

Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns

Second Edition



Published by War Resisters' International
Second Edition June 2014

ISBN 978-0-903517-28-7



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CREDITS

The process of writing this *Handbook* was a collective effort, with people from across the world (more than 20 countries) contributing their time, skills, knowledge and resources. The first edition was translated into 10 languages. The second edition was expanded on by a range of writers and contributors. All of the content and translations are available for free online at <http://wri-irg.org/pubs/NonviolenceHandbook>

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This handbook is dedicated to Howard Clark (1950-2013), who died unexpectedly while this second edition of the handbook was being produced; Howard had contributed extensively to the first and second edition with his knowledge of the history and practice of nonviolence. Howard was the WRI Chair from 2006 until his death.

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ABOUT

War Resisters' International (WRI) is a network of mutual support, where we learn and support each other. Our *Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns* is a vivid example of the strength and depth of the WRI network. In 2009, WRI published the first edition of this handbook, as a response to a need for a resource on nonviolent campaigning that could be used by grassroots groups in lots of different contexts. The content was based on the experience of many activists in different countries and across generations. After being published, some of the best responses to it came from local groups and people who took on translating the handbook into their own languages. When producing the first edition we thought people might use or translate specific sections; to our surprise, in the coming months and years, translations of its full content were completed in more than 10 languages. Some of them were only being finished as we went to press with this second edition.

By sharing experiences and providing mutual support in WRI, we learn of the power of nonviolent action. There are many dramatic images of nonviolent action; indeed, the ability to dramatise an issue is one of the strengths of non-violence. Nonviolence allows people to see and act on what often passes unnoticed. However, this drama doesn't just happen. It gestates — in groups or cells of activists, in discussions, in training sessions, in reflecting on previous experiences, in planning, in experimenting, in making contacts. That is why this handbook is grounded in what groups have done and how they have done it. We are not attempting to present a definitive model, but to suggest methods that have worked in various contexts, that can be adapted by creative nonviolent activists in their own situations.

The work of this handbook has been an ongoing project for WRI. We don't see this version as an end in itself. This second edition reflects the thinking and experiences of using and translating the first edition as well as the development of nonviolent campaigning within the network at the time it was written. The printed version of the *Handbook* is what you have in your hands, but the ongoing process of sharing resources on nonviolent campaigns continues on our website.

You will see that this second edition is very much based on the first one. While some of the content remains the same, there is also a lot of new and revised material. The first clear change is that in an effort to simplify and make

the handbook easier to use, we have a new structure based on five main sections. The first section, ‘introduction to nonviolence’ introduces what we mean by nonviolence and incorporates new content on what we understand by violence, conflict and the role of power when dealing with conflict. Power and conflict are not negative words on their own, it is how you engage and deal with conflict and power that matters. The gender piece in this section is completely new and reflects WRI’s decision to form a Queer Working Group as well as having a Women Working Group, to challenge a binary approach of men and women; it also looks at how to engender our practices at all levels as nonviolent activists. The second section is called ‘developing strategic campaigns’ – the key word here being strategic – and includes new pieces on what makes a campaign or group strategic, the experiences learned from mobilisation in Nepal, and a piece on popular education. The third section, ‘organising effective nonviolent action’, is a rich range of resources on organising effective nonviolent action. The content includes a piece on how to deal with fear in actions and a text introducing the concept of dilemma actions. ‘Case studies: stories and experiences’ is the fourth section, with new and updated cases that show the strength and diversity of nonviolent action. Finally, the fifth section, ‘training and exercises’ gives examples of exercises and advice on running training sessions for working with nonviolence. These groups exercises aim to deepen a group’s understanding of an issue and each other, or to help groups be more effective in carrying out nonviolent actions and campaigns.

In the spirit of seeing the *Handbook* as an ongoing process, we hope that readers continue to adapt, revise and translate it – when doing so, the glossary, ‘do it yourself’, and the resources section should help.

At the start of each section there is a box where we highlight how its content connects with the rest of the handbook. Use this to connect the more theoretical sections with the more practical content, as well as the cases studies and exercises, to see what the theories and concepts outlined look like in practice.

In WRI we try to create and distribute all resources, rather than merely providing them. This means that others can gain from reading what you yourselves have learned in your experiences with nonviolent campaigns or training. The resources section shows the extent of this process, as many other groups and people continue to develop and expand their thinking on nonviolent action. We hope that this handbook is another contribution in this joint effort.

INTRODUCTION TO NONVIOLENCE

What is nonviolence, and why use it?

Joanne Sheehan

In this handbook, our working definition of nonviolence is based on a desire to end all violence — be it physical violence or what's been called 'structural violence' and 'cultural violence' (see 'violence', p27) — without committing further violence. This handbook was written by people from around the world with a range of perspectives on the subject.

Many organisations and campaigns committed to nonviolence produce statements of their nonviolent principles that explain their perspectives. WRI's Statement of Principles says:

WRI embraces nonviolence. For some, nonviolence is a way of life. For all of us, it is a form of action that affirms life, speaks out against oppression, and acknowledges the value of each person.

This *Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns* has been written to support the work of groups putting nonviolence into action.

Nonviolence can combine active resistance, including civil disobedience, with dialogue; it can combine non-cooperation-withdrawal of support from a system of oppression-with constructive work to build alternatives. As a way of engaging in conflict, sometimes nonviolence attempts to bring reconciliation with it: strengthening the social fabric, empowering those at the bottom of society, and including people from different sides in seeking a solution. Even when such aims cannot immediately be achieved, our non-violence holds us firm in our determination not to destroy other people.

WRI statement of principles

Nonviolence can imply much more than this, including a desire to change power relations and social structures, an attitude of respect for all humanity or all life, or even a philosophy of life. We encourage you to explore these areas.

Discovering the differences in emphasis and sharing insights into nonviolence can be a rich experience in the context of a group preparing to take nonviolent action together.

People have different reasons for adopting nonviolence. Some advocate it because they see it as an effective technique for bringing about desired social changes, others because they seek to practice nonviolence as a way of life. There is a spectrum here, and many people lie somewhere in between. Such differences may surface during a campaign, but usually a statement of principles or guidelines specific to a particular campaign can accommodate people's attitudes across a spectrum. (See 'maintaining nonviolence during an action' p102)

Resource: "What makes an action nonviolent?", available at <http://www.warresisters.org/nva/nva0701-2.htm>

Certain differences in understanding, however, can be a source of friction, and need to be brought into the open. For example, the question of damage to property can be divisive; while some nonviolent activists seek to avoid damage to property, others believe that such action is a cost worth inflicting on an opponent. (See 'violence' p27.)

Nonviolence is more than the absence of violence, and more than saying "no". Nonviolent activists also want our activities to be an expression of the future we are trying to create, and our behaviour reflects the world we want. When we use phrases such as 'speaking truth to power', 'affirming life', or 'respecting diversity', we are invoking fundamental values that themselves are a source of strength for us and a point of contact with those we want to reach.

The pragmatic dimensions of active nonviolence

Active nonviolence has been used as an approach to overcoming war, injustice, and environmental destruction, resolving conflicts of all kinds, or simply leading a healthy, responsible life-or all of the above. It is generally understood that this approach is based on a set of principles that have obvious and important ethical dimensions. Historically, many different traditions around the world have principles and codes of ethical conduct that are harmonious with nonviolence. Unfortunately, it is not generally understood that these principles also have very clear, demonstrable, pragmatic dimensions.

Yet the distinction between ethics and effectiveness may be more illusory than real. The practice of abstaining from violence – or, more appropriately, of practising active nonviolence – has a very strong pragmatic rationale: it maximises the chances of a positive outcome. Of course, choosing the path of active nonviolence

As stated above, the word 'nonviolence' implies many things. This handbook is specifically about nonviolence in action – what nonviolence looks as a tool to challenge violence and oppression – which is why these principles are about 'active nonviolence'. For convenience, throughout the rest of the book, we'll just use the word 'nonviolence'.

in no way guarantees a positive outcome — at least in the short run — any more than choosing the path of violence does. Its only claim — based on everyday experience, not to mention a growing body of empirical evidence from the blood-soaked historical record — is that choosing active nonviolence is much more likely to produce a positive outcome, at least in the long run.

Seven interlocking principles of nonviolence

Here are seven inter-locking principles of active nonviolence that explain why nonviolence works.

1. Active nonviolence means choosing means that are consistent with our ends.

Opposing violence by employing violence ourselves simply adds to the sum total of violence. Even when violence appears to ‘succeed’ in the short run, in the long run it often leads to revenge and counter-violence, thus perpetuating the age-old ‘cycle of violence.’

2. Active nonviolence distinguishes between the act and the actor.

Resisting the temptation to dehumanise our opponents avoids making enemies unnecessarily. The more we show respect for other people as human beings — even when expressing our vehement opposition to what they do — the greater the likelihood of them changing their behaviour, or even joining us, such as when insiders become “whistle-blowers.”

3. Active nonviolence seeks inclusive solutions.

This principle does not mean compromising with injustice, exploitation, or violence, it simply means taking into consideration the legitimate needs of our opponents, trying to find ways to accommodate them without surrendering our own — or others’ — equally legitimate needs or objectives.

4. Active nonviolence rejects both retaliation and flight.

Refusing to flee or fight — the expected responses to conflict or violence — can cause our opponents to reassess the situation and reconsider their options. Standing our ground without returning violence for violence and without backing down, is the “third way” of active nonviolence.

5. Active nonviolence choose openness, transparency, and truthfulness.

This principle is not an absolute. Sometimes, secrecy may be necessary in order to safeguard the lives of others. In most situations however, secrecy and deceit are not only unnecessary, they are likely to have highly counter-productive consequences for our organisations, our work, and our relationships.

6. Active nonviolence transforms our anger, rather than lets it transform us.

‘Righteous anger’ in the face of violence, injustice, exploitation, brutality, and indifference is not only understandable, but healthy. The question is how we deal with our anger — through nonviolence we can transform our anger into a positive force for constructive action.

7. Active nonviolence exercises power by withdrawing cooperation.

The authority that power-holders wield is dependent on the continued cooperation of those whom they wield power over. When this cooperation is withdrawn — when people exercise their own power by refusing to cooperate — power-holders lose the source of their power, and the ‘powerless’ become empowered.

How can nonviolence strengthen a campaign?

Nonviolence strengthens a campaign in three main ways:

1. Among participants in a campaign.

By fostering trust and solidarity among participants, they usually are put in touch with the sources of their own power to act in the situation, facing their fears. Many people don't realise how creative they can be until they have the support of others in trying something new.

2. In relation to a campaign's adversary.

Nonviolence aims either to inhibit the violence of an adversary or to ensure that violent oppression will 'backfire' politically against them. Beyond that, it seeks to undermine an oppressive institution's 'pillars of power' (see 'pillars of power', <http://wri-irg.org/wiki/index.php/Pillars+of+Powerower>, p203 or 'spectrum of allies', <http://wri-irg.org/wiki/index.php/Spectrum+of+allies-llies>', p208). For example, rather than treating employees of a corporate opponent as inanimate tools, nonviolence tries to create possibilities for them to rethink their allegiances.

The pioneer of nonviolent scholarship, Gene Sharp, has suggested four mechanisms of change in those opposing a nonviolent struggle:

- a) conversion: occasionally a campaign will persuade adversaries to adopt its point of view;
- b) coercion: sometimes a campaign can coerce adversaries to back down without convincing them of the activists' views of right and wrong;
- c) accommodation: when an adversary looks for some way to 'accommodate' a campaign, to make a concession without granting everything a campaign demands and without relinquishing power;
- d) disintegration: a mechanism Sharp added after 1989 when Soviet-aligned regimes had lost so much legitimacy and had so little capacity to renew themselves that, in the face of a 'people power' challenge, they disintegrated. (See 'forms of nonviolent action', p124). In relation to others not yet involved.

3. In relation to others not yet involved.

Nonviolence changes the quality of communication with bystanders or 'outsiders' — people not yet concerned about the issue or not yet active in a movement, or people who could be potential allies (see 'spectrum of allies' exercise, p208).

This handbook looks at the processes involved in building campaigns, in making issues alive and tangible, in designing campaign strategies, in taking action against violence and it's causes, and in preparing and evaluating action. What we write is firmly grounded in the practice of social movements, and in particular our own experiences with the peace, antimilitarist, anti-nuclear, and social justice movements all over the world. This handbook has been written by and for activists.

Historical uses of nonviolent action

Howard Clark, April Carter and Michael Randle

Look at the history of your country and you will find examples of nonviolent action: demonstrations, strikes, boycotts or other forms of popular non-cooperation. The causes will vary – rights of workers and peasant farmers, freedom for slaves, votes for women or people without property, caste and racial equality, against political impunity, or freedom from occupation. However, until the twentieth century – and in particular the campaigns of Mohandas Gandhi in South Africa and India – nonviolent action was not widely understood as a conscious strategy for social transformation.

Gandhi was convinced that nonviolence had a particular power, both in its effect on those resisting and on their opponents. He saw that social solidarity can overcome attempts to dominate, exploit or otherwise oppress a population. He also believed that it was not enough to oppose and blame an adversary, but that people must look at their own behaviour. Freedom and justice should be the basis on which a movement constructs itself. Gandhi was not the first to observe that those who rule depend on the cooperation of the ruled, but he made this central to his strategies of civil resistance. He evolved his ‘Experiments with Truth’ over time, and was not the most systematic thinker about nonviolence. However, he insisted on certain fundamentals:

1. Campaigns must maintain nonviolent discipline;
2. Constructive Programmes to address problems are of central importance.

In India, Gandhi expanded this Constructive Programme (see p56) to include reducing inter-religious hostility, tackling discrimination based on gender or caste, countering illiteracy and ignorance on sanitation, promoting self-sufficiency in food and spinning one’s own cloth.

The example of the Indian independence struggle had a huge influence on subsequent movements against colonialism and racial discrimination, especially in Africa and the USA, and generated initial research into what makes nonviolent resistance effective. Over sixty years later, nonviolent activists are still ‘experimenting with truth’ – many movements have adopted methods of nonviolent resistance, and research on what makes nonviolent action effective is flourishing.

Challenging oppression

The style of nonviolent resistance varies a lot according to context. Since the term ‘people power’ was coined when the Marcos regime in the Philippines was toppled in 1986, and especially since the downfall of Milosevic in Serbia in

Strategy
Movement Action Plan
Nonviolent actions
Forms of nonviolent action
Case studies
The case studies section of has several comprehensive write-ups of historical nonviolent action and campaigns
Training
10/10 strategies

2000, some observers have talked about an ‘action template’ for popular non-violent action overthrowing a corrupt and authoritarian regime trying to win ‘elections’ by force and fraud. There are of course similarities between the downfall of Milosevic and ‘people power’ actions elsewhere. Indeed some of the Serbs who used nonviolence creatively against Milosevic have helped to advise and train groups in similar circumstances. However, circumstances vary and each movement has to analyse what will work for them.

The ‘global nonviolent action database’ is an online database of nonviolent actions, covering many decades and all of the continents. See <http://nvdatabase.swarthmore.edu>

Predominantly nonviolent forms of protest, influenced by differing national contexts, played an important role in replacing authoritarian or military regimes in South Korea and Taiwan in the 1980s, and in Thailand in 1992. Mass mobilisation may sometimes lead to temporary rather than lasting success; in Nepal, the impressive movement to curb the king’s arbitrary power and create parliamentary government in 1990 had to be repeated in 2006, to bring back the parliamentary system. The experience of popular nonviolent resistance can create a basis for revived rebellion.

Nonviolent protest – framed in terms of achieving limited goals – was widely adopted in the former Soviet bloc from the 1970s, where activists were acutely aware of the danger of Soviet military intervention. The most impressive protests occurred in Poland, where by the 1970s intellectuals and workers made common cause, and major strikes won economic concessions. The Solidarity movement that began in the Gdansk shipyard in 1980 gained support from all sectors of society and sympathy from some in the Communist Party apparatus, but despite its ‘self-limiting’ demands for free trade unions was seen as a threat by the Soviet leadership, leading to martial law in December 1981. For a while the Solidarity organisation went underground and promoted low key forms of resistance such as election boycotts. More overt resistance was carried out by smaller groups, notably *Wolność i Pokój* (Freedom and Peace), which promoted imaginative and often witty demonstrations (mainly by students and young people) in the later 1980s, and used links to western peace groups and media to provide some protection against regime oppression. Then, as Gorbachev’s ‘perestroika’ inside the USSR created new pressures for change across Eastern Europe, a revived Solidarity negotiated with the Communist Party and won elections in June 1989. Where regimes were intransigent, as in East Germany and Czechoslovakia, nonviolent rebellion from below (and Moscow’s support for change) led to the dismantling of the Berlin Wall and the ‘Velvet Revolution’.

The East European revolutions of 1989 encouraged internal dissent inside the USSR – especially in the Baltic republics where protest had already begun and where popular nonviolent resistance complemented demands from newly nationalist governments to achieve independence in 1990-91. The rapid changes in East Europe also had repercussions in Sub-Saharan Africa, where between 1988 and 1993 action from below in the form of boycotts, strikes and

mass demonstrations (combined with western economic and political pressure) led to the ending of autocratic one-party regimes in Malawi and Zambia and in parts of Francophone Africa, where Benin led the way. However, some significant movements, for example against President Moi in Kenya and the ‘villes mortes’ campaign in Cameroon, did not manage to oust their presidents at the time; and other, temporarily successful campaigns, were reversed. The most sustained movement for democratic equality in Africa was the resistance to apartheid, which took nonviolent forms up to 1960. The African National Congress then rejected nonviolence and created an armed wing – *Umkhonto we Sizwe* (‘the Spear of the Nation’) – which initially intended (according to Mandela) to minimise harm to individuals and maximise damage to the infrastructure of the regime. After the 1976 Soweto school children’s uprising, mass trade and community-based resistance developed in the 1980s – with some violent aspects but fundamentally using strikes, boycotts and other nonviolent methods.

The problem of oppression

Many people are sceptical about the power of nonviolence against entrenched, repressive regimes, where any overt resistance is liable to be brutally crushed. However, there are a large number of ways of responding nonviolently to oppression.

Firstly, there are ways of keeping resistance alive through small scale, symbolic, or indirect forms of protest (practised in Chile in the early 1980s and other parts of Latin America, and at various stages in Eastern Europe) and by creating alternative forms of organisation to promote educational and cultural goals (for example the ‘flying university’ in Poland); these types of initiative can set in motion fundamental social change. Moreover, more overt forms of nonviolent action (including vigils, as by the ‘Mothers of the Disappeared’ in Argentina, public fasts, as in Bolivia in 1977-78, and various kinds of strikes) occurred in Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s in the face of torture, disappearances and death squads, and led to general strikes and mass protest that helped to end dictatorships in Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay.

Secondly, when popular anger becomes widespread, open and unarmed rebellion may be possible and in some circumstances – as in Iran in 1977-79 – succeed in toppling the regime, despite thousands being killed. Brutal oppression can crush an immediate nonviolent rebellion, but there may be an important legacy of experience and organisation. For example, the 1988 uprising in Burma led to the formation of the ‘National League for Democracy’ which, under the symbolic leadership of Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League contested and won elections in 1990. Afterwards, many were imprisoned and the military regime remained in power. However, even if a regime crushes overt resistance – as the Burmese military suppressed the 2007 rising led by Buddhist monks – it may find it politic to make some concessions subsequently: In 2010, the regime released Suu Kyi, and in 2012 allowed the National League to contest elections for 48 parliamentary seats. A key factor here was a Western economic boycott (urged by the Suu Kyi opposition) and the regime’s reluctance to be too dependent on China.

Thirdly, international pressure by campaigning groups, international bodies and/or national governments have often played an important role in eventually persuading a regime to make concessions, as happened with the campaign against Apartheid in South Africa. Such pressure was also important in enabling the opposition in Chile to campaign successfully for a 'No' vote in the 1988 plebiscite designed to renew General Pinochet's presidency.

The emphasis here has been on national movements of resistance to repressive forms of rule, but even in 'free', democratic societies there persist many forms of structural and cultural violence, such as discrimination and social deprivation, and states continue to deploy destructive military arsenals (including in some cases nuclear weapons) that activists respond to with nonviolent means. In recent decades, innovative and challenging forms of nonviolent action have been associated with a wide range of social movements against discrimination, economic injustice, war and environmental destruction.

Nonviolent or unarmed resistance?

A very wide range of popular protests have been incorporated in the literature under the term 'nonviolent resistance' (or sometimes 'civil resistance'). Their common feature is that they have relied primarily on symbolic protest, forms of non-cooperation or nonviolent intervention. Some movements usually described as nonviolent have, however, involved defensive violence (as in Tahrir Square in Cairo in January 2011), or even frequent stone throwing (as in the First Palestinian Intifada of 1987-92). There is a continuum between:

1. The kind of moral commitment and interpretation of nonviolence adopted by Gandhi.
2. A very conscious political and strategic commitment to avoid violence as generally in East Europe in the 1980s; and
3. Willingness to use essentially nonviolent methods (and avoid armed conflict) but no commitment to avoid low level physical violence, true of many movements.

It is possible therefore to distinguish between 'nonviolent resistance' (where there is an organised attempt to avoid violence on moral and/or strategic grounds) and 'unarmed resistance', which stops short of guns and bombs. But within any given movement there may be varied attitudes to nonviolence: most participants in Gandhi's campaigns did not share his philosophy of nonviolence as a philosophy of life and, at best, saw nonviolence as a good strategy to achieve their campaign goals. While movements with low level physical violence are quite common, there may be a group committed to strict nonviolent methods – as was true in the Intifada.

There is still a qualitative difference between unarmed and armed struggle. While the turn to violence is sometimes understandable when faced with extreme oppression, it is by no means a 'quick fix'. If an armed struggle can mobilise wide popular support (and combine with forms of unarmed resistance) then it can succeed, as in Nicaragua in the 1970s. However, armed groups can become separate from the population, and have been known to turn to extortion

and kidnapping to maintain themselves, or even prey upon ordinary people, as in Colombia. Where the population is divided on ethnic or religious lines, then a turn from unarmed to armed struggle may result in civil war, as happened to two countries caught up in the ‘Arab Spring’ in 2011; in Libya, where nonviolent protests and regime defections occurred initially before the conflict descended into civil war, and in Syria, where an impressive six month campaign of unarmed defiance became marginalised by a complex and wholly destructive war between ideologically and religiously opposed groups. Sometimes, the superior military capacity of the regime, and the heavy losses incurred in fighting, make significant armed resistance untenable. It is significant that some guerilla struggles have turned towards unarmed resistance, as in East Timor, 1991-99.

The Role of Pacifists

We in the War Resisters’ International embrace nonviolence as a matter of principle. We recognise that this commitment makes us a minority and requires us to work with people who do not necessarily share our pacifist principles. We want to look beyond rhetoric or short-term shock tactics to develop forms of active nonviolence that challenge systems of oppression and to construct alternatives. This means defining goals that make sense to many non-pacifists as well as using methods and forms of organisation that are attractive to those who do not have a pacifist philosophy.

Historically, pacifists have played a vital, innovative role in social movements, developing nonviolent tactics and forms of organisation. For example, the first US ‘freedom rides’ against racial segregation in the 1940s, and British direct action against nuclear weapons in the 1950s, were pacifist initiatives. The creative nonviolence of these groups encouraged more widespread use of nonviolent action by the mass movements that followed. Since the 1960s, pacifists have introduced nonviolence training, initially preparing activists for the kind of violence they might meet. Subsequently, nonviolence training has played an essential role in promoting more participatory forms of movement organisation.

Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. became such towering figures within their own movements that some people believe successful nonviolence depends on ‘charismatic’ leadership. For us in the WRI, however, nonviolent action is a source of social empowerment that strengthens the capacities of all participants without depending on superhuman leaders. Therefore we have advocated: more participatory forms of decision-making; promoted organisation based on affinity groups; and expanded nonviolence training to include tools for participatory strategy assessment and development.

A bibliographical source for the movements mentioned here (and many others) is: A Guide to Civil Resistance, Vol. 1, ed. April Carter, Howard Clark and Michael Randle, Merlin Press, 2013 (available from WRI).



Nonviolence training

We don't say that you need nonviolence training before you go out on the street and hold up a placard or give out a leaflet. Not in most countries anyway. However, the whole process we refer to as nonviolence training—analysing issues, envisioning alternatives, drawing up demands, developing campaign strategy, planning actions, preparing actions, evaluating actions or campaigns—can increase the impact your group has on others, help you to function better in action and cope better with the risks and problems it poses, and expand your action horizons. Basically, nonviolence training helps to create a safe space to test out and develop new ideas or to analyse and evaluate experiences.

Nonviolence training can help participants form a common understanding of the use of nonviolence in campaigns and actions. It is a participatory educational experience where we can learn new skills and unlearn destructive and oppressive behaviours society has taught us. Nonviolence training can strengthen a group, developing

Nonviolence

Nonviolence training during the
U.S. Civil Rights movement

Strategy

Working in groups
Education is freedom: popular
education

Case studies

Seabrook-Wyhl-Marckolsheim:
transnational links in a chain of
campaigns
Nonviolent intervention in Kenya:
empowering community action for
social justice
Afghanistan nonviolence handbook

Training

Tasks and tools for organising a
training

Nonviolence training during the U.S. civil rights movement

Joanne Sheehan

The earliest trainings in the U.S. took place in 1941 to prepare black and white youth to challenge racial segregation, which was often met with violence. Four youth groups aimed to integrate a swimming pool in Cleveland, and prepared by role playing. They used what they learned to develop a stronger action. This became a model of training for interracial actions.

In 1942, radical pacifists formed the 'Nonviolent Action Committee of the Fellowship of Reconciliation', which trained teams to provide leadership in anti-racist and antimilitarist work. From this group grew the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) which, in 1945 became the first organisation to develop nonviolence trainings in preparation for involvement in nonviolent actions to desegregate. CORE's first major protest in 1947 was the Journey of Reconciliation, when an integrated group of 16 men rode buses together through the segregated South for two weeks. Nonviolence training, co-facilitated by Bayard Rustin and George House, prepared them for the violence and jail sentences they encountered.

Beginning in 1947, CORE ran month-long training workshops in Washington, DC. For 10 years, participants learned theories and skills in nonviolence and organising, with the goal of ending segregation in the Capital region.



WHITE SOUTHERNERS POUR SUGAR, KETCHUP, AND MUSTARD OVER THE HEADS OF CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATORS DURING A LUNCH COUNTER SIT-IN IN JACKSON, MISSISSIPPI, USA, JUNE 12, 1963.

PHOTO: WIDE WORLD

In 1959 in Nashville, Tennessee, James Lawson began weekly workshops on nonviolent methods which became participatory training sessions with stories of nonviolence, role plays, and discussions. Lawson facilitated a process of empowerment for the young black students living in a segregated society, where they developed a sense of their own value. They learned how to focus on the issue of racist segregation and choose a target. Not believing in hierarchical leadership, Lawson organised a central committee which was open to those taking the trainings. As the students developed a strategy to desegregate stores, they learned to organise, conduct a demonstration, negotiate, and deal with the media. They role played the physical and verbal abuse they would receive when they sat at a segregated lunch counter, learning how to nonviolently resist the impulse to run or fight back. Their three month campaign – which was preceded by six months of trainings – was a success, and the restaurants and stores of Nashville were desegregated. Nashville became a model for campaigns and trainings.

Eight of the young black students went on to be key organisers of major campaigns in the civil rights movement and beyond. One of them, Bernard Lafayette, trained the trainer of the first two occupations of the nuclear power plant at Seabrook starting in 1976 (see 'Seabrook-Wyhl-Marckolsheim: transnational links in a chain of campaigns', p147). Rev. James Lawson continues to provide nonviolence trainings.

Nonviolence training is part of a decades-old tradition that has empowered people to take action on the issues that matter to them. Throughout the world nonviolence trainings continue to be used to build stronger movements.

For more on Nashville, see A Force more Powerful

<http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org>



WOMEN ACTIVISTS AND TRAINERS PARTICIPATE IN GENDER-SPECIFIC NONVIOLENCE AND EMPOWERMENT TRAINING, HELD OUTSIDE THE UK'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS FACTORY — AWE ALDERMASTON, UK.
PHOTO: JUDITH BARON

a community bond while people learn to work better together and clarify their intentions. Nonviolence training can help us understand and develop the power of nonviolence. It gives an opportunity to share concerns, fears, and feelings and to discuss the role of oppression in our society and our groups. Individually, training helps build self-confidence and clarify our personal interactions. The goal of nonviolence training is empowering the participants to engage more effectively in collective action.

Nonviolence training can prepare people for participation in nonviolent direct action, teach strategy development techniques and the skills needed to engage in the strategy, and work on group process and issues of oppression. Nonviolence trainings are often used to prepare people for specific actions, to learn about the scenario, to develop a plan and practice it, to understand the legal issues, and more. They are an opportunity for a group to build solidarity and to develop affinity groups. Through role playing (see ‘role playing’ exercise, p214), people can learn what they might expect from police, officials, other people in the action, and themselves. It can help people decide if they are prepared to participate in the action.

Nonviolence training has also been used as a tool for mobilisation and movement building. Many movements and campaign’s have used dedicated training to build power, and nonviolence trainings can help to distribute power throughout a movement by empowering activists at the grassroots. Nonviolence trainings bring people in a community together together to explore issues and concerns, build trust, and work out how they can act together. There have been many examples of nonviolence training helping to strengthen a movement, from the civil rights movement in the USA, to Faslane 365 (an anti-nuclear weapons campaign in the UK) to the People Power movement, which overthrew the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines.

Nonviolence trainings can range from several hours to several months, depending on factors such as the campaign’s needs and timeline, the goals for the training, the experience, available time and other resources, and availability of the participants and trainers. (see ‘tasks and tools for organising and facilitating trainings’, p189.)

Role of trainers

A nonviolence trainer is someone who can facilitate a group through a learning process. A trainer must be knowledgeable regarding the topics of the training, but should not be a know-it-all. A trainer’s goal is to guide the participants to develop their own ideas, not to tell people what to think and do.

Not all groups and communities who want nonviolence training have local trainers. But when people understand what skills are needed to conduct a training, they may realise they have already developed some of those skills and used them in different contexts. You can create a training team of co-facilitators who together can add their combined skills and experience. If possible, the training team should reflect the participants, consisting of people of various gender, age, and ethnic backgrounds.

Trainers need:

- Good group process skills and an awareness of group dynamics. It is the role of the trainer to make sure everyone participates and feels able to share insights and experiences.
- An understanding of nonviolent actions and campaigns. If no one has experience, the trainer needs to use case studies and exercises to help the group learn.
- To learn how and when to use the right exercises, being sensitive to the needs and styles of groups.



Gender and nonviolence

Cattis Laska

“As we have accumulated more and more evidence from more and more societies, we have become increasingly confident in this assertion that to omit gender from any explanation of how militarisation occurs, is not only to risk a flawed political analysis; it is to risk, too, a perpetually unsuccessful campaign to roll back that militarisation.”

Cynthia Enloe

Nonviolence is about putting an end to violence, no matter if this violence is committed on a large or small scale, on an intimate or a structural level. Nonviolence is about challenging hierarchical structures based on values of domination and control, and about confronting both injustice and the oppressive structures, institutions and authorities that uphold them.

For movements working for peace and justice, confronting oppression and injustice in society, it is very important to question and confront the power structures perpetuating the same injustices within our own movements. Groups where women, queer and/or trans* people – or anyone else – feel excluded, not listened to and not taken seriously, will drastically fail in accountability. Actively working to make our movements inclusive, broad and diverse does not just make for larger movements; it makes room for more perspectives and experiences, and also makes us more creative and effective in our work against injustice. In order to create safe and sustainable communities, and cultures that promote peace and justice, we must address all issues of structural, cultural and direct violence wherever they exist, and in whatever form they take.

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Violence
Nonviolence and power

Strategy

Theories of change

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Legal support

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Israel: New Profile learns from the
experience of others
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Training

Power flower
River of Life – gender lens

Gender awareness helps us to make sure that we don't perpetuate the same injustices in our nonviolent actions and campaigns that we are trying to stop.

In this section, we include concepts to help you incorporate gender awareness in your trainings, actions and campaigns.

What is gender and how does it affect us?

Gender is a social construction of ideas that assign certain roles, attitudes, images and behaviour to us depending on the sex we were assigned to at birth and the gender identity that we and society identify us with.

'Male' and 'female' are constructed as – and assumed to be – binary positions, which means opposites that are mutually interdependent and attracted to each other. Ideas about male and female behaviour, of masculinities and femininities, interact with and change depending on other social categories such as race, age, ability, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity and religious beliefs, and also vary over space and time, but affect and influence all of us our whole lives. The world around us expects us, and teaches us, to be either boys/men or girls/women, with different standards of behaviour for these two categories. Out of these expectations we learn how to act, feel and think in order to pass as either male or female.

Gender is not something we are, it is something we do. We are permanently (re)constructing gender, our own as well as others. Thus, rather than fixed and opposite positions, we should understand gender as something that exists within a constellation, as identities and expressions existing by themselves and in clusters, being constantly reformed and regrouped by us and the societies we live in. This means that there are many possibilities to change how we understand gender, and to open up space for all the varieties of gender that exist, space that is needed in a just and peaceful society.

The assumptions about us and expectations on us because of our (perceived) gender identity condition our choices and possibilities in all kinds of ways. The social constructions about gender contribute heavily to power relations between individuals, as well as between groups of people.

How is gender related to power and justice?

The social construction of gender teaches us to view the world and think in dichotomies, and to associate these with either masculinity or femininity; activity versus passivity, rationality versus emotion, strength versus weakness, control versus disorganisation. Patriarchy teaches us to value the categories associated with masculinity higher than those associated with femininity, and – using the same logic – the lives of those assigned the male gender higher than those assigned the female gender. Power and resources are also unequally distributed according to this logic. For example, this can be seen in how different kinds of work are valued and who is expected to do it, whose experiences and stories are listened to and believed, and who is given roles as leaders of family, community and society.

Consequently, the gender identity we are assigned to and that we ourselves

and society form us into, gives us very different amount of power over our lives and decisions that affect them. Our access to power and privileges also relies heavily on other social categories (such as race, class and age, among others), which means people get advantages or disadvantages from gender privilege in very different ways.

Adding to this, people who don't comply with the expectations of their assigned gender are punished – privately, publicly, or both. People that behave in a different way than is expected of their assumed gender identity, as well as people who don't agree with the gender identity that the state has assigned them to, are confronted with a whole range of direct, structural and cultural violence.

Why is a gender perspective important to our work?

Violence takes many and various forms; it can manifest as physical harm between one person and another, as psychological control by a partner over many years, as occupational injuries because of monotonous, wearing work, as chronic illnesses and shorter life expectancy because of housing in polluted



WOMEN ACTIVISTS BLOCK ALDERMASTON AWE, UK

PHOTO: WRI ARCHIVE

areas, or as large scale violence against whole populations in times of war. In all cases, violence is made possible by the existence of unequal power relations (out of which gender is one). Power relations rely on violence, among other sanctions, for their reproduction. With a gender lens, we can understand how violence and (gender) power relations are mutually constituted in all spheres of social life, and how the different forms of violence are gendered. This gives us an important insight into our work for peace and justice.

One example of this is the way we use technology. The idea of “being in control” (of one’s life, of the world) is closely related to certain masculinities, and contributes to the belief not only that technology can be controlled (such as nuclear power, or genetically modified organisms), but also that technology can solve almost all problems. At the same time, technology itself and the consequences of the use of technology have a very different impact on our lives, depending on our gender.

Creating peace is about building a society where all of us can feel safe and a sense of affinity, and so peace is intimately connected with struggling against power structures and norms that limit, marginalise and oppress us. Although patriarchy and other power structures set limits for all of us, it is important to recognise how these structures values some lives and bodies more than other and oppress us in different ways.

For movements working to end violence it is crucial to understand the full spectrum of violence in our societies; the different forms it takes and how it targets and affects us in different ways depending on our positions. Working with gender awareness to change both ourselves, and the (power) dynamics within our organisations is an important personal and organisational transformation that in itself acts to diminish structural violence in our societies.

Gender awareness in nonviolent campaigns

Struggling for a world without violence, nonviolence includes sharing power and responsibilities and giving everyone the possibility to be involved on an equal basis. The success of any movement depends on its ability to involve people in many different ways of struggle and to make everyone’s contribution equally valid and essential to the kind of society we wish to create.

Incorporating gender awareness in a campaign can mean many things. The following questions can be used by organisers to think about, as well as for a whole group to reflect on together.

Analysis of the campaign issue

- When seen through a gender lens, how are people effected differently by your campaign issue?
- What voices are listened to when gathering information about the issue?
- In what ways is your campaign issue reinforced by, and reproducing, ideas about gender?
- How are the different realities and needs of those most impacted by your campaign issue being addressed and included in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the campaign/action?



NON-BINARY GENDER INCLUSIVITY

PHOTO: EVAN GREER

The campaign's face to society

- What are the norms in your society/surroundings and how do they affect and reflect upon your work? For example, what images and words do you use in outreaching material?
- When representing the campaign/action in media or at public events – how do you make sure there is space for those most often ignored/silenced to speak?
- What examples and scenarios do you use in workshops, presentations and at public actions? How can you question these norms (instead of reinforcing them)?
- Which public do you aim to mobilize with the campaign/action? How do you ensure the participation of marginalized groups?

Internal processes / Organizational structure

- How do you ensure organizational structures that allow everyone's voice to be heard equally? For example, does everyone have equal access to and influence in decision making processes? How do you communicate in between actions and meeting and make sure information reaches everyone concerned?
- How is access and use of resources – such as knowledge or finances – decided?
- When and where do you have meetings? How do you make sure meetings are accessible for everyone who wants to take part? For example, does it have toilets that are non-gendered and wheelchair accessible? Is the location itself as well as the route to get there safe and in a reachable distance?
- How inclusive is the language that is being used? How do you make sure that nobody makes assumptions of someone else's gender identity?
- How do you divide tasks and roles? Are there gendered, or in other ways biased, assumptions about who 'should' take on particular roles or do particular tasks? How do you share responsibility for supportive roles such as note taking, cleaning, and logistical support?

Dealing with violence from outside the campaign/group

- How do you deal with conflicts and violence from outside the group?
- How do you prepare for encounters with representatives of the state like police or courts and the violence from them?
- How does your group take into account how people will have different experiences of the state or law enforcement (depending on gender, race, class, origin etc)? How is people's different needs for protection being received in the group?
- How do you make sure that there are ways for people in more vulnerable positions to still participate in the action?
- How are any specific consequences/repercussions as a result of the campaign/action being taken into account? For example, will anyone run a greater risk of being harassed?

This piece was written with the help of Denise Drake, Joanne Sheehan, Andrew Dey, Andreas Speck, Miles Tanhira, and Dorie Wilsnack.

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Violence

Jørgen Johansen

There are many ways to describe violence. A former Chair of War Resisters' International, Narayan Desai, once said;

“Everything that disturbs the harmony in life is violence.”

Every school of nonviolence will have their own definition of violence; you don't need to agree with Narayan. However, there is no doubt that violence is much more than physical violence against other humans.

Johan Galtung – direct, structural and cultural violence

Peace scholar Johan Galtung made an important contribution to the understanding of violence, by making a distinction between direct and structural violence. He defined direct violence as ‘physical harming other humans with intention’ and structural violence as ‘harm to humans as a result of injustices in our societies’. Later, Galtung added the term cultural violence to his concept. Cultural violence refers to culturally

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Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people courage to defy Chile's dictatorship

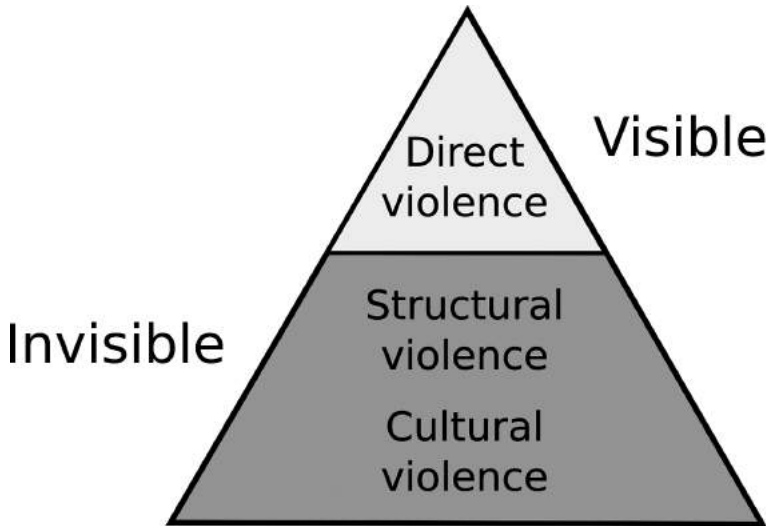
Nonviolent intervention in Kenya: empowering community action for social justice

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Training

Spectrum and cross spectrum

based justifications of direct or structural violence – cultural violence is what makes direct and structural violence appear justified, and can take the form of stories, songs, language use, aspects of religions or traditions, assumptions or stereotypes.



Peace movements have, traditionally, focused on the direct violence of the battlefields, but in recent years other forms of violence have been added to their agenda; the costs of wars reducing the budgets for health care and education, torture, school shootings, new weapon systems, and – to some degree – domestic violence. Other social movements have taken on psychological violence (bullying), violence against animals, violence against nature, and a variety of different forms of structural violence, such as poverty and economic justice issues.

Why understanding violence is important

If we try to compare the different types of violence, we can quickly encounter problems. If we focus solely on the deadly outcomes of violence against humans, we will see that they are in different 'divisions'. The number of humans killed in armed confrontations on battlefields has for some years been around 300 a day, or 100,000 a year. A huge number, but if we compare this figure with other causes of 'early deaths' in the world, traditional wars could be seen as a minor problem! According to the World Health Organisation, there are 60 million premature deaths a year, and at least half of these are due to easily curable diseases, or inadequate access to drinking water, food, and shelter. These are examples of structural violence, that are killing as many people every day as the number killed in wars each year. However, direct violence –

like war — should be understood as a manifestation of the complex structural and cultural violence that it is rooted in; this is summed up in War Resisters' International's founding declaration;

“War is a crime against humanity. I am therefore determined not to support any kind of war, and to strive for the removal of all causes of war.”

Fear of violence

Different forms of violence are feared much more than others. ‘Terrorism’ is hardly visible in statistics, while the fear of terrorism is very high. The fear of ‘terrorism’ is real, but ‘terrorism’ is not in the ‘top-10’ list of causes for early deaths in any country; the only exceptions might be countries with ongoing full scale wars. In general, the risk that you will be killed due to political or religious motivated violence is close to zero; the chance that your partner or someone else close to you will be the perpetrator is much higher. This is not meant to show disrespect for any victims of such politically-motivated violence, but it is important to consider how the fear of violence can be different to what is actually experienced, while other forms of violence are largely ignored.

How do we distinguish violence?

Sanctions are sometimes listed as a nonviolent method, as an alternative to violent conflict. However, even UN-ordered sanctions can have very violent consequences. During and after the first Gulf war in 1991, Iraq was punished with sanctions by the UN Security Council. The goal was to harm the Iraqi president Saddam Hussein, and to make him so unpopular that the people of Iraq would try to remove him. However, in a country seriously harmed by massive bombing, the effect of a near-total financial and trade embargo was devastating. By the time the sanctions were replaced with a new war (the occupation of Iraq in 2003), 1.5 million people had died as a consequence of the sanctions. This is another example of structural violence, and the total number of victims are higher than for all those killed by atomic, biological and chemical weapons in human history. One reason to oppose weapons of mass destruction is that they do not separate civilians from military, and yet these sanctions were extremely selective; Saddam Hussein and his general never lacked medicine, water, food, or shelter. The brunt of the sanctions was felt by the poor, newly born, sick, and elderly people who were unable to access the resources needed for survival.

Normative and descriptive understandings

A more theoretical discussion of violence can be useful to get a deeper understanding of the nuances of violence; to do this we can separate normative from descriptive views. A normative view takes into account the context in which the action occurs, while the descriptive tries to confine our understanding to a particular definition. Here is a short, descriptive definition of violence:

“Violence is any action that reduces the possibility for a human to live a life according to their full capacity.”

Using this definition, we could say that cutting an arm off a person is an act that reduces the capacity of a person's life, and so should be considered violent. However, that act will in fact be judged very differently depending on who does it and why it is done. For example, paramilitaries in Colombia have used chain saws to cut off the arms of young men who refuse to join them, and this is clearly an act of brutal violence. In contrast, when a doctor removes an infected arm to prevent a patient from dying, we do not even think of that act as violence, but as life-saving medical treatment. In both cases the person loses an arm and will have a reduced quality of life, and this fits with the descriptive definition of violence above, but the normative context for these two actions places them on opposite ends of a moral spectrum.

If we enter into a discussion on violence against animals, sabotage against dead objects, destruction of nature, or all the structural or cultural forms of violence, we will soon realise that most human activities could be seen as a form of violence. The destruction of material objects is sometimes considered justified; the Ploughshare movement sabotaged deadly weapons systems, environmental activists destroy machinery used to cut down rainforest, and animal rights activists have damaged laboratories where experiments on animals are carried out. In these cases, perhaps a more important question than whether or not these actions should be labelled as 'violent' or 'nonviolent' (descriptive), is if we can justify them to ourselves (normative).

For all of us it is therefore of utmost importance to base our activities on norms we have reflected on and can defend when they are questioned. There are no easy answers to all these questions.

No More Femicides Campaign: Violence against women and intersectionality

From 2003 onwards, feminist and antimilitarist group Red Juvenil has been analysing militarism as an expression of the patriarchal domination system. This initial attempt at not hierarching different systems of oppression generates a series of questions to female activists in the network: Can we be conscientious objectors? Should we as women accompany men in their process of disobedience? How can we be rebellious, from our antimilitarist practice and from our position as women oppressed by patriarchy? Are conscientious objectors victims of patriarchy or of militarism? These questions shifted the nonviolent campaigns developed by Red Juvenil; on the one hand trying to unveil militarism from patriarchy, but at the same time understanding the activists' need for a historical and concrete understanding of the oppression they were facing as working class women.

Red Juvenil decided to reveal the structural violence towards women brought by the system of patriarchal domination and made worse by the neoliberal economic contexts we live in the city of Medellín. For this reason we have designed a campaign that aims, through direct action, training and awareness raising, to reveal the violence against women, whose ultimate expression is the murder of women: femicide. In a highly militarised city filled with armed paramilitaries, women are permanently besieged or romantically involved with armed men, and this situation becomes the perfect justification for local authorities to re-victimise women again, stating that they are part of the 'paramilitary groups'. The 'No More Femicides Campaign' aims to unravel how femicide is closely linked to the neoliberal economic model, the state and to paramilitary militarism.

Our intention – to carry out a pedagogical and action process and not thematic but of intersectional analysis of systems of domination: patriarchy, capitalism, heteronormativity, militarism, neoliberalism, imperialism, colonialism, racism – has allowed us to set the design and development of non-violent campaigns in the context of our own reality. Together we have been able to develop a radical approach towards political action, where we welcome the own thinking and emancipation of our peoples, freedom, solidarity, community and the need for constant creative change.



Conflict

Jørgen Johansen

From a theoretical perspective, a conflict can be described as ‘two or more parties with seemingly incompatible goals’. That means that something such as territory, resources, or power is sought by multiple stakeholders, and it seems that they cannot all have it at the same time. The word ‘seems’ is important here; in many cases the use of skilful mediation, creative handling of a conflict, or transcendence of what seems to be incompatible can help to overcome the conflict. The ‘content’ or ‘contradiction’ of a conflict is often ‘polluted’ by strong attitudes, previous injustices, violent behaviour in the past, and other disturbing elements. These elements can make it difficult for the stakeholders to make rational choices or to behave wisely. Skilled conflict workers can use constructive nonviolence to help to overcome some of these obstacles.

When two or more parties are in a conflict they can act in many ways; negotiation and mediation are two normal ways to react. In some cases, they choose to use violent means, and – in the most extreme cases – start to kill each other. Most textbooks in political science or peace studies define war as a conflict, but they are wrong! War is a means used by some participants in some conflicts; conflict is a much broader and more complex concept than war. Authors of such textbooks show a lack of understanding of the nature of conflicts, and this has serious consequences, and not just for misled students.

If you cannot separate the means from the actual conflict, you will neither understand nor act wisely when dealing with conflict. One obvious consequence of not separating the violent means from the actual conflict is that many people understand conflict as negative per se.

Why conflict can be ‘good’

Let me make the following two declarations about the nature of conflict:

- Conflicts are a necessary and integral part of human development.
- All conflicts are ‘born equal’ and have the same right to recognition.

When individuals mature from children into adults, most have a phase of conflicts with their parents; this is an important part of children becoming independent adults. Similarly, the process of a society moving from agrarian lifestyles to a system based on industrial production is full of conflicts. When new ideologies or religions evolve, it is in conflict with the old ideas. This is how we have moved from children to adults, hunters to farmers, from authoritarian

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Training

Hassle lines
Role playing

systems to more democratic ones. All such change will, by necessity, involve conflict. These become harmful or destructive when one or more of the actors use violence to force their will, but there are millions of conflicts solved without violent means, which have helped us to build complex societies and civilisations.

The vast majority of conflicts are solved without the use of violence. The problem is that these peaceful cases are often not recognised. They are not covered in most media, included in our history books, or researched within academia – there is often a heavy bias towards violent or destructive conflicts. When partners quarrel it only become news if one actor uses enough physical force to make it a case for police, courts, and medical care – if the couple can solve their differences by asking their neighbour to mediate, or by civilised discussion over a cup of tea, the conflict will never appear in any records! It is similar with group conflicts, and conflicts between states. Only the most violent ones are reported, studied, and hence recognised. The peaceful examples – those we can learn most from – are forgotten, disappearing from our collective memories.

Since few have separated conflicts from the use of violence the common attitude is that conflicts are bad. And we have not sufficiently studied the many peaceful examples of how to handle conflicts. One of the problematic consequences of this extreme biased focus on the violent means is that the nonviolent strategies and techniques remains unknown and hidden.

Conflict and social change

If conflicts are seen as **resources** to be used in developing and building good societies we will need different type of studies and theories than what is presently available. The use of nonviolent and peaceful means and tools will normally mean the opposite of preventing and de-escalating conflicts. Nonviolent activists ‘jump into the middle of conflicts’ and act from there. If the conflict is not intense enough, they will try to dramatise and escalate it. If it is hardly known and recognised, they will stimulate the intensity by forcing others to act. Almost every example of a nonviolent action is a case of **conflict escalation**.

Conflict escalation

When few were engaged in opposition to slavery, the first task for the movement to abolish slavery was to put it on the political agenda. When the patriarchy did not care about universal voting rights it was up to women’s liberation movement to make the conflicts visible. When few cared about the brutal slaughtering of whales, activists dramatised the killing out in the deep seas by obstructing the whalers work. Campaigns against the arms trade do their best to raise awareness about the victims of wars. Almost every nonviolent campaign is an example of conflict escalation with peaceful means. These movements can celebrate their victories because they used conflict as a resource to confront injustice, and helped to create a better society in doing so.

Nonviolent techniques aim to escalate conflicts peacefully, and to make more people aware of hidden conflicts in our societies. Almost every democratic freedom or human right are the results of popular movements escalating the conflicts with the aim to change the old, unjust systems. The transformation to more equal and just societies still have a long way to go, and every hidden conflict should be made visible.



Nonviolence and power

Andreas Speck

Nonviolent movements or campaigns aim to change society – or even to promote revolution. In doing so, they will come up against existing power structures which want to prevent change. An understanding of power – of different forms of power – is therefore crucial for any movement for social change.

Most people have some assumptions about power. The power lies with the government (which may or may not be democratically elected), with the large multinational corporations, with the media, with the international institutions – to name just a few. All of these views are true to some degree, but how is their power is exercised? Where does it come from?

