a long winter crip survival guide for pandemic year 4/forever
(now revised december 2023 for winter fivever! with additions by contributors)

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shareable link:

https://www.tinyurl.com/longwintersurvival

intro: surviving the forever winter

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it's panini year 3/ 4, and a lot of us are getting increasingly desperate. shit hasn't "moved on," it's gotten worse. the U.S. government is downplaying COVID's continued existence and evolution and fucking with everyone's heads as the bodies pile up. On February 1, 2023, the Biden administration announced it plans on officially ending the COVID "emergency" declaration in May 2023- which will mean that people in the U.S. will lose things we need to survive: extended EBT, the 8 free covid tests, vaccines being free. things are surreal, stark and bleak, in general and especially for disabled and high risk people.

so many of us are immunocompromised/ "medically complex"/ high risk/ disabled/ sick folks who can't get COVID or we will die or face severe consequences. so many of us already had COVID or are living with long COVID and do not want to risk a second, third, fourth infection. so many of us are not wanting to go to the ER for even minor shit when people are waiting 12-18 hours in waiting room chairs to be seen. many of us are Black, brown, poor, trans, fat, undocumented, rural etc with different layers of oppression and access, where we cannot always assume we will be able to easily access Paxlovid, time off or health care. Finally, Evushield and monoclonal antibodies, remedies relied on by immunosuppressed people

for whom vaccines do not work effectively, stopped working against Omicron in late 2022, making some high risk/ immune comp folks really hit the shit of despair and “we really can’t go anywhere safely… for the rest of our lives?”

and so, many of us who are high risk/ sick/ disabled/ vulnerable, are increasingly feeling silo’d, from the world and movements, staring out the window, wondering where the fuck we go from here. as a friend said to me recently, **“if you’re disabled right now, it feels like either covid will kill you or isolation will. “**

we know that as crips we are good at surviving isolation- we’ve known how to make lives when the rest of the world leaves us behind way before COVID began. and we’ve been so fucking good at maxxing crip solo life during the pan, with all our all online everything, masking, safe hugs, safe hangs, discord life, etc.

but for a lot of us, COVID year four/ winter three hits different. maybe it’s the “oh well!” abandonment of us by the government and some of our abled friends. maybe it’s maybelline. maybe it’s that in 2020 most of us didn’t think this shit would be over in three months, but we thought three years in we might be. the idea of the pandemic and our abandonment in this era of fascist eugenics stretching out forever is rough, rough. out of these conditions, we (the writers of this project) see a lot of people getting more suicidal or in emotional crisis/ altered state, getting more panicked, getting more burned out and lashing out sideways at each other, withdrawing altogether from community. or, taking risks we know we can’t afford/ are dangerous to us because (wild shrug emoji), what else can we do?

the bottom line is: we need to be together in ways that are safe for us. we need to find ways to combat isolation and the shoving of disabled/high risk people into separate but not equal private space, safely.

and: **winter provides some unique challenges to in person connection**. climate change bizarre moments of 60 F degree temps in January in North

America aside, often it's cold as fuck out. while many of us mitigate risk and figure out ways to socialize during spring, summer and fall when it is more temperate out with outdoor small hangs/ events, eating at outdoor seating restaurants, etc, in winter it's just too goddamn cold to do most of that. w/ cold plus also damp (harder on the joints/pain) icey, snowing/ raining/ sleeting etc conditions, the choice then becomes 3-6 months of netflix or online community only as places to connect (or if you're lucky, v small pods.)

we love online connectivity- but we know that online platforms are becoming increasingly chokeholded. crips hacked online platforms like facebook, instagram, twitter etc and have used them heavily for the last 10-12 years to connect and build. we;ve been online since livejournal and forever before that. social media spaces have been crucial ways for us to connect and break isolation. we always knew we were using a weapon designed against us for methods it wasn't made for, and we made it work anyway. but, as M. Tėllez recently wrote," the gloves came off" in the last couple years in social media; zuccking/shadowbanning, algorhythm manipulations and harvesting of our data for cash all became so overt and intense we can barely find each other. Onlineverse is more and more just a straight up mall/ CIA spy command center, and hanging out online can be a law of diminishing returns.

so what's left? what gives us hope? what allows us to gather? we know that no matter what the shifting conditions, crips are inventive and creative. we always figure out a way to each other, with jury rigged ramps, psychic connections, dreaming to each other, talking to/ fucking ghosts and to each other on phones from 12 feet away. so we wrote this little winter survival guide to share some ways and tools we figured out to be able to hang out in person, outside, without freezing to death.

some specific words from the authors about where we're at and why we're doing this:

Leah: I have felt some real bone deep depression/ existential despair and "what is next" lately. because of everything, the mindfuck of "what COVID?" side by side with my grief and the deaths and suffering of people I care about, and us/ me STILL not being able to go to a party. I think a lot of us disabled folks are in a "where do we go from here" moment- personally and as communities, how do we keep organizing and struggling? what are the next crip survival innovations, what are we already doing?

