

Nonviolence for a Change

Guide for screening the film in groups

Download from: <http://vimeo.com/21800941>

What's the film all about?

This 30-minute film seeks to stimulate debate and get people to reflect on where they stand on nonviolent protest, particularly nonviolent direct action. Nonviolent action is about challenging and addressing injustice with the vision of building another, more just, world. It's more than simply not using violence. It is a pro-active, positive approach to making change. It offers a third way between passively accepting the status quo and trying to impose a change through violent force.

Turning the Tide originally made this video in 2001, and in 2011 we released an updated version, which you are about to watch. This updated version poses the same questions in the newer context and explores how people's perspectives and opinions about nonviolent protest may have shifted over those ten years.

Thank you for screening the film. We hope you find this guide useful and if you'd like more resources or support, please visit our website, send us an email or call. Our contact details are overleaf.

Before the screening with the group we suggest you ...

- Watch the film and think about what parts of this guide are relevant to the group. Make a plan for the session with this in mind.
- Talk over your plan for screening with someone and get their feedback.
- Keep in mind that people will come because they are interested or have been persuaded, but they will bring with them their personal pre-occupations and feelings as well. Gently bring them to focus.
- The film is intentionally provocative in order to stimulate discussion. Turning the Tide encourages viewers to consider where they stand in relation to the actions in the film, and explore their reasons why. Facilitate the discussion in a way that includes everyone and keep in mind there are no such things as right and wrong answers, only different opinions.
- Bear in mind that people might be more comfortable sharing in pairs or small groups rather than the whole group so you might want to create that sort of space before opening up a whole group discussion.
- Ensure you have adequate internet connection at the venue. Or you can download the video in advance (<http://vimeo.com/21800941>).

At the screening we suggest you ...

- Arrive early and check that the equipment is working. Arrange the room so everyone will be able to see and hear. Consider darkening the room to make the picture brighter. Make sure you have external

speakers – the internal speaker in the computer will not be sufficient.
Test for the right volume level.

- Consider having music playing low as people enter the room. It will help to welcome them in and set the scene. Choose something relevant.
- Thank everyone for coming. Welcome them by saying a few words about the film, such as the points mentioned in the beginning of this document (**What's the film all about?**).
- Consider an ice-breaker activity to help the group settle in and focus their attention. If the group doesn't know each other well, even a simple go-round introduction: who I am, why I'm here can help people get to know each other better and feel more comfortable sharing in the discussion.
- Start the film and check the volume with the audience.

After the screening we suggest you ...

- Plan a good amount of time for discussion and reflection. People are often quite stirred by the film's content. Invite them to turn to their neighbour and have a quick chat: 'what do you think about that', 'what stood out for you?' This can help people work through the first layer of their reaction to the film.

If time permits, here are some more points to explore with the group:

- What is violence and nonviolence? Consider the actions viewed in the film, is there agreement amongst the group about what is nonviolence and violence?
- What constitutes 'property damage'? What role does property damage play in nonviolent action for change?
- Is it important that we make our direct action and protests nonviolent? Why?
- How does change happen? How do power-holders generally respond to different tactics, eg, nonviolent direct action, large peaceful marches or mobilisations, letters and petitions?
- What is the role of direct action in social change? Why and when should we take nonviolent direct action? Why and when should we use 'normal channels' (eg lobbying MPs, petitions)?

Turning the Tide is a Quaker social action training programme offering workshops, courses and resources to groups working for nonviolent social change.

<http://turningtide.org.uk>

turningtide@quaker.org.uk