This article aims to explore a nonviolent understanding of power, and the forms of power nonviolence opposes, but also the forms of power it wants to build and nurture. Because power is needed to achieve social change – revolutionary change. And clarity about the kinds of power we object to, and the kinds of power we want, can help to avoid a “power-trap” of recreating structures of domination after toppling the powers-that-are.

A nonviolent theory of power

When we talk about power, we are often referring to power-over: the power of governments or corporations (or other power structures, such as patriarchy or heteronormatism) to impose on us what they see fit.

But power-over is only one form of power. There are several others, such as power-with, power-(in-relation)-to, and power-within.

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Mobilising for change: building power in Nepal

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Planning nonviolent campaigns
Working in groups
Activism in oppressive regimes

Case studies

West Papua: “We will be free”
Castor – how we mobilised people for civil disobedience

Training

Who has power in a school?
Pillars of power

Power-within

Power-within is related to an individual's sense of self-worth and self-knowledge; it is the capacity to imagine and have hope. Power-within means, on one hand, to understand our own situation of dependency and oppression, and to want to freedom from this; on the other hand it means to realise that every person has the possibility to influence the course of their own life and to change it. Developing power-within is crucial in any empowerment process.

Power-with

Power-with is power found in common ground among different people, and building collective strength. An awareness develops that you are not the only one affected by a situation, but that others have had similar experiences, too. This can lead to the realisation that people do not personally bear the guilt for their fate, but that often a structural or political pattern is at fault. This realisation and cooperation in the group can strengthen one's self-esteem. Not everybody has to find ways to deal with the situation – it is possible to struggle jointly for change. The group provides the opportunity to combine skills and knowledge, to support each other.

Power-with is related to the power of numbers, to the collective power we build when joining together with others, forming organisations, networks, and coalitions.

Power-(in relation)-to

Power-(in relation)-to refers to our goals and to the dominant power relationships. It is the power to achieve certain ends and opens up the possibilities of joint action for change. The question is: What leverage do we have, working in groups and coalitions, against the entrenched corporate and political power?

Any nonviolent movement needs to set into motion empowerment processes that develop these types of power, in order to challenge what is usually understood when we talk about power: power-over.

Challenging power-over

Power-over – or just power – as understood by most nonviolent movements is nothing static. A government doesn't just have power because it is the government, even if it is a military dictatorship. People in positions of power do not have in themselves any more power than any other human being. If that is the case, then, as Gene Sharp points out, the power to rule must come from outside.

Sources of power

If power is not intrinsic to political elites, then it has to be based on external sources. These external sources include authority (the acceptance by people of the elite's right to command), human resources (the elite's supporters, with their knowledge and skills), intangible factors (such as psychological considerations and ideological conditioning), material resources, and sanctions at the disposal of those with power. These sources of power depend on the obedience and cooperation of the people. The relationship between command and obedience is an interactive one, and power-over can be exercised only with the active or passive compliance of those being ruled.

It would be over simplifying to say that people obey only because of the fear of sanctions — legal sanctions such as fines or imprisonment, the threat of violence, or death. While this might be the dominant reason in extremely violent dictatorships, generally, there are other reasons for compliance that are more important. For example, habit (or tradition) is an important reason — we are used to obeying and without being challenged about it, we do not see any reason not to.

A third reason might be called “moral obligation”: because of social or religious values in society we feel morally (not necessarily legally) obliged to obey so as not to divert from the accepted norms and paths within society. This is also linked to “hidden-power” (see below),

Cooperating with power might be in our own interest. We might gain from it — in terms of prestige, monetary benefits, or we might gain a little more power too. We might even identify with those in power, or simply not see the issue as important.

Finally, we might lack self-confidence and just feel powerless (a lack of power-within).

Of course, it is not always easy to disobey. We are part of a web of (power) relationships and structures that often appear to leave us few choices. How can we disobey capitalism, when we need to earn money to satisfy our basic needs? While complete disobedience might not always be possible, there are often different degrees of compliance with the demands of power-over, which can be used to develop resistance.

A social movement aiming for social change — and not just for replacing one government with another — needs to address these reasons for compliance with power-over in order to challenge the power relationships, and build different types of power as a social movement.

Visible, invisible, and hidden power

It can be useful to look at power-over also from a different perspective, which is in some way related to the sources of power. These can be called ‘dimensions’ or ‘levels’ of power-over.

Visible power

Power-over can be very visible. This includes the formal rules (constitutions, laws) which establish relationships of power-over, but it also includes the threat of sanctions, either legal sanctions or the threat of arbitrary detentions or torture, which are designed to prevent people from claiming their rights.

Hidden power

Power-over can also be hidden, in the sense that no obvious, visible decisions need to be made which would expose the power. One example is the power of agenda setting: which issues are worth discussing in a society, at the place where decisions are being made. Who decides this? This can be done by controlling the media (which plays an important role in agenda setting), as well as by deciding who will be involved in discussing certain issues, and eventually in taking formal decisions. While the process of decision making itself might seem democratic, power-over is exercised by keeping issues off the agenda or excluding those most affected from taking part in decision making.

Invisible power

Power-over can also be completely invisible. It is kept from the mind and consciousness even of those most affected by it. By influencing how individuals think about their place in the world, this level of power-over contributes to shaping people's beliefs, sense of self, and acceptance of their supposed superiority or inferiority.

In many ways, invisible power is closely related to what Johan Galtung calls 'cultural violence' (see p27), which serves as legitimisation of both direct and structural violence, or the existence of power-over. As VeneKlasen and Miller put it: 'Processes of socialisation, culture and ideology perpetuate exclusion and inequality by defining what is normal, acceptable, and safe.' This contributes to creating what Sharp calls the "moral obligation" to obey.

Patriarchy in societies where it is still almost unchallenged and therefore widely accepted can be seen as a form of invisible power.

Social empowerment – nurturing the power we want

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Alice Walker

As movements for social change, which are distinct from political parties (which might want to get into government) we are not interested in acquiring power-over, but rather in limiting it. First and foremost, through empowerment we need to develop power-within each one of us, which is a prerequisite for developing power-with and power-(in-relation)-to.

These three types of power influence and strengthen each other. The desire

to achieve certain aims (power-to) can foster the power to act and join with others (power-with). And the group passes on power to the individual (power-within) – and the other way round.

In order to develop these kinds of power, we need to make sure our work facilitates empowerment processes. Empowerment processes often begin out of an experience of crisis, of a change in personal circumstances, which can lead to the realisation that one has to take responsibility for one's own life, and the desire for change. In joining with others in a similar situation or with similar interests, people begin to realise that they are not alone, and in acting together with others gain more confidence. With more experience, people get a better understanding of the structural causes of their problems, but also begin to challenge their assigned positions in personal life and within the group.

Finally, one might reach a stage Wolfgang Stark calls 'burning patience', derived from a poem by Arthur Rimbaud; 'And, in the dawn, armed with a burning patience, we shall enter the splendid cities'. This stage is characterised by an awareness of one's capacity to make change happen (alongside others) and a burning desire to do so, but combined with an understanding of the time required for empowerment processes and general social change, and the patience needed to facilitate and nurture empowerment processes in others.

These stages should not be seen as linear, but are intertwined and occur in parallel.

Group culture

A group culture facilitating empowerment is characterised by the possibility to gain new skills, fostering of social relations, sharing of competences and decision making (that is by consensus), and an open leadership structure. Our groups and organisations need to be at the same time empowering organisations – organisations that nurture empowerment processes among their members or activists – and empowered organisations, focusing on making use of power-to to achieve their campaigning objectives.

Further reading:

For more on the different forms of power, see:

■ *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics. The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Lisa VeneKlasen with Valerie Miller (Practical Action Publishing, 2002).

For more on empowerment, see:

■ *Nonviolence and Social Empowerment*, Julia Kraft and Andreas Speck (2001), and 'Empowerment – neue Handlungskompetenzen in der psychosozialen', in *Praxis*, Wolfgang Stark (Freiburg, 1996).

■ *The Politics of Nonviolent Action, Part One: Power & Struggle*, Gene Sharp (Porter Sargent Publishers, Boston, 1973).



DEVELOPING STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS

Why things don't 'just happen'

Andrew Dey and Joanne Sheehan

From the outside, social change can appear chaotic, spontaneous, or organic, with little reason or explanation behind it. The Occupy movement, the Seattle WTO blockade, the Philippine 'People Power' revolution, or so many hundreds of other examples, could all appear to have 'just happened', or were sourced solely from the power and influence of an inspiring leader. In reality, underlying this myth – that 'things just happen' – are committed activists who put much energy into planning and organising, to building power from the ground up, working out how to apply pressure to make the change they hope to see take place. Things don't just happen – people make things happen!

The Montgomery Bus Boycott: why it didn't 'just happen'

Consider this – very common – reading of the story of Rosa Parks' refusal on 1 December 1955 to move from her seat in the front of the bus to the back, where blacks were supposed to sit.

Rosa Parks was a tired, old woman, who made a spontaneous decision to refuse to move to the back of the bus that started a chain reaction of events – the Montgomery Bus Boycott, that ended segregated buses in

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Seabrook-Whyl-Marckolsheim:
transnational links in a chain of

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Diaspora solidarity for Eritrea: the

Arbi Harnet campaign

Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people
courage to defy Chile's dictatorship

Freedom Flotilla to Gaza – a

dilemma action case study

Training

Imagine the future: setting goals
The healthy tree/the problem tree

Montgomery, Alabama, USA, sparking the wider Civil Rights movement. The events that resulted from Rosa Parks' arrest were spontaneous, random; they were not planned for or expected.

This version of events completely misses the point.

The effectiveness of the thirteen month Montgomery Bus Boycott was reliant on the years of organising and power-building that preceded it, and the recognition of the strategic opportunity Parks' arrest offered by the leaders groups such as the Women's Political Council, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

The arrest was recognised by the Black leaders of Montgomery as the opportunity they had been waiting for to escalate the conflict over segregated buses by calling for a boycott — escalating in such a manner was an overt, strategic decision (it wasn't 'spontaneous' and it didn't 'just happen'.) This is highlighted by the fact that Parks' wasn't the first woman to take such action; nine months before, Claudette Colvin also refused the bus driver's order to move. However, there was concern that a campaign or boycott built around Colvin's arrest would be undermined because she was a pregnant unmarried teenager. Given the societal norms at the time, it was thought that this would hinder a boycott campaign, and they waited for someone who was "above reproach". Conversely, Rosa Parks was older, and had both a job and a very good reputation in the town; a strategic choice was made to boycott the buses after her arrest.

"I was not tired physically, or no more tired than I usually was at the end of a working day. I was not old, although some people have an image of me as being old then. I was forty-two. No, the only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

Rosa Parks, in her autobiography Rosa Parks: My Story

However, recognising the strategic chance and calling for a boycott would not have been enough either — 25 local black organisations had spent years building grassroots power, creating networks and alliances, communicating, empowering and strategising, and preparing for an opportunity to reach their demands for desegregation and equality. As an active member of the Montgomery NAACP, Rosa Parks had attended a workshop at the Highlander Folk School, that included discussions on nonviolent civil disobedience as a tactic. Martin Luther King, Jr, the 25 year old new minister in town, had already begun his exploration of the power of nonviolent action. When the opportunity presented by Parks' arrest came, they were able to draw on these resources. Had Rosa Parks acted in isolation from this background of strategy and organising, it is difficult to see how her action — no matter how brave — would have brought about the change that it did.

The words ‘group’, ‘campaign’, ‘action’ and ‘movement’ will be used often in this section.

A **group** is a collection of people, who act together to make change happen. A group might be an affinity group of five to fifteen people, or a huge campaigning NGO, with paid staff and hundreds, or even thousands, of supporters.

An **action** is a specific activity or event – such as a demonstration, street stall or blockade. Actions can last from a few seconds to a several days.

A **campaign** is organised social action designed to enact a specific change. Campaigns are run by a group of people with a common understanding and shared vision, and are made up of a series of actions and activities over a specific time frame.

A **movement** refers to a cross section of groups and campaigns that associate under a broad banner, for example the environmental movement or the anti-globalisation movement. Movement’s can last for decades, are often international, with many groups acting under a banner, and can be disputed and hard to define.

These concepts all interrelate. Actions can be thought of as ‘tactics’, informed by the strategy of a campaign, which is run by a group or coalition of groups. Groups often identify with a particular movement, and sometimes more than one. Occasionally, a movement comes together for a specific action – like a huge blockade at a G8 conference – with participants from many different groups and campaigns involved.

Strategy

Defining strategy is like trying to hit a moving target; we can name and describe some of the elements within it (organising, messaging, an aim, the available people, skills and resources...) but it is really the interaction between all of these different elements that make strategy what it is. This section (‘developing strategic campaigns’) and the one following it (‘organising effective nonviolent action’) are a series of tools and models that have been developed by activists over many decades, that can help us to plan campaigns that are strategic and effective. No one element is a strategy, no matter how effectively it’s used; a strategy is when the elements are brought together and used effectively to make change.

Some tools are about specific elements of a campaign – like using the media, planning an action or ways of organising our groups – while others are much broader tools that help to make sense of how movements and campaigns function – like the Movement Action Plan or conflict escalation. Remember that an effective strategy is something that happens; if change remains a ‘paper exercise’ – grand ideas with no action – then there is no strategy; strategy is the thinking, the planning and the doing.

What is strategy?

“[strategy] is how we turn what we have into what we need to get what we want. It is how we transform our resources into the power to achieve our purposes. It is the conceptual link we make between the targeting, timing, and tactics with which we mobilise and deploy resources and the outcomes we hope to achieve”.

Marshall Ganz, Why David Sometimes Wins

Analysis

After that initial desire to respond to a problem, it is important to step back and make sure we have understood it; what is the issue we’re facing? Why is it a problem? How does ‘our’ problem fit within wider society, or even a global scale? What other problems and issues does it relate to? While it is important to focus in on an issue, it is also important to understand how the change you are working for fits within a broader movement; for example, a campaign to halt work at an opencast coal mine near a particular village also fits into a global movement of people concerned for the environment. A good understanding of the systemic issues that are underlying the problem we hope to address is important, too. The activists in the photo below are taking action against the arms industry, yet they have not gone to a military base, or an arms factory –



ACTION OUTSIDE THE BBVA BANK IN BILBAO, BASQUE COUNTRY.

CREDIT: KEM-MOC

they've covered themselves in red paint at a bank! Why? Because they had a strong understanding of the systemic background to the problem – in this case, the relationship between arms trade and the financial sector.

The environment

An important part of analysis is understanding how the problem we hope to address with our campaign relates to wider society; the better we understood the environment we hope to make change in, the better we will be placed to act. It can be surprising how a small amount of pressure, placed at the right time and in the right way, can make a lot of change happen! The environment might include (but is not limited to):

- mainstream cultural attitudes and assumptions;
- economic conditions;
- local, national and international policy;
- who the power-holders and decision makers are;
- other activist groups associated with your issue;
- supportive (and non-supportive) individuals and social groups;
- the way local and national media 'works'.

When we think and act strategically, we are taking into account the particular social environment the issue sits within, and our hopes and desires for the future; we will be able then to develop a process to move us between the two. A strategy incorporates an understanding of the 'here and now', with a theory of change, and a vision of the future we hope to achieve.

Our friends and allies

“Good strategy involves people. It emphasises not just where we are going but how we get there.”

Si Kahn, A Guide for Grassroots Leaders

People are essential to our campaigns; it is hard to find a successful 'one-person' campaign! How we organise our groups and encourage new people to join in is an essential part of building a strategy for long-lasting change, as does making sure that our group culture reflects the change we want to see. This means building power-within individuals, power-with each other, and power-to make change happen (see 'nonviolence and power', p34). The irony of hierarchical, patriarchal, exclusionary, "liberation" movements is lost on some. Strategy should bring and hold people together.

Nonviolent movements shouldn't treat people like the military do; no one is cannon-fodder or expendable (see 'burnout', p111), when someone leaves a group or movement through physical or emotional exhaustion, can be seen as an example of someone being 'used'.) Good strategy is built, primarily, on the experience of those effected by the problem or environment you hope to

change, and includes them as equal partners in organising and strategising; it puts their voices first.

Conflict, nonviolence, and adversaries

“We who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Strategy allows us to engage in nonviolent conflict with confidence, discipline and creativity, because strategy enables us to identify the conditions we hope to change, and the adversaries we will have to challenge or influence in order to do so. Knowing who makes decisions, how we might be able to place pressure on them, and when might be a good time to do that means that our campaigns will be focused, disciplined and less resource intensive. Nonviolence means that we continue to see our adversaries as people, even when their ideas or actions feel like the antithesis of the world we want to create. Nonviolence also allows to escalate conflict, in a manner which is positive, disciplined and creative, not destructive or alienating, as violent conflict escalation is.

The goal and the message

Following on from the ‘analysis’ section above, there are plenty of activist groups in the world who cannot answer, briefly and succinctly, the question “what is it you want to change?” Whether the goal is a radical transformation of society, removing a corrupt government, reforming a particular unjust law, or raising awareness of a particular issue, it is important that a campaign articulates what change it wants to occur, and how it expects to see that happen — no matter how ‘out there’ or aspirational that may seem. Without this very simple, but often overlooked element, a campaign will have little traction.

Your goal may fit within a broader vision — a long term change you hope to see; perhaps for ‘a world without war’, or for ‘all people to live equally and happily’. Asking how this is reflected in your goal (and, indeed, throughout the whole of your campaign) is important.

Being able to communicate your goal — the message — is also critical. Finding creative, challenging and engaging ways to communicate is great, and it is often the case that simple, bold messages are the most effective. What do people need to know immediately about your campaign? What could be saved for later?

Timing

Strategy takes account of time — do you have a week to get your friend out of the immigration deportation centre, or three years before the government decides it’s long-term policy on renewable energy? Being strategic sometimes means we wait to fully use our resources, but that doesn’t mean we do nothing.

If there is an opportunity just around the corner to take advantage of (an international summit, an economic crisis, a parliamentary vote, a high profile activist being arrested) what do we need to do now to be ready to respond, so we're not left standing when we should be moving? The example of the Montgomery Bus Boycott above is an excellent example of a highly relevant, well-timed, strategic campaign, that did the organising, education and empowerment groundwork.

Skills & Resources

To be strategic, we also need to consider what resources and skills we have available; people, information, money, buildings, skills, contacts, community links and a whole multitude of other things — how can we use it if we don't know we've got it? If we don't have it, where can we get it from? It is also important to be realistic about what resources we do and don't have, about what those involved in our campaign are and are not able to do. Training in non-violence is a key part of building the 'skill base' of our movements.

Most importantly, strategy means we know how we're going to use all of these resources to creatively and effectively apply the pressure to bring about the change we hope to see. While our movements may at first seem ridiculously under-resourced for taking on the adversaries we face, we can look at other campaigns that have managed to make change with very limited resources for inspiration.

Tactics

A good strategy keeps us focused on our goal when we are planning actions, writing printed material, talking to the media, or any of the other practical, day-to-day things that make up a campaign. Strategy helps us to choose forms of tactic that are relevant to our particular situation, and the sort of change we hope to make. Is shutting down an arms factory with blockades going to be more effective than a long-term 'constructive programme' to create local peace-orientated jobs and build new cultural norms? Or could a combination of the two allow us to work on many fronts at once? Our strategy should inform which tactics are used in its day-to-day functioning.

Responding to change

Crucially, good strategy isn't just a theoretical exercise that a group participates in as a one-off and then forgets — it is at its best when it is thought of as a process that is ongoing, dynamic, reflective, and as relevant to the long term goals of a campaign as it is to the everyday actions of activists. Strategy needs to be flexible and responsive; things change and we meet surprises, but having a clear strategy allows us to respond to new situations or dynamics creatively and effectively — if the strategy is changing and developing, then that's a good thing!



Planning nonviolent campaigns

Joanne Sheehan and Andreas Speck

Demonstrations alone do not end a particular war or correct a deep-rooted injustice. Faced with the horrors of the world, it's easy to do the nonviolent equivalent of lashing out – jumping into action or activity without stepping back or looking ahead. Too often groups go directly from recognising a problem to picking a tactic. Alternatively, we might suffer from the 'paralysis of analysis', educating ourselves and others but never getting to action, and never reaching our goals. The power of a nonviolent campaign comes in creatively combining tactics, strategic thinking, and participants' commitment.

Influencing change on a specific issue requires a campaign or several campaigns. A campaign is a connected series of activities and actions carried out over a period of time to achieve specific, stated goals. Campaigns are started by a group of people or of groups and organisations with a common concern. The participants develop a common understanding and vision, identify goals, and begin the process of research, education, and training that strengthens and increases the number of participants.

A campaign has goals on different levels. First is a specific campaign demand or stated goal. Most campaigns challenge the policies of people at the top of a hierarchy. To reach this goal, we need to bring a new factor into their decision-making – be that persuading them with new information, convincing those on whose support they depend, or warning them of the resistance they will face (see 'how can nonviolence strengthen a campaign?', p12). We do not treat them as enemies, but as adversaries – people who have to be stopped or moved in order for us to end a specific injustice.

A campaign also has internal goals such as building the capacity of and number of participants. A nonviolent campaign takes people through processes of empowerment (see 'nonviolence and power', p34). This involves personal empowerment (people discovering and exercising their own power against oppression, exclusion, and violence, and for participation, peace, and human rights) and builds collective power. Groups learn how to be organisers and become political strategists in the process.

Campaigns should also communicate something of the vision of what we want, leading to further campaigns that challenge existing power structures.

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10/10 strategies

Pillars of power

Spectrum of allies

Imagine the future: setting goals

Multiple campaigns can move us towards the social empowerment that leads to the social transformation we are working for. In our training and planning we need to consider all aspects of this nonviolent social empowerment process: personal empowerment, community power, people power. To develop an effective nonviolent strategy we need to develop strategic thinking skills.

Developing effective strategies

Creative campaigns hold the key to exploring the potential of nonviolence. When groups are excited about the power and possibilities of a nonviolent campaign, they are more likely to develop an effective campaign strategy. The exercises suggested below can help produce that enthusiasm and excitement; they also offer suggestions on making campaigns effective as well as giving an understanding of how change happens.

If you are working for social change in your community, you may want to undertake a group process to prepare an effective strategy for moving towards this change. A group process draws on the resources already in the group and can generate enthusiasm and commitment.

To begin, you may want to have the group share its own knowledge of campaigns, using either the '10/10 strategies' (p198) exercise or discussing how change happens by asking participants what effective campaigns they know about and what made them effective. Create a check-list from the responses. Case studies are another way of learning from what has been done in the past. They do not offer blueprints, but show the determination, resourcefulness, and patience of successful nonviolent campaigns. See the Resources section (p228) for films and books that describe nonviolent campaigns or use some of the stories told in 'case studies: stories and experience' (p144).

If your group has a wide range of knowledge, you can move right into developing your own process for a successful strategy for change. In order to develop effective strategies, a useful process is to:

- clarify the groups shared values and perspectives;
- name and describe the problem or situation ;
- analyse why it exists;
- create a vision of what the group wants, including clear goals;
- develop a strategy to reach those goal;
- move from strategy to tactics.

Clarify the groups shared values and perspectives

Who we are as a group (or as an alliance or coalition), and what our shared values and world views are has a huge influence on how we understand a problem, the strategy we develop to respond to it, and the solutions we might come up with. For a new group it will be particularly important to clarify these points before moving to planning a strategy. Some guiding questions are:

- What belief systems, values, visions guide me/us in my/our activities?

- Is the group an action group that wants to solve the problem through individual or collective action, or is the group more educational or investigative to provide resources for others?
- How do we relate to official (parliamentary/government) processes of decision making? Do we see ourselves engaging directly (lobbying), do we see ourselves relating to others who do so, or do we act completely outside established channels?
- Do we have a common understanding of what it means to have a nonviolent campaign?
- Do we have an agreed upon decision-making process?

The questions above can help to clarify the main shared values and assumptions of the group or coalition of groups which are relevant for working together on a shared strategy.

Name and describe the problem

For many who face problems in their daily lives, describing and analysing problems is a natural part of the process of living. But others need to be more focused about it. These steps are intended to help people move together in a non-hierarchical, inclusive manner to a deeper understanding of effective non-violent strategies.

Naming and describing the problem or situation may seem a simple first step, but if it is not done collectively then people may have different assumptions, different descriptions, and different messages and goals. We can't analyse without clarity about what we are analysing. Going through this process together strengthens individual participation while also developing collective strength.

Exercises: A group can use either 'The problem tree/healthy tree' (p199) or 'The pillars of power' (p203) exercise to use throughout the strategic thinking and planning process.

Questions for checking in:

- Is there a common understanding of the problem or situation that exists?
- Have we analysed why it exists?
- Does the analysis include the social, economic, and political structures?

Analyse why the problem exists

To transform a problem situation, we need to understand why it exists and who potentially supports and opposes it. We need to analyse the power structure to find entry points for resistance and constructive work. An analysis should consider the following questions:

- Do we understand the context and the root causes of the problem?
- Who benefits and who suffers from it and how? Who holds the power, and who has the power to create change? (Who forms part of the structures

underpinning this? Who opposes this?)

■ Does the problem impact people differently depending on their position in society, based on their gender, age, race, class? (See ‘gender and nonviolence’, p22.)

■ How does our commitment to nonviolent social change affect our analysis?

Research and Information Gathering: Avoiding paralysis through analysis: What do we know, and what do we need to know? Are we searching for the truth or just trying to ‘prove our side’? Who can gather the information we need? Research includes finding out how others think about the issue. Listening Projects Community Surveys (see <http://www.listeningproject.info>) are one way to do that. Listening Projects help activists look more deeply at an issue, gathering information on which to base future strategy while developing a connection between those being interviewed and those listening.

Create a vision of what we want

To move forward, a campaign needs a vision of what it wants. Otherwise actions can simply be reactions, protests easy to disregard. A vision is likely to include ambitious long-term goals. It is worth asking groups to discuss their vision of big questions: world peace, economic justice, the society we want.

From visions to goals

The challenge is to identify the first steps in those journeys: the short and medium-range goals that lead towards the long-term goals. Campaigns face



SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS WATCH DEMONSTRATION, FORT BENNING, USA. PHOTO: JOANNE SHEEHAN

dilemmas in setting goals. To get the maximum possible support, a campaign might choose a short-term goal as a ‘lowest common denominator’—that is, a point upon which a wide range of people can agree. However, if this does not have deeper implications, if it does not suggest further steps for social transformation, then any change that results is likely to be shallow and unsatisfactory. On the other hand, utopian goals that seem unrealistic are not likely to mobilise people unless there are more attainable intermediate objectives. When the ultimate goals are revolutionary, campaigns need to identify limited, but more acceptable, stepping stones.

The Movement Action Plan (p67) or the Stages of Escalation (p64) can also be useful guides when developing a campaign goal. For example, the different phases of the MAP give some hints about what strategic goals can be useful for a campaign which would contribute to moving a movement forward into a new phase.

Goals can be external goals (achieving social change) or internal goals (building the strength of a campaign or organisation to achieve its external goals). For example, increasing the number of names on a mailing list is not going to achieve a campaign goal itself, but it can be seen as an internal goal, which contributes to building the capacity to achieve an external goal. Also, ‘giving out information’, ‘educating’ or ‘mobilising’ are not goals, but methods to achieve a goal.

At the end of this phase it can be useful to check the acceptance of the goals among the participants. A spectrum exercise (p) similar to the following scale in relation to acceptance of the goal can be a good way to do this.

Visions – goals – objectives

A vision describes the society we want to live in – the world we want to see. As such, it can provide us with motivation, but also with guiding principles for our actions or campaigns. However, it is usually too far removed to provide us with a suitable goal for a campaign. When we think about our vision, we probably think about time frames of decades – or even centuries.

A goal describes what we want to achieve with a specific campaign. It should be SMART (see sidebar on the next page), meaning it should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time bound.

A goal can usually be broken down into several short-term goals which need to be achieved on the way to the campaign goal. These should also be SMART, but the time frame is usually even shorter than the one for the campaign goal – weeks or months.



What is a SMART goal?

SMART is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time bound.

Specific: Clearly define what you mean, avoid jargon or buzz-words such as “sensitise”, “empower”, “raise awareness” which are vague.

Measurable: Be specific enough to know whether or not you have achieved them.

Achievable: The more concrete the objective is especially in relation to who, what, where, and when, the more realistic the goal is likely to be.

Realistic: Be realistic about who you need to reach to achieve your goals, and the resources you can realistically obtain/make use of. At the same time, be ambitious enough to be able to energise and mobilise people.

Time bound: Take account of time, is there an opportunity or deadline we need to consider? While it might not be possible to predict exactly when you will be successful, it is a good idea to set time frames.

When using consensus decision making, it is unlikely that anyone would position themselves at -2 or -3. Nevertheless, the individual positioning in relation to the goal will have consequences regarding the quality of the future involvement of each member of the group. If there is too little acceptance of the objective, it is therefore important to review and revise the goal.

Those who stand at +3 will put in all their energy. At the other extreme, people who positioned at -3 will put in a veto, if the group is based on consensus, or will leave the group and possibly form an opposing group. This is not necessarily far-fetched. It could happen that during the analysis and development of the objective different positions surface within the group which question the initial common ground and assumptions on the goals.

Acceptance of the goal

+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
I share this goal and will do everything I can for us to achieve it.	I will do everything that I can to achieve our goal.	I respect the objective, but I don't feel committed to helping achieve it.	I won't have anything to do with this goal, because I don't care about it.	I don't want to have anything to do with the goal because I am opposed to it.	I will do everything I can to stop the group from achieving its goal.

Exercises: ‘The pillars of power’ (p203)—What are the short- and medium-range goals that weaken the pillars? What do we aim to do with the underlying principles? Can we answer the above questions positively? For more information on messages, see ‘media’ (p131) and ‘Sending the protest message’ (p84).

A word on framing

How you word or ‘frame’ a goal can have a huge impact on its acceptance among the members of the group, and potential allies and adversaries. It can be useful to test the suitability of your goal using the following tool.

A table similar to the one opposite can help to identify how the acceptance of the goal influences the members of the group and potential allies, adversaries, or groups considered more or less neutral. The areas in grey illustrate where you might expect most people/groups from that particular column to be.

The goal can be brilliant and highly motivating for you or the other members of the group, but if there are too few people and potential allies that can be placed in the first two categories, and too many neutral people and adversaries that will be placed in the last two categories, then the goal should be reviewed and possibly revised. For example, a Canadian campaign against fracking ‘softened’ their goal from a complete ban of fracking to a generation moratorium, because they thought this would make it more acceptable for people who did not yet come around to a complete rejection of fracking. This allowed them to reach out to people considered more neutral, and to overcome resistance to the campaign.

Develop a Strategy

Once you have described and analysed the problem, a vision of what you want, and goals (SMART ones, see the sidebar p51) to move you towards that, you need to develop a strategy to get there. The analysis of the problem describes where you are now. The goal is where you want to get to. The strategy is how you get from where you are now to where you want to be. It is not so much the individual steps you need to take (these are the methods or tactics), but the milestones, the interim goals you need to achieve along the way. When you think of strategy as getting from point A to point Z, then the strategy defines the interim points. The individual steps you take – walking from A to B, hitchhiking from B to C, bus from C to D, cycling from D to E – are the methods (tactics) you employ to achieve your interim goals.

When developing a strategy, it can be useful to work from your campaign goal backwards, asking yourself what needs to have happened to make this change possible. The ‘imagine the future’ (p197), ‘pillars of power’ (p203) or the ‘the healthy tree/the problem tree’ (p199) all give you important starting points to develop your strategy.

Your strategy will need to address several aspects, including the following:

- how you make use of your strengths and opportunities.
- what measures you are taking to address your weaknesses and threats.
- how you shift or change different forces.
- how you develop the necessary resources, skills, and so on.

The overall strategy is likely to consist of several strategies in parallel, addressing different audiences or forces. For example, a strategy for a campaign goal to get the military out of schools (see diagram on p55) might focus on teachers and students simultaneously; one strand could focus on the teachers’ unions to

Acceptance of the goal and consequences for activities

Acceptance of the goal	Members of the group	(Potential) Allies	(Potential) Adversaries
I share this goal and will do everything I can to achieve it	Very engaged. Fully working in the group	Might join the group or support a group with similar goals, and will join the movement	Might turn into allies: join the group or support a group with similar goals, will join the movement
I support the achievement of the goal	Supporting within the available means without being directly involved/engaged	Support through signing petitions, donations, public declarations of sympathy, providing information, contacts, and so on	Might turn into allies: Support through signing petitions, donations, declarations of sympathy, providing information, contacts, and so on
I respect the goal, but I don't feel committed to help the campaign	"Let them do it."	Allies might turn away, become neutral, or observe	Adversaries might turn neutral, or observe
I don't have anything to do with this goal, because I don't care about it	Ignore	Allies might turn away, ignore. Retreat	Adversaries might soften their opposition, or ignore
I don't want to have anything to do with their goal because I am opposed to it	Distancing oneself. Oppose it. Leave the group	Allies might turn into adversaries: Distancing. Opposition. Changing sides, possibly supporting a group opposing the goal	Opposition, possibly supporting a group opposing the goal
I will do everything I can to stop them from achieving their goal.	Opposing the goal, putting in a veto, forming a group opposing the goal.	Allies might turn into adversaries: Resisting the goal. Forming an opposing group. Withdrawal of support. Using oppression	Resisting the goal. Forming an opposing group. Withdrawal of support. Using oppression

get them to pass a resolution against the presence of the military in schools and to support teachers who refuse to invite the military, while a second strand might focus on empowering students to take action whenever the military enters a school, disrupting their presence or even preventing them from entering. A third strand might focus on the school administration, and a fourth one on the local council, or the state government, to make legislative changes. These different strands would work in parallel towards the campaign goal ‘military out of schools’, but would require their own strategy, with their own objectives and activities. Of course, to work on all of them might be too much for your group. Look at your strategy in the context of the broader social movement, which also involves other actors: what are others doing which might address some aspects of our strategy? What can we do to convince others to take on some of these strands? Where are the gaps?

Which part or parts of the overall strategy you choose to focus on also depends on your group, and the values and belief systems of your group (see ‘Clarify the groups shared values and perspectives’, p47). If your group prefers nonviolent direct action, then it makes little sense to select a strategy which focuses on lobbying. Your strategy needs to fit your group, but at the same time it can make sense to build alliances or coalitions which can address a wide range of strategies to achieve a campaign goal.

Strategy development is not done in one meeting or by one person. It is a process of decision-making, organising, mobilising, and creative thinking.

From strategy to action

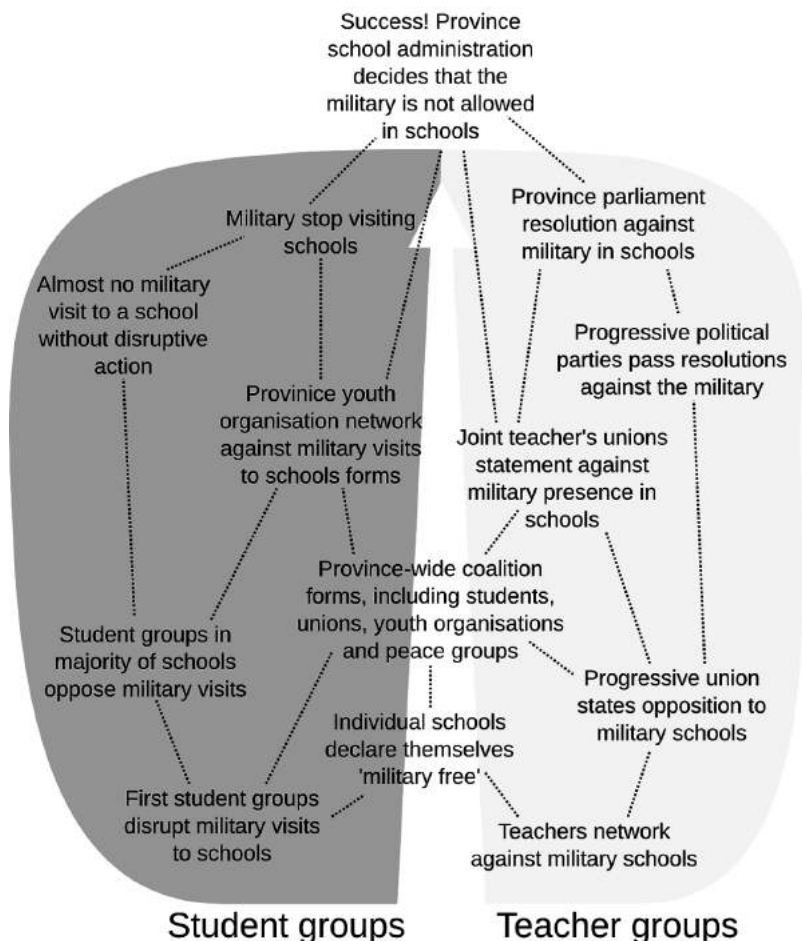
Once you have your strategy you can move on to your tactics – the steps you take to reach your goal and objectives, or the activities. For more information or ideas on moving to action, (see ‘tactic star’ p127, ‘forms of nonviolent action’ p124, and the ‘nonviolent and direct action’ resources at the back of this handbook p228). Tactics can include:

■ **Negotiation:** Have we clearly identified who we need to negotiate with? How will we communicate with them? Are we clear what we want? Are we strong enough, have we built enough power to negotiate with our opponents? Are we clear that our aims are not to humiliate our opponent but to work for a peaceful solution?

■ **Legal action:** Is legal action – going to court and challenging a government’s decision, a planning permit, or challenging human rights violations – part of our campaign? What is the goal of legal action? What can we gain, what compromises would we need to make, and what are the dangers if we win, or if we lose? How does the legal action relate to other campaigning activities?

■ **Constructive work/alternative institutions:** Gandhi saw constructive programmes as the beginning of building a new society, even in the shell of the old. While we say ‘no’ to an injustice, how do we say ‘yes’? How do we begin building the vision of what we are working towards? (see ‘constructive programme’ p56) Alternative institutions may be temporary creations, such as setting up alternative transportation while boycotting a segregated bus system.

Goal: Military out of schools



■ **Legislative and electoral action:** Is legislative or electoral action part of the campaign, either as an educational tactic or a goal? How will we put pressure on politicians? How do we exercise our power? How will people participate in that action? What are our plans if our goals are not met?

■ **Demonstrations:** How can we best demonstrate our concerns? Have we considered the many methods of nonviolent action? (See 'forms of nonviolent action' p124) Are we clear about the objectives of the demonstration and how

they will help us reach our goals? How will we involve the public? Will our actions make sense to the local community?

■ **Nonviolent direct action/civil disobedience/civil resistance:** Have we done all we can to build support for our action? Will it encourage more community involvement or will it be counter-productive? How will it advance our cause rather than be an end in itself? Are our objectives clear? Will it put the kind of pressure on our adversaries that will influence them to move? Who will it pressure?

■ **Celebrate:** Take time to recognise what we have done and celebrate our achievements. This is important for sustaining ourselves and strengthening our sense of community. Celebrate after an important event, and when you reach a particular goal.

■ **Evaluate:** It's important to evaluate our campaign, not just at the end, but throughout the process. Unless we do so, we may be making mistakes that we will not recognise until it is too late. We should listen to everyone involved. Keeping a record of our meetings, our decisions, and our work becomes the basis of our own case study. See 'action evaluation' for a series of questions to assess how an action contributed to a campaign (p142).



Constructive programme

Andrew Dey, Joanne Sheehan and Subhash Katel

According to Gandhi, nonviolent social change requires building a new society in the shell of the old, which he called 'constructive programme'. 'Nonviolence for Gandhi was more than just a technique of struggle or a strategy for resisting military aggression,' Robert Burrowes explains in *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense: A Gandhian Approach*. Rather, 'it was intimately related to the wider struggle for social justice, economic self-reliance, and ecological harmony as well as the quest for self-realisation.' As Burrowes describes it:

"For the individual, constructive programme meant increased power-from-within through the development of personal identity, self-reliance, and fearlessness. For the community, it meant the creation of a new set of political, social, and economic relations".

In cases where political revolutions have taken place but the population was not organised to exercise self-determination, creating a new society has been

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IPES FARMERS PROCESS THE JAMAICA HARVEST, EL SALVADOR

PHOTO: ANDREW DEY

extremely difficult, and a new dictatorship usurping power has too often resulted.

Gandhi posited three elements needed for social transformation: personal transformation, political action, and constructive programme. He saw them as intertwined, all equally necessary to achieve social change.

Components of a constructive programme

The different components that constructive programmes try to incorporate into their work are equality, liberatory education, economic self-reliance, and a clean environment. Be careful though; just because an activity appears to fully address one of these, it does not mean that activity equates to being a constructive programme. Just because a large, multinational corporation sells fair-trade coffee in its shops does not mean that we would consider their work a constructive programme focusing on economic self-reliance for the farmers! The structural violence of the economic system is not being addressed through such work; if anything, farmers have become that bit more reliant on oppressive structures. Constructive programme is an element of nonviolent social change, and should therefore be based on nonviolent principles (see p56).

The Instituto de Permacultura de El Salvador (IPES – <http://permacultura.com.sv>) is an example of how all four components of a constructive programme can be put into practice. IPES teaches campesino (subsistence farmers) communities in El Salvador how to grow crops to the rigorously environmentally sustainable model of permaculture. The four components of constructive programme are described opposite and in the table on the following page, followed by an example of how IPES' work promotes equality, is educational, develops economic self-reliance and encourages effective work for the environment.

The process of working on constructive programme has fundamental benefits, the first of which is providing immediate assistance to those in greatest need – constructive programme should be meeting a particular, concrete need for a community. As people come together in community – not individual-action, they build constituencies for social change. Gandhi saw constructive programme as training for civil disobedience, which often included non-cooperation. Constructive work provides opportunities to develop the skills needed to build a new society.

	<i>Gandhi's understanding of constructive programme</i>	<i>Constructive programme in El Salvador</i>
Equality	<p>For Gandhi, equality meant creating ashrams, political campaigns, and cooperative enterprises across social divides. These would cut through communal and religious lines, gender inequality, and caste distinctions – especially ‘untouchability’ – and include members of the ‘hill tribes’ and people suffering from leprosy.</p> <p>Working for equality means overcoming oppression and structural violence (see ‘violence’, p27).</p>	<p>IPES trains campesinos, supporting communities with relatively little social power to be more inter-reliant. The training IPES gives is in both practical permaculture techniques, and the skills needed to act as permaculture leaders when they return home. Trainees are encouraged to practise and learn from one another, and local leaders are organised in associations, giving them a powerful voice in development strategies; this way, they gain support, and advocate for sustainable farming and living practises with the government and NGO's.</p>
Education	<p>Gandhi began education projects; literacy campaigns to promote basic reading and maths skills, political education, knowledge about health, and nonviolence training for students.</p> <p>Paulo Friere's ‘conscientisation’ or ‘popular education’ approach (p73) is an example of how education can offer a community radical insight into the structural conditions that uphold the problems they face, and the article by Nepalese land reform activists (p79) also exemplifies this approach.</p>	<p>IPES' work focuses on training permaculture leaders. In particular, they use a farmer-to-farmer methodology that relies on trainees sharing their knowledge with their community when they return home, and demonstrating what they have learned in their community. IPES puts a particular emphasis on training young people.</p> <p>Alongside learning practical skills in a participatory manner (trainings are designed to be accessible to people with very low levels of literacy), participants look at the structural conditions they face nationally and internationally that have led to the food crisis in the country, and about climate change. This includes greater historical awareness of the legacy of colonialism.</p>

	<i>Gandhi's understanding of constructive programme</i>	<i>Constructive programme in El Salvador</i>
Economic self-reliance	<p>Gandhi's economic self-reliance campaigns involved, most famously, spinning homemade cloth (khadi), which was done throughout India. A constructive programme that was often done collectively, it was also a campaign of non-cooperation with Indians' systematic dependency on the British for cloth. Economic self-reliance also involved diversifying crops, creating village industries, and developing labour unions.</p> <p>Democratically run worker cooperatives are examples of economic self-reliance.</p>	<p>Since 1945, many Salvadorian governments have promoted high intensity 'green revolution' farming techniques, reliant on agrochemicals and expensive, 'single-use' seed. Farmers become dependent on a very unsustainable farming method which is very economically volatile, and the prices they will receive at market fluctuate greatly from year to year. The permaculture methods encouraged by IPES are based on local inputs, develop inter-reliant agriculture systems and promote seed-sharing schemes, so that farmers are able to become more self-reliant, and grow a wider range of produce. IPES encourages local farmers markets, so local people can sell surplus produce, rather than relying on imported food from Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico and the USA.</p>
Environmental efforts	<p>Environmental efforts involved the whole community in village sanitation, which meant, for Hindus, overtly flouting caste norms. Throughout the world, constructive programmes have focussed explicitly on environmental concerns, through community supported energy production schemes, local food production and farming, and recycling projects</p>	<p>As in many cases, the poorest and most vulnerable in El Salvador have felt the impact of climate change first. IPES teaches permaculture techniques that help farmers to develop biodiversity and improve soil conditions using techniques that do not need harmful chemicals or seed brought from corporations. Permaculture methods improve local sanitation through the use of compost toilets, rainwater is harvested for drinking and watering plants, and the use of local and natural building materials is encouraged.</p>

Theories of change

Jake Coleman

Theories of change are the ideas we have about how change happens in our communities, society, environment and economics. They are the ideas we have about how we can get from the current situation we face, to realising our visions and hopes of the future.

Traditionally experts, academics and theorists come up with what we learn about and base our political action and political identity on (for example 'I am a Marxist', or 'we are anarcho-syndicalists'). However, without the need for experts, abstract ideas and confusing academic theorising, we all have ideas about what kinds of action we think are and aren't effective. We all have ideas about how we think the change we are aiming for will occur.

Assumptions

The ideas behind our opinions and decisions (the answer to the question 'why do you think that?') are often unsaid and even unconscious. Many groups don't spend much time discussing why and how they think their actions will contribute to positive change. If the group has agreed on aims and visions for the future, then the conversation often goes from aims to action without much discussion about how and why we think that the proposed actions will achieve those changes. We don't often spend the time going a bit deeper behind our ideas and assumptions.

We often assume that other people in our groups who have similar political beliefs have similar ideas and theories of change. However, in reality, there is often uncertainty, disagreement and contradictions between people's ideas (and even within an individual's ideas).

Spending some time talking through and clarifying our ideas about how we think change happens – as well as acknowledging where there are agreements and disagreements – can make our campaigns more effective and strategic, and can prevent conflict and confusions arising in the group due to unspoken and unconscious disagreements. You do not need to share identical political goals on everything – the aim is to come to common agreement on a 'working theory of change' that the group can agree on, in relation to the particular campaign.

Our intuition and gut-feelings can be just as valuable as rational reasoning, and can be much quicker in times of urgency and reaction. However, in the process of questioning our assumptions and discussing our beliefs we learn to understand ourselves and each other better, bond, and inspire creativity to see options we might not otherwise see.

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What is a 'theory of change'?

Different Scales

You can see that these two examples are quite different, and demonstrate that theories of change can be applied on different levels: specific and broad, small scale and large scale. UK Uncut have a broad aim of stopping the cuts to public spending in the UK, and even broader aims of changes to our social and economic systems globally. Their theory of change is quite specific, and made up of the ideas behind why they think that raising public awareness is necessary to stop the austerity measures, how direct action will contribute to this, and why they think that stopping the cuts is necessary for even bigger social changes.

Example 1: UK Uncut

UK Uncut is a UK-based, grassroots movement that takes action to highlight alternatives to the government's spending cuts and 'austerity' economics after the 2008 financial crash.

Aims:

- To raise public awareness that the government's cuts to public spending are not necessary or fair.
- To cause public and corporate disruption
- To play a part in stopping the government's spending cuts to public services.

UK Uncut's theories of change:

- Disruptive action at popular shops is likely to get mainstream media attention.
- The reason many people believe that the government's cuts are necessary is that they are presented with biased (and untrue) information in the media. Being shown facts and ideas that oppose these will change the minds and hearts of at least some of the population. Disruption of the public during their usual activities of shopping, along with information (through leaflets, banners and conversation) and performance can open people up to new information and to change their opinions and behaviour.
- The way that the super-rich get away with not paying tax – while the vast majority of people do pay their tax – and the government claim there is not enough money for public services, is a clear example of an injustice. This should mean mass support for the groups protests, and more amplification of the ideas and messaging.
- Disruption affects the profits of the company, so disruption is a way to pressure the company to change. Negative media affects the image and brand of the company, and this puts pressure on the company to change.

Actions used by UK Uncut, based on their theory of change:

Sit-ins to disrupt the business of high street shops (of companies that avoid paying tax), street performances and theatre (such as symbolically transforming a shop into a library or sexual health clinic, or other services that are being cut by the government).

Example 2: Diverse social movements

Theory of change:

Social movements that do not have significant participation of oppressed groups such as women, transgender, working class, black, disabled, young and older people will not be successful in their aim of radical social change, because without the experiences of these people informing social movements, dominant cultures will prevail. There will not be the true motivation, understanding or skills needed to break and transform oppressive social relations, unless marginalised and oppressed groups are represented.

The broader social movement theories of change considers the nature of the change they want to create, and what and who that involves; the sort of change they hope to create – of equality, emancipation and freedom – is understood to be only possible if the people most often effected by oppression and violence are considered equal within the movement.

Knowing your place

Understanding and working on Theories of Change in your groups/organisations can also help you to understand the bigger picture of how change happens, where you are placed in it, and who your allies and adversaries are.

To support your discussions about your theories of change, you can use the following questions:

- How do you (as an individual or group) think change happens?
- Who needs to be involved to make change happen?
- How do your theories of change relate to others working on similar issues?
- Will a variety of different theories and approaches from different groups bring about the change you want?



Stages of escalation in a nonviolent campaign

Christine Schweitzer

Strategy

When we develop and carry out a nonviolent campaign for social change, we need to consider steps for increasing the pressure on those whose actions or decisions we oppose.

Ebert's model of Escalation

There are lots of ways a movement can escalate a conflict while remaining nonviolent. Intuitively, most activists know this, but there is very little in the literature about it, but one model was created by the German peace researcher Theodor Ebert in the 1960s, and described in his book *Gewaltfreier Aufstand (Nonviolent Uprising – Alternatives to Civil War)*. He distinguishes three steps of escalation, matching each step of confrontational action with constructive action.

In Ebert's model, the **first stage** of a nonviolent campaign emphasises bringing an issue into the public sphere. A well-organised campaign will use public protest actions and present alternatives (constructive action), to draw attention to the issues and encourage change. If this does not achieve the desired result, the campaign may move to 'stage two'.

In the **second stage**, the campaign increases public pressure by staging legal forms of non-cooperation (strikes, consumer boycotts, slow-downs) as well as innovative lawful activities (fair trade initiatives, alternative economy structures, nonviolent intervention). The goal at this stage is to 'raise the stakes' (societal costs) while minimising the 'rewards' for those committing or benefiting from injustice. At the same time, the campaign will most likely continue its actions from the first stage. This may be sufficient for a movement to achieve its objective. However, if not, campaign organisers have the possibility of using nonviolent actions that requires greater risk from the activists and present a much more powerful statement to the public.

The **third stage** of escalation uses nonviolent civil disobedience as both a protest and as a form of civil usurpation. In stage three, activists carry out actions that exercise authority or implement a structure, without a legal right to do so. Examples of this might be:

- providing sanctuary to prevent the deportation of refugees,
- nonviolent intervention,
- reverse strikes,
- building an environmentally sound village on the construction site of an environmentally destructive factory.

