Step by Step Guide to Reducing Hate in Your Communities

“NO ONE IS BORN HATING ANOTHER PERSON BECAUSE OF THE COLOR OF HIS SKIN, OR HIS BACKGROUND, OR HIS RELIGION. PEOPLE MUST LEARN TO HATE, AND IF THEY CAN LEARN TO HATE, THEY CAN BE TAUGHT TO LOVE, FOR LOVE COMES MORE NATURALLY TO THE HUMAN HEART THAN ITS OPPOSITE.”

-NELSON MANDELA

American Diversity Report
In Cooperation with
Council Against Hate
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Where Do You Begin?

It is getting more and more common to hear of heart wrenching stories about actions and speech being driven by HATE. More and more communities are afraid. More and more houses of worship are suffering from the loss of their “own” due to some hate crime.

“Darkness cannot drive out Darkness; Only light can do that! Hate cannot drive out hate; Only love can do that!”

-- Martin Luther King

This manual is a compilation of a very successful plan that was put in place in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and some additional resources to help you change the direction in YOUR communities!

We would like to thank all those who contributed willingly, and with hope, for a better tomorrow in all our communities:

Chattanooga Mayoral Office  American Diversity Report
Federal Bureau of Investigation  Communities Against Extremism
The Council Against Hate  Strong Cities Network
Anti-Defamation League  Family Justice Center

Compilation of Information created by
ADR New Beginnings Board Members:
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“The threat of social and political unrest around the world is rising as the coronavirus crisis fuels discontent amid food shortages, job losses and lockdowns. Covid-19 is potentially catastrophic for millions who are already hanging by a thread,” Arif Husain, senior economist at the WFP, said in a statement. ...It is a hammer blow for millions more who can only eat if they earn a wage. It only takes one more shock – like Covid-19 – to push them over the edge.” – Bloomberg.com

“Chattanooga was rocked by brazen attacks on two military facilities on July 16, 2015, starting at 10:45 a.m. when a gunman unloaded dozens of rounds into a Lee Highway recruiting office. As shock at the deaths of four Marines and one sailor turned to grief, residents looked for answers.” Based on other reports: Following an investigation of several months, the FBI said that the shootings were "motivated by foreign terrorist organization propaganda.”— Chattanooga Times Free Press
WHERE IT ALL STARTED

The idea for the Chattanooga Council Against Hate originated from a connection with a global organization known as the Strong Cities Network (SCN), which is a collaborative effort supported by the U.S. State Department, the German Marshall Fund, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue, and others. SCN regularly convenes mayors from around the world to discuss best practices with confronting violent extremism and radicalization. Mayor Berke got involved with SCN as a result of Chattanooga’s response to the July 16, 2015 domestic terror attack that claimed the lives of five servicemen. Recognizing that the factors that contribute to radicalization, hate speech, and violent extremism were very much present in Southeast Tennessee, he decided in Spring 2018 to form a locally-focused version of this effort, which became the Council Against Hate. He announced his idea for the project at his 2018 State of the City address, and it was unveiled to the public the following spring.

Mayor Berke and his senior staff reached out to a broad and diverse coalition of local faith leaders, business executives, educators, public safety officials, and others to serve as the steering committee for the Council Against Hate. The steering committee met periodically over the course of late 2018 to determine how and where to best apply their energies. Presentations and data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Anti-Defamation League, and others. At his 2018 State of the City address, Mayor Andy Berke of Chattanooga, TN announced the formation of a new Council Against Hate. A diverse steering committee was empaneled and met for the first time on October 18, 2018. Within ten days of this steering committee meeting, headlines were dominated by events demonstrating exactly how critical this work is.

This manual, “Councils For Peace,” has been created so that other communities might benefit from our experiences. It will share a framework and several initial recommendations for how the Council Against Hate began to limit the negative impact of hate in Chattanooga. These ideas were informed by reviewing current research about hate crimes and violent extremism in America – particularly in the South – and discussions with various constituencies within our community – African-American, Latinx, Muslim, Jewish, LGBTQ+, and others who are frequently and increasingly targets of harassment, intimidation, and violence. And in this COVID-19 Edition, we will address the additional challenges that have been added to our communities, and possible ways to deal with them.
**THE MISSION:** The mission of this manual is to understand the factors leading to the spread of violent extremism and intolerance in any community, regardless of the cause, and to advise the public and private sectors on policies and strategies that will create a more civil, safe, and welcoming community for all people.

Critical to this work is an understanding of what the *Anti-Defamation League* calls “**The Pyramid of Hate,**” in which communities permit and gradually normalize incidents of bias until they result in violent acts or even genocide. Addressing this kind of behavior at the base of the pyramid should prevent your community from experiencing the dangerous and horrific acts that occur at its apex.

