



# EMBODY

By Sossity Chiricuzio

Perspectives

## **Embody - In Case Of Emergency**

by Sossity Chiricuzio, PQ Monthly

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The women in my family have worked in the medical field as support staff for generations. We know so many of the ways the human body can fail, can fracture, can be forgotten to death. We carry emergency contact info; we keep tabs on each other; we most always have a plan.

For so many queer and trans folks, there is no net but the one we build together. Amazed to still be alive, determined to stay alive, constantly convincing ourselves and each other to stay alive, and yet still so rarely prepared for illness or death. How many people do you know that have a will? How about a living will, or a power of attorney? Do you know your blood type? How about where the nearest medical facility is, or which direction to head if the mountains blow or the water rises?

So many scary topics. So many unknowable factors, and sore subjects, and missing pieces. Let's get more basic: do you have any water or food supplies stashed? How about a first aid kit, or a compass?

Do you have a fire extinguisher, or at least a big box of baking soda and working smoke detectors? Have any CPR training? How about your partner(s) or housemate(s) or friends? Do you have a plan on where to meet if something goes wrong?

What if capitalism actually collapses in our lifetime; or “The Big One” hits while we're still in the middle of trying to deconstruct racism and the binary gender system? Who is going to come looking for us, and set our broken bones, and give us a drink of clean water?

Probably us. Or our straight neighbors whose name we never quite learn and who aren't sure if we just moved in or have been here for years. Or possibly the random kindness of a stranger, though I have to wonder if they have any more of a drive to be prepared than anyone else. Many of us will be completely unhelpful; injured or frightened or surprised at the sudden intrusion of violence into their bubble. Many of us haven't really thought about this, and don't want to even now. You're maybe thinking about thumbing ahead to the next article because this is a giant bummer. And you're right, it is. And it's already true for much of the world.

From this place of running water and relatively justice minded resources, I think we may feel a false sense of security in our ability to just keep going, exactly as we are, with no major interruptions to service. It's how the whole system is set up—to make us feel like we'll go on forever in the same routine: get up, do the things, make the money, find some joy, eat some food, get some sleep, and repeat.

This is not actually the natural order of things. We are so far removed from natural we may not know what parts of it to eat, and which to apply to wounds, and which to stay far away from. We may have nobody who knows how to birth babies, or prevent them. We may find ourselves living as mammals who traded all their natural wisdom for chemicals and machines.

I have no desire to hurry this process along, and I remain cynically optimistic that we could possibly, maybe, carefully, dismantle the system without descending into dystopia, and perhaps we will all keep

growing older, cradled in the soft blue glow and the pre-fab and the instant gratification, but I prefer to hedge my bets.

My year long plan includes a seed stash, a household plan, updated triage training, a rain barrel, and at least 3 more books about edible and medicinal plants. My immediate plan is to put new batteries in the smoke detector, update our household emergency page with blood types and allergies, and restock the first aid kit. Somewhere in the midst of all that, I hope to get some training from the local Rosehip Medic Collective, a group of volunteer Street Medics and health care activists who provide first aid and emergency care at protests, direct actions, and other sites of resistance and struggle; and also train other street medics and put on community wellness trainings.

I will be interviewing the collective for the July issue of PQ, and it's sure to be full of helpful resources, suggestions and details on how to take care of yourself, your household, your community, and your city. Until then, here's a short list of preparedness resources to get you started!

- Rosehip Medic Collective: More details about the collective, information about trainings, workshops, and community involvement, and resources.  
[rosehipmedics.org](http://rosehipmedics.org)
- Street Medic Wiki: A collaboratively edited information resource focused on medical issues, treatment protocols, ethical standards, and historical information of use to street medics.  
[medic.wikia.com](http://medic.wikia.com)
- American Red Cross preparedness: Free CPR/First Aid, and preparedness classes, supplies and kits, "Together We Prepare Guide," and First Aid & Disaster Apps.  
[redcross.org/or/portland/preparedness](http://redcross.org/or/portland/preparedness)

I don't propose that we live in fear, rather, I hope we can gather and share resources and skills, and create plans and networks to ensure that we live as long as possible, as well as possible, whatever may come.

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