

## Who are we?

It is easier to explain who we are not. We are not a government program, nor a business, nor a church, charity, or political party. We are people working within our communities to organize for a better future.

Community Direct Action is when members of a community come together and use their collective power to directly reach certain goals.

Mutual aid, Decentralization, Democracy, and teaching people a new way to organize are some of the reasons why we are here!

In this booklet you will learn:

- What Mutual Aid is
- What Dual Power is
- How these systems work
- How these systems can affect change

## Contact Us

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**Community Direct Action**  
Organizing for A Better Future

# Mutual Aid and Dual power

Building a better world through  
helping each other



## COMMUNITY DIRECT ACTION

Organizing for A Better Future

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**“The mutual-aid tendency in man has so remote an origin, and is so deeply interwoven with all the past evolution of the human race, that it has been maintained by mankind up to the present time, notwithstanding all vicissitudes of history.”**  
— Peter Kropotkin, *Mutual Aid*

# Examples of Mutual Aid and Dual Power

Mutual Aid can come in many forms and must always work under the framework of from the community, for the community.

Through talking to our community, we can pinpoint problems that our community is facing.

Once we do this, we can work together to address those problems through Direct Action and Mutual Aid.

Some examples include:

- Creating free stores to give away clothing or food for free.
- Building free lending libraries to share knowledge and stories.
- Organizing tenants unions to collectively bargain for a better deal from your landlord.
- Organizing community outreach groups to address drug addiction.
- Creating a Community “Garden Shed” where the community shares and maintains landscaping supplies.
- Providing mental health resources using local professionals.
- Trades/Maintenance groups that help maintain neighborhood needs.
- Union and Workers Rights Organizations such as The I.W.W that help local businesses.
- Childcare Services that utilize local professionals or those that are willing to help.
- Travelling Health Care Professionals such as free dental services or yearly check-ups.

# Dual Power

**We're not just giving people sandwiches.  
We're doing something called “building dual power structures”.**

“Building dual power structures” is another way of describing the creation of counter institutions to the current system that provide services and goods cooperatively, and push for revolutionary goals.

It is clear that the current system is struggling and many economists believe it is on the verge of collapse. By creating organizations and entities as a community that can take care of each other, we can reduce hardship in times of need.

We want to build our communities and help them organize together to create the world that we want to see directly.

Through building these dual power structures and Mutual Aid, we provide the solutions that a lot of these people need without having them read a bunch of economic textbooks to see the benefits. They see the benefits when they get the goods and services they require to survive. This brings the people together and gives them something to fight and work for. They would see the benefits the system would have in their communities and they would want to help you spread those ideas.

It's a way to spread class consciousness through action.

# Mutual-Aid

**What is a Mutual-Aid?**

Mutual Aid is essentially another way of saying “people helping each other”. It is a concept popularized by anarchist philosopher Peter Kropotkin to describe how people work together to survive, and how cooperation across ancient human culture has been the driving mechanism behind our evolution.

"The Mutual Aid tendency in man has so remote and origin, and it is so deeply interwoven with all the past evolution of the human race, that it has been maintained by mankind up to the present time, notwithstanding all vicissitudes of history" - Kropotkin

In other words, we strive to organize our community to help each other through mutual co-operation under the axiom “from each according to their ability, to each according to their need”

**How does it work?**

It works by bringing individuals, neighborhoods, and other networks together to address needs by bringing together local people and resources.

Mutual Aid works to create a healthy, happy, and harmonious life for all living beings because it's the right and sustainable thing to do!

It allows people to work together, combine skills/passion, learn, and grow with one another based on need and not greed.

Feeding the hungry, setting up community gardens, kitchens, free stores, donating medical supplies, setting up free health/dental clinics, daycares, clothing drives or getting out into the streets and fixing potholes are just a few examples!

## Solidarity versus Charity

Mutual Aid is not the same as Charity.

There are several different comparisons between the fundamental characteristics of solidarity and charity such as:

- In solitary we give things away without expectations while under charity they impose eligibility criteria for services that divide people into deserving and undeserving.
- In solidarity, there is no means testing. In charity, you are required to be sober, have a certain family status, have certain immigration status, have no outstanding warrants, have a job etc.
- In solidarity organizing the members are volunteers who work together to make decisions. In a charity the members are the donors, and paid staff.
- In solidarity people participate voluntarily because of passion about injustice, whereas in charities there is incentive for workers to climb a hierarchy or become important.
- In solidarity there are open voluntary meetings with as many people making decisions and doing the work as possible. While in a charity it's a closed board meeting, with governance by professionals or people associated with big institutions or big donors.

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*“The person who has to bake a loaf to earn the money to buy a slice is not free”*

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## Why Mutual Aid is Important!

**Donating food, or setting up a free store to give away clothes might seem small to you, but it is far more important than most of the things we pay attention to in National politics**

A minor adjustment in the marginal tax code, or a .02 increase in the national GDP doesn't really affect you when you're struggling for food, or your home is falling apart. If you haven't been able to find a job and are facing eviction a politician is not going to help you with your rent. But a Mutual Aid group might be able to find some solution.

Too often we're lost in the spectacle of the national race to pay attention to what's actually important. Things like providing food to the single mother of four down the street who is struggling through this pandemic, or providing services medical or otherwise to people who lost their job and could turn to the street for drugs are prime examples.

We are not looking at the people who need help as a charity case. We don't have a savior complex or paternalistic rescue fantasies. We realize that those in need are just regular people like you or me.

Since need is a temporary situation, addressing those needs empowers and strengthens one other. Often those who are in need today, will be willing and able to help you tomorrow. This is how Mutual Aid works.

