

DISCIPLINE PROTOCOL

Nonviolent discipline is not a moral preference — it is a strategic requirement.

→ **Don't respond to bait**

Provocations are designed to generate a violent response. Recognizing the trap is the first step to refusing it.

→ **Document everything**

Phones out, cameras rolling. Documentation deters escalation and creates accountability after the fact.

→ **Stay in groups**

Isolated individuals are vulnerable. Groups are harder to intimidate and easier to protect.

→ **Have a de-escalation plan**

Know who in your group is responsible for de-escalation before any action. Assign the role explicitly.

→ **Know your rights**

Carry a know-your-rights card. Know the number of a legal observer before you go. Preparation reduces fear.

"Any violence from the resistance is a gift to the regime."

MYTHS VS. REALITY

MYTH Nonviolence is passive — it's just waiting and hoping.

REALITY Nonviolence is strategic force — applied with discipline, at scale, to specific targets. It requires more planning, not less.

MYTH Violence is more effective when things get serious.

REALITY Violent campaigns succeed at roughly half the rate of nonviolent ones. 53% vs. 26%, across 323 historical campaigns.

MYTH Nonviolence only works against democracies that respect it.

REALITY Nonviolent campaigns have succeeded against some of the most brutal regimes in history — including those that violently repressed them.

MYTH Violent repression of a movement proves nonviolence has failed.

REALITY Repression often backfires — it expands the coalition, increases legitimacy, and triggers loyalty shifts in the regime's own supporters.

WHAT IS NONVIOLENCE?

The most effective strategy for defending democracy ever documented



"Not passivity. Not weakness. Force — applied with discipline, backed by evidence."

youandafew.org

THE EVIDENCE

Erica Chenoweth studied **323 major political campaigns** from 1900–2006. The findings are unambiguous.

2×

More likely to succeed
— nonviolent vs.
armed resistance

4×

More participants in
nonviolent campaigns
on average

53%

Success rate for
nonviolent campaigns

26%

Success rate for
violent campaigns —
less than half

Why does nonviolence outperform?

Participation. Violence limits who can join — it demands physical capacity and risk tolerance few can afford. Nonviolence expands the coalition to include the elderly, disabled, risk-averse, and undecided. That breadth is the strategy.

Durable outcomes: Countries that achieved change nonviolently were significantly more likely to establish and maintain democratic institutions afterward.

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

198 METHODS — A SAMPLE

Gene Sharp documented 198 nonviolent methods of action in three categories.

PROTEST & PERSUASION

Petitions, open letters, marches, vigils, teach-ins, banner displays, mock awards, symbolic public acts, renouncing honors, fraternization with troops

NON-COOPERATION

Consumer boycotts, labor strikes, tax refusal, sanctuary, divestment, civil disobedience, deliberate inefficiency, selective patronage, go-slows, stay-at-homes

NONVIOLENT INTERVENTION

Sit-ins, blockades, occupations, parallel institutions, alternative markets, overloading administrative systems, guerrilla theater, establishing free spaces

DISCIPLINE IS EVERYTHING

One act of violence triggers threat narratives, justifies crackdowns, and drives away the wavering majority you need. The discipline of nonviolence is not moral preference — it is strategic requirement.

WHY IT WORKS

Four mechanisms explain why nonviolence consistently outperforms armed resistance.

1 Lowers the barrier to participation

Anyone can participate — the elderly, the risk-averse, parents with children, people with disabilities. The coalition grows faster and wider than any armed movement can.

2 Triggers loyalty shifts

Security forces, bureaucrats, and even regime supporters begin to defect when the movement is clearly nonviolent. Violence gives them moral cover to stay loyal.

3 Makes repression backfire

Violent crackdowns on nonviolent protesters increase public sympathy, attract media attention, and often expand the movement rather than suppress it.

4 Builds durable institutions

Movements built on nonviolent norms tend to produce more stable democracies afterward. The method shapes the result.

"Violence is the only option is a feeling, not a finding."