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As nonviolent campaigns develop, they can escalate from one stage to the next, as well as continuing to use actions from previous stages. This does not imply that there is an inflexible, linear escalation, but it is useful to consider the interrelationship of these stages and types of actions. A campaign may consciously decide to move from one stage to another (up or down) as it chooses the most effective actions for the context in which the movement finds itself. Throughout a campaign, it is important to make the effort to engage in dialogue with one's adversaries, trying to find solutions that include all parties. At certain times, for example, this dialogue may start more easily if the campaign temporarily reduces its public pressure. A campaign may also decide that is more effective to increase its work on constructive action and to hold back on confrontational actions, or vice versa.

Other means of escalation

Of course, there are more ways to escalate a campaign than increasing the level of non-cooperation or developing constructive alternatives. Perhaps the most common are escalation through increasing numbers of participants, increased length of public protests (think of people occupying a public square to protest against a repressive regime for many weeks) or a wider variety of participants. In particular, if protesters are joined by people from the ranks of the elite members of institutions at the core of the state (police, military, civil servants) – the weight of their protest increases. These latter forms of escalation have been noted in studies on civil resistance campaigns which aimed to overthrow regimes.

Power and conflict

Nonviolent campaigns usually seek to change the behaviour of governments or government agencies. More rarely, other civil society actors are the focus of a campaign. When a government is the target, the issue is the power relations between the protesters and those who rule. Escalating nonviolent action through increasing levels of withdrawal of consent and cooperation, civil disobedience, increasing levels of participation in the campaign, or by inducing a split within the elites itself on the issue at stake – changes these power relations. In particular, carrying dissent into the ranks of the ruling political group, the police, or the military has turned out to be of vital importance in a wide variety of campaigns.

More difficult are those campaigns where the opponent is not the government but other, non-state or civil society, groups. We sometimes see opponents and supporters of a government or regime clashing in the street – for example, in Egypt after the fall of Hosni Mubarak, between supporters and opponents of the government. Very often these conflicts – if they do not become violent as is often the case – are 'resolved' by one group winning public opinion, leaving all but the most hard-core members aware that their opinions are not considered acceptable. This often leaves the 'losing' group socially ostracised. But while they may often 'disappear' for a time, they often 'reappear' again in the

future because there was no true change of attitudes but only the suppression of them being expressed publicly.

Carrying out a successful campaign requires an ongoing evaluation of the campaign's activities and their effectiveness. Ideally, at the beginning of a campaign, a strategic plan is made, where different options and steps are identified. Such analysis should include the question; "How can we escalate the conflict if we are not heard?" For effective strategic planning, it is critical that this is not a one-time analysis, but that there are frequent checks and re-analysis of where you stand. Your group can use the framework of Ebert's chart to track a campaign's implementation of constructive as well as confrontational actions over time to evaluate how they work together to achieve your goals.

Stages of escalation in a nonviolent campaign

Stage of Escalation	Confrontational action (actions that are directed against injustice in society)	Constructive action (actions that help to construct a just order in society)	How it works
Stage 1 Bring the issue into the public arena	Protest (demonstrations, petitions, leaflets, vigils)	Presenting alternatives (teach-in lectures, show alternatives)	Publicising to convince
Stage 2 Legal actions that deal with the issue	Legal non-cooperation (strikes, consumer boycotts, go slows)	Legal innovative activities (fair trade, free schools, alternative economic activity, ethical investments, nonviolent intervention)	Raising the stakes (costs) and minimising the rewards for those committing injustice
Stage 3 Illegal actions that deal with the issue	Civil disobedience (sit-ins, blockades, tax resistance, strikes, war resistance)	Civil usurpation (sanctuary movements, pirate radio, reverse strikes, nonviolent intervention)	Redirecting power away from power-holders

Table adapted and translated from German into English by Eric Bachman. This is a direct translation of the Chart of escalation of nonviolent actions on page 37 of Gewaltfreier Aufstand – Alternative zum Bürgerkrieg, Theodor Elbert (1978).

✱

The movement action plan

Andreas Speck

The Movement Action Plan (MAP) is a tool to help you understand the progress of a social movement. Developed in the 1980s by Bill Moyer, it describes eight stages of successful movements and four different roles activists play in a social movement.

The MAP is based on seven **strategic assumptions**, which strongly relate it to nonviolence and nonviolence theories of power (see p34) and social change:

1. **Social movements have been proven to be powerful in the past**, and hopefully they can be powerful in the future.
2. **Social movements are at the centre of society**. Social movements are based on society's most progressive values: justice, freedom, democracy, civil rights. Although they oppose the state or the government, social movements are promoting a better society, not working against it.
3. **The real issue is "social justice" versus "vested interests"**. The movement works for social justice and those in power represent vested interests.
4. **The grand strategy is to promote participatory democracy**. Lack of real democracy is a major source of injustice and social problems. In the fight for the movement's goal, developing participatory democracy is key.
5. **The target constituency is the ordinary citizen**, who gives power to powerholders by consent. The central issue in social movements is the struggle between the movement and powerholders to win the support of the majority of the people, who ultimately hold the power to preserve the status quo or create change.
6. **Success is a long-term process, not an event**. To achieve success, the movement needs to be successful in a long series of sub-goals.
7. **Social movements must be nonviolent**.

Eight stages of social movements

One of the two key concepts of the MAP are the eight stages of social movements. In each of these stages, specific strategic objectives are important to move a movement forward to the next stage. While this can be challenging – we cannot just jump to success – it is at the same time important to understand what can realistically be achieved at what stage of the movement.

A movement begins without knowing it. In **Stage 1, business as usual**, the main aim of movement groups is to get people thinking, to show that there is a problem.

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Training

Imagine the future: setting goals
Letter from a Birmingham Jail

The next step is to show the **failure of established channels (Stage 2)**. Using hearings, legal processes, participation in administrative proceedings, and so on, the movement has to prove that these institutions won't act for the people to solve the problem – that people will have to act themselves. This leads to **ripening conditions (Stage 3)** for the development of a social movement. People start to listen and form new groups, small civil disobedience actions start to dramatise the problem. The powerholders get a bit irritated, but mainly go on as usual.

If the movement does its homework well (organising new groups, networking and coalition-building) it can **take off (Stage 4)** after a trigger event. This might be organised by the movement – the occupation of the construction site at Wyhl, Germany, in 1974 triggered the German anti-nuclear movement – or something done by the powerholders. The trigger event leads to massive demonstrations, large campaigns of civil disobedience and extensive media coverage. Although the movement has very likely won a lot of public sympathy the powerholders usually won't give up at this stage.

This often leads to a **perception of failure (Stage 5)** by many activists. This is enhanced by decreasing participation in movement events and negative media coverage.

But at the same time the movement is **winning over the majority (Stage 6)**. Until now, the movement has focused on protest; now it is important to offer solutions. A majority of society agrees that there is a need for change. But this alone does not mean there will be change. It is now important to win the struggle over the kind of change to be made.

The powerholders will try to cheat the movement, increase oppression, play tricks. The movement must aim to stop the tricks and promote an alternative solution.

Actual success (Stage 7) is a long process and often difficult to recognise. The movement's task is not just to get its demands met, but to achieve a paradigm shift, a new way of thinking. Just to turn off all nuclear power plants without changing our view on energy only moves the problem from radioactivity to carbon dioxide. Just to get some women into positions of power doesn't change the structure of a patriarchal society.

After the movement wins – either by confrontational struggle or a long-term weakening of the powerholders – the movement needs to get its success implemented. **Consolidation of success and moving over to other struggles (Stage 8)** is now the movement's task.

The four roles of activism

The second central concept of the MAP are the **four roles of activism**. Each of these roles has its own relevance, which can shift through the different stages of a movement. But all roles need to be present and work efficiently for the movement to succeed. In addition, each of the roles can be filled in an effective or ineffective way.

The **rebel** is the kind of activist many people identify with social movements. Through nonviolent direct actions and publicly saying “no”, rebels put

the problem on the political agenda. But they can be ineffective by identifying themselves as the lonely voice on society's fringe and playing the militant radical. Rebels are important in Stages 3 and 4 and after any trigger event, but they usually move over to other ripening movements in Stage 6 or later.

Reformers are often badly valued in movements, but they are the ones who prove the failure of existing channels or promote alternative solutions. However, they often tend to believe in the institutions or propose reforms too small to consolidate the movement's success.

Citizens make sure the movement doesn't lose contact with its main constituency. They show that the movement acts at the centre of society (teachers, physicians, and farmers participating in the Gorleben protests), and protect it against oppression. They can be ineffective when they still believe in the powerholders' claim to serve public interests.

The **change agent** is the fourth and somehow key role in any movement. They promote education and convince the majority of society, they organise grassroots networks and promote long-term strategies. They too can be ineffective by promoting utopian visions or advocating only a single approach. They also tend to ignore personal issues and needs of activists.

Many activists and groups identify primarily with only one or two of the four roles, because each involves different emotions and attitudes, beliefs, ideologies, sources of funding, political and, often, organisational arrangements. Activists can be critical – or even hostile – to those playing other roles. Activists tend to consider the roles they play as the most important and politically correct one, while viewing other roles as naive, politically incorrect, ineffective, or, even, as the enemy.

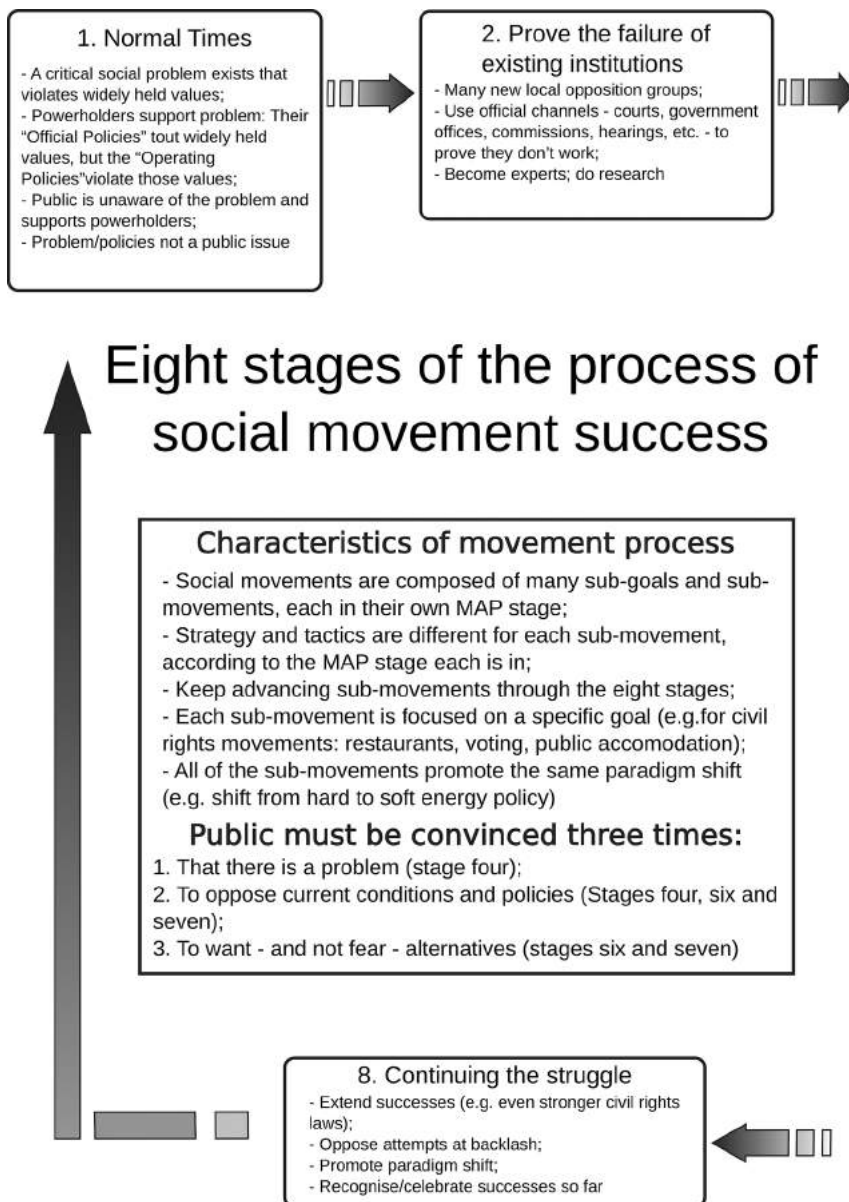
While there are certainly tensions between the different roles, recognising that each has its own value within a social movement is important to achieve success.

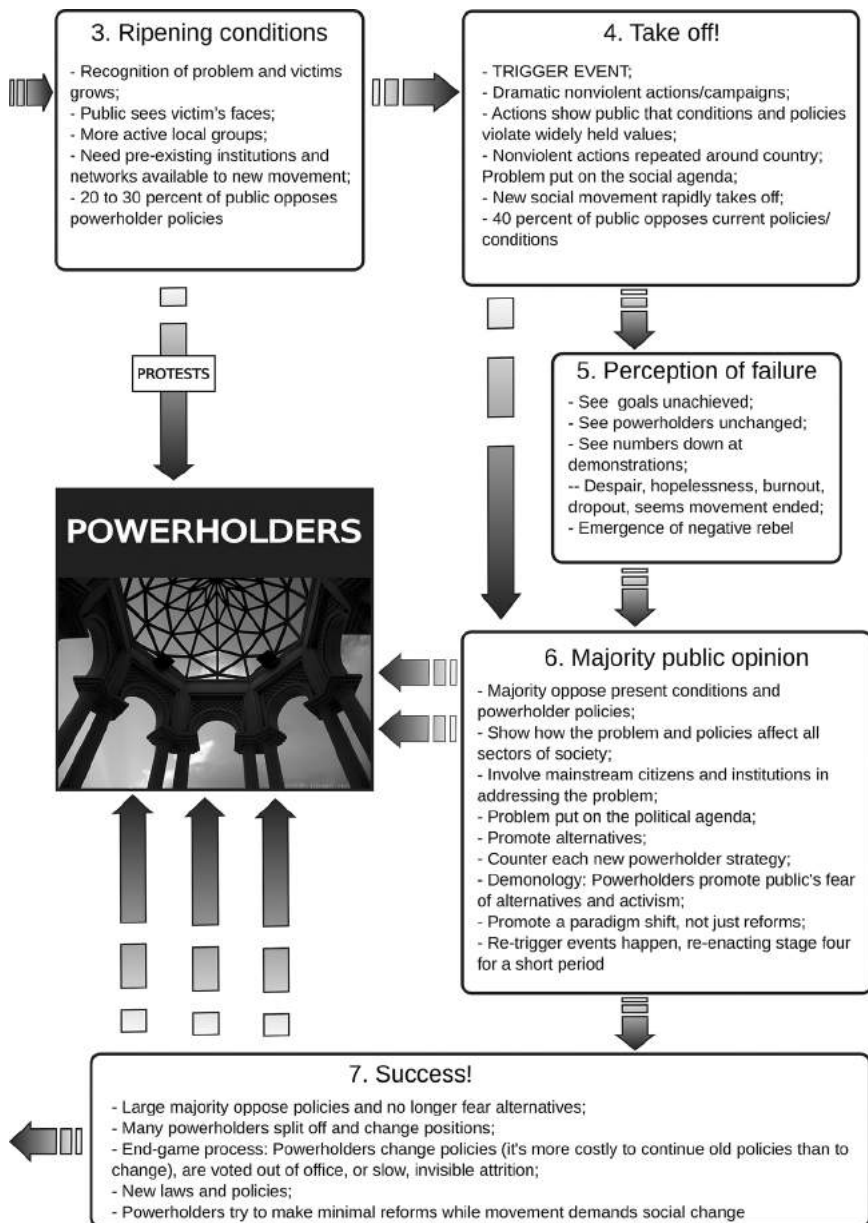
Further reading:

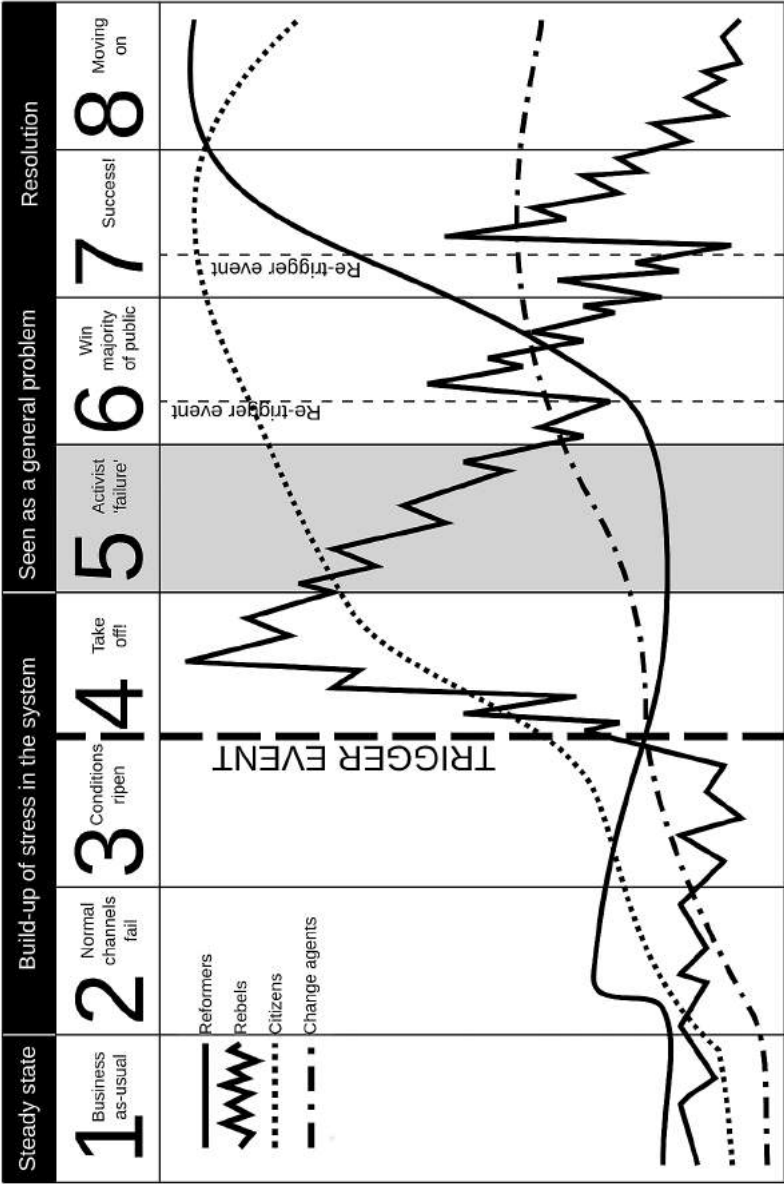
■ *Doing Democracy. The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movement*, Bill Moyer et al (New Society Publishers, 2001).

■ *Protest and Opportunities. The Political Outcomes of Social Movements*, Felix Kolb (Campus, Frankfurt 2007).









Adapted from Moyer, Bill: 'Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements'.

Education is freedom: popular education

Dan Glass

“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.”

Paulo Freire

Nonviolence

Violence
Nonviolence and power

Strategy

Theories of change
Constructive programme
Mobilising for change: building
power in Nepal

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups

Training

River of life – gender lens
Spectrum game
Forum Theatre
Power flower

Strategy

Changing the story

We all have an understanding of what life is about, what we are able to achieve, what it means to be human. Similarly, every human society is built around a particular story, or narrative. If we don’t change these stories, then humanity’s legacy will be of dominant behaviours that uphold structures of domination, which will then continue to affirm that there is no alternative to the current systems of oppression. For the story to change, we must intervene in how and where it is made, and the best place to challenge the old stories? and to create new ones – is at the individual and community level.

The core of popular education is the development of **critical consciousness** and **creativity**. Popular education was developed from Paulo Freire’s radically different approach to adult education, which helped people ‘to read their reality and write their own history’, and motivated them to action that transformed their life situation – popular education helped them create a new story. When he developed his ideas, Freire was an active educator in marginalised and poor townships across Brazil, where – as in most of Latin American – literacy was a requirement in order to vote and people wanted to challenge the many dictatorships across the continent.

Popular education has nourished social movements all over the world; the Centre for Human Ecology, So We Stand, Abahlali – the South African

Popular Education is a learning process that:

- begins with the standpoint of the oppressed;
- is inclusive;
- is accessible to people of all educational levels;
- addresses issues people face in their communities;
- supports people moving towards action/nonviolent social change;
- is based on the experiences of those participating in the learning; and
- integrates non-traditional methods of learning.

(From the Voluntown Peace Trust)

Shackdwellers Movement, Centre for Youth Resources Foundation Network (Cryogenic), Mamelani, the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement (MST) are just some examples of movements that have used popular education to mobilise their communities.

For Freire, popular education is rooted in generative themes. Generative themes are best thought of as powerful images or stories that impact the daily lives of people in a community. Critical consciousness is the product of a process where generative themes are recognised and analysed by members of a community. Exploring these themes speaks to people, allows them to understand their context, and helps end ‘a culture of silence.’

Freire thought those at the grassroots were marginalised by power and profit; it is easy to internalise negative images of ourselves, propagated by the oppressor, but doing this means we become our own worst enemies. If we don’t understand the generative themes in our communities struggles then cultures of silence will continue, and we will become ‘ventriloquists of power’. This means we end up repeating what we are told about ourselves, blaming each other for societies’ ills, instead of challenging the power holders or oppressors.

Banking education

Banking education is the opposite of popular education. Freire uses the term ‘banking education’ to describe the traditional education system; the concept illustrates students as ‘empty containers’ with no capacity for critical thinking, just waiting for educators, who will deposit knowledge into them. For popular education practitioners, ‘banking education’ reinforces systems of oppression and should always be avoided.

An important foundation of popular education is that the ‘students’ already carry all of the knowledge they need; the teacher is simply a facilitator in harnessing this knowledge and experience. This is why tools like the education spiral is useful (see ‘the spiral model’ sidebar for more information); they encourage us to always begin with the experience and knowledge of participants, for it is in understanding the patterns and generative themes within such knowledge and experience that people can begin to understand and respond to the world they live in.

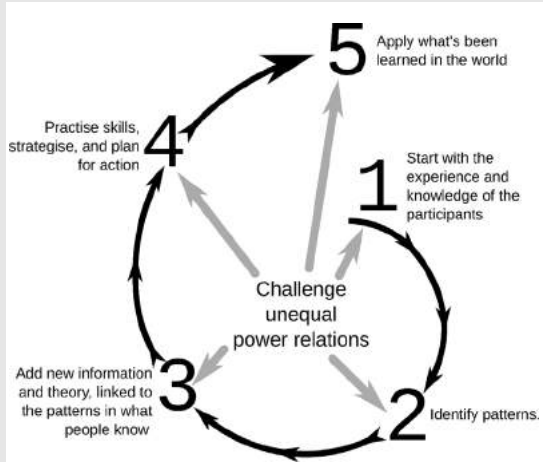
Adult education – the working toward common goals of improving the methods and materials of adult learning, extending the opportunities for adults to learn, and advancing the general level of our culture – becomes popular education when it begins to work for radical transformation. Popular education should get to the root of societies pathologies.

Conscientisation

At the heart of this journey to critical consciousness is **conscientisation** – which helps to build a culture of self-determination among those isolated and affected by inequality. ‘Conscientisation’ refers to a critical positioning (action) in the face of a reality, understood from a continuous process of reflection and questioning (conscience). Conscientisation programmes use different methods

The spiral model

The spiral model encourages us to make sure that our workshops and activities always begin with the experience and knowledge of the participants, ensuring that we do not become reliant on models similar to 'banking education'. The spiral model can be used to create participatory educational processes that are rooted in the experience of the learners, and combines collective analysis to



develop strategies for action for positive change. The spiral is not a one-time journey; as the group develops and grows, facilitators can take the group through multiple turns of the spiral — the fifth stage ('apply what's been learned in the world') can follow back into the first ('start with the experience and knowledge of the participants').

to engage simultaneously with the 'head' (intellectual arguments), the 'heart' (emotional engagement) and the 'hand' (the action-oriented potential) to create transformation. The tools on p76 can all be used to address the head, heart and hand in workshops or training.

"When we only name the problem, when we state complaint without a constructive focus or resolution, we take hope away. In this way critique can become merely an expression of profound cynicism, which then works to sustain dominator culture."

bell hooks

Education is political

Steve Biko's practice of popular education resonates with this process of conscientisation. He says

"Key to Friere's methodology is the recognition that teaching should be a political act directly related to production, health, social conditions... to be able to submerge themselves in the context of the learners' life experience, primarily to be able to listen while encouraging learners to unveil and 'unpackage their lives and problems.'"

Alternative education and health programmes are therefore imperative for our survival. To bring these to life we must understand the dominant values, beliefs, and myths of our society, which means critical questioning and the necessary action to combat structural and cultural violence (see ‘violence’, p27). This questioning to discover the ‘possibility of all possibilities’ leads to emancipation, as Freire states, ‘human beings must become active agents in their own history and their own models of development’.

The skills within popular education – of deep listening, unpacking power, overcoming fear, generating love, celebrating our powers, truth-telling, and creating alternatives to obedience – all provide avenues on the road to freedom and collaboration.

Tools used in popular education

There are many popular education tools which utilise the ‘head, heart, hand’ approach, and which help us to reflect and act on the world around us. First we start with the ‘head’ – knowledge and the experience of the participants to identify patterns. This adds new information and theory. Moving on to the ‘heart’, we explore what people’s emotional reactions are; how do they feel about their experience of the world? This leads to the ‘hand’ – practising skills and planning for action to apply what’s been learned in the world. The exercises below can all incorporate different degrees of ‘head’, ‘heart’ and ‘hand’.

The spectrum

(For a full description of using spectrums and cross spectrums to analyse a situation, see p215.)

A spectrum exercise uses examples to generate ‘critical thought’ on violence and oppression that surrounds us, and ideas of how we can change these. Spectrums help a group get a sense of the complexity of an issue or problem, and the breadth of feeling towards it.

The river of life

(For a more thorough description of how to put the ‘river of life’ into practise, and how it can be used to explore experiences of gender, see p22)

We can build dialogue and understand about how we became conscious about the need for change in our communities by drawing our lives as a river. Bridges can symbolise people who have helped us cross hard times, rapids when time has been stressful, tributaries or streams when we have had choices to make about what direction to go in. This helps us to gather, from our own lives, an understanding of the deep psychological blocks in people who have been affected by injustice. What has brought us to how we look at the world? What has shaped and influenced our world-view?

The wheel of fundamental human needs

‘The ‘wheel of fundamental human needs’ is a framework that can be used at different levels – from grassroots to national policy making – as a tool for

raising awareness and developing a common vision of the type of society we wish to create. The wheel helps us to analyse how we ensure that all of the various needs of our community are being met, and whether some are being met at the expense of others.

The wheel also shows how no one problem can be dealt with in isolation from another. A common sense of vision and purpose can help to gather the energies of a community, helping them to focus on a proactive process of development, and not merely a reactive responses to one crisis after another.



The wheel can be used to diagnose the most pressing needs of a local community or of wider society, and provide a foundation from which to start planning a holistic, integrated development programme or campaign. It can show the destructive ways in which a society attempts to satisfy a particular need, or blocks the satisfaction of several other needs. We can also use the wheel of fundamental human needs to analyse the participants needs in their community struggle and how that has changed over time.

One useful way of using the wheel is to split each segment in half. For each 'need', participants use one half to draw a line, which symbolises how well they feel a particular need is being met for them. On the other half, they draw another line, to illustrate to what degree the previous generation would feel each need has been met. Use the results to help 'diagnose' the problems the community faces, how they have changed over time and how it can meet it's needs.

Listening surveys

By looking at the local environment around us, we will begin to understand how to deeply question the racial, social, economic and environmental injustice around us and organise for new alternatives. 'Listening surveys' help us to lift the spirits of our communities and reach new levels of empowerment and consciousness. Through exploring how to meet our communities 'fundamental human needs' we will understand how we can build self-reliant responses to all forms of injustice. These conversations will ignite an understanding of how sharing our lived experiences and visions for justice is powerful. We will understand how these conversations can ensure action against oppression that has a deep and long term commitment to social justice, with a strong sense of responsibility and accountability to the communities whom we serve.

For more information, see <http://www.listeningproject.info/>



PROTESTERS IN GREECE, INTERNATIONAL CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS DAY, 2005. PHOTO: WRI ARCHIVE

Mobilising for change: building power in Nepal

Jagat Basnet and Jagat Deuja

Context of the land rights movement

In Nepal, land ownership is not a choice for most people – those who hold power own land, and such unequal land distribution means unjust power structures are perpetuated and reinforced. Before the first movement for democracy in 1950, the ruling classes had taken agricultural land as their own property and distributed it to their henchmen, relatives, supporters and some Hindu priests who were not farmers. This created conflict between landlords and tillers, and such unequal and unjust land distribution is now one of the main setbacks for economic development and social justice. Unequal land distribution has been blocking the development of Nepal, and sustains the elite-based land and agriculture system.

Many political parties use slogans like ‘land to the tillers’, but when they get into government they are used by the landlords, and the political leaders themselves become landlords.

The movements for democratic change in 1950, 1990 and 2003 all hoped to overthrow feudalism, but none of these campaigns were able to take power from the landlords. Land reform only appears in election manifestos, it is never practised, and so landless and tenant farmers are always under threat of eviction. As well, there are many NGOs – national and international – in Nepal, but very few support the building of movement power; their focus is on project work which does little to address the underlying problems.

The lack of change through political parties has compelled the landless and tenant farmers to become involved in the nonviolent land rights movement. They started to organise, and in 2003 formed their own organisation – the National Land Rights Forum (NLRF). The NLRF mobilises landless and tenant farmers, and promotes livelihood security, social justice and economic development in Nepal.

Tools used by the land rights movement

In 1996, more than 258 cases were filed by tenant farmers, claiming their rights, and this became the beginning of the land reform movement in Nepal. The Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC,) initiated the land rights movement, with a strategy of ‘cooperate where you can and resist where you must’.

Nonviolence

What is nonviolence, and why use it?

Nonviolence and power
Conflict

Strategy

Why things don’t ‘just happen’
Planning nonviolent campaigns
Constructive programme
Education is freedom: popular education

Nonviolent actions

Forms of nonviolent action
Case Studies
South Korea: the power of international solidarity

Training

Who has power in a school?
Pillars of power
Spectrum of allies

Based on this, CSRC built a people's organisation called the National Land Rights Forum (NLRF), and strengthened them to resist the threats and assaults from the land owning class and government. The movement began with the understanding that social development organisations must carefully analyse the power dynamics which govern their society. Without such transfer of power, experience shows that there will be little improvement in the livelihoods of poor people, and there will certainly be no justice. In the case of Nepal, it is not possible to solve the present conflict without solving the structural causes of the violence, which can only be addressed by transferring economic and political power to the community.

Power analysis

The first tool of the movement was an analysis of context and power. Without such an analysis of the respective community/groups, it would not have been possible to build an effective movement. In the movement, there is an important focus on building knowledge of nonviolent action and land rights among the land deprived people – such knowledge is generated from the communities affected by unequal land distribution.

Through knowledge of their context, the land-poor people have themselves realised that without their own organisation and mobilisation it is not possible to secure their rights or change the existing feudal based economic structure.

Nonviolent actions

The second tool is innovative and nonviolent actions, which aim to grab the attention of the media, the building of power, solidarity from the different sections of society, and allow for negotiation with respective policy makers, politicians and government. Nonviolent actions like demonstrations, mass rallies, paidal walking (foot marches), reading and writing activities (for education, but also writing to newspapers and government officials), and cleaning the land reform offices (cleaning the local government offices gives the message that the mass movement is not only for land; it aims for broader social transformation, justice, and poverty alleviation – cleaning the offices symbolises the reclaiming of power, sending a message of “this is our office, too!”)

Meeting power holders

Two things are important for the power building process; bringing policy makers to the villages, and taking landless and tenant farmers to Kathmandu, to the seat of power. When the NLRF bring policy makers to the villages, and organise interaction between them and the tillers, this gives power to the poor people. They are able to talk directly with policy makers, and explain how political parties maintain structures that exploit them. Now, the attitude and behaviours of landlords is changing, because they see the power of the organisation for land deprived people. After seeing the relationships that the landless have built with policy makers, landlords have begun to realise that poor people also have access to the policy makers, and have begun to change the practices in the villages.

One of the Haruwa (plougher) from Saptari visited Kathmandu, and CSRC organised a meeting between him and the Minister of Land Reform. When he got back to the village he said to his landlord, “You said that if I go to Kathmandu, you would file the case with the police, but now I talked with the Minister — this is his telephone number!” In this way, the Haruwa was able to use this to establish more equal power between him and the landlord.

Organisation, power building and popular education

It is impossible to have land reform without a strong movement, and mobilisation of landless and tenant farmers is critical to this. An important tool for building such power is popular education, which helps landless and tenant farmers to explore what they can do to make change. Popular education underpins the land rights movement. While the large NGOs can facilitate the building of people’s organisation and social movements; it is only possible to mobilise the landless and tenant farmers if they are in control of their own, strong organisation. If they are divided, it is not possible to change national policy regarding land distribution. Popular education helps landless and tenant farmers to recognise that their problems are shared.

Working in coalitions

It is very important that the people’s organisation takes the lead in negotiations. Other organisations can help by playing an active role in building the people’s organisation, and facilitating and supporting the movement, but we have to understand that there will only be change when the land deprived people take leadership positions in the change process.

Popular education processes helps to generate knowledge and power in three ways;

1. By empowering the landless and tenant farmers through knowledge and understanding of their society and culture;
2. By spreading knowledge of the nonviolent land rights movement with other organisations, the government and the public;
3. By building wider knowledge of land and agrarian reform.

The organised social movement will exist when there is knowledge of social transformation and land reform; popular education helps to solidify the land rights movement. Popular education also helps to develop leadership, which should come from people in the movement.

Power building processes

Popular education plays an important role in building power. Popular education helps to unite, collectivise actions and facilitate the sharing of roles in the movement, all of which helps to build power. Because the NLRF has used a participatory process for making decisions, it has been building power from the ground up. Before starting a programme, NLRF and CSRC think about what will



LANDLESS FARMERS GATHER TO DISCUSS CAMPAIGN STRATEGY.

PHOTO: CSRC (NEPAL).

really generate power, and have found alternative and innovative ways for the land rights movement to build power. For example, people could visit the district headquarters by bus, but they choose to travel by foot, to be more visible and demonstrate their commitment. When the movement gathers for a rally or demo, the NLRF members stay in public places, they cook for themselves and they share their food and blankets. Such actions create power.

The following five elements have also helped to generate power in the land rights movement.

1. Ownership

In Nepal, there is general mistrust of large NGOs (which are seen to rely on money from international donors). If the general public or the land deprived people found that mobilisation occurred only because of money from a funded project, this would undermine the power of the movement. However, if they know that the movement runs on the contributions of its members then power holders will look much more seriously at the movement, because this demonstrates their power.

2. Decision making structures

Open discussion and initiatives like paidal walking, encampments, rallies, demonstrations, and dialogue with powerholders generates power. Discussion in a small room, with just a few participants does little to create grassroots

power. When many people share stories about having the same kinds of problems, it generates power, because they feel that they are not alone in the problem/issue, there are many people, who are their friends. This also helps to develop a common action plan, where there is shared understanding of the problem and how to address it.

3. Demonstrating power

Mass meetings, gatherings, and nonviolent actions generate power. Because the land rights movement is able to hold bigger mass rallies than the political parties, their power is recognised.

4. Communication

Strong publicity of the issues and goals can create public debate that gives power to the movement and can help build solidarity.

5. Local contributions

Community contribution helps to decentralise power, and bring power to the grassroots. Innovative actions generate power and knowledge, as do powerful slogans and powerful mapping/visuals. The important thing is, it is the local mobilisation that creates power. Using local resources gives ownership to local activists, and makes sure that how we use resources is transparent.



ORGANISING EFFECTIVE ACTIONS

Sending the protest message

Jørgen Johansen and Brian Martin

What makes a protest action effective? Organisers have lots of potential choices: what, when, where, how and who. Looking at how audiences are likely to respond to messages can give guidance.

Heads of government are coming to town. Let's organise a protest! We'll have a massive rally and march. Those who want to can blockade the venue. We'll make our concerns about inequality, exploitation and aggression known far and wide.

But wait a second. Is this sort of protest going to be effective? Is it going to change people's viewpoints, mobilise support and help bring about a better society? Or, instead, will it reinforce prejudices, alienate potential supporters and suck energy away from more effective initiatives? And anyway what does it mean to "be effective"?

There are no simple answers to these questions. Actions have many different impacts. Many are hard to measure and some are entirely overlooked. Weighing up the pros and cons is difficult: it's an emotional as well as a rational matter.

Strategy

Planning nonviolent campaigns
Stages of escalation in a nonviolent campaign

Nonviolent actions

Tactic star
Dilemma actions
Media
Activism in oppressive regimes:
some lessons from South Africa
Humour and nonviolent campaigns

Case studies

Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people courage to defy Chile's dictatorship
Use of social media in nonviolent campaigns: the case of South Korea

Training

'Is it newsworthy?'
Imagine the future: setting goals

Context

Actions need to be designed with the context in mind. What is appropriate in one situation could be completely counterproductive in another. Laws, media,

police, culture, religion, civil society and many other factors are very different in Burkina Faso, Germany, Nepal, Indonesia, and China.

In India in 1930, Gandhi chose to build a campaign around salt, a potent symbol for Indians because of the British salt laws. What could protesters use as a potent symbol in Swaziland or Sweden today?

Actions must be designed with a deep knowledge of the local conditions. As a general rule, success stories should never be copied, but they can function as inspirations and as useful cases from which to learn.

Open-ended hunger strikes are regarded very differently in a Christian culture than in a Hindu society. For atheists and Christians it means a lot to sacrifice your life, whereas a Hindi anticipates thousands more lives to come – an important difference!

In a country where an activist risks torture, lengthy imprisonment or the death penalty, civil disobedience is a different matter than where the likely outcome is a fine or a few weeks in a decent prison. It is wise for activists to act differently in countries with strict censorship and state-run media than where free and oppositional media regularly cover demonstrations.

Choices

There are two main types of actions: (1) oppose and (2) promote. The first focuses on what you disagree with and the other on your alternative. Within each of these there are many options. In most cases, it's much easier to create a positive image when you have an alternative. To say no! is common and easy, but it will often be regarded as unhelpful, as blocking progress. Presenting alternatives is more demanding but often rewarded by being seen as constructive.

Within each of these main categories there is again a choice to be made: direct action or indirect action. By direct action we mean to do something about the problem/conflict ourselves. It could be to close a city street to change it into a space for pedestrians. Or it could be to squat in a house and turn it into a cultural centre. When the activists in Genetix Snowball destroy genetically modified plants from fields in Britain they are not only demanding that these fields should be made illegal but are removing them themselves. These types of actions are often illegal and risky. The point here is that the activists themselves are making the change directly: they are taking direct action.

Indirect actions involve asking someone else, such as politicians or business executives, to respond to a demand or deal with an unjust situation. In many countries you need permission from the local police to have a demonstration and sometimes they will be helpful in keeping things calm during a demo. To be successful, these types of actions depend on sympathy from someone else. If neither power holders nor the public support your demands you will not achieve what you want.

Note that in a dictatorship, making requests can be a form of direct action, because it is an exercise of free speech.

For both direct and indirect actions there is a need to develop more types of actions. Creativity, fantasy and experiments are crucial. Just as arms pro-

ducers come up with more sophisticated weapons every year, activists need to develop new forms of action. Good examples should be tested, documented and adapted for use at other times, places and circumstances.

Audiences

On many issues there are three main audiences: activists, opponents and third parties. When a group wants to challenge a repressive government, the activists are those involved in protests. The opponents are the government and its agencies such as the police and the army. The third parties are those not directly involved in the struggle: the general public and most people in other countries. People can move from being a third party to being an activist, and the other way around, as a consequence of actions. One goal is to engage more people. In most cases the media convey information/propaganda and messages from the event to wider audiences.

As well as looking at who the audiences are, it's helpful to look at the interaction between activist methods and audiences.

Alignment

Media guru Marshall McLuhan said "The medium is the message." For example, television encourages a certain way of viewing the world, irrespective of what's on the screen. Personal conversation encourages a different perspective.

In activism, too, the medium – namely the method of action – is the message. According to a perspective in psychology called correspondent inference theory, audiences make assumptions about someone's motivations according to the consequences of the actions they take. When activists threaten or use violence – for example, bombings, assassinations or hijackings – many observers believe the goal of the activists is to destroy society. The method, namely destruction, is assumed to reflect the goal. For example, after 9/11, many people in the US thought al Qaeda's goal was to destroy US society. This was the wrong message. Very few US citizens knew that Osama bin Laden's key goals concerned US government policies in the Muslim world.

The same thing applies on a much smaller scale. If a worker on a picket spits on a manager, the message is one of contempt and disrespect, which can distract audiences from the message that the pay is too low or working conditions are unsafe.

Actions are more powerful when the method used – the medium – is aligned with the message. In the US civil rights movement, well-dressed blacks entered white-only restaurants and sat politely and quietly at lunch counters, not responding to abuse and police provocation. Their presence and respectful demeanour sent a powerful message that was aligned with the short-term goal, equal access to the restaurant, as well as the long-term goal of racial equality. On the other hand, the abuse by white patrons and aggressive action by police, directed only at blacks in the restaurant, sent the message that segregation was a system of racism, exclusion and aggression. These powerful messages helped discredit segregation among audiences in the rest of the US and the world.



DEMONSTRATION IN QUITO, ECUADOR.

PHOTO: ACCIÓN ECOLÓGICA ECUADOR

Dealing with attack

Protesters often come under attack: they may be slandered, harassed, beaten, arrested, imprisoned, even killed. Their communications may be intercepted, their offices raided and their equipment confiscated or destroyed. These attacks are hurtful and expensive, damaging to morale and can discourage participation. But with the right preparation and tactics, and good luck, some attacks can be made to backfire on the attackers. It's not easy and doesn't happen often but it can be very powerful.

Perpetrators and their supporters regularly use five methods to inhibit outrage from their attacks:

- cover up the attack,
- devalue the target,
- reinterpret what happened (including lying, minimising effects and blaming others),
- use official channels to give an appearance of justice,
- and intimidate and reward targets and their supporters.

Protesters need to be prepared to counter each of these methods:

- expose the attack
- validate the target
- interpret what happened as an injustice
- avoid or discredit official channels; instead, mobilise support
- and resist intimidation and rewards

For example, after police assault protesters, the police and their supporters may use every one of these four methods.

■ Police, in assaulting protesters, often try to do it away from witnesses and cameras. Protesters need to be prepared to record assaults and communicate them with credibility to wider audiences.

■ Police claim that they were doing their duty, that protesters were violent and disturbing the peace and indeed that it was the police who came under attack. Protesters should focus on the injustice of the assault.

■ When protesters make formal complaints or go to court, seldom are there any serious consequences for abusive police. Meanwhile, the whole process takes so long that most people lose interest while activists are tied up in technicalities and distracted from activism. It is better for protesters to avoid courts and instead encourage greater participation in future planning and action.

■ In many cases protesters don't speak out for fear of police reprisals; in a court action they may accept a settlement to resolve the matter, often with a silencing clause attached. It is powerful when some protesters, or their supporters, speak out and refuse to be bought off.

Documentation, evaluation and dissemination

For actions to become more effective, activists need to learn from past experiences. They need to document and evaluate what they are doing and make this information available for others. Just as students at war colleges learn about historical battles from lectures and textbooks, activists must build a similar system for coming generations to learn from the history of nonviolence and social movements. This requires serious, critical evaluations of planning, actions and outcomes. It is just as important to study failures as to celebrate victories. Then these evaluations must be made available for other activists, taking into account different languages and contexts. It is a large task. There are many actions from which to learn!

This is a shorter version of an article published in Gandhi Marg, Vol. 29, No. 4, January-March 2008, pp. 503-519. You can access the full article at: <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/08gm.html>

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Working in groups

Denise Drake and Steve Whiting

Why work in groups?

The best way to fight the divide and rule system is to unite and resist. Uniting means working with other people in groups, and groups working with other groups to build a movement. Being successful will, at some point, mean working with people who may not be exactly like us; they may be approaching our issue from a different organising culture, perspective or motivation. Successful campaigns for deep, long-lasting change require broad-based work with different groups or people. This is when we see how vital good group work is, and how we respond to the opportunity of bringing the change we wish to see in the world.

How can we keep our group or movement working together whilst dealing with our differences – gender, class, age, race, able-bodiedness, rank and privilege? One of our many challenges is doing effective change work without mimicking ‘social smog’ (sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and so on). Different groups work in different contexts and cultures, and they will have different approaches, so there is no one way to do effective group-work, but here are some things to keep in mind when working in small campaigning groups, and more widely.

Nonviolence

Gender and nonviolence
Conflict

Strategy

Planning nonviolent campaigns
Theories of change

Nonviolent actions

Maintaining nonviolence during an action
Roles before, during, and after an action

Case studies

Seabrook-Wyhl-Marckolsheim:
transnational links in a chain of campaigns

Training

Decision making
Spectrum and cross spectrum
Role playing
Who has power in a school?
I could do that if

Nonviolent
actions

Personal motivations matter – why are you part of the group?

Personal motivations are important. Compare how large campaigning NGOs draw up role profiles and hire people with specific skills to carry out their plans, while grassroots activist groups rely on the people taking part to be willing to do the things the group has decided to do. Too often, grassroots groups form plans without considering individuals’ motivations, visions and resources. And, given the fact that people in grassroots groups may come and go, it’s important to include space to get to know people, and explore why they belong to the group/came to the meeting, what they can offer, and what they expect from the group.

We are also all in different places on the journey in understanding the issue and our way of campaigning. Our personal theories of change, what action or strategy will be effective, may be different. Some of us are involved because we need the personal connection in order to take action. Others’ main motivation is because it’s urgent and something needs to be done right now! Another motivating factor may be a desire to further understand the issue. Inevitably,

there will be some with a combination of motivations which aren't easily dissected. While there will be some overlap in our concerns and motivations – otherwise the group wouldn't have come together – some of our reasons for belonging to a group and how to best address the issue are going to be different. While these differences can be a source of tension and conflict, they are also the ingredients for a vibrant group and social movement, when we overcome them.

What's your group's culture like?

Groups tend to develop their own culture over time, based on shared knowledge, beliefs, practices and behaviours. Individuals in the group may or may not be aware of the group culture because they are steeped in it – it just is. Newcomers to the group most likely will only notice the group culture if it is different from their expectations or past group experiences. Feeling at home – or at least feeling space to be real and authentic with each other – is a strong factor in determining whether people become and remain part of a group. And no matter what the group's main purpose is in coming together, meetings will most likely be an inevitable part of working together. A good meeting not only gets things done, it also involves, supports and empowers the maximum number of people.

■ So how do you work together in your group? What regular habits and rituals do you have, for example, how do you begin and finish meetings? What do you do together? How do you share roles within the group (leading meetings, speaking at events, doing tasks, recording notes from meeting?)

■ What kind of group energy or patterns of interaction do you notice? How many people speak at meetings? Are they the same ones each time? What does the body language say? How do you share information?

■ How much trust is in the group and among individuals? Trust is important for people to work effectively together, and trust is built by people feeling safe to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences personally and doing things together. One small way to build trust in groups is to make 'social' time for people to get to know each other and to bring more of themselves than merely 'the activist' to the meeting.

"There is a direct relationship between valuing diversity and attention to process."

Marianne Maeckelbergh,
The Will of the Many

Building trust

One meeting habit that invites trust is to break the ice beginning each meeting with a simple go round responding to a specific statement like 'why I am here' or 'how I am connected to the issue'. For groups with more stable membership, responding to a statement like 'a new thing I've learned about the issue is ...', or 'something new in my life since we last met is ...' Doing things socially outside of

the campaigning group can also build relationships and trust, and allow space for personal differences to be resolved. It can also reveal different types of leadership and other valuable skills not always evident in the regular meetings.

Inclusivity

Where does your group meet? Is it accessible by public transport? Does it have facilities and services which make it friendly to people with disabilities? Is it an open, comfortable setting generally?

Meeting in someone's home or a pub/bar/café may make sense for some groups, it also may create barriers or unhealthy dynamics for others. Some people may not feel comfortable around alcohol, or others may be in a limited budget or ideologically opposed to consumption, and so buying a refreshment may seem like an imposition, among many reasons. You might also consider things like childcare, or whether children are welcome at the meeting. In short, give some thought to the needs, values and ethical and religious principles that group members – both actual and potential – may have when choosing a meeting venue and time.

- When do you meet and for how long? Do meetings start and finish on time?
- Do you take and share notes? Is that role shared or always done by the same person? How do you make decisions?
- Do you have a group agreement (an explicit statement about things the group believes in and behaviour expected, see 'maintaining nonviolence', p102) How often do you revisit this agreement to see if it's still relevant to those in the group?
- Does everyone participate, or just the vocal few? How do you make space to hear the voices you haven't heard?
- How do you deal with difference and conflict? Are opposing viewpoints allowed to coexist, Or are differences viewed as 'problems' to be either ignored, stifled or solved?
- Do you say you believe in equality, power-sharing and anti-hierarchical organising, and then ignore disparaging, condescending behaviour, plays for power and informal hierarchies? Do you only work with people like yourself, or with a spectrum of allies coming from a range of class, race, able-bodiedness and other backgrounds? How easy and comfortable are those relationships?

Rejecting our social smog

A dynamic we often ignore or fail to give enough credence and attention to in our groups is that, when resisting the dominant world order and building a more inclusive and participatory world, we are struggling against a tide of relationship patterns carved by centuries of established hurtful hierarchical power relations. We may say we believe in equality, peace and justice but we are

More questions and ideas to consider when thinking about your group and inclusivity can be found in the 'nonviolence and gender' section, p22)

scarred by centuries of sexism, racism, classism, ageism, regionalism, able-bodism, and ad nauseam-ism. Until we accept that this social smog affects who and how we are in the world we'll reproduce the same social, economic and political systems that formed each of us. We'll play off our internalised oppressions against ourselves and each other to the detriment of us all. Relationships based on equality, peace and justice are difficult to sow and nurture to life in our current climate of arrogance ('that's not my problem'), ignorance ('they're just a little upset, but will get over it') or complicity ('I'll throw my lot in with those folks – they're powerful, weighty within the group').

Participatory and conventional group-working characteristics

Every group's way of organising is going to be different, but here are few characteristics of what participatory group-working looks like in contrast to how conventional groups function, and things that can encourage fuller participation.

Participatory group-working	Conventional group-working
<i>Everyone participates, not just those who feel confident speaking out in groups, or the most influential group members</i>	The fastest thinkers and most articulate speakers, or those with higher status get more attention
How to encourage this: go rounds, or random rounds, where everyone has space to speak their mind social time for informal discussions and personal matters to be worked through time for pairs to discuss before opening up to whole group	
<i>People give each other room to think and get their thoughts all the way out</i>	People interrupt each other on a regular basis in ways that are unhelpful to the group
How to encourage this: a group agreement including points about how speaking turns happen (such raise hand to show you'd like to speak) knowing each other and awareness of our needs and communication styles can create space for all voices active listening is one way of holding discussions which builds connection and empathy between people helping us find mutual understanding despite differences	

Participatory group-working	Conventional group-working
<i>People draw each other out with supportive questions like, ‘What do you mean by ... ?’ are able to listen to each other’s ideas because they know that their own ideas will be heard, and the whole group is engaged in seeking the best outcome</i>	Questions are often viewed as challenges to authority or expertise, as if the person being questioned has done something wrong or has faulty thinking. People have difficulty listening to each other’s ideas because they’re busy rehearsing what they want to say
How to encourage this: a group culture of curiosity and good will to understand the other person’s perspective build trust within the group; this will allow people to believe each other’s good intentions and good will	
<i>A problem is not considered solved until everyone who will be affected by the solution understands the reasoning</i>	A problem is considered solved as soon as the fastest and most influential thinkers have reached an answer. Everyone else is expected to ‘get on board’ regardless of whether they understand the logic of the decision
How to encourage this: established and frequently examined decision-making structures – who decides, what, when and why? decision by consensus – when appropriate – also ensures all voices are heard	

See Berit Lakey’s *Meeting Facilitation –The No-Magic Method* for more ideas on how to find the most effective way for your group to develop its culture and way of working together <http://www.trainingforchange.org/tools/meeting-facilitation-no-magic-method-0>.

