

GOALS for today

1. Update on WFF-SJ project and volunteer needs
2. How WFF-SJ is connected to other city and state organizing
3. Build shared language on to strengthen our organizing
4. Practice techniques for non-cooperation
5. Leave with specific actions to do



NONCOOPERATION

This workshop is adapted from the Freedom Trainer's full day module. It's a crash course—meaning, you won't grasp everything and you may feel pretty tired or overwhelmed. We're in it together, this isn't your only chance to sharpen these skills, and we're proud to be sharpening together.

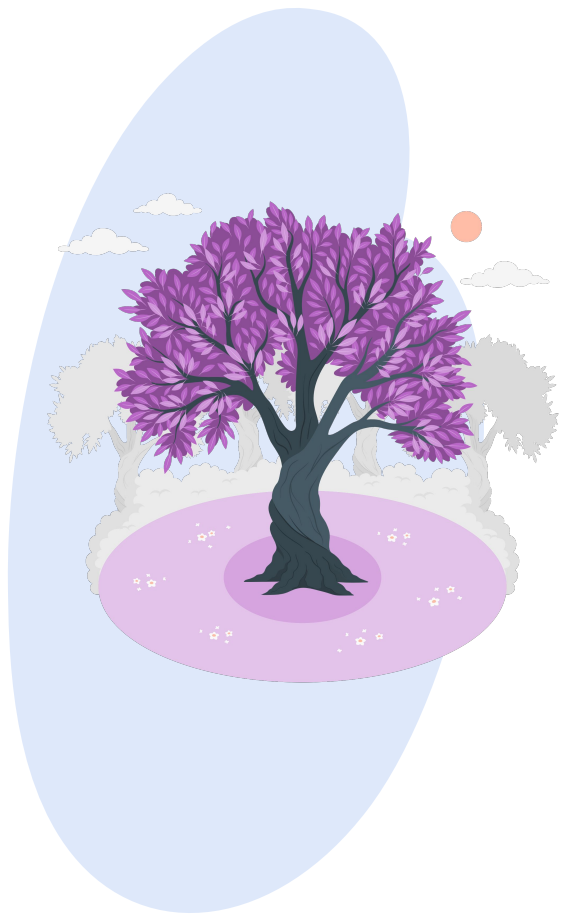
We have 5 sections:

- Introduction & Authoritarian Threat
- Pillars of Support
- Examples of resistance
- Application
- Closing



A large, mature tree with a thick trunk and extensive, spreading roots is the central focus. The roots are dark and gnarled, spreading out across a bed of brown mulch. The tree's canopy is lush with green leaves, some showing signs of aging or damage. The background shows a grassy area and a clear sky, suggesting an outdoor setting like a park or a golf course.

**GROUNDING
LIKE A TREE**



Grounding Exercise

Got your tree in your mind now? *Oak, maple, that big tree outside, whatever you call it.*

Get its name and the way it feels inside you.

Now, during a protest, use that as an anchor. In the middle of a chaotic situation?

Take a breath. Put your feet on the ground. (Two things you should do anyways.) And just recall the name of the tree and the way you felt.

Some of us have called it “the fastest way to ground ourselves in an action.”

What authoritarians do



**Direct
Investigations
Against Critics**



**Give License to
Lawbreaking**



**Regulatory
Retaliation**

**Deploy Military
Domestically**



**Federal Law
Enforcement
Overreach**



**The Autocrat Won't
Leave**



What's the Current State of Play?

BBC

Home News Sport Business Innovation Culture Arts Travel Earth Audio Video Live

Judge blocks Trump from sending troops from California to Portland

13 minutes ago

Share Save

Christal Hayes Los Angeles



Watch: Federal officers and protesters face off outside Portland ICE facility

Group plans puppy party protest to say: 'Paws off Portland!'

Updated: Oct. 07, 2025, 8:36 p.m. | Published: Oct. 07, 2025, 2:22 p.m.



Paws off Portland puppy protest (Mark Graves)

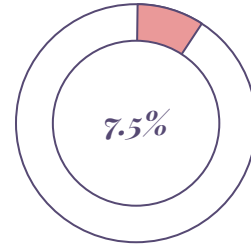


Can we stop backsliding? Yes.

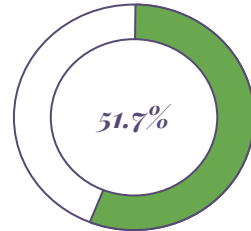
Researchers took 35 cases of democratic backsliding from 1991-2021.

