

198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

About:

Inspired by Gene Sharp's 198 Methods of Nonviolent Action, this dynamic resource provides the framework for facilitators, educators, and community members to lead an experiential activity that helps participants get to know one another, learn about different nonviolent strategies, and connect nonviolence theory to real world examples.

Duration: 20-120 minutes

Group Size: 2-200

Contents:

32 unique, double-sided handouts. The front of each handout contains the following:

- 1 of 32 categories of nonviolent action as identified in Gene Sharp's 198 Nonviolent Methods.
- List of specific methods that fall under the respective category
- Real-world example of one of the methods
- Discussion question

The backside of each handout features a uniform checklist of the 32 categories. As participants talk with each other and learn about different nonviolent actions, they can check off each of the 32 categories.

Objectives:

- Participants will teach other group members about the method(s) of nonviolent action that has been assigned to them.
- Participants will connect each method of nonviolent action to at least one real-world example.

Instructions:

1. Hand out 1, double-sided nonviolent methods handout to each participant in the group.
2. Give each person time to read their handout since they will be responsible for explaining it to others in the group.
3. When group members have finished reading their handout, give them 15 minutes to stand up and mingle with each other. During this time they should explain their nonviolent methods and answer the discussion question with at least three other people. In the process of teaching, they will also be learning about at least 3 other categories of nonviolent action.
4. At the end of the 15 minutes, bring the group together and lead a group discussion to reflect on the activity. What did they learn? What surprised them? What questions do they have?

Adaptations:

Speed Dating Format -- After giving each participant a nonviolent methods handout, place them into concentric circles facing each other. Give the outside circle 2 minutes to explain their nonviolent method to their partner and discuss to find real-world examples. After two minutes have passed, allow the other partner to do the same. When both partners have finished teaching, ask the outside circle to move one partner to the left and repeat.

Walking Workshop -- This workshop also works well when a large group is walking from one destination to the next as part of a memorial march or protest. After giving each participant a nonviolent methods handout, ask them to mingle with other participants so they can teach and learn while they walk to their final destination. Encourage participants to try to check off as many boxes on the back side of their handout as they can by talking to as many other participants as possible during the walk.

198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Formal Statements:

- Public speeches
- Letters of opposition or support
- Declarations by organizations and institutions
- Signed public statements
- Declarations of indictment and intention
- Group or mass petitions

Media Example:

Martin Luther King Jr. led thousands of Americans to the nation's capital for the March on Washington in 1963 for one of the largest and most successful nonviolent protests in history. Championing civil rights, the March on Washington culminated in King's "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in front of more than 250,000 protesters.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

Find someone with a handout about each of the following methods, check them off as you go!

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Communications with a Wider Audience:

- Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- Newspapers and journals
- Records, radio, and television
- Skywriting and earthwriting

Media Example:

A 17-year-old trolled Donald Trump in August by tweeting: “Hey everyone you totally shouldn’t go on tr*mp’s website and reserve tickets for his rally and not show up so that there’s empty seats (the tickets are free) but you should definitely not do that!!” The post was retweeted almost 40,000 times and thousands of seats remained empty at the rally.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Group Representations:

- Deputations
- Mock awards
- Group lobbying
- Picketing
- Mock elections

Media Example:

Over 2,000 restaurants across India are participating in the #logout boycott of table reservation, food delivery, and other food-tech apps that force restaurants to offer extreme discounts.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Symbolic Public Acts:

- Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- Wearing of symbols
- Prayer and worship
- Delivering symbolic objects
- Protest disrobings
- Destruction of own property
- Symbolic lights
- Displays of portraits
- Paint as protest
- New signs and names
- Symbolic sounds
- Symbolic reclamations
- Rude gestures

Media Example:

In August, Portland Timbers and Seattle Sounders fans staged a silent protest for the first 33 minutes of a match between the two teams against Major League Soccer's ban on political signage.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Pressures on Individuals:

- Haunting officials
- Taunting officials
- Fraternization
- Vigils

Media Example:

Turkish activists formed the “Vigil for Water and Conscience” this summer, camping out next to a Kaz Mountains mine in opposition of the alleged cutting down of 197,000 trees by the Canadian-owned mining company, Alamos Gold Inc.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Drama and Music:

- Humorous skits and pranks
- Performances of plays and music
- Singing

Media Example:

After a Good Morning America host laughed and made dismissive comments about male dancers while reporting about Prince George's ballet classes, 300 dancers gathered in front of the Good Morning America studio in Times Square to participate in an open air ballet class in solidarity with the many men who are criticized and bullied for ballet dancing.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Processions:

- Marches
- Parades
- Pilgrimages
- Religious processions
- Motorcades

Media Example:

Thousands of protesters took to the streets in August to protest Brazil's far-right president, Jair Bolsonaro, and his anti-environmental policies that have led to destructive fires burning across the Amazon.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Honoring the Dead:

- Political mourning
- Mock funerals
- Demonstrative funerals
- Homage at burial places

Media Example:

