone from participating in the action. Pressure for everyone to conform is counter to the spirit of solidarity. People who employ jail/court solidarity tactics need to leave plenty of room for those who do not wish to join them. Not everyone can stay in jail. Not everyone can go to court. But then, not everyone has to participate in order for solidarity tactics to work. The strength of solidarity comes from the voluntary agreement of everyone who takes part in it, and from the support from those who cannot.

Much of the time, we're working in coalition with people who hold varying political beliefs. Often the larger group includes people of different races, classes, ages, sexual orientations, etc. It's far easier to

reach consensus on solidarity tactics if we listen closely to all points of view before launching proposals.

We must never let the police, the jail authorities or any lawyers push us into rushed decisions. If we're being rushed, we just have to bargain for more time. After all, it's simpler for the authorities to give us another fifteen minutes to come to consensus than for them to carry a bus-full or room-full of limp bodies to jail.

Crime and Punishment: Frequently Asked Questions

(prepared by the Midnight Special Law Collective)

What crimes could we be charged with?

Protesters are usually charged with infractions (a crime usually not punishable by jail time) or misdemeanors (a crime punishable by a year in jail or less). Typical infractions are jaywalking or driving beyond the speed limit.

Typical misdemeanors are trespassing, blocking the road, causing minor property damage or resisting an officer. Sometimes activists are charged with felonies (a crime punishable by prison time), such as conspiracy or major property damage.

However, in past mass civil resistance, these felony charges have typically been dropped. Prosecutors tend to use them as a scare tactic or bargaining tool and will often pile up multiple charges, in order to be able to say: "We're charging the defendants with damaging property, resisting an officer, and trespass; but we'll drop the first two charges, if they'll plead guilty to the trespass charge."

Can the charges against us be changed?

Charges which police write down when they arrest us are not necessarily the charges a prosecutor uses. The arresting officer's charges are a suggestion. It's the prosecutor who decides the real charges, and s/he can change them up until we actually start trial. Charges are a matter for negotiation using solidarity.

Is it really a crime merely to touch a police officer?

Yes. Simply touching an officer with our fingers is usually an "assault" or "battery." Officers can lay hands on us, but we must not initiate contact with them with any part of our bodies or our belongings. Don't touch police vehicles, dogs, horses or other equipment. They are considered extensions of the officer.

What exactly is resisting an officer?

Resisting an officer is physical, not verbal. Even passive physical resistance, such as going limp, is legally considered resisting an officer. However, refusing to answer questions is not resisting, because you always have the right to remain silent.

What if we give names other than our "legal name?"

It is a misdemeanor to give a false name-or other false information-to a police officer, under both state and federal law.

What happens if we damage property?

Property damage which has occurred in previous mass civil resistance actions has included things like: cutting fences, painting messages, dismantling train tracks, etc. The penalties for property damage

almost always include fines and/or restitution, as well as incarceration.

The laws vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. For example, in the federal system, property damage of over \$100 is a felony. The bill for even a little graffiti cleanup is often well over the felony limit.

CAUTION!

If you bring weapons (including your trusty pocket knife or Leatherman tool) or illegal drugs to the action, you are likely to get additional charges-maybe very serious ones. Double-check your pockets and bags. It creates hassles for everyone and puts a major strain on solidarity if you get busted for drugs or weapons.

Lawyers...what's the use?

In a mass direct action, our best protection is solidarity. However, lawyers are useful for passing messages between groups of protesters who are being held in different places (different institutions or different cells in the same jail), or for dealing with problems (like getting medication in jail). When a lawyer arrives, make sure to use good meeting techniques. Select a facilitator or two among the protesters to organize questions and proposals.

How do we use our legal team?

Call as soon as you can. Call when you're about to be arrested; when you're on the bus to jail; when you get to jail. When the legal team visits you in custody, they will be expecting the facilitator to take the group through the following legal visit agenda:

Are there any emergencies which must be dealt with before we can proceed with other topics?
Do you want a report on what other groups of arrested protesters are doing and on the state of negotiations with the authorities?

Have you made decisions about solidarity tactics or demands which you want communicated to other groups of protesters or to the authorities?

Is there any legal information you need which will help you make decisions? Organize your questions and directions in advance, to make the best use of the meeting time.

CAUTION!

The police or jail authorities frequently lie and say there isn't a lawyer there for us or that we must name a specific lawyer. Very often there's a lawyer from our legal team waiting anxiously to talk to us, who won't be allowed in until we exert pressure through solidarity tactics. It helps if our lawyer knows our names or jail identification numbers, but we don't have to know a specific lawyer's name. We can just demand to see "someone from the legal team."

Police

When dealing with the police, keep your hands in view and don't make sudden movements. Also, avoid passing behind them. Never touch the police or their equipment (vehicles, flashlights, animals, etc.)

