



Language

[K. Preparation and Training for Nonviolent Action \[1\]](#)

Movements that expect their nonviolent actions to be met with violence, and are concerned to avoid violent reactions by their own activists, often try to prepare themselves for such confrontations. However, nonviolence training has come to involve much more than that – a range of activities embracing personal empowerment, group formation, campaign planning, strategy development, and preparation and evaluation of protests.

Preparation for nonviolent action can be understood as part of a wider nonviolent lifestyle. Gandhi, who stressed the need for self-discipline, believed it would best be acquired through taking part in constructive activities. Today's activists are more likely to stress the importance of empowerment for engaging in nonviolent action. But they also see this as an attitude underpinning everyday behaviour.

Many materials used in nonviolent training overlap with other types of workshops – conflict transformation, pedagogy of the oppressed (Paolo Freire), theatre of the oppressed (Augusto Boal), nonviolent communication (Marshall Rosenberg), or the Alternatives to Violence programmes on institutional and domestic violence. Nonviolent action training has evolved, depending on what seems useful and practical in diverse contexts. Therefore workshop leaders have been eclectic in choosing and developing methods, using whatever works in their experience and culture.

This section does not cover all aspects of preparation, such as the technical practicalities of some forms of protest (tripods, lock-ons); nor does it cover legal issues. But two relevant sources for these are:

Network for Climate Action, [Guides To Taking Action \[2\]](#), Vol. 2017, London, Network for Climate Action, 2010

Provides practical manuals on different types of protest, e.g. climbing fences, blockading.

Van der Zee, Bibi, [Rebel, Rebel: How to Start a Revolution \[3\]](#), London, Guardian Books, 2008

Designed for British readership and gives legal as well as other practical advice.

[K.1. Planning and Development of Campaigns \[4\]](#)

Martin, Brian, [Backfire Manual: Tactics Against Injustice \[5\]](#), Sparsnas Sweden, Irene Publishing, 2012, pp. 112

A guide to turning an opponent's violence to the campaign's advantage. For the wider theoretical analysis see: Martin, [Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire \[6\]](#) ([A. 1.b. Strategic Theory, Dynamics, Methods and Movements \[7\]](#))



Moyer, Bill ; McAllister, JoAnn ; Finley, Mary Lou ; Soifer, Steven, [Doing Democracy: The MAP Model for Organizing Social Movements](#) [8], Gabriola Island, New Society Publishers, 2001, pp. 228

From his central insight that some movements could not recognise when they were succeeding, Bill Moyer constructed his model MAP - Movement Action Plan - as a tool for strategic analysis for nonviolent movements. The book includes case studies of five US movements: civil rights, anti-nuclear energy, gay and lesbian, breast cancer and anti-globalization.

Rose, Chris, [How to Win Campaigns: 100 Steps to Success](#) [9], London, Earthscan Publications, 2005, pp. 231

Tips from an environmental campaigner and communications consultant who has worked for Greenpeace, among other organizations.

Shaw, Randy, [The Activist's Handbook: Winning Social Change in the 21st Century](#) [10], [2007], (2nd edition), Berkeley CA, University of California Press, 2013, pp. 304

Urban activist focuses on how to achieve social change even in difficult environments.

Turning the Tide, [Toolkit](#) [11], London, Quaker Peace and Social Witness, 2014

Information sheets on preparing for nonviolent action and nonviolent training resources and links to organizations offering training.

War Resisters' International, [Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns](#) [12], [2009], (2nd edition), London, War Resisters' International, 2014, pp. 232

Sections on 'Introduction to Nonviolence', 'Developing Strategic Campaigns', 'Organising Effective Actions', 'Case Studies' with examples from round the world, 'Training and Exercises' and advice on compiling one's own handbook and lists of helpful manuals, references and websites.

See also:

Richard K. Taylor, [Blockade: A Guide to Nonviolent Intervention](#) [13], ([E.3. Opposing Other Wars and Occupations](#) [14]), Part 2 is a manual for direct action.

The Ruckus Society offers manuals and checklists on 'Action Planning', 'Media' and other topics, plus numerous links to other web pages. See: <http://www.ruckus.org> [15].

[K.2. Training for Nonviolent Action](#) [16]

Beck, Sanderson, [Nonviolent Action Handbook](#) [17], Goleta CA, World Peace Communications, 2002, pp. 95



Introductory texts, downloadable or as print copies from: [World Peace Communications](#) [18], 495 Whitman St, Goleta, CA 93117, USA.