I am living more isolated than maybe even during lockdown bc with "masks optional!" there's less covid safe places to gather. I'm also living on the east coast for my first NE winter in seven years/ first cold winter during the pandemic. In Seattle it won't feel nice and you'll get rained on, but you can usually hang outside a little during the winter because it doesn't get that much below 40 F. but here in MA, I just went 21 days not seeing anyone in person but the checkout worker at the grocery store and the community acupuncturist. it's not great. I can do solo hermit cavern times good, I love holing up in my office with the tunes and the tea- until my brain gets weird and I can't.

being with other disabled people in public space is giving me the life I need right now. my mom died in December. two weeks after she passed I got in my car and drove to nyc because being in deep freeze western mass was making me lose it staring at the yellow wallpaper. I met up with Tina and our friends in the park outside their house in chinatown, LES NYC,we were able to because they had all these hacks for being together safely outside, even when it was around freezing. me and tina and g hung out and we ran into friends spontaneously- josephine was wheeling by, al came through. we laughed, talked shit, gossiped, argued, listened to each other, asked questions. this was what i was missing- the liveness of being in public space, period and as radical disabled people, the random synchronicity of who you run into. I need this- being safely in public with other disabled people - to stay alive. we need this if we're going to be able to figure out the "what's next." this *is* what is next. this is what's now.

Tina: i am not going to concede public space--crips being in public space. we have been and still are being kept from one another. it's too much for too long. obvi i'm all for online and super into making online more feel based---i love virtual multiplicities and all that---but i am not giving up on being in public space. i hate that covid has been disaster capiltaled and weaponized to clear ppl from being together in public space and that uno disproportionately affects some of us while affecting all of us to some degree. rn i'm just trying to make more in-person virtual spaces, asynchronously and synchronously. idc if it's j an hour in the cold i wanna be together. i wanna be with you everywhere. also fuck the mayor for ugly laws the reboot and all these commentors saying the public doesn't want crazy people in public—as if crazy people (krips) aren't also the public. like how long is this throw them to the public to beg slash clean the streets and clear the crips from the public push-pull nonsense gonna go on? it's been centuries of vagrancy laws, black codes, ugly laws, and other gentrification and public beautification urban development ass initiatives. they cut us outta school then sequestered our people in terror schools like willowbrook for how long til literally geraldo rivera breaks the story. the spaces they make for us are untenable and let's face it they aren't gonna make spaces for us that aren't just violence deemed care. we gotta make the spaces and take the spaces that have been made against us. the things they have done in our name! the rhetoric, the policies that shift to overfocus on us then ignore us altogether. I'm not looking for a policy; i'm looking for a people! and the people are in public; the people are the public, so i wanna be there. come if you can, and if you can't let's at least try to make somewhere we can. with much love to anywhere everywhere and especially those places called nowhere.

below are **some examples of hacks we have figured out to make being together in the long winter more possible**. **not all of this will work for everyone.** all of us are swimming with different seas of risk and choices we make and conditions that change every day. this is also not an exhaustive list, just a beginning place of gathering tools together. take what works for you and leave the rest, experiment, play with it, add your own.

general winter notes:

cold is hard for a lot of us. our pain, spasticity etc can get worse sitting or being outside when temps fall. walking, crutching/ caning/ rollerating or rolling on ice or snow is less accessible. a lot of public space places to sit are made of concrete or other surface that hold and radiate cold.

masking and being outside- with the xb115/ kraken variant, the risks are changing, it's hard to tell how much yet, but there's anecdotal reports of even super shielder people getting covid even after not hanging inside unmasked at all. covid does disperse more rapidly outside, but esp during surges and/or if severely immunocompromised or in larger crowds, masking up while outside might be a way to go. masking also helps stave off cold induced asthma, warms the throat and mouth and provides some protection from surveillance/ facial recognition.

outside surfaces, tables, seats- with the tripledemic (RSV, flu and COVID), there can be a need to sterilize surfaces because RSV and flu and cold viruses do transmit via fomites (through touching a surface) unlike COVID which is mostly airborne and pretty wimpy in the face of alcohol based sanitizer. bring some hand sani or alcohol spray or wipes with you and clean surfaces if you're worried.

a lot of these hacks are not new- they're things people have used for years to stay warm and survive outside during the cold, especially homeless/ houseless people.

