

LOUDER

SPRING 2026

*You Can't Self-Care
Your Way Out of a
Broken System*

NOT TOO MUCH,
NOT TOO SENSITIVE:

*The Cost of
Silencing
Youth Anger*

*Work Isn't Broken
— The Deal Is*

*Collective Is the
New Individual*

WHY YOUTH ANGER IS
NOT A WEAKNESS — IT'S
A WARNING SIGNAL

EDITOR'S LETTER



Why We Need to Be Louder

Young people are often told two contradictory things at the same time:

Your voice matters — and not like that.

Be passionate, but not angry.

Speak up, but don't disrupt.

Care deeply, but don't make it uncomfortable

LOUDER exists because change has never come from whispering.

This generation is navigating economic pressure, political instability, mental health strain, and cultural erasure — all while being asked to stay polite about it. That expectation is unrealistic and unfair.

LOUDER isn't about shouting for the sake of noise. It's about clarity. About naming what's broken, highlighting what's working, and giving space to voices that are usually edited down or talked over.

We believe youth culture is not a phase — it's a force.

And it deserves to be heard.

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The Cost of Silencing Youth Anger



By Elizabeth Dowd

Society has a selective memory when it comes to the utility of anger. When an institution exerts force to maintain the status quo, it is celebrated as "strong leadership" or "decisive action." However, when that same intensity originates from the youth, it is reflexively dismissed as a lack of emotional regulation or a flair for the dramatic. This double standard ignores a fundamental truth: anger is not just a feeling; it is a vital data point that signals where a system is failing its people.

At its core, anger acts as a psychological alarm system. It serves as a visceral indicator of boundary violations, broken social contracts, and systemic inequities that have gone unaddressed for too long. For the modern generation, this alarm is ringing constantly. They are navigating a landscape defined by skyrocketing living costs, the precarious nature of the "gig" economy, and the looming shadow of climate instability—all while being watched through the unrelenting lens of digital scrutiny. To expect young people to remain perfectly composed in the face of these pressures is not a request for maturity; it is a demand for suppression. Silence in the face of injustice isn't a sign of growth—it's a sign of a stifled voice. By rebranding youth anger as "immaturity," we effectively ignore the very data we need to fix the crumbling structures they are inheriting.



History suggests that we ignore this fire at our own peril. Every major leap in social progress—from the hard-won victories of the civil rights movement to essential labor protections and environmental regulations—was fueled by the refusal of the youth to normalize injustice. These movements didn't succeed because young people were inherently reckless; they succeeded because their anger provided the necessary friction to stop a harmful machine from continuing its status quo.

At LOUDER, we recognize that anger itself is never the enemy. It is a raw, potent fuel that has the power to reshape the world if harnessed correctly. The danger lies only in "directionless" anger—the kind that burns without a target. Our goal is not to extinguish the flame, but to provide the hearth and the chimney, ensuring that this heat is converted into the power required for structural reform.

Anger is the ultimate signal that the current path is unsustainable. It is the friction that precedes fire, and the fire that precedes renewal. If we want a functional future, we must stop viewing the volume of youth voices as a problem to be solved and start viewing it as a diagnostic tool to be utilized. Listening is not a passive act of "allowing" speech; it is an active commitment to investigating the roots of the outcry and moving toward systemic resolution.

The narrative that the world needs "quieter" or more "respectful" youth is a dangerous myth designed to protect the comfortable. Quiet youth are often just hopeless youth, and a generation without hope is a generation that cannot build. What the future actually requires is a generation that remains loud enough to be heard over the noise of corporate and political inertia, ensuring that the urgency of the present is never forgotten. Ultimately, the burden of change should not rest solely on the shoulders of those who are angry. The future doesn't just need braver activists; it needs braver systems. We need institutions that are resilient enough to handle critique, leaders who are humble enough to admit when a boundary has been violated, and a culture that values the truth of a signal over the comfort of silence.



Collective Is the New Individual

By Aaron Chau

The myth of the self-made success story is losing its grip.

Young people are increasingly aware that individual wins don't fix collective problems. No amount of personal achievement can offset systemic barriers — especially when those barriers affect mental health, housing, education, and income.



That's why youth power is shifting from lone influencers to collectives. Student unions are organizing for mental health services. Creators forming cooperatives instead of competing.

Young workers are unionizing industries once considered untouchable. This isn't a weakness. It's a strategy.

Collective power spreads risk, multiplies impact, and reduces isolation. It also challenges the idea that struggling alone is somehow more honourable.

Progress doesn't happen because one person "made it." It happens when many people refuse to be left behind.

YOU CAN'T SELF-CARE YOUR WAY OUT OF A BROKEN SYSTEM

By Blessing Slami

Bubble baths won't fix burnout caused by overwork.

Affirmations won't erase financial insecurity. Meditation won't solve institutional neglect. Mental health conversations have expanded — but they've also been oversimplified. Young people are often encouraged to regulate themselves in environments that are fundamentally dysregulating.

LOUDER believes in self-care — but not as a distraction from accountability.

Real mental health support includes:

- Access to affordable therapy
- Flexible work and school expectations
- Safe housing
- Community care, not just individual coping

Young people aren't "failing to cope." They're responding normally to abnormal pressure.

Healing is personal — but it's also political.



Work Isn't Broken The Deal Is

BY TERRENCE AFU

Young people are not afraid of work. They're afraid of exploitation. They've watched productivity rise while wages stagnate.

They've seen loyalty rewarded with layoffs, and "dream jobs" come with unpaid labour expectations.

So they're renegotiating the deal.

More transparency.
Clear boundaries.
Pay that reflects reality.

This generation is asking harder questions before saying yes:

- Does this job support my life – or consume it?
- Is growth promised, or demonstrated?
- Is burnout treated as a badge or a warning sign?

Choosing better terms isn't entitlement.
It's intelligence.

Visibility Isn't the Same as Representation

BY JACOB WANG

Youth culture is everywhere — but not always accurately.

Representation without agency turns people into aesthetics. LOUDER highlights creators, artists, and thinkers who control their narratives, own their work, and resist being flattened into trends.

Being seen matters.
Being heard matters more.



A photograph of three Black women standing in profile, looking towards the left. They are wearing vibrant, colorful clothing and multiple layers of jewelry, including necklaces and earrings. The woman on the left is wearing a yellow top and a pearl necklace. The woman in the middle is wearing a red beret and a white top with colorful embroidery. The woman on the right is wearing a blue top. They are standing in front of a blurred city skyline with tall buildings.

**LOUDER is not about
having the final word.
It's about refusing
silence.**

*If you're angry, curious, hopeful,
exhausted, or determined — there's
room for you here.*

Organizing Without Apology

At 24, Daniel Reyes is leading housing rights forums in his city. “People think young organizers are reactive,” he says. “We’re strategic. We just refuse to wait.”

His focus: policy literacy, not protest optics.

Power is built. Not borrowed.

Two Voices



**'I'M TIRED OF EXPLAINING
MY EXHAUSTION'**

— 23, Ottawa

"My parents think burnout is ambition. I think it's unsustainable."

**"STOP CALLING US
SOFT"**

— 26, Halifax

"Choosing peace isn't weakness. It's awareness."





Poetry Excerpt

*“Volume is not noise
It is breath returning
To lungs told
To shrink.”*

*Youth art isn’t
decoration. It’s
documentation*