

Do you have a dream?



Photographs © Sarah Corbett / Craftivist Collective

Sarah Corbett shares a crafty project for positive change

Christmas is a great time for gentle and positive craftivism, whether you are making ethical presents or simply passing the time before dinner. Find a quiet place to rest, reflect and make your altruistic New Year's resolution. More and more people want to be part of the change they wish to see in our world, but don't know how. Craftivism can be a powerful tool in the activism toolbox for any changemaker, whether you are new to activism or an experienced campaigner. Here is one way you can use craftivism (craft + activism) this month.

What is your dream for a better world for all? We know the dreams of Martin Luther King Jr., Gandhi and the Suffragettes, and the power they have to not only sustain themselves but also attract others to the cause. So why is our default to be problem-complainers rather than solution-seekers? Charlotte Rae, a neuroscientist at the University of Sussex, writes:

"Neuroscience research shows that when we feel threatened, the habit-based centres of the brain drive automatic behaviours, shutting down opportunity for new thinking. When we pause and make a conscious effort to reflect, we engage our prefrontal cortex, enabling us to actively explore what actions we can take for a better future."

Use this activity to help you imagine, with all of your senses, what a healthier, happier and more harmonious world

would be like and how you can be part of making it a reality. Take part on your own, hidden away, or do this with loved ones. Our 'crafter-thought' questions can be discussed with others or reflected on alone. This project involves hand-stitching one of your positive visions for the future onto fabric 'dream clouds' while using the meditative and calming effects of handicrafts to think critically and compassionately about how you can be part of *making* positive social change.

In a society that can feel like it's becoming more fractured and fragile, let's stop making despair convincing and start making hope possible.

Crafter-thoughts

Once you're embracing the soothing, repetitive nature of stitching, it's time for some deep thought about your dream for a better future for all. Craftivism is all about being the tortoise and taking it slowly. Considering these questions stitch by stitch will help you focus on becoming a dream-maker, not just a world-worrier:

- What would your utopian world include? What would it look, feel, even sound like?
- As a global citizen, how can you make this dream a reality?
- Who has power to help make your dream happen, and how can you appeal for their support?



1

Let's get dreaming! Hold your two fabric clouds in the palm of your hand. Picture your vision for the future. What do you see?



2

In your best handwriting, write a short message that describes an element of your vision on the cotton cloud.



Back stitch

Running stitch

Blanket stitch



3

Backstitch over your writing, reflecting on our crafterthought questions as you do so.



4

Puff up your dream cloud with ethical hemp or shredded paper, or upcycle worn-out fabric as stuffing.



5

Hang your cloud somewhere your message will be relevant and thought-provoking. Share an image of your dream cloud hanging proud somewhere in your local area or at home as a physical reminder to yourself to be a dream-maker. Include @craftivists so that we can appreciate your great work and share it with other dream-makers.

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Sarah Corbett is an award-winning activist, Ashoka Fellow and the founder of the global Craftivist Collective. Her latest book, *How to Be a Craftivist: The Art of Gentle Protest*, is published by Unbound. You can order her Dream-Making ethical DIY kit at craftivist-collective.com/projects