Conflict, change and groups

Conflict

Many activists are motivated to get involved in a campaign because they empathise with those caught up in a conflict between justice ('us') and injustice ('them'). We expect, and are often prepared for conflict with the campaign 'opponent' or target, but conflict within our groups is not usually part of our vision of change, so not something we welcome or expect. Whether it's conflict with the 'opponent' or among group members, it usually involves physical and emotional pain, and our most typical responses are to dominate, suppress, avoid, accommodate or ignore conflict. However, nonviolence is about handling conflict differently, and to be the change we wish to see in the world grassroots campaigning groups need to learn to handle conflict in ways that are cooperative, creative and constructive.

See Seeds for Change 'Working with conflict in our groups: a guide for grassroots activists' for more tips on dealing with conflict in groups: <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/conflictbooklet.pdf>

Change

Inner and outer change in ourselves and the world begins with handling conflict differently – unlearning the social scripts of gender, class, race, power and rank. While we campaign on wider world issues, we also need to transform ourselves and deal with the issues of social smog in our own environment and relationships. It's not a linear process; do not be tempted into easy thinking that we have to change ourselves first before we can change the world; this can be a recipe for inertia. Change is dynamic; both inner and outer change are essential and connected and happen together. Transformation is a holistic process each feeding into the other, both individually and socially.

Group agreement

A group agreement is a list of suggested behaviours about how to interact with each other and when done well, a group agreement can help to support a group to interact better with each other and practice new behaviours for more effective communication. Even if it's an informal group and everyone is relaxed, a group agreement is one way to build and define a group culture, making it easier for newcomers to fit in.

A group agreement needs to be based on a real group process. If you plan on the group agreement session taking 10 minutes, you are rushing the process; rushing makes it a ritual and reduces its meaning. People need time to express their concerns, ask questions about what's on the list, and make an internal commitment to points in the agreement – or, eliminate points from the list.

Ideally the whole group makes a list of proposed points for the group agreement together; alternatively a few group members may do this. However it happens, the list then needs to be discussed and accepted by all. Testing for acceptance of the group agreement must be done in a genuinely open way and

with active participation. You may want to ask people to stand if they agree with each point on the list, or use it as an opportunity to practice consensus decision-making. You should expect some resistance and questions about the points on the list. Developing a genuine and effective group agreement requires time and willingness to explore the meaning behind the words, to ensure there is mutual understanding.

Beware of points that may mean different things to different people. For example, ‘active listening’ refers to a specific communication method, but also means a wide range of behaviours and different things to different people. So it might be more effective to actually describe what ‘active listening’ look like, for example, one person talking at a time, or no interrupting. Another point frequently included in a group agreement that requires clarification is ‘maintain confidentiality about the group’s work’; Does this mean not sharing anything from the meeting, or is it OK to talk about the meeting in a general way that does not identify people or delicate matters?

It’s also important that the list include behaviours that can actually be regulated. ‘No internal or external judgements’ for example, may be one group’s idea of a good point for inclusion – but we can’t monitor or enforce rules about another person’s internal thoughts. So, if the group can’t enforce a point from the list, it’s not an effective point for your group agreement.

Enforcement of a group agreement can and should be done by everyone in relaxed and gentle ways, and is best when explicit and direct – identifying behaviour in the moment or shortly after it. For example, ‘Sam, we have agreed to put our phones on silent’.

Group agreements aren’t a panacea

We should be aware that group agreements also have a negative side. The reality is that a group agreement tends to represent the mainstream norms of the group who may be unaware of their power and influence in creating the group culture and how it coerces others to lose a bit of themselves. For example, ‘no interruptions’ is a typical point for a group agreement, yet it explicitly privileges one communication style over another. In this case the mainstream believes interruptions reduce effective communication because people cannot make their points when they are cut off. This is a belief more associated with white, middle-class, professional people from the Global North. People from other cultures’ may have a different style of communication and view interruptions differently; they may be seen as a way that some people keep the conversation moving, as a way of moving with the flow of a conversation, and other participants might want to respond point-by-point – in their view the people taking up so much time making multiple and even unrelated points are the rude ones!

See ‘Break the Rules: How ground rules can hurt us’ for more
<https://www.trainingforchange.org/publications/break-rules-how-ground-rules-can-hurt-us>

In sum, it is important that group agreements are willingly and genuinely agreed by people and not imposed. Be aware also that group agreements should not become lists of politically correct behaviour designed to enforce mainstream norms.

Affinity groups

Collective power is key to social change. We may belong to a small, local campaign or community group, or a larger national or faith-based movement. And the activities campaigning groups do are different. Our group may take direct action risking arrest to highlight the injustice our campaign address, or we may do advocacy and reform work facilitating and implementing social change using legal channels like petitions or legislative approaches. Other groups may focus on building alternative and new social structures and institutions. The important thing is that we take action with others, including connecting and respecting the work of those who address different aspects of the issue.

One way activists work together to maximise their contribution and efforts is to organise into affinity groups. Broadly speaking an affinity group is a small group of people (usually no more than 15) who have an appreciation of each other. They trust each other and share a vision and approach to the sort of activism they do. They also know each other's strengths and weaknesses and support each other as they participate (or intend to participate) in a nonviolent campaign together. An activist choir, a group collecting signatures for a petition, direct action activists risking arrest, or a collective providing a special service at a mass mobilisation like legal observing, first aiders, or the cooking team may consider themselves an affinity group. Affinity groups may come together for just one action, or take action together for many years.

Structure

Some affinity groups challenge the prevailing social model of dominance and undue obedience to authority by working in anti-hierarchical ways, meaning they are non-hierarchical, acknowledging informal hierarchies – both helpful and unhealthy ones or a combination – in the group and work these in ways that will maximise the group's influence, effectiveness and skills. This may mean sharing knowledge and skills so that more people are able to take on group roles. It may be noticing when one person seems to be holding influence over the group for no reason other than personal rank and power to the detriment of the collective good. Another reason some campaign groups and social movements strive to be non-hierarchical and seemingly 'leaderless' is protection for people in campaigning groups and the movement, otherwise, the authorities may simply target the 'leaders' hoping to destabilise and disempower the movement.

Other affinity groups may have a hierarchy to provide management of the group's long-term interests, or if the group is large enough to require the delegation of responsibilities to other members or staff. Hierarchy may be a useful part of the culture that the group uses to move them towards their cam-

paign goal, as in the case of cultures with a practice of turning to leaders who use their influence for the greater good. These are leaders trusted and respected by groups and the movement because of their integrity. The key to all of these models, however, is trust in the group, the level of participation among group members and the resulting effectiveness of the group.

Finding an affinity group

How do you find an affinity group that is right for you? The simple answer is you look for people you know and who have similar opinions about the issue(s) in question and the methods of action to be used. They could be people you meet at an educational seminar or nonviolence training, work with, socialise with, or live with. The point to stress however, is that you have something in common other than the issue that is bringing you all together, and that you trust them and they trust you. An important aspect of being part of an affinity group is to learn each others' viewpoints and be willing to make the time and effort to understand each other — you don't have to agree, just accept and allow another point of view to coincide next to your own. Being part of an affinity group may mean setting aside your own personal preference to accept actions, ideas, proposals that are acceptable for the collective.

Effective affinity groups develop a shared idea of what is wanted individually and collectively from the action/campaign, how it will conceivably go, what support you will need from others, and what you can offer others. It helps if you have agreement on certain basic things: how active, how spiritual, how nonviolent, how deep a relationship, how willing to risk arrest, when you might want to stop an action, your overall political perspective, your action methods, and so on.

In the Global North one use of an affinity group is taking nonviolent direct action to highlight or protest an unjust situation. The sit-ins and occupations of segregated business led by African-Americans during the US civil rights movement aimed to raise to the surface the injustice of that practice, which was invisible or ignored by the white mainstream. Or the purpose may be to slow or stop injustice, like blocking the building of a weapons factory or disarming weaponry through disrupting or stopping its usual operation.

An affinity group planning to take nonviolent direct action will want to carefully plan the action, decide the roles required and with some thought, people choose what they are capable to do. Support roles are vital to the success of an action, and to the safety of the participants. Each action is going to be different and will require different roles, but common roles are things like media contact, legal observer, first aider, people willing to be arrested and support people to look after the well-being of those risking arrest. People risking arrest may be using their body as a tool in the action (locked on to something or in a position which limits their mobility such as sitting down in the road).

It is important that these people have support people to ensure they have food, water, and protection from the elements, and to monitor the authorities' response. Sometimes people can take on more than one role, for example. a legal observer might also be a first-aider, or police liaison, or media contact,

but be careful about one person taking on too many key responsibilities. The key is to make sure that all necessary roles are covered, that everyone understands the extent of their commitment before the action begins, and no one takes on roles they are unable to carry out (See ‘roles before, during, and after an action’, p128).

There are more types of affinity groups in the world than this handbook can reference, and nonviolent direct action also takes many more forms than can be described here. Consider the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo: these women met while searching for their children disappeared during the Argentine military dictatorship between 1975 and 1983. They first began to meet in order to share information and support each other, and then later began gathering in front of the presidential palace in public defiance of state terrorism intended to silence all opposition. Or it may take the form of people working across boundaries like class, race, gender or nationality to stand in solidarity with others, as was the case with the group Black Sash in Apartheid-era South Africa. Between 1955 and 1994, the Black Sash provided widespread and visible proof of white resistance towards the apartheid system. Its members worked as volunteer advocates to families affected by apartheid laws; held regular street demonstrations; spoke at political meetings; brought cases of injustice to the attention of their Members of Parliament, and kept vigils outside Parliament and government offices. Many members were vilified within their local white communities, and it was not unusual for women wearing the black sash to be physically attacked by supporters of apartheid.



Consensus decision-making

Why consensus?

There are many ways a group can make decisions, and it's important to choose the method that is best for the decision that needs to be made. This may be voting, one person decides (usually a ‘leader’ or another person tasked with that responsibility), a randomised method like flipping a coin, or consensus decision-making.

Often in a democratic vote a significant minority is unhappy with the outcome. While they may acknowledge the legitimacy of the decision – because they accept these rules of democracy – they may still actively resist it or undermine it, and work towards the next voting opportunity.

Compromise is another method of reaching a decision, often through negotiation. Two or more sides announce their position and move towards each other with measured concessionary and mutual steps. However, this can often lead to dissatisfaction on all sides, with nobody getting what they really wanted.

Many activist groups use consensus decision-making believing that people should have full control over our lives and that power should be shared by all rather than given to the few to make decisions for the many. Consensus is especially useful when a group is preparing to carry out nonviolent actions with each

other because it aims to encourage all to participate and express opinions, and cultivating support for decisions by all group members. To avoid new forms of dominance within a group, its discussion and decision-making processes needs to be participatory and empowering, and consensus aims to do just that.

While consensus implies freedom to decide one's own course of life, it also comes with responsibilities to the collective. The consensus process is based upon listening and respect, and participation by everyone. The goal is to find a decision that is acceptable to all group members, that everyone consents to. Be clear, however, that consensus does not necessarily mean that everyone is completely satisfied with the final outcome, but everyone agrees the decision is acceptable and in the best interest of the collective. It is a decision that people can live with.

Consensus is not a compromise however. A compromise may result in everyone being dissatisfied with the decision, and does not contribute to building trust in the long run. And majority decisions, like voting or 'the leader decides' can lead to a power struggle between different factions within a group who compete rather than respect each other's opinions. The consensus process taps into the creativity, insights, experience, and perspectives of the whole group. The differences between people stimulate deeper inquiry and greater wisdom.

So how does cooperative decision-making work? The opinions, ideas and reservations of all participants are listened to and discussed. Differing opinions are brought out and noted. No ideas are lost, each member's input is valued as part of the solution. This open and respectful discussion is vital in enabling the group to reach a decision on the basis of which – in nonviolent action – people will put themselves and their bodies 'on the line'.

Positions within a consensus decision

Agreement: "I support the proposal, and want to see it implemented."

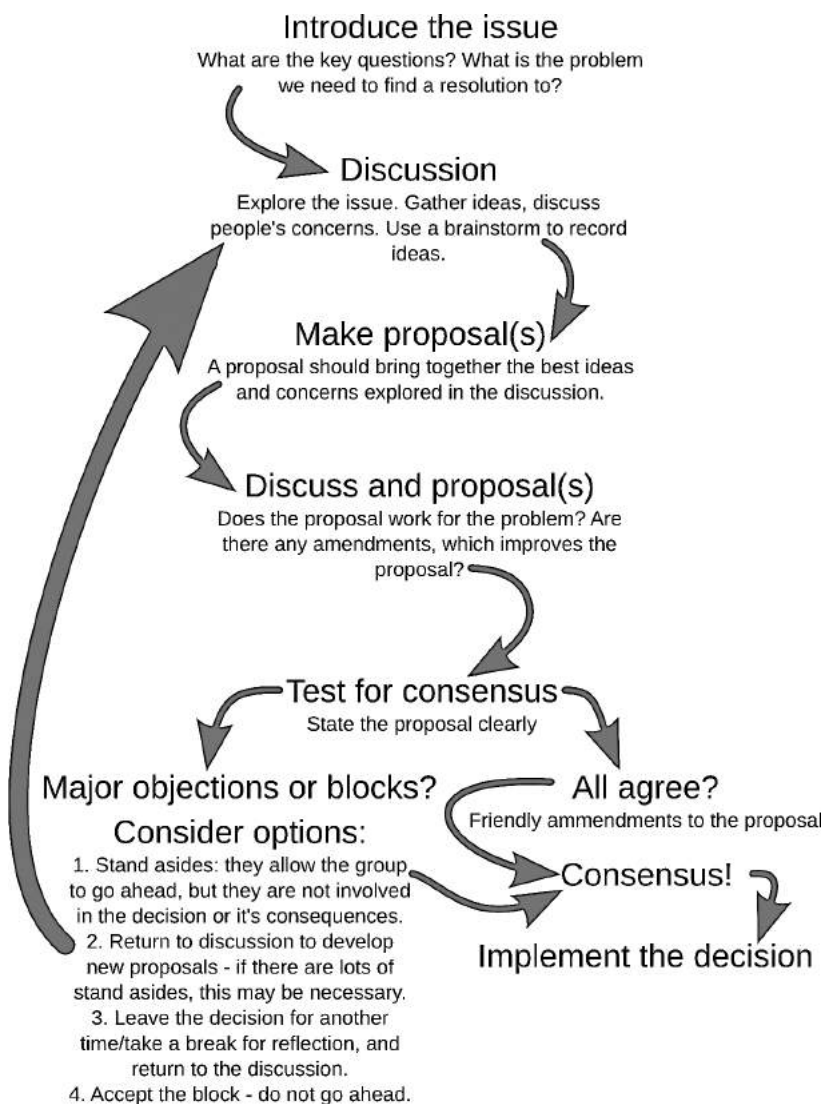
Stand-asides: "I cannot support this proposal because... but I don't wish to stop the group, so I'll let the decision go ahead without me."

Blocks: "I have a fundamental disagreement with something at the core of the proposal; making this decision would mean the group breaking up."

The consensus decision-making process, step-by-step

1. The problem, or decision needing to be made, is defined and named. It helps to do this in a way that separates the problems/questions from personalities.
2. Brainstorm possible solutions. Write them all down, even the crazy ones. Keep the energy up for quick, top-of-the head suggestions.
3. Create space for questions or clarification on the situation.
4. Discuss the options written down. Modify some, eliminate others, and develop a short list. Which are the favourites?
5. State the proposal or choice of proposals so that everybody is clear. (Sometimes it might be useful to break into small sub-groups to write up each proposal clearly and succinctly.)
6. Discuss the pros and cons of each proposal – make sure everybody has a chance to contribute.

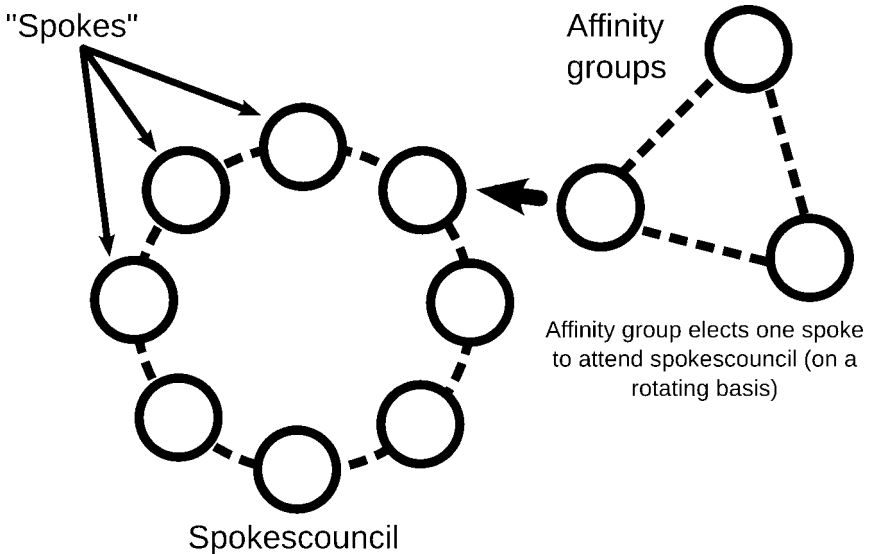
Consensus decision-making flowchart



7. If there is a major objection, return to step 6 (this is the time-consuming bit). Sometimes you may need to return to step 4.
8. If there are no major objections, state the decisions and test for agreement.
9. Acknowledge minor objections and incorporate friendly amendments.
10. Discuss.
11. Check for consensus.

Consensus in large groups: the spokescouncil

The model of consensus decision-making described above works well within one group. However, bigger nonviolent actions require the cooperation of several affinity groups; one method to do so is to use a spokes council. The spokescouncil is a tool for making consensus decisions in large groups. In a spokes council, spokespeople from smaller groups come together to make shared decisions. Each group is represented by their 'spoke'. The group communicates to the larger meeting through their spokesperson, allowing hundreds of people to be represented in a smaller group discussion. What the spoke is empowered to do is up to their affinity group; spokes may need to consult with their groups before discussing or agreeing on certain subjects.



For more information on using consensus decision-making in large groups, see: <http://wri-irg.org/node/11059>

Maintaining nonviolence during an action

Andreas Speck

Wanting an action to be nonviolent does not in itself ensure that this will be the case. Any action involves a complex set of actors, not all of whom might agree with nonviolence, and not all of which might even be on our side. This is especially true for larger actions with public mobilisation, involving a variety of groups from a broad political spectrum.

To ensure an action remains nonviolent, it makes sense to assess potential risks:

- Who do we want to come to the action? Who are we inviting? Who else might also come with a different idea as to what it is about?
- What do we think about the commitment to nonviolence of the varying groups that might join the actions? What level of preparation/training will people have?
- What kind of disturbances might arise because of the actions of our opponents, or the police? Do we see a risk of agent provocateurs being used to provoke violence?

Nonviolence

What is nonviolence, and why use it?

Strategy

Stages of escalation

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Forms of nonviolent action
Fear

Case studies

Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people courage to defy Chile's dictatorship
Castor — how we mobilised people for civil disobedience

Training

Hassle lines
Consequences of fear
Role playing
Tools for grounding, protecting and blockading
Spectrum and cross spectrum

If your assessment comes to the conclusion that there is a risk of problems, it is important to put structures and strategies in place to deal with these should they arise. This can include teams prepared to intervene in case of a violent escalation, be it by police or other individuals.

Nonviolence Guidelines

Nonviolence guidelines are often used as one way to minimise the risk of violence, as they are a clear statement of the organisers of an action about the nature of the action. 'Nonviolence guidelines' are not the same as nonviolent principles (see p11). They are an agreement as to how participants in an action will behave. They may be stated in very practical terms ('We will not carry any weapons') or may be in more philosophical terms ('We will gather together in a manner that reflects the world we choose to create').

Nonviolence guidelines have their advantages and disadvantages. Sometimes they can create more problems than they solve, while at other times they contribute to mutual confidence and a feeling of safety among participants. Nonviolence guidelines can send an important message to (potential) participants that the action will be nonviolent, and that violence will not be tolerated. Agreement on what we mean by 'nonviolence', or why we choose nonviolent

“I was with thousands of protesters walking through fields heading towards the fenced off area of Heiligendamm where the G8 were meeting in 2007. The atmosphere was one of unity and purpose, our aim being to create a human road block with our bodies; we wanted to use our bodies as a sign of peaceful resistance to the meeting of the G8 and to disrupt the meeting itself by preventing delegates accessing the area. We were so many and as we approached a small and rather terrified looking police line, a few protesters ran towards them aggressively. In unison hundreds of protesters stopped and calmly shouted ‘NO!’ The protesters who were running at the police stopped. It was a powerful moment as we collectively voiced our opposition. We wanted the protest to be peaceful, to be a safe space where we would not use aggression or violence. We continued on our journey leaving the small line of police behind us, our sheer numbers meant that we could easily pass them. We created a peaceful blockade with our bodies which lasted for three days.”

tactics, should not be assumed. Even in a small and apparently homogeneous group, discussion will bring up different interpretations and varied levels of commitment to nonviolence. Nonviolence guidelines make clear what is expected for a specific action.

Nonviolence guidelines are also sometimes seen as divisive, especially when working in broad coalitions. The word “nonviolence” alone is often seen as ideological and dogmatic, even among groups that in practice (though maybe not ideologically) act nonviolently. In these cases, it is more important to develop trust between the different groups organising an action, and to devise strategies for ensuring the action itself remains nonviolent.

Nonviolence guidelines are not a substitute for training and preparation. Government infiltrators may attempt to discredit a group by urging people to act violently. Nonviolence guidelines – coupled with nonviolence training – can make it possible for a large number of people to participate in an action nonviolently, even if they have little experience in this area. No matter how committed the organisers are to the principles of nonviolent action, or how well the campaign strategy is organised, it is crucial that the participants in demonstrations and civil disobedience actions reflect the principles of nonviolence, if it is to be an effective, nonviolent campaign.

Examples of nonviolence guidelines:

- Faslane 365: http://www.faslane365.org/fr/display_preview/nonviolence_guidelines
- Lakenheath Action Group: <http://www.motherearth.org/lakenheathaction/nv.php3>
- School of the Americas Watch: <http://www.soaw.org/article.php?id=1093>
- Principles of the Students' Union of the University of Prishtina, 1997: <http://wri-irg.org/node/6568>
- NATO-ZU/Shut down NATO: , March 2009: <http://wri-irg.org/node/6980>

Fear is a powerful emotion, and often we experience it for very good reasons – fear can alert us to threats and prepares our body to respond. However, fear can easily incapacitate and immobilise us, sap our vitality, prevent us from embracing life in all its fullness – living in fear can be like living in jail, it can kill you before you actually die.

Fear can also act as a catalyst for action, producing a sense of outrage or indignation and a determination to act, in the awareness that if nothing is done the threat will overpower us. Threats can be relatively distant – like nuclear destruction and environmental catastrophe – or more immediate, like abuses of your human rights.

The big question for activists is: what is it that people need to enable them to step into their fear, and take action, rather than withdraw into their privatised protective shell?

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Risky situation
I could do that if

What are we afraid of?

In 2013 I was observing a Palestinian demonstration, and encountered various forms of fear. The soldiers began firing tear-gas and rubber bullets, and I feared that I might be hit or injured. There was also a fear that my presence might be caught on camera and, if identified, I might face problems leaving and entering Israel in future. My experience in Palestine chimes with the work of Manuel Garreton, who researched fear experienced by activists in Latin America during the period of military dictatorship. Garreton identified two types of fear; the first occurs when you feel insecure, and Garreton called this the 'darkened room'. It can be very broad and long term, and contrasts with the fear which is specific and identifiable – the 'dog that bites'. This distinction informed the observations of an Egyptian activist speaking at an international 'fear symposium' held in Coventry, UK in 2012:

"All of us have logical reasons to be afraid, but I have illogical reasons because I am afraid of the future. ... Every time you expect something bad to happen, the good things don't happen in my society. I am afraid for my children when they go out to play. My friends think I am very brave because when there is risk I am the first to go to the front. I am not afraid of the known risk but afraid of the unknown risk."

Fearlessness and courage

Experienced activists make a clear distinction between **courage** – which means acknowledging your fears and trying to overcome them or deal with them – and **fearlessness**, which is the absence of any fear whatsoever. Another ‘fear symposium’ participant cautioned:

“We shouldn’t expect people to have infinite courage, and the process of casting off fear doesn’t mean that there is no fear left. A person with no fear at all would be similar to the person who cannot feel pain, and people who cannot feel pain can suffer hideous injuries...”

Another participant drew on a similar distinction when making an analogy between engaging in protest action and rock-climbing:

“There is the assumption that people who do a particularly difficult ascent must be fearless – but what they need is the skill and the confidence to know how to act in a particular situation, which isn’t the same thing at all as being fearless. And I think this comes across in a lot of good nonviolent training – training people how to act sensibly in difficult situations.”

Cultivating courage

There are all kinds of ways that the negative impact of fear can be managed. These can be divided into four categories: 1) Acknowledgement, 2) Organisational culture, 3) Emotional management, 4) Planning and training.

1. Acknowledgement

There is no way fear can be addressed if it isn’t acknowledged. By acknowledging your fears you can share them with others, and through sharing, activists can start to analyse the nature of their fears and begin to explore ways of addressing them.

2. Organisational culture

The nature of your group or organisation can have a radical impact on how people respond to and address their fears:

■ People are more likely to be prepared to address their fears if their participation in an organisation or movement is valued.

■ The military knows that acts of heroism aren’t performed for ‘freedom’ or ‘democracy’ but for friends and comrades. Similarly, it is vital that movements build bonds of trust and friendship, encouraging solidarity that can strengthen activists’ will to face their fears.

■ One way to contribute to this sense of solidarity is through ‘rituals’ and celebrations. Studying the US civil rights movements, Charles Payne referred to the significance of the mass meetings, church services, and music that was

integral to African-American culture. ‘The music operated as a kind of litany against fear. Mass meetings offered a context in which the mystique of fear could be chipped away.’

■ Everyone has different comfort levels, and organisers need to involve people from across a wide spectrum, and to recognise that everyone’s contribution is valid and important. One of the symposium participants urged:

“You need different levels and modes of participation – not everyone is going to want to go down to the square for direct action and risk a beating. There has to be other ways of involvement.”

3. Emotional management

Emotions are never singular – fear might be dominant in certain circumstances, but it is always accompanied by other feelings. One way to undermine fear then is by identifying associated, more affirming, emotions – much of the advice in this section can be read as means to strengthen the spirit of hope within activists. ‘Hope’ is a powerful counter to the impotency that can be fuelled by fear. Relinquishing hope is to give way to despair; to despair is to betray the future. Even where hope is weak, people can still be encouraged to face their fears on the basis of their values, morality or belief system. For example – I may not believe that I will see the world without war, but it does not affect my commitment to the values on which that dream was founded.

4. Planning and preparation

Robert Helvey has focused on the importance of preparation and planning as a way of dealing with the effects of fear in relation to nonviolent direct action. Helvey advises:

■ Plan actions to avoid engaging the opponent in their own terms. (for example, organise surprise demonstrations and disperse quickly, declaring a ‘victory’ before the opponent can respond).

■ Plan actions carefully so as to minimise the risk of surprise or panic.

■ Provide participants with guidelines for action, to promote the level of discipline awareness and self control necessary for a coordinated action under pressure.

■ Aim to reduce the fear of the opponent.

■ Leadership that inspires trust and confidence is vital. As one of the participants at the Coventry symposium observed:

“In a situation where the riot police have jumped from their vehicles – crucial here is leadership. Someone has to break that fear, stand their ground and create calmness among others. That is leadership. Some people manage to overcome their own fear – once you have one person doing that another can follow – they are some of the key things to break the crowd panic.”

Risk assessment

One element of any preparation and training for an action involving some kind of threat to the participants should be a form of risk assessment. In the words of one of the Coventry symposium participants,

“Take the example of the dog that bites – which is the dog, when does it bite, why does it bite ... how to react when it is about to bite, what can we do after it has bitten me? There are ways not to overcome fear but to manage it. Break it down – what are the entry points and what is our plan? ... You need to assess risks, assess vulnerabilities ... even be prepared to stop because the risk is too high. Planning is so important.”

Any planning process for an action should also factor in the significant role that might be played by networks of support, that can act as crucial ‘safety nets’ for those facing threats. At one level, this can mean having good legal support (see p136), but it can also involve international solidarity networks. One of the campaigners who attended the ‘fear symposium’ gave examples of the significance of international networks:

“Thinking about networks and support and undermining the pillars of support for oppressors – ‘the world is watching you’ – sends a very strong message to the oppressors. Many police officers have said to me after releasing me, ‘I didn’t do anything bad to you, so please don’t put my name on the internet’.”

Quotations are taken from the transcripts of an international seminar at Coventry University, UK in April 2012 on the theme of Nonviolent Movements and the Barrier of Fear. The symposium was convened by the Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies and the International Centre for Nonviolent Conflict.

Further reading:

■ *I’ve got the light of freedom: The organising tradition and the Mississippi freedom struggle*, C. M. Payne, (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2007, p. 262).

■ *On strategic nonviolent conflict: Thinking about fundamentals*, R. L. Hervey (Boston, MA.: Albert Einstein Institute, 2004, pp. 102-6. Accessible at <http://tinyurl.com/ofop7wd>)



Coping with the stress and strain of taking a stand

Roberta Bacic with thanks to Clem McCartney

Protest occurs for many reasons, but often it is because people are confronted with a situation to which they feel they must respond and take a stand. The reality we face – whether it’s our own or that of others – pushes us to try and change what we are experiencing or witnessing. However, it is easy to forget to take into serious consideration the possible consequences of any such choice; while positive consequences are often empowering, we can be disempowered by negative experiences. We need to think about the personal consequences of protest in advance, so that we are prepared for the impact, and so that we are not surprised by them and end up suffering great stress.

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Colombia: Peace community of San Jose de Apartadó

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Role playing
Decision-making
Risky situation

Consequences of taking a stand

When taking a stand, we might be putting ourselves into situations that will push us to our limits and put ourselves at risk. If this happens, negative experiences will be almost inevitable and fear will most likely surface as a response. In situations of insecurity and anguish, some of these feelings will emerge; fear of being arrested, fear of being denounced, fear of being tortured, fear of being caught in an illegal meeting, fear of being betrayed, fear of again not achieving our goal. Activists need to know what can be done to avoid those consequences, or cope with them when they arise.

Three main elements can help us to continue functioning in the face of fear: **confidence and solidarity with our fellow activists, good training, and emotional preparation and debriefing.**

Some of the consequences we need to be prepared for

Dealing with fear consequences

When we think of traumatic consequences, we immediately think of the physical consequences; being manhandled, arrested or beaten, or having our human rights violated, are all potential risks activists face. This is a greater risk in some societies than others, and people protesting in very militaristic and authoritarian states are particularly vulnerable. However, all of us will normally feel at least some anxiety and fear, and be aware of the risk of physical pain or discomfort. **These fears can immobilise us, and it is not good to ignore them.** If we are not prepared our natural reactions in a situation may actually lead to



NONVIOLENT ACTION IN SANTIAGO, CHILE

PHOTO: ARCHIVES OF ROBERTA BACIC

greater hurt. For example, when we encounter riot police we may have an urge to run, but if we start running we lose our discipline and those opposing us may be tempted to attack at that moment. Being prepared – rationally, emotionally and practically – is important, and training in fear control is very helpful.

The strength of coming out in public

People involved in action for social change need to be aware that they are choosing to stand outside conventional opinion. It is not difficult to share our feelings in private with those who share our views (although we may worry about being betrayed), but coming out in public is more difficult. We are taking a stand not only against the state, but also against common social attitudes. The very reason that activists need to protest is to challenge those conventions, but knowing that does not make it easy; we are exposing ourselves. Consider ‘Women in Black’ in Israel, who simply stood still as a silent witness to what they could not accept in their society; that form of witness has been used in Serbia, Colombia and elsewhere. **Solidarity** is very important in such situations, as is creating space to air our feelings and deal with them. Even those who appear confident will have worries that they need to acknowledge and deal with.

Preparing ourselves to deal with distress

There are other risks and consequences that are comparatively subtle, but for that very reason can be more distressing. We may face disrespect and humiliation, be mocked and goaded by bystanders or the state forces. Again ‘Women in Black’ come to mind, who were spat at and abused by a hostile public, yet

remained silent, and did not react. Such actions can be emotionally distressing for the participants, but role playing the situation in advance at a training or meeting of the participants helps us to prepare ourselves emotionally, and to understand more fully the motivations (and fear) of our opponents (see ‘nonviolence training’, p18). Solidarity and confidence in our fellow protesters is important, and that is partly built up in rehearsal. Less emotionally distressing, because it is less immediate, is bad publicity. The press, who may libel movements with all kinds of inaccuracies, may challenge our good faith and motivations. Preparing ourselves for such humiliation makes it easier to cope with it when it comes.

Putting yourself in the position of the other

Activists may even seek out humiliation as part of the statement we are trying to make, as when protesters try to put themselves into the situation of people they are defending. For example, many groups have done street theatre, acting out the roles of prisoners and guards at Guantanamo Bay. In this scenario, unanticipated feelings rise to the surface which participants sometimes find difficult to control. The ‘prisoners’ may begin to feel violated, while the ‘guards’ find themselves entering into the experience too enthusiastically or – on the contrary – feel a sense of revulsion; either way the participants may feel defiled and polluted. To deal with such possibilities, participants need to be prepared for such reactions in themselves, and to be debriefed sensitively afterwards. Another example are the protests against factory farming, when volunteers used their own bodies to model slabs of meat. The reaction may be to feel really enthusiastic and liberated by taking a stand, or troubled at the situation they have put themselves into.

Dealing with disillusionment

Sometimes we have few problems before and during the protest, but it is a real blow if it seems we didn’t have an impact. For example – the huge protests against the invasion of Iraq in February 2003 did not stop the war, and the movement’s worst fears were realised. Unsurprisingly, many people felt disillusioned and disempowered, and asked whether it had been worth doing. Activists who have experienced this may not want to take part in any other actions on this or other issues, feeling it worthless. What can be done to address this disillusionment? We need opportunities to reflect together on what has happened and what we can learn from the experience (see ‘action evaluation’, p142), and we need to adjust our expectations. Protests are important to show strength, but protests alone will not stop a war.

Dealing with success in our actions

As well as worrying that a situation may turn out worse than we anticipated, paradoxically we might also find it hard to cope with what might on the surface seem positive; for instance, if the security forces act more humanely than anticipated, or the authorities engage and seem more willing to consider our

Burnout

Joanne Sheehan

Burnout is when we become emotionally, mentally and physically exhausted from our activism. We feel ‘burned’, our ability to deal with things well is gone. We may have a hard time staying focused, we can become irritable, we may become resentful of others for ‘not working as hard’. We may lose hope that change can happen.

We can suffer burnout when we overwork and do not take care of ourselves. We push ourselves and others with long hours of work, long meetings without breaks, expectations that we and others should do things we do not have the ability to do.

Avoiding burnout

Being an activist does not mean we need to sacrifice ourselves “for the cause.” We need to take care of ourselves and each other. We cannot grow healthy movements if those of us involved are unhealthy. Who will want to get involved?

We need to take care of ourselves — eat right, exercise, make time for practices such as yoga, meditation, tai chi. Be a gardener. Get a massage. Take time to be with friends and relax.

Exercise

Here is a simple way to be mindful of balance in our lives. You can do this on your own or include it in a workshop where people can share their reflections after. Write down, one under the other:

work
community
ourselves

Next to each, write what that includes for you. In addition to your job, what is your work? How do you spend time with community and friends? How do you nurture yourself?

To show how much time you spend on each of these three areas of your life, draw a line in relationship to the others. You will probably end up with three lines of varying lengths. Can you join them together in a triangle, or is your life so out of balance that your work is a long line, and the others shorter and not able to connect?

Thanks to Ouyporn Khuankaew of International Women’s Partnership for Peace and Justice for this exercise.

Resource

Sustainable Activism & Avoiding Burnout:

http://www.activist-trauma.net/assets/files/burnout_flyer_rightway.pdf

demands than expected. This can have an unsettling effect if we have steeled ourselves for confrontation; what happens to all the adrenaline that has been built up in our bodies? what do these developments do to our analysis? are we wrong in our analysis of the situation? should we trust the system more? or are we being duped by sweet words? Our movement may achieve more solidarity when faced with harsh opposition, and may fracture when that does not materialise. We need to be ready to know what responses might be most effective, and test out what is possible. That way, we are more able to collectively assess the situation and act appropriately.

When levels of aggression rise

Many of us have been shocked at the aggression which sometimes arises during a nonviolent protest – and not only from our adversaries! For example, waves of aggression can rise up when we are manhandled by authorities – even if we do not react, then that feeling can make us very uncomfortable and doubtful. Or other protesters may start to riot and we have to be able to find an appropriate response; do we join in, leave, or hold our ground continuing the protest nonviolently as planned? There is little time to think in such situations, so options need to have been thought through in advance, and we need to have our alternatives clear so that quick decisions can be made.

Different contexts

We might be protesting in the Global North in states and cultures which claim to be liberal and democratic, or we might be living under an authoritarian

Roberta Bacic

If we prepare for the mixture of emotions and reactions which may result from our protest, build solidarity with our colleagues and analyse and debrief ourselves on the consequences of our actions, then we are better placed to continue the struggle for a better society, even though we may know that that will not be achieved in our lifetime, if at all.

However, if we do not prepare well and deal well with the consequences, then we may end up not helping anyone, not even ourselves. We may get discouraged and decide to give up, or take up other types of strategies that may be counterproductive, like mainstream politics or the use of force. Alternatively, we may get into a pattern of just protesting for its own sake, without any strategic sense. We may appear, on a superficial level, to still be engaged in movements for change, and others may admire our persistence, but we will have lost a purpose for all the energy we expend; our ineffectiveness and purposefulness may even discourage others. If – as I believe – we have a duty to protest, then we also have a duty to prepare ourselves well, by identifying the risks to our physical and emotional well being, taking steps to ensure that we can overcome these risks, and continuing to work for change in a positive and effective manner, keeping true to our ideals.

regime. We should not assume that protest is easier in liberal democracies; some ‘democratic’ states can be very harsh in their reaction to protest.

There are other factors that determine what the potential of protest and its limits are; for example, the society may be closed or open. In a closed society the risks are greater because dissidents can disappear and there is little possibility of any accountability. It may have a functioning judicial system, independent of the government, which can act as a check on human rights abuses. The culture of a society is also a significant factor, especially if it values conformity and respect for authority. A society can also feel weak and vulnerable to the pressures of modernity, or of the influence of other states, and this can mean that any form of protest is seen as disloyal and destructive.



Activism in oppressive regimes: some lessons from South Africa

Janet Cherry

The brief reflection below draws on my experience as an activist in the South African liberation movement in the 1980s, and subsequently as a trainer in strategic non-violence in other struggles over the past decade. While most of the examples given are from experience of activism against the apartheid regime, it is written in the hope that it will be useful to activists in other contexts.

The nature of authoritarian regimes

Our experience as activists in the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa was of building a mass movement in the context of a repressive and authoritarian regime. The apartheid state was brutal but also to some extent restrained: it was a racially exclusive democracy, operating with the rule of law. The laws were changed from time to time, of course, to contain the rising resistance through security legislation and States of Emergency; and the courts did not prevent torture and deaths in custody. The cost of resistance was sometimes very high. And yet, there was also some space in which to operate, to build grassroots organisations, which evolved into a mass nonviolent movement; to develop strategies and test out a variety of tactics, and ultimately to create a counter-hegemony to the apartheid state. We called this “peoples’ power” in South Africa. But it is not very different to many of the

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pro-democracy and popular power movements which have emerged in repressive regimes around the world over the last four decades.

One of the helpful tools I learned subsequently from other countries was to conduct a “pre-emptive cost-benefit analysis” of any proposed tactic. Working under repressive regimes usually – but not always – involves adopting tactics which are at low cost to your movement, but are of high cost to your opponent. Sometimes the movement takes risks and puts its members, literally, in the firing line; but if this is done, it should be done with very careful thought given to the ethical risks, as well as to whether the benefits of such action will outweigh the costs.

Strategies and tactics

Getting the masses involved

Building resistance in the context of repressive regimes, where movements or opposition parties are banned, illegal or seriously constrained, is always tricky at the beginning. High profile leaders can easily be “taken out” or “put on ice” by the regime. One effective method used in South Africa after the bannings of the 1960s and 1970s was the building of very localised grassroots organisations. These organisations – civic and residents associations, women’s groups, student, youth or church groups – built slowly around very local issues of immediate concern to their constituency. They contested and won small victories, using organisational principles from the Philippines “Organising People for Power” manual.

By the time these organisations coalesced into a mass movement under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, they were able to mobilise hundreds of thousands of people in mass action. Some of the most successful early examples were the work stay aways, where organised workers came together with residents associations and “shut down” the local economy for a day or more. This demonstrated the growing legitimacy of the movement and was nearly impossible to police. If all the residents of a township just stayed at home, they could not be arrested for doing so.

Being creative: low risk economic withdrawal

Similarly, consumer boycotts proved extremely difficult to police or repress. The consumer boycott of 1985 was one example of a successful withdrawal from the local economy. In apartheid South Africa, the local economy was in the hands of white businessmen, but depended on black consumers. As boycott leader Mkhuseleli Jack famously said, “With our buying power, we will bring down this government”. As middle-aged women controlled the household budget, they could simply withdraw from the formal economy, and not “buy in town”. This depended on coordination with local black businessmen, forming alternative sources of supply of essentials for the period of the boycott. The boycott forced the local (white) Chamber of Commerce to negotiate with the UDF leaders and in turn put pressure on the local and national government around certain demands.

Consumer boycotts took many forms in the anti-apartheid movement. In South Africa, there were targeted boycotts of specific products in support of worker strikes: the Fattis and Monis (pasta) boycott of 1979, the Red Meat Boycott of 1980, and the Wilson Rowntree boycott of 1981 are three examples – all supporting the new independent black trade unions. Another form of economic withdrawal was the ‘Black Weekend’ where township residents stopped buying goods for three days, combined with a strike action – withdrawing both labour and consumer power from the ‘white’ economy; as well as a ‘Black Christmas’ where black consumers did not shop before Christmas, putting massive pressure on the retail sector.

Creating low risk local structures

Coordination of such campaigns was done through local committees of residents in each residential area or section of the black townships. The most sophisticated of these structures established a committee in each street. Street representatives reported to an area committee, which in turn reported to a semi-clandestine forum. There were also mass organisations of students, youth and women, as well as trade unions, which coordinated such campaigns through the UDF network.

Creating layers of leadership

The apartheid regime dealt with mass resistance by declaring States of Emergency, and using emergency powers to detain activists without trial. This was sometimes called ‘preventative detention’ and activists were ‘put on ice’ by the regime. The response was to ensure that there were layers of leadership – and that the mass movement was not ‘top heavy’. Decentralisation of leadership (local committees or coordinating forums) and grassroots structures (street committees, reporting to area committees) were ways of maintaining momentum of long-running campaigns through the State of Emergency. The campaigns described (consumer boycotts, campaigns against the Black Local Authorities (BLA), and many others including schools boycotts and Peoples Education campaigns) were all run in this manner.

Shaming the security forces

Working in the context of a regime that is systematically repressive, and routinely uses torture, beatings and detention without trial, it is essential to have human rights activist groups or activists either in alliance or within your organisations who monitor, document and take action to expose and shame the security forces. This delegitimises them among the citizens of the country, as well as internationally.

This was done very successfully in Egypt, through the website/blog Torture in Egypt (see <http://www.tortureinegypt.net>), in the years preceding the Arab Spring and the events of February 2011. About six years ago, the severe beating of women activists in the street by Zimbabwe police was filmed by a church human rights group and widely distributed internationally, discrediting Mugabe’s security forces. Long before the advent of the internet, and easy

access to video, in South Africa, songs, poetry and even humour were used to document and expose the actions of the security police.

Undermining the security forces

In countries where there is a conscripted army, there is an opportunity for undermining the morale of the security forces, as many young people do not want to go to the army. Where the military is highly politicised and is upholding a repressive regime, there is even more opportunity for creating divisions within the security forces and undermining their legitimacy. In South Africa, where only white men were conscripted, it was important to make it clear to these young men that they were being used by the apartheid regime to uphold an illegitimate system. The strategy in this case was to form a “single issue campaign” around the demand for an end to race-based conscription: the End Conscription Campaign (ECC). In this campaign, we drew on the example of the US Anti-Vietnam War movement, drawing parallels between Angola and Vietnam, and as the conflict escalated inside South Africa, by questioning why one section of the youth were being used to suppress their peers within the townships.

In Detention, by Christopher van Wyk

He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He hanged himself
He slipped on a piece of soap while washing
He fell from the ninth floor
He hanged himself while washing
He slipped from the ninth floor
He hung from the ninth floor
He slipped on the ninth floor while washing
He fell from a piece of soap while slipping
He hung from the ninth floor
He washed from the ninth floor while slipping
He hung from a piece of soap while washing.

When the stakes get higher – using funerals for mobilisation and backfire

Serbian activists who mobilised successfully against President Milosevic in 2000 share their experiences of building the movement through creating space through public demonstrations and street occupations. In such actions, young women were deliberately at the front of the demonstrations, directly confronting the security force members – who were usually young men. In the event of these young women being beaten or otherwise injured by security forces, they would maximise the media coverage of such incidents, demonstrating that the security forces’ brutality in using violence against peaceful and harmless young women. The actions of the security forces “backfired” against them – in this case the costs to the security forces were much higher than to the activists who were injured, as they were discredited in the eyes of the public.

In South Africa, similarly, there were instances where race and gender were used by activists to put the security forces in a dilemma. Middle-aged, middle-

class white women – the respectable citizens of the Black Sash, a women’s human rights organisation – were in the front line of a funeral for “unrest victims” in the townships of Port Elizabeth, at the height of the township uprising in mid 1986. Women from the townships, organised by the Port Elizabeth Womens Organisations, took control of this funeral in order to break the cycle of violence, where militant male youth confronted brutal security forces every weekend. Security force use of excessive force to disperse the demonstrations would result in deaths of more protestors, which in turn resulted in anger, attacks on the police and yet another funeral. In the case of the “Womens Funeral” there was a deliberate effort to not only demonstrate that women could protect their sons and their communities, and change the pattern of violence; in addition, the presence of respectable white women made the security forces reluctant to use lethal force in dispersing the demonstration. They did disperse the funeral procession (which was a demonstration) using teargas – but nobody was killed.

“Making the townships ungovernable”

What is now widely known in South Africa as “ungovernability” involved the withdrawing of support for institutions which were considered part of the Apartheid regime. The prime example was the campaign against the Tricameral Parliament and BLA’s established in 1983 as “reforms” of the apartheid system. The campaign was strategised and led by the UDF, but involved a wide range of tactics devised and implemented at local level. These included a national election boycott; local boycotts of councillors’ businesses, ostracism of councillors, and disruption of councillors’ campaign meetings through switching off lights and making noise – after which many of the councillors publicly resigned.

Making apartheid unworkable: withholding consent

After the councillors were elected (or appointed when the elections were not contested or disrupted), there were campaigns involving the withholding of cooperation from these illegitimate municipal authorities – including non payment of rents and service charges, and refusal of access to municipal electricity repair vehicles (unless they negotiated access through the UDF committees and civic leadership). This deprived the BLAs of revenue and rendered them unable to fulfil their function of providing services to the township residents, thus further denying them any legitimacy in the eyes of the majority of residents.

Creating space for local compromises

Where regimes are capable of carefully targeted oppression, utilising control of the media and sophisticated propaganda to discredit the movement, activists need to use equally sophisticated means of creating space to build their legitimacy and discredit the regime. One way in which UDF activists did this was to “divide the ruling class” through liaising with particular groups within the white ruling group. The negotiation with the Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce (PECC) is one such example of this. The leader of the consumer boycott,

Mkhuseli Jack, was released from detention under pressure from the PECC leaders, who need someone to negotiate with.

In the small town of Port Alfred, at the height of the township uprising, the Port Alfred Residents and Womens Associations had in fact taken control of the township. However, there was a dangerous rapist at large, against whom the police were not taking action. The township women, who were mainly employed as domestic workers for the white residents of the town, then withdrew their labour, creating huge inconvenience for the white women. The township women then appealed to the white employers; these women then intervened with the local police, insisting that the man accused of rape be arrested.

Delegitimising the opponent and creating counter-hegemony

The result of the combined campaigns against the BLAs was the resignation of most of the councils in the Eastern Cape and in other well-organised townships across the country. Without local authorities in the black townships, the municipalities struggled to govern effectively. In some cases, they turned to the movement – engaging the leaders of the civic organisations as the acknowledged representatives of the black residents of the city. In Port Elizabeth, this led first to the civic leaders negotiating the implementation of electricity connections to township houses; later it led to the first non-racial local Council in South Africa.

Taking control of public spaces

Towards the end of this struggle, the movement in Port Elizabeth decided to reclaim the city centre, marching from the townships to the centre of the city, occupying the Market Square outside the City Hall, and renaming it after a local martyr. This symbolic action, which was completely nonviolent, emphasised the simple demand of “One City, One Municipality” and the end of the apartheid division of the city.

Unbanning the movement

The Apartheid regime had used legislation to ban organisations from 1950, when the Communist Party of South Africa was banned. Being a banned organisation meant that membership of, and activities of, the organisation were illegal, and hence criminalised. The main liberation movements, the ANC and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), were banned in 1960. Hence came the need to revive the liberation movement in a different guise, being careful not to be criminalised at the beginning of the mass mobilisation. Once the mass movement gained momentum, it became possible to challenge the banned status of the liberation movement. Starting from the huge funerals of 1985, we began publicly to display the flags of the banned liberation movement, the ANC, as well as that of the Communist Party. Even where documents or formal publications of the banned movement would lead to arrest, activists used song and speech to convey messages and build the identity of the movement.

As the struggle progressed, the organisations we formed – the UDF and the

ECC among them – were banned, and key leaders of these organisations were banned or restricted as well. During the state of emergency in 1986, a quarter of the ECC activists were detained, and the organisation was banned in 1988. Richard Steele noted that “they were initially shocked and depressed by the oppression. When they recovered, they decided to step back and cultivate their roots.” After years of severe oppression, those activists who had been banned or restricted began to defy their banning orders, and in 1989 declared the ECC ‘unbanned’. By late 1989, the regime had lost the will to implement restrictions, as well as petty apartheid laws. As Richard Steel notes, ECC activists “used their down period to resuscitate themselves.”



Humour and nonviolent campaigns

Majken Jul Sørensen

We usually use nonviolent action in response to serious problems, so creating actions intended to be humorous might not seem like an obvious choice. However, humour can be dead serious – almost all good humour thrives on contradictions and absurdity, and nonviolent action is often trying to point out similar contradictions. Humour is never a ‘magic solution’ for an action or campaign, but can be a powerful tool for activists because it allows us to turn the world as we know it upside down, and escape the logic and reasoning that is an inevitable part of the rest of our lives.

Nonviolent actions

Sending the protest message
Tactic star

Training

Brainstorming
Role playing

Nonviolent
actions

How to start

If humour doesn't come to you easily, don't despair, you can improve. Watch your opponent: If there is a contradiction between what is said, and what is done, could this be the basis for a good joke? The closer you stick to the truth about what your opponent is saying and doing, the better the humour will work. For example, almost all dictators will say their decisions and actions are ‘for the good of the people’. That kind of statement is often contradicted by their actions!