Desai, Narayan, [Handbook for Satyagrahis: A Manual for Volunteers of Total Revolution](#) [19], New Delhi, Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1980, pp. 57

The founder of the Institute for Total Revolution outlines a Gandhian approach to nonviolence training.

Fisher, Simon ; Abdi, Dekha Ibrahim ; Ludin, Jawed ; Williams, Richard ; Smith, Steven ; Williams, Sue, [Working With Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action](#) [20], London, Zed, 2000, pp. 185

Includes exercises and advice on active nonviolence.

Hunter, Daniel ; Lakey, George, [Opening Space for Democracy: Training Manual for Third-Party Nonviolent Intervention](#) [21], Philadelphia PA, Training for Change, 2004, pp. 628

Much of this book can be downloaded from: <http://www.trainingforchange.org> [22].

Devised as a training resource for the Nonviolent Peace Force, this manual contains hundreds of training activities, with special emphasis on team-building and defending human rights. It includes over 60 handouts, an integrated 23 day curriculum, and many tips for trainers.

Miller, Christopher A., [Strategic Nonviolent Conflict: A Training Manual](#) [23], Addis Ababa, University of Peace Africa Programme, 2006, pp. 142

A manual derived mainly from writings and approach of Gene Sharp, Robert Helvey and Peter Ackerman and directed at an African audience.

Nonviolent Training Project, [Nonviolent Trainers Resources Manual](#) [24], Melbourne VIC, Nonviolent Training Project, 1995, pp. 211

Wide ranging manual with sections on: 'Defining nonviolence', 'Power and conflict', 'Learning from other movements', 'Strategic frameworks', 'Nonviolence and communication', 'Working in groups', 'Preparing for nonviolent action'.

Websites recommended

(844.) [The Seeds for Change Network](#) [25] - <http://seedsforchange.org.uk/> [26] 2016, Offers variety of workshops from practical organizing skills to action preparation. Although their own writing does not use the term nonviolence, their web page includes material on nonviolence reproduced from Turning the Tide.

See also:

War Resisters' International, [Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns](#) [12], (K.1. [Planning and Development of Campaigns](#) [27]), pp. 189-222.

Michael Randle; Gene Sharp, [Annotated Bibliography on Training for Nonviolent Action and Civilian-Based Defence](#) [28], ([A. 7. Important Reference Works and Websites](#) [29]), Randle's introductory essay and related bibliography provide an important resource on the historical evolution of training for nonviolent action.



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Links

- [1] <https://civilresistance.info/section/k-preparation-and-training-nonviolent-action>
- [2] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2010/guides-taking-action>
- [3] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2008/rebel-rebel-how-start-revolution>
- [4] <https://civilresistance.info/section/k-preparation-and-training-nonviolent-action/k1-planning-and-development-campaigns>
- [5] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2012/backfire-manual-tactics-against-injustice>
- [6] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2007/justice-ignited-dynamics-backfire>
- [7] <https://civilresistance.info/section/introduction-nonviolent-action/1-theory-methods-and-examples/1b-strategic-theory-dynamics>
- [8] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2001/doing-democracy-map-model-organizing-social-movements>
- [9] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2005/how-win-campaigns-100-steps-success>
- [10] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2013/activists-handbook-winning-social-change-21st-century>
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- [12] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2014/handbook-nonviolent-campaigns>
- [13] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1977/blockade-guide-nonviolent-intervention>
- [14] <https://civilresistance.info/taxonomy/term/247>
- [15] <http://www.ruckus.org>
- [16] <https://civilresistance.info/section/k-preparation-and-training-nonviolent-action/k2-training-nonviolent-action>
- [17] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2002/nonviolent-action-handbook>
- [18] <http://1worldpeace.org/OrderForm.html#NAH>
- [19] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1980/handbook-satyagrahis-manual-volunteers-total-revolution>
- [20] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2000/working-conflict-skills-and-strategies-action>
- [21] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2004/opening-space-democracy-training-manual-third-party-nonviolent-intervention>
- [22] <http://www.trainingforchange.org>
- [23] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2006/strategic-nonviolent-conflict-training-manual>
- [24] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1995/nonviolent-trainers-resources-manual>
- [25] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/2016/seeds-change-network>
- [26] <http://seedsforchange.org.uk/>
- [27] <https://civilresistance.info/taxonomy/term/287>
- [28] <https://civilresistance.info/biblio-item/1981/annotated-bibliography-training-nonviolent-action-and-civilian-based-defence>
- [29] <https://civilresistance.info/taxonomy/term/16>