

# 2004 is a leap year...

Excerpted from *Slingshot*

## Slingshot

2004 is a leap year—a fantastic opportunity to leap into something new. Are you gonna use your extra day like you use so many other days—using up more of the earth’s resources while the forests, the oceans, and tree communities wither and die? Watching it all go on around you—an “information consumer”—feeling helpless to do anything to resist it?

Life is far too short to spend days, weeks, years just getting by—getting treated like an object. How much of your life do you really get to control? How often are you really fully alive and free?

If you wish things were different and dream about a better world, you’re not alone. Vast numbers of people from all walks of life realize that life as we know it isn’t satisfying our real needs and has to change.

Lots of people have developed pretty concrete ideas of how life could be transformed. We need to love each other, take care of each other share and cooperate, live with the earth instead of destroying it, and embrace diversity, not hatred and violence. Social structures that promote power and inequality need to be dismantled, and arrangements that promote freedom and sustainability constructed in their place.

It’s easy to see that if everyone oppressed by the current system would simply refuse to go along with it all at once, the system could be crushed and replaced by something else. The key is for each individual to make a visible leap of inspiration—from hopelessness to activity disregarding if other individuals have simultaneously made the same leap at the same time. Otherwise everyone will always be waiting for everyone else to rise up first, and life will go on as always. As more and more people individually and visibly leap to action, their actions become noticeable, inspiring more people and snowballing the struggle for liberation.

We propose a universal day of action on our extra day in 2004, February 29. Imagine everyone who feels smothered living a mediocre life within the current insane system taking individual responsibility to resist in whatever way they can. Break out of your normal routine on February 29 and spend the day living life like it really mattered. Make it visible, public, accessible, exciting, beautiful and free. You don’t have to wait for tomorrow, and you don’t have to ask anyone permission. Celebrate leap day and everyday with a leap of participation and change.

# fifth Estate

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