When we are involved in or observing an interaction with the police, we should always note what is said and by whom. Record the officers' names and badge numbers. Immediately after the police interaction, make a copy of the Police Misconduct Report and fill it out. Do it promptly so you can remember important details clearly. Familiarize yourself with the Police Misconduct Report in advance so you'll know what to look for.

Questioning

Whenever law enforcement officers ask us anything besides name and address, it's legally safest to say these Magic Words: "I am going to remain silent. I want a lawyer." Remember, anything we say to the authorities can and will be used against us and our friends in court. There's no way to predict what the police might try to use or how they'd use it. Plus, the police might misquote us or lie altogether about what was said. So it's good to make a habit of saying only the Magic Words and letting everyone know that this is our policy.

Be aware that the authorities are legally allowed to lie when they're investigating, and they are trained to be manipulative. Insist upon speaking with friends and lawyers before you answer any questions or produce any documents.

If you don't think you'll remember the Magic Words when you need them, write them on your body, preferably with something that won't wash off too easily (permanent markers work well.) Make sure that when you're arrested with other people, the rest of the group knows the Magic Words and promises to use them.

There are a lot of ways the police will try to trick you into talking.

It's always safest just to say the Magic Words: "I am going to remain silent. I want a lawyer."

The following are common lines the police use when they're trying to get you to talk:

"You're not a suspect. We're simply investigating here. Just help us understand what happened and then you can go."

"If you don't answer my questions, I won't have any choice but to take you to jail."

"Your friends have all cooperated and we let them go home. You're the only one left. Do you want to go to jail?"

"If you don't answer these questions, you'll be charged with resisting an officer."

If you're arrested with friends, make an agreement that no one will make statements to the police until everyone's been able to talk to a lawyer and calmly decide what to do. Be aware of the paranoia which tends to set in after people have been separated.

Be particularly suspicious if you are in custody and an officer (or an unfamiliar person claiming to be a lawyer) comes and tells you that everyone else has agreed to a particular deal or to leave jail. Demand to see a trusted lawyer or another activist to verify this information.

When you're in jail, remember to be careful of what you say. Use each others nicknames. Above all, do not ask for or accept legal advice from law enforcement officers. They are not there your advocates. Remember that they've been trained to put you at ease, to get you to trust them. Their job is to find, arrest and help convict the suspect. And that suspect is you.

Searches and Warrants

Do not consent when the police ask to enter and search your home without a search warrant. Don't let them invite themselves in. Stand in the doorway and refuse to give them permission. The police are quite likely to tell you they don't need a warrant. It's always safest to reply: "I do not consent to this

search.”

If police have a search warrant, ask to see it and check that it’s signed and has your correct address and a reasonably recent date (not more than a couple of weeks). If you point out a flaw in a warrant, the police may ask you to let them in anyway. Just say no. Even if the police have a warrant which looks perfectly okay to you, it still makes sense to say “I do not consent to this search,” because it’s possible that there’s a hidden flaw in the warrant which your lawyer may be able to find later on.

You should refuse consent to searches of your car, bags and any other possessions by saying “I do not consent” may seem a little formal, but it helps keep the police from claiming that they thought copy with affinity group supporters, and leave copies with your legal and medical teams. Obviously, these letters may disclose your identity, which interferes with the solidarity tactic of withholding information. One way to handle this is to give your doctor a photo of yourself to go with the letter, and have the doctor refer to you as “the patient in the attached photograph,” rather than by name.

Other Legal Resources

Just Cause www.lawcollective.org • katya@lawcollective.org
6103 Harwood Ave. • Oakland, CA 94618 • (510)420-0210

How to Be a Legal Observer
Legal Observer Notes Form
Police Misconduct Form
National Lawyer's Guild www.nlg.org

Midnight Special Law Collective www.midnightspecial.net
(510) 834-1883
Coming Out of Jail Stronger
by Starhawk

In the many times I’ve been to jail, here are some of the overwhelming responses I’ve noticed in myself and which you might be experiencing:

Rage: Jail is simply the distilled form of the larger violence around us. Anger is a sane and healthy response, but you may find it deflected onto your friends and families instead of directed to the systems of oppression we’re fighting. Warn your friends and coworkers to tread gently and not order you around for a while. Be prepared for flashes of rage, and try to remember whom we’re really angry at.

Self-Blame: You’ve been in a system designed on every level to make you feel bad, wrong, inadequate and powerless. The men and women who run it are experts in psychological manipulation and intimidation. They spend a lifetime developing their techniques—you had at most a few hours training in how to resist them.

