Healing from Hate: Battle for the Soul of a Nation

[Transcript]

FRANK MEEINK: All right. Ready? All right.

JASON DOWNARD: I was always in the streets. I've been in the streets since I was 13 years old. So I grew up a rough childhood, but then I found something I felt like I belonged to.

CHUCK LEEK: I just had this rage inside of me, and so the skinhead life was very appealing, because it was a way to externalize what I was feeling inside. I was just a scared little kid inside an 18-year-old, adult male's body.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I was standing in an alley smoking a joint one day, and a man came up to me and pulled the joint from my mouth. And he said, don't you know that that's what the capitalists and the Jews want you to do to keep you docile?

TONY MCALEER: Look at me. I'm on the edge of the vanguard to save the white race, and I'm going to play my heroic role, and I'll be dead or in jail by the age of 30 in a white revolution.

JASON DOWNARD: We were violent towards those people, because we believed that we were the superior race. We were here first, and this is our country.

SCOTT BELKNAP: Guns, ammo, steel-toed Doc Martens, tattooing, violence was just prerequisite to enter or exit.

CHUCK LEEK: Guy took a swing at me. Instantly, all of the skinheads jumped in, mowed these guys down, adrenaline rush was huge.

FRANK MEEINK: Before he walked off, like I could see this look in his face, and I thought that-- like fear, he feared me.

TONY MCALEER: Being part of that movement, I got to feel a sense of power, when I felt powerless. I got attention when I'd felt invisible, and accepted, when I'd felt unlovable.

FRANK MEEINK: Because we all need this spiritual hole in our bodies filled up with something, so hate fills it, but then hate can't keep filling it. It's just like a heroin addict. Got to get more and more.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: We had a strategy. We wanted to clean our image up and make our message more palatable to the masses.

TONY MCALEER: Don't get tattoos. Don't shave your head. Don't get arrested. Go to college. Join the military. Keep your head down. Go mainstream.

TITLE SCREEN
Healing from Hate: Battle for the Soul of a Nation

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: I began to hear about these organizations that were trying to help guys get out of the movement, because only the guys who were in the movement could really understand what the guys who are currently getting out would feel like. So Life After Hate is an organization that was founded by four ex-skinhead, neo-Nazi, white supremacists in the US and Canada. And they found each other, and they knew that they wanted to help other guys get out. So the idea is to get them out, keep them safe, and get that kind of support that they need from other formers in order to stay out.

- How you doing, brother? Good to see you, man.
- It's been a long time.
- Come on in, guys. This is Mike and Julie.
- How you doing? Scott. Nice to meet you.
- Hi. I'm Sammy.
- Hi.
- Welcome.
- It's good to meet you.

SAMMY RANGEL: We're pioneering this path. We're the first ones to do this. We're the first ones, and quite frankly, probably the only ones doing it. And we're certainly the only ones driven by 100% formers at this point.

TONY MCALEER: Even if your desire to do this is new, and you don't have the experience, each of us in this room has the capability to help people where we once were.

SAMMY RANGEL: This isn't a path that anyone should have to do alone, and if there's people in this room who have to do it alone in the beginning, then you understand how difficult that was and what kind of critical role we can play in the lives of someone else.

FRANK MEEINK: Hi. My name is Frank. I'm originally from Philadelphia, got in the movement in '88. I was 13 going on 14. In the movement, I got very active, especially very violent. Kidnapped somebody, went to prison, when I was 17. As I got out of the movement, it was the Oklahoma City bombing that made me reach out to people to help. That picture of the firemen running down the street with that dead little girl is something that will always stick with me.

JASON DOWNARD: Ended up going to prison for about four years. That's when I got involved in the skinhead movement. There's meanings behind the color of the tattoo. Like if it's a solid black tattoo, a person committed a murder and got away with it. I did some serious things to earn that. I was thankful to get that covered up. I don't have to look at it no more. Went to treatment last year, and when I got out of treatment, I reached out to Life After Hate and been involved with

them. And then doing stuff out here in Portland, trying to reach out and help other people that are struggling to come out of the movement.

CHUCK LEEK: I was involved with the White Aryan Resistance skinheads and Hammer skinheads in San Diego for 13 or 14 years. We would do gay bashing runs, and we would attack people just for the color of their skin. I have left people laying there that I don't know if they lived or not.