some of us will be targeted for added harassment if we use some of these hacks (like using heaters or more visible tools) because of anti Blackness, anti-Indigenousness, trans hatred, sex worker targeting, the list goes on. in some areas, **cops have used the pandemic as an excuse to close parks earlier** (like 5 pm) in winter "for safety, because it's dark." (eyeball roll) along with increasing police violence in street sweeps of parks and encampments. this increased surveillance and harassment

affects how easily and for long many racialized people can be in public space, esp using methods like heaters that can be criminalized/ be more visible to cops. **keep an eye out, plan for safety, exit and de escalation, figure out where and how feels safer to be together, distract/ use dazzle camoflague/ use solidarit/ protect each other** (some good places to check out around community safety to police violence are Vision Change Win and Kalaya'an Mendoza's work.)

these hacks and ideas were made by two people who live in the NE of the US (NYC and western MA) based on our experiences and conditions. most of them work best when the temperature is hovering around 32 f/ 0 c. we're releasing this doc a couple weeks after the "arctic hammer" hit swatches of the NE and central Turtle Island, bringing temps down to "feels like -30 F/C with the wind chill." when it gets that cold, these may not work for any kind of extended hang (though it might make necessary or shorter time outside more survivable.)

we welcome hearing from folks about what stuff you do to be together in the cold in your bioregion- email longwintersurvival@gmail.com with tips. with your permission, we can include them in future revisions.

without further ado… our non/exhaustive earth sign tips:

outdoor public/semi public space tools and hacks for heat and dryness:

PROPANE HEATERS: Tina: i like the buddy heater line by mr. heater cuz it runs on a 1 pound propane tank (and you can store the small propane tanks more easily/safely than the large ones). i have the portable buddy at $69. has low and high settings from 4000-9000 btus. but there's both bigger and smaller ones too. i have an adapter hose to hook it up to a big propane tank and i've got a splitter two so you can run two heaters off of one big tank. in the city or for camping the lil portable one is best but if you've got a yard and want multiple heaters like for distance or for surround heat then

the hose and splitter is great (provided u can store a big tank)--otherwise one pound coleman propane is best. link

Leah: you can run these outside- in a park, hangout spot, stoop, backyard etc. they are small but pack a punch, hanging with friends for 4 hours as the temps hovered around freezing, i noticed a big difference in my ability to hang in there longer with one going.

camping batteries: Tina: me and jojo use camping batteries and often take them with us to recharge our wheelchairs if going farther than a few miles. these come in various sizes and powers and are basically big powerbanks but they're still reasonably sized (fits under our chairs) and light enough too. there's a million brands and sizes and power levels and some have solar panels or emergency lights and such (which is a nice under chair headlamp for night walks) but the basic idea is you charge it up and take it with you and you can charge or power things from it. cell phone chargers are built in but there's also outlets so you could power a heating pad or an infrared heater or whatever else---speakers, lights, anything that runs on plug in electric or needs to charge its battery in that way---it's like having outlets on the go. just be sure to match the power level to the things you wanna charge or run. and if you want a plug in heater keep in mind that outdoors forced heat dissipates quickly so maybe best for hybrid spaces that are outdoors but partially enclosed---for full outside you want straight fire like a fire pit or propane gas heater. (see below). jackery and anker have whole lines so do a billion other jawns

battery powered heating pads: **Tina:** these r pricey but so fuckn convenient. sunbeam makes a good one for like 50 bucks. it's basically like yr plug in heat pad only it has a strap to wrap it anywhere it fits on yr body. fat tip---it's velcro so you can make yr own extender pretty easily but real talk the pad is small so it's pointed heat like on yr belly or thigh or shoulder or back. this thing is nice indoors too cuz u don't gotta be by an outlet. it's too much money imo for what it is (prolly cuz it's new tech---n i think the price will drop soon) but if you love yr heat pad and u want it with you outside for pain this is a game changer---also it's legit portable heat for an

outdoor hang of two hours with no fuss no cords and no flames. i don't rec wetting it for the moist heat option outside cuz as bomb as that is indoors it's different outside as humidity feels colder.

hot pockets, hot hands- you know these, the little packs that you squeeze to activate. can buy for about $13/ 12 or $22/ 40. in pockets, on body, feet. **Tina:** yo love these. they take 15-30 minutes to truly heat up tho they get kinda warmish in 5-10 minutes but the kicker is they stay warm for legit 10 hours. putting in yr boots or pockets is super nice---tbh warmer than gloves in mild winter cases and can go in yr gloves. **Leah:** I use them in my pockets but also sit on them, put them in my boots/ shoes or shove them under leggings or tights for a heat boost, esp around my sacrum/ ass/ L%. I get multi day bad pain flares from fibro/ OA/ probable ankylosing spondylitis really easily if I sit in the cold (esp damp cold) for too long, these help a lot.

