



An action is nonviolent if...

Purpose

To reach a collective understanding about nonviolence.

This tool works best when preceded by something that opens up the subject, for example the Violence and nonviolence spectrum.

Time

30 minutes

Group size

Up to 25

Materials

Flipchart, marker pens, tape or Blu-tac.

Related tools

⇒ Violence and nonviolence spectrum

Toolkit theme:



Violence and nonviolence

Description

Invite people to get into threes or fours and to take turns to complete the sentence: "an action is nonviolent if..." Invite discussion in these small groups of the themes that arise. Allow about 10 minutes.

Bring the group back together and take one idea from each small group in turn, listing the results on flip sheets until they are all up.

Keep asking 'Does everyone agree with that?' Invite other participants to respond and disagree. Mark the disputed ones in some way.

Verbally summarise areas of unity and disunity.

Debrief

Ask the whole group:





TURNING THE TIDE

Toolkit

- ⇒ How was that? Did you find it difficult?
- ⇒ What can we say as a group about our collective understanding of nonviolence?

Optional add-on

Share Turning the Tide's nonviolence characteristics:

- ⇒ Willingness to take action for justice without giving into or mimicking violence
- ⇒ Respect and care for everyone involved in a conflict, including the opponent
- ⇒ Refusal to harm, damage or degrade people / living things / the earth
- ⇒ Belief that everyone is capable of change and no-one has a monopoly of truth
- ⇒ Readiness to take inevitable suffering on yourself rather than inflict it on others
- ⇒ The means used must be consistent with the goal of peace and justice
- ⇒ Preparation and training, so that our behaviour is nonviolent.

You might like to invite a short discussion of how far this matches what the group has said.

