

The Dynamics of Social Movements

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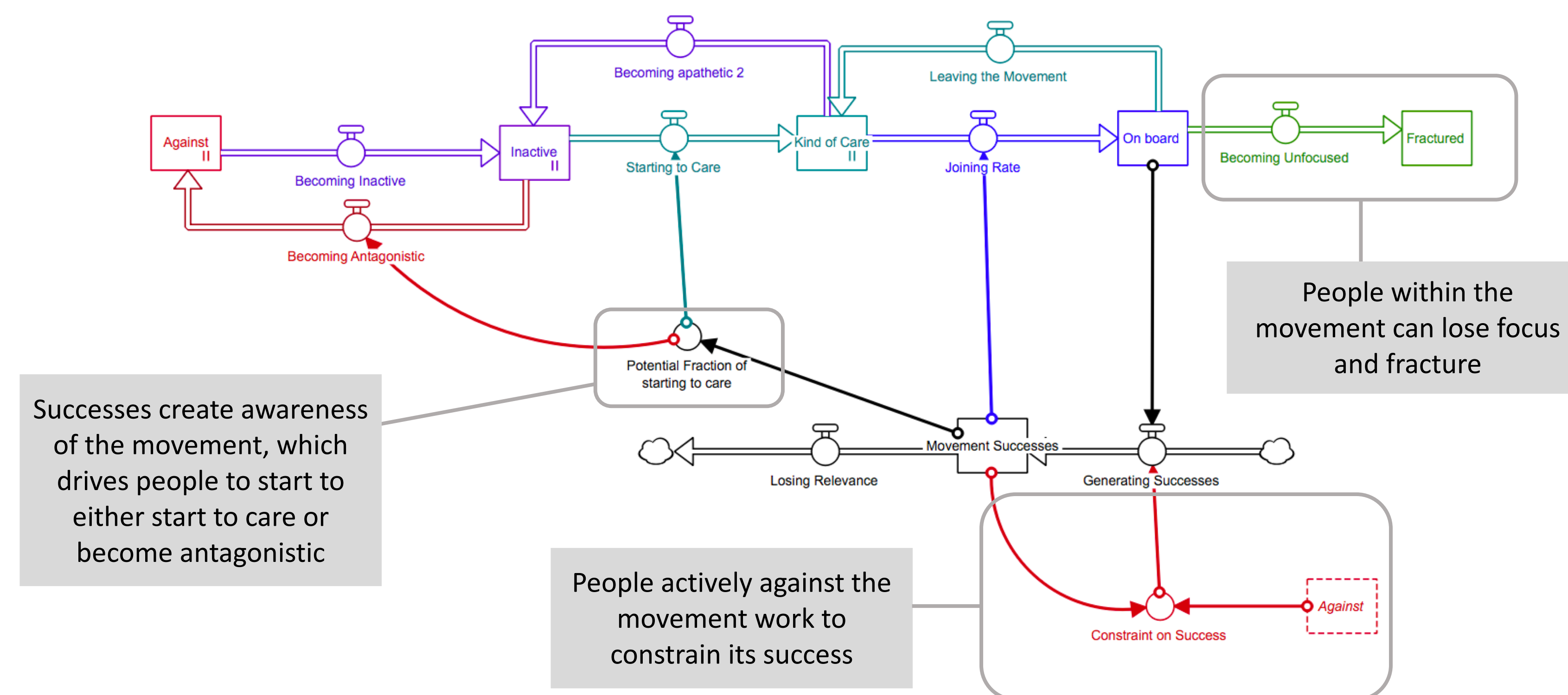
How Do You Build a Movement?

Social movements have long been effective methods of changing individual and societal behavior and beliefs (for better, as in the case of the Civil Rights Movement, or worse, as in the case of the growing neo-Nazi movement in the US today). However, there are many promising movements that fail to generate the change, and many more that fail to even reach the stage of mobilization.

Driving Question:

How do movements generate social change? Where are the leverage points to “engineer” effective social movements?