furs to sit on or wrap around you: **Tina:** if you aren't vegcalan or allergic or opposed to real fur it is truly amazing. a sheepskin wheelchair pad is winter wonderland (when ambulatory friends get cold going for a walk can help warm up---if yr using a chair tho it aint the same and sometimes means getting colder from air flow---lining yr seat can't be beat!) i like a thin sheepskin for the seat and a thick one for the back---they can also work as blankets and wraps. they can be a pain cuz you gotta shake them out and even brush them occasionally to keep them clean n unmatted. but they are warm like for real ugh taurus moon dream. i'm sure there are also amazing vegan ones, faux furs, down alternatives, and space age materials that will do the same. furs can be pricey unless you know tanners, have a taxidermist in the family, or have a culture practice around this but they are so good and with a lil care last super long.

Leah: I found sem-cheap sheepskins at IKEA – they sell a little sheepskin rug for $29 that wraps around part of your body, is good on a lap, or is something you can sit on, I've also been a long time finder of old fur collars at thrift stores for not too much money. Thrift stores are increasingly spraying everything with heavily scented products because of bedbug

infestations and also a desire for “cleanliness” but it can still be worth a look if you can find a place not super sprayed. Maybe Etsy or Poshmark or looking online could also be an option. They don’t have to be fancy. Also saying that even when I throw a fur collar around my neck it helps heat loss a lot.

Blankets: Tina: obvi by now you know i love down and wool and fur but if you don't want any animal products there are great alternatives. speaking of which an emergency blanket or mylar blanket or acupuncture blanket you know the space jawn---with a heat pad under or a hot hands in there is rly rly nice baked potato life. just be sure to designate outdoor storage for outdoor blankets n keep yr indoor blankets separate and/or clean them as needed (immunocomp tip) ie i have blankets that never come inside (except to be laundered) and blankets that never go outside uno.

hot beverages, hot food: Tina: hot food before u go outside or as you are outside is rly helpful in maintaining warmth. im not a scientist so no clue why this is but i do have a taurus moon and it works. maybe even better than hot drinks tho those are great too. a lil spice is good too but dont do more than you are accustomed to cuz sweating will cool u down. thermos thermos thermos. the only downside of a thermos is that it isn't warm to touch so if u want that hand hold heat bring a separate cup too. also: your thermos can hold hot water for hot water bottle if u like that moist heat or u can keep it under blankets to warm more space. u fill it hot n go and when it gets cold u dump it n refill from the thermos. obvi this only works in temps above freezing

Leah: no judgment but drinking booze/alcohol will warm you for a second then cool you down real fast because it constricts blood vessels. people can get in trouble drinking alcohol when it’s cold out this way. I like a thermos. I also like filling mason jars (yeahh punk from the 90s) with hot tea, coffee or just hot water, both to drink, and, filled mason jars can be clutched between hands, thighs, or carefully laid on your body/ a lap to radiate heat. it’s a cheap hack that can work if you don’t have access to a heating pad, hot hands etc- when I lived in an unheated shack for a couple

years I would fill jars with boiling water, put them in ziplocks and line my bed with them in the winter.

when filling with hot liquid be careful, put a metal spoon in if you're filling up, not all mason jars are made equal and thin ones can crack if you just pour boiling water in. Also be careful transporting these because obviously they can break – I've had bad luck with one in a bag with a computer, notebook or anything fragile in it where the jar cracked and soaked stuff. placing in ziplocks helps but a smashed jar will still pierce plastic.

you can also pickup or have someone meet you and bring hot food from home or carryout, sometimes you can get online food delivery to a local address near a park and grab it from thre and bring it to where you are hanging out. pho really hits the spot on hour 2 of an outdoor hang in the cold, for one example. bring hand sani or alcohol spray (I have a simple plastic spray bottle i fill with 50% 90% isopropyl alcohol /50% water that comes with me in my car or bag), spray down your surface to make sure you don't pick up germies from resting your hand on it and then putting your hand into or near your mouth, and you're good to go.

