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Six Reasons You Should Stop Supporting Trump Right Now

If you support Donald Trump for president, please stop. Listen to what he says, and the far-reaching ramifications of such talk to ignite more acts of cruelty, and fuel the fires of hatred that divide and diminish us.

Look also at history. “How could this happen?” is often the foremost question about the Holocaust. As the author of *Needle in the Bone: How a Holocaust Survivor and Polish Resistance Fighter Beat the Odds and Found Each Other*, I've found that most historians agree that this nightmare of humanity didn't manifest within days or even months, but came out of incremental changes, some seemingly small and some huge, that systematically stripped Jews and others (gay and lesbian people, Roma people, people with disabilities, political opponents) of their rights, particularly their right to live.

So many of these incremental changes had to do with language, such as referring to Jews as vermin, something not human that wreaks havoc and should be eliminated. Out of such language came lots of permission and even encouragement for people to act out of anti-Semitism and other forms of communal hatred. Words matter, and they can lift us up, or lead us down the rabbit hole to hell. Joshua Greene, author and filmmaker of *Witness: Voices from the Holocaust*, told me as I was writing *Needle in the Bone*, “When we turn away from our nature, we can fall very far.” Trump's comments about “the other” speak to how low we can go when we act from our most fearful and angry selves. So instead, ask yourself these and other questions that speak to our highest values and most cherished beliefs:

- **Do You Respect Freedom of Religion?** Trump calls for Muslims to be prevented from immigrating to the U.S., and some of his supporters, such as N.H. Representative Al Baldasaro, New Hampshire, co-chair of Trump's state veterans coalition, added, “What he’s saying is no different than the situation during World War II, when we put the Japanese in camps.” Asked whether Trump supported the U.S. Incarceration of approximately 120,000 of its citizens of

Japanese descent during World War II, Trump told *Time Magazine*,

<http://time.com/4140050/donald-trump-muslims-japanese-internment/> “I would have had to be there at the time, to give you a proper answer.” That response alone is chilling. Furthermore, lumping all Muslims with extreme Jihadists is akin to grouping all Christians with Oklahoma City terrorist Timothy McVeigh. Most Muslims, according to polls and research, don't support suicide bombings or attacks like what just happened in San Bernardino (see this Pew Research Center poll on Muslim country attitudes toward Isis <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/in-nations-with-significant-muslim-populations-much-disdain-for-isis/>). Are you appalled by the idea of a religious litmus test for all who want to enter the U.S.? Do you believe freedom of religion is one of our most sacred values, in fact, one on which our country was founded?

- **Do You Love and Respect Women?** Trump's statements putting down women are sadly legendary (see http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/18-real-things-donald-trump-has-said-about-women_55d356a8e4b07addcb442023 and <http://fortune.com/2015/08/09/trump-insult-women-history/>). He's called women words like “animal, slob, disgusting, and pigs,” and said Carly Fiorina wasn't attractive enough to be president “(Look at that face! Would anyone vote for that?” <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/donald-trump-insults-carly-fiorinas-appearance/>). When Megyn Kelly questioned about such name-calling, he called her a bimbo, and accused her of being irrational because she might be on her period. For women he finds attractive, his comments are just as offensive: he even went as far as to say that if Ivanka wasn't his daughter, he'd be dating her. Would you want a president like this for your wife, daughter, sister, mother, friend or self?
- **Do You Care About People With Serious Illness and/or Disabilities?** In late November, Trump mocked Serge Kovalski, a *New York Times* reporter who suffers from arthrogryposis, which affects his joint movement (<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-mocks-disabled->

[reporter_56572101e4b072e9d1c1d1c0](#)), but such attacks of people are nothing new for Trump. He insulted columnist Charles Krauthammer, who is in a wheelchair, as not being worthy because he can't buy pants (<http://www.msnbc.com/msnbc/trump-mocks-person-disability-again>). His casinos also have a record of being inaccessible, which led to numerous court cases (<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/12/02/donald-trump-s-war-on-people-with-disabilities.html>). Some people live with disabilities all of their lives, and some of us develop disabilities as a result of serious injury, illness or age, but the bottom line is that none of us get out of this life without physically falling apart. Do you believe in inclusivity for people around you, yourself, or the person you may become when, at age 96, you're tooling around in a wheelchair?

- **Do You Respect Latinos?** One of the first populations Trump insulted was Mexican-Americans and Latinos, announcing in the first Republican primary debate, "When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending the best. They're not sending you, they're sending people that have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems. They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime. They're rapists and some, I assume, are good people, but I speak to border guards and they're telling us what we're getting" (<http://www.cnn.com/2015/06/17/opinions/kohn-donald-trump-announcement/>). First, this is flat-out wrong (<http://nypost.com/2015/07/10/trumps-facts-on-mexicans-and-crime-are-just-wrong/>). Also, given that people from Spanish-speaking countries are one of the fast-growing populations in the U.S., these words didn't just cost Trump potential supporters, but they spark further discrimination. How can you stand with someone who uses such language to describe your neighbor, friend, co-worker, or sister-in-law?
- **Do You Respect Native Americans?** Although Trump is quick to denigrate immigrants, he also has harsh words for our indigenous people, from supporting sports team names such as "Redskins" to promising to reverse President Obama's change of Mount McKinley's name back to its indigenous Alaskan name, Denali, saying that Denali as "a great insult to Ohio" (where

McKinley came from) <http://thinkprogress.org/politics/2015/10/05/3709039/trump-redskins-anti-native-american/>. While feuding with native communities in upstate New York because of their casinos competing against his own, he ran ads describing the native community as druggies and criminals, and when the native-owned casinos started doing better than his, he questioned whether the tribal leaders were really native. Don't you believe in the right of our first Americans, the ones who have been guardians of this land for centuries, particularly given our history of Native American genocide?

- **Do You in Freedom of Speech?** When a Black Lives Matter protestor showed up at a Trump event, and some Trump supporters and security punched and kicked the him, Trump responded on “Fox and Friends” that “Maybe he should have been roughed up” (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-black-lives-matter-protester_5651ea96e4b0258edb31dd7e). Trump has repeatedly criticized Black Lives Matters, but to encourage his people to “rough up” someone he disagrees with harkens back to many dictators in world history and is not befitting of what it means to believe in freedom of speech. Shouldn't all of us be allowed to share our perspective without being beaten up, and isn't this a cornerstone of our constitution?

All of us are better than this kind of talk, and to find ways to move together as a nation as well as in our millions of communities, we need to reject the rhetoric of hate. I'm not asking you to support my candidates or positions -- by all means, find and support your own, but let's act as much as we can from our best possible selves who believe in the inalienable rights of all people for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.