

# NEON

## LEADERSHIP // READING // 2016

*"There are really only two questions for activists: what do you want to achieve? And who do you want to be? And those two questions are deeply entwined. Every minute of every hour of every day you are making the world, just as you are making yourself, and you might as well do it with generosity and kindness and style."* – [Rebecca Solnit](#), activist and writer

We often think that if we could just have the right analysis, the right strategy or the right people then we can achieve our goals. However, **how** we work together in pursuing this strategy will often make or break our work. All too often we forget the cultural foundations and the kind of leadership we need if we are to create empowering, inclusive and impactful groups, organisations and movements.

This reading explores our way of being – both at an individual level and in how we relate to each other. To do this we will need to go a little deeper. We'll be reflecting on some of our motivations for the doing the work we do, how we've experienced movement culture and asking ourselves what are the leadership qualities we each need to develop in ourselves if we are to help build safe and empowering spaces.

Please note that this reading list is usually accompanied by training session(s) but we thought it would be useful to provide it for those wanting to do their own reading.

### ESSENTIAL:

**NEON Power & Privilege Guide**, (This contains a lot of other resources that could be useful for future reference, not necessary to read all now):

[bit.ly/1NP2Bci](http://bit.ly/1NP2Bci) (Toolkit)

**Undoing the Politics of Powerlessness**, Yotam Moram:

[bit.ly/1Wlf2il](http://bit.ly/1Wlf2il) (Article)

**9 Ways We Can Make Social Justice Movements Less Elitist and More Accessible**, Kai Cheng Thom:

[bit.ly/1VqVCUD](http://bit.ly/1VqVCUD) (Article)

**Organizer's Transforming the Practice of Social Justice**, Six themes on where the movement is stuck, Movement Strategy Centre:

[bit.ly/1vELX4S](http://bit.ly/1vELX4S) (Excerpt from full report: [bit.ly/HsMRKV](http://bit.ly/HsMRKV))

**#BlackLivesMatter: Lessons from a Leader-ful Movement**, Jodie Tonita [http:](http://)

[bit.ly/1Z1XCFZ](http://bit.ly/1Z1XCFZ) (Article)

## OPTIONAL:

So there are a lot of resources!

Please don't feel pressured to read / watch all of these, especially the books! However, these are things that have inspired and helped us, so we wanted to include them for your future reference. Please dip in and out of them, in preparation for the retreat, and beyond.

**Torobaka: Enter the Arena**, Akhram Khan & Israel Galván:

[bit.ly/1VMJRwA](https://bit.ly/1VMJRwA) (Video)

**The Drum Major's Instinct**, Martin Luther King:

[bit.ly/1zVCkgW](https://bit.ly/1zVCkgW) (Video)

**TED talk on vulnerability**, Brene Brown:

[bit.ly/XwCm0S](https://bit.ly/XwCm0S) (Video)

**Public Narrative, Collective Action and Power**, Marshall Ganz:

[bit.ly/1aOfJrF](https://bit.ly/1aOfJrF) (Article)

**Heart and soul: Meet the UK Groups Changing Activism**, Jannat Hossain, Suki Ferguson and Guppi Bola:

[bit.ly/1XyRI0c](https://bit.ly/1XyRI0c) (Article)

**White Privilege, Unpacking the Invisible Backpack**, Peggy McIntosh:

[bit.ly/1hWFvRu](https://bit.ly/1hWFvRu) (Article)

**How to Decolonise Mental Health**, Penny Wangari-Jones:

[bit.ly/1XeGCeI](https://bit.ly/1XeGCeI) (Article)

**How to Stay Human**, Charlotte Millar and Deborah Grayson:

[bit.ly/1Wlg6mT](https://bit.ly/1Wlg6mT) (Article)

**The Rise And Fall Of Default Man**, Grayson Perry:

[bit.ly/1s9NT2s](https://bit.ly/1s9NT2s) (Article)

**bell hooks: Buddhism, the Beats and Loving Blackness**, New York Times interview:

[nyti.ms/1NJm5N9](https://nyti.ms/1NJm5N9) (Interview)

**How and why to be a leader and not a wannabe**, Umair Haque:

[bit.ly/18JkKwK](https://bit.ly/18JkKwK) (Article)

**Unbowed**, Wangari Maathai:

[bit.ly/1sLW1cG](https://bit.ly/1sLW1cG) (Book)

**Greenbelt movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experience**, Wangari Maathai:

[bit.ly/25AZGfq](https://bit.ly/25AZGfq) (Book)

*This reading list is the end result of a lot collective thinking and practice. NEON led the synthesis of these insights to create the reading list, with the support of the Public Interest Research Centre (PIRC). PIRC designed the reading list and made it beautiful.*