

Keep Going

A Guide to Organizing When It's Hard

Ellen David Friedman • Illustrated by Fernando Marti

This book is a guide to help workplace organizers get started, keep going, and get unstuck when things aren't going as expected.

Organizing is full of challenges and dilemmas. How do you decide who to talk to, if your coworkers all seem scared or apathetic? What if you invite people to a meeting and no one comes? What should you do when your organizing committee is splitting apart? What if your own union leaders break your heart? This book will help you evaluate any situation and find a way forward.

Drawing on a half century of experiences in training and advising thousands of workplace activists, Ellen David Friedman teaches four essential principles and four basic ingredients of organizing. She shows how to apply these principles and ingredients to familiar situations and invites you to rethink common missteps. You'll start to see how you can get yourself unstuck, no matter what situation you're in.

Eight featured true stories of workplace organizers bring the ideas to life, gorgeously illustrated by Fernando Marti.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ellen David Friedman is a retired organizer with the Vermont affiliate of the National Education Association. She has trained and advised thousands of union members, staffers, and officers, and is the architect of the popular Labor Notes workshop "What to Do When Your Union Breaks Your Heart." She is a regular contributor to *Labor Notes* magazine and chair of the Labor Notes board. She lives in Ithaca, NY.

Fernando Marti is a printmaker, community architect, writer, and poet based in San Francisco.

ACCOLADES

"While many organizing books focus narrowly on techniques, *Keep Going* hits on key fundamentals putting questions of union democracy and power front and center. It combines practical advice with fundamental insights on organizing."

—Joe Burns, labor attorney/negotiator and author of *Class Struggle Unionism*

"The book *Keep Going* captures the need for humility in organizing, especially when things get hard. Through storytelling, Ellen shares organizing lessons that are in response to common organizing questions and challenges and that provoke thought about the processes of organizing often taken for granted or forgotten."

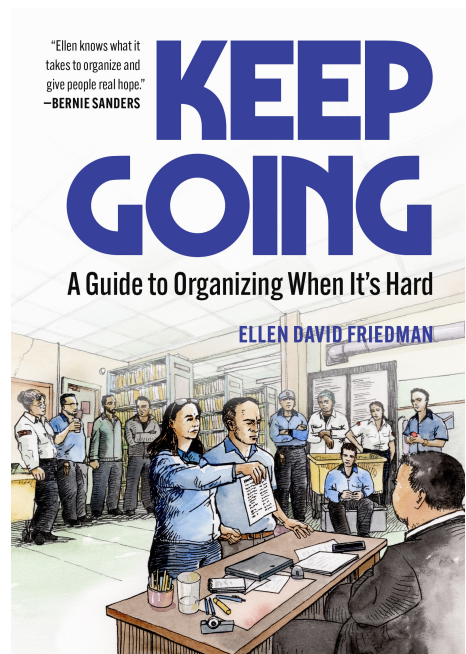
—Diamonté Brown, president of the Baltimore Teachers Union

"Ellen David Friedman has gifted us all with this essential book on organizing! We've all been there as organizers, hit with obstacles that seem insurmountable on our journey to build power in our workplaces and in our lives. This text gets right to the point, addressing what it will take to shift our mindsets and the culture of oppressive systems to ones that beam with hope and real tools. Every element is taken from stories in the field with lessons that carry over to help us all. Our rank-and-file caucus cannot wait to begin our book group!"

—Jia Lee, Movement of Rank-and-File Educators caucus/United Federation of Teachers, NYC

"Each page of *Keep Going* will help you gain and build momentum when you feel stuck. It's easy to get frustrated, to complain or take a step back from your union or a campaign. I've been there. But we must lean into our problems, organize, keep going, and keep an eye on the horizon. This book equips you to push through your frustrations, anxieties, fears, and burnout. Every real-world story delivers an organizing principle that will help you build collective power with your colleagues and create a democratic union along the way."

—Jon Schleuss, president of the NewsGuild-CWA



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PM PRESS

P.O. Box 23912 • Oakland, CA 94623

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