TONY MCALEER: I was involved in the skinhead scene from the mid-'80s all the way to the mid-'90s. For seven or eight years, I went through a disengagement, but I'd left the movement, but the movement hadn't left me. It was the birth of my daughter, getting that little girl in the delivery room, and my son who was born 15 months later. They saw the magnificence in me when I couldn't see it, and they gave me that gift that allowed me to re-humanize.

SAMMY RANGEL: I became a gang member, spent probably about 18 years inside of that kind of lifestyle, in and out of prison, juvenile homes, stuff like that. After surviving a race riot, became pretty violent and aggressive and started manifesting like this hate towards whites as a result of that race riot. Because of my role in the riot, I quickly grew within the gang, one of the highest ranking gang members in my state. I had even made a vow that, if I was going to rob, steal, pillage, whatever, it was going to be whites.

SAMMY RANGEL: We can start to feel special in what we're going through here, and it is special, but it's not as unique as you might think. It's really a humanistic plight. It's the same stories. It's the same feelings. It's the human experience, and hate, no matter what flag you fly it under, has a very similar approach.

TONY MCALEER: This inaugural gathering of the formers I think is incredibly important. We were able to get in so far with just us as volunteers working together as a team and being able to handle the load, but that's not possible anymore. This country's in too far crisis.

[Scenes from Charlottesville, Virginia | Unite the Right Rally]

DAVID DUKE: The truth is that we are being ethnically cleansed in our own nation, in the nation our own forefathers built. We've got a right to live. We've got a right to preserve ourselves. We've got a right to keep this nation, the nation that our forefathers envisioned. That's what we're fighting for here.

- Everyone move together now.

DAVID DUKE: Thank you.

TYLER TENBRINK: The 14 words-- I want to secure the existence of the white race and a future for white children. That's what this is all about. This is about stopping white genocide, stopping multiculturalism.

BRIAN CULPEPPER: American, white, working class is angry. They've been systematically ignored by both major parties for decades now.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: I'm looking at these extreme white nationalists, white supremacists, neo-Nazis, these guys who are active in the extreme right, the very, very end of the continuum. Because I want to know how they went from the center and drifted off there and ended up so far from what I consider to be the mainstream. Because I think they can tell us a lot about what's going on in the mainstream as well. Why would this group that seems so privileged feel themselves to be such victims? These guys are furious, and in many cases, they're right to be furious. They've been dealt a bad hand. You can't understand the sense of this rage without understanding the sense of entitlement that it's founded on. So when I say that their anger is real, it's because they feel like they've been dispossessed, that something's been taken from them.

[Scenes from Charlottesville, Virginia | Unite the Right Rally]

- Fuck you. Fuck you Nazi shit.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: The language that they use is all a language of retrieving, restoring, reclaiming your masculinity, because you had it. They took it away. Now, you've got to get it back.

[Scenes from Charlottesville, Virginia | Unite the Right Rally]

- In the name of the commonwealth, you are commanded to immediately disperse.

RICHARD SPENCER: Little Mayor Seener, or Siner. How do you pronounce this little creep's name?

- Jew! Jew! That's how you pronounce it!

RICHARD SPENCER: The idea that I would ever back down to such a little creep like Mayor Signer, that I would ever back down when the governor of this state declares a state of emergency. If they think that, they don't understand what's in my heart. They don't understand the alt-right. They don't understand this entire movement.

SAMMY RANGEL: We're trying to support people through their fear-ridden curiosity about even contemplating the idea of changing their lives. By the time they ask the question or reach out for help, they've probably had an internal battle over a long time. And if we don't capitalize on that moment of clarity with them, we can permanently do damage and lose the opportunity to provide them with a pathway and support out.

RANDY FURNISS: (ON PHONE) Hello.
SAMMY RANGEL: Hey, Randy.

RANDY FURNISS: (ON PHONE) Hey.
SAMMY RANGEL: Hey, it's Sammy.
RANDY FURNISS: (ON PHONE) Hey, what's up?
SAMMY RANGEL: I just wanted to check in with you, see how you're doing before we come over.
RANDY FURNISS: (ON PHONE) [INAUDIBLE] --barely got home from church, so.
SAMMY RANGEL: It's going to be so good to meet you, brother.
FRANK MEEINK: Yeah. I can't wait to meet you.
RANDY FURNISS: (ON PHONE) Yeah. Yeah.
SAMMY RANGEL: All right. Brother. We'll be there in a few minutes. All right?