The predicted probability of stopping democratic backsliding:

With no civil resistance movement: 7.5%

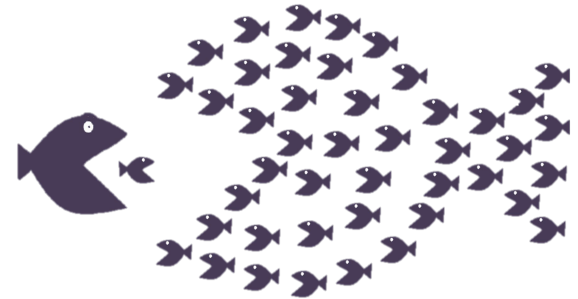


With a civil resistance movement: 51.7%



What makes people power successful?

- Large, diverse participation from different sectors and groups in society
- Manage constructive tensions, center relationships and prioritize larger collective goals
- Unifying “vision of tomorrow” grounded in shared values
- Loyalty shifts and recruiting from within key pillars
- Expanding the repertoire of nonviolent tactics
- Training and nonviolent discipline
- Violence de-escalation



What Works

1

Do Not
Obey in
Advance

2

Prioritize
Joy

3

Take Up
Space

4

Practice
Solidarity

5

Organize

**A condensed version*

The Arc

Slow It

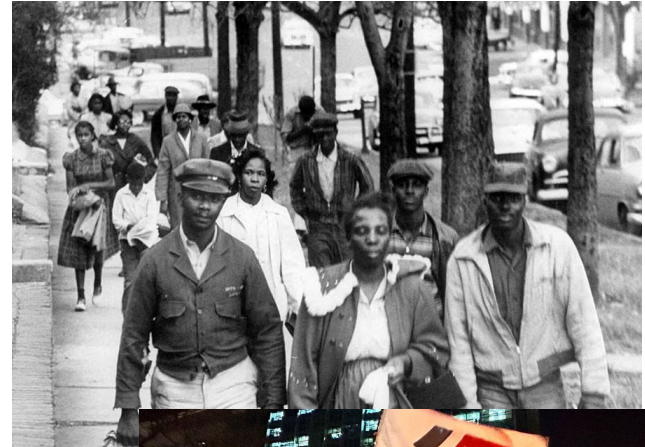
Stop It

**Build the
Democracy we
Deserve**

How to defeat an Authoritarian Regime

Research shows that when **3.5% of the population engages in strategic noncooperation**, those movements typically win.

In Portland, 3.5% is **22,250 people.**



Structure

Neighborhood groups are a critical **base building structure**:

- Hold community events
- Welcome in new people
- Work with other orgs and groups like Protect Oregon to provide training/orientation

**How do we organize 6,000
people in each District?**

Forms of Participation

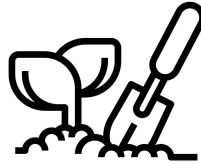


Symbolic Actions

To raise public awareness of an issue and persuade a target to act in a desired way

Examples:

- Marches/rallies/vigils
- Street theater
- Letter-writing/petition drives
- Skywriting
- Mock awards
- Picketing
- Group lobbying
- Mock elections
- Birddogging



Building Alternatives

To build an alternative institution or policy by acting as though it is already in place to disrupt or directly challenge the current system/policy, and demonstrate alternatives

Examples:

- Nonviolent land seizure
- Occupation of buildings
- Citizens' arrests
- Guerilla gardening
- Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party alternative elections
- Mutual Aid food/health



Noncooperation

To undermine the authority of an unjust system by disrupting it, refusing to cooperate with it, or otherwise making it harder, or impossible, for the system to keep its unfair policy

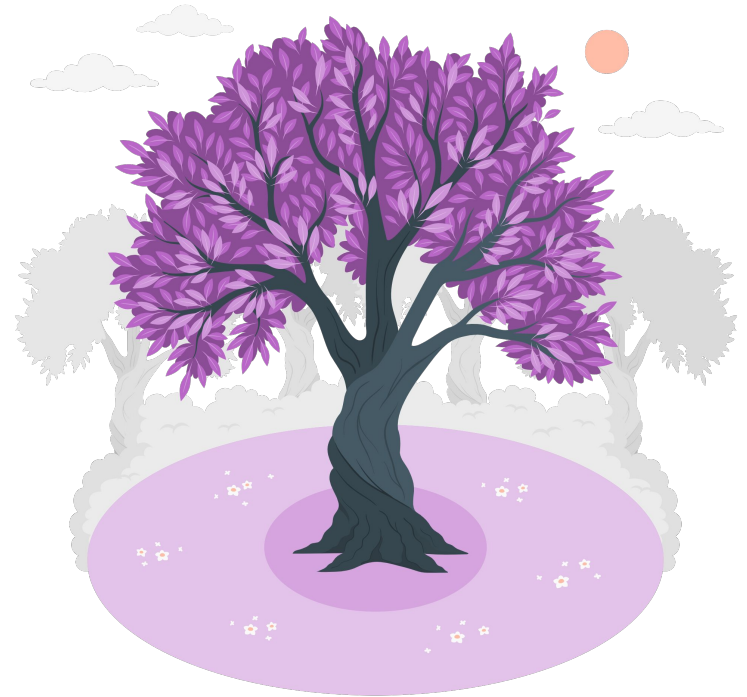
Examples:

