

Rest as a Political Power

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“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence; it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare” – Audre Lorde.

Over this summer, I had the pleasure of interning with the New Orleans Abortion Fund on the cusp of a post-Roe America. Coming into this work, I was nervous about my role as a Social Media intern. With the amount of misinformation on our social media platforms, I pressured myself to be nearly perfect when working on NOAF’s social media presence. This pressure made this internship one of my most fascinating yet challenging learning experiences.

An abortion fund was already a precious commodity before the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, especially in a state filled with anti-abortion legislation, politicians, and organizations. It became increasingly important to me following the overturn of *Roe*, to ensure the followers on NOAF's prominent Instagram and their secondary Youth Action page had access to consistent, up-to-date, vital information. One aspect I enjoyed was diversifying the style of informative content being created. On top of having graphics on legislation and topics like comprehensive sex ed, I kick-started a weekly posting called "Mindfulness Monday." In this series, I reminded followers about the importance of being grounded and resting when doing work connected to reproductive health and justice. Often, we get so wrapped in making a change that we sometimes fail to take care of ourselves. Many people see rest as giving up. In reality, rest is one of the most potent acts of political warfare. When we are rested, we can present mentally, physically, and emotionally in our investments, leading to long-lasting change.

As pro-choice judges and politicians fought back against trigger bans like SB342, it became more challenging to keep up with the status of the legality of abortions in Louisiana. The consistent back and forth between legal status made finding stability in my work increasingly difficult. After a week of imbalance, I soon realized I needed to take a step back, breathe, rest, then try again. After consistent rest, I curated more posts promptly and effectively, engaged more with the Board about the visions we saw for the future, and even interacted more with our followers. As my work with New Orleans Abortion Fund continues, I look forward to highlighting the importance of rest as new projects continue to roll out.