clothing: Leah: layers, double socks, if you can get wool esp merino is great for leggings, long johns, socks, sweaters, mittens etc. cotton and jeans esp when wet do not retain heat well and in fact suck heat out of your body. there's also a lot of "miracle fabrics" out there now that are human made/ not animal sourced out there- you might know them from uniqlo, the "warm jeans" old navy sells in January for $30 (cheap and ok size range) or at stores like LL Bean, Sierra Trading Post and the like. I like some of them, they also do not breathe as much and if you're prone to yeast infections it can accelerate that shit because it will trap moisture, just FYI. covering your head keeps heat in. scarves are weirdly important. I keep an eye out for sales at places like ll bean or eddie bauer, rei and sierra mountain coop and look at their "technical" gear- however it often is limited in size to a smaller XL so A lot of it does not fit me / is not fat accessible, some places have extended or fat sizes). tip from sarah doherty: Woman within and king size both have waffle knit long johns in super fat sizes. universal standard

has stuff in an amazing size range but they are really expensive. Added from Tina: you gotta know that king size longjohns have the butt flap! I've been curious about work wear lines like Carhartt and dickies that have some lined options, dickies just added a big and tall line in men's where the waist goes up to 56.

firepits: pros and cons. Tina: fire pits gotta be safe so it's metal or brick or a literal pit with a rock surround or pavers on the ground under yr bbq grill jawn and not near trees and brush and houses n whatnot. im in new york where theres some humidity but if yr in california it may not be an option with dry air and so much nature. always have enough water on had to put out the fire or be near a hose or water source and/or sand or an actual cover for yr grill or pit.

there shd be two ppl dedicated to the fire like one to be there n one as back up. obvi it can be more or less and u can divided it up but basically don't leave it unattended and when u r done put it allllll the way out which means stirring the ash til u don't see any glow and/or dumping water on it and squelching it and checking by stirring the ash. this is silly to say but all thru 2020 i saw it---if u sit too close to fire it will burn or melt yr shit.

that said it can be hard to space around a fire if u are distancing hence i rec two pits. this is NOT a small space thing or a portable thing obvi. i do rec magic flames to make the fire gay

Leah: there's cheap fire pits at Walmart but every one I've had or used the leg has bent easily and/or broken off, esp if left in a yard to be rained/ snowed on- extend life by bringing inside if you can. solo stove is a small model that burns hot and long lasting and is lightweight to carry, it also will work with both wood or those pellets. Right now the smallest model is 70 bucks, they also seem to go on sale a lot. You can also get bigger ones. I love my rocket stove for cooking, ie boiling water fast but it doesn't give off much heat bc it's designed to be efficient. these might be nice investments for friends or a group to go splits on and share.

I like building fires, some shit to know if you don't do it that often is that dry wood is important, even wood that's "green" (ie not cured, damp at all) will smoke a lot but not catch and warm you up. if you're not rural the little packs of firewood you can get from grocery stores, hardware stores are just fine, you will go through a small bundle every couple hours. don't set pallets or pressure treated wood on fire! they have chemicals in them and the fumes will make you sick. you can also get a Duraflame log or one of those similar things to kick things off easily. if you have a little money buying fire starters or pre-dried kindling if the wood around you is wet or not available can really help shit catch and burn easily. Here's a simple video for how to lay out a fire to get things burning fast.

Important – don't like these under any kind of rain canopy shelter etc! The CO2 can build up and/or if you're doing any kind of fire that gets big it can light it on fire and be really dangerous.

rain shelters, canopies- **Leah:** great, people I know have gotten Easy Ups or whatever is on sale at Lowe's etc, Coleman, there's a million brands. These were the big pandemic winter year 1 solution on the west coast as a way to have a space semi protected from rain and wind- but people discovered fast that they can also easily blow away in the wind esp with climate changed Pineapple Express heavy winds (so, so many canopies flew onto roofs or into power lines in Seattle winter 2020 and the fire department laughed and would not help people get them back.) Think about taking them down in between uses if you've got a yard or another situation if you have an impulse to leave them up all the time, or tying them down somehow.

Tina: these r also kinda a fixed space thing if u have a yard or covered porch. important thing here is that they be open on 2 to 4 sides for airflow. to keep from blowing away use sandbags not just stakes or cast concrete or cinder blocks or fix one or two ends to yr building or whatever u r allowed to do this is v case by case

lighting: tina: theres allll kinds of battery powered lighting or u can use a power bank battery to power a plug in light. if close to home u can use an outdoor outlet from yr house or run one from inside if u can seal it. def use outdoor proper gauge UL listed safe cords

Leah: agreed, like this one is $19.95, takes aa batteries and gives 450 lumens ie bright. there's also a ton of small solar lanterns you can get pretty cheap these days online or on sale that are pretty bright. I've found them on sale for $20, average price runs $30-40 each. remember they need to be exposed to sunlight for a while to charge or they won't light up. if it's dark where you are, try having them in front of a regular indoor lamp or a "happy lamp" to charge. I got gifted a couple of solar lanterns from Lowes a few years ago that are about 8"x 4" and can be hung- i I can't find a direct link though. however, here's one for a lander mini solar lantern with 150 lumen for $25: https://www.lander.com/lights/cairn-mini-lantern.html. newer solar lanterns are often now being built with a usb port you can charge off of which is v nice for short charges. this one is highly rated and I like that you can both charge it in the sun (24 hours to full charge from empty) or if you have access to power, charge quickl;y in 2-3 hours on a USB.