FRANK MEEINK: It's the hardest decision I have ever made at the time, in my young 19 years, was to get out of this. I was going on 20. I'm now going to lose family members that are in the movement. I'm going to lose them. I'm going to lose every friend I've just had for the last six years. I'm losing them all. They're all going to go.

SAMMY RANGEL: All right. So just kind of recapping. He's fresh out, fresh out. Like I think he's just like one day to the next just--

FRANK MEEINK: Still questions things.

SAMMY RANGEL: Yeah, but he didn't go through a period of questioning his membership. He went from being in it to being out, like almost instantaneous, the same day kind of thing. You know? He got turned at the rally.

[Scenes from Charlottesville, Virginia | Unite the Right Rally]

FRANK MEEINK: Was he getting beat up?

SAMMY RANGEL: He was getting beat up walking through the protesters' side of things and getting punched. People were kicking him in the calves.

FRANK MEEINK: People just have to know that it's really rampant, when people are getting out, to turn to other things-- alcohol, drugs, other addictions.

SAMMY RANGEL: Yep.

FRANK MEEINK: You don't just make this clean break, and it's, ah, you know? There's going to be issues.

SAMMY RANGEL: You get a whole 180 on a lifestyle. My situation, when I got out, it was like I'm alone out here. Like, I'm completely isolated. I'm alone, and I would try to tell people what my experience was like, but no one could relate. And it sounds like, this guy that we're seeing right now has been-- what I'm hearing is loneliness, uncertainty, cut off.

I think happy to know that there are others on here to understand what it's like to be in the movement, to understand what it's like to get out of the movement, and to understand what it's like post-movement. Change is possible. There is a way out. There is life after hate. You know?

FRANK MEEINK: I wanted to say like-- or ask you-- is like the racial-- you always kind of been a little racist?

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah. Yeah, and it just kind of fell into it and acceptance. You know?

SAMMY RANGEL: Was in your like in your family? Was it in your community?

RANDY FURNISS: Yes. It's everywhere out there in Idaho. It's everywhere.

SAMMY RANGEL: So it's more normal for you then.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah. Yeah, more a way of life.

SAMMY RANGEL: Way of life, yeah.

RANDY FURNISS: I wasn't afraid to be open about it. Everybody becomes racist once they go to prison. I've never been in prison. You know? Everybody come out of prison. You run around with them. They've got their swazis and I already had it. And I didn't need to go to prison to know what I felt and what I believed. It felt right. Most guys, when they get out, they don't keep with it. I know if I ever go to prison, that's what I'm going to have to do. I'm going to have to click back up.

SAMMY RANGEL: So how long over the whole course of your life were you involved like actively as a white supremacist?

RANDY FURNISS: I'd wear my shirt all time, my shirts all the time. You're always making new ones. You know? Make them more fashionable, easy on the eye, instead of just one big swazi on the front. You know? I didn't like who I was. I didn't like who I was becoming, and I shot myself in the abdomen, because I didn't want to just bite the bullet. Had it pointed up, a .44 Magnum, long barrel, you know it's going to take out everything inside. And it kicked down, and it came out my back and clean shot through.

SAMMY RANGEL: How long you been clean now?

RANDY FURNISS: Let's see, I relapsed a couple of years ago.

SAMMY RANGEL: All right.

RANDY FURNISS: Before that, I had three years. Shooting up meth all day long. That's what white boys do. They sell meth. That's why it's called Nazi dough.

SAMMY RANGEL: You out here doing it, man. Look at you. You're raising your family. Yep, working hard, busting your butt.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, double carpal tunnel surgery on both hands. And so when my hands get cold, they don't want to work, and they freeze up.

SAMMY RANGEL: Was that from your construction work?

RANDY FURNISS: No, from shooting up drugs.

SAMMY RANGEL: That's a lot of change getting thrown at you right now.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah. Yeah, a lot, a lot. You're not using drugs, you know? So that familiarity is gone, and the race thing was all a crutch, if you will. You guys have been life-lines. Irreplaceable, you know?

SAMMY RANGEL: You're reaching out, though, man. You know?

RANDY FURNISS: That alone is something.

SAMMY RANGEL: You're reaching back.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, didn't do it willingly in the past. You know? God come through and hitting me in the mouth. It wasn't that guy. It was God-- wake up. I got fearful when you called and said, hey, we're definitely going to be down. I was like, oh, shit.

SAMMY RANGEL: It got real.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah. Yeah. It got real, quick.