Using humour wisely

If you are making a political action then you want a political message, and you want to stick to the point. How people look, their way of speaking or sexual habits are not good subjects. Making jokes about such things may be fun within your own group, but are usually not the way to reach out to other people, and risk taking attention away from the political point you want to make.



CLOWNING AROUND DURING FREEDOM TO PROTEST DEMONSTRATION, LONDON, UK.

PHOTO: IPPY

Why use humour?

Using humour in your actions can be useful in a number of ways. First, it should be fun for those of you who participate in the action. Laughing together helps establish feelings of belonging together. Humour can also help to prevent and counter activist burnout.

Using humour can also be one way to increase the chance of getting attention from media, potential supporters, and bystanders. Journalists who know that they will get good images and a lively story from your group are more likely to show up when you announce that something is going to happen. If you are part of a small movement that wants to expand, humour will be a way of showing potential members that although you work on a serious issue, you are still capable of enjoying life.

The power of humour

Good, humorous actions are difficult for the police, government or companies you are targeting to respond to, because the ‘absurdity’ of your actions changes both the relationship between you and your opponent, and the logic of rational argumentation. The way you can use humour to position your view of the world – in contrast to a more dominant perspective or a more powerful opponent’s way of explaining the world – can be divided in five different ways: supportive, corrective, naïve, absurd and provocative humorous nonviolent actions.”

Supportive

Supportive actions use irony, parody and exaggeration to temporarily disguise their critique. Instead of being openly critical, they pretend that they support and celebrate their target or want to protect it from harm. The target will know that they are being watched, and the audiences are presented with an image of the power holders’ vulnerable sides.

In Norway in 1983, a small group of total objectors organised in the group “Campaign against Conscription”, (KMOV in Norwegian) refused both military and substitute service. They wanted to create public debate and change the law that sent them to prison for 16 months. The state refused to call it “prison” and instead labelled it “service in an institution under the administration of the prison authorities”. The cases of the total objectors went through the courts only to identify the objector, and the result was always the same – 16 months in prison. Sometimes the prosecutor never showed up because the result was clear anyway, so KMOV exploited this in one of their actions:

One of the activists dressed up as the prosecutor and demanded that the total objector receive an even longer sentence because of his profession (he was a lawyer). During the case nobody noticed anything was wrong, despite the ‘prosecutor’s’ exaggerations. KMOV sent their video recording to the media; by satirising the absurdity of a court case where nothing is discussed, KMOV succeeded in getting attention from both media and the general public. By dramatising the farce in the court, KMOV cut through all rational explanations and make people understand that sending someone to prison for 16 months without calling it a punishment did not make sense.

Corrective

Corrective actions aim to transcend the inequality in power by presenting an alternative version of “the truth”. They temporarily “steal” the identity of the institutions and companies they are aiming to unmask. From this disguise, they present a more honest representation of who the target really is. The correction can for instance be an exaggeration that exposes greed and selfishness, or it might just be the facts in language that everyone can understand. The Yes Men have made this type of “identity correction” an art form under the slogan “Sometimes it takes a lie to expose the truth”. However, many others have used similar tactics.

When the agency responsible for the administration of natural resources in Greenland invited oil companies to an information meeting in 2011, Greenpeace organised a protest outside with banners stating “No license to drill”, “Protect the Arctic”, and a red carpet smeared in oil. Inside, friendly people dressed in suits welcomed the representatives from the oil companies and told them the meeting had been moved to another floor. When all were settled in the conference room, the oil companies were given an introduction to the technical difficulties and the risk of damaging the Arctic environment when drilling for oil in Greenland. Only at the end of the presentation was it revealed that the oil representatives had been tricked into attending a meeting organised by Greenpeace, and that the original meeting had not been moved at all.

Naïve

Naïve actions bring the unequal relations of power to everyone’s attention by tackling the opponent from behind an apparent naiveté. What is actually critique is camouflaged as coincidences or a normal activity. While the supportive and corrective stunts often exaggerate and overemphasise what those in power say, people who carry out naive stunts pretend that they are not aware that they have challenged any power. An example from Denmark during the Nazi occupation 1940-45: On the back of his van with double doors a creative butcher had written: “Salted down sausages. N.S Jensen, Butcher. Delivery Anywhere. England Road 22, Esbjerg.” Apparently an innocent advertisement for his butcher shop. However, when one of the doors was opened, the words on the other door turned into the political slogan denouncing the Nazis and supporting England: “Down with N.S [National Socialism], Long Live England”.

Absurd

Absurd actions rely on total silliness and absurdity. From this position, activists mock the positions and status of those who claim a monopoly on the truth – be it governments, powerful institutions, or corporations. The absurd action shares some similarities with the naïve regarding the apparent naiveté of the activists, but whereas the participants in the naïve stunt appear not to understand, the absurd pranksters refuse to acknowledge that any truth exists. Some activists have a natural flair for this, since it reflects how they look at the world. Others might “just” recognise it as a powerful way of expressing critique where the risks of being met with violence are lower.

In Poland in the late 1980's before the fall of the communist regime, a group called Orange Alternative organised a series of absurd happenings involving elves, carnivals and distribution of candy, toilet paper and sanitary pads (often scarce during communist rule) to passers-by. The events never expressed any open critique, but all independent organising was considered a threat and the participants arrested. However, it is difficult to justify arresting people just because they dress as elves and hand out candy, and people were quickly released again. These actions played an important role in lowering levels of fear (see p104), and prepared the way for the more dramatic changes a few years later.

Provocative

Provocative actions do not pretend anything like the four other strategies. They are an openly declared challenge to claims to status and power. They include an element that part of the audience consider amusing, for instance when they manage to expose shortcomings and present the “almighty” as humans with flaws. The pranksters do not deny the unequal relations of power, as in absurd stunts, or present any alternatives like the supportive or corrective actions do: they simply appear not to care about the consequences of their actions.

In Serbia in year 2000 before the fall of Slobodan Milošević the youth movement ‘Otpor’ held a number of provocative actions that mocked Milošević. To support agriculture, Milošević was placing boxes in shops and public places asking people to donate one dinar (Serbian currency) for sowing and planting crops. As a response, Otpor arranged its own collection called ‘Dinar za Smenu’. Smenu is a Serbian word with many meanings; it can mean change, resignation, dismissal, pension and purge. This action was repeated several times in different places in Serbia, and consisted of a big barrel with a photo of Milošević. People could donate one dinar, and would then get a stick they could use to hit the barrel. On one occasion, a sign suggested that if people did not have any money because of Milošević’s politics, they should bang the barrel twice. When the police removed the barrel, Otpor said in a press release that the police had arrested the barrel, and that the action was a huge success. They claimed they had collected enough money for Milošević’s retirement, and that the police would give the money to Milošević.

Be prepared for harsh reactions if you humiliate and ridicule anybody. If you make it difficult for your opponent to find an “appropriate” response (adequate from their point of view), frustration might cause a violent reaction. Remember your context. Not all examples should be copied if you want to avoid long prison terms.

Don’t overdo it – humour should be used with moderation and works best if it is complemented with a serious message.

Further reading:

- Majken Jul Sørensen, “Humour as a Serious Strategy of Nonviolent Resistance to Oppression” in *Peace & Change* vol.33, no. 2 (April 2008)
- Majken Jul Sørensen, “Humorous political stunts: Speaking ‘truth’ to power?” in *European Journal of Humour Research* Vol. 1, no 2(1) (2013).

Forms of nonviolent action

Martin Smedjeback

Gene Sharp researched and catalogued 198 methods of nonviolent action. These were first published in *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, in 1973. These methods are broken into three broad classifications: **protest and persuasion**, **non-cooperation**, and **nonviolent intervention**. Below is a summary of these various forms, the full list is available at <http://www.aeinstein.org>.

The methods of protests and persuasion

The ‘protest and persuasion’ category includes methods beyond verbal expression of an opinion, in a mostly symbolic way – they are used to express opposition and convince others to change their behaviour, opinion, policies, laws or political decisions. Among these methods are vigils, posters, meetings, demonstrations and petitions.

Demonstrations

Many people express their discontent by holding marches or rallies, often with signs, placards or banners stating their opinions. For instance, the demonstrations held on 15th February 2003 – against the invasion of Iraq – were the biggest anti-war demonstrations ever held, with up to 10 million people marching in more than 600 cities around the world.

Petitions

Petitions gather names and signatures under a statement demanding a particular change, or drawing attention to a particular concern. For instance, a petition was held against Swedish weapons exports to the USA and UK during the Iraq war. There are now many websites which can be used to create online petitions.

The methods of non-cooperation

‘Non-cooperation’ means to refuse to participate in an unjust system by withdrawing labour, normal behaviour, or obedience to a law or command. Sharp distinguishes between social, economic and political non-cooperation. Social non-cooperation means, for example, suspension or boycotts of social or sports activities or the establishment of sanctuaries for refugees threatened with eviction. Economic non-cooperation includes boycotts of products and strikes. Political non-cooperation includes boycotting elections, or refusal to accept appointed officials.

Nonviolence

What is nonviolence, and why use it?
Violence

Strategies

Stages of escalation

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Maintaining nonviolence
Tactic Star
Action Evaluation

Case studies

Castor – how we mobilised people for civil disobedience
Freedom Flotilla – dilemma actions
Diaspora solidarity for Eritrea: the Arbi Harnet campaign

Training

Role playing
Tools for grounding, protecting and blockading
Brainstorming

Boycott

To boycott means to refuse to buy merchandise or a service to show dissatisfaction with the one selling it or the nature of the product. For instance, while the apartheid regime remained in power, many boycotted South African products sold in other countries. At first, individuals and organisations boycotted South African merchandise, then later entire countries were refusing to buy South African products or do business with South African corporations.

Strike

Strikers refuse to work, often en masse. During the first Intifada, the Palestinian resistance that started in 1987, many Palestinians withdrew their labour from Israeli employers. Israeli companies lost a lot of money when they didn't have access to cheap Palestinian labour, and the economy stagnated.

Non-cooperation with conscription and deportation

This is the refusal to do military service or to perform an extradition. War Resisters' International is one of the organisations that supports conscientious objectors who refuse military service, regardless of whether they have the legal right in their country to do so.

Refusal to obey new regulations and laws

During the second world war, Norwegian teachers refused to follow the Nazi curriculum for schools. Many teachers were sent to concentration camps because of their disobedience, but most of them were released when the Nazis understood that they wouldn't give in.

The methods of nonviolent intervention

'Nonviolent intervention' is defined by Sharp to take action, in the time and place where an injustice or violence is most direct or prevalent, in an attempt to prevent or stop it.

Blockades

Blockades mean putting your body in the way of something. For example, indigenous communities in the Amazon rainforest blockaded access to loggers or miners by physically obstructing roads and vehicles.

Protective presence and accompaniment

This action aims to protect endangered people or groups in conflict areas. For example, volunteers from Peace Brigades International and other organisations accompany human rights activists under threat as "unarmed bodyguards" and mount a presence in endangered communities in Mexico, Guatemala, Kenya, Nepal, Israel-Palestine and Colombia, among others.

Disarmament actions

In such actions, activists openly disarm a weapon, and are then willing to be held accountable for their action. For example, activists have symbolically “disarmed” Trident submarines carrying nuclear weapons in Scotland.



WAR STARTS HERE; INTERNATIONAL BLOCKADE OF AWE BURGHFIELD, UK. 2013. PHOTO: WRI ARCHIVE

Tactic star

The tactic star is a tool that leads us through a series of critical questions, to help us plan actions that are strategic, effective and purposeful. Follow the star clockwise, from the top ('goals and strategy') using the questions to refine the plan for an action as you go.

Strategies

Why thing don't 'just happen'

Nonviolent actions

Sending the protest message

Action evaluation

Humour and nonviolent campaigns

Training

"Is it newsworthy?"

Goals and strategy

Is the action part of an ongoing campaign, with SMART goals?

How will the action help us achieve our goals? Which goals will it help us to achieve?

Is this tactic in keeping with our strategy? What has been done before, and what will be done after?

Does this tactic embody the lessons we've learned from previous work?

Target

Who is the target?

What influence does the target have on the goal?

How will this tactic impact the target?

How will the target react?

Are we prepared for the target's reaction?

Regrouping

How do we plan to celebrate our action once it's done?

What's our plan for debriefing the action?

What does success look like?

What do we want to measure?

Relationships

How will our relationships with key stakeholders be affected?

Will they likely move closer to our view, or further away?

Will we create new relationships?

Who should we communicate, consult, seek approval from, or collaborate with?

Organisation

How will our group be affected?

How will this tactic affect recruitment, member-retention, and the acquisition of new skills?

Will the tactic build trust or exacerbate tension and burnout?

Location

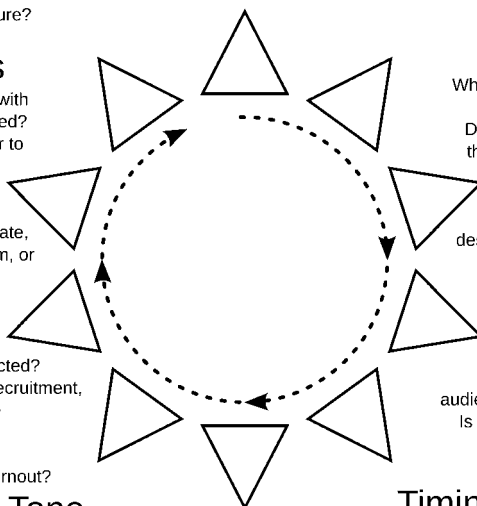
Where will the tactic take place?

Does the location show the problem and reveal the target?

Is the location at the point of consumption, destruction, or decision?

Message

What will the tactic communicate to our audience, target, or allies? Is it understandable and persuasive?



Tone

What is the tone of the action? Solemn, fun, angry, calm?

How will people we want to engage (participants, passersby) react to the tone?

Resources

Is this action worth the limited time, energy, and resources of our group?

Do we have the capacity to make it happen?

Can/should we expand it, or scale it back?

Timing

When should we do the action? Why?

Does the timing hold potential for us, or vulnerability for our opponents?

Can we take advantage of current events or new developments?

Nonviolent
actions

The tactic star was developed by 'Beyond the Choir' — www.beyondthechoir.org

Roles before, during, and after an action

Every action requires a range of different tasks. Some are very visible (for example, the people blocking a street, or the press spokesperson), while others are less visible. Each of these tasks is equally important, as all together they make an action possible.

Before an action

- Coordinator, campaigner, or organiser
- Fund raisers
- Research
- Scouting the site or route
- Outreach and organising
- Logistics and support
- Meeting facilitator's
- Prop, sign, and banner making, painters, graphic artists, etc.
- Sending out media and press releases
- Publicity kit preparers
- Writers

During an action

- People risking arrest (committing civil disobedience)
- Direct support people
- Police liaison
- Peacekeepers/monitors
- Deployment team/diversion
- Media spokesperson
- Media outreach
- Communication team
- Demonstrators/sign-holders/chanters/singers
- Leafletters
- Videographer
- Still photographer
- Medic/EMT/Medical team
- Legal observer(s)
- Jail support contact person

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Action evaluation
Media
Legal support

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Castor – how we mobilised people for civil disobedience

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Role playing
Tools for grounding, protecting and blockading
Brainstorming

After an action

- Legal support (see 'legal support', p136)
- Lawyer
- Documenter/historian/archivist
- Fund raisers
- Public speakers
- Letter-writers to decision-makers and newspaper editorial boards

Adapted from Rant Collective: <http://www.rantcollective.net>

Dilemma: what it is (and isn't)

In 2009, the people of Iran went on their rooftops to shout ‘Allah Akbar’ (God is great) as a protest against the regime. In response, the government had two choices, neither very attractive: let the protest continue unhindered (and possibly grow), or arrest people and try to justify forbidding people shouting that ‘God is Great’, something commonly done by devout Muslims. This protest is an example of a dilemma action.

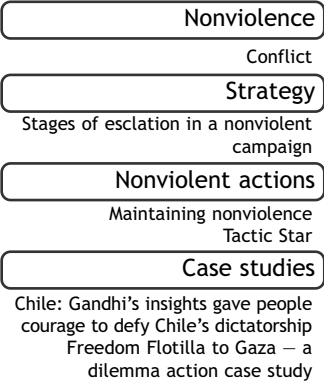
A dilemma action leaves the opponent with no obvious ‘best response’ — each possible choice has significant negative aspects. Even the opponent’s most attractive response will have a mix of advantages and disadvantages that are not directly comparable, as assessed at the time or in hindsight. Many nonviolent actions are reactions to what authorities or multinational companies do: activists respond to agendas set by others. In a dilemma action, activists are proactive.

Most nonviolent actions do not impose a dilemma. Take a conventional expression of social concern, such as an antiwar rally on Hiroshima Day in a liberal democracy; authorities may tolerate or even facilitate the event because it poses little threat to vested interests, whereas banning it would only arouse unnecessary antagonism. Some forms of civil disobedience, such as ploughshares actions involving damaging military equipment, also pose no dilemma, because authorities know exactly what to do: arrest the activists, who willingly surrender to police. Nevertheless, we think it is more useful to think of dilemma actions as a matter of degree rather than present or absent. Dilemma actions provide one approach for increasing the effectiveness of non-violent action strategies. Knowing more about the dynamics of dilemma actions can enable activists to design their actions to pose difficult dilemmas to opponents, leading opponents to make unpopular decisions, or waste their efforts preparing for several possible responses.

Creating a dilemma

In addition to the core feature of a dilemma action, five factors can frequently be found in actual dilemma actions that add to the difficulty of opponents making choices:

1. The action has a constructive, positive element, such as delivering humanitarian aid, or expressing religious commitment, as in Iran in 2009.
2. Activists use surprise or unpredictability, for instance by inventing a new method, or turning up in a totally unexpected place.



3. Opponents' prime choices are in different domains (political, social, personal), which means that the choices are difficult to compare. For example, when a police officer has to choose whether or not to arrest a friend at a demonstration, there is a conflict between the economic (keep the job), and interpersonal (keep the friend) domains.

4. Dilemma actions can be timed to appeal to mass media coverage.

5. A dilemma action can appeal to widely held beliefs within society. The apparent religious commitment among the rooftop protesters in Iran is a good example.

These factors contribute to making the dilemma more difficult to “solve”, but are not essential in constructing it. Governments and their agents — such as police and prison officials — are often those who are forced to deal with dilemmas. However, this is not a core feature of a dilemma action, since it can be directed towards private companies, for example banks or corporations.

The opponent's response

Usually the best option for the opponents is to stop the action without anybody noticing — the activists' strategy should then be to make it as public as possible. Something that makes a dilemma difficult is when the opponent has to compare consequences from different domains; it can be difficult to compare the benefit of an approving reaction from supporters, with negative feedback from a different audience. In the Freedom Flotilla case study, Israeli authorities were faced with both domestic and international audiences. They chose to prioritise the domestic image, where they were perceived as upholding a blockade that would protect Israel from a terrorist attack. It was difficult to compare the benefits of upholding this domestic image with the negative effects of the outrage generated when international audiences perceived the military response as an unprovoked assault on humanitarian aid workers in international waters.

For activists, dilemma actions can seem attractive because they offer the prospect of success no matter what the opponent does. However, creating dilemmas for the opponent is not necessary for nonviolent actions to be successful and like all other strategies it should be used with care.

This text is adapted from Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin. 'The Dilemma Action: Analysis of an Activist Technique.' Peace & Change, Vol. 39, no. 1 (2014): pages 73-100.

Further reading:

■ *The Dilemma Demonstration: Using Nonviolent Civil Disobedience to Put the Government between a Rock and a Hard Place*, Philippe Duhamel (Minneapolis, MN: Center for Victims of Torture, 2004).



While written by an activist whose primary experience of the media is in the United Kingdom, (reflected in the examples used), the skills and approaches covered in this piece are relevant to a much wider context.

Media and your campaign

Media liaison has been central to many nonviolent struggles. The anti-colonial movement in India made sure the cameras were on Gandhi as he scooped up salt from the Indian Ocean. Anti-apartheid activists in South Africa timed their actions with an eye on the news cycle in countries they wanted to influence. Mubarak’s opponents in Egypt ensured that the violence of his forces was filmed and broadcast around the world.

Engaging with the media does not mean accepting their priorities. It is possible to oppose the unaccountable power held by many media outlets while also using the media to promote our messages (in the same way that you can work with a politician who backs your cause without accepting the existing political system).

Media engagement must not be the preserve of professionals serving the status quo. The term ‘Grassroots PR’ refers to activists, community groups and individuals engaging with the media to promote their own concerns. We can engage with the media without compromising our integrity. ‘Radicalism’ and ‘effectiveness’ are not necessarily opposites.

A crucial distinction

The rise of social media has led many people to distinguish between the internet and ‘traditional’ media. However, there is a more important distinction to be made.

There is media that we produce ourselves – whether websites and tweets or leaflets and newsletters. In contrast, there is media produced by others – including news websites, newspapers, radio and television.

Media engagement is about getting our message across through media that others produce. This involves understanding how the media works.

Think media

Effective campaigning often means making media engagement a priority. If you plan an action and only then think about how to interest the media, you may have already chosen a date or venue that is going to make getting media

Nonviolence

Nonviolence and power

Nonviolent actions

Sending the protest message
Roles before, during, and after an action

Case studies

Castor – how we mobilised people for civil disobedience
Use of social media in nonviolent campaigns: the case of South Korea

Training

“Is it newsworthy?”

Nonviolent actions

coverage harder than it needs to be. This won't happen if you put media at the centre of your planning. This doesn't mean that media coverage should trump all other concerns, but it should not be afterthought.

Choose the right media

Who are you trying to influence? The most prominent media are not always the most important. Business leaders may be frightened of negative coverage in the financial press, in case it affects their share price. If you want to expose a politician, they may be more concerned about coverage in the local papers in their constituency than what's said in the national media.

A group of students and staff at University College London (UCL) realised the importance of choosing the right media when they called for their college to divest from the arms industry. UCL's Provost was sensitive about his media profile, particularly in education media. Coverage of the issue in publications such as the Times Higher Education supplement was key to the success of the campaign and UCL's decision to ditch its arms shares.

At the same time, don't pass up other opportunities to influence public opinion. Don't forget radio phone-ins and newspaper letters pages. In 2014, campaigners knitted a seven-mile scarf to stretch between the two sites of the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) in Berkshire. The group behind the plan, Action AWE, secured coverage in a knitting magazine – thus taking the anti-nuclear message to people who may be unfamiliar with it.

Making news

Something is only news if it is new. Opinions are not news – but you can make them news. When the University of London Union campaigned on Fairtrade, they could not make headlines simply by repeating its benefits. By conducting a survey that showed London students were among Britain's most enthusiastic Fairtrade buyers, they made a good news story.

Nonetheless, dealing with the media's ideas of what's newsworthy can be frustrating. Despite emphasising novelty, journalists often like to develop new angles on existing stories rather than cover something totally new.

It can therefore be helpful to relate your story to something already in the news. In 2011, the Jubilee Debt Campaign publicised the fact that the UK government was cancelling debt from countries that would never repay it – and then counting the sum concerned as expenditure on aid. In promoting this story in the Financial Times, the Campaign built on debates about the aid budget that had been prominent in the media at the time.

Before promoting any piece of news ask yourself three questions:

- Is it new?
- Is it clear?
- Is it relevant to the audience (such as a local story for a local paper)?

Have a clear message

Decide what you are calling for and keep repeating it clearly and concisely.

Don't dilute strong arguments by adding weak ones. Don't let opponents or interviewers lead you off on tangents.

Relate your cause to everyday concerns. For example, you can make clear that climate change influences all our lives — and the poorest the most. Emphasise the difference that human rights make to every person. Point out that the biggest difference in society is between the richest and the rest — so the poorest and those in the middle can make common cause.

You're not simply a group of 'campaigners' or 'activists'. Use words that people will identify with. You may be a group of 'local residents', 'women', 'tenants', 'unemployed people' or 'students', among others.

A single death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic. Stories tend to be more memorable than facts and figures. If campaigning against a government policy, try to provide a story of someone whom the policy has harmed. The more people who identify with this individual, the more real the issue becomes to them.

Communicate with journalists

It sounds obvious but is often overlooked! You can issue a press release (also known as a news release) when you act or respond to events. Press releases are sent by email to a number of journalists at once. You can usually find journalists' email addresses on the websites of the publications or channels they work for. You can even phone up the general contact number and ask for the email address of a particular journalist. If you're not used to press releases, you can find examples on the websites of campaigning groups, many of which upload all their releases.

The headline is vital — it is this that you will write in the subject line of the email. Journalists who receive dozens of releases each day will not open them all and your headline may make the difference. It should be no more than ten words and clearly state a piece of news, not just an opinion. Summarise the most newsworthy aspect of the story in the first paragraph, with more information afterwards. The release should be worded in the third person, except for opinions that appear as quotes from someone involved. You can find advice about writing press releases in the sources listed below.

However, don't rely on press releases alone. Phone around some of the journalists who have received it. You may have sent the release to hundreds of people, but you can pick out the most likely ones for phoning. Be ready to summarise the newsworthy aspect of the story in a sentence or two when they answer. You can slant your pitch according to the journalist: for local radio, emphasise the local aspect, for an environmental magazine, emphasise the environmental aspect, and so on.

Brace yourself for disappointments — most of the journalists you phone will not be interested. But the chances are that you will eventually find someone who wants to know more.

Go back to the same journalists every time you have a story, especially those who seemed interested earlier. If you're concise, reliable and give them good stories, they will soon be phoning you for comments. When this happens

make sure that someone is available and that you keep a record of the journalist's contact details.

Remember that journalists need you as much as you need them. You're offering them something, not asking for a favour. A good relationship with a few journalists is worth a thousand press releases.

Right time, right place

If aiming for a weekly paper that goes to print on Tuesday afternoon, don't hold an event on Tuesday evening. Call them on Wednesday and they'll just be beginning to look round for ideas for next week's issue. In the same way, journalists at daily papers often have more time in the morning than the afternoon.

Be where journalists are, both literally and metaphorically. It's difficult to get journalists along to a protest outside a company's offices, but if you demonstrate outside the company's AGM, business correspondents may already be there. Contact them in advance and there's a good chance they'll come over to speak with you.

Social media – blurring the boundaries

Social media usually fall into the category of media that you produce, rather than media produced by others, but the boundaries are blurred. Twitter and Facebook work best if you use them for conversation rather than one-sided announcements. If people respond to your tweets, be prepared to reply. Many corporations have never understood this. That's why campaigning groups such as Boycott Workfare have been able to use social media to bombard unethical companies with messages about their policies, visible to anyone visiting the companies' Facebook pages or Twitter feeds.

Many journalists use Twitter very frequently, meaning you can now tweet journalists directly when you're trying to draw their attention to a story. They may also mention an issue that they're working on and you can reply by making a connection with an aspect of your campaign. Of course, be careful not to do this too often to the same few journalists or they may stop listening.

Secrecy and direct action

It can be hard to interest the media in nonviolent direct action or civil disobedience, because of course you often have to keep things secret until the last minute. One possibility is to inform a journalist with whom you have built up a good relationship, on the understanding that they will keep it confidential but that once the action starts, they will be able to publish all the details before the rest of the media know them. This has its risks: it involves trusting not only the journalist but any editors they may be reporting to.

If you would rather not do this, you can be prepared to publicise your action to the media at the moment that it begins. Someone can have a press release ready to go, send it out once they get the word the action has begun and start making phone calls. By planning media engagement as carefully as other aspects of an action, its impact can be significantly increased.

The number of people involved in a protest rarely makes much difference to the coverage. Creativity and originality have a bigger impact. When UK Uncut began occupying tax-dodging shops in 2010, it was a creative tactic with an original message. They gained far more coverage than the more predictable anti-cuts marches. Now that occupying shops has become more common, it's getting harder to gain coverage through it. We need to keep on being creative!

Giving interviews

Being interviewed on radio or television, or by a newspaper, can be a great opportunity to have your message heard. It can also be nervewracking. But if you keep calm, talk clearly and remember your audience, radical ideas can sound not only reasonable but even obvious.

Many people listen to the radio or TV in the background while doing other things. In most cases, you will not have time to develop a detailed argument. Ask yourself: if the listeners or viewers remember only one thing, what do you want it to be? Make sure that this is the point you talk about most. This is particularly important if your interview is recorded rather than live: it will probably be clipped, so if you talk about lots of things, the clip may be about something that's peripheral to your message. Don't let the questions distract you, but connect the questions to your own concerns and keep bringing the conversation back to your main focus.

Keep going

Media liaison is hard work. Don't give up. The more you do, the more contacts you will acquire and the more coverage you will get. Keep your press releases and your phone calls regular and respond speedily to enquiries. It will all be worth it when you see the coverage making a difference to your campaigns.

Further reading:

- *An Activist's Guide to Exploiting the Media*, George Monbiot: <http://www.urban75.com/action/media.html>
- *Be Your Own Spindoctor*, Paul Richards (Politico's, 2005).



“Legal support” is a term used to describe a person or small team of people, who support people taking action which is likely to result in arrest by:

- ensuring that activists know their rights if they are arrested;
- monitoring and recording arrests and police behaviour;
- liaising with police and lawyers to help arrested activists in custody;
- giving activists emotional and practical support.

Nonviolent actions

Gender and nonviolence

Nonviolent actions

Fear

Roles before, during and after an actions

Action Evaluation

Training

Hassle lines

Role playing

“Legal supporters” do not have to be lawyers, and they do not have any status in law. Although legal observers don’t need legal expertise, they should be familiar with the laws governing demonstrations in the relevant country, and with police responses to “public disorder” (actions and demonstrations).

The methodology described here is based on observing and supporting demonstrations, mainly in the UK and USA. Every country will be different, but this guide should help you to provide support to arrested activists before, during and after arrest. This type of support can be absolutely vital in helping activists feel empowered and supported when they are arrested.

Legal support group roles

The number of people involved in the legal support group will depend upon the size of the action and the number of arrests expected. If your action or group is small, one person could take all of these roles. If it is a larger action then you will need a team in which the roles are split up among you. A legal support team might organise to have someone in the ‘back office’ using the telephone, legal observers attending the action, someone coordinating the collection of those arrested after they have been released, and someone responsible for ensuring people are supported emotionally.

Before the action:

■ You need a dedicated mobile phone (some activists choose not to use their personal number, by purchasing a ‘clean’ sim card). This will be the **legal support number** for contact with activists, police and lawyers. Someone needs to be responsible for this at all times.

■ **Prepare a legal briefing** for the action, so that activists are fully informed of arrest procedure, what they should expect to happen at the police station, likely offences, likely outcomes, bail and first court hearing. This information can be presented at a pre-action meeting, or produced as a leaflet.



LEGAL OBSERVER AT PROTEST AGAINST ISRAELI MILITARY TRANSPORTS THROUGH RAF BRIZE NORTON, UK, DURING 2006 LEBANON WAR. PHOTO: JK

■ **Ensure activists know their rights under arrest.** The easiest way to do this is to prepare and distribute a small card, sometimes called a ‘bust card’, and encourage all participants to carry it. This should include basic detention rights under applicable law. For example, if arrestees have the right to silence, or the right to see a lawyer, then state this on the card.

■ The bust card should include phone numbers to ring after arrest. You should include the name and number of a supportive lawyer; and the **legal support telephone number** if arrestees have the right to have someone notified of their arrest. Activists may also want to write the number in marker on their arms so it is not taken from them when they are arrested.

■ Each person putting themselves at risk of arrest (even if they do not intend to be arrested) should **fill out a form** for the legal support team that includes: their legal name and contact information, who should be contacted in case of arrest, and relevant medical information. This information should be held off-site from the action.

During the action:

Unless your action is covert, the most crucial aspect of legal support is provided by the **legal observer** or observers. They should watch the action/demonstration, but not take part in any way. They should record **who** is arrested – **when, why,**

where and by **whom**? This information should be collected in a list of arrested people to make it easier to find out where they have been taken, and when they are released. Videos and still photos of the action are helpful in documenting arrests, and especially important if your rights are violated.

Legal observer/s should also record any violent behaviour or unlawful actions by the police, recording if possible the identity of the police officer/s involved, and collecting statements from witnesses, in case the affected or injured person wishes to later complain against the police.

After arrests:

■ If an arrestee wants to contact the legal supporters from the police station, they should ask the police to use the **legal support telephone** number. The legal support team should use this phone to call police stations to find out who is detained. Whether you get this information depends on the police.

■ Make a definitive list of who has been arrested, where they are held, and when/whether they are released. Compare this to the Legal Support Forms people filled out. If people are not released, call their support people listed on the form and set up jail support (see 'jail support', p140).

■ Contact the police station and, if necessary, contact lawyers; ask supporters to wait outside the police stations until the last of the arrested people are released by the police.

■ Provide practical support (food, drink, transport, warm clothing) and emotional support.

■ You should find out if released people have been charged with an offence, or remain under investigation, and add this to the list. If people remain in detention make sure they have access to a lawyer.

■ You might need to organise **transport** to collect people released from police custody.

■ Coordinate defendants' meetings after the action to help prepare for prosecution.

Responding to violence

The story in the box opposite illustrates how different people will have different experiences of the police and the legal system. While some entering that

Standing at the gate to a US military base in the UK, a police officer with an automatic machine gun was questioned by white, female protesters, as to why he was so heavily armed. "To stop terrorists entering the base", was the prompt reply. "Would you shoot us, if we went through the gate or over the fence?" asked the women. "Of course not," replied the police officer, "you're not terrorists." "How do you know? What does a terrorist look like?" asked the women. There was no response; the police officer had been caught out on the way he would have profiled people differently, and how he would have treated some with lethal force but not others, based in this case, on skin colour or ethnicity.

base would not expect a bullet, others would have legitimate fears for their life. Someone's ethnicity, race, gender identity, class, age, or a whole host of other social characteristics can mean people encounter greater levels of direct violence or discrimination than others, be it during actions, as they are arrested, or while in custody. It is important to talk as a group, recognising that some people may be treated differently, and for legal observers to be ready to respond appropriately. Be ready for the unexpected, too; for example, when being removed from a blockade, able-bodied men may be treated more roughly than their elder, female counterparts. When in custody, detainees will often be expected to conform to a traditional gender structure; for those who don't fit into such a structure the experience can be extremely difficult.

Legal observers can respond to violence by:

- documenting violence when it occurs;
- making sure the police know that they have been witnessed;
- not leaving those being treated violently alone;
- lawyers can monitor conditions and make sure detainees are treated respectfully;
- groups can act in solidarity with victims of violence by refusing to cooperate until everyone is treated equally, demanding that individuals are not left isolated, and making sure those likely to be targeted by the police are not the last to be processed.

Sometimes, official channels — like police complaints procedures — can be used to make sure that a particular officer is reprimanded after the fact. Some activists feel empowered by making sure some form of justice takes place.

Remember:

- Legal observers and support team are not lawyers, so should not give legal advice.
- Legal observers are not there to liaise with the police, but to observe their actions.

More information

Examples of how legal support has been organised all over the world

- (UK): <http://greenandblackcross.org/legal>
- (UK): www.activistslegalproject.org.uk
- (US) <http://www.midnightspecial.net>
- (Egypt) <https://www.newtactics.org/tactic/utilizing-sms-facilitate-communication-between-detainees-and-human-rights-groups-provide>
- (South Korea) <http://eng.minbyun.or.kr/>
- (Chile) <http://oddhchile.blogspot.co.uk/>
- (Australia) <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~ptchang/about.htm>



Jail support (MOC-Spain experience)

Prisoner support groups

The experience of MOC (Movimiento de Objeción de Conciencia) in helping people in prison is based on the civil disobedience campaign against obligatory military service — the campaign of *insumisión* 1971-2002 in which thousands of *insumisos* were jailed. During this period, various ways of supporting prisoners were suggested and tried. One of the most valued, without a doubt, were the ‘support groups’.

Let’s imagine a concrete case in order to illustrate how these groups function. Bixente Desobediente is an *insumiso* who will have to serve a sentence of two years, four months and one day. He needs to convene a meeting with people close to him (family, friends) plus someone from the movement. The first meeting is attended by his partner, his sister, three friends from the neighbourhood, a university pal, a cousin, a guy he met at an anti-militarism discussion group and a neighbour. This group reviews his decision to be an *insumiso*, discussing his motives and the consequences it could bring. As not all of them understand concepts like civil disobedience, nonviolence, direct action, and antimilitarism, the group looks at these too. In the following meetings, they establish goals, and after much brainstorming and discussion, they come up with the following objectives:

1) Emotional support

Supporting Bixente emotionally is important during his time before his trial, in court itself and in prison. One suggestion is to hire a bus so that everybody who wants can go to court and witness the trial. Other suggestions are to visit Bixente in prison and encourage others to write letters. The idea is that he should not feel alone and has continual contact with supportive friends. This support should also extend to those close to him, such as his parents.

2) Logistic support

Both before his trial and in prison, Bixente will need material support. Before his trial, he goes into hiding to avoid arrest and pre-trial detention, so people need to bring his things from his previous place of residence to his current location so that he is not caught. In prison, he needs books and paper to continue his studies. This is also part of the work of the support group.

3) Political work

The MOC, the movement to which Bixente belongs, is in charge of the political work. However, the support group can also collaborate with this work, joining in protest actions organised by MOC — especially those connected with his trial and imprisonment. At the same time, the groups can reach out politically in the places that Bixente is known — his neighborhood and university — to make the most of the action. Also the support group can put together an email list to keep people informed about his case and a webpage with information about



SYMBOLIC JAIL ESCAPE.

PHOTO: SIMO HELLSTEN

Bixente's case, antimilitarism, war tax resistance to military spending, peace education, and links to related pages. Every now and then, Bixente will write a letter that can be circulated. The support group should coordinate with the MOC – for instance, one member attending MOC meetings – and check that their actions are in line with the MOC's overall campaign.

The support groups are a great help, not only for the prisoner, but also for the movement. They share the work and also serve as contact points for people to join the movement. Coordination between the political group and the support group, and with the prisoner is essential. Stable, frequent communication is important. The political criteria come from the political movement, not from the prison; however visits to the prison by members of both groups is important for the development and coordination of the political work.



Action evaluation

Evaluation allows us to learn from our experiences. Usually people informally evaluate an event, be it through personal reflections, talking with friends, or meeting with a group of core organisers. It is important though to also have a structure for evaluating an event. Rather than leaving evaluation to chance or confining it to an elite, it should be set up as a planned and collective activity that values the input of people who have played different roles, who bring different kinds of experience, and who have different levels of commitment. Preferably everyone who participated in an action or in organising an event should be encouraged to take part in evaluating it.

When evaluations are a regular part of our work, we have a chance for honest feedback on the process and content of the work and a way to improve in the future. Bear in mind that there will be considerable differences of opinion and that it is not necessary for the group to come to agreement. It is also important to point out what was successful as well as what went wrong; begin with positive evaluations whenever possible. The structure of the evaluation should be planned carefully.

Some of the most obvious points to bring up in an evaluation might be quantitative: ‘we handed out so many leaflets’, ‘we attracted so many people’, ‘we gained so much media coverage’, ‘we blocked a road for so long’. If such information is important in evaluating the campaign development, make sure that somebody is monitoring it, that you have a way of counting the number of protesters, that a media group collects information about coverage. However, sometimes the numbers game can distract from the main purpose, especially in the case of repeated protests. Maybe more protesters arrived, but the action made less impact and first-time protesters felt useless, got bored, scared, or in some other way were put off. Maybe a military base entrance was blockaded for a longer time, but the action reached fewer people or was somehow less empowering. Criteria for evaluation need to be linked with the strategic purposes of a particular event, and take into account how participants experienced.

Below is a checklist to help you in evaluating an action; it can also be used in other areas of your work.

1. Vision, strategy, and objectives

- Was there an overall vision/strategy/objective?
- Was it relevant to the problem/conflict?
- Did participants know who initiated the action?
- Were participants aware of the vision/strategy/objectives?

Nonviolence

Gender and nonviolence

Strategies

Planning nonviolent campaigns

Nonviolent actions

Sending the protest message

Working in groups

Tactic star

Roles before, during and after an action

2. Principles and discipline

- Was there a clear discussion and agreement on discipline for the action?
- Was it followed during the action?
- Were the planned tactics and those actually carried out consistent with the discipline?
- Did any of the participants feel that they themselves or others failed to follow the agreed-upon discipline?

3. Preparation and training

- Was the preparation/training appropriate?
- Was the preparation/training adequate?
- Did it actually aid the participants in coping with the unexpected?
- Did it meet the needs of those involved?
- Did it meet the expectations of those involved?
- Did the necessary community feel developed?

4. Tactics

- Were the planned tactics adequate?
- Were the tactics, as planned, actually carried out?
- Did they meet the needs and expectations of those involved?
- Were unexpected problems adequately dealt with?
- Was this done in a way consistent with the discipline/vision/objective?

5. Organisation

- Did the structure/organisation of the action fit its objective/strategy/vision/discipline?
- Was it organised in a democratic way?

6. Impact

<p>On the participants</p> <p>Was it relevant?</p> <p>Did it invite/create participation?</p> <p>Did the participants feel in control of the action?</p> <p>Did it increase the initiative and confidence of the participants?</p> <p>Did the participants feel supported by each other?</p>	<p>On those to whom it was addressed</p> <p>Was it understood?</p> <p>Were objectives reached?</p> <p>Did it close or open options for further action and communication?</p> <p>Were there responses from individuals (opponents) that differed from the institutions that were a part of it?</p> <p>How did these responses relate to the objectives of the action?</p>	<p>On others</p> <p>Did they understand it?</p> <p>Were they alienated by it?</p> <p>Did it have any unexpected results?</p> <p>Were people moved in our direction (neutralised, attracted, catalysed)?</p>
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This evaluation form was developed at the International Seminar on Training for Nonviolent Action held in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in July 1977.

CASE STUDIES: STORIES AND EXPERIENCES

This section is a collection of stories and experiences on the use of nonviolence around the world, written by activists who took part in the campaigns. Stories help us learn from past experiences; the motivation to act can be influenced by what has been done elsewhere, and we can be inspired by the creativity and success of others. Many of the stories describe how people learned strategies from campaigns in other parts of the world, or were inspired by contact with activists from other regions. On some occasions, the visit of a member of another group was the catalyst; in others, reading materials produced elsewhere or attending an international event led to ideas for campaigns. Additionally, many of the stories explain how campaigns were strengthened through international cooperation.

While these stories differ according to circumstances, they all have nonviolence as a common feature. Some cases focus on education and promoting nonviolence within the activist scene in a country, as in the Turkey example. Solidarity work – such as with South Africa during the anti-apartheid movement – can be a model for other situations. Learning across borders took place between Seabrook, Wyhl and Markolsheim, between Israel and South Africa, in South Korea, and when nonviolence trainers from the UK visited Kenya.

The work of building alternatives to violence and against human rights violations in conflict areas was helped by key contributions from the nonviolence movements of Chile and Colombia. Other case studies – like the story of the castor blockade in Germany – demonstrate how a large number of people can be mobilised to take nonviolent direct action, while the contribution from activists in West Papua demonstrates how nonviolence can be used en masse in even the most hostile environments. The case studies about the Eritrean diaspora campaign Arbi Harnet, and the use of social media in South Korea, show how new technology can be used to enhance a campaign. The contribution from Afghanistan is an excellent motivator for producing material about nonviolence for our own situations.

When planning your campaigns, it is always good to research if others have done something similar before, and to learn from their successes and errors. Remember to document your own campaigns, and share your own stories.

International solidarity campaign with South Africa

Howard Clark

The first calls for an international boycott of apartheid South Africa were made as early as 1958; in Britain, the Anti-Apartheid Movement launched in 1959 saw it as a major strategy. At the intergovernmental level, South Africa's system of apartheid was widely condemned, especially after the 1960 Sharpeville massacre. In 1961 South Africa was thrown out of the Commonwealth (then called the British Commonwealth), and in 1962 the UN set up a Special Committee Against Apartheid, the next year agreeing to a 'voluntary' arms embargo. Yet apartheid did not finally end until the 1990s.

There were three main areas for international sanctions against South Africa: economic sanctions, including trade and investment; a cultural boycott; and a sports boycott. The cultural and sports boycotts had primarily a psychological impact on South Africa. A sports-mad country, South Africa's exclusion from the Olympics from 1964 onwards, and most importantly from international rugby and cricket from 1970 onwards, was brought about by a combination of pressure from other African states and demonstrations, including disrupting tennis and rugby matches.

The impact of economic sanctions remains a matter of debate, especially because two powerful states (UK and the USA) repeatedly circumvented the declarations of intergovernmental organisations such as the UN or the Commonwealth. However, there were waves of movements for 'people's sanctions' — beginning probably with the revulsion at the Sharpeville massacre — when even the British Labour Party leadership supported the moral gesture of refusing to buy South African fruit.

My own involvement began later. As a student in 1969, I was one of those who wanted to transfer the momentum gained from the sporting boycott into an economic boycott. Our students' union had already passed resolutions against the university buying apartheid fruit. Then we took up a campaign against Barclays Bank, the most popular bank for British students at that time and, as it happened, the bank used by my university. Our first success was in dissuading new students from opening their first-ever bank accounts with Barclays and persuading others to change banks. Our second was in holding a rent strike, refusing to pay rent for student rooms into an account with Barclays Bank. Eventually the university authorities conceded, triggering the resignation of prominent members of the University's ruling council. Throughout the country, trade union branches, clubs, associations, and churches debated changing banks. I got into trouble with both the Quakers and the Peace Pledge Union for writing in Peace News in 1972 that they had no legitimacy in talking about non-violence in South Africa unless they took the small step of moving their bank accounts. Local authorities decided to do so too. In 1986 — 16 years after the Boycott Barclays campaign began — the bank sold its South African subsidiaries. Finally, too, the Cooperative supermarket chain decided not to stock South African products.

This type of boycott was very much influenced by waves of concern about apartheid. One such wave was after the Soweto killings of 1976 and the murder in custody of Steve Biko in 1977; another was in the 1980s with the emergence inside South Africa of the United Democratic Front and spokespeople such as Desmond Tutu. All the while, in the background, were local anti-apartheid activists, putting resolutions to their trade union branches and their churches, recognising that both trade unions and churches were large corporate investors capable of exerting pressure on companies.

In Britain, the anti-apartheid boycott was a ‘long march’, usually rather unspectacular. Having succeeded in persuading municipal councils to do something, we then had to witness Margaret Thatcher’s government take away their power to make decisions on such political grounds. Nevertheless, we kept the issue of Britain’s connections with apartheid in people’s minds.

The story was different in other countries. In the 1970s we Brits looked enviously at the success of the Dutch boycott of coffee from Angola, a Portuguese colony in close alliance with South Africa. In the 1980s, workers at one of Ireland’s main supermarket chains – Dunne’s – were locked out in a four-year dispute over selling apartheid goods, a conflict only resolved when the Irish government made South African products illegal.

The USA was a particularly important terrain of struggle. The people’s sanctions’ movement had three main foci: colleges and campuses; banks; and municipal and state corporations. Their achievements were considerable. In 1985, after a 19-year campaign, the main bank involved with South Africa – Chase Manhattan – announced that it would not renew its loans to South African projects. By 1991, 28 states, 24 counties, 92 cities, and the Virgin Islands had adopted legislation or policies imposing some form of sanctions on South Africa. By the end of 1987 more than 200 U.S. companies had formally withdrawn from South Africa, though many of them found other ways to carry on their business. (For instance, General Motors licensed local production, while IBM computers had a South African distributor.) What was most important about these campaigns, however, was the public education carried out through them and the sense of solidarity engendered with the anti-apartheid movement inside South Africa.



Seabrook-Wyhl-Marckolsheim: transnational links in a chain of campaigns



THE SEABROOK SITE, NEW HAMPSHIRE, USA, 1977.

PHOTO: GRACE HEDERMANN

Joanne Sheehan and Eric Bachman

When 18 people walked onto the construction site of the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant in New Hampshire on 1 August 1976, it was the first collective nonviolent direct action against nuclear power in the USA. Many opponents of nuclear power considered such tactics too radical. Later that month, when 180 people committed civil disobedience at the site, the organisers, the Clamshell Alliance, used nonviolence training and the affinity group structure for the first time. In the future, these elements became well-known and practised throughout the nonviolent social change movement. On 30 April 1977 over 2400 people, organised in hundreds of affinity groups, occupied the site. During the next two days 1415 were arrested, many jailed for two weeks. This action inspired the anti-nuclear power movement and created a new international model for organising actions that consisted of training for nonviolent direct action and consensus decision-making in a non-hierarchical affinity group structure.

Inspiration for the Seabrook action actually came from Europe. In the early 1970s, people in Germany and France became concerned about plans to build a nuclear power plant in Wyhl, Germany. Nearby, across the border in Marckolsheim, France, a German company announced plans to build a lead factory alongside the Rhine. The people living in Wyhl and Marckolsheim agreed to cooperate in a cross-border campaign, in August 1974 founding a joint organisation, the International Committee of 21 Environmental Groups from Baden (Germany) and Alsace (France). Together they decided that wherever the construction started first, together they would nonviolently occupy that site to stop the plants.

After workers began constructing a fence for the Marckolsheim lead plant, on 20 September 1974 local women climbed into the fencepost holes and stopped the construction. Environmental activists erected a tent, at first outside the fence line, but soon moved inside and occupied the site. Support for the campaign came from many places. The German anarcho-pacifist magazine *Graswurzelrevolution* had helped to spread the idea of grassroots nonviolent

actions. A local group from Freiburg, Germany, near the plants, introduced active nonviolence to those organising in Whyl and Marckolsheim. In 1974, a three-day workshop in Marckolsheim included nonviolence training; 300 people practised role-plays and planned what to do if the police came.

People from both sides of the Rhine – farmers, housewives, fisherfolk, teachers, environmentalists, students and others – built a round, wooden ‘Friendship House’ on the site. The occupation in Marckolsheim continued through the winter, until 25 February 1975 when the French government withdrew the construction permit for the lead works.

Meanwhile, construction of the nuclear reactor in Whyl, Germany, had begun. The first occupation of that site began on 18 February 1975 but was stopped by the police a few days later. After a transnational rally of 30,000 people on 23 February, the second occupation of the Whyl construction site began. Encouraged by the success in Marckolsheim, the environmental activists, including whole families from the region, continued this occupation for eight months. More than 20 years of legal battles finally ended the plans for the construction of the Whyl nuclear power plant.

In the summer of 1975, two U.S. activists, Randy Kehler and Betsy Corner, visited Whyl after attending the WRI Triennial in the Netherlands. They brought the film ‘Lovejoy’s Nuclear War’, the story of the first individual act of nonviolent civil disobedience against a nuclear power plant in the USA. They brought back to the USA and to those organising to stop the Seabrook nuclear power plant the inspiring story of the German community’s occupations. More information exchange followed. During the 1976 occupation of Seabrook, WRI folks in Germany communicated daily by phone with the Clamshell Alliance. German nonviolent activists had been using consensus, but the affinity group structure was new to them, and they saw it as an excellent method for organising actions.

In 1977, German activists and trainers Eric Bachman and Günter Saathoff made a speaking trip to the USA, visiting anti-nuclear groups in the northeastern USA as well as groups in California where there were protests against a nuclear power plant at Diablo Canyon. Activists from both sides of the Atlantic continued this process of cross-fertilisation.

The Marckolsheim and Whyl plants were never built. Even though one of the two proposed nuclear reactors was built in Seabrook, no new nuclear power plants have started in the USA since then. Both Whyl in Germany and Seabrook in the USA were important milestones for the anti-nuclear movement and encouraged many other such campaigns.