- Worker strikes
- Boycotts
- Rent strikes
- Tax refusal
- Fix bathrooms signs
- Jury- conscientious objection

Grounding

Physical practice helps our response

Building muscle memory to respond as we want



PILLARS OF SUPPORT



**“The most common way people
give up their power is by thinking
they don’t have any.”**

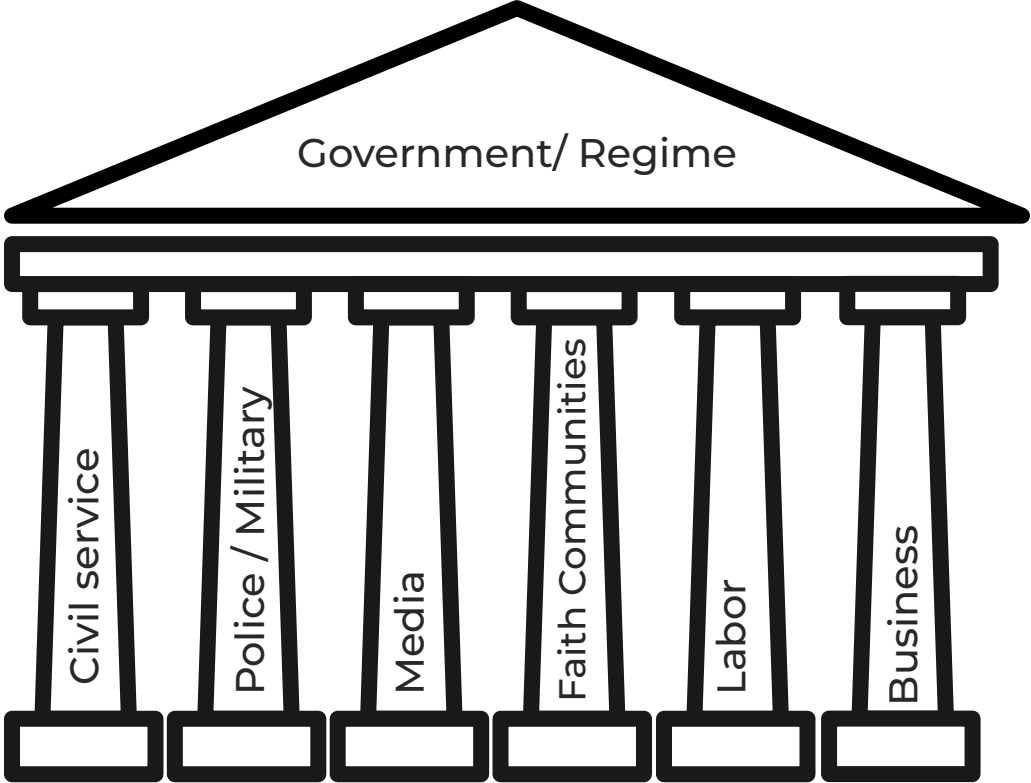
-Alice Walker, author of The Color Purple

Noncooperation is the act of refusing to cooperate or comply with requests, demands, or orders.