you can also get a tealight lantern that magnifies the light and provides a little warmth, a lot of people might already have a headlamp or bike lights around which provide good light, setting up your phone flashlight is an option. I think it's hella cute and nice lighting when people plug Christmas or twinkle lights into an outdoor battery pack or the power in their wheelchair. for headlamps, I like cruising outdoor supply shops like rei, mountain equipment coop or EMS (any camping store) to see what they have- the quality is better. my $20 black diamond headlamp is still going strong 11 years after I got gifted it, whereas one a friend bought in a CVS broke immediately. a lot of outdoor supplies have bargain basement/used sections or frequent sales you can check out.

ALSO: just an old school camping lantern that runs on batteries is fine, and you can find them all the time at thrift stores for cheap (people try camping

and then decide they're not into it and get rid of gear, or upgrade,) my fav camping lantern is an older colman I got for $8 a few years ago at a savers, it takes 4 DD batteries but it gives good light.

running air purifiers outside: Tina: this idk it wd likely have to be a partially enclosed space like a screened in porch or an outdoor canopy open on two sides cuz airpurifiers need to fit the space n if the space is open that is hard to do---but mb a lil personal jawn wd do the area right in front of ya idk this is case by case physics and volume n airflow question. negative pressure is wild n changes based on the space itself

Leah: yeah, I think it's less about using bigger HEPAS to clean air because of what you said and more using little personal battery powered HEPA purifiers as a layer of protection. with the little personal guys, i see some people have started talking about/ using these Pure Enrichment mini portable HEPA purifiers for an added layer of protection inside but also could be used in outside hang spaces where people are unmasked and fairly close, or high level protection needed because #highrisk. If I was doing this I would just stick it right in front of me on the picnic table where we would be sitting – especially if I was eating outside with a group of people and we were worried. caleb luna turned me on to these, they wrote about traveling to europe where no one masked as a brown superfat high risk person and crediting the pure aire (plus n95s) as a big part of the reason they didn't get covid. you can see caleb's whole story about this here. pure aire mini hepas cost $39.99 at amazon, best buy, other big box stores, 49,99 on cvs.com, run at three speeds and hold a charge for a while ("up to 12 hours depending on fan speed".) they weigh under a pound and are about the size of a tallboy/ Arizona iced tea can, so fairly easy to carry and stash in a bag.

I've kinda been veering towards outside is safe for no masks for most of the pan, but with the Kraken variant coming on strong, anecdotal reports in the NE of people getting COVID even while masking, and zero old school ways of calculating risk I used to use still being in effect (RIP covidactnow.org and Microcovid,.org, both of which were risk calculators I

leaned heavily on from 2021- winter 2022 and are kinda useless now that regular COVID data set reporting pretty much bit the dust so they don't have accurate data to pull from) I'm considering masking more outside, even just a KN94 I switch to a fitted N95 for inside times, which is less comfortable but more protection), and running a pure aire. also, if you're somebody who has to eat inside, work inside, take public transit a lot where people are not masking, or take amtrak/greyhound/fly, pure aires can reduce some risk/ harm.

people's CDC layers of protection safer gathering guide: people's CDC does really good work, their weekly weather reports about the above and Covid situation are accurate sources of information in my opinion for evolving pandemic stuff and they also let people know about breaking news, like that there is research being done to create a new version of evushield or new monoclonal antibodies. They also have this layers of protection document that has really good advice about gathering together check it out here.

edits winter 2023/2024: after we launched this guide in feb 2023 we got some really good suggestions from people who read it. with permission, we've included them below.

REVISED CROWDSOURCED INFO FOR 2023/2024

"'I'm a chronically sick Indigenous woman, from the Northeast, long tradish of surviving and thriving in the cold, appreciated your recommendation of furs. Outside of knowing a family like mine who hunts, I'd recommend this fur. Pricey but so so worth it. Wrap up in it, sit on it, ect. I use caribou to stay warm. Caribou are legendary at surviving the winter, we can learn alot from them.
Scandinavian Reindeer Skin, Outdoor– Grimfrost"

Etawi O'Byrne

“Battery-operated warming socks and gloves. there is a store called The Warming Store that specializes in these. they can be $$$$$$ but the battery operated models are cheaper

re: base layers - avoid cotton as base layer if possible because it is not quick-drying, so if you perspire and cool down, it will stay damp and make you colder underneath your layers.”

