Affective Necessities

We need to break some beliefs
we were educated
that we should
take care of others
the training is
you need to take care of others
in order to be loved.

We need to deconstruct.

This recognition is ephemeral,
a belief,
the origin
saying;
the present is for sacrifice
and struggle,
the future
for the working class
and the proletariat,
for us
nothing,
for everyone
everything.¹

That is a timebomb.
The challenge
affective necessities;
health,
just salary,
air,
a ten minute break
each hour
when we have ten hours of meetings.
It was seen as an ornament,
you are measured
for the number of attacks you have suffered
not by the way you survived.
To find the balance
make visible the tools which make us survive.

Composed by Juliana Mensah from an interview transcript of a Mexican woman human rights defender from the research project ‘Navigating Risk, Managing Security, and Receiving Support’, which focuses on the experiences of human rights defenders at risk in Colombia, Mexico, Egypt, Kenya, and Indonesia (securityofdefendersproject.org)

¹ Zapatista maxim “Para nosotros nada, para todos todo”