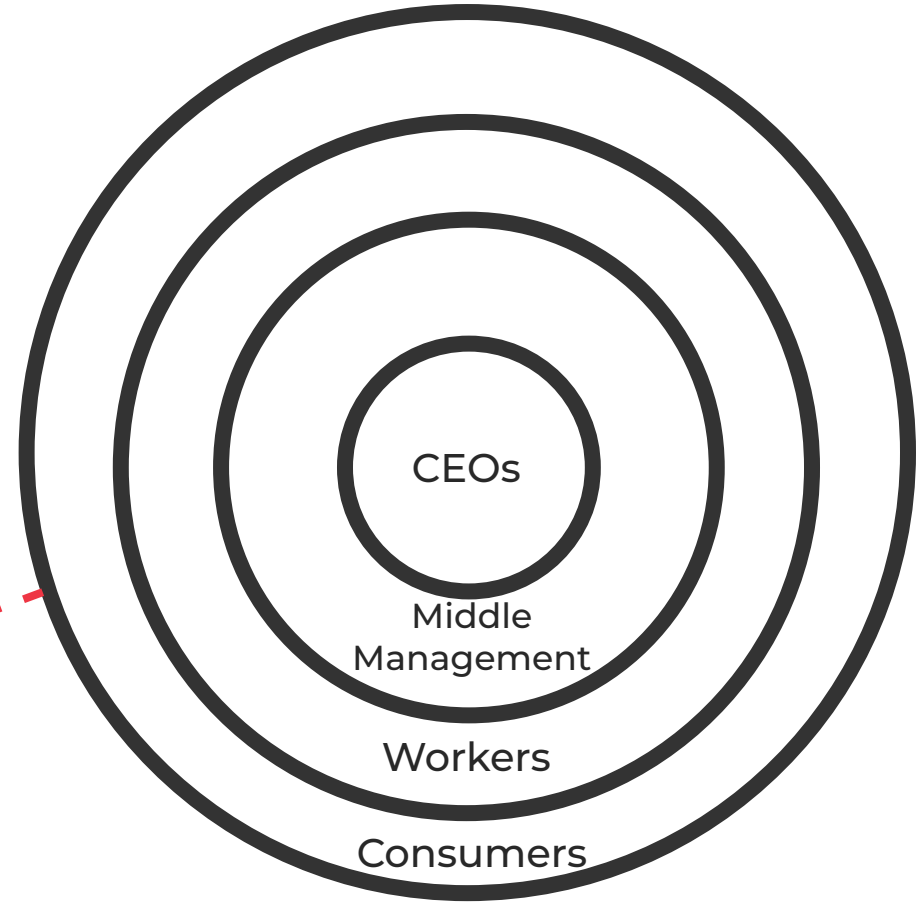
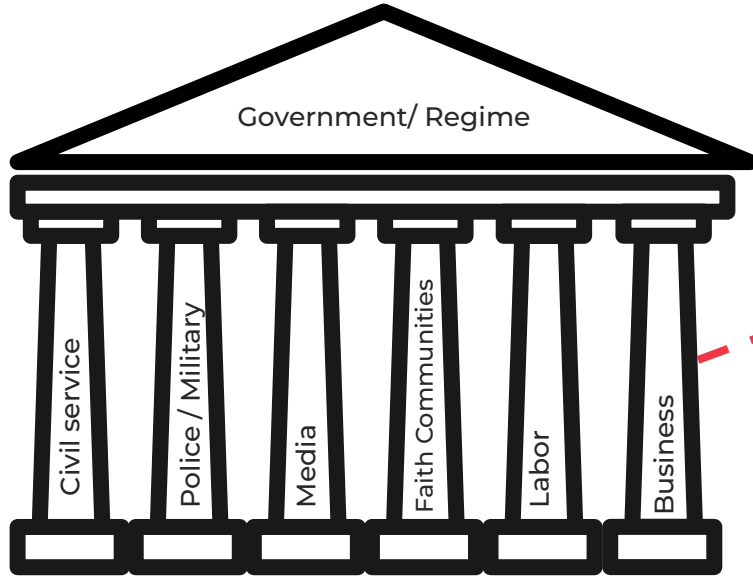
Enough noncooperation will cause a pillar to completely defect — or at least be unreliable in the autocrat's aims.

