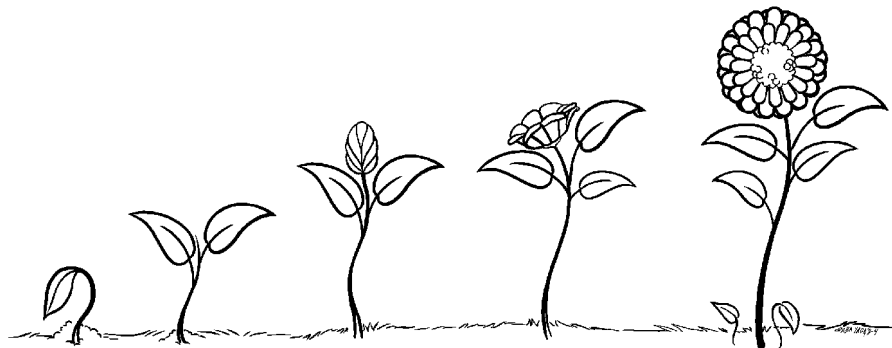


*Despite what some believe, patterns of harm or abuse can be broken and left in the cemetery of the past. Every individual has the power to break those patterns and redefine and recreate their self. Who you are is not defined by someone else, a group of people or even the political ideas you may possess. Ultimately you are responsible for your actions - which include any and all changes you make to yourself that ultimately determine your actions moving forward. **Any or all mistakes you made in the past - or even yesterday - don't have to define who you could be today...***

...Every individual has the potential to overcome obstacles (whether imposed by society or carried on from personal trauma) that stand in the way of personal change. We (the authors of this text) believe that rebellion isn't only a business district littered with burning cars and broken glass but also an internal transformation that liberates an individual from the indoctrinated ways people have been conditioned to relate to one another. And that also includes the often harmful ways we each tend to treat ourselves.



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CANCELED

A Short DIY Guide to

Surviving & Recovering from Social Banishment

Written by

A Conspiracy to Arm Self-Care

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So. You've just been canceled. Or maybe you've been secretly canceled for a while and didn't find out until just now. Or you've known that you've been canceled for a while but are handling it worse than you imagined. First things first. **Take a deep breath.** Sit back...and relax. Despite how awful you are feeling right now: believe it or not, these feelings will pass. You will get through this. Maybe you don't feel any of that is possible because you feel traumatized. And if you are wondering, **yes, it's totally valid to feel traumatized from being canceled.** Every individual experiences things in their own unique way. So of course some people will find themselves traumatized by the experience of being canceled. Nevertheless, the mind (and body) are notorious for being amazingly adaptive and resilient! If you made the decision to pick up this zine and are currently reading these words, you've already demonstrated a will to push forward. Let's keep that momentum going!

Surviving and recovering from the experience of being canceled can take some time. The most common feeling is that there is no way beyond this experience. But there are multiple ways you can move forward. To simplify things a little bit, you could view the situation

actions don't exist in a vacuum. This applies to everyone, from you to the people who canceled you to everyone else - and they affect other people with complex histories and stories which are often not acknowledged in mainstream discourse.

Sometime this can be a difficult lesson to learn: respecting our own realities as well as others. Someone can feel hurt - by our actions or our inactions or our speech or our silence - and that doesn't necessarily reflect an objective reality. We can respect someone's feelings of hurt while respecting our own feelings - even if that feeling is that we did nothing wrong. We are separate people, making sense of our own reasons.

Every individual has the potential to overcome obstacles (whether imposed by society or carried on from personal trauma) that stand in the way of personal change. We (the authors of this text) believe that rebellion isn't only a business district littered with burning cars and broken glass but also an internal transformation that liberates an individual from the indoctrinated ways people have been conditioned to relate to one another. And that also includes the often harmful ways we each tend to treat ourselves.

Just remember: nobody lives forever, and every day you open your eyes is a new day, ending one minute at a time. So spread your arms wide, take a deep breath and make every second count!

This text was written by an informal collective of canceled and/or socially banned individuals who, rather than resigning from a life of anarchy believe in expanding it to include survival and growth beyond the politics of social banishing.

recognize your transformation – or are just more forgiving! Would you rather be part of a large group of people who you don't truly connect with on that level, or a smaller group of people who you can trust and who accept you for who you are? Perhaps you don't want a group dynamic. Maybe you are ready to try things independently on your own. Go for it! Shit, even lone wolves are not alone.

The point is, **the world is wide and there are so many people in it and so much to see and experience.** Try to remember that cancel culture does not encompass all of society, and actually only constitutes a relatively small portion of people.

