



Embodied Contribution Consulting

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# Pocket of Liberation

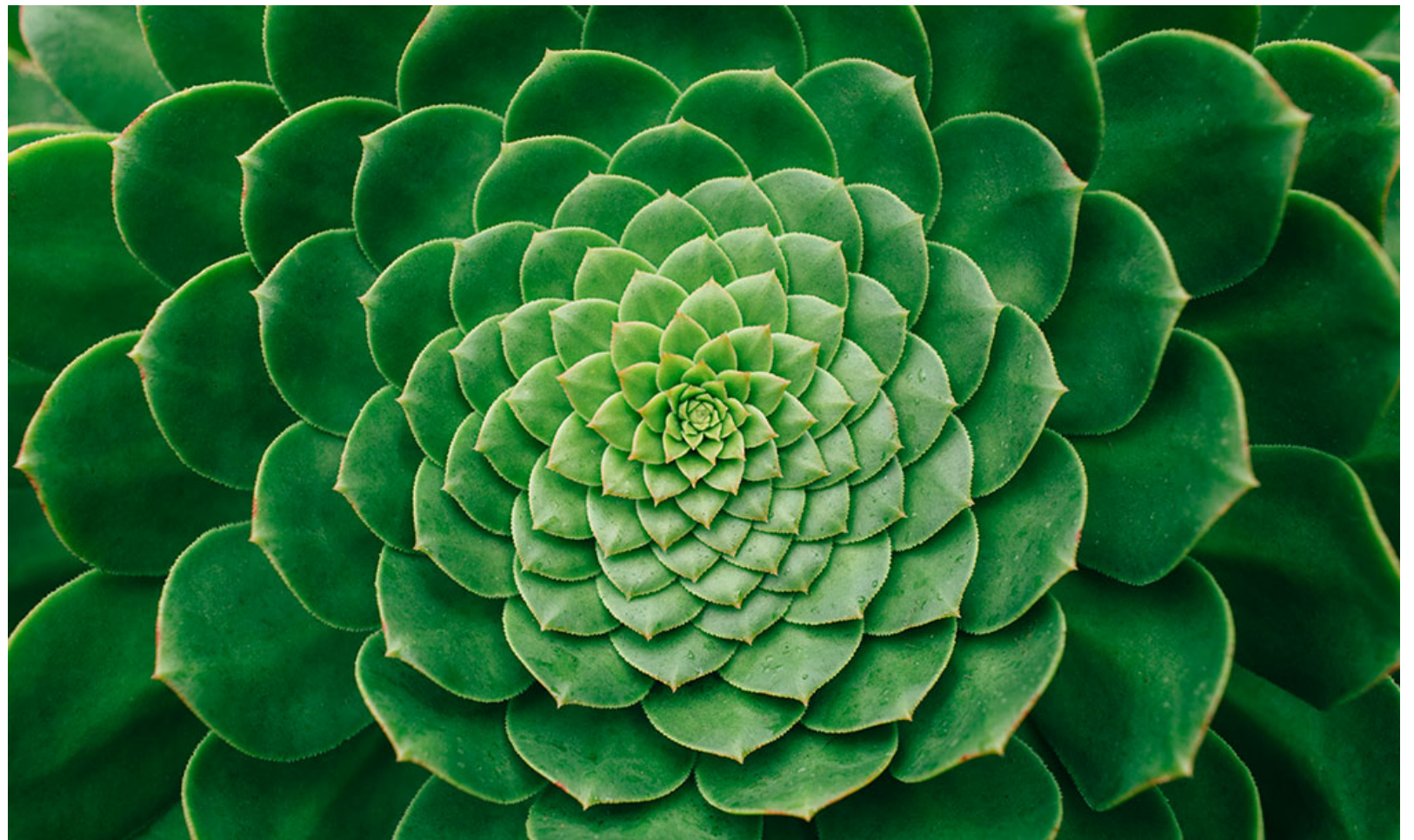
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**Liberation is a practice**, not a destination. If we have a yoga or meditation practice we know that every day of our practice is different. Some days our practice flows easily and effortlessly. Some days it is hard or painful. Some days we refuse to even try. It is the same with any other practice, such as parenting or resting.

Maintaining our practice requires that we cultivate a relationship with **Liberation**: *the state of being in movement, partnership, and co-creation with the Aliveness of life*. Life is in a constant state of movement through seasons and cycles. To maintain our practice, we learn how to show up and move with the changes. We learn to endure the constant newness of being *in movement* with life. It is our engaged acceptance of life's movement that allows us to stick with our practice and produce the results we want.