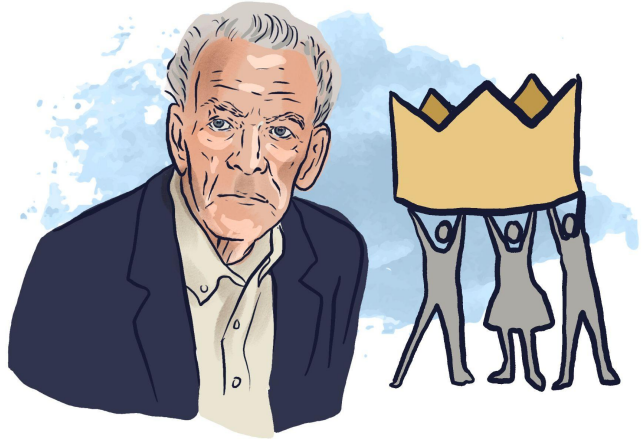


Pillars of Support



Cross Section of a Pillar



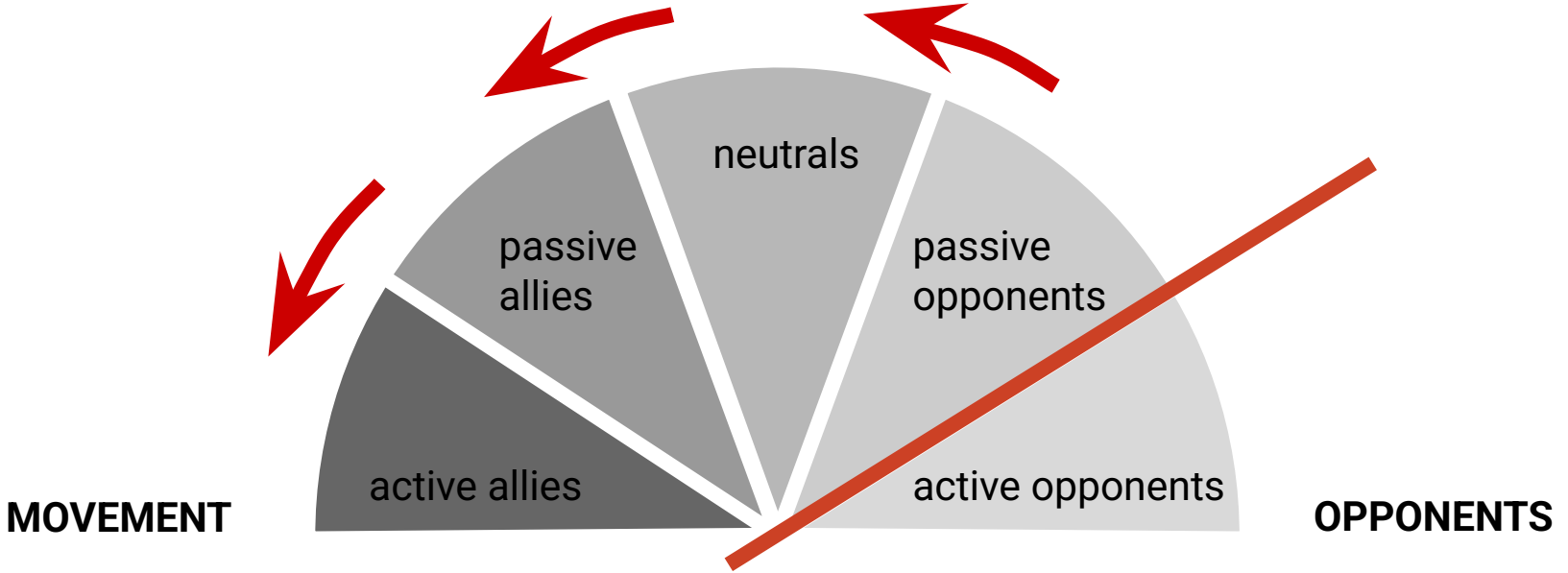


“By themselves, rulers cannot collect taxes, enforce repressive laws and regulations, keep trains running on time, prepare national budgets, direct traffic, manage ports, print money, repair roads, keep markets supplied with food, make steel, build rockets, train the police and army, issue postage stamps or even milk a cow.

People provide these services to the ruler through a variety of organizations and institutions. If people would stop providing these skills, the ruler could not rule.”

— Gene Sharp

Spectrum of Allies



Levels of Noncooperation

**Individual & Small
Group
Noncooperation**



**Collective
Noncooperation**



**Mass
Noncooperation**







Refuse to accept illegal orders.

When USDA inspector general, Phyllis Fong, was “fired” by Trump administration she refused to leave. It was an illegal order.

She “has taken the position that these termination notices do not comply with the requirements set out in law and therefore are not effective at this time”.



PHOTO: @MOREPERFECTION ON [YOUTUBE](#)



PHOTO: @NOWTHISIMPACT VIA [YOUTUBE](#)

Refusing to accept polite decorum.

Outrage in Republican town halls has grown so loud over DOGE that Republicans are being told not to hold them anymore.



PHOTO: 11 ALIVE NEWS VIA [YOUTUBE](#)

Refuse to buy — boycott.

The Feb 28th economic strike hit 11% of Target's sales.

Nina Turner and Rev. Jamal Bryant's Target boycott cost Target \$12.4 billion in market value.

The Tesla boycotts have lost Musk over \$100 billion+.