Your relationship with yourself is the most important one you will build - it's the basis from which you relate to everything and everyone else. Remember, it is important to understand the reasons you respond in the ways you do, and the emotions behind the ways you act/ed, so that you can make sense of and understand yourself.

From experience, some of us have come to understand that working through issues with others can be a little easier when you do your best to avoid being defensive, especially when someone expresses struggles related to your own. One way to minimize defensive reactions is to recognize someone's expressed struggles as an opportunity to see how they are interconnected to your own. This way, you can see the possibility of working together to overcome them.

Despite what we - people in general - might feel sometimes, our

one of two ways:

1. **You could see it as total defeat and remain endlessly paralyzed by depression,** day after day, sleepless night after night, submerged in the spiraling thoughts of regret, guilt, despair, wondering how it all happened, what you should or shouldn't have done, and so on and so forth.

Or...

2. **You could see this all as an opportunity to recreate yourself.** Because at the end of the day, nobody can change your mind or behavior except you.

Okay, calm down, nobody said it was all your fault! Maybe it was all a misunderstanding. Maybe even someone with social capital on a power trip canceled you just because they saw you as a threat in some way. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter. You've been canceled. And even if you don't feel there is anything to change, you certainly don't want a repeat of any of this shit, right? So perhaps something *can* change. This is a good time for self-reflection.

Self-reflection is (in our opinion at least) a wonderful way to patiently fine-tune one's self with precision. There's nothing like taking a hot bath (or whatever preferred quiet, relaxing activity) and just reflecting on past conversations, choices, decisions, actions - in general and also specific to the present situation - envisioning different ways things could have played out based on different

choices and actions. And fuck it, why not also reflect on your choices in terms of who to associate with, individually or in groups? This doesn't have to remain fixed on past tense. This can be looking forward. For example rather than obsessively saying, "I *should/shouldn't* have..." instead try, "I'm going to start doing this", or "This time I will play it safe and not do that..." and so on. These types of internal conversations can help you begin to move forward by serving as a reminder that you are not fixed in the past. Traumatic experiences often become emotional prisons that prevent many from envisioning themselves in the present or future. We feel one of the most important tasks of recovery from any experience is the acknowledging of one's self as transient and in motion. Despite what some believe, patterns of harm or abuse can be broken and left in the cemetery of the past. Every individual has the power to break those patterns and redefine and recreate their self. Who you are is not defined by someone else, a group of people or even the political ideas you may possess. Ultimately *you* are responsible for your actions - which include any and all changes you make to yourself that ultimately determine your actions moving forward. **Any or all mistakes you made in the past - or even yesterday - don't have to define who you could be today.** And even when people (who struggle to move forward themselves) bring up your past, it's important to remember that you are a new person hearing of your past self. Sometimes the only connection between your new self and your past self are those who bring up the past - perhaps because they struggle with moving forward themselves.

Now I know what you're thinking. Social media sure has a funny way of not moving on from the past as well! And honestly that's a

produces them, some people would rather inflict their own harm on others disguised in the name of "social justice". So as you reflect, remember to take this into perspective. Change and minimizing harm toward others can apply to *anyone* who actually gives a shit about personal transformation - it's not *all* on you.

So let's pretend we can see into the future. Let's say you've transformed and become a more patient, compassionate, and less harmful person. You've learned from your mistakes and everything! But you are still canceled and unwelcomed in the spaces you used to enjoy being part of. Even if you have nothing left to 'knock off', you still find yourself....canceled. Well shit, what to do now? What will your life look like moving forward - even from this point? Maybe some of the activities you used to do, or social groups you were part of are no longer an option. For example, for many activists, movement-building and the group dynamic WAS their life. Does that mean you have to quit being an activist altogether? Change your values due to being banned from the things you valued doing the most? Not at all! Sometimes we get stuck in a loop. We think that everything we see and experience is all there is. We forget that the world is huge - especially the world of activism.

Remember what we said earlier? That not all people feel the same way or even go online, etc? It's the same within activism too. The fact is, there is no single monolith community of activists but many different circles and cliques and small groups - and solo individuals too! If the group dynamic is what you desire most then fine, create a new group! Maybe this new group or affinity will be a little smaller, but at least it will include people who appreciate you and

to torture yourself with guilt to “learn your lesson”. You are already hurting enough. And either with friends or all on your own, it’s time to start looking ahead. At the end of the day, there is only *you* who can make any changes, and therefore **it is only you who can forgive yourself and be the lover and caretaker you need**. Maybe for some this sounds lonely and depressing, but why should it be?