**DEFINITIONS OF HATE:**

**Verb:**
- To feel intense hostility, ill will, or aversion for someone or something
- To love less (scriptural definition)

**Noun:**
- Intense or passionate hostility, disgust, or aversion
- The emotion or feeling of intense aversion or perceived moral resentment
- Learned perspective of aversion, hostility, or perceived moral resentment for someone or something

**Adjective:**
- Hate speech
- Hate groups
- Hate crime

**POSSIBLE CAUSES OF HATE:** (Find the cause — find the solution!)
- Fear of the unknown or things that are “different”
- Historical Conflict
- Inherited or taught “hate”
- Personal experience
THE PANDEMIC CHALLENGE

COVID-19 presents our communities with an unprecedented set of challenges as emotions are heightened and biases become stronger. The two major challenges that are likely to generate fear, division and civil unrest are related to 1) Economics and 2) Health.

ECONOMY-BASED UNREST

In countries where the coronavirus has devastated the economy and job market, there's been civil unrest. Poverty, hunger, crime, and social upheaval are a real threat according to Karen Kendrick, a professor of sociology at Albertus Magnus College.

Divided Community

We are divided in part by the lack of consistent information, and the multitude of different views from “experts” which only adds to the uncertainty and divisiveness. There are other factor in the growing contention and divisiveness. Totally opposing views are getting more and more apparent, because people are getting quite vocal on Social Media. People who have been friends for years are finding themselves at odds:

A. Certain groups are very against too much government control:
   - Why are Big Box stores allowed to stay open, but small businesses are going bankrupt?
   - Why have Doctors been told to put COVID-19 on all deaths if the person tests positive, even if they died of a different cause?
   - Some states are putting in laws that are very restrictive, and seem illogical...like you can shop at Walmart, but you can’t go fishing?
   - People are starting to get “Cabin Fever” and feel they should have the freedom to choose.

B. Others feel that it’s the government’s duty to protect and support us:
   - They feel that if people go out, they might infect others.
   - They are concerned about being in public where others may not observe social distancing.
   - They may have family or friends that are at “high risk”.
   - Some people are truly afraid of getting it themselves.
Domestic Violence
The number of domestic violence calls to law enforcement has spiked. Incidents can involve intimate partners, children and senior relatives. Domestic violence can involve sexual assault, physical harm, and emotional abuse. During this pandemic, when families have self-isolated, cities like Milwaukee are seeing a spike in homicides, and nearly half of them are related to domestic or family violence.

Unemployment
“The number of Americans filling for unemployment benefits came in at 2.981 million in the week ended May 9th, the lowest level since the coronavirus crisis began two months ago. Still, filings came in above market expectations of 2.5 million and lifted the total reported since March 21st to 36.5 million, equivalent to nearly a quarter of the working age population. The 4-week moving average, which removes week-to-week volatility, eased for a third straight week to 3.617 million, while continuing jobless claims hit a new record of 22.833 million in the week ended May 2nd.” ~ Trading Economics
https://tradingeconomics.com/united-states/jobless-claims

Record unemployment has many anticipating a rise in theft-related crime. At record lows for years, thefts could begin to spike. High-end retailers — from Louis Vuitton in Soho to West Elm in Beverly Hills — have boarded up their storefronts to ward off looters. The NYPD has seen a 75% increase in burglaries of businesses, according to The Wall Street Journal.

HEALTH-BASED UNREST
Issues of public health and access to healthcare have become a major focus at every level of our communities from neighborhoods and cities, to states and the federal government. COVID-19 has affected various populations differently, and individuals and groups have responded differently. While Councils For Peace are not equipped to dispense medical treatment directly, they can create collaborative efforts to address the highly emotional issues that could lead to extreme and destructive responses.

Fear
Fear of the unknown and fear of death are two of the most powerful forces that can affect a person’s mindset. As we deal with the current COVID-19 situation, both of these fears are simultaneously in play, and the situation is magnified in people’s psyche. It is important for those who do not have these fears to realize that the fears are genuine in others’ minds.
They cannot be brushed away as “nonsense”. In some situations, even logic isn’t enough. If a child falls off their bicycle, and gets a bad injury...they WILL be fearful of bicycles, no matter what logic you use. Fear is a powerful emotion and cannot be ignored as it impacts the choices made by individuals and communities.

**Mental Health**

In a recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll, nearly half (45%) of adults in the United States reported that their mental health has been negatively impacted due to worry and stress over the virus. As the pandemic wears on, it is likely the mental health burden will increase as measures taken to slow the spread of the virus, such as social distancing, business and school closures, and shelter-in-place orders, lead to greater isolation and potential financial distress.

History teaches us that human beings do not respond well to forced lockdowns. When placed on lockdown, adrenaline and stress hormones like cortisol kick into an acute stress response. Survival mode, the “fight or flight response”, kicks in so rapidly many people don’t realize what has happened to them. The knee-jerk reactions that result are almost uncontrollable. These reactions are often made worse by a sense that the vulnerable are being taken advantage of, resulting in increased anger and retaliatory actions.