"Turner" by TeenersMedia is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#); CNN via [Youtube](#); Nina Turner (4939226365).jpg by Gage Skidmore licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#) via commons.wikimedia.org



Rhododrites, Tesla Takedown protest in Brooklyn (15131).jpg - CC 4.0;



"Tesla protest IMG 7000-01 (154366396664)" by Becker1999 from Columbus, OH is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).



"Tesla protest IMG 7000-0104 (154374165324)" by Becker1999 from Columbus, OH is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#).



"Tesla-Musk Protest 2025" by dl bono is marked with [Public Domain Mark 1.0](#)

CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

Harvard won't comply with demands from Trump administration

'We're just getting started': Hundreds gather for protest about DEI at University of Michigan

Updated: Apr. 23, 2025, 2:10 p.m. | Published: Apr. 22, 2025, 9:34 p.m.

UC students, faculty protest university's rollback of DEI initiatives

91.7 WVXU | By Zack Carreon

Published February 24, 2025 at 5:59 PM EST



▶ LISTEN • 1:17



UNIVERSITIES





r/Political_Revolution 5 days ago
SnowTiger578

Join



Utterly Brilliant!!! Dump Glitter on ICE agents so they can be identified days later!

Immigration



derek guy
@dieetworkwear

Follow

talked to an immigrant cobbler at my local shoe repair shop who told me he found out a customer supported deportations so he put a tiny pebble in his insole on purpose

IMMIGRATION

Neighbors Form Human Chain to Block ICE from Detaining Father and Son: They Were 'Bullying' Them

"They came to the wrong community on the wrong day," one neighbor said

By Char Adams | Published on July 23, 2019 08:42PM EDT



Video Ad Feedback

Furious crowds try to block ICE after agents raid San Diego restaurant



its_our_future_stupid
Suggested for you

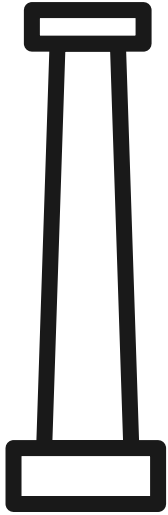
Follow

FIND A WAY TO DO YOUR PART.



18.5K Q 252 2,840

Liked by josephip8888 and others
its_our_future_stupid Reports are coming in of tow truck drivers following ICE around LA... more
2 days ago



Getting Pillars to Crack and Defect

Inside each pillar people may defect as individuals, small groups, or on behalf of the whole institution. A pillar may defect by:

SPEAKING

- making statements, either in public or private, that support democracy or oppose authoritarianism

ACTING

- from participating in protests to organizing for candidates whom you wouldn't normally support but who oppose authoritarianism

STANDING IN THE WAY / NONCOOPERATION

- not allowing the normal course of things to play themselves out, refusing to do what is expected of you, and withdrawing cooperation from policies

Speaking

During Inaugural Prayer Service, Episcopal Bishop Budde prayed for Trump to *“have mercy upon the people in our country who are scared now.”*

740+ Naval Academy alumni sign a public letter rejecting censorship at the Academy.

Bethesda Declaration: A formal, coordinated institutional denunciation of harmful federal cuts

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN](#)

Open Letter to the Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy

Vice Admiral Yvette M. Davids, USN
Superintendent, United States Naval Academy
Annapolis, MD

Dear Vice Admiral Davids,

The strength of the United States Naval Academy has always rested not only in its ability to train future officers, but in its commitment to developing leaders of intellect, character, and moral courage. A foundational part of that mission is the Academy's academic independence—free from partisan interference or ideological censorship. It is the Superintendent's duty to protect this independence. Regrettably, it is our view that you are not fulfilling this duty.

We are deeply concerned by a pattern of decisions that collectively undermine the Academy's academic integrity and intellectual openness:

1. **The cancellation of Dr. Ruth Ben-Ghizat's invitation to speak about fascism**—a topic of direct relevance to those who swear an oath to defend the Constitution — signated a willingness to yield to political pressure over educational value. This continued with the subsequent cancellation of Ryan Holiday's scheduled presentation about stoicism and its relevance to the life of Medal of Honor recipient and graduate of distinction, VADM James Stockdale.
2. **The interference in the Midshipman leadership reading list**—a space traditionally reserved for thoughtful development—reflects a troubling politicization of academic guidance.
3. **The removal of 381 books from the Academy library** undermines the very principles of inquiry and free thought essential to developing the mind and character of future Naval Officers and American leaders.
4. **The cancellation of midshipman resource and affinity groups**, which provide support, community, and leadership opportunities, sends a message that inclusion of the broad sweep of American talents are subordinate to external political agendas.

