



## Top 10 "What To Do or Don't Do Right Now" from Fire Survivor Communities Day 1 through Day 30

1. We are so sorry this happened to your home -- which includes your houses, businesses, pets, etc. It is devastating and unimaginable until it is reality. We know. We've been there and then we've been to virtually everywhere a megafire has devastated since 2017. This is your recovery to lead; the rest of us need to support YOUR experience.
2. People are generally wonderful, and we see you there, stepping up and helping out your friends, neighbors and total strangers because it is the right thing to do. It is what Rebecca Solnit calls, "A Paradise Built in Hell." Hold onto this love in the air.
3. Three types of people will show up after disaster: those who want to sell you something, those who want to help you, those who want to defraud you. How to navigate? Make sure you don't make any quick decisions, no matter how much you want to because this is a deeply traumatic event, and you (reasonably) want your life back.
4. Watch for fraud and scammers. So sorry. They will tell you to settle, to pay off your mortgages, sell your land, to give them large checks to rebuild now, to convince you they are superheroes. They are not. **DO NOT PAY OFF YOUR MORTGAGE.** For financial navigation, there is a free service (for anyone) called Here 2 Help: 1.855-HERE2HELP (Thank you Fannie Mae)
5. Look towards wildfire survivor communities to assist you. Do not reinvent the wheel. We want you to start way ahead of us. We can help. **WE ARE NOT ASKING YOU FOR MONEY NOW OR LATER.**
6. "I don't know" are Super Power words. Do not fear the "I don't know." Do be wary of those who say they know it all. Do be wary of those who do not listen to you. You know your community.
7. Ask for anything you need. Ask and don't be afraid to be wrong. Do not worship perfection. You will make mistakes and that is fine. You will make the terrible better by leaning in, loving hard, and being fierce and humble. It may seem impossible, but I promise you got this....
8. But don't try to "got this" alone. There is no one person, one sector, one NGO, one agency who can do all or even most alone. This moment is Survival of the Kindest -- and kind people are strong people. Strong people also need mental health care, breaks, breaths.
9. You will get through it. How? By going through it. I hate that answer too. But you will not be alone. We have a vast and deep network of people who will support you. You will walk through this event and to the other side together.
10. Read this list again. Breath. Cry. There was then and this is now After the Fire. Ever thus. Welcome to our terrible club full of the most wonderful people on the planet. We are all here for you. All the days and months and years ahead.  
**There's a lot of Hope in the Dark.**