Partnering with life means cooperating with and supporting cycles of change. In contrast, practicing oppression means refusing to cooperate with life and attempting to force life to stay the same or stay still. We force relationships to



stay the same and they stagnate. We force power dynamics to stay the same and society stagnates. We force ourselves to stay the same and we stagnate. When people stagnate it becomes a source of *depression*.

By refusing to move with life, we remove ourselves from the flow of life's change. This has three devastating consequences.

First, we feel profoundly alone. We do not simply feel separate from our communities, which is bad enough; we feel alone in the universe. This is a colder, deeper form of feeling alone that is harder to endure. Humans are resilient and can bounce back from unthinkable pain, especially with community support. But this all-encompassing aloneness is unbearable. To cope, we self-soothe with numbing behaviors like

binging. We binge drink, binge eat, binge exercise, binge technology, binge sex, etc. We are desperate to soothe this devastating aloneness. When we only self-soothe alone we can find ourselves trapped in a cycle of numbness (binging) and overstimulation (caffeine to undo the numb/ depressed feeling). As we continue to numb out, and increase our tolerance to stimulants, we need more and more of any substance to feel numb or to feel alive. What we really need is the soothing balm of connection. We need relationship and we can find this, at the deepest level, by reconnecting to life itself.

The second impact of refusing to be in movement with life is that we remove ourselves from the flow of life that will inevitably change the circumstances we dislike. We eliminate the opportunity for life to do the work for us. We rob life of the space to bring change *to us*. If we refuse to use this flow of change, we must *force* the world to give us what we want. We dominate, control, suppress, and strategize like demented chess players, trying to orchestrate life when we are merely chess pieces ourselves. We expend immense amounts of energy (time, money, physical effort) trying to force life to change. All the while we pretend we are more equipped than life to be the conductor of life's orchestra.

The third impact of refusing to be in movement, partnership and co-creation with life is that we use oppression as a life-strategy, and we become a source of oppression rather than an antidote. When we dominate, control, and suppress the Aliveness of ourselves and others we create more of the problem we want to eradicate. We cannot force other people

to be less forceful. We cannot fight oppression with oppression. This profound truth has been spoken by many well-respected thought leaders.

"Hate cannot drive our hate, only love can do that."  
- Martin Luther King Jr.

"The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house."  
- Audre Lorde

"You cannot fight fire with fire."  
- colloquialism from The United States of America

"The serious problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."  
- Albert Einstein

The good news is we can choose Liberation moment by moment. Regardless of what others do, no matter what we chose the moment before, in *this* moment we can choose to be in partnership, movement and co-creation with Aliveness.

Cooperating with Aliveness gives us the gift of change, the deep and profound intimacy we long for, and personal integrity as we act in alignment with our values. We may not see the societal change we crave today, but we can honor ourselves, each other, and our collective Aliveness by seeing liberation as a practice - a living, dynamic strategy - not a destination. ***When we view liberation as a practice rather than a destination, we can live liberated lives, even in an oppressive world.***

# What is Aliveness?

The nature of Aliveness is to express what exists. As such, Aliveness prefers honesty to safety. But, Aliveness is not neutral. Aliveness cares about our well-being in all ways; mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually/energetically. It is inclusive in that way. It will not sacrifice our well-being in one domain to support another. At times, our Aliveness will choose to express itself despite the repercussions. Our fear may counsel us to dominate, control, or suppress the Aliveness in ourselves or others to feel safe. But Aliveness exists to be expressed. That is its singular purpose. It will never bow down to our fear's desire to play it safe. Aliveness wants so much more for us than safety; Aliveness wants our freedom, totally and completely. Aliveness wants to be free of all oppression, inside and out. Your Aliveness will settle for nothing less than your total Liberation.

Why humans began to fear Aliveness in another conversation, but the power of human beings and their Aliveness *is* awe-

inspiring. The word awe encapsulates the dual experience of reverence and terror that humans have for other humans. We have free will and limitless capacity. We can dream up endless new inventions, build endless new tools, and think up endless new ways to express our Aliveness. When powerful humans exercise their free will with an awareness of interdependence and a belief in the sacredness of life, we can do wondrous things. When we act without regard for others, we wield ourselves as weapons of mass destruction. It is wise to be in awe.