- Claire Lutz

“My tip to add: There are electric socks, gloves, pants, tops, and jackets (I only have the socks, everything else is too pricy right now) but they generate a good steady warmth right against your skin. A lot of them are expensive because they come with battery packs. If you already have portable batteries, try to find versions that don't come with batteries but do have standard plugs, that saves a ton of money. The jackets are generally designed for construction work so they go a little bigger in size. (Kaia Arrow, @TheWillowsWork)”

Sent from my bed

“I didn't have many notes reading your very helpful file, but one thing I did notice was mentioning to get fire starters "if you had money for it" or however it was phrased? Which yeah I'm sure they work but also you can make them pretty easily (if housed anyways, not sure how much dryer lint someone is gonna be willing to dig through laundromat trash cans to find.)

I only know this because I'm paranoid lol

Anyways this link has multiple options for homemade, including just hella squirting hand sanitizer onto the wood which sounds like a very bad idea

but who am I to judge, I'm mostly talking about the ideas that involve egg cartons or dryer lint since they're otherwise trash anyways so you might as well use them somehow. You can add a small amount of melted candle wax to help it burn longer, I've had random bits of paper burn for hours in a tiny little jar mostly covered by candle wax. It shouldn't even take enough to make the candle last noticeably less long if it's a decent sized one. https://www.explore-mag.com/homemade-fire-starters#:~:text=Dryer%20Lint%20%26%20Egg%20Cartons,making%20crafts%20in%20public%20school."

- Justine N
-

Do you think it'd be possible to organize a lil mutual aid drive for folks who'd want some of the recommended products but can't afford them? A lil wealth distribution?

I know that may be a bit hard to organize, but it'd be so nice; just suggesting in case it works out!"

–

"Here are some additions I thought about from my exp growing up winter camping and as a poor person.

How to dress in the cold (not many people are taught this explicitly):

Layers are your friend - do not skip any!:

1.Base layer: For absorption - The best base layer for cold weather is a close-fitting undershirt/ long underwear (this layer is tighter)
2. Middle layer: For insulation/ warmth. The middle clothing layer traps body heat, insulating you from the cold. The middle layer retains your body heat, the better the layer, the warmer you'll be. This layer is looser so your warmth can circulate inside the outer layer.

3. Outer layer: For protection – this one keeps you dry – also looser and water/wind resistant. If you're investing money in any layer, it's often this one.
4. Also cover head, hands, legs, feet adequately! Exposed skin is where the most heat escapes from. Wool socks are amazing and will wick away moisture.

Note - as a wheelchair user, I also carry two separate pairs of hand protection. One for movement and one for waiting/socializing. The pair for movement gets wet quicker and isn't often very warm, so having a separate pair in my bag or pockets is helpful for longer outings.

Cheap warm thing to sit on (I noticed sheepskins suggested but they are pricey!):

Sit-upons from girl guides:
https://www.gsutah.org/content/dam/girlscouts-gsutah/documents/Sit_Upons_Short_and_Snappy.pdf

How to guide above. I used to make these all the time using the newspaper and plastic bag method. Kept me dry and warm to sit on, reusable and cost under 2$ to make and very easy to transport. If combined with a blanket - especially a quilt - someone can stay outside for a while.

In terms of shelter here in canada - I try to gather strategically. It doesn't feel sustainable for my activities to purchase any kind of shelter and so even if we are meeting at the park etc, we may gather closer to a building to stave off the wind/under an awning.

If it will be a longer outing/gathering - in the past, tarps, bungee cords, wooden/metal stakes, and zip ties can be used in conjunction with trees to create temporary shelters that are more durable than commercially available ones. They will only have sides and no roof but this alone can do a lot for wind protection. Military surplus stores also have more durable

meeting style tents available but they are expensive and laborious to install/would draw a lot of attention to a gathering due to size.

Knowing how to do square and round lashings, as well as other simple knots can also be really helpful in setting up temporary shelters and other general survival tasks.

https://www.animatedknots.com/square-lashing-knot#:~:text=Start%20with%20a%20Clove%20Hitch,or%20three%20tight%20half%20hitches.

https://www.animatedknots.com/round-lashing-knot

https://www.animatedknots.com/complete-knot-list

fires: duct tape and twine are excellent fire starters that are commonly available in urban areas if you don't have a ton of kindling. It's good practice to have some wrapped around any lighter in case of emergency.

I was also thinking more about how useful fishing line is for making improvised shelters. There was a time when I was younger where I made a shelter out of sticks, leaves, and fishing line. It stayed standing for about 5 years until the wood itself rotted. Something to keep in mind.

Hope this is helpful. Thank you for the labor so far!

