

the modern **domestic woman**



RESISTANCE IN REAL LIFE: EVERYDAY
ACTIONS THAT CREATE CHANGE



Hey, friend!

Lately, we've been hearing a common question from members of our community: "I want to do something. But I don't feel comfortable going to a march. What else can I do?"

This guide was created as a response to that question — and as a reflection of this moment we're all living in. With so much happening in our communities and across the globe — politically, socially, environmentally — it's natural to want to resist. But the truth is, resistance isn't a one-size-fits-all act. It's not only protests and picket signs. It's not only showing up on the front lines.

When we think of resistance, our minds often go straight to those powerful images of marches and rallies. And while those moments matter, they're not the only way to push back against injustice.

In fact, many of us carry resistance in quieter, deeper ways every single day — in how we speak up, who we support, what we choose to do with our time, and how we show up in our communities.

This guide is here to help you recognize that your resistance counts, even if it doesn't look like anyone else's. Especially if it doesn't.

You don't need to be loud to be powerful. You don't need to be everywhere to make a difference. Let's explore what real-life resistance looks like — on your terms.

Let's Start with Mental Health

If you've hesitated to attend a rally or march, you're not alone.

- Crowds can feel overwhelming.
- Loud noises and chaotic energy can trigger anxiety or bring up past trauma.
- You may worry about what could happen — even if it's unlikely.

These are all valid concerns. You do not have to explain or justify them. Resistance must be sustainable — and sustainable resistance starts with your well-being.

 Mental health is not the reason you're opting out. It's a foundation for how you're choosing to show up in a way that's safe and aligned for you.

Educate Yourself to Stand Firm in Your Values

You don't have to yell on the steps of a building to take a stand. Reading, watching, listening, and reflecting are all powerful. It means when conversations arise — at work, online, or around your dinner table — you're equipped to hold your ground with compassion and facts.

Why This Matters:

- Misinformation spreads quickly. Education is one of the best defenses.
- Values aren't just words — they're lived. Knowing where you stand helps you act with intention.
- Not everyone has the time or energy to stay informed. When you do, you become a resource for others.



Need a place to start? Download our [MDW Values Guide](#) to name your core values and use them as a compass in daily life.

Reliable & Balanced News Outlets to Explore:

The truth is, there's no perfectly unbiased source — which is why it's important to read widely, fact-check, and think critically. Here are some suggestions for outlets that make an effort to consider a range of perspectives and provide balanced reporting.



BBC News

A global perspective that helps contextualize U.S. issues in broader trends.



ProPublica

Investigative journalism focused on holding power accountable.



Reuters

International news agency with a strong reputation for accuracy and neutrality.



Ground News

Read the news from multiple perspectives. See through media bias from local and international sources.

You Can Resist in Your Own Way — Every Single Day

You may be thinking: "I don't have time to volunteer or attend events."
And we hear you. But resistance doesn't have to take over your schedule. It can look like choosing one small act of impact that aligns with your values.
Let's explore what that might look like.

Each of the actions on the next few pages includes ideas, examples, and how to get involved, even with limited time or energy.

Fill a Community Fridge or Pantry

What It Is: Donating nutritious food, household essentials, or personal care items to mutual aid efforts that directly serve people in need — no questions asked. It's a simple, direct act of resistance against food insecurity and systems that devalue people in poverty.

Why It Matters: Everyone deserves dignity — that includes food and clothing you'd proudly serve or wear yourself.

Examples & Why They Matter:

 **Stock a Local Community Fridge with Fresh Produce or Protein** – Fruits, veggies, cheese, eggs, and culturally familiar foods go a long way toward nourishing families.

➔ Fresh food empowers people to cook, feel cared for, and maintain their health.

 **Donate New Socks, Underwear, or Menstrual Products to a Local Shelter** – These items are often in short supply but essential for comfort, hygiene, and confidence.

➔ Clean, new basics provide immediate relief and send a powerful message: you matter.