At some point humans decided to use their power over other humans, motivated by fear of the Aliveness of those “others.” With that decision, those fearful humans weaponized themselves. Seeing this terrifying expression of Aliveness, the “others” weaponized themselves in response. Reciprocating domination continues because the nature of conflict is that it escalates. The only way out of oppression is to forge a path to the safety of Liberation, even in a world of Oppression.

Fortunately, the safety we seek *can* be found in Liberation, the state of being in movement, partnership, and co-creation with the Aliveness of life. When we flow with the constant movement of life - impermanence - we are never stuck with circumstances we dislike. We let them change. When we co-create with life, we give more of our Aliveness to life, influencing its movement. When we partner with life, we accept that while we may not get everything we want all of the time, we can work with life for the highest good of ALL life. Which includes *us*! Over time we begin to see life's wisdom and we develop reverence for the wisdom of Aliveness.



## The Safety of Aliveness

It can feel scary to put down the armor and weapons of domination, control and suppression. We can feel defenseless in a world where others continue to wield those weapons. However, we do not have to be defenseless. We can armor ourselves with Liberatory Practices. Liberatory Practices protect us without infringing upon the Aliveness of others, except as a last resort. They are nonviolent protection.

It is important to remember that the physical world is not a safe place. Humans invented oppression in the first place as armor against a dangerous world. But we are not safer when we practice oppression. We believe we are, but in reality we are making the world less safe for ourselves and others.

When we accept that life is unsafe and we will not make it out alive, we can armor ourselves responsibly, while knowing that painful or life-ending circumstances will still occur in our lives. There is no armor against pain or death. A healthy balance is to do our best to protect ourselves and feel and express



our feelings about the impermanence and pain of life.

### Aliveness for Greater Success

Oppression limits our success to the amount of force we can exert and the amount of exertion we can maintain over time. Liberation aligns us with the growth potential of an endlessly expanding universe. We can tap into

endless expansion and therefore, endless abundance and success. So how do we practice Liberation?

### Practicing Liberation

The key to all change is to build familiarity with what we want. At first, what we want seems distant, unfamiliar, and unrecognizable as part of us. Over time we come to see that what we want



is already part of us. It is the same with Liberation. We can build familiarity with Liberation through the use of Liberatory Practices (which are already part of you).

Anything that unleashes your Aliveness could be called a liberatory practice so there are infinite liberatory practices. I suggest you make your own list of practices that put you in partnership, movement and co-creation with Aliveness.

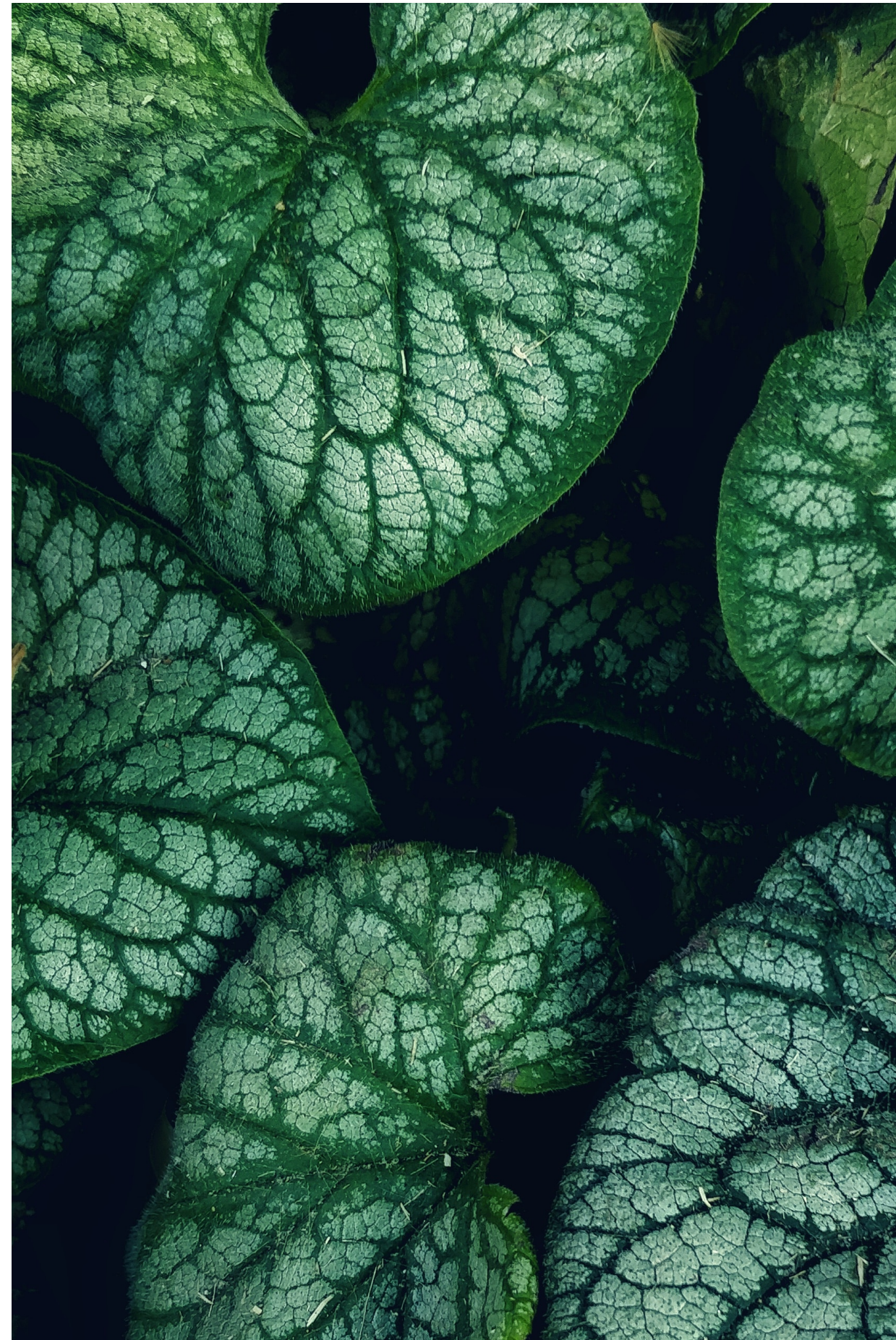
Over the last 10 years, I have tried out hundreds of practices and programs for personal growth, personal and intergenerational healing, and professional development. After all my years of research and practice, I whittled the list down to only the most essential. The 18 Liberatory Practices of Liberated Being plus the definitions of Oppression, Internalized Oppression, and Liberation make up the practice of