Simplified Model Structure

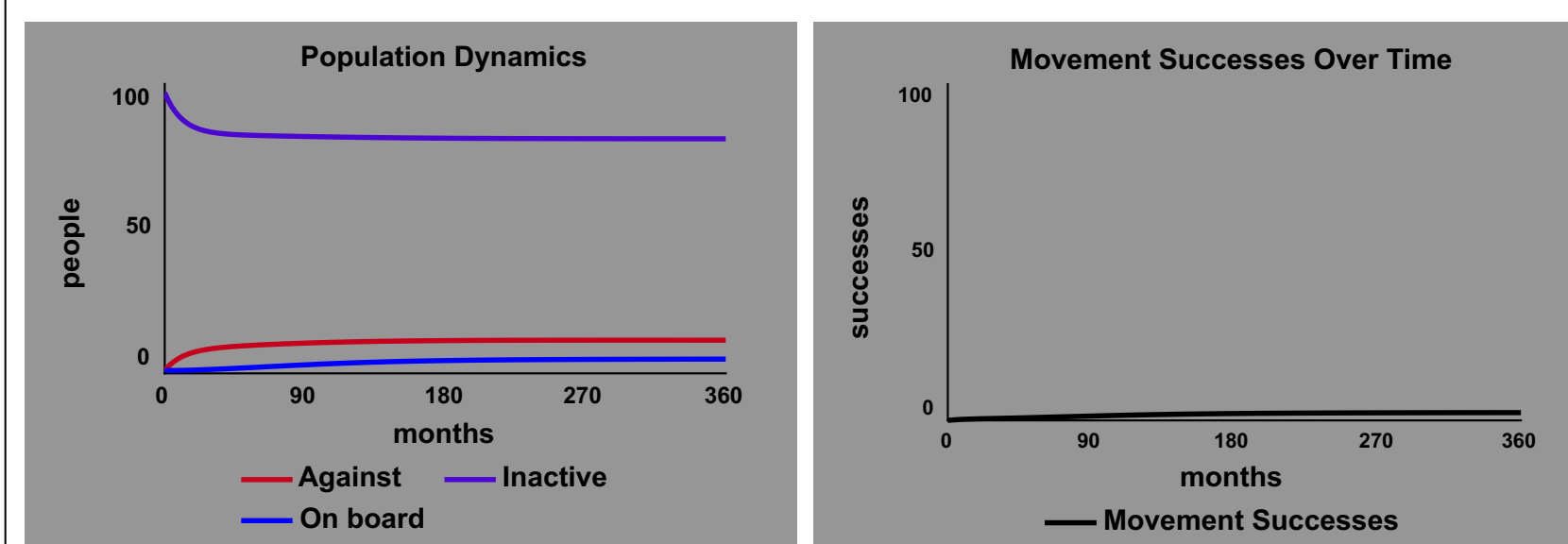


Tested Four Potential Leverage Points

- Percent of people who move into ‘against’ from those leaving ‘inactive’
- Level of pushback generated by success
- Relevance time of successes
- Problem awareness

