



LIFEAFTER**HATE**

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PEACE MAKERS

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Welcome

TO THE INAUGURAL ISSUE



Dear Friend,

Welcome to the very first issue of the Life After Hate newsletter!

As we were putting it together, I was continually reminded of the power of forgiveness. While every individual story about transformation is unique, all of our narratives hold in common one truth: As compassion grows, so does the possibility for change.

This newsletter is dedicated to that idea, and to sharing resources and updates on our work countering hate and racism. Central to this effort is our **#iforgive** campaign in the upcoming season of giving.

Each year, more than **250,000 people** in the United States are victims of hate crimes. More than half go unreported. I can think of no way better to counter this swell of hate and intolerance than through compassion and forgiveness.

Sammy Rangel

Executive Director,
Life After Hate



Q&A:

BREAKING AWAY AT ANY COST

A FORMER MEMBER OF THE ARYAN BROTHERHOOD TALKS ABOUT WHY HE JOINED & HOW HE FINALLY GOT OUT

Thomas Engelmänn, 35, was a longtime member of the Aryan Brotherhood of Mississippi. He is now an active member of Life After Hate, helping other formers successfully leave behind hate groups.

What first drew you into the Aryan Brotherhood?

Growing up, the Aryan Brotherhood had legendary status within the circles I was raised. With a criminal set of ethics, the Aryan Brotherhood seemed to be the most elite group. A few years after being incarcerated, I decided to join the Brotherhood out of a need for family.

When did you start questioning your involvement with the group?

It was around 2015 that I had finally had enough. I realized that no matter how hard I tried none of the brothers wanted to change their lives for the better.

How do you handle moments of self-doubt?

I remember how content I am in my life today. Before fully breaking away and getting clean, my life was nothing but constant chaos. My newfound peace is what keeps me going.



Was there a breaking point?

No, I can't say that there was just one. For me, everything snowballed until I couldn't stand a single section of my life. I had left myself no other way out, other than to completely disappear. At the rate I was going, I would have ended up in prison, doing a life sentence.



What continues to motivate you today?

I really want to help people. The fact that I survived getting shot in the face with a .45-caliber handgun at point-blank range and lived is my motivation. I am doing my best to dedicate the rest of my life to becoming the person I should have been all along. I consider every day a gift and I will share that gift with the ones who need it.

What is the one thing people should understand about hate groups but most likely don't?

Most people seem to think that everyone in a hate group is in it to hate another person. It usually doesn't start out that way. A lot of people that are involved are doing so because they want the community and belonging that comes with being part of selective groups. The groups teach hate by playing on the members' fear of losing that community structure.

What's changed in how hate groups operate or strategize from the time you were involved to today?

Everything has shifted to more Internet recruiting and Internet training. The movement has said for years that it wanted its members to become major players in government, military, and police while avoiding tattoos.

Unfortunately, we must now contend with the effects of that campaign.

What should communities do when they see a local chapter of the Aryan Brotherhood or other hate group begin to form locally?

I would suggest that the public become properly educated as to the different groups and their methods. Always use caution when around them. If you know someone in the group, you may be able to show them that there is another way to live. Remember, some people may not see another path in life until we show them.



HOW YOU HELPED MAKE TWITTER LESS HATEFUL IN 2018

9 MILLION.

That's the number of hate impressions that have been eliminated from Twitter thanks to [#WeCounterHate](#) and the innovative A.I. technology that powers it.

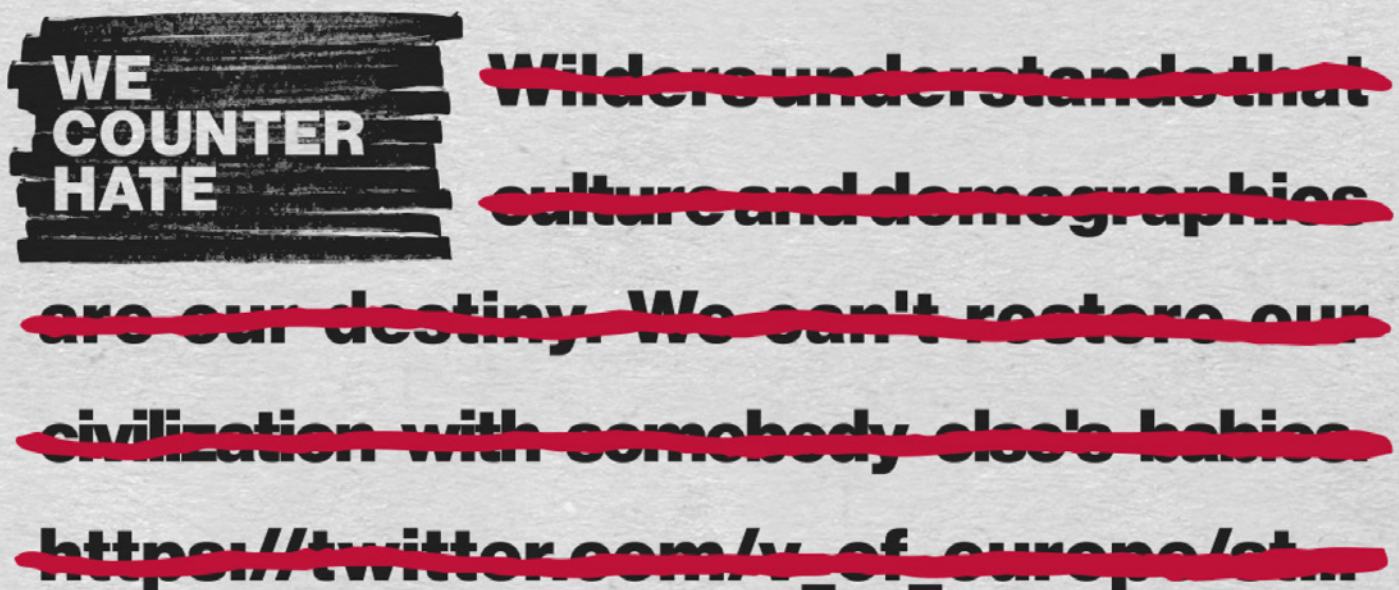
And that number continues to grow.