The Clamshell Alliance at Seabrook, which was itself inspired by actions in Europe, in turn became a source of inspiration to others in the USA and in Europe. In the USA, the Seabrook action inspired the successful campaign to stop the Shoreham, Long Island, New York, nuclear power plant, then 80 per cent completed. That began when an affinity group of War Resisters League members returned from the Seabrook occupation and began to organise in their community. British activists who took part in the 1977 occupation of Seabrook, together with activists who read about it in *Peace News*, decided to promote

this form of organisation in Britain, leading to the Torness Alliance opposing the last ‘green field’ nuclear site in Britain. In Germany, a number of nuclear power plants and nuclear fuel reprocessing plants were prevented or closed due to growing protests. In the early 1980s, large nonviolent actions were organised in both Britain and Germany in opposition to the installation of U.S. cruise missiles, using the affinity group model. And the story has continued, with affinity groups being used in many nonviolent actions around the world (including in the 1999 sit-ins in Seattle to stop the World Trade Organisation meetings).



Chile: Gandhi’s insights gave people courage to defy Chile’s dictatorship

Roberta Bacic

On September 11, 1973, the Chilean junta, backed by the CIA and the Nixon Administration, overthrew the democratically elected government of Socialist President Salvador Allende. Priscilla Hayner, in her book *Unspeakable Truths, Confronting State Terror and Atrocity* (2001) outlines the devastating impact: “The regime espoused a virulent anticommunism to justify its repressive tactics, which included mass arrests, torture (estimates of the number of people tortured range from 50,000 to 200,000), killings, and disappearances.” The dictatorship assassinated, tortured, and exiled thousands of political opponents and visionaries.

Under these conditions, a foreboding silence, the result of threats and terror, hung over Chile. Some of us wondered, “could Gandhian insights about the power of nonviolence help the struggle to defy the terror?”

Nonviolence refers to a philosophy and strategy of conflict resolution, a means of fighting injustice, and – in a broader sense – a way of life, developed and employed by Gandhi and by followers all around the world. Nonviolence, then, is action that does not do or allow injustice.

Crying Out the Truth

A few of us decided to try to inspire others to speak up against the dictatorship by “crying out the truth.” We faced a double suffering: the pain involved in enduring the dictatorship’s violence, and the suffering caused by keeping silent out of fear. To not cry out while those we love were killed, tortured, and disappeared was unendurable. Clandestine pamphlets and leaflets were printed. Slogans that denounced human rights violations were painted on the walls at night at great risk to safety. Underlying these actions was the principle of active nonviolence: since there is injustice, the first requirement is to report it, otherwise we are accomplices. The clandestine actions helped spread the principle of telling the truth and acting on it. Yet, despite the risks, we needed to move beyond clandestine protests: we needed to move the protests against the Chilean junta into the public arena.



DEMONSTRATION OF THE SEBASTIAN ACEVEDO MOVEMENT, SANTIAGO, CHILE.

PHOTO: ARCHIVES OF ROBERTA BACIC

Activating the public movement against torture

José Aldunate, a Jesuit priest who became the leader of the Sebastian Acevedo Movement Against Torture in Chile, says in his memoirs, “A comrade came to us and brought up the fact (of torture). We educated ourselves about torture and about the dynamics of nonviolence. We watched a film on Mahatma Gandhi. I was more motivated to protest against poverty, but I responded to the discipline of the group. We deliberated and decided to undertake a nonviolent demonstration to denounce torture... to break the barriers of silence and hiding with regards to torture, we had an obligation to denounce it in public. We needed to shake the population’s conscience.”

On September 14, 1983, ten years after the regime took power, the anti-torture movement was born in an action in front of the headquarters of the National Investigation Center, 1470 Borgoño Street, in Santiago. Around 70 people interrupted traffic, unfurling a banner which read “Torturing Done Here.” They shouted their denunciation and sang a hymn to liberty. The group returned to this scene to denounce the regime’s crimes against humanity at least once a month until 1990.

In order to act, we needed to openly defy the State of Emergency provisions decreed by the junta in order to terrorise the population. We needed to break through our own sense of powerlessness, isolation, and fear.

The movement denounced torture. It left to other entities the task of investigating and making declarations. It had no meeting place, no secretariat, no infrastructure. It met in the streets and plazas when it was time to act. It had no membership list. Participants came by personal invitation, as the movement

had to avoid infiltration from the secret police and other repressive institutions. Instructions were passed from person to person. Participants were mainly trained during the actions themselves, where we evaluated each action on the spot.

Participants faced legal and illegal sanctions when detained and prosecuted as they often were. Tear gas, beatings, detention, and prosecution were common practices used in retaliation against demonstrators. Torture was also a possible consequence of being arrested. Not only Sebastian Acevedo movement participants faced these sanctions, also reporters and journalists willing to report the actions and the issues that were exposed.

At some of the actions, there were as many as 300 participants. Some 500 people participated in total. There were Christians and non-Christians, priests, monks, slum dwellers, students, old people, homemakers, and members of various human rights movements; people of every class, ideology, and walk of life.

The main goal was to get rid of torture in Chile. The means chosen was to shake up national awareness (consciousness raising) and rouse the conscience of the nation until the regime would get rid of torture or the country would get rid of the regime. In 1988, after a widespread anti-intimidation campaign, the nonviolent “Chile Si, Pinochet No” campaign helped, to Pinochet’s shock, to defeat a plebiscite designed to ratify his rule.

Efforts to end the culture of impunity that arose during the Pinochet years, and to engage in national reconciliation, continue, but nonviolent protest provided an important means, among others, to overthrow the dictatorship.



South Korea: the power of international solidarity

Jungmin Choi

It was the result of solidarity efforts between activists at home and abroad that the conscientious objection movement in this ultra-militaristic South Korean society began. In 2000 Karin Lee and John Feffer, who were staff members at the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) office in Tokyo and who had been working with many South Korean civic groups, recognised that movements against the Korean military, militarism, conscription system, and other related institutions in Korea were not very active. In July of the same year, Taiwan introduced an alternative military service system. When Karin and John heard this news, they thought that it might be time for South Korea to begin discussing these topics more openly and widely as the circumstances in both Taiwan and South Korea were quite similar with respect to military confrontation, economic growth, and geographical location. As they were looking for an organisation to work with, they met Sangyeul Sohn and me, both of us activists at the Solidarity for Peace and Human Rights (SPR) at the time.

Soon thereafter, a working group was formed within SPR, and the members began to translate and study foreign language sources concerning the military and conscription. Back then, not even the concept of conscientious objection



ANTI FLAG SWEARING DIRECT ACTION, SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA.

PHOTO: JUNGMIN CHOI

to military service existed in Korea, and barely any materials were available in Korean. Naturally, the SPR working group faced some challenges in the beginning but continued researching the human rights violations suffered by Jehovah's Witnesses – who at the time were the only conscientious objectors – as well as other issues of the conscription system in Korea.

Consequently, in March 2001, SPR and other civic organisations in Korea held, with the support of AFSC, a semipublic workshop to discuss the problems of the conscription system and to search for alternatives to this system. Around 50 Korean activists and researchers who had been interested in this topic, in addition to activists from Taiwan and Colombia, were invited to exchange their experiences. We shared what we had researched and the difficulties we had found, and mapped out some strategies. During this period our strategy was to keep the masses informed about the demonstrable justification of conscientious objection to military service, so we wrote articles and organised various kinds of workshops. Despite the radical angle, this issue shocked many as they learned about the oppression and hardship Jehovah's Witnesses had been facing for 60 years.

In July of the same year, we visited Taiwan to learn more about its alternative to military service and, at around the same time, began to establish our relationship with War Resisters' International. We wanted to build upon our work and learn more about conscientious objection as a peace movement. We attended the WRI annual seminar in Turkey in September 2001. After the seminar we were able to build a stronger connection with WRI. Subsequently, Andreas Speck, who was a coordinator of the Right to Refuse to Kill Program at WRI, visited Korea in 2002 and discussed how the international community

could support the movement in Korea, a latecomer in the conscientious objection movement. As a result, an international conference focused on conscientious objection was held in Korea in March 2003, and two Korean activists attended another WRI seminar in Israel in May 2003. Additionally, one Korean activist interned at WRI in London. All of these activities were supported by AFSC and WRI.

Before 2003, although conscientious objection was a hot issue in Korean society, the issue was discussed from too much of a human rights perspective. The debate was only focused on addressing an alternative to mandatory military service in order to provide relief to the individual conscientious objector. Conscientious objectors were therefore seen as passive victims, whereas the female activists were seen as supporters standing by, sobbing to gain society's sympathy. Consequently, World Without War was launched during this time by activists who were critical of these binary visions, and wanted to reorganise the movement as a civil disobedience campaign. International solidarity helped us to anticipate what would happen and to brainstorm possible strategies for the next step. On the one hand, it was surprising that most conscientious objection movements in other geographical areas ran into similar problems at certain stages of the movement, but strangely, on the other hand, the fact that we had in common these critiques and challenges was also a little comforting for us.

We invited WRI staff member Andreas Speck to Korea again for our very first nonviolence training in summer 2004 and – 10 years later – we now have our own team of Korean trainers. In addition, we attended WRI's triennial seminar in Germany in 2006, where we got motivated to challenge war profiteers. A year later we launched a new campaign, Weapon Zero, to monitor Korea's arms trade and munitions industry and to focus on the issue of war profiteering. Currently, calling for a ban on cluster munitions, carrying out our Stop the Aerospace and Defence Exhibition (ADEX) campaign, and blocking tear gas exports to Bahrain are our core activities. Through international solidarity we learned, and we were inspired.

Our experience shows the importance of international solidarity and its power. If we did not receive AFSC's and WRI's help, especially in the beginning of this movement, there is no telling what our movement would have looked like now. The situation in each country and each stage or period may differ, of course, but the experience and skill of the people and groups that have walked with us until now served as a useful guide for beginners like us. Their help allowed us to foresee some of the challenges ahead of us and enabled us to carry out our actions thoughtfully and strategically.



South Korea: the use of social media in nonviolent campaigns

Yeo Jeewoo

In South Korea, social media is playing an important role not previously fulfilled by conventional media, because of its advantages like user initiative, interactivity and low cost. More than anything else, social media is providing valuable communication channels, especially for nonviolent activists. Whenever there are rallies, protests or events not considered ‘newsworthy’ by the established mainstream media, ‘wall posters’ are spread via web bulletins and social networking tools such as Twitter and Facebook. In 2008, when millions of people participated in a series of anti-government candlelight protests, people were organised en masse, through hobby websites. There was also a case where user-created video letters – adapted from prison writings by those who protested against the Jeju Island Naval Base construction – were circulated among supporters via YouTube.

Every citizen is a reporter

‘Internet press’, run by the active participation of the public, is a distinctive phenomenon originating in South Korea. ‘OhmyNews’ is a news website with the motto ‘Every Citizen is a Reporter.’ Anyone can write news articles as a reporter, and readers can support writers of their choice, by paying them a manuscript fee. Many social movement organisations are using this type of media to distribute news for their events and activities. In this way, through social media, people can access unfiltered reports on issues that are not covered by television programs and newspapers due to possible external pressure or censorship. Arguments and debates occurring on web portals, news websites, blogs and via social media contribute to the formation of critical public opinion as well.

The use of social media is not only a means by which information is shared and opinions are exchanged, but it is also a movement itself. Those who cannot afford to take to the streets can participate in a simultaneous Twitter action. In 2013, on the 10th anniversary of the USA’s invasion of Iraq, people took photos of themselves holding their messages and uploaded them on social media. Similarly, during the struggle against the building of electric transmission towers in Miryang, there was a ‘Day of Action’ when everyone could participate in the struggle on different levels by attending a rally, making phone calls in protest, signing a petition, and sharing news via social media. In situations where urgent petitions for arrested prisoners of conscience are needed, quick circulation through social media is a massive help. Even in the midst of a direct action, participants use smart phones and mobile instant messengers such as KakaoTalk to share situations in real time, make rapid decisions and pass on modifications to the course of action.

International communication

At times, international solidarity and communication are made through social media. For example, in 2013, it was discovered that the government of Bahrain was using a massive amount of tear gas imported from South Korea to repress peaceful protests. Urgent actions were organised by peace groups in South Korea, and they managed to stop additional exports. This news was relayed to activists in Bahrain and encouraged their movements. Also, during the 2013 Seoul International Aerospace and Defence Exhibition (ADEX), activists used the exact same slogans used by those who took action against the Defense Security and Equipment International (DSEi) held earlier in the same year in the UK. It was a tactic adopted deliberately to show arms dealers that ‘we are everywhere’, and to build international links. After seeing the photos and video clips of our actions, activists in the UK commented on how much they enjoyed watching them. These are good examples of how social media provided positive stimulation and encouragement to those working for the same cause in different places.

The drawbacks...

Of course, the use of social media has certain drawbacks. The credibility of information spreading through social media can be a concern, as are privacy issues and problems regarding security and surveillance. In one case, as knowledge began to surface of the police’s making use of photos on social media to investigate participants at rallies, an organiser asked users to delete the photos they had uploaded. Social media is also not completely free from state censorship and oppression of the freedom to expression. In South Korea, individuals are still being imprisoned under the National Security Act simply for writing a blog regarding North Korea, or an opinion against government policy. While it has been abolished after being ruled unconstitutional, the crime of spreading false information was applied indiscriminately in the past. There are also a number of cases where internet service providers have deleted users’ posts unilaterally, under the orders of authorities.

Recently, we have also become aware of the counter-actions against social movements using social media. It has become common for internet users supporting far-right websites to use social media to glorify past military dictatorships, and to express extreme hatred based on gender, race, ethnicity or political beliefs. State institutions are also making use of social media to influence public opinion. It was recently disclosed that in the runup to the presidential election in 2013, the National Intelligence Service (South Korea’s top intelligence agency), and Cyber Command (a special unit of the Ministry of National Defense) had been engaged in psychological warfare against South Korea’s own citizens. The NIS and Cyber Command agents are suspected of spreading over twenty million SNS posts defaming the candidate of opposition party.

As we can see in the case of South Korea, social media can be a useful tool for nonviolent social movements. We should keep in mind, however, that it is of equal use to our opponents! In this regard, nonviolent activists must study and develop more strategies and tactics for “social defense” on social media.

Colombia: Peace Community of San José de Apartadó

Luke Finn

The Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Colombia was formed on 23 of March 1997. The town of San José and its agricultural hinterlands are located in the mountainous zones in the region of Urabá, infamous even within Colombia for its violence and instability. The Community is defined by its strict internal regulations: not to take any part in the armed conflict, not to pass information to or aid any belligerent groups, not to grow coca; a commitment to engage in communal work.

In their own telling of their history, the Peace Community remembers the massacre of eight peasant farmers by the Colombian National Army in July 1977, the victims of whose families now populate the Peace Community. 20 years after this massacre, the Peace Community was formed in an attempt to remain on their lands and make a principled stand against the violence engulfing Colombia in the 1990s. September of 1996 saw another massacre, and in January 1997 over 800 people were forcibly displaced from their homes. Another massacre happened in February 1997, and the following month the Peace Community formed.

The Peace Community's settlements lie at a point of strategic and economic interest – close to the Caribbean coast, and the main weapons and drug trafficking routes to the United States and Europe, and on fertile and productive land in an area with little state presence – perfect for growing coca. The violence that surrounds the Community is a fight for control of the land they live on. The violence across Colombia stems from a continuing battle for control for this – not only results in the control of its resources, but also results in social and political control.

This is why the Peace Community is such an emblematic case of social resistance in Colombia. In forming a pacifist zone they have renounced the culture of violence as a means to power and championed neutrality. In embracing communal work they have renounced individualism and profiteering and replaced it with community values, kinship, and respect for the land.

The cost of peace in a war zone

The land is fought over by three armed groups – the Colombian Army, paramilitary groups (often working hand in hand with the state military), and the guerilla army Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Each of these groups have been responsible for the assassination of Peace Community members, though the majority of killings have come at the hands of Army and Paramilitary groups.

Over 200 members of the Community have been killed in the years since 1997, and as of 2014, only two cases out of the more than 900 human rights violations recorded and documented by the Community have been brought to

court. Today the membership of the Community stands at about 600 people.

The history of the Peace Community is a history of peaceful and dignified resistance in the face of brutality, and over time has resulted in truly impressive victories for the Community, not least the fact they remain on their land and on their farms.

Nonviolent resistance to the culture of war

The internal rules of the community, whether consciously or not, are a rejection of the basic political economy of a peripheral conflict zone like Urabá, a political economy jealously protected and enforced by those it has raised to power. It rejects the use of violence as a legitimate mode of power; it rejects coca; it embraces communal work as an economic model. It is a representative democracy. It emphasises localism, self-sustainability, and community organisation, connection to the land and rejection of displacement. Its members stand and all too often die on their principals.

Over time, the Peace Community has developed a number of forms of non-violent resistance and intervention to counter the various threats they (and their way of life) face. Every week, a day is put aside for communal work. This might be to help an individual community member, or to work on lands held in common — each Peace Community settlement splits into work groups, led by elected leaders, to work. Occasionally, for large projects, like improving the path that leads to the various villages, the whole Community will work as one work group.

One form of resistance is to publicly record the challenges and violence the Community faces. They make regular public statements, put out by the Communities Internal Council, which are put on the internet and record publicly the challenges they have faced. For example, if an army battalion has camped on their land, if paramilitary groups have tried to threaten or bribe a Community member into making false accusation, or if a member has been kidnapped or their home invaded. By making these public statements they not only publicise their work and their world, but keep a publicly available record — which are used by other activists to advocate change and maintain the transparency of the Community's activities and ward off unjust accusations.

The Community elects the Internal Council once a year at one of the bi-annual assemblies of the entire populace. They meet weekly, and discuss the current situation, problems facing the Community internally and externally, and strategic direction. They also serve as the management for the communally held land and resources, unless a task (for example managing the cacao crop) has been specifically delegated. The Internal Council members are the public face of the Community, and face a high personal risk. Nonetheless, they do speaking tours and attend meetings with officials outside of the Community.

These regular structures, of elections, public communication, and communal work provide the structure and strength of the Community on a day-to-day basis, and also provide the basis for the strategies used in times of emergency.

If a Community member is harassed, or threatened, or attacked, a response is made by the whole Community, led by the Internal Council. In addition to the

publicly made denouncement in the regular reports, a group of Community members, often with international accompaniment, may confront an armed group and request the release of a member, or complain about recent actions (as the case may be).

In 2013, the nearby areas of Rodoxali and Sabaleta – not Peace Community villages – were seeing a huge incursion of paramilitary forces, forcing people from their homes, forcefully recruiting young men, and “disappearing” others. The Peace Community organised a week-long “pilgrimage”, where a group of over 100 people, including outside allies such as journalists, lawyers, and international accompaniers, went to these areas in search of the paramilitary groups in order to request the lands and lives of their neighbours was respected. The paramilitary groups avoided the meeting, hiding from the pilgrimage group, but the message was clear and paramilitary activity did drop off in these areas. The courage of the people, going unarmed to confront a armed group which had repeatedly committed massacres against the Community, killing family members and making public threats, cannot be underestimated.

Internal difficulties – for example if someone has misused Community funds – are dealt with strictly, and people have been asked to leave the Community in order to maintain unity and ensure the Community cannot be accused of breaking its own rules.

The Peace Community has remained steadfast in its stand against violence and terror. They have expanded their community lands, and developed effective methods of communal work for the good of the community. They set up the Farmers University, which invites similar communities from around Colombia to meet in the Peace Community and share technologies and strategies. They set up Humanitarian Zones, where any one, regardless of whether they are a member or not, can take refuge from the regular and fierce battles that rage between the three armed groups around their villages. Their democratic structure and vision has seen the Community grow out of their home Department of Antioquia, into neighbouring Cordoba, and onto the national conscious.

International presence and support

Since its formation, the Peace Community has had the support of civil society groups both Colombian and international. They have had international support, from organisations around the world. The Fellowship of Reconciliation Colombia Program (now FOR Peace Presence) has lived with the Community of La Union since 2002, and accompany Community members in their daily lives to make violent reprisals less likely. Among others, Peace Brigades International and Operazione Colomba accompany the Peace Community throughout the year, providing both physical and political accompaniment to improve the security of this inspiring organisation.

Success of nonviolent resistance

Gains have been made. There has not been a serious massacre since the fall-out of 2005. The UN Human Rights Council has investigated the abuses committed



SAN JOSÉ DE APARTADÓ, COLOMBIA. COFFINS PROCESSION.

PHOTO: PEACE COMMUNITY

against the community. In July 2012, the Colombian Constitutional Court ordered the Colombian President's Office to retract the statements it had made and apologise to the Peace Community – which President Santos did in December of 2013. It also ordered the establishment of channels of direct communication between the government and the Peace Community, and the founding of a Commission of Evaluation and Justice – these steps have not yet been taken.

Since formation the leadership of the Peace Community has been targeted for assassination and harassment, many have died, and many have been forced into hiding. Yet the Peace Community continues, now in its second generation, as a self sustaining and democratic unit standing firm on its principals of non-violence, communal work, and the right to land.

The Peace Community belongs to one of the most vulnerable groups in Colombia: peasant farmers. With over five million forcibly displaced people (worldwide Colombia is the country with the highest number of internal refugees) it is clear that the fight over land is one of the main reasons of the on-going armed conflict in Colombia. That the Peace Community has stood up for its rights, in a nonviolent manner under such attacks for so long is inspirational, and makes them a leading light in the fight for a peaceful, more just, Colombia.



Turkey: building a nonviolent culture

Hilal Demir and Ferda Ülker

Militarism and patriarchy are deeply rooted in Turkish culture. Currently, war in the 'south-east' is based on ethnic discrimination against Kurds, although it is officially described as a 'war against terrorism'. Any attempt to question militarism is called 'treason'. The people most affected by the negative consequences of violence are primarily women, children, the elderly, and religious, ethnic, and political minorities. Violence is so internalised in Turkish society that alternative perspectives have become almost unthinkable, even among those who normally question hierarchy and promote freedom and equality.

The influence of the military can be seen in the following examples:

- Only after having done military service is a man regarded as a 'real' man.
- The National Security Council (including the chiefs of staff) as recently as 1997 prevented the winners of the elections from forming a government ("the post-modern coup").
- Economic power: the Turkish army's financial services company OYAK is one of the most powerful investors in Turkey.
- Opinion polls show that the military is the institution most trusted by the people.

The army under Mustafa Kemal established the Turkish republic in 1923, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire; Kemalist principles remain fundamental to the state, reflected in the criminal code, the maintenance of a powerful army, and the belief in the 'indivisibility of the nation'. These generate repressive attitudes. Few people see male domination of women as an issue, and physical violence is widely accepted against subordinates, prisoners, and within the family.

Beginnings

The term nonviolence was used for the first time in the principles of the Izmir War Resisters' Association (IWRA) in 1992. Within the Association, nonviolence was always a discussion point, especially how to find practical ways of living nonviolently in a violent culture. We first used nonviolence training to prepare ourselves for prison visits when a group member, Osman Murat Ülke, was imprisoned for conscientious objection. Initially nobody from outside approached us to discuss nonviolence. However, now there is more interest, although the War Resisters' Association itself closed in 2001 because of the burn-out of members.

IWRA's commitment to nonviolence put us in sharp contrast with other left-ist groups who did not take our approach seriously and regarded nonviolence as weak and ineffective. We mainly involved antimilitarist, anarchist, and feminist activists. Perhaps the biggest welcome for nonviolence came from the Lesbian, Gay, Bi, and Trans-sexual (LGBT) community, which was just in the process of becoming structured and taking up nonviolent methods.

In political alliances, our most fruitful interaction was with the women's

movement. When we first began, we formed a feminist and antimilitarist women's group called 'Antimilitarist Feminists', trying to reach out to women's groups. Despite some initial disappointment, we reached many independent women and began to hold trainings with women's organisations. This change in attitude was related to changes/transformation within the women's movement, in particular a desire to do things their own way rather than on traditional leftist lines. Questioning violence became a priority for women, and nonviolence seemed to offer a response. As more women sought personal empowerment, our cooperation with women and women's groups strengthened.

The closest political group was the conscientious objection movement because it was built by the efforts of activists working to promote nonviolence. Although this partnership continues, an individualistic streak in the movement, we believe, makes discussion of nonviolence less effective. Although most Turkish conscientious objectors are total resisters (that is, rejecting both military service and alternative civilian service), the movement's attitude towards nonviolence is equivocal at times, especially because of support for conscientious objectors from the Kurdish movement and leftist groups.

Izmir nonviolent trainers initiative

The Izmir Nonviolent Trainers Initiative (INTI) was first formed as part of the IWRA with additional support from others. Our work was supported and improved in quality thanks to cooperation with German trainers, including training courses at Kurve Wustrow in Germany, an international training for trainers organised in Foca, Turkey, in April 1996, and the accompaniment of two German trainers who lived in Izmir from 1998 until 2001.

When IWRA closed in December 2001, the trainers' initiative continued, organising workshops in Izmir and anywhere in the country we are invited, including in Diyarbakir in the south-east 'crisis' region. Today five trainers – four female and one male – mostly work on a voluntary basis, only receiving travel expenses, although sometimes we have money to pay a part-time coordinator. In June 2006 we began a course of training for trainers with 20 participants from all over the country.

The aim of INTI is to enhance and establish nonviolent principles and structures as an alternative to militarism, nationalism, hierarchy, and patriarchy. Our public activities began with organising demonstrations and seminars on nonviolence and conscientious objection, publishing pamphlets (although police confiscated a number of our works from printers), and looking for international cooperation. In the field of training we worked with activists from extra-parliamentary groups, from human rights, women's, and LGBT groups, and from political parties. Additionally, the group co-operated with the Human Rights Centre of the Izmir Lawyers' Association to train lawyers and police about human rights issues. In general, issues covered in our trainings include creating non-hierarchical structures for grassroots and oppositional political work, consensus decision-making, discussion of militaristic structures within society (starting from the family), and nonviolent alternatives. The individual behaviours and actions of participants are always the basic and central point of

our workshops. We reflect on theoretical analyses and practical experiences of nonviolence and nonviolent actions (starting with Henry David Thoreau and Mohandas Gandhi and leading to today's examples). We include reflections on anarchistic approaches to nonviolence, on Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, and Gene Sharp's strategies of nonviolence.

For more on the application of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed in Turkey, see <http://wri-irg.org/node/23112>

Our group believes that it is possible to eliminate all kinds of inequalities, discrimination, and thus violence and to develop nonviolent actions and methods for social and political change. Therefore, with the principle that 'nonviolence is not an aspiration to be achieved in the future, but the very means to achieve such a goal', our group started questioning everyday life practices that may seem to be 'neutral'. For over 10 years our group has been learning, practising, and teaching the means and methods of nonviolence, an attitude towards life that we are now developing as a life principle.

First, we offer 'introductory' one-day trainings for diverse organisations and for individual activists who question violence within their agendas. Second, we offer 'issue-based trainings' on particular topics requested by groups based on their needs; these have included prejudice, conflict resolution, communication, and sexism. Third, we are working to offer a one-week intensive 'training for trainers' session with individuals who have taken part in the first two training sessions and who want to become trainers; this was in response to a constantly increasing demand for such a module. Since 2002, we have conducted the first and second parts of trainings with diverse groups — working with women, the LGBT community, and human rights, ecology, peace, and antimilitarist groups in Izmir, Ankara, Antalya, Adana, and Diyarbakir.



TRAINING FOR TRAINERS IN TURKEY.

PHOTO: HILAL DEMIR

Individuals who participated in our first two trainings and wanted to be trainers had already started questioning violence and had been trying to integrate nonviolent methods in their institutions and their individual practices. However, they felt they lacked information and experience about ‘nonviolent action’. For example, in Diyarbakir we identified a need to learn about developing nonviolent solutions for fundamental activities (like ‘honour’ killings, and general violence against women). Participants needed empowerment for their work and an enhanced capacity to use nonviolence to create new solutions to ongoing problems.

We are aware that it is impossible to cover all principles of nonviolence in a one-week training. One of the solutions we found is to continue dialogue and to seek possibilities for future meetings of supervision and feedback. Furthermore, during our third training, we plan to form a network between trainers from all over Turkey and will establish operational principles for such a network. This ‘network of trainers’ approach will ensure that our dialogue is sustainable and allow us to continue sharing knowledge and experience among nonviolence trainers and to collaboratively disseminate nonviolence training both at local and national levels.

Our aims

We aim to improve and strengthen the culture of democracy and human rights by introducing the concept of nonviolence, to question the culture of violence (which has a militaristic and patriarchal character in Turkey) in order to sow seeds of a culture of nonviolence, and to raise awareness of and struggle with discrimination in all walks of life. Training trainers will allow them to work for these ends by gaining practical experience and increasing their capacity to facilitate their own training groups.

Nonviolent campaigns

Looking at examples of nonviolent campaigns in Turkey, we can say that these activities have not been organised in an entirely nonviolent way. While nonviolence was one of the fundamental principles, some organisations lacked some of the qualities of a truly nonviolent action, such as preparing for the event with nonviolence trainings. One of the longest campaigns in this regard was the Militourism Festival. This festival, held annually on 15 May (International Conscientious Objectors’ Day), consisted of visiting prominent militarist symbols in various cities, organising alternative events, and publicising declarations of conscientious objections. Another was the ‘We Are Facing It’ Campaign, aimed at coming to terms with the war going on in Turkey. It was spread over an entire year, with major actions held every three months. The aim was to prevent people from ignoring this war by the use of nonviolent means such as street theatre. Another nonviolent action was the ‘Rice Day’, held in Ankara, the centre of official administration, and specifically in front of a military barracks. We gathered there to say ‘we exist, we are here’. As antimilitarists who subverted societal roles in our activities, we used the symbol of Rice Day to enhance group solidarity and end our invisibility. Apart from these major activities, smaller organisations and actions mobilised for short-term political intervention purposes.

ANFEM (*antimilitarist feminists*)

Hilal Demir and Ferda Ülker

ANFEM was founded in the end of 1990s and the beginning of 2000 by five women who were all artists and activists in Turkey, which has a strong culture of militarism where everyone born as a ‘soldier’.

Three of ANFEM members were working in Izmir War Resister’s Association which was a mixed group of 10 people. The association’s vision was: the creation of an antimilitarist, nonviolent culture in Turkey. Our group was unique in those times. We all were learning, too. Nonviolence was new to all of us and to Turkey; there was no practice of it in the history. During our learning about nonviolent tools and theories we were practicing them on ourselves.

As women, we were facing problems within the mixed groups but we insisted on staying because the association’s principles were giving us the platform to talk about these problems although we weren’t successful always. Then the gender problems started to find their names. As women, we weren’t aware that our discomforts, low self-esteems, and fears had common reasons. Our male friends were the ones who were saying the last words mostly even we were using consensus decision making. They were the ones who were carrying “important” tasks. It was difficult to see them in the kitchen washing a mug.

During that time we had a women’s project within the association, an international seminar with our German women friends. During the preparations we had started to have women-only meetings, which made us feel confident working together. We realised that the discomforts we had in our mixed group weren’t personal problems. We started to see these things from a different perspective when two other feminist friends arrived. We didn’t accuse our male friends of course because they didn’t do anything on purpose, we are all living in the same patriarchal society. They were learning, too.

The first time we brought the our gender issue to the mixed group meeting, they didn’t know how to handle it. Some reacted like we were accusing them. But after some discussions they were at least ready to listen more and they were more careful. In our women only meetings the first thing we discussed was how to make us comfortable and more active in our mixed group meetings. For example, if a press released needed to be prepared, instead of letting the usual male friend do it, one of us took the responsibility and other women supported her.

We decided to carry on to meet as women-only even when the international women seminar was postponed. We were discovering. That was very satisfying for all of us because, at first, we didn’t recognise that feminism is a fundamental part of an antimilitarist-nonviolent culture. We had discussions for a long time about who we are, what we are going to do, our vision, our principles, if it would be ‘antimilitarist-feminism’ or ‘feminist-antimilitarism’. We

were activists in the antimilitarist movement but the problems we were facing as women weren't different than any other part of the life.

We all were facing 'hidden' gender discrimination in our political movements. We wanted to create a new way of political struggle which doesn't limit us as women. This search led us to militarism. Militarism is based on violence and power, and it uses patriarchy to control. As women or any other minority group such as LGBTI people we are being discriminated by this system. Feminism was helping us to name the issues. We tried to change those situations when we had an action, meeting etc. As ANFEM one of our aim was to reach feminist or other political groups whose working style was dominated by power as a consequence of our militarist culture. We invited other feminist groups to our nonviolence trainings. After one of our trainings a new, independent women group was founded (Independent Women's Initiative – BKİ). They named themselves feminists later and this group is still actively working. This group was a result of a process that ANFEM had started. With this new link, women who were activists in antimilitarist and conscientious objection movements brought new discussions into our movements. We weren't just supporters, wives or girlfriends or feminists whose only activism area is women issues. A new concept of women conscientious objectors were a product of this journey, too.

For us it is clear that feminism gives a critical perspective on gender problems that are part of our movements and our society. If we are fighting for an antimilitarist, nonviolent world we can't reach our goal without help of feminism.

ANFEM decided to stop working after burn-outs although we are still in contact with each other. My personal thought when I (Hilal) look back after many years to our ANFEM experience, it is not surprising that it didn't last for long, because it was narrowly defined. Yet the link between antimilitarism and feminism brought feminist awareness into Turkish antimilitarist and conscientious objection movements even. After ANFEM, three of us also were part of founding first nonviolent trainer collective in Turkey.



Castor how we mobilised people for civil disobedience

Katja Tempel

X-tausendmal quer' ('x-thousands block') was founded in 1996, in a remote corner of Lower-Saxony in Germany, called Wendland. The region is known for plans to establish a nuclear waste management centre near the village of Gorleben; former plans for the site included a nuclear power plant, a reprocessing plant, a pilot conditioning factory, an interim storage hall for radioactive waste, and a high radioactive waste repository in a salt mine. Currently, only the conditioning plant and the intermediate storage site are functioning -everything else has been prevented, mainly due to the power of the resistance to these plans since the late 1970s.

In the mid-1990s, the first transports containing highly radioactive waste in 'casks for storage and transport of radioactive material' – the so called 'castors' - were brought to Gorleben. The resistance against them was growing, and several groups mobilised to protest against these transports, but people lacked a concrete concept of how to disrupt them. Many people were on the roads and near the train tracks, but often just stood at the side while the castor rolled by – they were left feeling powerless and disorganised. At the same time, state oppression to resistance was increasing. Groups and individuals were being spied on, and surveillance of people's movements and telephone-use increased (internet use was not common at this point). Many activists in the anti-nuclear resistance in the Wendland felt a need for greater secrecy, but that would have only reduced the number of active people. Another strategy was needed.

The call to action

X-tausendmal quer was founded by different individuals from Christian groups, the Centre for Nonviolence (KURVE Wustrow), activists from the office for environment (Umweltwerkstatt) in Verden, nonviolent anarchist activists (associated with the graswurzelrevolution newspaper), and local activists.

In 1996, our main goals were:

- to mobilise a large mass of people for a nonviolent blockade of the next castor to Gorleben;
- to build public pressure to make oppression of activists impossible;
- to give new (nonviolent) impulses to the resistance in Wendland.

We aimed to offer a low-threshold action, that would provide a secure frame through intense preparation in the camp with nonviolent training, affinity groups and consensus decision making, to ensure that everyone's fears and resources were taken into consideration.

To reach our goals we started a call to action, with a self-declaration as the core element; 'I will block the next castor with X-tausendmal quer.' More than 5000 people signed this declaration, which was also a commitment to act non-



THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE BLOCK THE CASTOR TRANSPORTS.

PHOTO: C PALITZSCH

violently towards the police and other people, because ‘we respect the person but criticise the role they are taking’.

The signatures on the declaration were published in the local newspaper. In the weeks preceding the castor transport in 1997, a newspaper page full of signatures (paid for with donations) showed that nonviolent and powerful resistance to the castor transport was growing. We gained political impact, sometimes even hoping that the Lower-Saxony government would cancel the transport in the face of such citizen resistance. As more people from the middle class signed the pledge, the whole campaign gained momentum; people wanted to see their name in the newspaper, to be a part of the big family of resistance in the Wendland.

The public declaration was not just an instrument for internal mobilisation; as more and more people signed the call for action, the probability of prosecution of the signatories decreased. We also hoped that it would reduce police violence against blockaders, as they were no longer an anonymous mass, but individuals from across society, so perhaps making violent attacks less likely.

To reach our goal we printed more than 10,000 leaflets, financed several pages in the local newspaper, held open public meetings, and talked with many people to convince them that civil disobedience is a public responsibility. We understood that direct action is not for everyone, and we offered a wide variety of ways to contribute to the blockade – working in the kitchen, erecting tents in the camp, providing first aid, and everything else that was needed to prepare a camp for several thousand people. The camp acted as a starting point for the blockade and as a safe place to withdraw to afterwards.

The camp and the blockade

On 4 and 5 March 1997, 9000 activists blocked the castor; for many of them it was their first experience of direct action. Students, farmers, teachers, old people, civil servants – all of them with unmasked faces, all willing to risk their bodies and united in the hope for a nuclear free society. Starting at 1am, it took the police over 12 hours to clear the road. Police violence increased during the night, as water canons at freezing temperatures and riot batons were used. Activists endured the pain and remained nonviolent.

As a result of the resistance in Wendland, the Castor transports were stopped for four years, because it was obvious that nuclear waste transports to Gorleben could no longer be undertaken without excessive police violence against nonviolent protesters. It had been not been possible to legally break the resistance and enforce the transports because, according to German law, the police have to adjust their means to the level of violence they encounter, so that against non-violent blockaders only low level violence (like carrying people away) is legally allowed. Everything else is illegal, even if it sometimes still practised.

“I block the castor! You too?”

In the following years we improved our structures and professionalised our volunteer work. We established a list of working groups to prepare the next blockades; media, mobilisation, moderation and training, legal aid, emotional support, strategy planning, technical support, and police liaison.

Every working group consists of a coordinator, regular participants, some ‘learners’, and resource people who are not actively part of the working group. One person is responsible to remind all working groups of their tasks and to control their deadlines. All participants of working groups are listed in a compilation for transparency. We work non-hierarchically, but take into account that people have different levels of experience.



Every four weeks we meet in a coordination group with all the members of working groups. In between we have conference calls.

During the later years of the campaign, our slogan was “I block the castor. You too?” To increase our visibility within the anti-nuclear movement, we produced stickers and t-shirts with the slogan, several mobilisation videos for different target groups (<http://www.x-tausendmalquer.de/index.php?id=36>), and a large poster showing people in a blockade combined with a powerful X as our logo.

Unfortunately, X-tausendmal quer was unable to maintain the same level of mobilisation for the next nuclear waste transports after 2000. Many people were appeased by new regulations of the Social Democratic/Green coalition government for a phase out of nuclear power, and other themes entered the political protest agenda, such as the G8 summits in Genoa and Heiligendamm, the financial crisis, genetic engineering, or right wing radicalism.

Though we never managed to mobilise as many activists as in 1997, the thousands of activists who resisted the castor nuclear transports and learned and experienced nonviolence in our blockades, are motivation enough to continue. Also, many of our methods and strategies were picked up by other groups; non-violence training, affinity group structures, and the ‘five-finger-strategy’ (to flow through police lines) are now broadly used in protest movements all over Germany.

Now, as nuclear waste transports to Gorleben have once again been stopped, we continue to act as a loose network of political friends, coming together at other places in Germany to fight against nuclear bombs, for the rights of refugees or against military infrastructures. Experiences and friendships from the struggle in Gorleben will carry on and give us strength and confidence to continue.



Freedom Flotilla to Gaza – a dilemma action case study

Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin

In 2010, a convoy of six ships – the Freedom Flotilla – set out to challenge the Israeli blockade of the Gaza strip, posing a dilemma for the offending Israeli government. On board the ships were around 700 unarmed civilians from around the world, including some well known personalities, like the Swedish crime novelist Henning Mankell, and parliamentarians from a number of countries. In addition to the passengers and representatives from the media, the ships also carried 10,000 tons of humanitarian aid, such as building materials and medical equipment like X-ray machines and ultrasound scanners. The long journey meant that the pressure built as the ships approached Gaza, making this a drama for the world to watch.

The Israeli government had two main options. The first was to let the ships arrive in Gaza with their passengers and cargo, which in the eyes of many Israeli citizens would mean giving in to pressure. The other option was to stop the vessels. Neither of these options was desirable for the Israeli government, which would have preferred that everything remained quiet about Gaza. Dilemma actions are a type of action in which opponents have to make a choice between two or more responses, each of which has significant negative aspects; the responses are not readily comparable, which is the nub of the dilemma. When the Israeli authorities decided to stop the flotilla their next dilemma arose: what means should be used, and when?

The Israeli government's response

Commando soldiers from the Israeli Defense Force attacked early in the morning on 31 May, while the ships were still in international waters. On board the Mavi Marmara, nine Turkish citizens were killed, some of them shot dead at close range. The killings created an enormous public relations disaster for the Israeli government, and were condemned around the world: the use of force backfired on the Israeli government despite its efforts to inhibit public outrage.

Many governments summoned the Israeli ambassadors or recalled their own. The relationship with the Turkish government, for decades one of the Israeli government's few allies in the Middle East, was damaged for more than a year. Although the Obama administration in the United States was very restrained in its reactions, it expressed criticism of the Israeli government. A UN commission was established to investigate the attacks, and in August 2011 reached the controversial conclusion that the blockade of Gaza was not illegal, but that the use of force had been excessive and unreasonable.

The Freedom Flotilla was not the first attempt to break the blockade of Gaza. On New Year's Eve 2009, 1300 activists from 43 different countries tried to break the blockade by marching into Gaza. This initiative was just as international as the flotilla, and was stopped by Israeli authorities. Since 2008, the

Free Gaza Movement has sent several passenger boats to Gaza, some of which arrived successfully. However, both of these initiatives could only carry a small amount of humanitarian aid, making it less threatening than the Freedom Flotilla – these actions did not impose a dilemma.

Increasing the dilemma

Within the Freedom Flotilla movement there was discussion about how to make the dilemma for the Israeli authorities even more difficult. The following year, 2011, the campaign planned to repeat the journey, and 12 ships were ready to travel towards Gaza, 10 of them from Greek waters. More ships, with passengers from even more countries, were chosen as a means for raising the pressure.

However, the Israeli government avoided a repeat of the 2010 scenario by using more subtle ways of stopping the ships. They cultivated relationships with the Greek government, and launched a successful diplomatic offensive that resulted in UN General Secretary Ban Ki-moon calling on all governments to urge their citizens not to participate in a second flotilla. The Greek authorities banned the ships from leaving their ports; those that attempted to leave anyway were intercepted by the Greek coast guard. Two of the ships had similar propeller damage, leading to suspicion that they had been sabotaged by the Israeli secret service. The Turkish authorities also prevented the Mavi Mamara from leaving Turkey – in spite of the Turkish government's criticism of the blockade of Gaza. Only one ship, leaving from France, was boarded by Israeli commando soldiers. These events prevented a potential public relations disaster for the Israeli government. The Israeli authorities managed to keep the issue in the arena of permissions to leave ports, thus preventing the activists from reaching their preferred arena, international waters. Bureaucratic obstacles are less newsworthy than a military attack in international waters.

The activists had prepared for many different Israeli government reactions, but had not foreseen the possibility of bureaucratic obstacles of this kind. One way to surmount such obstacles would have been for the ships to start from different ports in different countries. However, this would have increased the organisational challenge of arriving in Gaza at the same time. It could have been a way of establishing the dilemma over a longer period of time, thereby increasing the pressure; however, it might have been easier to stop them separately using force, without the media drama of the first journey.

In the section about strategy you can read more about dilemma actions. Although not all dilemma actions involve a constructive element like bringing humanitarian aid, this is one way to make the dilemma more complicated for the opponent. Similarly, surprises and unpredictability can increase pressure. The Freedom Flotilla lost a lot of momentum in 2011 when it was not a surprise as it had been the year before, and the Israeli authorities had learned from their mistakes.

Activists seldom can be certain that their actions will have the intended effect. The Freedom Flotilla did not succeed in breaking the blockade of Gaza. But the fact that the Israeli government worked so hard to defuse a potential repetition of the 2010 experience provides evidence that it had been an effective action.

Further reading:

■ This text is adapted from Majken Jul Sørensen and Brian Martin. 'Dilemma actions: analysis of an activist technique.' *Peace & Change*, Vol. 39, no. 1 (2014): pages 73-100.



Israel: New Profile learns from the experience of others

Ruth Hiller

There was a new political awareness in Israel in the mid-1990s. Increasing numbers of Israelis were objecting to Israel's presence in Lebanon and the loss of Israeli lives. Some were questioning the government's infringement into Palestinian lands. Demonstrations were taking place daily, particularly at major intersections, to pressure Israel to get out of Lebanon. There were several groups who were leading the grassroots movements at the time? Four Mothers, Mothers and Women for Peace, and Women in Black.

Personally, my son had decided to refuse conscription into the military, and I needed to get more involved. I started to look for people who were examining things critically, hoping to find a support group. I had a neighbour who was a social activist and we started going to demonstrations at the intersection close to home. There I heard a woman address the crowd about getting even more involved. The next day I called her and she told me about a study group that had just started meeting on a monthly basis. The group was comprised of middle and upper middle class white women (of European descent as opposed to Mizrahi, Ethiopian or Palestinian origin), most like myself, looking for some way to bring about change together; some were already active in the peace movement, some had lost family members in war.

In the study group I learned how to look at things with a critical, feminist eye. Rela Mazali, a feminist, author and activist in the peace and human rights movements for many years, was the facilitator. She brought materials which we analysed to understand why things are the way they are. We questioned: why is Israel a militarist power? why is there so much discrimination in Israel? what are the similarities between the pyramid of power in the military and civilian life in Israel? what is victimisation? what are the roles of the women and mothers? what is Jewish heritage and what role does it play in Israel today?

We talked about effective movements that we could learn from. We looked

at two different but related South African groups that worked to end apartheid. They are equally important examples of the power of small focus groups who work in a spiral motion and gain momentum.

We studied South Africa's End Conscription Campaign, which was "launched by various CO groups in 1983 to oppose conscription in the service of apartheid. In 1985, after white troops were deployed in black townships, the amount of conscripts not responding to the call ups increased by 500 per cent.". We discussed the End Conscription Campaign through Rela's study and research as an activist and writer, in her ongoing reading about militarisation – first through Jacklyn Cock's book, *Women and War in South Africa* and then, continued with an email exchange with her and others.

We also studied the Black Sash Movement, a group of nonviolent white women who used the safety of their privilege to challenge the apartheid system. They wore black sashes to express their disgust at the racist system. They tied them to trees, posts, on car antennas – anywhere they could be seen by all. We tried to use an orange sash similar to the black sash used in South Africa as a symbol, tying them everywhere possible, but it never took off, it didn't work at the time. (The Black Sash Movement had been an inspiration for Women in Black, which was founded in Israel in 1987.)

But we did find another aspect of their work very helpful. While we had read about this, we also learned from South African women, one white, one black and one of Indian descent, who, in 1999, facilitated a seminar bringing together Israeli women on the Left.

South Africans couldn't congregate in groups of more than three. So they met in groups of three, then one of them would meet with two more people. The South Africans worked in that circular movement, using this deeper way of networking to get the message out and engage in dialogue about ending conscription. It's a matter of discussing with people, not lecturing. Even if you find someone who doesn't agree with you except for one thing, build on that one thing. One on one, or one with a very small group, is more effective. It takes a lot of energy to organise. Everyday life is hard, and it takes a lot to be an activist. But putting the time into this kind of process can be deep and effective.

"For our first open study day in October 1998," Rela recalls, "I wrote up the main principles formulated and followed by the End Conscription Campaign and gave a short talk also proposing possible similarities and differences as I saw them. We returned to these questions from time to time at various points in our meetings, discussions, organising."

In retrospect, we realise this was our founding conference. We were not looking to form a movement. We really wanted to gather together and learn. The events of the day and the fact that over 150 people showed up to discuss and learn made it clear to us that there were people we could work with.

My son being a pacifist may have been a major factor in our group discussion when looking at the issue of conscription and the right to conscience. Some felt that conscientious objection was too radical and later left the group. But about 12 of the original 30 or so women who had been members of what had grown into two study groups are still active in New Profile today. In August of



ACTION IN FRONT OF THE ISRAELI MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, TEL AVIV, ISRAEL. PHOTO: ANDREAS SPECK

2000, New Profile discussed initiating an End Conscription Campaign. However, the Intifada started a month later, sidetracking that idea. We are just getting back to that now with our new campaign “Thinking Before Enlistment”. New Profile recognises conscription as a big part of the militarisation of Israel. Even if the Occupation ended, we still have to demilitarise Israeli society.

New Profile has maintained a learning/action balance. We have internal study days as well as open sessions. We have learning circles five to seven times a year, usually on issues that we want to learn more about. Sometimes we focus on a very specific issue during our monthly plenary. This is usually without guest speakers and focuses on different aspects of what can become a basis for action. But for separate study days and learning circles we may have guest speakers. Sometimes the facilitator is someone from within the group who has learned about something in particular or is an expert in the matter. We want to know more and learn about it collectively. New Profile is non-hierarchical. We have remained an active organisation, working without a managerial board for 10 years. Nothing is ever done single-handedly or without analysis. Nothing changes overnight and, to really make change happen, we need to be persistent. Our study of effective movements made that clear.

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Queer Anti-Militarist directions

Sahar Vardi

As part of New Profile's work with young people experiencing difficulties with the military system before and during military service, we have encountered various cases of homophobic and transphobic discrimination and violence. For example, a military mental evaluator that referred to a transgender as a pervert or a case of a young gay soldier whose fellow unit members threatened him that, if he dare do 'something' to any of them during the night, they will beat him up. When he went to his commanding officers they ignored his complaint, and as a result he went AWOL, in the middle of the night, afraid to return to the barracks. These are just two of many examples not only of homophobic behaviour by soldiers, but also by officers and the military structure itself, leaving soldiers helpless within the system.

At the same time, the Queer discourse that was introduced in our youth work, both in our youth groups and annual alternative summer camp, is bringing New Profile to address, in a still ongoing process, the connection between Queer theory, feminism, and militarism, and how we can connect these different messages in our work. This process was initiated by young people themselves, after being exposed to critical content by New Profile, and in return bought their own identity and politics that were developed in the safe space we could provide, to the door step of the organisation.

This process of seeing things through a Queer political lens, comes alongside a growing discourse about whiteness and how we can challenge it in our work, and at this point we are very much in a learning stage, seeking to understand the issues themselves and how they relate to our analysis. This has to do with the identity and way in which imprisoned public refusers are seen, with challenging the heroisation of conscientious objectors as opposed to people who avoid military service without a clear – and often privileged – public statement, and many other questions that effect our ongoing work.

On the practical side, recognising the unusual yet specific difficulties many queer and especially trans* teens may face while undergoing the process of exemption from military service, New Profile works in collaboration with the Gila Project (<http://www.gila-project.com/>), a trans* empowerment project for and by trans people. The Gila Project volunteers provide community support to those in need, including many teens. Besides the frequent exchange of information regarding trans* people avoiding military service, as well as providing those with support on various level (Gila on a community level and New Profile on the practical level of avoiding and refusing military service), NP's counseling network aspires to train Gila volunteers on the different military bureaucracy so they will be able to independently provide such support to those they reach out to.

We are just at the beginning of this process, led from the bottom up by the participants of our programs, and hope to be able to better articulate these connections in the future, and find how this can manifest itself in our work.

Nonviolent intervention in Kenya: empowering community action for social justice

Benard Lisamadi Agona

Power and rank are often used to oppress the poor in Kenya. For example, in 2012, a very powerful government official in the Kenyan police force used his position of power to illegally acquire a farm belonging to a grandmother, a place she had called home for 20 years. She was evicted from the farm and her six-room brick house was demolished. No legal records could be found in the land registry authenticating the powerful man's claim to the farm. The community lived in fear, and felt they could not challenge the power holders who were perpetrating this injustice. However, alongside other social change practitioners and partner organisations dealing with legal aspects of injustices specifically for women, the campaign team managed to file a case in Kakamega high court and obtained an order allowing the grandmother to return to her farm. In the following days, another round of legal battles between the powerful man and the little-known grandmother, who was now backed by the local activists, began.