We live in a world where we are taught to believe our value can only be measured by how many friends (including facebook(/instagram/twitter/snapchat/whatever friends) we have, or how much social capital and popularity we possess. Rarely do we find in this world any message emphasizing the importance of self-love and self-care. Take a look in the mirror. That’s your warrior, your lover, and your fighter! The person you see in the mirror has been on your side, in your corner since the day you were born. And **it’s totally okay to ask that person for help and support** when you’ve lost everyone else.

In terms of trauma and harm, **industrial society is a huge pot of boiling traumas that spill over and burn all of us**. Harm is felt, reproduced, and repackaged with every personality that’s exposed to a world of conflict. Despite the elitism of innocence professed by many cancelers and call-out warriors, every single person has, at one point or another, caused harm upon another. There is no such thing as a person who has never exhibited “problematic behavior”. Capitalist society creates the perfect breeding ground for competitive social hierarchy and power play. **The hard truth is that rather than acknowledge the roots of social harm and trauma, and take aim at the racist, sexist, speciesist, ableist, queerphobic structure that**

fucking shame. But there’s some good news! Social media isn’t the sole judge of who you are. And not everyone on social media compulsively believes in everything they read on the internet. While within some social circles, one’s past can follow them forever, it is important to remember that an entire world of people do exist outside the internet. Not everyone goes on social media, and not everyone - on or offline - believes that a person’s past mistakes are what defines them in the present. Put simply, **if the present changes you make for yourself disallow things in the past from ever repeating, those things only identify who you *used* to be, not who you *are***. And in that case, you can simply inform people that you no longer are that person. **On the contrary, if the mistakes you made in the past continue to happen today and tomorrow, then being canceled on or offline is irrelevant. You will be “canceled” every time you meet someone and do whatever it is that got you canceled in the first place**. So from that point forward the solution is pretty obvious: Knock it off! (of course, that includes actually reflecting on your actions and how they negatively impact others and yourself, etc)

So the good news is this; whatever you did to get yourself canceled is 100 percent within your power and control to eliminate. Again, of course this is assuming you were at fault in the first place which, if you don’t feel you were then perhaps re-evaluating the kinds of friends or social circles you surround yourself with is important too.

So! You’ve re-examined, re-evaluated and made some changes to your way of thinking and behavior. But you still feel like shit. You got canceled. You can’t go online without seeing your name and a

shitload of people taking trash on you. Your phone is going off less than ever. It's bad. **Let's get physical!**

For many people, physical activity can help boost one's mood and overall well-being. So shit, if it can work for some people, why not give it a try?

Stretching is known for not only decreasing muscle tension but also decreasing emotional tension as well - and it's something almost everyone can do, whether it's sit-down or lying down stretches for a few seconds at a time, or full-body stretching for an hour!

Because come on, just admit it, the worst thing you can probably do right now is lay around in bed all day. As tempting as it sounds - and sometimes rest *is* good during times like this - keeping your body active will help expand your range of motion, keep your blood circulating, keep your metabolism up, and keep your mind preoccupied. Exercise in general, (especially cardio) is known to help boost endorphins which can help counter some of the shock and trembling often associated with trauma. If your goal is to use this whole experience as an opportunity to transform yourself, why not transform your relationship with your body as well?

Of course, it is not necessary to exercise in order to overcome what you are going through, but for some people it definitely helps! If you aren't totally broke, consider getting a gym membership. In addition to providing a wide variety of workout equipment for all abilities, gyms can be a passive social environment. Or how about mixed martial arts? Can't go wrong with learning more ways to

defend yourself!

If you're too broke for that (and trust us, we get it!), find a nearby park to run or walk around - or just sit and watch the birds if that's all you're physically up for. It may sound boring at first but anything that gets you off your ass and out of the house will help! And we understand that not everyone has the ability to get physical. So get creative! Many people build positive relationships with their selves through creating art and crafts. With this new transformation, anything is possible. Envision yourself trying something new and fun! Dare to be adventurous!

Set a goal for yourself - any goal! Whether it's running a mile or walking to the mailbox, setting physical and or mental goals and achieving them have the potential to help you boost your confidence and redevelop a sense of love and affinity for yourself.

Guilt and regret are some of the heaviest emotions when experiencing being canceled. It's especially awful when a person feels like they've been totally abandoned by their friends, and deemed unforgivable. For some, this could lead to total self-destruction. It is within the struggle with these emotions that it is the most important to remember to **forgive yourself!** Despite what those who canceled you might say or feel, every living person has made mistakes, hurt someone they loved, or generally speaking, *done fucked up..* Whether it was intentional or unintentional, it happened, **but it doesn't have to happen again.** Regardless of any consequences you may have experienced in response, you are still the one who ultimately decides a change. And you also don't have