**Diversity of Risk**

The contagion and deaths from COVID-19 are not experienced uniformly across all communities and ethnicities. The diverse experiences are highlighting social disparities that have long existed. Science magazine reported in April that African Americans comprise 32% of Louisiana’s population, but are 70% of COVID-19 deaths. New York City reported that Hispanics and African Americans died at double the rate of Whites. Native Americans have died at three times that rate to the point where Doctors Without Borders, usually reserved for third-world countries, are now deployed on US soil.

In addition, there are high risk populations in crowded facilities such as prisons. The generational differences in response to contagion make densely populated senior citizen homes particularly vulnerable. Further, women are at high risk of the contagion, given that they constitute almost 80% of health care workers in the US. They are caretakers not only for patients, but for children and grandparents, so their entire families may be exposed. Healthcare workers are not the only women at risk. Almost 54% of employees in the hospitality industry are women.
A THEORY OF CHANGE:
Hate, violent extremism or social unrest have no single cause, and will not be solved by a single approach, sector, or individual. The theory of change grounding this work seeks to invest time, energy, and capacity in critical areas to create system-level change.

To achieve the outcomes we seek, we must:

- Create a coherent and consistent legal framework to deter actual hate crimes through enforced penalties.
- Engage influencers in the business community, faith community, media, and others to set cultural expectations around shared values.
- Remember that all community leaders need to work together and deliver the same messages to the public during uncertain times.
- Calm and knowledgeable leaders help address the uncertainty people are feeling.
- Drive generational change from the bottom-up by educating young people about consequences of bias, discrimination, and hateful behavior to reduce incidents and positively influence adults’ rhetoric and behavior.
- Understand the current uncertainty of COVID-19 and work to create and environment of calm vs. one of dissention and fearfulness.

Recommendations:
Survey state statutes regarding hate crimes and social unrest, and determine which are the most effective, based on public input and available public safety data. Use this research as the basis for future state and local advocacy efforts to improve existing hate crime legislation. Support and expand community immersion, cultural competency training, and diversity recruitment efforts by the Police Department.

COVID-19 has created a whole new type of social engagement, and a lot of it is headed in the wrong direction. We need to find a way to address the fear and lack of credible information. Then there needs to be a “balanced” approach to getting this information to the people, as we suggested in the “Address the Fear” section.
WHERE TO BEGIN?
Civic leaders or entities interested in forming their own local Councils For Peace are encouraged to keep a few things in mind:

• **Leadership matters.** This work is inherently political, provocative, and controversial, so finding volunteer chairs who offer credibility and subject matter expertise is crucial, particularly at the launch.

• **Organize around local needs and issues.** The Chattanooga Council Against Hate invited experts from federal law enforcement and regional anti-hate groups to advise us about national trends and statistics, which was invaluable. This high-level research was especially useful in conversations with local law enforcement agencies and other leaders who could more precisely identify areas of concern that were unique to our region; in our case, that includes white nationalist organizing on college campuses, discrimination against immigrant and refugee populations, and civil rights for LGBTQ+ individuals. These needs may appear quite different in different communities with differing populations, economic conditions, etc.

• **Bring people from the margins to the center** and find ways for people to participate. Ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTQ+ citizens, and other marginalized populations are of course the most vulnerable to violent extremism and hate. Opening and maintaining lines of communication with these communities early on, and being responsive to their concerns over time, will pay dividends in maintaining your Council’s credibility. As the saying goes, *don’t do anything about them without them!* As with any good community organizing endeavor, finding creative ways to make sure people feel empowered and acknowledging their contributions is vital to sustaining your progress.

• **Be loud in declaring your values.** At their core, efforts like the Councils For Peace are about shifting culture, which is a crucial step to changing policy and preventing violence. Establishing a civic identity that is rooted in values of peace, diversity, and open communication is essential if you hope to prevent violent extremism and hate from taking root in your community or country. At every opportunity, in every way, find ways to broadcast these values. In Chattanooga, that took the form of regular public events with guest speakers, an active social media presence and email newsletter, a podcast, and frequent declarations from Councils For Peace members about what was and wasn’t considered acceptable in our city.
STAGE ONE: BUILDING COUNCIL TEAMS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The process of forming teams should begin with the assembling an executive committee that can put together other teams and direct their work. Eventually this committee will include the captains of the teams that are created. However, to get started you need co-chairs dedicated to this process. It is important when designating co-chairs to have both male and female, and team leaders should be diverse, representative of gender, generation, race/ethnicity and religion. They will recruit participants to be on the Council’s teams and designate each team’s leadership, for at least the first year. At that time, the teams can choose to continue to with the designated leaders or elect others from within the team to lead it.

The executive committee may meet in person and/or online to determine the basics of the Council’s operation:

- Mission statement
- Determination of teams and their topics
- Leadership recruitment for each team
- Team orientation: date, location, agenda
- Quarterly meetings: location, scheduling, agenda
- Quarterly team reports: template, delivery method
- Public announcements: process, format, recipients

The executive committee should personally contact individuals they chose to lead the teams and get their agreement to do so. They will also need to designate a time and place for a Council orientation session and invited the team leaders to attend. To prepare for that conversation, the executive committee must be able to describe the general responsibilities of these team leaders:

- Serve as team leader for a minimum of one year
- Attend the Council’s orientation session
- Recruit colleagues and friends to serve on their teams
- Meet with their teams monthly either in person or online
- Report progress quarterly to co-chairs
- Serve on Executive Committee

TEAM FORMATION: Determining the focus of Council’s teams is an essential step to public involvement, assessment of needs, response planning, and project implementation. The co-chairs of each Council may choose a different set of teams based on place and focus, with a likelihood of combining both.