Strategies...

Case studies

The nonviolent activists were determined to see the law applied to the letter, though they were aware that any attempt to enforce the law would be challenged, perhaps violently. They knew that any campaign would need concerted effort from like-minded organisations and individuals if it were to be successful. "We started strategising for the campaign. We sought direction from key administrative offices like the area District Commissioner who is in charge of the Security Council in the district. Though he was clear that the law should be followed, he admitted he was not in a position to implement the court order, because the police man was his senior. As a commander in the police, he often deployed armed officers to guard the farm whenever he suspected the grandmother might be planning to return," explains Benson Khamasi, the campaign team leader.

On the Thursday that the activists had intended to take back the grandmother's home, a contingent of armed police officers guarded the farm for the whole day. This confirmed that the powerful man would not respect the law, and would use any means available to him to threaten and intimidate us. The campaign team realised they needed a new plan, and spent the day strategising. One thing that became clear was that the team needed to work with only trusted allies, who would not let their opponents know our plans – knowledge of the campaign plans were therefore restricted to trained members until everything was ready. "We intentionally resolved not to involve the authorities directly as it was obvious that the police chief had threatened them with sackings and transfers, hence they could not go against his wishes," said Khamasi. The campaign involved key allies including the famous *boda boda* riders (motor bike



MAMA ZEPRETA AT HER HOME. HER DEMOLISHED HOUSE DURING EVICTION IS VISIBLE IN THE BACKGROUND
PHOTO: BENSON KHAMASI

transporters), civil societies, Turning the Tide trained resource people, business people, the media, and local farmers (Turning the Tide is a UK-based, nonviolence training collective <http://www.turning-the-tide.org/>).

With the new day for the campaign set for a Saturday, it was time to do serious ground work. This meant visiting the farm covertly and preparing the campaign materials. “I visited the farm late in the evening, disguised as a neighbour’s visitor, to get acquainted with the surroundings, and then left to see the grandmother who had taken refuge in a church not far from her farm. I was moved to tears to see the condition this old woman had been pushed to with her grandchildren. Perhaps this was the moment that made me decide to go ahead with the campaign regardless of the consequences; I could not believe somebody could be subjected to such inhuman acts”, the team leader declared.

Campaign day

The morning of the campaign day was like any other day, apart from in the hearts of the activists — this was a scenario that was between life and death, so determination to push further was paramount. By 9am people had started arriving at the meeting point in a nearby market. “The market was slowly waking up to business unaware of what was about to happen. With leaflets, newspaper cuttings of the story, the court order, and campaign posters, we got on with mobilisation through the market with a fired up jig and dance, and within minutes we had a big crowd that was eager to see what was happening. A short briefing of the plan was given to emphasise our nonviolent campaign discipline, and many offered to join the campaign. We immediately set off in a convoy of motorcycles and women sang songs of praise, all the way into the grandmother’s home.” recalls the team leader.

As the procession entered the home, the caretakers were surprised to see a big crowd in the house they had been hired to protect. The women danced, and the entire village came to see what was happening. Many villagers were happy to receive the grandmother back after many weeks since her eviction. Many could not believe what they were seeing — they knew the farm had been taken over by a powerful person in government and that it was being guarded by armed police. Many wondered how the grandmother was able to take her farm back despite being so “powerless”. The community had opted to remain silent, though they knew that this was the only home for this grandmother, and that she had taken refuge in a nearby church.

One of the activists said a prayer before everyone started the construction of a new house just in front of the earlier demolished one. The entire crowd helped, and was encouraged to see how a community could unite behind a cause to help the woman rebuild her house. Within an hour the houses super-structure was up ready for roofing. The women were busy fetching water for mud walling.

Responding to police violence

Around 2:30pm, when the house was ready to be roofed, the campaign team were told that a contingent of armed police officers was about to arrive. “We quickly briefed everyone to stay calm. In under five minutes the police vehicle — driving at top speed and with flashing lights — veered into the compound and before it could even stop, the armed police officers had jumped out, firing their guns and throwing tear gas at the crowd, sending them running for safety. The whole village was filled with tear gas, and even small children could be seen choking from the gas. Several people were injured, but this did not deter the campaign team from pushing on with the campaign to ensure the grandmother was in her rightful home.

The crowd had left the compound, and officers were everywhere. “We quickly regrouped and discussed a way forward — we agreed three representatives would seek audience with the armed officers. We entered into dialogue, but were categorical that we were not ready to leave except by court order. The crowd became agitated but we managed to calm everyone down, and we adhered to our principles of nonviolence. I believe this was the time the power of cooperation was at work, power with!!” explains the team leader. “After long hours of negotiation the police officers agreed to go and leave the grandmother peacefully in her home.”

The crowd was determined to finish the house before sunset, and by 6pm the house had been roofed. Everyone was overjoyed that they had succeeded even after being threatened and intimidated with guns. It proved that nonviolence is more powerful than any weapon. Though the grandmother lost her big house after the eviction, she is happy to be back on her farm in a house that the community built for her.

Nonviolence strategies have proved beyond any reasonable doubt that they can be used to address the many injustices in our communities. The fact that nonviolence bore results in such circumstances, where violent agitation would not have achieved such a positive result, demonstrates its potential. Violence

would have complicated the issues further and not helped us to achieve our objective. Over the short period that the strategies have been tested in Kenya, they have yielded positive results which have led to many wanting to know more about nonviolence strategies, and allowed the movement to grow. The exposure to risk for nonviolent activism is often less than that compared to violent tactics. Nonviolent social change involves both the oppressor and the oppressed, allowing for more sustainable resolutions to conflict. By minimising risks during a campaign, more people can get involved and the movement can grow by the day. Nonviolence practitioners should seek win-win solutions to conflict to allow for greater reconciliation and dialogue after conflict.

This nonviolence work in Kenya is being implemented by Change Agents for Peace International (<http://www.capiinternational.or.ke>) in collaboration with Quaker Peace and Social Witness (<http://www.quaker.org.uk/work-quaker-peace-social-witness>).



West Papua: “We will be free”

Jason MacLeod and Rosa Moiwend

One of the biggest challenges for nonviolent resisters is dealing with oppression. A worst case scenario is a remote and isolated community facing a genocidal regime far from the watching eyes of the international media. This is the situation in West Papua, a Melanesian nation-in-waiting on the western half of the island of New Guinea, occupied by the Indonesian military since 1963. Papuans want political independence and at the same time they demand recognition of their basic rights as indigenous people living on their customary land. The Indonesian security forces have responded brutally to these demands. Consider these two brief examples:

1. In the early hours of 6 July 1998, the Indonesian military opened fire on a crowd of unarmed protesters camped underneath the water tower in Biak City. The violence did not end at the Tower. Police and military officials rounded up the survivors and took them on board three waiting warships. There the survivors were brutalised and killed. Their mutilated bodies were then thrown overboard. More than 100 Papuans were massacred. No media were present. It took a week before local human rights investigators arrived and even then they had to operate clandestinely and it was months before the story got a mention in mainstream international newspapers, if at all. Even now there has been no inquiry; no justice. The perpetrators were promoted and the survivors were sentenced to jail.
2. Fast forward to 2010. Rev Kindeman Gire, a priest with the Kingmi Church was stopped beside a road by the Indonesian military. He was forcibly held down while soldiers deliberately burned his genitals with a burning stick. Gire later died. Sadly, public acts of torture, like that experienced by Reverend

Gire, are not isolated incidents. Dr Yohanes (Budi) Hernawan OFM, a scholar whose doctorate investigated the practice of torture in West Papua, has documented hundreds of cases. Hernawan argues that far from trying to extract information, the Indonesian military and police use torture to govern. Human bodies are physically marked, often as part of a public spectacle – in police cells or in the front yard of military barracks, in full view of the street – to assert Indonesian sovereignty over Papuans in the most visceral way imaginable. What is slowly changing is that unlike the 1998 Biak Massacre, state violence is increasingly being filmed and distributed to networks outside the country in the hope of gaining international action in support of Papuan aspirations. Gire's death for instance was filmed on a soldier's mobile phone and later obtained by activists at great personal risk. That footage went viral, igniting outrage inside and outside Indonesia.

These two stories should be enough to illustrate that in many ways West Papua is a worst case scenario: remote communities isolated from the international media facing an opponent willing to use extremely ruthless oppression to maintain their rule. Many Papuans sincerely believe the Indonesian government is intent on eradicating them as a distinct people. But as horrifying as these stories are, oppression does not necessarily ensure submission. Activists in West Papua have innovated across the following five dimensions to develop resilience, learning over time how to resist while continuing to build social and political power.

Movements can become much more strategic in order to undermine state power

In order to undermine state power movements need to analyse the source of that power then design strategies and tactics to withdraw cooperation. Papuans are doing that, generating elite defections, cracks in the Indonesia's government system of rule. Most recently, the head of the provincial parliament in Papua, Mr Yunus Wonda, wrote to other Melanesian countries – Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu – to express his support for the pro-independence group the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation. In 2010, all 36 members of the Papuan People's Assembly, a kind of indigenous senate charged with safeguarding Papuan cultural values, publicly withdrew their support for Special Autonomy, a key policy designed to dilute the clamour for self-rule. The Assembly argued that this policy had failed. Then they backed a two-day 5,000 person occupation of the Provincial Parliament.

However, anti-occupation and secessionist struggles face even tougher challenges than conventional regime change struggles, which are difficult enough. As well as building a mass movement inside the country, self-determination activists need to 'extend the nonviolent battlefield'. That requires three things. First, the domain of the struggle needs to be expanded. Resistance needs to be waged inside the occupied territory (like West Papua), inside the territory of the occupier (like Indonesia) and inside the societies of the occupier's elite allies (like the United States, ASEAN countries and the EU). Second, Papuans need to activate what Johan Galtung called the 'Great Chain of

Nonviolence'. That means recruiting new allies who can bridge the cultural and social distance between the occupier and the occupied. Progressive Indonesian allies are starting to do that. Third, Papuans must disrupt the ways the international community provides capacity so that the Indonesian government can continue the occupation. Essentially that means raising the political and economic costs of the occupation.

Movements can innovate tactically

Instead of high-risk, low-participation actions like raising the Morning Star flag of independence, Papuans are experimenting with low-risk, high-participation actions like wearing black clothes, stay-at-home strikes and mass prayer services. Instead of concentrating people in one place these actions decentralise participation; people can take part in diverse locations.

Papuans have also creatively defied laws. When the Indonesian state issued a decree banning displays of independence symbols in West Papua (Law 77/2007), Papuans defied this by painting the flag on their faces and bodies, weaving the Morning Star into nokens (traditional string bags) and displaying other aspects of distinct Papuan culture in daily life. When the police arrested Papuans for painting the flag on their faces and body they retorted, 'this isn't a flag it's paint!', or 'this isn't a flag, it's a noken!' Now displays of the Morning Star on bags, clothes, jewellery and bodies have become so ubiquitous that Law 77/2007 has become almost impossible to enforce. Papuans also use traditional dress and eat Papuan food to reinforce they are Melanesians, not Indonesians.

Movements can develop more resilient organisational structures

Whenever a single charismatic leader has arisen in West Papua they have been neutralised by the state. Arnold Ap and Theys Eluay were both assassinated. Thomas Waingai died in jail. Kelly Kwalik was shot dead by Indonesian troops. Forkorus Yaboisembut currently languishes in jail. That is why West Papuans are slowly shifting to a decentralised network structure, the organisational structure most likely to promote a movement's resilience to oppression. It is important to emphasise that organisational structures like coalitions, alliances and federations still facilitate unity. However, it is unity around goals, strategy and tactics rather than a single hierarchical organisational form. This is what West Papuan leader Benny Wenda talks about when he says: 'Let's not try and have a single organisation, let's have a shared agenda'. The challenge for Papuans is to enhance coordination between the different nodes of the resistance, inside and outside the country.

Individuals can prepare themselves

Courageous resisters are made not born. Kristina Thalhhammer and her colleagues say the path towards a repeated willingness to risk oneself in order to search for justice and protect others passes through six distinct crossroads. At each crossroad decisions need to be made. First, a person has to become aware of the issue. Second, the issue has to be interpreted as an injustice. Third, the

person needs to accept personal responsibility, and fourth identify possible choices for action. The fifth crossroad is taking action and the sixth crossroad is sustaining action over time. Alternative destinations — aside from becoming a courageous resistor — lead to becoming a bystander or perpetrator. Papuan religious leaders like Benny Giay, Neles Tebay and Sofyan Yoman have walked the path to becoming courageous resistors. So too are many political prisoners. So too have many other Papuans. The movement for freedom in West Papua is growing because more and more people are casting off their fear of what the Indonesian police and security forces could do to them. When Rev Benny Giay learnt he was on an Indonesian intelligence hit list he responded ‘I cannot just sit there whenever children of the Lord are being abused or murdered. I have to stand up and fight for their rights and give voice to the voiceless.’ People like Rev Giay enlarge the possibility for others to cast off fear. Their courage transforms their political and social environment. Courageous Papuan resistors help others take action to herald in a new Papua.

Movements can request external assistance

Papuans are inviting different kinds of outsiders to accompany them in their struggle. For a few years — before the Indonesian police forced them out of the country — Peace Brigades International provided unarmed protection to West Papuans. Internationals from PBI embodied the concern of the international community, becoming the eyes and ears on the ground of a growing international network. This is precisely the reason the Indonesian government expelled PBI from the country. Papuans have also secretly invited journalists into the country who have travelled undercover to report on the struggle. Assistance from external actors, provided at the request of Papuans, respectfully delivered in ways that enable Papuan led resistance, and in support of Papuan led goals, is welcomed. The quantity and quality of these international linkages need to be increased.

The struggle for independence and demands for basic rights cannot be separated one another since one influences the other. As one West Papuan leader once cautioned ‘clamouring for basic rights is not the enemy of independence.’ The struggle for independence is much more widely known but West Papuans are also nonviolently defending their land and customary rights. For example there is nonviolent resistance by the Amungme and Kamoro to the U.S owned Freeport gold and copper mine; a campaign for economic justice by women market sellers; and, nonviolent resistance by the Malind Anim indigenous people to the MIFEE (Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate), a staggering 1.6 billion hectare land grab by Indonesian and transnational corporations that will displace hundreds of thousands of indigenous peoples.

Summary

West Papua is occupied by the Indonesian government who use state violence to desperately maintain their grip on power. This direct and systemic violence signifies the poverty of the Indonesian government’s political imagination.



YOUNG ACTIVIST WITH THE MORNING STAR FLAG PAINTED ON HER FACE AT AN INDEPENDENCE RALLY, WARMENA, WEST PAPUA, 2011. PHOTO: ALEXSANDR POTOTSKIY VIA WESTPAPUAMEDIA COLLECTION

However, state violence rests on fundamentally flawed logic. The tighter the Indonesian government tries to keep Papua the more their legitimacy slips. Ultimately oppression, even extremely ruthless oppression, cannot ensure Papuan compliance with continued Indonesian colonial rule. While the Indonesian government refuses to allow Papuans to peacefully, freely and fairly choose their own political future, any claim that Indonesia is a democracy will ring hollow. Through providing concrete examples in this article we have asserted the reality that West Papuans are not giving up their fight for self-determination. Nor are they fighting Indonesian rule on the oppressor's terms. Remarkably, Papuans are using nonviolent resistance and conventional political processes much more than armed struggle. They are using nonviolent resistance to defend their basic rights as indigenous people and to struggle for political independence, while recognising the connections between both goals. With the kind of intelligence, moral courage, innovation and determination demonstrated above, there is no question in our mind that one day, West Papua will be free.

Further reading:

- *West Papua: Civil Resistance, Framing and Identity: 1910s-2012*, Jason MacLeod, in Maciej J. Bartkowski (Ed.) *Recovering Nonviolent History: Civil Resistance in Liberation Struggles*. (Lynne Rienner: Boulder and London, 2013).
- *Freedom in Entangled Worlds: West Papua and the Architecture of Global Power*, Kirksey, S. Eben (Duke University Press, 2012).
- West Papua Media, <http://www.westpapuamedia.info>

I believe that knowledge of nonviolent civic mobilisation must precede nonviolent action. Some might ask what nonviolent civic mobilisation is – it is a way of using conflict constructively, and has many names such as ‘nonviolence’, ‘civil resistance’, ‘nonviolent civic mobilisation’, and so on. While the term ‘nonviolence’ can refer to both an individual lifestyle and as a means of waging political struggle, for the sake of this discussion, I am interested in the second definition, where nonviolence is thought of as a means of struggle that is distinct from the individual lifestyle choices that might also be associated with nonviolence. OSCAR’s (Organisation for Social, Cultural Awareness and Rehabilitation, www.oscaraf.org) involvement in nonviolent civic mobilisation in Afghanistan is guided by this understanding, and we believe that people should be educated in nonviolent civic mobilisation first, and then become active in movements for change. Because very few people in Afghanistan have a positive understanding of nonviolence, many do not consider it as a means for waging struggle for gaining their constitutional rights. To counter this, OSCAR has been conducting workshops for civil society members and young people in some of Afghanistan’s provinces, to increase awareness of the power of nonviolence.

I first encountered nonviolence when reading a book called ‘*Civilian Jihad in the Middle East*’, edited by Dr Maria Stephen. This book is a collection of writings by various authors about the philosophy of nonviolence and the history of nonviolent actions in Islamic communities in the Middle East and North Africa. I was completely new to the philosophy of nonviolence when I started reading, and prior to this the only thing that I knew about nonviolence were the names ‘Bacha Khan’, ‘Gandhi’, and ‘Martin Luther King’. Crucially, I thought of nonviolence as passive and attempting to avoid conflict. However, after reading and translating the book, I learned that nonviolent civic mobilisation is not passive – nonviolence is an active alternative to violence for waging political struggle, and can be used by communities to demand their rights.

I had hardly finished reading the first quarter of the book when I decided to translate the book into Pashto. I realised that the message of nonviolence needed to be spread among young Afghans, because they deserve to live peaceful lives after decades of war. To achieve this, they have to know about peaceful, nonviolent methods that can help them gain their constitutional rights. Having completed the translation of the book, I had gained an understanding of the methods of nonviolent civic mobilisation and I understood how nonviolent civic mobilisation worked. I would also have frequent discussions about nonviolence and the tactics involved with my colleague, Maria J Stephen. Communicating with others about nonviolence helped me to gain confidence in the approach, and in 2011, I felt ready to conduct an introductory workshop for the members of civil society in Kunar.

The six-day workshop, which was the first of its type in Afghanistan, attracted attention from the local community. Alongside *Civilian Jihad in the Middle*

East, we also used the CANVAS guide on nonviolence, *50 Crucial Points*, and Gene Sharp's book, *There Are Realistic Alternatives*. Thirty people attended, 11 of whom were women. Three of the women were members of Kunar Provincial Council, while others were journalists and women's rights activists. At the outset of the workshop, the logic of nonviolence was strange for the participants – they believed that nonviolence was a weak way of waging struggle, and was inconsistent with Afghan culture. However, towards the end of the workshop, their perception about nonviolent civic mobilisation had changed. Since that first workshop, OSCAR has been involved in teaching nonviolence in a number of other provinces in Afghanistan. Alongside our nonviolence trainings, OSCAR writes articles in local languages, gives interviews to the local media and distributes Pashto translations of *Civilian Jihad in the Middle East* and *A Force More Powerful*.

With the passage of time, I felt the need to develop a curriculum for teaching nonviolent civic mobilisation in Afghanistan that is responsive to the specific cultural and economic environment here. After studying nonviolent civic mobilisation and attending some seminars on the philosophy of nonviolence, OSCAR developed a curriculum that is based on Islamic and other cultural references relevant to Afghanistan. The curriculum explores the relevance of nonviolent civic mobilisation in an Afghan context, the history of nonviolence in Afghanistan, leadership, and strategy in nonviolent movements. It also explains sources of power and the mechanisms for communication that can be used in Afghanistan to mobilise nonviolently. The book argues that conflict itself is neither good nor bad, and that it depends on the attitude and approach of those engaging in a conflict as to whether it is constructive or damaging. Finally, our nonviolence handbook explores violence in its various dimensions and forms. Every discussion is followed by a practical exercise, which gives the participants an opportunity to work in groups to discuss the various topics and their relevance to their own situation.

The mentality that violence is a solution to a problem and that ordinary people don't have the potential to introduce change in their own lives, are the two main hurdles in spreading the philosophy and practice of nonviolence. To challenge this mentality, OSCAR uses historical examples from the Middle East and the nonviolent movements in India as illustrations, and shows workshop participants documentaries such as *A Force More Powerful* (a series of documentaries that illustrates different nonviolent civic mobilisation movements in some areas of the world). Countering the perception of nonviolence as weak or passive is challenging, but Afghans are aware of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement led by the Pashtun leader Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan, and this helps us to demonstrate the potential of nonviolence. The movement is also known as '*Surkh Posh*', ('Red Shirts'), and in the 1930s they waged a nonviolent campaign against the British in today's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Though some Afghans accuse Bacha Khan for siding with the Communist regime in Kabul, he is widely respected as an influential Pashtun leader. Afghans believe that Bacha Khan's movement worked for social reforms among Pashtuns, and should be used to transform the political, social, and economic conditions in Afghanistan. Since many Afghans know and respect

Bacha Khan and the *Surkh Posh* movement, we are able to use this story to demonstrate the relevance of nonviolence in an Afghan context.

The majority of our trainees are young people, and we use Facebook groups to build our network. Although we focus mainly on young people with modern education and other activists, we also provide opportunities for religious scholars and tribal chiefs to attend our workshops. Perceptions of nonviolence are changing, particularly among those who have attended our trainings. They now believe that nonviolence is a strong tools and should be spread among young people. OSCAR believes that once the Afghan civil society is equipped with non-violent civic mobilisation they will be able to start waging nonviolent campaigns. Although Afghans wage nonviolent actions on a small scale in different areas of the country, with more support and training they will grow in confidence and be able to start larger scale nonviolent campaigns. I hope OSCAR's work will serve as an inspiration for others in the future.

To support the promotion of nonviolence in Afghanistan, OSCAR was established in 2011. OSCAR teaches the methods of nonviolent civic mobilisation, and is one of the few organisations promoting nonviolence in an Afghanistan – <http://www.oscaraf.org>



Diaspora solidarity for Eritrea: the Arbi Harnet campaign

Abraham G. Mehreteab

Conditions in Eritrea

Eritrea – one of the ‘Horn of East Africa’ countries – was established in 1890, when the region was colonised by Italy. After being occupied by the Italian military in 1890, Eritrea remained an Italian colony for many years before falling under a UK mandate in 1941, and then became a federated state as part of Ethiopia in 1951. After some unsuccessful nonviolent campaigns in the cities and towns in the 1950s and 1960s, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) began the armed struggle for independence in 1961. By the 1970s, there were two rival Eritrean armed movements at war with one another – the ELF and the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). After the civil war ended in 1981, the EPLF dominated Eritrea both militarily and politically, and achieved independence for Eritrea in 1991.

In 1994, the EPLF was renamed the ‘Peoples’ Front for Democracy and Justice’ (PFDJ). Two decades later, the PFDJ remains the only legal political party, and control the country politically and economically. There is no right to free speech, assembly, protest or free media. Thousands of Eritreans are in detention for their political views, without access to due process.

Since the government introduced ‘National Military Service’ in 1995, the country has become highly militarised. All grade 12 students attend the ‘Sawa

Defence Training Centre’, where – though the students do not carry weapons – they are treated as members of the national military service, and do marching and military training exercises. Though nominally set at 18 months, no military-fit national service recruit has been released from military service since the Eritrean-Ethiopia war, which ended in 2000. Military service in Eritrea is unpaid, and has forced many young Eritreans to flee the country.

As a result of the PFDJ’s harsh treatment of political dissent, opposition to their rule has been almost exclusively based in the diaspora, including a significant presence in Ethiopia. Inside Eritrea, resistance is limited to isolated incidents and occasional acts of defiance that have been easy to isolate and curtail, even if it they have had support from military officials or government ministers.

Arbi Harnet (“Freedom Friday”) is a campaign run by members of the Eritrean diaspora living in USA or the EU, which aims to link acts of resistance inside Eritrea with the diaspora community. The diaspora resistance aims to be informed and guided by realities inside Eritrea, and to support resistance groups inside the country. *Arbi Harnet* seeks to encourage the nascent movement for democracy inside Eritrea, by developing contact with ordinary Eritreans, transmitting messages to them, and encouraging them to take collective action. Because social and traditional media are tightly controlled by the government, mobilisation work has to be carried out utilising methods that allow for creative engagement of ordinary people. To do this, the campaign uses mobile and land line telephones.

Phone call activism

Every month, *Arbi Harnet* chooses a relevant and pertinent issue, and contacts the Eritrean public, using a ‘Robo-call’ machine to make hundreds or even thousands of phone calls, directly into Eritrea. diaspora activists use the calls to encourage opposition to the regime by boycotting government-led commemoration events (such as on ‘Independence Day’ and ‘Martyr’s Day’), asking people to stay indoors as an act of protest on Friday’s, and to encourage discussions about collective resistance actions.

The first attempts at calling in to Eritrea were in November 2011, and saw 200-250 calls a month. By 2013, 5,000-10,000 were being made each month, using a computer to make automated ‘Robo-calls’ which delivers pre-recorded messages. The calls specifically request that, on Friday’s, people ‘silence the streets’ by staying at home, an act of resistance that is sensitive to the Eritrean context and allows many people to participate. Activists have also chosen specific days or events to send messages into Eritrea, and tailored their message accordingly.

May 24 is ‘Independence Day’ in Eritrea. The human rights agenda had taken centre stage for those reflecting on the turn of events in the country since the hopeful post-independence days. The number of prisons and prisoners, and outflow of young refugees is a stark reminder of where Eritrea has ended up after independence. On Independence Day, *Arbi Harnet*’s calls aims to give ordinary Eritreans an insight into international solidarity, and encourages them to reflect on those who lost their lives in the independence struggle, and on the conditions in Eritrea.

Similarly, calls made on 20 June are designed to coincide with Eritrean Martyr's Day. The calls encourage Eritreans inside the country to reflect on the promise of the revolution and uphold the promise of a 'Free Eritrea' as a tribute to all those who died fighting for it.

In July 2013, the government of Eritrea 'graduated' thousands of 'national service recruits' and sent them home for a brief period before deployment to military service posts or the militarised 'education institutes'. The Arbi Harnet activists saw this as an opportunity to engage with young people in the army or military schools who will not have access to information even in the form of the automated monthly messages. A specific call, encouraging young people to organise amongst fellow recruits and work to uphold justice, was transmitted, mostly to mobile phones.

Impact in Eritrea

Arbi Harnet has been able to build trust between activists in Eritrea and those in the diaspora. Activists have started working together, for example by smuggling posters printed outside the country into Eritrea. As trust has grown, activists in the country have suggested ideas for other work relevant to the situation in Eritrea, such as a poster campaign in support of a disabled war veteran, and a full colour glossy poster campaign themed 'enough is enough!'

As trust has increased, activists have collaborated on more adventurous projects such as "MeqaleH Forto" (*'Echoes of Forto'*), an underground newspaper. As activists in the country become more effective and confident, the diaspora 'Arbi Harnet' activists hope to play more of a supportive role and continue to develop the Robo-call project.

Reaction

The project has enjoyed unprecedented international media coverage. Eritrean media outlets in the diaspora have covered the movement's actions on Facebook pages, Twitter and other media outlets. Inside Eritrea, citizens have reacted positively to the messages and the calls have attracted outrage from government officials and their supporters.

When the May calls were announced, the organisers were informed by their contacts inside Eritrea that households in Asmara were required to report to their local administration office – in traditional festive outfits – to join the official 'Friday Evening Carnival'. However, the turnout was low, with only young children and diaspora visitors attending the event. Among other things, the calls have played a great role for the reaction of the government.



TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Tasks and tools for organising a training

This section describes exercises to help in developing your nonviolent campaigns and actions, and ways of bringing them together to create training sessions and workshops. These exercises can be used during nonviolence trainings, workshops, or group meetings. Exercises make our time together more participatory and contribute to the process of learning and building capacities among participants.

The exercises we have collected come from a variety of sources in our rich history. Often, these exercises have been adapted and changed over time. We expect that you will do the same, changing them to meet your needs. While most of the exercises in this section can be used for different purposes, we give some recommendations for where and how to use them best, as well as tips for the facilitator/trainer. Each exercise also has a link back to a section in the handbook where more information about a particular topic can be found.

We hope you find these exercises useful in your process of building nonviolent campaigns and that they motivate you to search for and develop more exercises to continue to enrich the repertoire of the nonviolence movement.

Topics for nonviolence training

Trainings — especially when relatively short — tend to focus on a specific element of nonviolence relevant to the group at that time. For example, if you're training in preparation for an action the following day, there are probably better things to focus on than a comprehensive history of nonviolent movements! However, in a broader training looking at strategy, this might be a very helpful element to look at, and there are some excellent exercises in the handbook that can help with this. Below is a list of different topics that trainers have covered in their trainings.

- History and philosophy of nonviolence and practice of nonviolent action (see 'history of nonviolence', p13)
- Overcoming oppression, ethnic/racial, and gender dynamics (see 'nonviolence and gender', p22).
- Campaign strategy development (see 'why things don't just happen' p39, and



NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION TRAINING IN SANTIAGO, CHILE

PHOTO: ANDREAS SPECK

‘planning nonviolent campaigns’ p46).

■ Consensus decision-making and quick decision-making (see ‘working in groups’, p89, and the ‘decision-making’ exercise, p211).

■ What an affinity group is, and roles within the group (see ‘affinity groups’, p96, and ‘roles before, during and after an action’, p128).

■ Skills such as legal and media work (see ‘legal support’, p136, and ‘media’, p131).

Planning and facilitating trainings

Planning and facilitating nonviolence training requires a range of tasks that a number of people should share.

First, campaign organisers need to be aware of when and what training is needed. Does the group need training in strategic campaign development or gender sensitivity? Is training needed to prepare a new group of people to participate in nonviolent actions, or for an experienced group to achieve new skills? Do affinity groups need training in group process? Does everyone in the group know each other?

Once a decision is made to have a training, trainers are needed. As stated in ‘Nonviolence Training’ (p18), if trainers are not available, create a team of co-facilitators to do the training. This section has check-lists to help organise, plan, and facilitate trainings.

Organisers and trainers need to talk together before working on their own tasks. A lack of clarity and assumptions made by trainers or organisers can result in an ineffective training. A training can be an important opportunity to test plans, to find weaknesses in the group, or to bring more people into the process. A trainer must be open to those goals.

If the trainers are part of the group, they need to be clear about their role as trainers. While they understand the context, the group, the campaign, the action scenario, etc. better than an outside facilitator, trainers deeply involved in the work can have difficulty stepping into a different role; clarifying roles should help in that process.

The “Developing strategic campaigns” (p39) and “Organising effective actions” (p84) sections include information that can help trainers and organisers understand what they need to do and what they may need to train for.

Working together

1. Several of the organisers and all the trainers should meet well in advance to plan the training. Depending on the situation, the organisers may need to go back to the group for further decision-making. The trainers’ questions may help the organisers understand what more they need to do to prepare the group for the training.
2. Discuss how much time is needed to accomplish the goals of the training. Can it be done in one day (how many hours) or a weekend? Can the training be done in steps, following the process of campaign development? Do you need a series of trainings to plan a campaign? Some groups take a holiday week to plan and prepare for a campaign. If people are travelling to an action, how can you plan for training?
3. Trainers need information about the participants: are they people coming together just for this action or do they meet regularly? What level of experience do they have? Have they done trainings before? Have they done nonviolent actions and what kinds?
4. Discuss the group’s approach to nonviolence and training. Does it have non-violence guidelines? (See p102.)
5. Ask the campaign organisers to present specific information at the training (e.g., scenario plans, campaign background). Be clear how much time they have for this task.
6. Identify what handouts are needed; use maps and pictures if appropriate.
7. Be clear who is responsible for bringing supplies (markers, paper, tape, photocopies of handouts, copies of the handbook, equipment for films, etc.) and arrangements for food or other physical needs.

Check-list for organising a training

1. Make sure that the space where the training will occur has enough room for people to do role plays and exercises, to sit in a circle, and that it is accessible to those coming.
2. Make sure there is a wall board or paper to write on.
3. Food and beverages are important; make sure someone is responsible for it or that participants are asked to bring something to share.
4. Outreach should include a clear description of the training and the need for full participation, its length, and other details.

Check-list for facilitating a training

1. Facilitators should realise that it may take as long to prepare for as to actually present/facilitate the training. It is important that co-facilitators work together to build the agenda and are clear who is responsible for what and how they will work together.
2. Be realistic about the amount of time allotted for each section. Don't give in to the pressure to do the training quickly if it can't be done. Start the training with introductions. Break the ice with introductory exercises. Take some time to put together a group agreement (see p94) which states how the group want to communicate, relate to each other, and what participants responsibilities are to each other.
3. If the group members know each other well, ask a question so people learn something new about each other. If trainers don't have enough information about people's experiences, use non-competitive ways to ask. Set a tone, explaining that the trainers need the information but that it is not an exercise in identifying who is 'better'.
4. Early in the training, have exercises that will encourage participation, such as a simple parallel lines (see p193). Balance activity in pairs or trios with activity in larger groups.
5. Mix discussion with moving exercises; provide regular breaks.
6. Keep track of time, and mark possible cuts if you get behind schedule. But don't cut the last items as they may be some of the most important, such as the scenario role play.
7. Always leave time for evaluation, and use different forms of evaluation. Write on wall charts 'what went well' (+) and 'what could have been better' (>). Ask a series of questions to solicit comments; use a go around or a brainstorm method. Written evaluation forms are very helpful for long trainings.

Intellectual Property

Only a few of these exercises give 'credit' to particular trainers or training groups. We apologise in advance to anybody who feels they should have been credited as the author of a particular exercise. Please let us know so that we can rectify this on the Web and in future printed editions. However, most exercises used in nonviolence training have been passed from group to group and adapted according to new situations or styles.



Parallel lines (also known as ‘hassle lines’)

Time: 20 minutes (as an introduction or warm-up), 45 minutes (as a full exercise).

Goal or purpose:

- To give people an opportunity to solve a hassle or conflict using nonviolence.
- To experience a conflict from various viewpoints.

Preparation:

A series of role plays are needed, each focusing on a conflict between two people, with a clear protagonist (see the sidebar for ideas of scenarios).

Nonviolence

Conflict

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Coping with the stress and strain of taking a stand
Maintaining nonviolence during an action

Training

Role playing

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

The facilitator asks people to form two rows of an equal number of people facing one another (you can use another row, which will play the role of observer and then comment during the debriefing on what the person saw during the exercise – the ‘observer role’ is also useful to give to those who do not wish to participate in the exercise.) Ask the participants to reach out to the person across from them to make sure they know who they will be relating to.

Explain that there are only two roles in this exercise, everyone in one line has the same role, the people opposite them have another role. Each person relates only to the person across from them. The facilitator explains the roles for each side, describes the conflict and who will start it. Encourage creativity and spontaneity.

Examples of roles:

- Conflict between two activists; perhaps someone new wants to join an action after the planning and training process.
- Someone planning to engage in nonviolent action/someone close to them who is opposed to their participation.
- Blockading a weapons or government facility/frustrated or angry police officer.

In some cases it may help to brief the two sides separately – as the role plays develop, you might want some to play the role of angry or belligerent police or security – so that the other ‘side’ responds as naturally as possible. Feel free to change the rules without letting the whole group know – for example, brief the ‘police line’ to target one individual (perhaps someone they identify as an ‘organiser’), ignoring the others. How does the rest of the group respond in this situation?

Allow for a few seconds of silence and then tell them to begin. Depending on the situation, it may be a brief hassle (less than a minute) or you can let it go longer, but do not let it extend beyond 3 or 4 minutes. Call ‘stop’ and debrief.

Debriefing questions might include:

- what did people do?
- how did they feel? What did you notice about your body language, voice, or other ways your body responded to conflict?
- what ways did you find to solve or deal with the conflict?
- are there things you think you could have done differently to respond more constructively to the conflict?

Replay the role play (perhaps add another element, or develop the situation), switching roles around. Moving one line up and having the person at the end go to the other end of that line is a quick and easy way of mixing up the lines.



Brainstorming

Time: 15 minutes, or longer

Goal or purpose:

- Brainstorming is a group technique designed to generate a large number of ideas in a limited amount of time.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

The facilitator gives the group a question (for example, ‘what is nonviolence?’) or an issue you want to come up with more ideas (‘developing a fund-raising strategy’), then asks the group to come up with as many ideas and responses as possible. The following guidelines will help produce an effective brainstorm.

- Focus on quantity: The more ideas generated, the more to pick from.
- No criticism: Criticism, challenges and discussion should be put ‘on hold’ until the brainstorming is done.

Nonviolence brainstorm

Try coming up with a single definition to answer ‘What is nonviolence?’ Through the brainstorm the participants can share many answers to that question – try to find enough commonality to reach a final definition that everyone can agree on. It can be enlightening to do a ‘What is violence’ brainstorm at the same time, again, trying to reach a definition. The facilitator should pay attention to key words, and check to make sure that words like ‘power’ and ‘anger’ don’t only appear in the violence brainstorm. This can be used to support and inform other exercises, such as the spectrum game (p213).

- Unusual ideas are welcome: To get a good and long list of ideas, encourage creative responses to a problem.
- Combine and improve ideas: Good ideas can be combined to form a single very good idea.
- The facilitator should be aware that a brainstorm usually starts slowly, picks up speed as ideas are sparking other ideas, and then slows down again.

Wrapping up

After all the ideas are up on the wall, ask if there is anything that people have a question about, or that they disagree with. Open this up for discussion. You don’t always need to come to consensus following a brainstorming session. Or you may want to sort out the answers for further discussion.



River of life – gender lens

Time: 45 minutes minimum, depending on how much time is spent sharing the drawings.

Goal or purpose:

- To explore how gender has shaped and influenced participants lives, and help participants to articulate this.

This version of ‘river of Life’ focuses on exploring participants’ journey to their understanding of gender, but this can be used in a whole host of other ways too, exploring different parts of identity, or as a broader tool for articulating life experience. Adapt the instructions to fit different forms.

Preparation/materials:

Minimum – a piece of paper and pen for each person.
 Larger pieces of paper, and a wider range of art materials (paint, coloured pens, glitter, charcoal, glue, coloured paper) can also be helpful.
 String and clothes pegs or bulldog clips – set up a ‘washing line’ across the room to display the final pieces.

How it’s done/facilitators notes:

Tell the group something like;

“We’re going to explore how gender has been a feature in each of our lives, the influence gender has had, how we have felt, how we have been seen by others, and the impact that this has had on us.



We're going to use the example of a river, with all its twists and turns, rapids, gentle sections, waterfalls, and bridges to reflect on this, and we're going to create a picture using the art materials to do that. Use the different features of a river to illustrate how gender has manifested in your life, both positive and negative experiences. Use the exercise to reflect on how your understanding of gender has changed over time."

Give some time – at least 15 minutes – for participants to create their image. Invite a quiet, reflective atmosphere so people can think and express themselves – at this stage, this is an opportunity for individuals to express themselves. Encourage people to find their own space in the room. Some might get distracted by the quality of the art, rather than the quality of reflection – look out for this, and encourage them to 'fill the paper'.

Encourage people to think about their home or family life, their experience at school or work, or in activist groups; what influenced their understanding of gender, and their own gender identity? Has that ever been challenged, or reinforced? Have they ever benefited – or lost out – because of their gender, or how their gender was perceived by others? Have there been any radical shifts in how they understand gender?

After the 15 minutes, or when the group seems to be generally finished, invite those who want to to share their illustration to do so, explaining to the group what they have drawn and why. Give plenty of time and space for this, and make it clear that this is the individual's time for sharing, not for questions or comments from the group. If the group is very large, then there may be more benefit in smaller groups sharing with each other, rather than as a large group, and then sharing back to the whole group something they have learned from the experience. If people feel comfortable, hang all of the images on a washing line, or stick them on the walls of the training room, to allow everyone to see everyone else's work.

In whole group discussions – or when introducing the exercise – use open, inclusive language.

When working with gender in a group, it is important that your language reflects the complexity of gender, and doesn't reinforce binary gender constructions, or impose that lens.

If some are struggling with thinking about gender in anything but a fixed, binary way or they have no 'relationship' with their own socially prescribed gender, after introducing the tool as above spend some more time helping these people; avoid long (and potentially heated) discussions about 'whether or not gender is constructed' with the whole group. In this situation, it might be helpful and less challenging to think about how societal understandings of gender have changed historically, (e.g. 'male' and 'female' roles), before bringing this back to the individual's experience.

Imagine the future: setting goals

Time needed: 60-120 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- to ‘imagine the future’ and develop steps to get there;
- to develop campaign goals, including short and medium range goals.

Preparation/materials:

Flip-chart and markers

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

To ‘imagine the future’ start by placing a vision the group shares at the top of a piece flip chart paper. Underneath, write goals that the group thinks would need to be achieved to make that vision a reality. Ask the group to choose one of the goals that is most appropriate for them to work towards, and to assign a date in the future when it could be reached.

Encourage the group to imagine they are already in that year; their vision has been fulfilled! Ask the question: what conditions had to be met for the goal to become a reality? What changes needed to take place? How did people’s attitudes and behaviours change? Were there changes in government policy, or in other institutions? When did these changes happen? Place the important changes on the paper, beginning with the goal and working backwards from the goal (the future) to where you are now (the present).

Once you have a complete picture, all the way from the campaign goal to the present moment, it might be helpful to prioritise the changes you need to achieve. The table below can be helpful when doing this; give each change a number from zero to four.

For achieving or preventing us from achieving our goal this change is...

4	3	2	1	0
... sufficient (to achieve the goal, this factor alone is sufficient)	... necessary (to achieve our goal this factor is indispensable, but other factors are also needed)	... influential (this factor has the potential to influence other – sufficient or necessary – factors positively or negatively)	... of some relevance, but can (probably) be ignored	... irrelevant (neutral)

Nonviolence

What makes a campaign nonviolent
Historical uses of nonviolence

Strategy

Why things don't 'just happen'
Planning nonviolent campaigns
Theories of change
The movement action plan

Training

Pillars of power
The problem tree/healthy tree

Changes which, on closer examination, are irrelevant should be taken off the chart, because they do not contribute to achieving the campaign goal or vision.

In addition, you might add changes which would be threatening to the vision or campaign goal, and which need to be avoided. This can help to make you aware of dangers to your strategy. An exercise like the pillars of power (see p203) or spectrum of allies (see p208) can be support this process.

Encourage the group to reflect on each change, moving further from the goal (the future) back to the present situation, looking at the relevant changes, and what changes needed to happen to bring this change about. Do this until you get back to where you are 'now'.

By the end of this process, you will have a string of parallel and intertwined changes, which will give you a good idea of what the short and medium range goals for a campaign might be. A campaign might only focus on some of these strings of changes if, for example, other organisations are working on other aspects of the change.

This exercise is based on Elise Boulding's "imagine a world without weapons" workshops, which asked participants to imagine what a 'world at peace thirty years from now' would look like.



10/10 strategies

Time: 30 minutes, minimum

Goal or purpose:

■ To learn about the rich history of nonviolent campaigns, gain a better understanding of campaigns, tactics and movements

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

The facilitator asks people to break into small groups of five or six. Ask one person in each group to list numbers 1 to 10 on a piece of paper. Tell groups they are "competing" with one another to see who can do the task in the fastest time (as opposed to our usual cooperative style!)

Tell each group to list 10 wars as quickly as possible, raising their hands when they are done. Facilitator should note the time, and when all groups have finished, ask them to make another list of 10 nonviolent campaigns, and again raise their hands when done. Note how it takes longer to come up with the non-violent campaigns than the wars!

Starting with the "winning" group. Write their list of nonviolent campaigns on a wall chart, then ask other groups to add to the list. There will probably be

Nonviolence

Historical uses of nonviolent action

Strategies

Planning nonviolent campaigns

Case studies

All of the case studies are examples of nonviolent strategies that could be used alongside this exercise

Training

Letter from a Birmingham Jail

a mix of movements, tactics, campaigns, etc. List them all and then use the list to explain the differences so people learn about strategic processes and how effective strategies develop. For example, the list may include “anti-apartheid” (movement), “Salt March” (a campaign) and “sit-ins” (a tactic). It may also include campaigns they’ve been involved with (if groups are struggling, this can be a helpful way of helping them fill their lists).

See the Glossary of terms in this handbook (p225). Using the list, ask the participants to describe components of campaigns, identify tactics, and describe what makes a movement. You can also use this list to introduce people to campaigns they are not familiar with; participants will often enjoy giving brief summaries of campaigns and actions — especially if they were involved in them!

This exercise can become the basis of a longer discussion; use a well known campaign as a case study to learn about strategic development of nonviolent campaign; the ‘Letter from a Birmingham jail’ (p205) exercise is a good introduction to doing this.



The problem tree/healthy tree

Time: Minimum 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To identify and analyse the nature and components of the problem and to come up with positive responses

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

Describe the problem tree:

Draw a tree with roots, a trunk, and branches with fruit. The tree represents the problem. Participants identify the roots (causes), the fruits (consequences), the trunk (the institutions that uphold the system.) You can also add the underlying principles that are found in the soil that “nurture” these root causes.

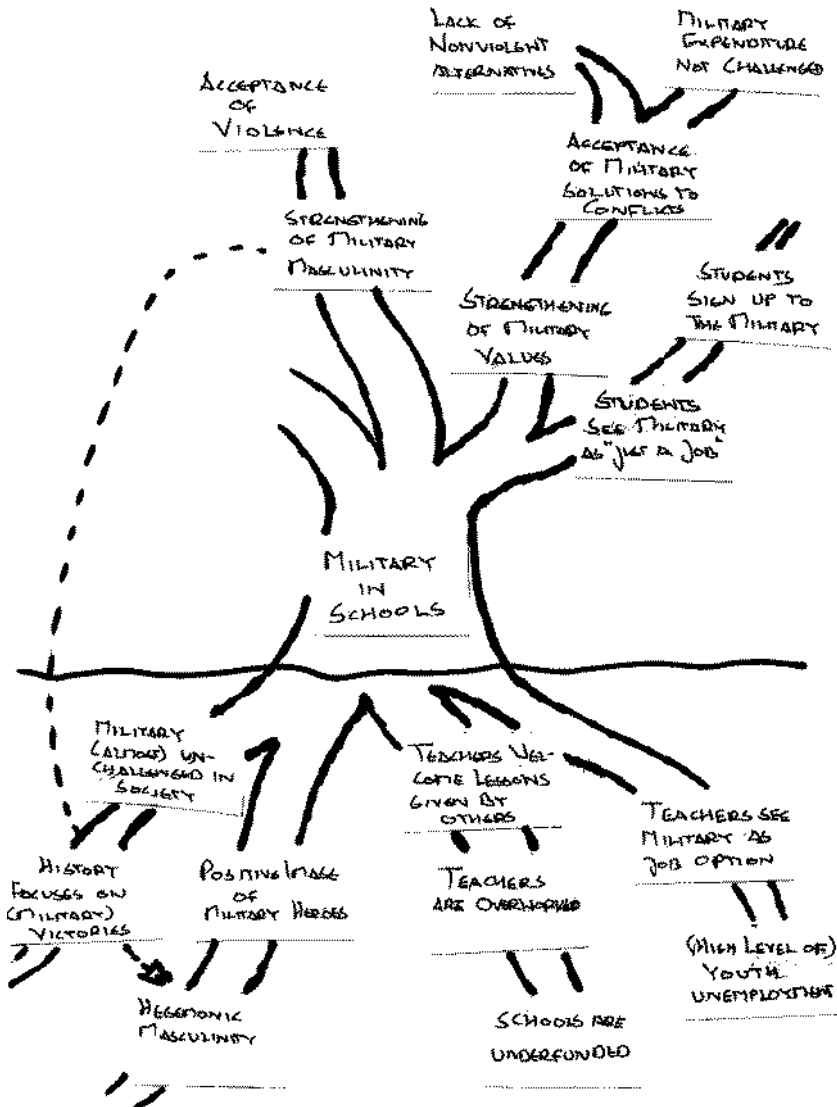
Analyse the problem tree:

Choose the institution in the trunk of the tree that your group wants to weaken. Draw another tree, identifying the root causes, consequences and using the list of questions below to analyse the situation.

Nonviolence
Violence
Strategies
Why things don't just happen Planning nonviolent campaigns Theories of change
Training
Imagine the future: setting goals

Healthy tree:

What is the healthy fruit we want to grow? What roots do we need in order to grow healthy fruit? What roots do we need to cut? What structures need to be developed for a healthy society? What needs to be resisted? What values need to be in the soil to strengthen the roots? Identify goals to grow a healthy tree, or goals to cut down an unhealthy tree. Can we answer the above questions positively?



*

The pillars of power

Time: Minimum 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To identify the pillars holding up the power structures we want to knock down.
- To analyse the pillars with the goal of developing strategies to weaken them.
- To identify the vulnerability of power structures.

Nonviolence

Nonviolence and power

Strategies

Mobilising for change: building power in Nepal
Theories of change

Training

Imagine the future: setting goals
Power flower
The healthy tree/the problem tree

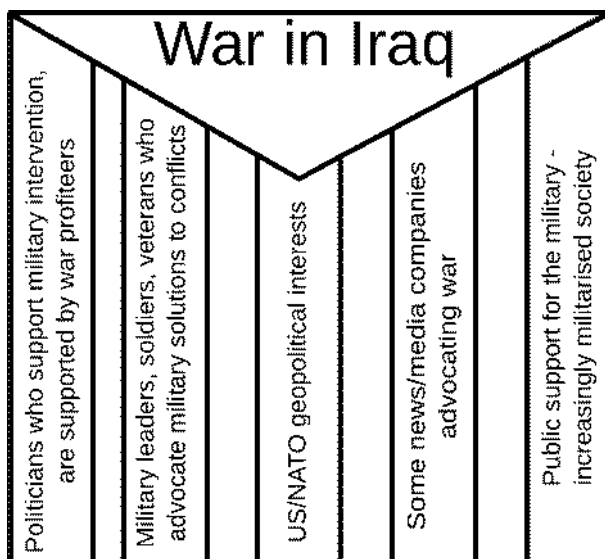
How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Describe the Pillars

Draw an upside down triangle, with pillars holding it up. Write the name of the problem in the triangle. It can be an institution or an injustice ('war'), or a more specific problem ('lack of access to water supply in our village').

Ask the group to identify the pillars that represent the institutions and factors that support the problem (the military, corporations, patriotic citizens...) Be specific about elements of the support structures ('the military' includes the leadership, soldiers, veterans, military families). This will help as we analyse how to weaken the structure.

Identify the underlying principles that are the foundation of the pillars (i.e. sexism, greed, lies).



Analyse a Pillar

Choose a pillar that your group wants to knock down. Consider your group's mission as you make your decision. Draw another set of pillars, writing the name of the institution from your chosen pillar in the triangle, and analyse what powers hold it up. The questions in 'analyse why this problem exists' in the 'planning nonviolent campaigns' section of this handbook (p46) are helpful analysis tools.

- Do we understand the context and the root causes of the problem?
- Who benefits and who suffers from it, and how?
- Who holds the power, and who has the power to create change? (Who forms part of the structures underpinning the problem? Who opposes it?)
- Does the problem affect people differently depending on their position in society, based on their gender, age, race, class, etc.? (See 'gender and nonviolence', p22.)
- What are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for a campaign to change this?
- How does our commitment to nonviolence affect our analysis?

Explain to the group that while the problem seems hard to shake, the inverted triangle symbolises its weakness. Whole pillars do not need to be knocked down to weaken the power, weakening the pillars can have a great effect.



