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To End the Cycle of Hate, Begin with Love for Others

By: Tim Delaney

Eight people were killed in Atlanta – including seven women and one man, six of whom were of Asian descent. All victims of yet another mass shooting fueled by varying amounts of racism, sexism, and xenophobia.

We grieve for the surviving families and friends of the deceased.

We stand in solidarity with our sisters and brothers who identify as Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders, expressing our sorrow and our outrage at the slayings in Atlanta and the history of harmful stereotypes and abuses that began long before last week.

And yet we know it is not enough to just stand together in moral solidarity during times of tragedies. Being together certainly is needed in such times, to remind those attacked that they are not alone and are, indeed, loved. It also serves to expose the rest of us who live our lives in relative safety to the pain, fear, and grief so we collectively learn and take action.

Sadly, we've all had too many opportunities to learn about pain, fear, and grief during the last several years, due to hate-inspired mass killings based on race,

ethnicity, sexual preferences, religion, and gender in Charleston, Orlando, Pittsburgh, El Paso, Atlanta, and too many other places. Yet not enough action has been taken to stop the division and hatred.

But what can we possibly do as individuals when hate based on an ever-evolving range of characteristics keeps bubbling up and erupting in violence? After all, as individuals we can't possibly stop the hateful-based actions everywhere across the entire country.

Or can we?

Certainly not physically. But each of us can take these simple steps to influence the broader climate of society and thereby change the future.

First, we each can learn more about people different from ourselves so we better understand the world. We need to learn more about others so we can respect, embrace, and even celebrate our differences, while also recognizing what we share in common rather than exploiting otherness.

To help those of us who are not of Asian or Pacific Islander descent better understand our fellow Americans, I offer this link to materials curated by Nonprofit New York, [Solidarity with NYC's Asian American Communities](#), which identifies "ways to support Asian New Yorkers amidst violence targeting Asian Communities." (Most of the materials will be of use far beyond New York City.)

Second, we each can use our power to advocate. One form of advocacy is through direct personal action to meet immediate needs. It starts with having love in our hearts and respect in our minds for the dignity of our fellow human beings. That's the source of our commitment and courage to stand up for other human beings in our midst and reject hate no matter the form, whether based on gender identity, race, sexual orientation, mental or physical abilities, or ethnicity.

Another way to advocate is through group action, not just formal policy advocacy, but also coming together to bring about change beyond ourselves to society. We need to eliminate the hate that exists in our midst. We need to stop excusing the stereotypes that never should have had a place in our world. None of this will happen overnight. But it can begin today, and it begins with love for others.