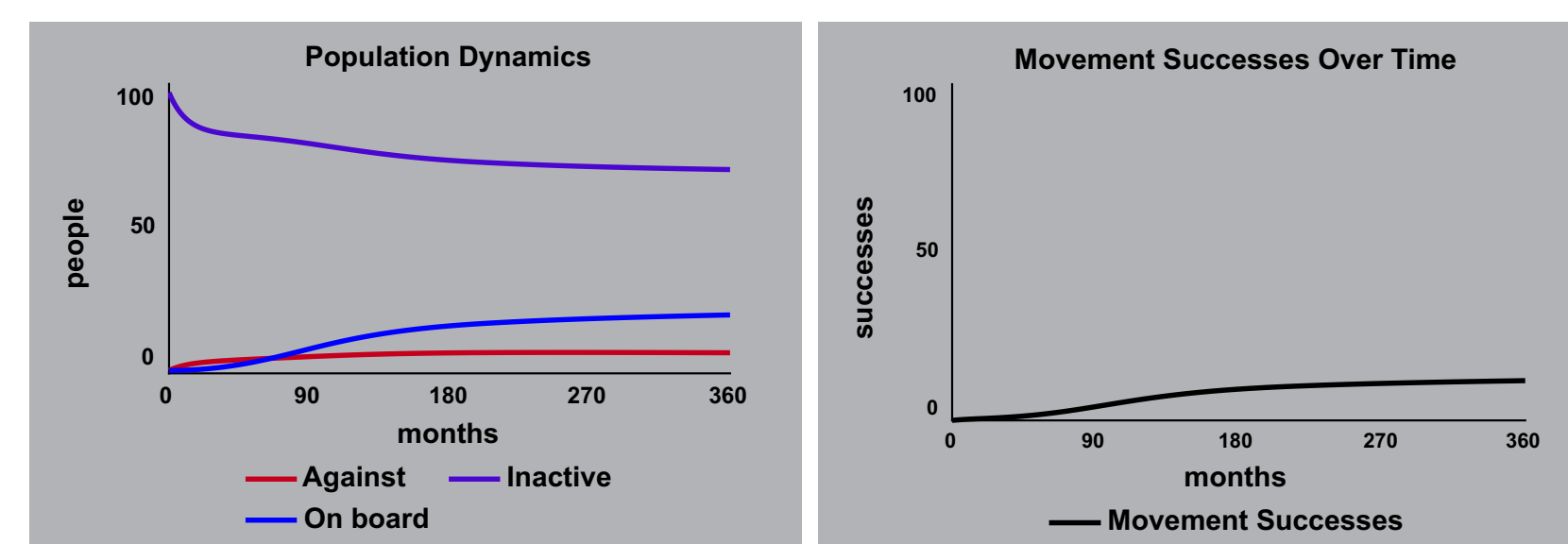
Reverse Engineering Movement Success

Unsuccessful Movement



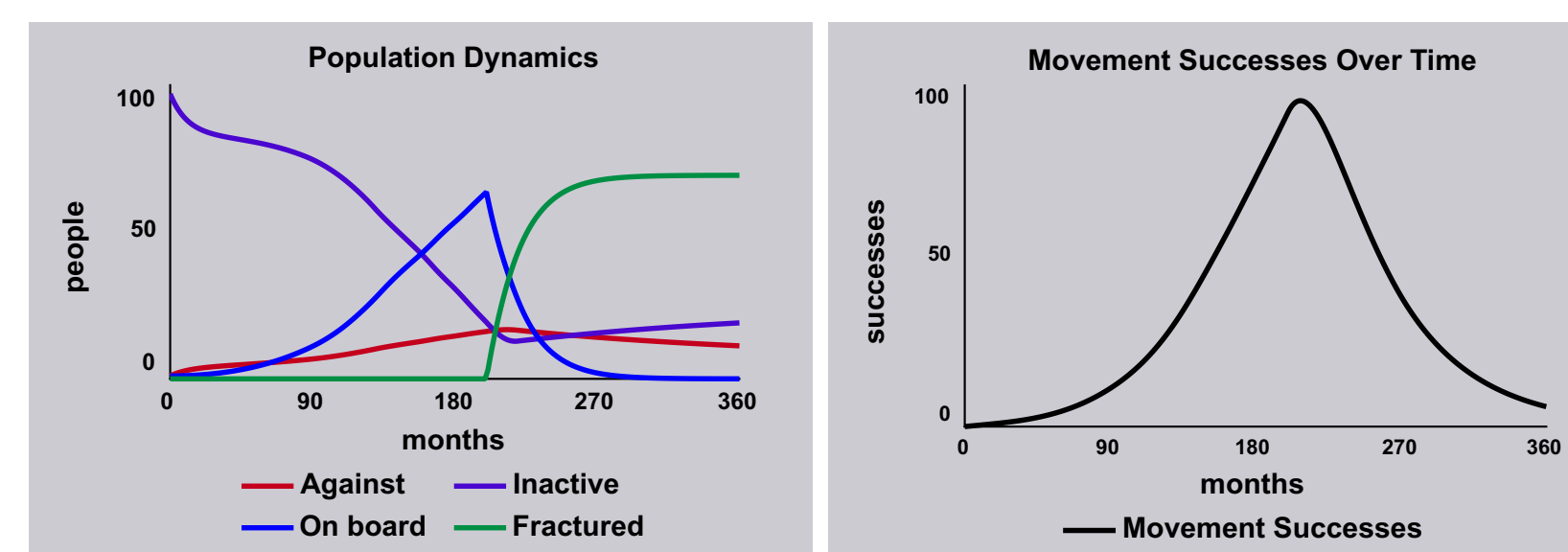
- **High** % of people moving into ‘against’
- **High** levels of pushback from success
- **Short** relevance time of successes
- **Low** problem awareness

Successes Quickly Lose Relevance



- **Low** % of people moving into ‘against’
- **Low** levels of pushback from success
- **Short** relevance time of successes
- **High** problem awareness