Power flower

Time: 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To support groups and individuals to recognise how their own social identity does – or doesn't – align with those most powerful in society.

Preparation/materials:

Before the workshop, draw a blank version of the 'power flower' on flip chart paper. You will also need blank copies printed on smaller pieces of paper – enough for everyone to have one each.

Nonviolence

Nonviolence and power
Gender and nonviolence

Strategies

Mobilising for change: building
power in Nepal

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Legal support

Training

ANFEM (antimilitarist feminists –
women group)
West Papua: 'we will be free

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Introduce the exercise. Tell the group that they are going to reflect as a group and individually on who has power in society, what the features of the most powerful people in society are, and in what ways we as individuals do (and don't) intersect with those.

Introduce the power flower – each 'petal' represents one social category; for example gender, ethnicity, educational background, economic class, language, geographic region, age group, etc. Facilitate a discussion with the group about what the main features are of the most socially powerful people, identifying the dominant characteristic in each feature (for example, is there a particular age group who tend to have the most power? Where does their power come from?) When the group agrees on one, write it in one of the outer petals. Power could be derived from economic positions, the cultural or historical background, access to policy makers, for example.

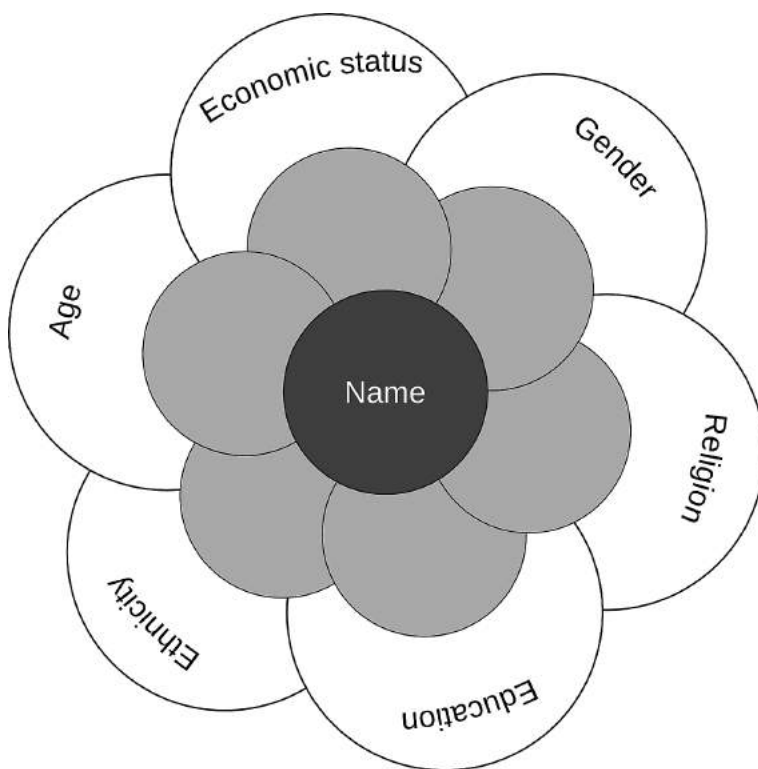
When the outer petals are full, hand out the smaller printed versions. Ask everyone to write their name – or draw a picture that represents them – in the centre, and to copy the features from the large version across. Everyone now works independently, writing how their own identity reflects that of the most powerful in society (for example, if an outer petal refers to ethnicity, they write a word reflecting their own ethnicity in the corresponding inner petal.)

Give five minutes for people to think about and fill in the flower; ask if people need more time, and if everyone is ready then bring the group back together. Use what people have identified as the start of a discussion. Which features overlapped? Which didn't? Is there anyone in the group who identified with all of the dominant characteristics? Had they recognised this before? Similarly, is there anyone for whom there is no overlap? How does the group uphold – or subvert – dominant power structures? Is there anything else the group can do to identify and empower those who share little with the features of those with most societal power?

If the group is struggling to identify the dominant identity features, ask the group what they notice about the number of men in governmental positions in comparison to women, historically disenfranchised or oppressed groups, or which groups do (or don't) get most media airtime.

This exercise will obviously be more complex if done with an international audience – if this is the case, group people into country-specific groups, or work together still, but focus on a particular country (perhaps where the training is taking place).

Exercises like these – which can remind people of the structural conditions they face – can leave people feeling very downtrodden. Towards the end, encourage discussion about how the individuals or the group have responded positively to the issues that the exercise has brought up.



Letter from a Birmingham jail

Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To explore different elements of a campaign strategy.
- To help a group reflect on the power of non-violent direct action.

Preparation/Materials:

Write the quote below on a wall board or chart before the exercise. Have the quote on hand-outs, and lots of marker pens for marking if you plan to use small groups.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

In his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr. wrote, "You may well ask, 'Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, etc? Isn't negotiation a better path?' You are exactly right in your call for negotiation. Indeed, this is the purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and establish such tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatise the issue that it can no longer be ignored"

Write this quote on flip chart paper.

Facilitate a process of deconstructing the quote, using the action that participants are preparing for. If there is not a common action, use an example of an action that the group is familiar with. Use the following questions to facilitate a discussion;

- What is the crisis? What is the underlying crisis that created the conflict?
- Describe the tension.
- Who is the community who 'refuses to negotiate'?
- How do we 'dramatise the issue'?
- What is the goal of the nonviolent direct action? What does it mean, for the issue to 'no longer be ignored'?

Use coloured markers to underline or circle the concept you are focusing on and to note the descriptions.

Depending on the size of the group, and whether or not the participants are from a single campaign or are a mixed group with a range of backgrounds, it may be helpful to break the group down into pairs or small groups to identify the features before reporting back. If the participants are not directly involved in a particular campaign, use a well known campaign as a starting point, or break the group into pairs and give a different well known campaign to each smaller group. As groups report back you can write things up on the large quote.

Nonviolence

Nonviolence and power
Conflict

Strategies

Why things don't just happen
Planning for nonviolent campaigns
Conflict escalation

Nonviolent actions

Sending the protest message
Forms of nonviolent action
Tactic star
Activism inside oppressive regimes:
some lessons from South Africa

Risky situation

Time: 40 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To identify different kinds of fears we will face when taking part in direct action (legal consequences, risks of the action itself, losing control and acting violently, failing the group...)

■ To promote awareness of ourselves and the group, and an understanding of how we respond in different situations.

Preparation/materials:

A printed handout with the description of four risky situations, a pen or a pencil.

It can be useful to know the kind of actions that the group usually organises (or is planning to organise), to adapt the sentences to situations that the group could potentially face.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

In groups of four, participants are presented a scenario in a nonviolent action which involves a particular risk. In each situation, there are four options possible responses. Each person has a printed handout of the scenarios, with four possible options of how to respond.

Each person is assigned a different scenario, and everyone takes some time to read it through and decide how they would respond. For each scenario, the group takes it in turns to decide how they think the person assigned that scenario would respond, and explains why. After the group have given their ideas, the person assigned that scenario explains what they think they would do in that situation and why.

The same exercise is done four times – in each round the four members of the group reflect on a different person (it should take about five minutes per round). **See exercises opposite.**

Nonviolence

Nonviolence and power
Conflict

Nonviolent actions

Fear
Coping with the stress and strain
of taking a stand

Case studies

Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people courage to defy Chile's dictatorship
Freedom Flotilla to Gaza – a dilemma action case studying
Nonviolent intervention in Kenya: empowering community action for social justice

Training

Role playing
Forum theatre

**Examples of risky situations and of options
(to be adapted depending on the group's actions)**

1. You are part of a group of six people, chained together in an outdoor setting. Your initial plan was to stay until the morning, since that's when it is really strategic to be there. However, unexpected rain makes you feel very cold, and makes it more difficult to stay there all night long. If you quit, the action ends. In this situation do you:

- A. Quit the action as soon as possible because you cannot manage to stay until the morning.
- B. Try to stay at least a few more hours. Cold is psychological and I have to learn to resist.
- C. Decide to stay for as long as possible because you are very few and you can't fail to the group.
- D. Explain the problem to the rest of the group, and try to find a solution.

2. An angry protester is leading you in to a trap, and angry riot policemen are threatening to use violence. You are there with your affinity group, but tension and panic are making it very difficult to keep the situation under control. In this situation:

- A. The most important thing is to keep the group together, even if this means being more static. My effort, whatever happens, is to keep the group together.
- B. I stay with at least some colleagues and try to pretend we are not in the demonstration.
- C. I run away as fast as I can! Once I am safe I'll be able to take care of the others, but right now it's best to escape.
- D. I feel nervous and angry because of the behaviour of the police, and I start insulting them.

3. You plan to take part in a nonviolent action that could have legal implications. On the way, you realise that you fear the legal implications, and that you do not feel as sure as you did during the group meetings. In this situation do you:

- A. Abandon the action at the last moment, inventing some sort of excuse.
- B. Abandon the action at the last moment, but before it starts, telling the rest of group the truth, that you fear the legal consequences.
- C. Take the risk and do the action, aware that if there are arrests, you might be able to escape.
- D. Assume the risk of my decision, accept the possibility of being arrested, and go ahead with the action.

4. Your group is preparing a non-violent action to be held at a military base, that requires discretion and secrecy. Suddenly, there is a rumour that there is an infiltrator in your group. In this situation you:

- A. Don't believe the rumour and ignore it.
- B. Propose the group should hold an urgent meeting, to talk about it as a whole group.
- C. Propose to cancel the action because it can be too risky and dangerous.
- D. Try to discover by yourself who the infiltrator is, to decide what the group should do with this person.

Debriefing

Debriefing should go in two directions: discuss the types of fear that can arise in nonviolent actions, and consider what it is good to know about other people in the group. Use the follow questions to help guide a discussion;

- Did the groups guess correctly the option that other members of the group think they would take in risky situations? How well do we know ourselves, others in the group, and the reactions we could have in a risky situation?
- What kinds of risky situations/fears have been tackled in the exercise? Are there other risks/fears that can be present in nonviolent actions that have not been mentioned in the exercise?
- How do we handle risk when taking nonviolent action?
- Which individual and group strategies do we already use to manage fear? How do we currently take care of others who are fearful? What else could we do?

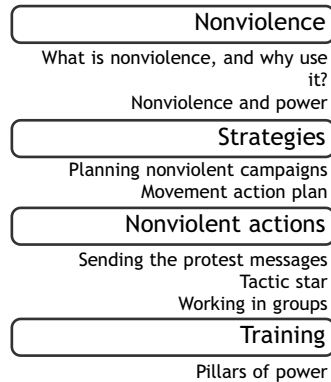


Spectrum of allies

Time: Minimum 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To understand who our allies and opponents are.
- To learn that tactics need to be planned in relation to how much they do or don't attract key allies and move people towards being active allies.
- To encourage more optimistic mobilisation efforts through a realisation that it is not necessary to win over the opposition to our point of view.
- To invite people into the fascinating complexity of strategising.

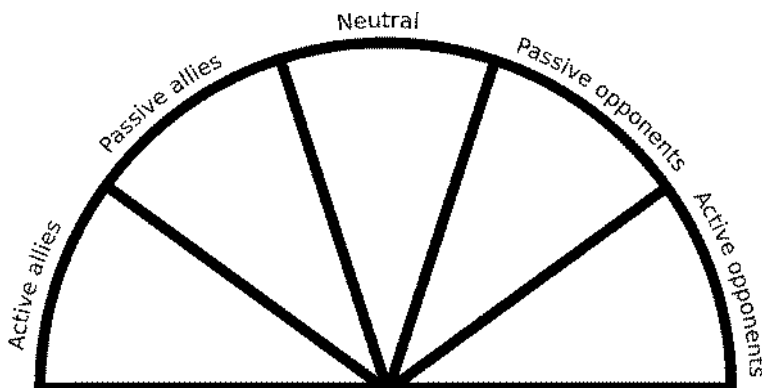


How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Explain that societies (or towns, or states) include a wide range of groups that can be put on a kind of spectrum, from those closest to the point of view of the advocates to those who actively oppose change. Draw a horizontal line to represent that. Those who advocate change are represented by a point at one end of the line (say, on the left), and the opponents by a point at the other end.

Draw a semicircle with wedges. The wedges closest to either end are the active allies and opponents, next in are passive allies. The group in the middle are neutral.

Use the issue the group is working on, or if this is a general training ask for an example of an issue that people in the group might be working on. You can also use an historical example that everyone would know. State an



agreed demand we might have, and ask who in society might be inclined to be most supportive, least supportive, or neutral. Give examples of groups: 'unions?', 'poor people's groups?', 'business community?'. As participants identify groups and their location on the spectrum, and write them into the 'pie'. Encourage discussion and reflection. Aim for specificity.

Identify why people are neutral and discuss if there are ways to move them toward becoming allies. Also note where people may already have moved from one wedge to another and discuss why (for example, soldiers and veterans tend to support wars at first, but as the war wages, opposition develops.)

Give the good news: in most social change campaigns, it is not necessary to win the opponent to your point of view, even if the powerholders are the opponent. It is only necessary to move some or all of the pie wedges one step in your direction. If we shift each wedge one step, we are likely to win, even if the hardliners on the opponent's side don't budge.

As the group develops its strategy and relevant tactics, encourage them to identify which wedge they are addressing and how they can move people in their direction. In making choices about who to reach out to, ask:

- Which groups do we have some access to, or credibility with?
- Which groups are not being reached?
- Given our group's purpose, which groups are we most suited to persuade?

Developed from: http://www.trainingforchange.org/spectrum_of_allies

✱

Tree and wind

Time: 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ Trust games help to highlight situations of insecurity or fear, and of confidence in yourself and the group

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Coping with the stress and strain
of taking a stand
Fear

Training

Risky situation

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Form a tight circle of six to seven participants, with one person placed in the middle. The person in the middle should place their feet solidly on the ground, close their eyes and let themselves fall to one side (as if you were a tree being moved by the wind). The rest of the group is around them, with their hands in front of their bodies and they pass the person that is in the middle from one to the other, without any brusque movement and not letting the person in the middle fall. It's important that everyone in the circle coordinates to make the 'tree' move from one side to the other. After a minute, another person from the group goes to the middle. Ideally, everyone will have a turn as the 'tree', so that they can share their experiences.

After everyone has been in the middle, debrief the activity.

The following questions might be helpful:

- What did it feel like to trust the group for your safety?
- Have you had experiences in your activism where you have had to trust a group?

Don't assume that everyone is comfortable or willing to touch other people or to be touched themselves; this exercise is quite intimate, and a facilitator should make sure that people do not feel pressured into participating if they do not want to.



Decision making

Time: Minimum 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To practise making decisions in a group.
- To prepare people to face crisis situations and to get them into the frame of mind in which they will think quickly under stress, focus on key issues, learn to ignore minor ones and to reach action-decisions.

Preparation/materials:

A series of scenario's relevant to the group and actions they may be preparing for, or taking part in.

If using the exercise to practice consensus-decision making, have small copies of the consensus flowchart on p100, or the same flowchart drawn up on flip chart paper.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

As a group, talk through the decision-making process that will be used. For example, if using consensus decision-making, talk through the consensus flow chart, talk about the facilitator's role, and give some tips on reaching consensus. Make sure that everyone is clear on the process that will be used.

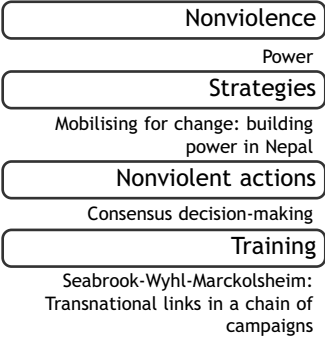
Split the group into smaller groups, of no more than eight people. Give each group a scenario, for example:

Your group is acting as 'peacekeepers' on a march, when a participant in the action faints. What do you do?

With the first scenario, give the groups several minutes to make a decision, but

Doing too many quick decision exercises – especially right before an action takes place – can establish a mind-set of emergency, raise tension, and cause people to panic. Quick decision exercises should be tempered with other training experiences to prevent this perspective of imminent danger. When reflecting on each of the roleplays, encourage the group to reflect primarily on the process or experience of making a decision, not the final decision they came to.

If there is enough time available, starting the exercise with a broader discussion by brainstorming (p194) around the headings 'What makes a good decision' and 'What makes a bad decision'. Introducing the broader principles of good decision-making can help to get a group in the right frame of mind for the scenario's.



reduce the time for later – perhaps more urgent – scenarios. When the time is up, invite the groups to reflect on what they have experienced. Did you manage to make a decision? How did you make your decision? What helped or hindered the process? Did everyone agree?

Spokes councils

A next step is to run the exercise as a spokes council. Identify several small groups that act as ‘affinity groups’ during the exercise. Give them a new scenario, and ask each group to choose a spokesperson for their group. Once each ‘affinity group’ has come to a decision the different spokespersons meet together and come to a decision about what to do. After they reach a level of consensus, each spokesperson returns to their affinity group, and consults them about the proposal. The group can make recommendations or changes, and then all the spokespersons meet again to come to a final decision that will – hopefully – be a decision that everyone in all of the different affinity groups can live with.

After the exercise, debrief the process. Was everyone happy with the decision? Did the process work? What challenges or problems could there be, and what could the groups do to overcome them?



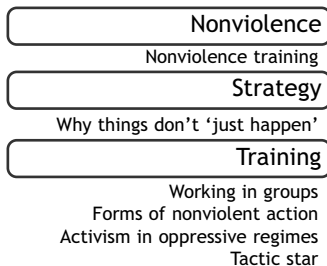
I could do that if...

Time: 30 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To help people become aware of their fear boundaries and to think of ways of being supported over them.

■ To enable individuals and groups to identify their strengths, capacities and potential in order to be more effective. This activity is good for personal and group empowerment and for campaign planning.



Preparation/materials:

Prepare a ‘could do if....’ table on flip chart paper, with four columns; ‘Activity’, ‘Could do easily’, ‘Could never do’, ‘Could do if...’. You will also need a marker pen for each person.

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

Ask the group to call out different actions people take for social change, and write them as a brainstorm on a piece of flipchart paper. Let the group know you’re looking for a wide range – you may need to invite more/less radical examples, or suggest some yourself to ensure there are actions the group might

ACTIVITY	I COULD	I COULDN'T	I COULD DO THAT IF
~~~~~	• • • •	• • • • •	• •
~~~~~	• •	• • • •	• • • • •
~~~~~	• • • • •	• •	• • • • •
~~~~~	• • • • •		• • • • •

find extreme or challenging. When you have 20 to 30 actions, work with the group to list 15 to 20 of them in the table, making sure there is a range from relatively easy to very challenging.

Invite people to consider their responses to each action and work in pairs to share these with their partner, completing these sentences: 'I could do that' or 'I couldn't do that' or 'I could do that if...'. Encourage participants to work through the list quickly – it's their immediate responses that are important.

Now invite everyone to come to the chart and put a dot in the column appropriate to them. Use marker pens to ensure the dots are large enough to be seen from the back of the room.

When everyone has worked through the list, bring the group together and ask:

- What do you notice about the list?
- Where are there clusters of dots? What does that say about the group?
- Where are there no dots or only one or two? What does that say to you? Is there capacity within the group to do an action like this?
- Let's hear about some of the 'ifs'. What have you said that would enable you to do some of these actions?

Based on the version in the 'Turning the Tide' Kenya handbook.

*

Role playing

Time: 30 minutes minimum

Goal or purpose:

- To analyse situations and consider theories and tactics anticipate new situations, reveal fears, anxieties and other feelings people have about an action;
- To understand people and their roles, including insight into the thoughts and feelings of our adversaries;
- To develop individual and group competence and confidence and develop group morale.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Although role plays can be very complicated and involve many participants, they often are designed to look at a limited situation, not an entire action. Consider what the group needs to practice in order to prepare for a particular action. See 'roles before, during and after an action' (p128) to determine roles that may be needed.

Set the scene and run the role play

The facilitator sets the scene, sometimes using simple props to prepare the role play and characterise the roles, so that all participants understand the physical scene. The participants are given a description of their role describing the motives and interests of the role. People are given a few minutes to get into their role, and if they are in a group they might map out tactics. The trainer indicates when the role play begins and when it ends. The role players act their given role as they see it.

Role plays are a good opportunity for people to test their comfort zones and try something they have never done before, but it is important for facilitators to prevent physical or emotional injury to the participants, quickly stopping the role play if dangerous situations emerge.

It is important to be clear about the difference between reality and role play. Role plays can give an exaggerated sense of confidence; counter this by talking through the limitations, drawing on the experience of those taking part in the exercise.

Be creative! For example, practice disrupting shareholder meetings by having a facilitator give a ten minute presentation (perhaps on methods for disrupting a meeting!); all of the participants have to do something to disrupt the presentation.

Nonviolence

What is nonviolence, and why use it?

Conflict

Nonviolent actions

Maintaining nonviolence during an action

Working in groups

Coping with the stress and strain of taking a stand

Roles before, during, and after an action

Training

Tools for grounding, protecting and blockading

Hassle lines

Risky situation

Evaluation and debriefing

After the role play is stopped, the participants are given a brief pause to come out of their roles for the evaluation. Encourage participants to share their emotions that came up during the role play, as well as reflecting on the practical elements. If not everyone could see the entire role play it helps to have a very brief overview of the events. Participants can share what they learned during the exercise, and what they would want to do differently next time. Observers are asked to share their views about what happened, what went well, what needs improvement, what seemed to increase or decrease tension.

Re-run the role play to consolidate learning (optional)

The evaluation should only go on as long as new issues are raised and participants are exploring problems and alternatives. Make sure that attention is given both to the practical elements of the action within the role play, and on how the participants felt in different situations. It can be helpful to start the role play again, allowing the group to try alternatives that came up in the evaluation, rather than just continuing the discussion. One way to do this is to repeat the same basic plot with different people in the roles, or change the situation by bringing in new roles, such as police, press, or members of the public.



Spectrum and cross spectrum (also known as a barometer)

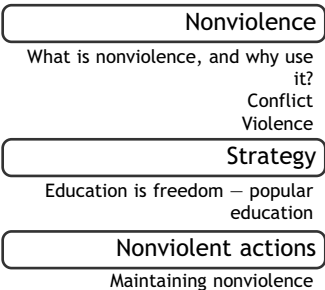
Time: 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To test or illustrate the breadth of opinion within a group.
- To identify what makes an effective action.
- Can be used to test or develop specific proposal for effective nonviolent action that the group can agree on.

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

Spectrums are a useful tool for exploring the breadth and depth of opinion within a group, on a wide variety of issues.



Spectrum

Identify a space where group members can place themselves along a line. The two ends of the line represent polar opposites; ‘agreement/disagreement’, ‘I would/I wouldn’t’. Present a clear statement or scenario, and ask people to stand in a place on the spectrum that represents how they feel about it. Make

it clear that there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, just different opinions, and that it is important to listen to each other and try to understand each others’ perspectives. Ask participants to explain why they have stood where they are; encourage brief, snappy responses. If the group is large, invite participants to discuss with those near them why they have chosen to stand where they have; this helps everyone to participate and voice their position, even if there isn’t time to hear everyone in the full group.

Cross spectrum

A variation on the spectrum is the ‘cross spectrum’; effectively, two spectrums on different axes. A good example of how the cross spectrum can be used is by labelling the ends ‘violent/nonviolent’ and ‘effective/not effective’, and going through a range of action scenarios; participants have to decide to what degree they think an action is violent/nonviolent, and effective/ineffective.

The facilitator makes a cross (+) on the floor with a ribbon, rope or masking tape, large enough to make a grid that the group can stand on. Write ‘non-violent’ and ‘violent’ on opposite ends of one line, ‘effective’ and ‘not effective’ on opposite ends of the other. (Instead of tape, you can simply put the words on paper on the four walls of the room.) The facilitator presents an action scenario, and asks people to stand in a place on the grid that represents how they feel about it (for example, nonviolent but not effective). As above, ask participants to say why they stood where they did.

If the purpose of this exercise is to create an effective nonviolent action for a specific situation, the facilitator and participants should make suggestions that move people towards the nonviolent and effective ends. The facilitator should make a list as people identify what is needed to make the action more effective and nonviolent. (i.e. training for all the participants, good media work, etc.)

The facilitator should ask questions to get the group thinking deeply – use examples that might be controversial! Useful points to try and draw out of the group might be; whether language or words, environmental damage, or property destruction (such as a ploughshares action, or graffiti) should be thought of as violent.

Participants might be tempted to immediately move into a discussion after the first person has explained why they have stood where they are. Watch for this – if it happens, ask participants to complete the sentence “I am standing here because...”



“Is it newsworthy?”

Time: 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To explore how a group could use or adapt their actions to enhance their work with the media.

Preparation/materials:

A large piece of flip chart paper and markers – draw a ‘spectrum’ cross, marked with ‘news-worthy/not newsworthy’ and ‘core message/not core message’ (see diagram).

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

On a number of small pieces of paper, ask the participants to brainstorm some of the actions or activities that they have done – or plan to do – as part of their campaign. Encourage a broad view (for example, if the group has moved offices, or bought a new printer, or done a survey, write these down too – they are activities relevant to the group or campaign) Each action should be on a separate piece of paper.

Nonviolence

Gender

Nonviolent actions

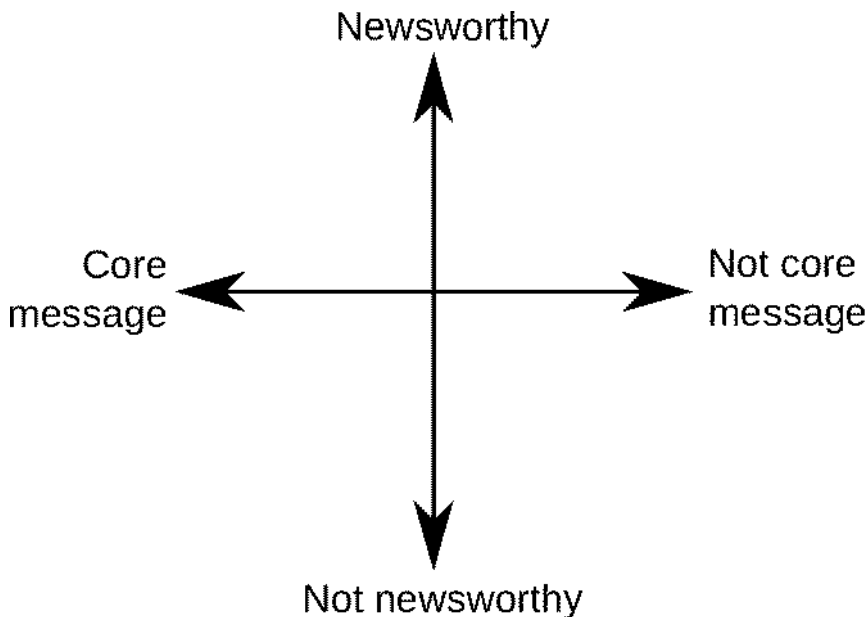
Sending the protest message
Media

Case studies

Use of social media in nonviolent
campaigns: the case of South
Korea
Castor – how we mobilised people
for civil disobedience

Training

Spectrum and cross spectrum
Letter from a Birmingham Jail



After collecting a number of actions (5 to 10 should be enough), add to each piece of paper, in a different colour, brief descriptions of what the ‘message’ that each action was setting out to give, either explicitly or implicitly: What’s the story going to look like? How would the action or activity have been ‘read’? What is the message?

Now, turn to the spectrum. Explain that the group has to place the different actions and activities on the spectrum, depending on how ‘core’ the message being given is to their campaign, and how ‘newsworthy’ that particular action has been (or could be) seen in the eyes of the media. Encourage debate, discussion and specificity. Hopefully, you will have a broad spread across the spectrum, of different activities with different messages. Use the results to reflect on the group’s activities, how attractive their actions might be to the media, and how they could adapt their actions to make them more so.

■ Is the group putting media energy into ‘core message’ actions that are not newsworthy? What could the group do to make the action more newsworthy?

■ Are there any ‘newsworthy’ actions which are not carrying the ‘core message’? In what way could the group make sure that their core messages are being heard in these types of actions?

■ Is the group trying to get coverage of any actions that are neither newsworthy, nor core message? Why? Would their media activity be better placed elsewhere?

■ What about the ‘newsworthy/core message’ actions; What could the group learn from these? Are they getting the coverage the group would like? If not, this might mean they need to improve their media work.



Forum theatre

Time: minimum 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

■ To provide a forum for people to find solutions and invent new ways of confronting oppression.

■ To explore and analyse different options in an oppressive situation.

How it’s done/facilitator’s notes:

Forum Theatre is a form of role playing that can be used for public action or in training. The basic idea is to act out a scenario – which perhaps leads to an undesirable conclusion or violence – and then do the scenario again. The second time, either a participant in the role play or any other observer can shout ‘freeze’, and take over a role in the scenario to try to do something differently. The second time new players act out the scenario from the beginning. When the role play is

Nonviolence

Power and nonviolence
Conflict
Violence

Strategy

Education is freedom: popular
education

Nonviolent actions

Dilemma actions
Working in groups

Training

Role playing

interrupted with ‘freeze’, the role play stops, then resumes at the same point with someone doing the newly suggested action.

A short forum theatre

(There can be much more involved scenarios with many more players; here is a simple plot to begin with.)

Cast: two group members, one official, one official’s receptionist

Plot: Two members of your group visit a relevant state official to report an act of violence against your group. The trainer might identify the official and attackers more specifically according to the situation. It is unclear whether there was collaboration between the police and whoever attacked your group. Before entering the office, the group members decide what documentation they have about the attack and what they are actually wanting to achieve. The official is briefed on the attitude to take (ranging from generally sympathetic through feigning that they will take it seriously, to outright hostility and counter-attacking on the provocative nature of the group) and also on motives (desire to keep group quiet, to find out as much about them as possible). The official should start by doing something to wrong foot the group and taking the initiative themselves (at least telling them how busy they are, and perhaps asking to see their identity cards). The official should also consider doing something friendly, or scary – friendly would be reminiscing about their activist youth, claiming friendship with parents of some group members: frightening would be showing knowledge of private lives of group members. Note in replaying the scenario, the official can introduce new challenges.

Discussion points:

- What were reasonable objectives? How could they take the group take the initiative in the situation?
- How much did they want to divulge about the group and its members? Were they putting other group members or their families at risk?
- If they convinced the official to promise to do something, how could they firm that up into an agreement and make sure it was done? How could they have prepared better for this visit?



Who has power in a school?

Time: 45 minutes

Goal or purpose:

- To help people see that virtually everyone has some power.
- To convey the basic nonviolent understanding of power – that power comes from the obedience of others, and that there are various kinds of sources of power.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Explain that this exercise is about understanding 'power over' so that social change groups can identify effective application of their 'power with', namely their ability to have a positive impact on the world (for more on power, see 'nonviolence and power', p34)

Ask people to brainstorm all the people or groups who have power in a school. You will quickly get a list of pretty well everyone involved. If an important group or person is missing (Secretary of State/caretaker), you can add it yourself. Ideally this is done on two pieces of flip chart, so that you can write the people on one sheet and the source of power on the other. If working on one sheet, leave enough room between names to add in the source of power.

Next ask them why 'X' has power. Where does the power come from? What is its source? Why do people do what 'X' says? Time usually doesn't permit to do this for the whole list, but make sure you cover the head, the pupils, the caretaker, the school secretary, parents and Secretary of State. This will give a good range of sources. Write participants responses in a different coloured pen. The third stage is a facilitated discussion about power in general. Capture participants main points in a third colour. Try to draw out the core point of this exercise which is that the power of some comes from the obedience of others. People in a position of authority and power have gained that position because consciously or subconsciously others have given their own power over to them.

If you have enough time, begin this exercise by brainstorming why students, generally, obey teachers. Give a particular command as an example ('open your textbook, and do the first exercise on page 15'), and brainstorm all the reasons that a student would follow that command. This exercise can demonstrate how different people have power, and are able to exercise 'power over' because of the obedience of others.

This exercise is adapted from Turning The Tide:

http://www.turning-the-tide.org/resources/manual/powerchange#full_list

Nonviolence

Power and nonviolence
Conflict

Strategy

Theories of change
Constructive programme

Nonviolent actions

Working in groups
Consensus decision-making

Case studies

Nonviolent intervention in Kenya:
empowering community action for
social justice

Training

Pillars of power
Spectrum of Allies
The healthy tree/the problem tree

Tools for grounding, protecting and blockading

Time: 5 to 10 minutes to practice each variation.

Goal or purpose:

■ To learn physical tools that can help you protect yourself and others in your group, and de-escalate a situation.

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

Centring When you are centred, you are calm, stable, present in the moment, and hard to push off balance physically or emotionally. You can also have a calming effect on those around you. In order to centre yourself, focus on your centre of gravity. It's just below your navel, deep inside your body. Focus here when you feel upset or under pressure in order to ground yourself and reconnect with your power within.

Point to attacker You can make a violent attack very visible by getting everyone in the vicinity to sit down so the attacker is suddenly visible to all and to the media.

Step in between perpetrator and demonstrator Keep your palms open and visible, try not to touch the attacker, or at very least, do not hold onto him or her. Just inter-positioning yourself can often be enough to stop an attack. Talk reassuringly to the attacker.

Surround ('U') and move perpetrator away With several people, step between the attacker and the demonstrator, form a U shape around the perpetrator, and move him or her away. Don't completely surround the attacker; make sure to leave him or her an 'out'. Talk with the attacker reassuringly as you do this.

Surround ('O') and absorb demonstrator Totally surround a demonstrator who's being attacked and absorb him or her back into the crowd.

Form a line between opposing factions/blocking Knees relaxed and not locked, stand shoulder-width apart. Be aware of how strong a line you need to make and the different impacts of different stances, for example standing separately > holding hands > linking elbows > linking wrists.

Staying put/holding your ground Specially in a blockade. Centre yourself, send your roots down deep into the earth, feel yourself relaxed and heavy.

Going limp It is much harder to move someone if they go limp. Practice sitting on the floor with very relaxed muscles; if someone lifts an arm, it should flop back

Nonviolence

Violence
Nonviolence training

Strategy

Forms of nonviolent action
Maintaining nonviolence

Nonviolent actions

Chile: Gandhi's insights gave people
courage to defy Chile's
dictatorship

Training

Hassle lines
Role playing



ACTIVISTS PRACTICE BLOCKADING IN SOUTH KOREA.

PHOTO: WRI ARCHIVE

to the floor! Practice being carried, too – it will be very hard for one person to lift a ‘protester’, and it will likely take two, three or even four people to lift just one person and move them. Demonstrate the difference by having someone tense all of their muscles; people are much easier to carry when their muscles are tense.

Other variations

Sitting in a row Place larger people to the ends.

Sitting/lying in a circle Cross your hands over your legs and hold each others’ wrists with a strong grip. In this formation, you can see each other and give emotional support. Make sure to warn each other about what’s happening behind, where the other side of the cannot see. Lying down, with your feet behind you, means you take up more space and you can lie on your hands so it’s harder for police or security to get at your hands to break your grip.

Sitting in a column Wrap your legs round the person in front, lean forward, put your hands around the chest of the person in front of you, and keep your head down.

Self-defence posture First, lace your hands together at the base of your skull, with your elbows together protecting your temples. Curl up in a foetal position on the ground, lying on your right side to protect your liver. Most main organs and head are thus protected, although your kidneys are still vulnerable.

When practicing these techniques, it should always be made clear that using them in ‘real life’ will often mean putting oneself in very vulnerable and dangerous situations. Having good knowledge of how police officers and security guards are likely to respond in different contexts can help and could be used in conjunction with parallel lines (p193) to create more complex role plays (p214).



DOING YOUR OWN HANDBOOK

Since this is an international handbook, we realise that many groups will want to translate material to create their own. When translating the handbook, we don't expect you to translate its full content, if you do so that is good but it is not a requirement. You are also welcome to add new content to your version, such as new case studies, and images relevant to your own context – this is a 'copy left' publication. Also, it may be that some words used in this handbook don't exist or are not used in the same way in your language. The glossary of terms will help you with some of the handbook's concepts to find the most suitable word in your language. When translating the first edition of the handbook, translators asked other translators or the WRI staff when having problems. We encourage you to get in touch with us at info@wri-irg.org if you need help.

If you are thinking of producing your own handbook, here are some general tips. First, you need to be clear about your goals and the amount of energy you are willing to put into a handbook (see questions below under goals and content). Another important aspect is thinking about what would make your handbook special.

Goals

- What is the main reason of the handbook?
- Who is the handbook for?
- How do you want the handbook to be used?
- What do you need to include in the handbook?
- Have you checked existing handbooks? What don't you like about them or find not useful?

Content

- What topics and themes do you want in the handbook?
- How do you want to structure the handbook?
- What is the length of your handbook?
- Will you use only new texts or existing ones?
- Who is choosing existing texts and writes new ones?
- What is the timeline for this work?
- How should the handbook be used? Can people just read a section that is relevant or is it that you need to read the full handbook?

Production

- How would you fund the handbook,
- Do you want to sell it or give it out for free?
- What will the distribution scope be?
- What kind of layout do you want (e.g., paper size, graphic styles)?
- How would you evaluate the handbook?

*



INDEPENDENCE DAY DEMONSTRATION, BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA.

PHOTO: COLLECTIVE ACTION OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS IN BOGOTÁ

GLOSSARY

■ **Affinity groups:** an affinity group is a small group of people (usually no more than 15) who come together to do actions together. Sometimes they are formed for a particular action, sometimes they are more permanent groups of people who share a vision and approach, and attend actions together. Affinity groups also form the basis for grassroots' decision-making at actions by sending a speaker to a speakers' council deciding on what steps to take in an action (see 'affinity groups' p96).

■ **Bust card:** pocket sized guideline with recommendations on what to do if stopped by the police during an action. Can also include an individual's rights on arrest, and helpful phone numbers, like legal support and solicitors (see 'legal support', p136).

■ **Campaign:** organised social action designed to bring about a specific change. Campaigns are run by a group of people with a common understanding and shared vision, and are made up of a series of actions and activities over a specific time frame, with a particular goal and a strategy how to achieve that goal (see 'planning nonviolent campaigns', p46).

■ **Civil disobedience:** the active refusal to comply with specific laws that are considered unjust, or breaking laws to achieve objectives considered crucial enough that breaking the law is justified (for example breaking a law on registering demonstrations in a campaign).

Civil resistance: "Collective action for political or social ends without any systematic recourse to violence... civil resistance can cover a spectrum from non-violent resistance – where a movement makes a positive commitment to pursue a strategy of nonviolent action – to 'unarmed resistance' which is less a policy than a description, that the resisters are not using lethal weapons." (As defined in *A guide to civil resistance: a bibliography of people power and protest*, Carter, Clark and Randle.)

■ **Consensus decision-making:** A process that aims to take everyone's concerns into consideration, and reach a decision that has the active consent of all the

participants. It is based on listening, respect, and participation by everyone (see ‘consensus decision-making’, p98).

■ **Constructive programme:** the process of building a new society in the shell of the old. As Robert Burrowes describes it; ‘for the individual, constructive programme meant increased power-from-within through the development of personal identity, self-reliance, and fearlessness. For the community, it meant the creation of a new set of political, social, and economic relations.’ (See ‘constructive programme’, p56.)

■ **Debriefing:** A process after an action or training, where participants tell each other what they experienced, felt and learned. Debriefing takes into account what happened and how individuals responded (see ‘action evaluation’, p142).

■ **Direct action:** Any action where individuals or groups act to bring about change themselves, rather than asking or expecting others to act on their behalf. Can be disruptive (like blockading a weapons factory) or constructive (like guerilla gardening). (See ‘forms of nonviolent action’, p124.)

■ **Empowerment:** Supporting people to have more control over their own lives. Empowerment means gaining skills, increasing self confidence, and developing self-reliance. Nonviolence training can be an excellent source of empowerment (see ‘nonviolence and power’, p34).

■ **Movement (or ‘social movement’):** a cross section of groups and campaigns that associate under a broad banner, such as the environmental movement or the anti-globalisation movement. Movement’s can last for decades, are often international, with many groups acting under a banner, and can be disputed or hard to define.

■ **Nonviolent action:** a form of political action based on the decision not to physically harm or destroy human life. It is an alternative to both passive submission and violence, it includes both actions “against” something and constructive actions ‘for’ an alternative, both legal and illegal (see ‘civil disobedience’).

■ **Nonviolent intervention:** Gene Sharp defines this as actions that ‘pose an immediate and direct challenge’ (see ‘forms of nonviolent action’, p124). Over the last 20 years, ‘nonviolent intervention’ has also been used to refer to activities that are undertaken either in solidarity with like-minded groups, or as a non-partisan external party that tries to influence a conflict which the intervening party is otherwise not directly involved in, usually abroad.

■ **Nonviolent resistance:** a struggle, conducted nonviolently and largely by non-cooperation, in reaction to an act, policy, or government a person or group disapproves of. The broader terms ‘nonviolent action’ and ‘nonviolent struggle’

are preferred to refer to the overall nonviolent technique of action and to action in which a nonviolent group also takes the initiative or intervenes, as in a sit-in. Recently, the term has also been used to describe unarmed uprisings.

■ **Nonviolent struggle:** a synonym for ‘nonviolent action’. This term may be used also to indicate that the nonviolent action in a conflict is particularly purposeful or aggressive. ‘Nonviolent struggle’ is especially useful to describe nonviolent action against determined and resourceful opponents who use repressive measures and countermeasures.

■ **People Power:** the powerful capacity of a mobilised population and its institutions using nonviolent forms of struggle to make social change. The term was used during the 1986 Philippine unarmed uprising against President Marcos (see p13).

■ **Popular education:** adult education which aims to develop critical consciousness; students are empowered, by learning about the context they live in and the changes they could make to improve their condition (see ‘popular education’ p73).

■ **Power:** the ability to have an impact on the world. Power may takes different forms:

- **Power-with:** finding common ground among different people and building collective strength.
- **Power-to:** an enabling power, derived from an inner conviction, acquired knowledge, or a particular skill.
- **Power-over:** the power of dominance in which the will of one person or group prevails. (see ‘nonviolence and power’, p34).

■ **Strategy and tactic:** A strategy is a long term plan which aims to achieve certain objectives (like a campaign goal). A tactic is a specific action – like an event, activity or nonviolent direct action – which contributes to the implementation of the strategy. (See ‘why things don’t just happen’, p39. A tactic star (p127) can be a useful guide to developing effective tactics.)

■ **Violence:** “...the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.” From World Health Organisation, World report on violence and health, 2002. (see ‘violence’, see p27.)



RESOURCES

Other training manuals and web resources on nonviolence

■ *Nonviolent Action Handbook*, Beck, Sanderson, Goleta, California, (World Peace Communications, 2002, 95 pages). Introductory texts, downloadable or as print copies from World Peace Communications, 495 Whitman St. #A, Goleta, CA 93117, USA. <http://san.beck.org/NAH1-Nonviolence.html>

■ *The Ruckus Society*: a website offering manuals on action planning and media among other topics, plus numerous links to other websites: www.ruckus.org

■ *Handbook for Nonviolent Action*, designed as a tool for learning about different aspects of nonviolent civil disobedience actions. Most of it can be downloaded as part of ACT UP New York's *Manual for Civil Disobedience*: <http://www.actupny.org/documents/CDdocuments/CDindex.html> (War Resisters League, Donnelly/Colt Graphix, 1989, 36 pages).

■ *Seeds for Change*: A British-based network that provides training resources including: consensus and facilitation, groups and meetings, practical skills for campaigning groups: <http://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/free/resources>

■ *Rant Collective*: A trainers' collective that offers resources on action planning and structures, anti-oppression, media, and strategy: <http://www.rantcollective.net/article.php?list=type&type=17>

■ *Training for Change, USA*: Resources on diversity and anti-oppression, team building, organising and strategy, meeting facilitation, and nonviolent action: <http://www.trainingforchange.org>

■ *Turning the Tide*: positive change through nonviolent action, nonviolence training resources, information and resources on nonviolence: <http://www.turning-the-tide.org/http://www.turning-the-tide.org/>

■ *Nonviolence Trainers Resource Manual*, (Nonviolence Training Project, Melbourne, Australia, May 1995, 211 pages). Wide-ranging manual with sections on defining nonviolence, power and conflict, learning from other movements, strategic frameworks, nonviolence and communication, working in groups, and preparing for nonviolent action.

■ *Resource Manual for a Living Revolution*, Virginia Coover, Ellen Deacon, Charles Esser, and Christopher Moore, Philadelphia, (New Society Publishers, first edition 1977, latest 1985, 351 pages). Familiarly known as the 'Monster Manual', this was the comprehensive source book for English-speaking nonviolence trainers

in the 1970s and 1980s, produced collectively within the United States by Movement for a New Society.

Nonviolent and direct action

■ *The Albert Einstein Institution*: nonviolent action, 198 methods of nonviolent action, applications of nonviolent action, case studies, publications on nonviolent action in many languages: <http://www.aeinstein.org>

■ *Beautiful Trouble*: a printed book and online resource, with a wide range of articles on different forms of activism and campaigning. Also available in Spanish. <http://www.beautifultrouble.org>

■ *Skillshare*: a collection of resources covering consensus and facilitation, strategy, anti-oppression, and direct action. In many European languages. <http://www.skillsharing.net>

■ *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*, Gene Sharp. Now classic analysis of the theory and dynamics of nonviolent action and an exhaustive list of methods with examples. Includes extensive bibliographical information (Porter Sargent, 1973, 3 volumes).

■ *A Guide to Civil Resistance, a bibliography of people power and nonviolent protest*, Edited by April Carter, Howard Clark and Michael Randle (Green Print, 2013).

■ *Backfire Manual: Tactics Against Injustice*: A guide to using an opponent's violence to your benefit <http://www.bmartin.cc/pubs/12bfm/12bfm.pdf>

■ *Security in a Box*: an online resource in multiple languages, explaining a variety of different ways of keeping electronic equipment secure: <http://www.securityinabox.org>

■ *Network for Climate Action*: Guides to Taking Action. A range of practical manuals for different types of direct action, like blockading, climbing fences, running street stalls and making props. http://www.networkforclimateaction.org.uk/toolkit/guides_to_taking_action.html

■ *Starhawk's Resources for Activism Trainers*: Resources for nonviolent direct action and anti-oppression trainers/preparers magical activism workshop facilitators and consensus decision making: see <http://www.starhawk.org/activism/trainer-resources/trainer-resources.html>

Campaign development

■ *How to Win Campaigns: 100 Steps to Success*, Chris Rose, (Earthscan 2005).

■ *The Strategy of Nonviolent Defense*, Robert J. Burrowes, (State University of New York Press, 1996).

■ *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire*, Brian Martin, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).

■ *New Tactics*: An online resource to help human rights defenders work more effectively – explores a wide range of different strategies and tactics: <http://www.newtactics.org>

■ *Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements*, Bill Moyer (with JoAnn McAllister, Mary Lou Finley, and Steven Soifer), (New

Society Publishers, 2001, 228 pages). Includes MAP – a tool of strategic analysis for nonviolent movements. Resources on the MAP can be accessed at: <http://www.turning-the-tide.org/files/Bill%20Moyer%208-stages%20Social%20Movements%20Hand-out.pdf>

■ *How to Research Companies*, Corporate Watch guide to researching companies <http://www.corporatewatch.org/download.php?id=31>

Organisation, facilitation and decision-Making (including consensus)

■ *The Tyranny of Structurelessness*, Jo Freeman, (1970). An analysis of why group process is crucial: http://flag.blackened.net/revolt/hist_texts/structurelessness.html

■ *Meeting Facilitation – The No-Magic Method*, Berit Lakey. How to develop good group structures, with resources on: agenda planning, facilitation, and roles in a group: <http://www.trainingforchange.org/tools/meeting-facilitation-no-magic-method>

■ *Papers on Nonviolent Action and Cooperative Decision-Making*, Randy Schutt. A nonviolence trainer's sample agendas and workshop notes dealing with preparing for nonviolent action, nonviolent action strategic planning, cooperative decision-making, and interpersonal behaviour: <http://www.vernalproject.org/RPapers/html>

■ *INNATE: Irish Network for Nonviolent Action Training & Education, Consensus for Small Groups*: an introduction and worksheets. More resources on nonviolence training available at <http://www.innatenonviolence.org/workshops/consensus-smallgroups.shtml>

■ *The Will of the Many: How the Alterglobalisation Movement is Changing the Face of Democracy*, Marianne Maeckelbergh, (Pluto Press, 2009). Explores the radical forms of democracy used by alterglobalisation movement.

Dealing with emotions and trauma (fear, burn-out, anger)

Both of these websites have resources in many languages and links to other good resources.

■ *Activist Trauma Support*: This website is primarily for political activists who may be injured during or by their political activities, and/or who are struggling with other mental health issues related to activism. Resources are available in many different languages: www.activist-trauma.net

■ *T-team*: a collective of activists in Tel Aviv, historical Palestine, who've come together to support activists going through intense emotional (and post-traumatic) experiences as a result of their work: <http://www.the-t-team.blogspot.com>

Anti-oppression

Each of these resources is deeply connected to a particular country and cultural context, but as examples, they can provide ideas and inspiration for people everywhere.

■ *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice*, Paul Kivel, (New Society Publishers, 2002). A book written for white activists working against racism in the United States.

■ *Confronting Racism in Communities: Guidelines and Resources for Anti-Racism Training Resources*, David Hollinsworth. A training manual produced for groups addressing racism in Australia. The document is available as a pdf on the Web from the Change Agency Education and Training Institute: http://www.thechangeagency.org/_dbase_upl/Anti-Racism%20Training.pdf

■ *Soulforce*: an organisation committed to using nonviolence to end violence against the LGBTQ community in the United States. The mission of Soulforce is to cut off homophobia at its source: religious bigotry. It applies creative direct action to peacefully resist injustice and demand full equality for LGBTQ citizens and same-gender families. Their website includes videos, articles, handouts, and action campaign ideas: <http://www.soulforce.org/index.php>

Gender

■ *It's Pronounced Metrosexual*: articles, fun graphics, and other resources designed to be shared in an effort to advance social equity. <http://www.itspronouncedmetrosexual.com>

■ *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*: <http://www.peacewomen.org>. Includes women's peace and security resources, with materials from many cultures and contexts and a number of handbooks and training resources. See also:

<http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Organizing/organizingindex.html>

■ *Ways and Means: An Advocacy Guide for Feminists*, <http://www.awid.org/content/download/48809/537583/file/waysmeans1.pdf>

■ *Claiming Justice, Claiming Rights: a Guide for Women Human Rights Defenders*, available in multiple languages: <http://defendingwomen-defendingrights.org/our-work/resources>

■ *Gender-Sensitive Active Nonviolence Training Checklist*, Women Peacemakers Programme, <http://tr.im/5dksq>

■ *Here We Stand: Women Changing the World*, stories, interviews and articles from 17 British women campaigners, compiled by Helen Earnshaw and Angharad Penrhyn Jones, (Honno, UK, 2014).

Working with traditional and social media

■ *A queer activist media guide*: www.octobertech.com/handbook/media.html
Ruckus Society: A series of manuals looking at various means of using the media for activism: <http://www.ruckus.org/article.php?list=type&type=18>

■ *Beautiful Trouble: HASHTAG POLITICS*
<http://beautifultrouble.org/theory/hashtag-politics/>

■ *SPIN Works: a Media Guidebook for Communicating Values and Shaping Opinion*, Robert Bray, San Francisco, Independent Media Institute, 2000.

Others: news, networks and educational resources

■ *Waging Nonviolence*: People-powered news and analysis

<http://wagingnonviolence.org/>

■ *Global Nonviolence Network*: A directory of groups promoting nonviolence

<http://globalnonviolencenetwork.wordpress.com>

■ *A Force More Powerful*: educational films, books and computer games on nonviolent people power: <http://www.aforcemorepowerful.org/>



Printing for the handbook was sponsored by WRI associated paper *Graswurzelrevolution* – for a nonviolent libertarian society, Germany.
<http://www.graswurzel.net>