So, while you've likely come across stories about how major tech companies are grappling with hate speech, what you may have missed—at least on Twitter—is that one campaign is successfully turning the tide on hate speech.

We first told you about We Counter Hate earlier this year when we helped pioneer it with Possible, a creative agency based in Seattle.

It's a donation platform that slows the spread of hate speech by making people think twice about retweeting it.

Just over eight months since the campaign went live, the results are staggering.



9 MILLION.

Overall tweet impressions are down by more than 9 million. Essentially, 9 million fewer people have been exposed to hate speech because of this platform.

65%

Rate reduction at which “countered” tweets—tweets that We Counter Hate recognized as hate speech—were retweeted.

16%

Percentage of those tweets that were ultimately deleted.

31%

Percentage of accounts suspended after a tweet was countered. While not a goal of the campaign, these accounts were shown to violate Twitter’s own rules.

“We Counter Hate works because it’s a way for people to challenge hate speech without condemning the person behind it,” says Sammy Rangel, the executive director of Life After Hate. “It’s important to remember that we don’t need to concede our position, that we can still maintain healthy boundaries, while starting a dialogue with people that need help.”

OUR HATE SPEECH CLASSIFICATIONS

MODE	OUTPUT
5. <i>Intention</i>	Incitement to genocide Incitement to general violence Incitement to specific violence Incitement to degrade and discriminate
4. <i>Polarization</i>	Inculcation of target group Historical negationism Promotion of known hate groups Exclusion of target group
3. <i>Dehumanization</i>	Propaganda of stereotype Derogatory language against target group
2. <i>Classification</i>	Target group comparison Target group identification
1. <i>Coded Language</i>	Innuendo signaling in-group/out-group nationalism Innuendo implicating a target group Innuendo excluding a target group

How #WeCounterHate categorizes hate speech on Twitter; the campaign only targets the most egregious hate speech that has the largest audience, specifically modes 4 and 5.

To learn more, visit: wecounterhate.com



LIFE AFTER HATE CO-FOUNDER FEATURED IN AWARD-WINNING VIRTUAL REALITY DOC

Life After Hate co-founder Angela King received the silver screen treatment this year when her story became the subject of an award-winning virtual reality documentary, “Meeting a Monster.”

Moviegoers were able to experience Angela’s descent into the violent white supremacy movement and the path she took to get out.

Through audio recordings and reenactments, the virtual reality film

exposed the monsters of Angela’s past that defined the eight years she spent mired in hate. But it also showed how she triumphed, helping start Life After Hate, helping others leave extremist hate groups.

“Meeting a Monster” was an official selection in this year’s Tribeca Film Festival.



“Meeting a Monster” was part of the Oculus VR for Good Creators Lab. Life After Hate was just one of 10 nonprofits that were chosen by VR for Good among hundreds of organizations that applied for the project.



WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN HATE GROUPS COME TO YOUR TOWN

From Portland, Oregon, to Newnan, Georgia, cities of all sizes across the country are confronting a difficult question: How should we respond when hate groups plan a rally in our towns? Here's what you should know:

VIOLENT FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISTS ONLY BENEFIT FROM MEDIA ATTENTION

They're trying to trigger you and want you to act on your anger. It validates their victim mentality. And makes them feel justified.

THEY WANT TO BE HATED AND THEY WANT YOU TO GET VIOLENT

But most of them did not join these groups because they hate people. Many are trying to fill a void in their own lives. And for many, it is themselves whom they hate.

AVOID ARGUING THE IDEOLOGY HEAD-ON

You won't change anyone's mind in the middle of a rally. Debate often devolves into shouting matches and that only puts you at risk.

IF YOU ARE COUNTER-PROTESTING AND USING SIGNS, USE SIMPLE MESSAGES

But please consider keeping it positive, for example, ***"There Is Life After Hate."***

START A FUNDRAISER OR COUNTER-RALLY

Initiate a fundraising campaign to deter a rally in the first place.

Ask community members to donate a dollar to a civil rights charity for every far-right extremist marching. You can also launch a counter-rally.

The most successful of these are usually held in another part of town and focus on something positive. If you don't like what you're hearing, change the conversation.

UNITE WITH OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

Make sure you connect with youth groups, churches and other civil rights organizations. Remember, there is strength in numbers.

Police are likely already aware of any upcoming rallies, so make sure you communicate your strategies with any departments involved.



COMING UP ...

On November 27, Life After Hate will be celebrating #GivingTuesday, a global day of giving.

We've been overwhelmed by the many ways in which you have given to us.

And while #GivingTuesday is recognized as a day to continue that generous support, we want to take some time to give back to all of you.

In the days leading up to #GivingTuesday, we'll share an update on all that we have accomplished since August 2017.

It's been an amazing 15 months and we're eager to expand our work in the coming year. That's why we're also excited to unveil our #iforgive campaign.

Thank you for being our partner as we counter hate and intolerance together!



#GIVING
TUESDAY™



Life After Hate was founded in 2011 by former members of the American violent far-right extremist movement. Through powerful stories of transformation and unique insight gained from decades of experience, we serve to inspire, educate, guide, and counsel.



Exit USA, a program of Life After Hate, is dedicated to helping men and women disengage from the white power movement and build a more positive life. Founded and run by former hate group members who have led successful lives post-movement, Exit USA provides support to individuals who are looking to leave racism and violence behind.