**Movement Action Plan Summary (MAP)**

A Strategic Framework Describing the Eight Stages of Successful Social Movements

By William (Bill) Moyer, Spring 1987

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| **Stage** | **Stage Name** | **Description** | **Opposition** | **Powerholders** |
| **1** | **Normal Times**  10 – 15% | Conditions that violate widely held cherished human values; maintained by the policies of public and private powerholders and a majority of public opinion; relatively unnoticed | 3 kinds of opposition – professional opposition organizations (POOs), principled dissent groups, & grass root groups | They promote policies that support the interests of society’s privileged and powerful; which violate values of society as a whole; keep policies out of public spotlight and off society’s agenda of contested issues |
| **2** | **Prove the Failure of Institutions**  10 – 20% | The public begins to realize that government policies violate human values and beliefs, and that authorities deceive the public and govern unfairly. | Starts proving that powerholders are preventing the democratic system from working:   * Undertake research * Testify & undertake challenges * Prove there are “kangaroo courts” * File suits in the courts * POOs take concerns to decision makers | They fight the opposition through the normal channels, usually winning easily, and continue the policies. They control the media and can keep the potential problems out of public view. |
| **3** | **Ripening Conditions**  30% | The “take-off” of a new social movement has preconditions that built up over many years; a growing discontent of victims and allies; a building of anonymous grass roots opposition | * A growing understanding of the seriousness of the problem * Local people start new autonomous groups separate from POOs * Small local demonstrations and nonviolent action * Pre-existing networks and groups need to become available | Irritated and relatively unconcerned  The official policies remain publically believed and unchallended. |
| **4** | **Social Movement Take-Off**  30 – 50% | Overnight everyone is talking about the previously unrecognized social problem. Often starts with a highly publicized “trigger event” that shocks people, followed by a nonviolent campaign and large rallies. The public has a sense of moral outrage.  Take-off is the shortest stage. | Must organize a dramatic nonviolent campaign immediately after the trigger event to keep the public spotlight on the problem and build social tension.  If powerholders ignore the demonstrations, their policies are prevented from being carried out. If they respond with force and violence, it puts public sympathies with the demonstrators.  Participation in the new movement gives meaning to many peoples’ lives. | Shocked, upset, and angry that the genie is out of the bottle. They take a hard line in defending their policies and criticizing the new movement, calling it radical, irresponsible and even communist-inspired or socialist. |
| **5** | **Identity Crisis of Powerlessness**  50% | Many activists lose their faith that success is just around the corner and come to believe that it is never going to happen. | * Belief that the movement is failing * Battle fatigue * Stuck in protest * Widespread burnout * Organizational crisis | * Report that the movement is dead, irrelevant or non-existent * Continues a hardline strategy * Infiltrate the movement to get intelligence, disrupt |
| **6** | **Majority Public Support**  65 – 75% | A conscious transformation from protest to long-term popular struggle which engages those who were neutral or sympathetic | * Massive public education/conversion * Broad-based pluralized movement * Renewed use of mainstream political/social institutions * Citizen involvement programs * Respond to new trigger events * Propose alternatives, larger demands, and a new paradigm | * New rhetoric about the threat of outside demons * Switching strategies, stance, and policies as needed * Public “negotiation process” without giving up important advantages |
| **7** | **Success**  80% | A new social consensus turns the tide and begins an endgame process leading to success:   * Dramatic showdown, or * Quiet showdown w/victorious retreat, or * Attrition over decades | Activists need to work hard to recognize the victory and their own role.  Efforts carried out through the work of POOs and elites. | Majority of powerholders join the opposition view, while central powerholders are isolated and eventually defeated:   * Forced into making fatal mistakes * Custer’s last stand * Resort to extreme acts and repression |
| **8** | **Continuing the Struggle** | The success in Stage 7 is not the end but the basis for continuing the struggle and creating new beginnings. | * Celebrate success * Follow-up * Work on achieving other demands * New social consciousness * Beyond reform toward fundamental structural change | Most powerholders will be a part of the new social and political consensus.  Govt. bureaucracies might drag their feet or fail to follow through in carrying out new laws. |

Summary by Harold Fields