



A Guide to Plug Into Community

Mutual Aid Efforts

In times of crisis, one of the questions on your mind might be 'how can I help?' Meaning both 'how can I do my best to support my community,' and 'how can I as an individual make an impact?' Like many, you might be feeling overwhelmed and underprepared to deal with this crisis. That's okay, take a deep breath and remember you are not alone and you are not powerless. One very useful way in which we can organize during a crisis is through mutual aid.

Mutual Aid is when we support each other directly because we recognize that the well-being, health and dignity of all are connected. It means that we understand that **our survival depends on cooperation, not competition**. In this way we can challenge political conditions directly by improving the lives of those around us.

Mutual Aid is not a new idea. Because the state, and in particular the healthcare system, has historically and systematically failed to meet the needs of the disabled community, we specifically want to uplift disability justice movements for already championing mutual aid in our communities and for being at the forefront of defying state negligence towards our public health.

Use this guide to help you plug into mutual aid work happening nearby or take initiative and build out new types of mutual aid in your community.

Before diving in, it is important to note that in this work we can sometimes hit a wall or feel overwhelmed. We want to uplift some Uprooted & Rising principles to guide us in our organizing and help re-ground us when that happens.

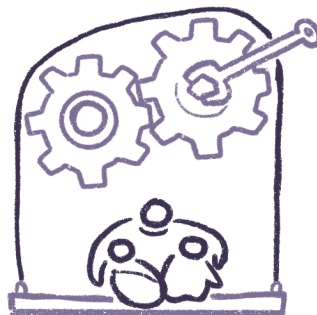
We care for ourselves and each other.



We challenge the roots of the problem.



We focus on systems change.



You can find all 14 principles at www.uprootedandrising.org/values.

Step 1: Connect with your network

Talk to your immediate network – friends, neighbors, coworkers and family about mutual aid.

- Come to a common understanding of what mutual aid is.
- Talk about what you are each struggling with.
- Ask them if they have resources or time they'd be willing to share.

Based on those conversations make a list of potential partners in Mutual Aid work

- Who was particularly excited about helping?
- Who has capacity or experience?

Make a list of the most common needs in your network. Examples include:

- Food
- Housing
- Childcare
- Emotional support
- Housing
- Support for incarcerated peoples

Identify what small scale needs you can meet as an individual. Make a list of potential projects you could fulfil yourself. Examples include:

- Baby sitting
- Small food donation
- Monetary aid
- Companionship
- Giving a ride

Step 2: Research Mutual Aid in your community

Based on the needs of your immediate network look up what projects are already happening in your community.

- Try searching “[your town] mutual aid” to get started.
- Look on community message boards and social media including facebook.
- Remember mutual aid is solidarity, not charity.
- Make a list of projects already occurring that meet the needs of your network or that you have interest in.

What needs does your network have that aren't being fulfilled by current resources?

- Make a list of potential projects that a group could take on to meet these needs.

Step 3: Map out your capacity

Determine how much money and time you can afford to give

- Make a schedule of the week and write down your available times for the week.
- Make a basic budget of expenses and see what extra funds you have to use.

Make a list of any resources or skills available to you that would be useful. Consider how much time and money is available to you.

- Do you have any special skills - cooking, sewing, entertainment, computers, tutoring?
- Do you have a car?
- Can you lift heavy objects?

- What are you excited about?
- Do you have personal protective equipment like a mask or gloves?
- How is your health right now?
- Consider what would replenish your energy.

Step 4: Bring it all together

By now you should have a list of:

- **Network Needs:** The most common needs in your network.
- **Potential Partners:** People interested in helping you in your mutual aid work.
- **My skills/ resources:** any resources or skills available to you that would be useful.
- **Individual Projects:** Potential projects you could fulfil yourself.
- **Projects Happening in Community:** projects already occurring that meet the needs of your network or that you have interest in.
- **Mutual Aid Project Ideas:** potential projects that a group could take on to meet these needs.
- **Budget and time constraints.**

Look at the table below, consider your time, budget, support and interest and decide what projects are manageable for you.

- You can take on a small scale individual project
- Team up with others to take on a mutual aid project that picks up where other mutual aid groups have left off.
- Join an existing group's mission for mutual aid

Don't forget to share information with your network and connect the dots between need and resources when you can.

My Skills / Resources		Network Needs		Potential Partners	
Small Scale Individual Projects		Projects Happening in My Community		Mutual Aid Project Ideas	

Can you think of more mutual aid organizing strategies? Send us your ideas to our insta @unr_now or to our facebook @Uprooted and Rising.

Resources:

- [What Do We Mean by Mutual Aid?](#)
- [Shit is Totally FUCKED! What Can We Do?: A Mutual Aid Explainer](#)
- [Mutual Aid 101](#)
- [Mutual Aid Disaster Relief Resources](#)