A top priority should be to develop a team involving a local university. The Council co-chairs should designate a leader of this team who can engage faculty and students. By doing so,
this team will be able to assist the Council in long-term sustainability by providing access to meeting spaces and the technology needed to produce podcasts and radio programs. The following is a list of elements to consider in forming the teams relevant to the Council’s mission. Creating approximately 6 teams is a reasonable goal although that number can be flexible based on the mission, the breadth of the co-chairs’ contacts, and the population they anticipate serving.

1. Geography Examples:
   • neighborhood
   • community
   • city
   • district
   • national
   • regional

2. Sector / Focus Examples:
   • business
   • government
   • healthcare
   • arts & culture
   • media
   • technology
   • education
   • religion
   • nonprofits/NGOs

**ORIENTATION:** Once the co-chairs have determined the nature and number of teams and have the team leaders in place, they can proceed to an orientation session. Arrange a location, date and time in advance and notify all team leaders. They should be asked to invite up to a dozen colleagues to join them at the orientation as their potential team members. The next step is planning the orientation session’s agenda. The program should include introductions, presentations by experts, and an open facilitation process. Keep in mind that these meetings and presentations CAN be done online. There are many different online platforms, and many of you are already using these to communicate during the first months of COVID-19 lockdown.

**INTroductions:** Begin by having one of the co-chairs lead the session by giving a welcome and share the Council’s mission. That person will then introduce each co-chair and have them introduce themselves to the group. Making each introduction only 1-3 minutes, setting the pace for the team leaders who the leader will as to introduce themselves and their guests. Make sure that all who are present use a prepared sign in sheet and give their contact information.

**EXPERT PREsentations:** The co-chairs can opt to have 1-2 experts present on central topics to the Council’s mission. Presentations should be no more than 10-15 minutes with an additional 5 minutes for Questions & Answers. Examples of presentation topics include:
   • Hate groups recruitment strategies
   • Community issues that perpetrate intolerance & needed interventions
   • Current efforts to counteract hate
OPEN FACILITATION: This element of the orientation is the most essential part of the process. Each team leader gathers his group with directions to brainstorm the needs that their team should address. One person in the group is designated to write and record the suggestions. They will be given approximately 20 minutes for this process. At the end of this time, each team will vote on the top 2-3 issues that they will begin to address together. The team priorities are shared verbally with the entire group.

Each team member will research one of the issues, determine what is being done to address those needs, and report at the next meeting on what specific goals the team should focus on. That first meeting of the team should be scheduled approximately a month later with the date, time, and place for the next meeting determined.

At the conclusion of the orientation session, the date, time, and place will be announced for the next executive committee meeting, including team leaders, approximately 6 weeks later in order to give teams a chance to meet, record, and report their findings and goals.

TEAM ASSIGNMENTS: Each team is charged with laying the groundwork for developing strategies for an inclusive environment that counteracts hate. They will have determined priorities during the orientation session. They will determine specific goals for those priorities in their first team meeting. The next step should be to take each of those goals and map out specific strategies over a 1-year period. That step should include assigning specific tasks to team members. All of these efforts are to be recorded and shared by the leaders with the executive committee.

UNIVERSITY CONNECTIONS: Universities, colleges, and community colleges can be optimal choice of headquarters for Councils Against Hate because it is a neutral site, with space to meet and technology to assist. It's also removed from oversight from a specific group or political party. If your community doesn’t have any of these, a larger high school might be able to assist. Because many of these are closed for COVID-19, the physical use of their technology will be delayed, but you can certainly start laying the groundwork.