Brennan (Bren) Roy”

“When sitting outside to eat or hangout it might be possible to create a sort of Kotatsu with a long table cloth/ blanket and the propane heater you recommended. Another thing I use indoors that might be helpful outdoors is a heated blanket hooked up to the portable battery you recommended. This is the one I have at home (Long Covid made me very sensitive to the cold which has been devastating as someone whose favorite season is winter).”
– Andrea Atehortua

Here are a couple things my friends and I have done while meeting up outside in Aroostook County, Maine.

“1> if you get any grocery, like misfits market, or medicine that needs to be refrigerated, delivered ... the insulating thing in the box, if it's big enough or you're handy enough to put two together... you can either sew a cover or put it in a queen size pillow case ... if you sit on it in a chair it keeps your tush & back warmer and acts as barrier between the air and you.

2> if you have a piece of reflectix (the stuff they use in van builds) or anything like it ... you can make chair "wings" that reflect the heat from your propane heater back towards you and the group. We did them temporarily... with those black office clips. You can make it as big as you want.

3> yoga mats or cheap camping mat under the feet keeps you warmer

Again, thanks for the resource.
Kate”

who we are and why do we care about this stuff anyway:

- **Leah:** Me and Tina have been friends since 2007 where a house collapsed across the street from where I was, the morning after a first date on Hazel Ave, West Philly. we both came out to see what was going on, locked eyes and the rest is history.16 years of friendship rooted in shit talk, love, and growing disabled community later - eating food, talking the real, long texts and making art and spaces together- they are one of the people who I look to to be the captain’s hat of this shit. we’ve kept each other alive through hospital times and heart breaks and have a bedrock Taurus/ Cancer love vibe. we’ve collaborated and supported each other’s work, are part of the I **wanna be with you everywhere** disabled art festival crew as

> organizer and participant. and this is what this is about- the magic necessity of disabled people needing to be together. I have a virgo moon focus on ‘what are practical, real ways we can get through, serve the people” mixed with a scorp rising HARK, DEATH IS ALL AROUND, GET READY town crier vibe. I am also always learning from the legacy and example of my friend stacey park milbern, rest in power 2020, who we started inventing disabled survival strategies for climate and other disasters together way back in 2010. get ready for it, I came to win, i want us all to make it. in the words of my friend san alland remembering their friend callie gardner, “we may not save the world, but we damn sure were going to save each other.”

constant_tt: i’m ride or die for leah and often that’s literal in cars or hospitals and now public parks in winter– and we are trying to land on the side of ride with this study in heat. I love a taurus sun/moon synastry thing and we’ve got that plus good chat and hugs and food and a seriously deep love to find more of us to hang with and nurture who’s been showing up for years or even just popping in for a minute. I’d say it’s been 16 years this time, but i know it’s been lifetimes. So much of why we are doing this is just like necessary; we wanna live and hang out and love and whatnot and we are in fact being removed from public space to varying degrees in various ways especially with the world back to normal thing or whatever they’re calling it now. I wanna get on back to living again for sure but i’m very happy to leave some of that other stuff behind. times are really fuckn hard. and yeah our people are dying; our people are really struggling. this shit is just not ok. and i hope it’s not too unpopular for a disabled immunocompromised person to say, but i’m so uninterested in this constant rotation and shifting goal post gaslighting ass policies thing–especially those that use our name to shame some of us and divide us all—and i really just never believed that these undead institutions or the medical industrial complex was going to save us—i don’t need a policy i just really want a people, you know? so yeah, we are starting here with just getting together, making and taking spaces in the ways that actually work for us. we know not all this will work for everyone; maybe for those with raynauds it won’t work at all. maybe you don’t do below freezing even with all the

tricks. maybe like GK you open your windows at 25 F and call it a brisk breeze. it's cool to do whatever you need and giving your need is a real contribution. take whatever you like from this and think it like the free store or the fat clothing swap and unstick your fingers from whatever don't fit. For me it's just a wishing well, give a penny, take a penny, our lips are sealed, kiss n tell, whatever. once we get together maybe then we decide why we assemble? I feel very "now that we've found love, what are we gonna do with it?" about it all. And kinda like leah said, i don't think hanging outside in covid will save everyone's lives but i've definitely seen it save a few—and i'm one of them.

finally:

this may be obvious to most people reading this, but it bears repeating: **the work we are doing to stay safe matters.** the work we are doing to keep ourselves alive- fully alive, not just existing- matters.

everything is overwhelming, but the small things we do to connect, to stay safe and alive and joyful, are not small. they matter. they are something and everything.

feedback? got a hot tip to add? email us at longwintersurvival@gmail.com

and hold on to a feeling of freedom, wherever you can find it. we need it.