

10 Tips for Great Actions During the Campaign Nonviolence Week of Actions

by Rivera Sun for Campaign Nonviolence

The Campaign Nonviolence Week of Actions happens every September around the International Day of Peace. Here are some organizing tips for strong, effective, and fun actions with powerful messages and great community support!

1. Start Now. Have Fun.

Potlucks and planning are a time-honored tradition. Gather people in your community to share food, vision, and ideas for the Campaign Nonviolence Week of Actions. Start with the core coordinating team; then host another brainstorming/visioning potluck with the wider community.

2. Connect the Dots and Reach Out!

Campaign Nonviolence works to end war, poverty, racism, the climate crisis. Understanding the connections between the issues is vitally important! Take a moment to think about how the problems and the solutions are connected in your area, and plan actions that connect the dots. The Campaign Nonviolence Week of Actions also offers a great opportunity to reach out to other people, groups, movements, and campaigns in your area. CNV organizers in Buffalo, NY wrote a letter to dozens of organizations in their area inviting them to participate and collaborate in the September actions. Use the Week of Actions as an opportunity to strengthen friendships and build connections.

3. Use Multiple Tactics!

Planning a peace gathering on International Day of Peace? Add a peace walk from a nearby park to the location of the gathering. Ask people to sign a peace letter, declaration, or petition. Gather a small (or large) group to deliver it to local officials, and/or media. Why not march with banners on your way to deliver it? Many historic nonviolent movements combine multiple tactics for a successful series of actions. Gandhi's Salt March, for example, used the march, letters, essays, rallies, pledges, constructive action, petitions, picketing, boycotts, and civil disobedience. Use a bit of creativity and add strength to your events through combining tactics.

4. Use the Tactic Star to Think Through Your Action

War Resisters' International offers us a useful tool in their "Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns", called the Tactic Star. This graphic walks your planning team through the key questions of planning an action, helping you achieve your goals with maximum effectiveness and safety. Find out more here: <http://www.wri-irg.org/node/23302>

5. Amplify With Media

Put together a small media team for your action. Ask people who have skills in traditional, online, and social media to help you get your message out through radio, local television, op-eds, newspaper coverage, Facebook, Twitter, livestream, email blasts, blogging, and more. Let your media team plan pre-action publicity, live coverage during the events, and post-action reporting. In this day and age, we are the media!

6. Use Slogans and Powerful Messaging

As you're preparing for your actions, think about whom you hope to sway or transform with your endeavors. What words,



slogans, and messages may encourage them to see things a different way? How will you make those messages visible to the people you hope to reach? Beyond the action, how can you use letters, media, and other signs and symbols to carry the message to where it needs to go?

7. Use the Two Hands of Nonviolence

At Pace e Bene/ Campaign Nonviolence, we use the concept of *The Two Hands of Nonviolence* to build powerful campaigns for change. One hand opposes or halts destruction. The other hand proposes or builds a solution. During the Week of Actions, consider how you can use both hands of nonviolence. For example, Wilmington, Delaware organizers used two phrases, “March **to End** Gun Violence, March **for** a Culture of Peace”. Some groups organized protests *and* constructive actions. Arkansas Peace Week in Little Rock held a march and also organized the painting of a huge peace mural.



8. Host An Art Build!

Painting banners, drawing slogans on cardboard signs, building giant puppets . . . hosting an art build before your actions is a great way to bring people together, increase involvement and momentum, and prepare excellent visuals for the events. Plus, it gives you an opportunity to build community and make friends.

9. Get Training!

We recommend planning a nonviolence and/or direct action training prior to the Week of Actions. Ground your participants in skills for nonviolent communication, de-escalation, and maintaining nonviolent discipline. Whether you “need” them at the action or not, these are handy skills to foster in your community! Pace e Bene offers nonviolence trainings, contact us for more information at info@paceebene.org.

10. Share Stories

We’re building a *culture* of active nonviolence, and the process is part of the change. Share your stories of dreams, visions, gatherings, meetings, and trainings, as well as the photos and reports from your actual actions. Use social media starting today to chronicle the journey of your group. Send Pace e Bene staff a photo and a paragraph about what’s going on! We will share it to inspire others! After the Week of Actions, be sure to write a thorough action report . . . Campaign Nonviolence uses these reports all year long to encourage and grow the movement for a culture of nonviolence.