

WHAT YOU CAN DO

1 Find your number

Go to youandafew.org and use the calculator to see what 3.5% looks like in your community, workplace, or congregation.

2 Have the conversation

Talk to one person this week. Not to recruit — to connect. Share what you've been thinking about.

3 Build your few

Bring 2–3 people together. A living room, a coffee shop, a lunch break. Small groups are where movements start.

4 Target the pillars

Focus energy on local institutions — courts, media, business, faith communities — not on the news cycle.

5 Maintain discipline

Nonviolent, evidence-based, strategic. Every action either builds or undermines the movement.

THE PSYCHOLOGY

Why does speaking up feel so hard — even when most people agree with you?

PLURALISTIC IGNORANCE

Everyone privately disagrees but reads others' silence as agreement. Most people around you share your concerns. They're waiting for someone to go first.

THE BYSTANDER EFFECT

In a crowd, no one acts because everyone assumes someone else will. A single dissenter breaks the spell entirely. You just have to be that person first.

CONFORMITY PRESSURE

We are wired to mirror the group. But the group is also mirroring us. When one person names the truth out loud, the illusion of consensus collapses fast.

Small groups dissolve all three. In a group of 3–5 people who trust each other, honesty becomes possible, then natural, then contagious.

YOU AND A FEW

is all it takes to protect democracy

3.5%

Every nonviolent movement that reached 3.5% participation has succeeded. The research is clear. The question is whether you'll be part of that percentage.

youandafew.org

THE SCIENCE

Political scientist Erica Chenoweth studied **323 major political campaigns** from 1900–2006, comparing violent and nonviolent resistance movements.

2×

More likely to succeed
— nonviolent vs.
armed

4×

More participants in
nonviolent campaigns

The threshold finding: **3.5% active participation**. Every campaign in history that reached this level succeeded. Not a single one failed.

Nonviolence wins not because it's morally superior — but because it expands the coalition to include people who cannot or will not take up arms: the elderly, the risk-averse, the undecided.

Source: Chenoweth & Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works* (2011)

THE NUMBERS

What does 3.5% actually look like? Not the whole country at once — *your* corner of it.

11 MILLION

3.5% of the United States population. A large number nationally — but movements don't start nationally.

7 PEOPLE

3.5% of a workplace of 200. Seven colleagues who show up consistently, speak clearly, and support each other.

4 PEOPLE

3.5% of a congregation of 100. Four members who bring the conversation into the pews.

35 PEOPLE

3.5% of a school of 1,000. Enough to shift culture when they act as one.

Use the calculator at youandafew.org to find your number in your community, institution, or city.

THE PILLARS

No leader governs alone. Every authoritarian depends on the cooperation of institutions.

Ignore the leader. Target the pillars.

Judiciary

Support judicial independence. Attend hearings.

Write to bar associations.



Legislature

Flood offices with constituent contact. Show up at town halls.



Media

Subscribe. Pay for local journalism. Share reporting, not outrage.



Business

Make courage profitable and complicity expensive.



Security Forces

Build community ties. Officers are individuals with families.



Religious Communities

Appeal to stated values. Congregations have moral authority and space.



Bureaucracy

Protect whistleblowers. Support career civil servants.