The Naval Academy's motto—*Ex Scientia Tridens* (“Through Knowledge, Sea Power”)—demands graduates who can think critically, speak boldly, and stand for principles that to be an effective leader, whether in combat or elsewhere, is to be

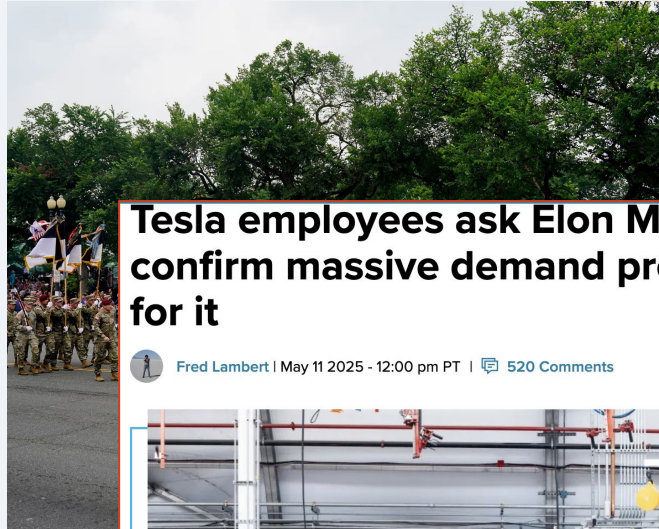


The Bethesda Declaration: A Call for NIH and HHS Leadership to Deliver on Promises of Academic Freedom and Scientific Excellence



Acting

Military followed orders for a parade — but did so in an openly lackadaisical way

Tesla investors asking Elon Musk to leave DOGE



Tesla employees ask Elon Musk to resign, confirm massive demand problem, get fired for it

 Fred Lambert | May 11 2025 - 12:00 pm PT |  520 Comments



Standing in the Way

Federal workers quietly and loudly try to stop DOGE (this is the US African Development Foundation blockading their doors and refusing access to DOGE.)

California school districts refusing to dismantle DEI programs

Dodgers stadium!

Harvard digs in its heels against Trump's massive overreach into academic freedom

Los Angeles Times

California d

Los Angeles Times

Federal agents deny parking lot, sparking r sweeps

Terry Castleman, Jack Harris

Thu, June 19, 2025 at 2:07 PM EDT · 5 min read



Federal agents stage outside Gate E of Dodger Stadium on June 19. (Myung J. Chun / Los Angeles Times)

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HARVARD
MAGAZINE

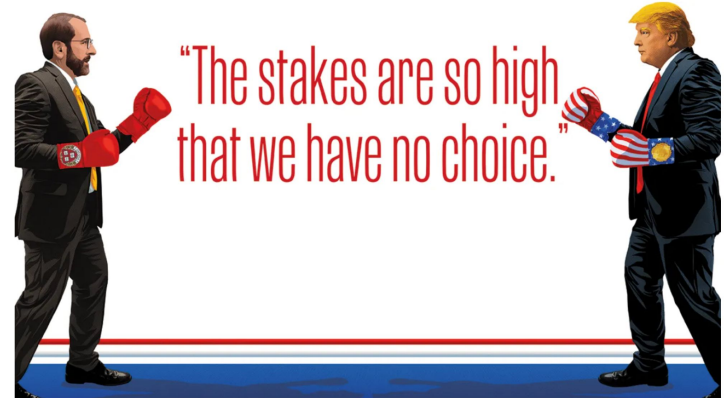


ILLUSTRATION BY TAYLOR CALLERY



s. (Genaro Molina/Los

What are some lessons for us?

Keep testing the boundaries

One of the reasons political space gets smaller is because people self-censor.

To avoid this, groups need to keep testing the boundaries. Calling the union strike was a way to test — *how will the opposition respond?*

We have to take risks.

Prepare to make repression rebound

Repression isn't the goal. But if your primary goal is "safety" it will result in safe actions that don't challenge authority. Authoritarians' primary weapon is fear — which is the goal of repression. You can make it rebound.

Create some systems to handle that repression. Otpor had:

- a rapid-response network
- solidarity with attacked persons
- leaders saying it won't work ("the more they repress, the more opposition grows").

Stay adaptable

Getting committed to any single tactic is a huge mistake.

You cannot *only* march or *only* occupy a building.

You have to adapt. These examples show groups who adapted rapidly based on what the opposition was doing and adjusted.