Fractured Movement



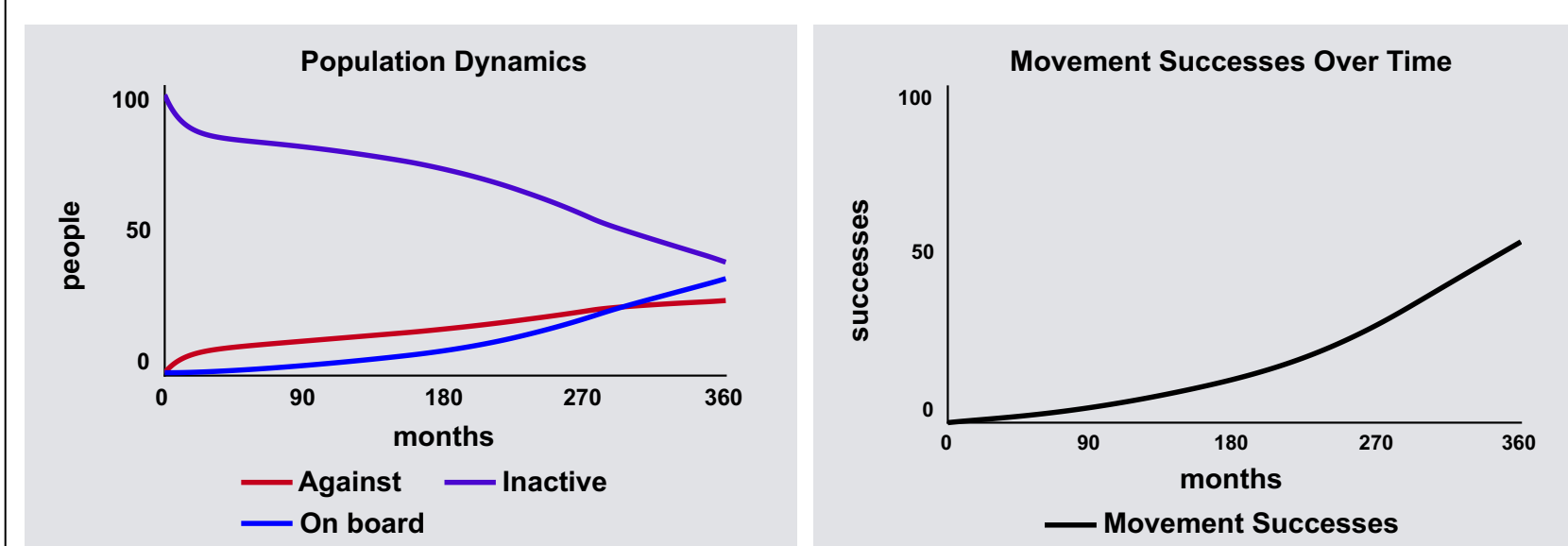
- People in the movement lose focus at month 200
- **Low** % of people moving into ‘against’
- **Low** levels of pushback from success
- **Long** relevance time of successes
- **High** problem awareness

Making It Happen

- Work to keep successes relevant
- Address multiple leverage points
- Maintain focus of people on board
- Do not unnecessarily alienate the ‘inactive’

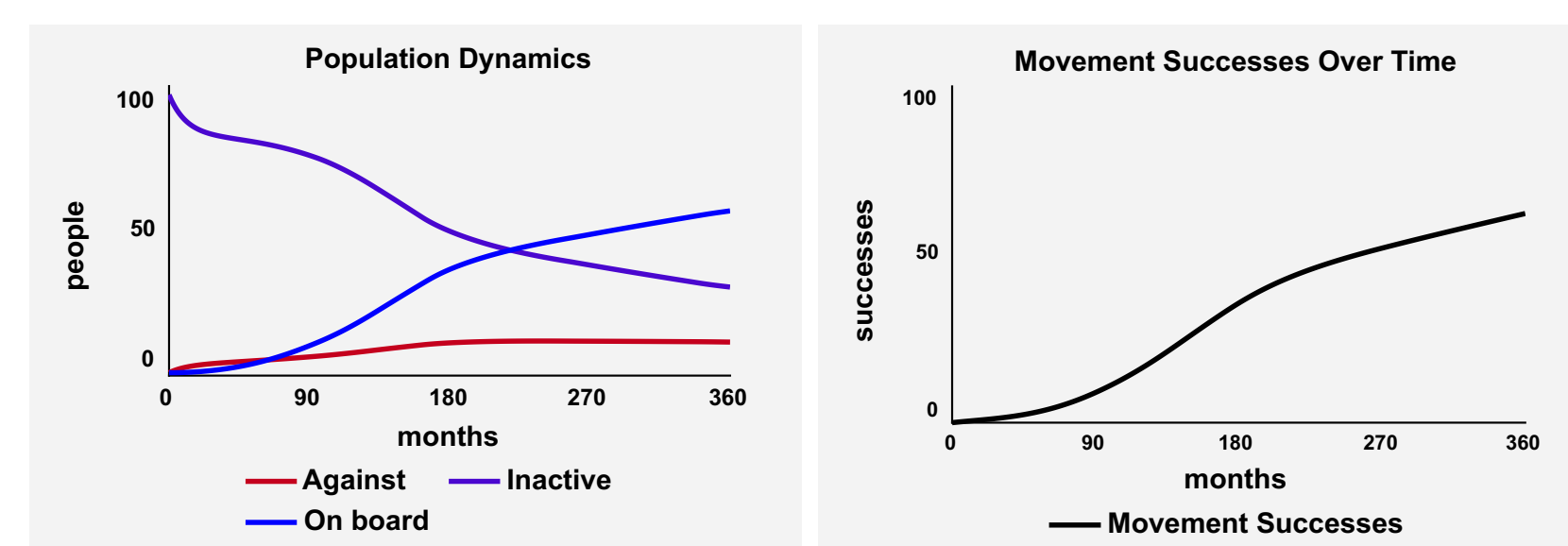
Movement failure is often due to a one-size fits all approach that does not consider initial conditions of the four levers.