When you’re in jail, you’re constantly faced with decisions to be made with inadequate information under conditions of fear and exhaustion. You may make mistakes. You may end up complying when you later wish you’d resisted, or failing to act when you think you should have. You may make decisions you later regret.

Try not to blame yourselves. One of the ways the system functions is to keep us focused on what we, individually, did or didn’t do instead of on the violence of the system itself. Self blame is the way we take the violence of the system in, and beat ourselves up instead of making the guards and police do their own dirty work. And it rapidly turns into blame of each other, becoming a force to divide us and cut us off from the very support we need.

Difficult Re-entry: It’s hard to go back to regular life after the intensity of an action. It’s hard to go home to a lonely apartment after the strong community we’ve felt in the action and in jail. It’s hard to

go back to a school, a job, or to any institution that suddenly seems like a softer-edged version of the jail. And everything suddenly does look like a version of jail—a system of punishment and control.

You may find yourselves tired, depressed, unable to take pleasure in things you usually enjoy, vicariously experiencing the sufferings of all the oppressed and dispossessed. Food may seem tasteless, work or studies meaningless. You may lose things, get confused, and have difficulty functioning.

These are common human responses to loss, trauma and stress. They are not a sign of your personal weakness or inadequacy. Here are a few things that can help:

Talk About It: Ideally with the others who were with you, with your affinity group or with someone else who has been through a similar experience. If that's not possible, find a friend who is willing to lend a sympathetic ear, or a counselor. You need to tell your story, sometimes over and over and over again.

Rest: We've all put out a phenomenal amount of energy. Sleep. Take yourself out into a natural environment with trees and green plants. Lie on the ground. Restore your energy.

Cleanse: Do something physical and symbolic to release the energies of the jail. Take a shower and scrub with epsom salts, bathe in the ocean or a running stream, wash your clothes. Do it with the conscious intention of letting go of the jail energy, of emerging renewed.

Renew: If you have a spiritual practice, now is the time to intensify it. If you don't resonate with spirituality, take time for what does inspire you and feed you, whether it's the forests, music, or the company of friends.

Learn: You've just received a priceless educational experience. You now know more about the underlying workings of the system we are fighting. You've had a small taste of the violence and repression experienced every day by the poor, by people of color, by those who end up in jail without the support of an action and a media team. You will never be the same person you were before this action.

Honor yourself: And all of us—for the courage, strength, and commitment we've shown in taking action, for the movement we are building together, for the ways we've listened to one another and struggled with our differences and already changed the world. I'm deeply, deeply proud to have been part of this action, and to be in a movement that contains such brave, committed and caring people.

Carry it On: Rage can be an energizing force. So can love. As hard as a jail experience can be, it can also be empowering. We can come out of it stronger than we went in. What we've learned from this action can move us into the next phase as we build the movement that will transform the world

Organizing in Jail

Some Suggestions

The prison system controls us, among other ways, by controlling the space we inhabit, the way our time is structured, and the information we can send and receive. We can take power by organizing our own space, time and information.

INFORMATION/COMMUNICATIONS:

--Find out who has been arrested, which affinity groups are in jail, who if anyone is missing or has been isolated. Consolidate the information so that in one or two phone calls it can be communicated to our legal team and support people.

--Organize our own system of lines or lists to use telephones. Transmit messages for others.

--Use legal team to communicate with others of our groups held in other locations.

--Choosing a jail liaison from among the group will often ease communication with the guards, who feel more comfortable talking to one person. But this role should rotate so no one person becomes identified as 'the leader'.

--Remember, information from the guards, however nice they may seem, is not often deceptive or inaccurate. **DON'T SPREAD RUMORS!** Verify information.

--Share information and stories about the action among ourselves, but cautiously—you may be monitored. Don't talk about your suspicions of being watched, or you lose

SPACE:

When possible, organize our own space in jail: a meeting corner, a quiet corner, a healing space, a workshop space etc.

TIME:

The time we spend together in jail can be enriching. We can organize workshops, classes, nonviolence trainings, political discussions, strategy and theory sessions, games, rituals, exercise sessions, music, talent shows, quiet times, and of course, meetings. Remember not to become obsessed by meetings.

--Don't become panicked by their timetable. We can take the time we need to do what we have to do.

MEETING AND GETTING ORGANIZED:

When you get into jail, and have a chance to meet:

- Collect information on who has been arrested, isolated, medical needs, etc.
- Develop a strategy for getting that info to supporters.
- Update on information on the action, legal issues, and negotiations.
- Roles and responsibilities in the group—caretakers, liaisons, etc.
- Clustering—make sure everyone has an affinity group or buddy.
- Feeling sharing—perhaps a round on how we each deal with powerlessness

Share information, but be careful not to pass on legal information you are unsure of. Anyone who is too obviously knowledgeable risks being singled out, so stay low-key and neutral.