MEDIA CONNECTIONS: The Executive Committee should put in place social networking platforms for their Council For Peace such as Face Book and the city’s website. In addition, plan a podcast series with local and regional prominent figures in community building, counteracting hate, and peace initiatives. Contact organizations that have the equipment and technical assistance to both record the podcast interviews and help share them on social media. After the lockdowns are lifted, Team leaders can help promote the events generated by the Council in their neighborhoods and communities. They should be encouraged to write letters to the editor for local newspapers in coordination with the Executive Committee and the media team. The media can be invited to public meetings held by the Council, but not the team meetings.
STAGE TWO: IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Analysis of all surrounding communities – 50-mile radius
  - Research the history of the conflicts in question.
    - How many years has it been going on?
    - Is culture or religion involved?
- Plan a Town Hall or Virtual meeting to discuss the issues that are most concerning.
  - Give residents a reason to attend by making the topic broadly engaging and speaker well-known to them.
  - Make sure that the Town Hall is well publicized by all organizations and leaders who are invited.
  - Promote that all attendees will have a chance to give feedback.
  - Publicize the feedback after the event
  - Collect contact information of all attendees and follow up with a request to join the team of their choice.
- Who to invite? (better to have the first one invitation only to maintain topic of discussion)
  - Clergy and faith leaders
  - Police Chief
  - Council members
  - Business leaders
  - Principals or Deans of area schools and universities
  - Student leaders
  - Newspapers
  - Community-oriented nonprofit executives
  - Foundation directors
- Plan to work with Police to create more “personal connections” with communities:
  - Police getting involved with at-risk kids as Big Brothers and Big Sisters.
  - Police sponsoring a sports team in at-risk communities.
  - Have “ride-a-longs” with police into at-risk areas to increase awareness of what main issues are.
  - Provide diversity training for law enforcement
  - Commend officers who go above and beyond in helping at-risk communities
- Try to keep political views out of the conversation as that will allow both sides to work together for the whole. It will also allow continued effectiveness during political changes.
- In efforts like these, making sure people have a clear and coherent way to report discrimination, bias, acts of violence, and other incidents is essential.
STAGE THREE: VERBALIZING THE ISSUES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

• Revisit with original groups and discuss the main observations and objectives.
  o Categorize by priority and severity of each neighborhood and community represented on the team.
  o Assign task forces to the different areas of improvement.
• A Press Kit to “announce” the new changes be look forward to in the communities.
• Start planning events to bring these neighborhoods and communities together to discuss solutions, manage conflicts, and unite in peaceful activities.

DIFFICULTIES IN ADDRESSING OPPOSING IDEAS

Typically, when there is conflict, the desire is to change people views so they will alter their behavior. But in some cases, one or both sides have no interest in hearing, much less believing the other side. “They know nothing but their own ideological stance and these fantasy pictures that they bill to the opposition.” (When Hate Groups March Down Main Street pg 71)

The key to any problem is to make sure both sides have skin in the game, both sides stand to gain from negotiation, and both sides might lose without it. EVERYONE listens to the same radio” in their minds: WIIFM = What’s In It For Me?

ADDRESSING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

While most of us are not neuroscientists, we can see the effects of unconscious bias. The problem then becomes, how can we address both the intentional and unintentional thought processes? The founder of American Diversity Report has used her years of research and training to create what she calls “The 4-Step Unbiased Matrix System”, a cultural and anthropology-based system designed for training Leadership and Teams.

The four steps are designed to take you through the process of recognizing and adjusting Bias:

1. **Awareness**: (Communication) Create and develop the ability to sharpen listening skills and better communication across cultural boundaries
2. **Sensitivity**: (Emotion) Increasing emotional intelligence, the ability to assess comfort levels, possible conflicts and dealing with emotional responses in a non-threatening manner
3. **Competence**: (Wisdom) Combination of Awareness and Sensitivity to increase knowledge and understanding of “the other” and improve decision making skills
4. **Planning**: Setting mission, goals and policies to move forward (Un-Bias Guide for Leaders: Unconscious Bias & Conscious Choices-- by Deborah Levine)

“The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas as in escaping from old ones.” – John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946)
STAGE FOUR: OUR YOUTH

Find the “Causative Mechanism”. “Children first shows signs of prejudice at a very early age.” (Frances E. Aboud – *Children and Prejudice – When Hate Groups March Down Main Street* pg 72) Then typically it subsides but is more likely to return in the teen years if their social environment is more affected by prejudice. It is also true that the ethnic attitudes of the parents will be unconsciously influencing the children.

The Parent’s attitudes may be cause by any multitude of possibilities: A Personal bad experience...feelings of everyone they socialize with...neighbor or relative has a bad experience...or just the fact that their family has “always felt this way.” When you find the source, it is easier to find the appropriate solution.

The common saying among educators is “There is no gene for racism.” They believe that even though children may develop and act on intolerant attitudes, they can be educated to value human differences. They do start to notice physical differences at a young age, which sometimes leads to an observation of power or privilege vs. disrespect and poverty. Because their understanding of such concepts is limited, they form their reactions by watching the adults around them. These rejections of differences can blossom into full-fledged prejudice if they are not exposed to more positive examples. (*When Hate Groups March Down Main Street* pg 111)

If we want to address unconscious bias or prejudices, we need to be aware of how our senses, emotions and brain interact to create the bias. The bias wasn’t created overnight, and won’t be changed overnight. It takes desire, and a willingness to reach further into the hows and whys. It takes time and patience and it must be sustainable for all concerned.

Remember a sustainable change for the better must be “a set of practices by people or groups designed to promote the long-term sharing [and cooperation] with future generations. It will “meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future.” (*When Hate Groups March Down Main Street* pg 71)

**Recommendations:**

Challenge every student in your community’s public schools to sign a pledge in which they commit to living a life free of hate. Using “signing ceremonies” as public engagement opportunities to speak to them about the importance of kindness, civility, and compassion. Develop a committee within the local Youth Councils focused on combating hate speech among high schoolers through the formation of harmony clubs, sponsoring “walk in my shoes” activities, or creating other ways to interact with kids of other cultures.

