

**LEE BOGGS**  
multi-movement social  
justice organizer

“Begin by doing  
small things at the  
local level. That is  
how change takes  
place in living  
systems, not from  
above but from within,  
from many local  
actions occurring  
simultaneously”

you have permission to:

- ◆ see your work as part  
of an interconnected  
whole
- ◆ get inspiration from  
what you see  
happening in other  
places, no matter  
how different they  
seem compared to  
where you are
- ◆ start small (and stay  
small if you want!)
- ◆ start now

**ELLA BAKER**  
organizer of non-  
hierarchical leadership in  
Black Liberation

“The kind of role that  
I tried to play was to  
pick up pieces or put  
together pieces out  
of which I hoped  
organization might  
come. My theory is,  
strong people don't  
need strong leaders.”

you have permission to:

- ◆ say what you feel is true  
to anyone
- ◆ draw strength from  
your identity and  
experience
- ◆ demand answers and  
explanations from  
people in power
- ◆ feel confident that the  
work you do with  
your community  
will result in  
meaningful change

**MY NAME IS AMANDA** and i  
made this zine because i am a  
volunteer organizer in my spare  
time (what's left over after  
doing paid work to survive). i've  
spent 4 years trying, meeting,  
discussing, emailing, studying,  
holding space, calling bullshit,  
and building relationships with  
my neighbors, and i am still  
learning how to impact my  
surroundings.

let's connect. email me:  
a.r.huckins@gmail.com

# BEGIN by doing small things

ENCOURAGEMENT TO INTERRUPT POWER  
starting now, where you already are.

you have permission to:

- ◆ be inefficient
- ◆ slowly gather  
what you need
- ◆ get to know people  
deeply and try to  
understand them  
(and yourself)
- ◆ feed many possibilities
- ◆ use your values  
(instead of a  
specific end goal)  
as your guide

“Fear not, **the  
power is in you.**  
The problems that  
we have are not going  
to end if we continue  
being afraid.”

**MAGDA  
RAMIREZ  
CASTAÑEDA**  
Chicana cultural and  
anti-gentrification  
activist

**DELORES**  
🌿 **LINTEL**  
neighborhood  
organizer  
in Lincoln, NE

“We didn’t have any idea of what was happening or why... but we decided that we would have to take responsibility for our neighborhood... At each meeting we’d kind of figure out what was the most pressing issue... We just chugged along trying to manage to do something about what was happening to us. We just did what we had to do.”

*you have permission to:*

- ❖ organize around your own life, needs, and communities
- ❖ create new ways of organizing that suit you better than what you’ve seen done
- ❖ root your organizing/change-making in your dearest responsibilities
- ❖ prioritize the ideas and thoughts of children!

“It was a movement of people, and that meant elders and children, families. So whenever we decided to go anywhere, everybody was involved and wanted to be involved and have a say so”

“It would’ve been easier for me to travel around and play militant and stick my kids in school, and let someone else take care of them. But...we had our own school, because that’s what my children wanted.”

**MADONNA**  
🌿 **THUNDER HAWK**  
organizer of grassroots  
indigenous resistance

*you have permission to:*

- ❖ act without having all the information you wish you had
- ❖ step up to leadership (and back again, as needed)
- ❖ think on your feet, improvise, reassess, and modify your approach
- ❖ try something, even if there are reasons it might not work how you want

## VERY SHORT BIOGRAPHIES

*of organizers quoted in this zine*

**Ella Baker** was a purposefully behind-the-scenes leader of the Black Liberation movement. She advocated for participatory (instead of representative) democracy & mentored young organizers (in the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee) throughout the 60’s

**Madonna Thunder Hawk** was part of the American Indian Movement (AIM) as an organizer, a facilitator of an improvised and revolutionary “survival school”/ group home on her family’s land in South Dakota, and continues to lead resistance as part of the Lakota People’s Law Project.

## GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING

*requires skills, but you already have the most important ones.*

you just have to care deeply (which you do) and be willing to work closely with other people who care deeply.

you will need to offer at least one of your talents to the public good, which means that you have to acknowledge your ability to make a meaningful contribution. and that’s all you need to start.

*want more permission?*

the following pages contain ways to start from the lives of experienced organizers.

**Grace Lee Boggs** spent 80 years in movement activism, from tenant’s and labor rights, to civil rights, to neighborhood self-determination (in Detroit), to anti-war and ecological justice struggles.

**Delores Lintel** started organizing over coffee around her kitchen table in Lincoln, NE’s Clinton neighborhood, whose self-advocacy organization she helped found.

**Magda Ramirez Castañeda** was a Chicana organizer and longtime resident of Chicago’s Pilsen Neighborhood. Starting in the late 90’s she became a leading voice against gentrification there.