

You are not powerless

## **We have all the power we need for daily acts of resistance and hope.**

By [Beth Merrill Neel](#)

February 2, 2017

Do you have a pen, a postcard, and a stamp?

Do you have a phone or a computer?

Do you have friends or colleagues?

Do you have a community?

Do you have a voice?

Do you have a heart, a mind, and a soul?

If you do, then know this: you have all the power you need.

I've been a part of many conversations in recent days and people are so frustrated because they feel like they have no power to stop things that are happening that they believe are deeply, morally wrong.

So in one sense, yes, many of us are powerless. We have not been elected to public office where decisions are made, orders are signed, and laws are enacted. We do not sit in the Oval Office. We do not have the president's ear. We cannot take away his pens.

But we have the power of our convictions which are backed up by facts, by research, by journalism, and for some of us, by the basic tenets of our faith tradition. That is not nothing; that is something.

We have the power of showing up, the more the merrier. We have the power of reminding those whom we elected that another election will come around, and each vote is equally valuable. We have the power to go to someone who is hurting and angry and afraid and to say, “You are not alone. I am here with you.”

**Having power is not the issue, using our power is.** Because if we do not pick up that pen and stick on that stamp; if we do not pick up the phone and call the people who need to be called out; if we do not exercise our right to vote; if we do not go to the one who is hurting and angry and afraid, and stand by them—then we have wasted all that others have earned for us, all those rights that people fought and died for.

But to all of you, I will say this: you have a beautiful soul, do not pollute it with hate. Fire it with righteous anger, but do not let hate take over.

You and I are capable of doing small things in great love, as Mother Teresa once said. This war will not be fought in huge battles but in small, every day, every moment acts of resistance and hope.

You are not alone. You have friends and colleagues. You may have to travel a ways to find them. You may have to start therapy. You may need to get off Facebook and Twitter for a while. But you are not alone, and you are not crazy.

You and I need bread for this journey, and really good hiking boots, and a walking stick, and more water than we need—so we can share it with others. We need tents and sleeping bags and camp stoves. I write metaphorically, of course, but what I mean is this: this journey will not end tomorrow or next week. We are in this for the long haul. We need to be prepared and healthy. Rested and well-read. Not overindulging in the things that are bad for us. We need to be armed with the facts of reality, not the latest theory. We cannot use up all our energy now; more is going to come.

And maybe more now than ever we need art. We need music and beauty. We need all the gifts Mother Nature has to offer. We need [Corita Kent](#) and [Christo](#) and [Banksy](#). We need [Mary Oliver](#) and [Langston Hughes](#) and [Andy Borowitz](#). We need [Bruce Springsteen](#). We need to breathe clean air and watch the waves on the ocean or get up early enough to see the sunrise or just go for a walk and say hi to the neighbors.

We are not done, friends. Not by a long shot.

We have only just begun.

Originally posted at [Hold Fast to What Is Good](#)