Many People Against, Minimal Pushback



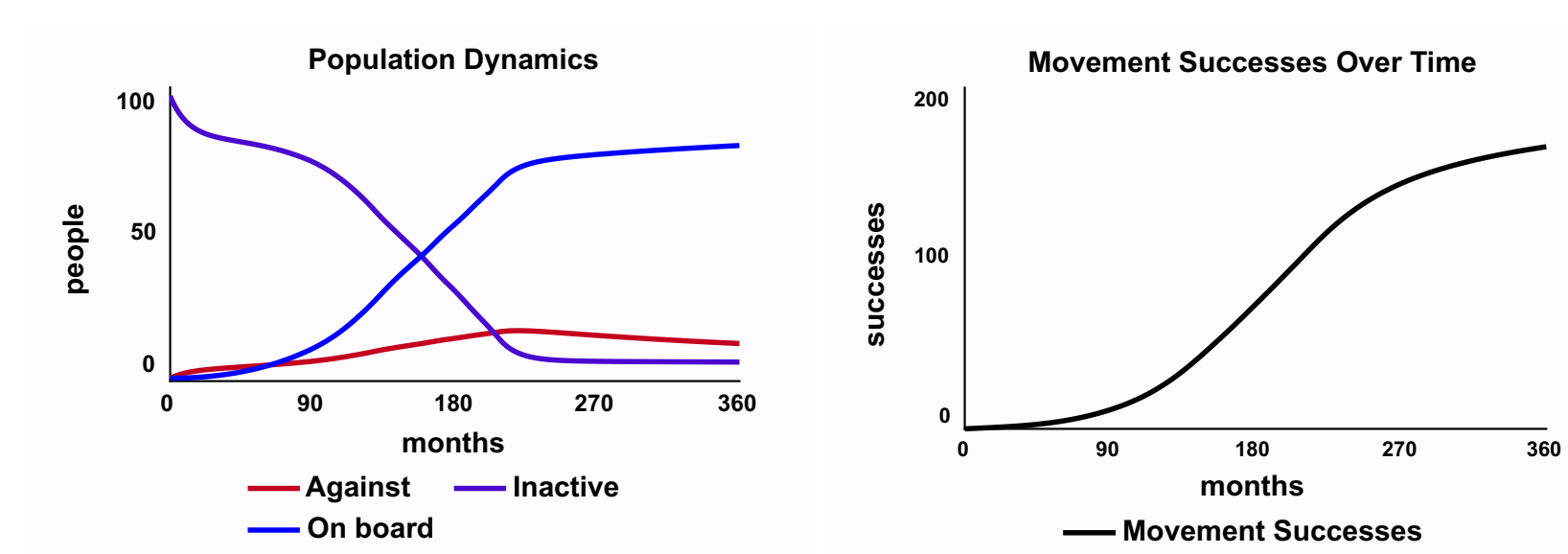
- **High** % of people moving into ‘against’
- **Low** levels of pushback from success
- **Long** relevance time of successes
- **High** problem awareness

Few People Against, Strong Pushback



- **Low** % of people moving into against
- **High** levels of pushback from success
- **Long** relevance time of successes
- **High** problem awareness

Successful Movement*



- **Low** % of people moving into ‘against’
- **Low** levels of pushback from success
- **Long** relevance time of successes
- **High** problem awareness

*Note different axis scale for movement successes

Future Work

- Incorporate feedbacks that affect how people leave the movement, such as frustration or satisfaction
- Incorporate feedback where the magnitude of problem affects success

Acknowledgements

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