



WELLBEING IN FEMINIST ACTIVISM

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"Have you ever felt like you could take over the world and do it all? That surge of energy where you're operating at what we might call 'high voltage'? This feeling, it's exhilarating, powerful, and signifies moments when we believe nothing is beyond our reach. I'd like to discuss this very energy within us—our electricity. This 'electricity' is the essence of our being, our soul's power. It's what lights up our lives, drives our passion for change, and fuels our activism.



As much as this high voltage can make us feel invincible, capable of tackling every injustice and inequality, it comes with its nuances. Wanting to do it all—this intense desire and drive—can sometimes push us beyond our limits, leading us into a state where sustaining that level of energy becomes impossible without consequences.

At the heart of feminist activism is a critical need to manage this electricity, to ensure that while we aim to light up the world with our endeavors, we don't burn out in the process. This blog is about recognizing our energy levels, understanding how they impact our work, and learning to manage them in a way that keeps our lights shining bright without flickering out."

The Importance of Wellbeing in Activism

Where the battles fought are deeply personal and the victories, profoundly communal, the demands on our mental and emotional health are immense. Operating in a "high voltage" state—where our energy, passion, and commitment are at their peak—can make us feel unstoppable. Yet, this very intensity, without proper management, risks leading us to burnout, a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by prolonged stress.

The importance of wellbeing and self-care in this context cannot be overstated. Managing our voltage protects us from the detrimental effects of burnout and enhances our efficacy as activists. Wellbeing isn't just about avoiding negative outcomes; it's about nurturing a foundation of strength that sustains our passion and energy, to ensure that we are thriving not surviving.



Managing Our "Electricity"

Electricity is a practical aspect of our being, encompassing the body, mind, and spirit. Our bodies are the vessels through which we enact change, requiring physical care and nourishment to function optimally. Our minds are the strategists, the planners, and the dreamers, necessitating mental stimulation, rest, and healthy coping mechanisms. Our spirits are the heart of our activism, the wellspring of our passion and commitment, needing nourishment through connection, purpose, and reflection.



Body

For our bodies, energy management means regular physical activity. This means that we must remind our bodies that they are alive. Adequate rest is equally crucial, as is a nutritious diet that fuels our bodies without weighing us down. I'd suggest practices like structured sleep schedules and regular breaks for movement.



Mind

Rest also extends to our minds. Recovery from so much information and stimulation. We have to set aside time to do things that bring us joy or do absolutely nothing. Additionally, engaging in challenging activities that stimulate the mind outside the realm of activism can provide a refreshing change of pace.



Spirit

Nurturing our spirit involves engaging with activities that reinforce our sense of purpose and connection. This could mean spending time in nature, practicing gratitude, or participating in community service. It's also about being mindful of the narratives we tell ourselves and ensuring they are aligned with compassion and hope rather than judgment and despair.

Conscious Pouring

Just as we choose our battles in activism, we must choose what experiences, people, and activities we allow into our energy space. It's about filling our lives with light—things that uplift and energize us—and being vigilant about not depleting our reserves on what dims that light.

In pursuit of our cause, let us remember that maintaining our light isn't a selfish act; it's a strategic one. By ensuring we are filled with the right kind of electricity, we not only safeguard our wellbeing but also enhance our capacity to lead, inspire, and effect meaningful change.

Zone of Control and Letting Go

This concept describes the boundary between what we can directly influence and what lies beyond our reach, urging us to focus our energies wisely and sustainably.

The zone of control encompasses the actions, decisions, and attitudes within our personal domain. It's where our power and agency lie, allowing us to effect change, grow, and adapt. Conversely, factors outside this zone—such as others' opinions, systemic barriers, or global events—while impactful, are not directly within our ability to alter.

Recognizing this distinction empowers us to channel our efforts towards meaningful, impactful actions rather than dissipating our energy against what we can't control. It's about discerning where our electricity can truly light up the darkness and where it might simply vanish into the void.

PRACTICAL STEPS

1 Identification

Start by listing the aspects of your activism and life you find draining or frustrating. Next to each, mark whether it's within your control to change. This exercise helps in visually segregating the controllable from the uncontrollable, clarifying where your energy is best invested.

2 Letting Go

This doesn't mean you ignore these issues or cease to care, but rather you acknowledge that your direct influence is limited. Here, I do a lot of journaling and express gratitude to release stress and frustration.

3 Refreshing Your Energy

Unloading frees up space to rejuvenate your spirit and refresh your energy. I'd like to take us back to refilling our electricity by pursuing a passion project, or simply enjoying quiet moments of reflection. Here, you reinforce your capacity to impact your zone of control.

4 Redirect your refreshed Energy

Back into the areas where you can make a difference. Whether it's advocating for policy changes, supporting community initiatives, or educating others on gender equality, your efforts here are potent and impactful.

I encourage you to consider your own electricity. How are you managing it? Are you nurturing it, ensuring it's not depleted by forces beyond your control?

Let's commit to being fierce advocates for gender equality and stewards of our energy. Remember, the light we wish to shine on the world first needs to burn brightly within us. So I leave you with this question: How will you ensure your light remains luminous, guiding not only your path but illuminating the way for others in the journey towards justice and equality?

Together, let's embrace the power of self-care and energy management, for it is in nurturing our own electricity that we find the strength to continue our vital work.

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Thank You!