

## Your Place in the Movement

### Mapping Our Roles in A Social Change Ecosystem



Created by Deepa Iyer (Solidarity Is and Building Movement Project)  
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<https://medium.com/@dviyer/mapping-our-social-change-roles-in-times-of-crisis-8bbe71a8ab01>

Look at this graphic by Deepa Iyer on the roles of a social movement in a time of social change. Where do you see yourself doing the work in the movement for racial justice? What skills do you bring to the table? What are your strengths? See the roles below. Each one of these roles will be crucial in the sustained movement for social justice. We need you.

## The Framework

**Weavers:** I see the through-lines of connectivity between people, places, organizations, ideas, and movements.

**Experimenters:** I innovate, pioneer, and invent. I take risks and course-correct as needed.

**Frontline Responders:** I address community crises by marshaling and organizing resources, networks, and messages.

**Visionaries:** I imagine and generate our boldest possibilities, hopes and dreams, and remind us of our direction.

**Builders:** I develop, organize, and implement ideas, practices, people, and resources in service of a collective vision.

**Caregivers:** I nurture and nourish the people around me by creating and sustaining a community of care, joy, and connection.

**Disruptors:** I take uncomfortable and risky actions to shake up the status quo, to raise awareness, and to build power.

**Healers:** I recognize and tend to the generational and current traumas caused by oppressive systems, institutions, policies, and practices.

**Storytellers:** I craft and share our community stories, cultures, experiences, histories, and possibilities through art, music, media, and movement.

**Guides:** I teach, counsel, and advise, using my gifts of well-earned discernment and wisdom.

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<https://buildingmovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Ecosystem-roles-explained.pdf>

## **Guiding Questions from Deepa Iyer**

Identify your ecosystem (a team, an organization, a network, a movement) and put its name on the top of the map. Then, locate yourself on the map and put your name inside the circles that you find yourself playing most frequently. Add other circles if needed and label them with roles (not job titles).

What role(s) do you feel comfortable and natural playing, and why? What role(s) make you come alive, and why? Are there any differences between these two responses for you to explore?

What is the impact of playing these roles on you - physically, energetically, emotionally, or spiritually?

Reflect on the values in the middle of the map. How do your roles bring about social change?

How does your role connect to your privilege and power? For example, are there roles where you might be taking too much space (or not enough)? Which roles provide positional authority and power within your organization and what are the effects?

How could you stretch yourself? Where can you take bolder risks?

How do/can you sustain yourself to be aligned and committed to social change values?

There are times when we all feel confused and lost about the roles that we should play, especially during community crises. When you don't feel in alignment with my roles, how can you re-set? Who can you turn to for guidance? How can this exercise help you?