Start a Facebook, WhatsApp or Twitter Group to talk about fostering Peace with the youth in charge of content.
RELIGION CAN BE THE PROBLEM ... OR IT CAN BE THE SOLUTION!

In today’s world with religious diversity becoming a bigger part of our communities. It is important that a true understanding of the faith practices is crucial in the search for peace. “Throughout history, many of these religions have had moments in time when atrocities have been done in the name of righteousness. Keep in mind that these actions generally come about when the pure teachings are misinterpreted or manipulated by zealots and extremists of the time.” (The Search for Peace in Times of Chaos- R Lebron)

It is the misunderstanding, and miscommunication of a religion by extremists that need to be understood to move past the damage they have caused in our communities. ALL the world religions teach of love and peace. Education about these religions and faith practices can change the way we see each other.

The Universality of the Golden Rule in the World Religions

**Christianity**  All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.--Matthew 7:1

**Confucianism**  Do not do to others what you would not like yourself. Then there will be no resentment against you, either in the family or in the state.--Analects 12:2

**Buddhism**  Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.--Udana-Varga 5,1

**Hinduism**  This is the sum of duty; do naught onto others what you would not have them do unto you.--Mahabharata 5,1517

**Islam**  No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.--Sunnah

**Judaism**  What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowman. This is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary.--Talmud, Shabbat 3id

**Taoism**  Regard your neighbor’s gain as your gain, and your neighbor’s loss as your own loss.--Tai Shang Kan Yin P’ien

**Zoroastrianism**  That nature alone is good which refrains from doing another whatsoever is not good for itself.--Dadisten-I-dinik, 94,5

**Recommendation:** Curate a program of film screenings, art exhibits, and/or “Pecha Kucha” talks that highlight stories and voices of those affected by hate speech, hate crimes, and discrimination. Have similar events to highlight the “peaceful side” of different cultures and faith practices. Produce a series of dinners or other experience opportunities at which multicultural and multiethnic guests can gather and discuss sensitive issues in a safe and non-political environment.
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The key to solving any conflict, whether it be between groups, between co-workers or even family members is basically the same.

There are key issues at play the need to be recognized IN THE BEGINNING:

- Is there conflict in the individuals’ homes that cause anxiety? (That needs to be recognized and addressed as well)
- Is this conflict new or is it on-going (Where and when did it start?)
- Is culture, religion or politics involved? (What is the source?)
- In any conflict it is possible that both sides must sacrifice something to meet in the middle. (They must want peace more than they want to “win.”)

Conflict Resolution Strategies:

1) Clearly define the issue. Be part of the solution.
2) Make sure both sides understand the cost of NOT compromising.
3) Prepare evidence of specific ways of solving the conflict.
4) Have a positive attitude.
5) Walk in the other persons shoes.
6) Look for similarities. Discuss specific common goals.
7) Deal with facts not emotions.
8) Present facts and evidence about suggestions.
9) Establish open communication (listen first, talk second).
10) Demonstrate or listen to people’s point of view.
11) Explore actions and possible solutions together.
12) Reframe the goals with the team, friend, family (make a win-win situation)
13) Do onto others as you will have others do onto you. Be kind, loving, and peaceful always.

Remember that people believe what they believe for a reason.
Find that reason and help them to see the other side.
STAGE FIVE:
Create ways for people to engage online in a peaceful manner:

- Set up Facebook and Twitter groups for your community
- Allow questions and concerns to be voiced there.
- Designate a person to respond with accurate and timely information
- Designate a person to post positive and uplifting stories to improve mental health
- Post helpful articles about locations in your communities that are open or partially open
- Create local youth groups to deliver food and necessities to the most vulnerable who are house bound
- Set up a "calling tree" to check on residents who are at risk to make sure they are ok

Activities and programs to bring the community together is peace after they reopen:

A Community Services Fair: Many at-risk communities are not aware of all the services and assistance that is available. The fair could have Medicaid, Social Security, Job consultants, people who help write resumes, etc...all in one location.

Unity & Peace Walk: Plan a day that the community can walk from one “house of worship” to another. At each Church, Mosque, Synagogue, they could hear about teachings of love and good works, share cultural foods, or listen to chants and music. If it’s too far to walk, have an organization offer a van or bus as transportation. At the end, congregate at a location like city hall or a park and light candles of peace.

Day of Thanksgiving: Potluck in some larger facility, where people bring a dish from the community. In those communities at-risk, people could go out and bus them in.

Dinner Dialogues: Once a month having a gathering of 5-6 couples and discuss life topics, not religion or politics...just getting to know each other.

Culture Discovery Classes at Jr High, High school & College: Faith leaders can teach weekly classes about different faith practices and religions, stressing on our common ground to help young people realize how much we have in common. Training student in unity and inclusivity through leadership programs. Offering “Internships” to those who complete the course to help teach the younger levels.

