

decentralization
and community
building

EMERGENT STRATEGY AND "BEWARE OF DANDELIONS"

COMPLEX MOVEMENTS



BEWARE OF THE DANDELIONS

SOUNDTRACK

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EMERGENT STRATEGY

03

the concept: adrienne marie brown created the organizing and leadership model of emergent strategy. She built this concept from principles of nature and society. Recognizing how people and nature interact with one another to create interdependence in life.



as they relate to this work: Two aspects of emergent strategy are decentralization and community building. Decentralizing our idea of where solutions happen, allows true interdependence. Truly leaning on another and caring what others have to say builds community.

"BEWARE OF DANDELIONS"

Complex Movements Detroit

04

A group of Detroit-based artist asking the question of how they can transform a space without site specific work. Created "the pod" a performance and participatory experience, where ancestral struggles and stories are mapped.

Each installation viewing facilitates listeners to explore the connection between complex science and social justice movements presented in the pod. This facilitates the listeners to lean on one another for answers and support.

The soundtrack and the purpose of the pod work to tell stories of systems of oppression. Through a curated science fiction universe, the participants work together to dismantle the oppressors plans in the pod's universe.



HOW DO WE WORK WITHOUT A LEAD?

Lessons on Decentralization

Beware of Dandelion's pod is a participatory experience. Guests are minimally guided throughout the story to create decentralized collective action.

The pod tells the story of an "apple orchard" where townspeople are worked to starvation by "captains of industry" and cannot have the fruits of their labor. Audience members are presented with challenges to unlock the townspeople's stories and experiences with the apple orchard and liberating themselves.



Participants receive little guidance to unlock the pod's knowledge and help liberate the townspeople. The participants work in a decentralized framework to create collective action to a goal. This fosters solidarity between individuals, as a main leader is taken out of the equation.

HOW DO WE WORK WITHOUT A LEAD?

07

Lessons on Decentralization

A decentralized structure begs the question of how groups operate without a lead. Taking out a lead, groups are encouraged to think about what really is the goal and value their individual opinions. This creates solidarity in recognition of shared goals and values.



A Personal Assessment of Successful Completion of this Lesson:

When achieving this goal, has anyone's voice been silenced?

Is there a certain charismatic leader that has emerged to direct our conversation?

What identities are being represented in our decision?

What gaps get created when a "leader" or "facilitator" is removed?

HOW DO WE BUILD INTERDEPENDENCE?

Lessons in Community Building

Participants in “Beware of Dandelions” listen to and work to uncover the ancestral knowledge of the pod. The pod tells “movement memory maps” that tell real stories of peoples struggles with oppression and organizing. The pod transports these same stories and experiences as it travels to different cities.



Participants experience the stories and knowledge that the pod imparts on them, some of it being heavier to hold than others. This encourages participants to lean on one another for support and guidance when navigating the emotions the performance brings. This fosters community building and interdependence, making networks and deeper connections.

HOW DO WE BUILD INTERDEPENDENCE?

09

Lessons on Community Building

The pod transports these stories as a traveling art performance and piece, branching out from the midwest to Dallas or Seattle, reaching new communities. These stories being disseminated to new places with diverse audiences, builds community with these peoples' stories and solidarity with their commitment to organizing. Audiences across America build interdependence in experiencing these stories.



A Personal Assessment of Successful Completion of this Lesson:

What organizing objective does this group share, does it move them?

Are these individuals, "moving at the speed of trust" while organizing?

Is everyone being transparent and vulnerable in communication?

How are support webs being created between individuals?

SOLIDARITY AND WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

HOW/WHERE TO GET INVOLVED

- visit <https://emergencemedia.org/pages/beware-of-the-dandelions> to see upcoming performances and listen to "the pod" soundtrack
- Emergent Strategy's "Praxis Projects", 6 mo workshop to apply emergent strategy to your organization
- in your own organizing, think about a non-lead strategy, whose voices are heard and whose are not
- Emergent Strategy Podcast
- striving to use a decentralized framework for discussion in courses

HOW DO DECENTRALIZATION AND COMMUNITY BUILDING RELATE TO SOLIDARITY? HOW CAN I HELP?

solidarity and emergent strategy

I have been broadly attaching solidarity to all these elements of emergent strategy, to study how they all interact. My understanding of solidarity is based on Dean Spade's idea of solidarity, as a process by which alternative structures are made to meet peoples' needs.

Decentralization works to remove a central leader and encourages communities to lean on one another for support. This breeds solidarity between individuals and groups by pushing them to value one another's opinions and guidance. Community building creates interdependence between individuals, asking how we all connect. These new networks and connections create solidarity between groups that may have not previously seen the similarities they shared. Both elements construct solidarity in their process of emergent strategy, valuing the way elements of nature (people!) interact.

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