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There is no They

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There is No They
Margot Vigeant

Here's something I believe, deeply and fervently.

There is no They.

You know who They are? You've heard of Them, although you've never met Them. They are the ones who *do stuff*. You know – “They really should make it so this works better.” “Someone ought to fix that.” “It's never been the same since They changed the rules.”

I know you've never met those who comprise They because once you do, they're not a They anymore. They are people – your friends, your colleagues, your teachers.... People you could talk to and would probably even find to be reasonable if you asked why they'd done things. Sometimes, there isn't even a person or group that's the relevant They. Sometimes things are as they are because no one made a choice. It just turned out like that.

So what does this mean? It means that you can't, you shouldn't, wait around for Them to take care of things. If there is a way to make the world better, even in a small way, and you are the one who cares about it and sees the answer, then do it. Get some like-minded friends, and improve your community. Or do it yourself. They won't take care of it, because They don't exist. But your friends and neighbors do.

It's an old idea. In fact, if you've ever been a Brownie Girl Scout, it's the essence of the story your leader tells on day 1. “Hey what happened to the fairies and brownies who used to take care of all the cleaning up around here?” “Why don't you go at the full moon and look at the pond; you'll see the brownie there.” Ah. I get it. *I'm the brownie!*

(Although I must admit I missed the point when I was six. I thought it was about cookies.)

It's a small world. Yes, there are seven billion people, but most of them are friends of your friends' friends. And while this might seem tangential, it's central to the point – the stuff you do is “local”. You impact your community. But your community ripples and echoes out into the much larger world. It's worth remembering, because while my belief seems to just be about small systems, small systems are what make up of the big ones. Revolutions are started, wars are ended, the world is made better by people who made the choice for themselves to do the right thing, with their friends and neighbors, rather than wait for others to take care of it.

There is no They.

Only Us.