



## **Staying Safe at Protests: How to Respond Non-Violently**

Peaceful protest is our right. But, other groups may attempt to intimidate us with violence. To prevent our non-violent demonstration from becoming a show of their violence, here are some tips. It is easiest to defuse a problem before it explodes.

- If you feel uncomfortable or intimidated, immediately move or leave the area.
- If you see weapons or you feel threatened or you observe suspicious behavior, call the police immediately and leave the area.
- If you are surrounded, don't panic. Move to the periphery of the crowd.
- If someone appears to be in danger, intervene calmly. Emotional actions beget emotional responses.
- If a person abuses you verbally, do not respond. Reasonable discourse in this situation is futile. Verbal abuse is used to anger, demoralize and provoke. Do not take the bait.
- If you face aggression and choose to engage, know that an aggressive person is not likely to listen to you. Have an escape route.
- If it is possible, look for creative ways of isolating and calming aggressive people, by building a positive relationship with them: "I want to listen to you but I am having trouble when you are shouting...."
- If you are attacked, follow the attacker's directions; do not fight back.
- If an attack occurs, try to remember details so you will be a good witness.

remember:

**WE ARE NOT AFRAID | Stay Safe**

*Furnished by Charlottesville Center for Peace and Justice  
www.charlottesvillepeace.org/*



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