Seven Principles of Buddhist Activism

What distinguishes Buddhist activism from any other kind of activism?

1. Setting Motivation
   Our political actions can be dedicated to the benefit and awakening of all beings. Holding this, the action itself moves beyond mere do-gooding or fighting so-called oppression and into the realm of dharma practice.

2. Interbeing
   First, we see alive and present in our own minds the same external structures of greed, hatred, and delusion that we are fighting against. We bow to them. Then we realize there is no "other" to fight against anyway.

3. Not Knowing
   Our job as activists is to learn to hold the multiple questions that arise in our work. We don't have to have the answer; we want to be present with whatever is coming up. Maybe we are wrong.

4. Opening to Suffering
   Through our meditation practice, we learn to be present in the face of suffering. We take this skill out into the world and don't turn away as we face all levels of injustice.

5. Knowing Equanimity
   Can we bring equanimity to all of our actions? Can we act without being attached to the result of our actions? Can we recognize the impossible nature of our tasks and act anyway?

6. Being Peace
   Beyond ideological differences, there is a place we can, as Buddhist activists, stand together: our commitment to be in ourselves that which we are trying to bring about in the world.

7. Mindfulness in Action
   The nondistracted state of mindful awareness must accompany and underlie Buddhist activists in our work to change the world. It is the fundamental nature of our being. There is no separation.

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