

Meditation For Social Justice Protesters

Amy Aiko

As we enter into this time of meditation, I invite you to close your eyes if you feel comfortable or consider softening your gaze. The meditative words are a bit longer, so we will only have a brief moment of silence upon their conclusion.

In this meditation,
I use the words and ideas of Thich Nhat Hanh,
Buddhist teacher and legendary protester who marched alongside Dr.
Martin Luther King Jr.
He said,
Every step is healing.
Every step is healing.
In these steps,
Your body is literally healing.
It's not just a metaphor,
But that your body heals and is aligned to purpose.
Every step,
You are doing your part to heal a broken system.
It is healing both to your body and to your cause.
Each step that you take in resistance to a power that is much greater than only you.
You are surrounded by others in solidarity together,
Fighting together against the power.
And that through this marching,
You enact real change.
You make your voice heard.
You make your body seen.
You unite with others in the mission to heal this broken system.
The next step you take,
You are healing into the past,
All those protesters who have suffered injury while they marched.

You are healing those protesters who have suffered injury after they marched because they protesting.

You heal the wound created by our oppressors.

Every step you take as an activist is a miracle because so few take that step.

As you fight to stand up against what's wrong,

To resist,

And to use your body and your voice and your presence to represent your beliefs,

You fight against the horrible things that are happening.

You fight against the injustice,

The inhumanity,

Genocide.

As you fight,

It's a miracle because so many have died fighting.

So many have died before they've had the chance to fight.

So many are afraid to fight.

So many don't know how to fight.

So many don't think that they need to fight.

So many have given up the fight.

So many can't fight because they are already fighting just to stay alive.

So as you step,

Each step is a miracle because as you march and as you protest,

You are in the midst of your own miracle.

All the factors coming together to allow you to have this time and space to protest and to fight for what's right.

Your next step is freedom.

Every step is freedom.

As you step,

As a protester,

You create the freedom of speech for the oppressed.

You open space for people to exist,

Merely to exist,

Merely for their own human rights.

You protest not only for your cause but also for them.

Every step is freedom.

Every step is freedom because you are exercising your right to free speech.

Every step you are exercising your right to oppose.

Every step,

Your right to resist.

Freedom is in every step.

As you step and fight for those who cannot always fight for their lives because they're caring for other people.

Every step is life.

We march for those living now and for those who have lived in the past.

We are marching for those who will never know that we have marched for them.

Every step is life.

Every step you honor the preciousness of life.

Every step you use your walk to show how important this cause is.

Every step you use your march to show that you are alive.

Thank you.

Thank you for marching.

Thank you for using your voice.

Thank you

Reading Adrienne Maree Brown

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it is our turn to carry the world

we are each other's safety
right now, and every day
decide who you will protect
yourself, your own and who else

it's time to cover all that we love
land, creature, place, person
intertwine your roots with mine
in this way our lives become miracles

there will be strangers
they will become comrades
we will each say our needs
we will learn to let community come closer

every part of us is a shield
our words, our trust, our hearts
our bodies in action
and the freedom to think for ourselves

we are the adaptation
no oppressor can imagine
our love is water – form-shifting power, river, vapor, life
we flood each other with belonging

we are building our stamina
we dream of the real world
we carry god, and see god, in each of our faces

your holiness is not too heavy, not for me

our attention and courage
show us the next stand to take
the next hill on which to hold each other
and if needed, the next hiding place: survive!

our imagination and memory
find the wisdom of our ancestors
find our future in the rubble
find the seeds in our songs

we choose our freedom
we keep each other's souls intact
safer than any cage of empire
we know something better is coming

we are each other's safety
we see each other's freest selves
we will hold on tight, in public, in private
over and underground

and we will never let go
we will never let go
we will never let go
we will never let go