Find Opportunities:

- Search: "community fridge + [your town]" or "mutual aid + [your city]"
- Ask your library, YMCA, or community center if they host or know of local food access points
- Check out [LittleFreePantry.org](https://www.littlefreepantry.org) to see if there's a mini pantry in your area



Support Your Local Library

What It Is: Libraries are more than buildings with books — they are trusted community hubs for information, connection, and resistance through education. Supporting your library strengthens free public access to knowledge and cultivates equity in your neighborhood.

Examples & Why They Matter:

● **Get Your Library Card and Check Out Books Instead of Buying** – Circulating books saves money, reduces waste, and helps libraries demonstrate demand (which affects funding).

➡ Every checkout helps protect access to diverse ideas and authors.

● **Bring Your Kids to Storytime, Teen Nights, or Book Clubs** – These programs introduce young people to new perspectives, community belonging, and a love for learning.

➡ Showing up for library programs helps them stay funded and inclusive.

● **Attend Talks or Events That Raise Awareness About Social Justice** – Libraries often host events on racial equity, LGBTQ+ rights, banned books, voting access, and more.

➡ Your attendance supports open dialogue and helps keep these important conversations going.

Find Events & Get Involved:

- Visit your local library's website or follow them on social media
- Ask a librarian how to join or volunteer
- Suggest a speaker, book, or event that supports equity and justice



Join a Community or Environmental Clean-Up

What It Is: Volunteering to clean parks, rivers, or trails in your area.

Examples & Why They Matter:

-  **River Clean-Up Days** – Removing trash and debris from waterways protects local ecosystems, improves water quality, and shows care for shared natural resources.
-  **Trail Restoration Projects** – Restoring trails ensures safe, accessible outdoor spaces for everyone and strengthens your connection to the land and community stewardship.
-  **Neighborhood Trash Walks with Friends or Kids** – Picking up litter in your own neighborhood teaches responsibility, creates visible change, and models community pride and respect for others.

Find Opportunities:

- Search “environmental cleanup near me” or check your city or county park district website
- Follow your local forest preserve, conservation district, or environmental nonprofit
- Visit [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org) or [Idealist.org](https://www.idealists.org) and filter by environmental causes



Attend City Council or School Board Meetings

What It Is: Showing up (in person or virtually) to observe, learn, and participate in the decisions that directly impact your daily life — from zoning and policing to school curriculum and community funding. Local government is where national issues become personal, and your presence truly matters.

Examples & Why They Matter:

-  **Listening to Proposed Policies** – Just being in the room helps you stay informed about issues like housing, public safety, education, and infrastructure — and lets elected officials know people are paying attention.
 - ➔ Knowledge is power, and it's hard to resist what you don't understand.
-  **Asking Questions or Submitting a Public Comment** – Most meetings allow for public input — written or spoken — giving you the chance to voice concerns, share personal stories, or support community efforts.
 - ➔ Your perspective can influence decisions and remind leaders who they serve.
-  **Encouraging Friends to Attend Too** – Bringing others along helps reduce the intimidation factor, spreads awareness, and strengthens community pressure on decision-makers.
 - ➔ Collective presence sends a message: we're watching, and we care.

How to Start:

- Visit your city's website and sign up for meeting alerts
- Watch live streams if you can't go in person

Offer Your Skills as a Gift

What It Is: Volunteering your professional expertise — not just your time — to directly support organizations, families, or movements that align with your values.

It's one of the most impactful forms of resistance because it helps grassroots efforts thrive with quality support they might not otherwise afford.



Examples & Why They Matter:



A Designer Creates Branding for a Local Nonprofit – Strong, professional visuals help nonprofits attract donors, share their mission, and build credibility.

➔ Design isn't just aesthetic — it's advocacy in visual form.



A Therapist Leads a Free Support Group – Mental health professionals can normalize help-seeking and provide tools to families navigating stress, grief, or systemic challenges.

➔ Your guidance could ripple through generations.