Liberated Being.™ They are the distilled essence of the ancient wisdom that makes up modern personal growth programs and healing practices.

### **How to Use The Unleashing Aliveness: Liberatory Practices Discernment Deck**

Each Liberatory Practice can only add to the workability of any situation. So, when you're confused or stuck, pick a card to provide guidance. To build your skillset, pick a card and focus on that practice for the day or the week. Or follow your own inner wisdom and use them in whatever way your Aliveness feels excited about. Have fun with it! In Liberation there are no wrong answers, only more information to claim and integrate.

Enjoy!





# Leanne Ruth Alaman

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Any act that unleashes your Aliveness can be a liberatory practice, but I have found these 18 to be some of the most essential.

## ***The 18 Liberatory Practices of Liberated Being™***

1. Radical Honesty
2. Radical Choice
3. Expressing Aliveness
4. Embodying Awareness
5. Transparency
6. Consent
7. Allowing Space
8. Boundaries
9. Justice
10. Equity
11. Equality
12. Diversity
13. Inclusion

## ***Advanced Practices for Total Liberation***

14. Dignity
15. Rest
16. Pleasure
17. Play
18. Celebration

See our ***Pocket Liberation Guide*** for descriptions of the practices





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In contrast, here are some oppressive practices you may be familiar with. After my own observations I have included several of the White supremacy Cultural Norms outlined by Tema Okun for Dismantling Racism Works with support from Kenneth Jones, that are commonly experienced by my clients and colleagues.

## ***Oppressive Practices To Disrupt with Liberatory Practices***

1. Saviorism - “I *have* to \_\_\_\_\_.”
2. Shaming - “I shouldn’t be/ feel \_\_\_\_\_.”
3. Victimhood - “I can’t \_\_\_\_\_.”
4. Imposter syndrome: self-doubt, insecurity, fear of our power
5. Violence: Force, Coercing, Convincing
6. Defensiveness: Hiding, Contracting, Armoring
7. The Cycle of Numbing and Stimulation
8. Denial and Minimization (of our own needs)
9. Name Calling - “If I rest, I am *lazy*. I am *weak*.”

## ***Other Oppressive Practices***

10. Perfectionism (Only One Right Way)
11. Binary (Either/ Or) Thinking
12. Sense of Urgency
13. Fear of Open Conflict

See our ***Pocket Liberation Guide*** for descriptions of our Liberatory Practices at ***embodiedcontribution.com***







**You're doing great!**

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