Earth Day (April 22nd) Activities to being people together to plant trees and gardens

Community Garden Projects: Getting people in the at-risk areas to work together with others to start and care for a garden that will help feed the community.
Community Beatification Weekend: People coming together to clean up and repair areas of concern or safety in different neighborhoods.

World Environment Day (June 5th) Activities: Plan an event to honor the environment

International Day of Peace (Sept 21st): bring various cultural meals and activities to a central location and share a meal together.

Teaching young people to build “Sharing Library Book Stations” for at-risk areas. Getting people in other communities to donate supplies and books.

Investigate Programs Like Kids4Peace (Seattle) and Camp AnyTown (Las Vegas); Youth programs in diversity and peace in cooperation with United Religions Initiative.

The key here is to bring people together in a non-threatening environment and get them talking and working together. They are no longer strangers, no longer enemies… and many will become friends!
Bibliography

*The Council Against Hate – Steering Committee Report 2019, Chattanooga Tennessee*

*ADR New Beginnings Team Against Hate Manual*

*When Hate Groups march Down Main Street – Engaging a Community Response* by Deborah Levine and March Brenman

*The Search for Peace in Times of Chaos – 40 World Religions and Faith Practices (Volumes 1&2)* by Robyn Lebron

*Un-Bias Guide for Leaders: Unconscious Bias & Conscious Choices*-- by Deborah Levine

**Additional Resources:**

American Diversity Report

Anti-Defamation League

The Council Against Hate

Family Justice Center

Institute for Strategic Dialogue

Peace Through Education

Strong Cities Network

United Religions Initiative
As you can see, the problem we have is not a new one...and it is not insurmountable!

We are stronger when we are united in Peace!
Step by Step Guide to Increasing Peace in Your Communities

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

American Diversity Report New Beginnings
In Cooperation with
Council Against Hate
Chattanooga, Tennessee
What Now?

“The threat of social and political unrest around the world is rising as the coronavirus crisis fuels discontent amid food shortages, job losses and lockdowns. Covid-19 is potentially catastrophic for millions who are already hanging by a thread,” Arif Husain, senior economist at the WFP, said in a statement. ...It is a hammer blow for millions more who can only eat if they earn a wage. It only takes one more shock – like COVID-19 – to push them over the edge.” – Bloomberg.com

In some communities it is getting more and more common to hear of heart wrenching stories about actions and speech being driven by HATE. More and more communities are afraid. More and more houses of worship are suffering from the loss of their “own” due to some hate crime.

And as the country faces the new challenges of COVID-19 and who and what to believe, communities are getting increasingly divided and the seeds of dissension and contention are growing more and more every day.

Fear is something that causes intense reactions and, in some cases, can evolve into destructive behaviors. We need a plan to stop this downward spiral in our communities, and it is with that in mind that this manual has been created.

This COVID-19 Supplement strengthens the Council Against Hate manual that is a compilation of a very successful plan that was put in place in to conquer Hate in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and some additional resources to help you change the direction in YOUR communities!

I have learned over the years that when one’s mind is made up, this diminishes fear; knowing what must be done does away with fear. – Rosa Parks

“In recognizing the humanity of our fellow beings, we pay ourselves the highest tribute.”— Thurgood Marshall, first African American U.S. Supreme Court member

“We all have dreams. In order to make dreams come into reality, it takes an awful lot of determination, dedication, self-discipline and effort.”
—Jesse Owens, world record-setting Olympic athlete

“True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost, but the urge to serve others at whatever cost.” —Arthur Ashe
COUNCIL STRATEGIES

To address the changes brought about by COVID 19, Councils Against Hate should consider adding teams and sub-committees to focus on emerging challenges:

HEALTH UNREST
Team mission is to create a collaboration with healthcare providers, hospital administrators, public health officials, medical educators and community representatives. The goals are as follows and can be expanded to sub-committees as needs arise:

- Include representatives of diverse communities and workers, especially those at high risk.
- Discuss local public health and formulate plan with sub-committees as needed around healthcare data, access, public safety, and testing needs.
- Have an ongoing focus on mental health, providing information on medical assistance, hot lines, social worker availability, emergency protocols, and family support.
- Designate a COVID 19 sub-committee engaging representatives of local hospitals and medical organizations to report on status and ongoing plans.
- Link to state and regional healthcare professional associations for information on best practices on addressing mental health.
- Work with medical professional providing services to women to address the needs of women on the front lines and promote any programs that make access and availability easier.
- Promote any new short-term and long-range plans of hospitals and insurance companies for providing healthcare adjusted for COVID 19.
- Form sub-committees to focus on specific at-risk populations, gather data on infections, deaths, and testing and provide reports to both the Health and Economic Unrest teams.