A Lawyer Gives Free Legal Advice to an Immigrant Family – Access to accurate, compassionate legal counsel can mean the difference between safety and crisis for vulnerable individuals.

➔ Legal literacy is a powerful form of justice and protection.

How to Find Opportunities to Use Your Skills:

- Reach out directly: DM or email organizations you admire and ask, “Is there a way I can support your work with [your skill]?”
- Ask your local school, church, or community center: Many need guest speakers, workshop leaders, or behind-the-scenes help — they just may not know what to ask for yet.
- Team up with friends or coworkers: Offer a joint service day (designers + copywriters, therapists + yoga instructors, etc.) to multiply your impact.

Volunteer for Local Causes

What It Is: Giving your time, energy, or resources to organizations doing work that matters to you.

Whether it's once a month or once a year, local volunteering is a meaningful form of resistance that centers care, solidarity, and shared responsibility.

Below are some examples in Kane County that MDW Supports.



Examples & Why They Matter:

 **Kayla's Hope** (Mental Health Awareness & Suicide Prevention) – Raises awareness about youth mental health and supports education and programming to save lives.

➡ By volunteering, you help break stigma and make sure young people feel seen, heard, and supported.

 **Refuge for Women** (Long-Term Care for Survivors of Trafficking) – Provides safe housing, trauma-informed care, and life-skills training for women rebuilding after exploitation.

➡ Your time could directly support a survivor's path to healing and independence.

 **Lazarus House** (Homeless Shelter & Transitional Housing) – Offers emergency shelter, food, and case management for people experiencing homelessness.

➡ Every volunteer helps uphold someone's dignity and stability during a vulnerable time.

How to Find Opportunities:

- Use [VolunteerMatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org), [Idealist.org](https://www.idealist.org), or your local United Way
- Ask places you already engage with (your gym, school, faith group, etc.) if they partner with local causes
- Follow local organizations on social media to see when they need extra help
- MDW often shares volunteer opportunities on Instagram and Facebook

Use Your Voice

What It Is: Contacting decision-makers — from your city council to Congress — to share your views, ask for change, or advocate for policies that align with your values.

You don't need to be an expert or activist to speak up — just informed and sincere.



Examples & Why They Matter:

-  **Email Your City Council About Police Reform or Education Funding** – Local government often controls budgets and policies that shape daily life in your community.
 - ➔ A short, respectful email can push key issues onto the agenda or show community concern.
-  **Call Your State Rep to Support Maternal Health Bills** – Phone calls to state-level officials are tracked and can directly influence how legislators vote on critical public health or justice issues.
 - ➔ Even a 2-minute call helps amplify the voices of those most impacted.
-  **Share Well-Sourced Info on Your Social Media** – Raising awareness through trusted sources helps your circle make informed choices and feel less alone in what they care about.
 - ➔ Digital resistance counts — especially when it leads to real-world action.

How to Find Opportunities:

- Find your representatives at [commoncause.org](https://www.commoncause.org)
- Sign up for updates from orgs aligned with your values (like MomsRising, ACLU, Everytown, or Color of Change)
- Save a call or email script in your Notes app so you're ready to respond when action is needed



What's Your Resistance Style?

Use the prompts below to choose your resistance pathway:

What issues do I care most deeply about?

What's a form of resistance that fits my energy and bandwidth right now?

What small step can I take this week?



*You are part
of the change!*

There is no single way to resist injustice — and no one right way to show up. You're allowed to opt out of one method and pour yourself into another. Maybe marches aren't your path, but mutual aid is. Maybe you're not ready to speak in public, but you're writing letters, raising kids with empathy, or volunteering behind the scenes.

You're allowed to feel scared, overwhelmed, or unsure. You might even feel too small to make a difference — but let us remind you: the most powerful movements are made up of regular people doing small, meaningful things with intention and heart.

You don't have to do everything. You just have to do something. Something that aligns with your values, your strengths, and your capacity.

Because when you choose to act — in your neighborhood, your workplace, your home — you are resisting.

And those small steps? They absolutely build a movement.