BREAK

Stretch - breathe - reset



Practice/Application

What Works

1

Do Not
Obey in
Advance

2

Prioritize
Joy

3

Take Up
Space

4

Practice
Solidarity

5

Organize

**A condensed version*

Zero-ing in on gathering strength

**Gathering
Strength**

+

**Respond to
Cycles of
Attack**

=

**Conditions
Are Ripe**



Where to Start

Organize Neighbors

Create a neighborhood
affinity group and
identify your people

Take on a project or role

Get to know your team
members. Build
relationships and trust.
Figure out which pillars
you can disrupt

Disrupt Pillars of Support

Start seeing
non-cooperation
around you and start
participating.

Methods of Non-Cooperation

I. Nonviolent protest and persuasion

Formal Statements

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by orgs and institutions
4. Signed public statements
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

Communications with a wider audience

7. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
8. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
9. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
10. Newspapers and journals
11. Records, radio, and television
12. Skywriting and earthwriting

Group Representations

13. Deputations
14. Mock awards
15. Group lobbying
16. Picketing
17. Mock elections

Symbolic Public Acts

18. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
19. Wearing of symbols
20. Prayer and worship
21. Delivering symbolic objects
22. Protest disrobings
23. Destruction of own property
24. Symbolic lights
25. Displays of portraits
26. Paint as protest
27. New signs and names
28. Symbolic sounds
29. Symbolic reclamations
30. Rude gestures

Pressures on Individuals

31. "Haunting" officials
32. Taunting officials
33. Fraternalization
34. Vigils

Drama and Music

- Humorous skits and pranks
36. Performances of plays and music
 37. Singing
 38. Processions
 39. Marches
 40. Parades
 41. Religious processions
 42. Pilgrimages
 43. Motorcades

Honoring the Dead

44. Political mourning
45. Mock funerals
46. Demonstrative funerals
47. Homage at burial places

Public Assemblies

48. Assemblies of protest or support
49. Protest meetings
50. Camouflaged meetings of protest
51. Teach-ins

Withdrawal and Renunciation

52. Walk-outs
53. Silence
54. Renouncing honors
55. Turning one's back

II. Social non-cooperation

Ostracism

56. Social boycott
57. Selective social boycott
58. Lysistratic nonaction
59. Excommunication
60. Interdict

Noncooperation with Social Events, Customs, and Institutions

61. Suspension of social and sports activities
62. Boycott of social affairs
63. Student strike
64. Social disobedience
65. Withdrawal from social institutions

Withdrawal from the Social System

66. Stay-at-home
67. Total personal noncooperation
68. "Flight" of workers
69. Sanctuary
70. Collective disappearance
71. Protest emigration (hijrat)

III. Economic boycotts

Economic Boycotts

- Actions by Consumers
72. Consumers' boycott
 73. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
 74. Policy of austerity
 75. Rent withholding
 76. Refusal to rent
 77. National consumers' boycott
 78. International consumers' boycott

Action by Workers and Producers

79. Workmen's boycott
80. Producers' boycott
81. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott
82. Traders' boycott
83. Refusal to let or sell property
84. Lockout
85. Refusal of industrial assistance
86. Merchants' "general strike"

Action by Holders of Financial Resources

87. Withdrawal of bank deposits
88. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
89. Refusal to pay debts or interest

90. Severance of funds and credit
91. Revenue refusal
92. Refusal of a government's money

Action by Governments

93. Domestic embargo
94. Blacklisting of traders
95. International sellers' embargo
96. International buyers' embargo
97. International trade embargo

IV. Economic non-cooperation

Symbolic Strikes

98. Protest strike
99. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

Agricultural Strikes

100. Peasant strike
101. Farm Workers' strike

Strikes by Special Groups

102. Refusal of impressed labor
103. Prisoners' strike
104. Craft strike
105. Professional strike

Ordinary Industrial Strikes

106. Establishment strike
107. Industry strike
108. Sympathetic strike

Restricted Strikes

109. Detailed Strike
110. Bumper strike
111. Slowdown strike
112. Working-to-rule strike
113. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
114. Strike by resignation
115. Limited strike
116. Selective strike

Moving to Action

Half the room will do pillars - half will do tactics

Deeper dive on pillars

- Choose a pillar
- Are there individuals that can be moved to non-cooperation ?
- How can WFF-SJ create cracks in that pillar?

Recruitment and tactics

- Who are your people?
- What non-coop tactics would appeal to them?
- What is your next step in the next week?

Closing: What are your next steps?

PIRC Hotline 1-888-622-1510

Oct. 18 No Kings

<https://worthfightingforstjohns.org/>