ECONOMIC UNREST:
Team mission is to create a collaboration that broadens the council business team to include more small businesses, independent contractors, unions, and service providers as well as corporations and financial institutions. The goal is to use an urban planning approach, combining business participants with the council’s policy-making team.
• Invite local government staff overseeing economic development to serve on the team.
• Collaborate with local nonprofits to provide an online funding center with links to foundations focusing on COVID-19 assistance.
• Promote a jobs program including hiring contact tracers.
• Work with nonprofits and religious institutions that provide food and basic essentials to evaluate needs and design plans for short-term and long-range community participation.
• Coordinate with law enforcement to focus on areas where crime, poverty, and COVID-19 intersect and address the underlying needs.
• Develop a sub-committee to work on economic projects for common good. Divided perspectives are unlikely to merge, however there can be collaborations on projects that address shared concerns for the community’s success. Coordinate with chambers of commerce as well as policy makers in the development and implementation of these plans.
• Establish an online portal for reporting in coordination with law enforcement to avoid vigilante responses to hate crimes, threats, abuse, harassment.

**Online community events for community building.**

“This world of ours... must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect.” ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

**Virtual Community Meetings**

Many teams and their members may be reluctant to meet in person at this time. The use of online platforms to conduct meetings, conversations, discussions, and dialogue is becoming a frequent alternative. Team leaders can design the agenda for the online dialogue to address specific issues and advance peacebuilding at the community level. There are a number of resources that can assist in designing and implementing a relevant, sustainable, and meaningful dialogue process such as Designing Community-Based Dialogue (Online Self-Paced Course) by the United States Institute of Peace.

There are a number of platforms including Zoom, Slack, Skype, and Face Book that can host these discussions and allow for input from participants. Guest speakers who might otherwise have presented in person to community groups, can be hosted on these platforms efficiently and recordings can be made and shared.
Higher Tensions Create a Tinder Keg

During COVID-19, cities across the country are also facing a major cultural shift in race relations that includes protests that are peaceful and incidents that have become violent. Here are the words from Chattanooga’s Mayor Andy Berke that address the situation at a community level and can be used as a model for cities elsewhere:

"Protests have erupted across the country since the killing of George Floyd. They are searing reminders of the difficult relationships that exist between people of color and police officers. These challenges did not come into existence with this incident, but they have now come to light for many people. While I join with many Americans grieving the death of Mr. Floyd, I’m hopeful that our nation can confront these painful problems with an eye towards lasting solutions.

Mayors from across the United States are signing the 4-part pledge from the My Brother’s Keeper Alliance to review the City of Chattanooga’s use-of-force policies and make any reforms that may be needed to protect residents and local law enforcement alike. I’m glad to report that virtually all of the “8 Can’t Wait” policies called for by Campaign Zero are already being implemented by the Chattanooga Police Department.

We know that progress moves at the speed of trust. Nowhere is this more true than when it comes to public safety. We have had a lot of success in reducing violent crime in Chattanooga over the last several years, and I know that it is because our police department works at building strong relationships at the neighborhood level. The Chattanooga Police Department has been responsible for a terrific reforms and community projects in the last several years that can serve as models or other cities:

• Supported the establishment of the city’s first Police Advisory and Review Committee to provide additional independent oversight from the community.

• Instituted the use and outfitting of Body-Worn Cameras to create additional transparency and accountability.

• Expanded the Citizens Police Academy, a nine-week program that gives community members a better understanding of the Chattanooga Police Department’s units and operations as well as insight about what law enforcement entails.

• Established “Each One Reach One,” a financial incentive offered to community members who successfully recruit a minority candidate to the CPD Police Academy.
• Developed and launched the Community Immersion program, which puts candidates specific marginalized and minority communities for long-term experiential learning and relationship-building work.

• Created the School Liaison Program, where officers are assigned to elementary schools in Chattanooga to cultivate and develop relationships with students, teachers, and administrators.

• Holds regular “Coffee With a Cop” sessions and “Front Porch Lineups”, opportunities for community members and police to work together for safer neighborhoods and meet one another in a home, business, or other friendly environment.

• Partnered with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Chattanooga on “Bigs in Blue”, a national youth mentoring program that has proven to reduce crime and youth violence.

Yet I know that even all of this good work is taking place against the backdrop of this country’s very painful history with race and policing. There is more we must continue to do in Chattanooga, across our state, and throughout our country." – Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke

Technology offers an abundance of possibilities for communities to come together to discuss challenges, determine shared goals, and design solutions based on those goals. The standard urban planning format can still be used to structure those discussion for implementable strategies and measurable results:
Mission (5-10 years)
Goals (3-5 years)
Objectives (1-3 years)
Tasks (1-12 months)
Budget per task
Benchmarks (intended results per year)
Evaluation (results achieved, results needing more attention)

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All of us at American Diversity Report New Beginnings appreciate your community efforts in these challenging times. We support your efforts to find a path to engage peacefully, counteract hate and develop solutions together.
There are hundreds of articles on our site that you are free to use to help guide you along that path: [http://www.AmericanDiversityReport.com](http://www.AmericanDiversityReport.com)

Contact us if you have questions or need support on your journey:

[info@DiversityReport.com](mailto:info@DiversityReport.com)

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“There is no path to peace. Peace is the path.”

Gandhi

www.happyhappenings.today

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From Everyone at ADR New Beginnings

“Peace be with you!”