More than 100 scientists took part in a mock Victorian funeral procession in Westminster, London in 2012 to protest against a science funding policy they claimed “puts the future of British science in mortal danger.” The scientists staged a rally outside parliament before delivering a petition in a coffin.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Public Assemblies:

- Assemblies of protest or support
- Protest meetings
- Camouflaged meetings of protest
- Teach-ins

Media Example:

Within hours of British Prime Minister Boris' Johnson's decision to suspend parliament in August, thousands participated in impromptu protests across the country chanting "save our democracy, stop the coup" and demanding Boris' resignation.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Withdrawal and Renunciation:

- Walk-outs
- Silence
- Renouncing honors
- Turning one's back

Media Example:

NFL player Colin Kaepernick leverage his star power to raise awareness about racial and social issues facing our nation when he began choosing to sit and then kneel during the National Anthem.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Ostracism of Persons:

- Excommunication
- Interdict
- Social boycott
- Selective social boycott
- Lysistratic nonaction

Media Example:

Due to concerns about separations of power and judicial independence, at least 19 bar associations representing a vast majority of lawyers across Turkey said they would boycott the annual opening ceremony of the judicial year this fall because it would be held on the premises of the presidential palace.

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Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions:

- Suspension of social and sports activities
- Boycott of social affairs
- Student strike
- Social disobedience
- Withdrawal from social institutions

Media Example:

Inspired by 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg's weekly protests, the global youth climate movement swept the globe this year, with students organizing strikes on every continent. Students put their collective voices together in a coordinated global school walkout, called Youth Strike 4 Climate that involved thousands of towns in over 100 different countries.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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Withdrawal from the Social System:

- Stay-at-home
- Total personal noncooperation
- “Flight” of workers
- Sanctuary
- Collective disappearance
- Protest emigration (hijrat)

Media Example:

In August, Sweden’s women’s hockey team, the only European team to dent the U.S.-Canada dominance in the Olympics, announced that all 43 players selected to for an upcoming camp would be boycotting it in protest of lingering pay issue.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Actions by Consumers:

- Consumers' boycott
- Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
- Policy of austerity
- Rent withholding
- Refusal to rent
- National consumers' boycott
- International consumers' boycott

Media Example:

Recently, many SoulCycle and Equinox customers, including celebrities Chrissy Teigen, Sophia Bush, and Billy Eichner, took to social media to declare their boycotting of the fitness brands in protest of company chair Stephen Ross hosting a reelection fundraiser for Donald Trump.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Action by Workers, Producers, and Middlemen:

- Workmen's boycott
- Producers' boycott
- Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

Media Example:

Hundreds of thousands of women across Switzerland took to the streets to demand higher pay, greater equality, and more respect, protesting that one of the world's wealthiest countries continues to treat half its population unfairly. Nearly 30 years after the first nationwide equal rights demonstration by Swiss women, a "purple wave" of pram marches, whistle concerts, extended lunch breaks, giant picnics, and city-center rallies took place this June.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Action by Owners and Holders of Financial Resources:

- Refusal to let or sell property
- Lockout
- Refusal of industrial assistance
- Merchants' "general strike"
- Withdrawal of bank deposits
- Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
- Refusal to pay debts or interest
- Severance of funds and credit
- Revenue refusal
- Refusal of a government's money
- Traders' boycott

Media Example:

In one of the first major corporate responses to the environmental damage taking place in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, VF Corp.— which owns brands including Timberland, Vans, and The North Face — declared in August that they would stop using leather from Brazil until they could have “the confidence and assurance that the materials used in our products do not contribute to environmental harm.”

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Action by Governments:

- Domestic embargo
- Blacklisting of traders
- International sellers' embargo
- International buyers' embargo
- International trade embargo

Media Example:

Peru has committed to ending palm oil-driven deforestation by 2021. The National Wildlife Federation named the move a “momentous win” for wildlife and sustainable agriculture.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Symbolic Strikes:

- Protest strike
- Quickie walkout (lightning strike)
- Peasant strike
- Farm Workers' strike

Media Example:

In August, Irish farmers began refusing to provide cattle to meat processing factories until they receive better prices that will cover the cost of production. As a result, 12 meat plants have been forced to cease operations and customers have had to source beef from other countries.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Strikes by Special Groups:

- Refusal of impressed labor
- Prisoners' strike
- Craft strike
- Professional strike

Media Example:

Public school teachers across the US are preparing to continue the strikes that began during the 2018-2019 school year, hoping to achieve better pay, resources, and working conditions.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Ordinary Industrial Strikes:

- Establishment strike
- Industry strike
- Sympathetic strike

Media Example:

In Kentucky, 400 coal miners blocked the tracks of a coal train in protest of bailouts for corporations while they lost jobs, benefits, and unemployment pay.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Restricted Strikes:

- Detailed Strike
- Bumper strike
- Slowdown strike
- Working-to-rule strike
- Reporting “sick” (sick-in)
- Strike by resignation
- Limited strike
- Selective strike

Media Example:

American Airlines management and airplane mechanics union representatives were not able to agree on a contract last spring. In response, the mechanics have begun to intentionally delay flights and slow down the airline’s operations.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Multi-Industry Strikes:

- General strike
- Hartal
- Economic shutdown

Media Example:

Over 900 Amazon employees have signed an internal petition pledging to walk out over their employer's lack of action on climate change.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Citizens' Noncooperation with Government:

- Boycott of legislative bodies
- Boycott of elections
- Boycott of government employment and positions
- Boycott of government depts., agencies, and other bodies
- Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- Boycott of government-supported organizations
- Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
- Removal of own signs and placemarks
- Refusal to accept appointed officials
- Refusal to dissolve existing institutions
- Refusal of public support
- Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Media Example:

Recently, a coalition of Ethiopian opposition parties threatened to boycott a national vote next year if changes to an electoral law they view as biased towards the ruling party do not take place.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Citizens' Alternatives to Obedience:

- Reluctant and slow compliance
- Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
- Popular nonobedience
- Disguised disobedience
- Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
- Sit-down
- Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
- Hiding, escape, and false identities
- Civil disobedience of “illegitimate” laws

Media Example:

In July, a Swedish college student prevented a plane from taking off and deporting an Afghan refugee by refusing to sit down and buckle her seatbelt.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Rejection of Authority:

- Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
- Refusal of public support
- Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Media Example:

In July of 2018, the Church of England voted to withdraw funds from companies that contribute to climate change.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

Read about your method of nonviolent action and share what you learn with others.

Action by Government Personnel:

- Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
- Blocking of lines of command and information
- Stalling and obstruction
- General administrative noncooperation
- Judicial noncooperation Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
- Mutiny
- Quasi-legal evasions and delays
- Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

Media Example:

The Jordan Teachers Association is currently planning an open strike after talks with the government regarding their demand for a 50 percent raise bore no results.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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International Governmental Action:

- Changes in diplomatic and other representations
- Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
- Withholding of diplomatic recognition
- Severance of diplomatic relations
- Withdrawal from international organizations Refusal of membership in international bodies
- Expulsion from international organizations

Media Example:

In 2016, Vladimir Putin cancelled a trip to Paris after the French government accused Russian and Syrian government forces of committing war crimes in Aleppo.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Psychological Intervention:

- Self-exposure to the elements
- The fast
 - Fast of moral pressure
 - Hunger strike
 - Satyagrahic fast
- Reverse trial
- Nonviolent harassment

Media Example:

A grocery store in Vancouver has started giving out plastic bags with large embarrassing logos on them in hopes that customers will turn to reusable bags.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Physical Intervention:

- Sit-in 163. Stand-in
- Ride-in
- Wade-in
- Mill-in
- Pray-in
- Nonviolent raids
- Nonviolent air raids
- Nonviolent invasion
- Nonviolent interjection
- Nonviolent obstruction
- Nonviolent occupation

Media Example:

Anti-racism campaigners participated in a 137-day occupation of Deptford Town Hall on the Goldsmiths, University of London campus last spring, demanding that the school comply with a list of demands to combat institutional racism. After a series of discussions, the occupation ended with the university agreeing to introduce mandatory race awareness training for staff and review its anti-discrimination and harassment procedures.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Social Intervention:

- Establishing new social patterns
- Overloading of facilities
- Stall-in
- Speak-in
- Guerrilla theater
- Alternative social institutions
- Alternative communication system

Media Example:

In August, a man in Hong Kong put himself between protesters and police in an effort to prevent police from shooting. Some activists have compared the man to the Tiananmen Square “tank man“ after Hong Kong news outlet RTHK captured video of him kneeling before police as they attempted to advance on protesters with weapons drawn.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Economic Intervention:

- Reverse Strike
- Stay-in Strike
- Nonviolent land seizure
- Defiance of Blockades
- Politically Motivated Counterfeiting
- Preclusive Purchasing
- Seizure of assets
- Dumping
- Selective patronage
- Alternative markets
- Alternative transportation systems
- Alternative economic institutions

Media Example:

In early 2019, the Brunei government passed a law calling for adulterers and homosexuals to be stoned to death. Actor George Clooney called for a Hollywood boycott of Brunei's government-owned hotels including Hotel Bel-Air and Beverly Hills Hotel. Clooney's boycott slashed the profits of a multi-million dollar industry and within two months, the government backed off from enforcing the law.

Can you think of another example of this method?

Methods of Nonviolent Protest & Persuasion

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198 METHODS OF NONVIOLENT ACTION

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Political Intervention:

- Overloading of administrative systems
- Disclosing identities of secret agents
- Seeking imprisonment
- Civil disobedience of “neutral” laws
- Work-on without collaboration
- Dual sovereignty and parallel government

Media Example:

In July, Carola Rackete, a German Sea-Watch captain, disobeyed Italian military orders and entered the port of Lampedusa, forcing a naval blockade and hitting a police patrol boat as she brought some 41 African migrants to land in the Sea-Watch rescue vessel. After being detained and placed under house arrest, a judge ruled that Rackete had been carrying out her duty and had not broken the law or committed any act of violence.

Can you think of another example of this method?

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