

Excerpt from interview with Mariame Kaba who often says that “Hope is a discipline.”

She describes it like this:

It became a mantra for me in terms of when I would feel unmoored. Or when I would feel overwhelmed by what was going on in the world, I would just say to myself: “Hope is a discipline.” It’s less about “how you feel,” and more about the practice of making a decision every day, that you’re still gonna put one foot in front of the other, that you’re still going to get up in the morning. And you’re still going to struggle, that that was what I took away from it.

It’s work to be hopeful. It’s not like a fuzzy feeling. Like, you have to actually put in energy, time, and you have to be clear-eyed, and you have to hold fast to having a vision. It’s a hard thing to maintain. But it matters to have it, to believe that it’s possible, to change the world. You know, that we don’t live in a predetermined, predestined world where like nothing we do has an impact. Change is, in fact, constant, right? Octavia Butler teaches us. We’re constantly changing. We’re constantly transforming. It doesn’t mean that it’s necessarily good or bad. It just is. That’s always the case. And so, because that’s true, we have an opportunity at every moment to push in a direction that we think is actually a direction towards more justice.

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I learned from my father that you may have big dreams and big visions. And, you know, you have to prepare for the day after the revolution. And even when you do that, it’s not guaranteed that things are going to go as you had hoped. So what’s the next best thing you can do from where you are? For you, in this moment, in this possibility space that you have, what’s the next best thing? And it’s such a grounding question. Because it doesn’t tell you: What’s the next 17 things that you need to do to get from where you are to where you need to go? It’s: What’s the next best step to take?

You can read Mariame’s full interview in the Intercept [here](#).