SAMMY RANGEL: I can't imagine with what the future holds for you, man, but if it's anything like what we're seeing now.

RANDY FURNISS: It's looking. It's looking up. You know? I'm going to sit here and struggle and keep going through it. You know? It's scary as hell, but--

SAMMY RANGEL: You're joining that group of men and women, man, who are facing the same change that you're facing right now, man.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I can't tell you how many hundreds of people who don't believe in the ideology, have lost it while they're in the movement, are too afraid to leave. They're too afraid to leave for safety purposes, but they're also afraid to start over. They don't want to abandon that identity that they have or that community, and they stay in. Because they have nothing to

go back to, because they walked away from everything when they joined. I'm happy to say that, since we launched this, in 2015, we've helped over 100 people disengage from hate and hateful movements and hate groups, and how we do that is by not judging them. I'm not interested in what they did before today, although, I ask them to be accountable for it. I focus on today and tomorrow, and I listen more than I speak. When people reach out to me, I listen to them, and I listen for what I call potholes. What existed in their path that deviated their original trajectory?

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Up at the top.
RICHARD SPENCER: What do you think about a nation or a political order that is racially-based?
CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Hi, Richard.
RICHARD SPENCER: So what do you think of the state of Israel?
CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Let's have some coffee. Let's talk.
RICHARD SPENCER: Sure.
CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: OK.

FRANK MEEINK: Michael, hey, nice to meet you.
DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: Thank you. Good to meet you.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: What formers show us is that you can sink as low as human beings can think in some ways. You can do horrible things, and you can come out the other side. You should have been so badly broken that there's no way you could come back from this. If you did, so can he.

FRANK MEEINK: Right.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: Right? So can you. If you are going to pretend this is simply an intellectual exercise, and you don't speak to the visceral experience that these guys have in the movement, you won't be able to reach them.

TONY MCALEER: Violence was fairly new to me. I know at the beginning, I certainly enjoyed it. The adrenaline rush and the ability to instill fear in people, that was like water to someone who'd been wandering the desert.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: You don't come to white supremacist, neo-Nazi ideas individually. You don't do it by careful study. You do it by experience, and the experience is what validates us.

FRANK MEEINK: All these farm boys that were becoming these neo-Nazis were coming over to my cousin's house and drinking at night, and they'd always start talking to me about what's it like really growing up in the city? I'm growing up in one of the toughest neighborhoods in Philly, and my cousin would point that out. He kind of boasted about it about me, and all these big, tough skinheads would always get drunk and give me a beer. And they'd start talking to me about what's it like? I walk into my parents' house. I could get rolled on, I could get jumped, have a great football game, great hockey game, whatever, my parents don't even ask me, how was school today, son? How was that game today? I heard you did good. Nothing. These skinhead guys asking

me what's it like growing up in Philly was someone saying, how's your day? How's your day? And I liked being around them.

TONY MCALEER: The number one correlated factor in someone joining a violent extremist group is childhood trauma.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Abuse, could be coming from a broken home, and drugs and alcohol. My case, it was abandonment.

JASON DOWNARD: Growing up in foster care my whole life and being physically abused as a kid by my aunt and uncle and my cousins and stuff. And I was fighting since I was a kid, and I grew up in the streets.

TONY MCALEER: I know my father loved us very much, but I didn't get to see him a whole lot. When I was 10, I walked in on him with another woman, and then, bang, that's when the god fell off the pedestal. I really started to act out at school and to go down this rabbit hole of defiance and anger and confused. I was very confused.

FRANK MEEINK: My dad, he used to beat me like another guy beat another guy in a bar brawl, and that's no lie. I walk in, and the dude almost knocks-- he basically knocks me out with a punch. I'm out, fade to black.

TONY MCALEER: They form a very unhealthy identity about themselves. They're not good enough. They're not smart enough. They're not pretty enough. They're unlovable. They're less than.

SAMMY RANGEL: All my friends in the gang, as a young kid, as a young man, as an older man, we all had very similar experiences. Nobody used words like trauma or abuse or child abuse, abandonment. My father wasn't there for me. No one could talk about that. It was just like we stuff it. We suppress it. The shame was I think compiled with humiliation, if you couldn't put it away, and you couldn't be violent.

TONY MCALEER: We live our lives, until we heal that shame, in reaction to it. Another way is to adopt an ideology which tells you, you're greater than. That's what I did.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: They feel like other people think they're nothing, and here's a group that comes along and says, we think you're something. In fact, we think you're better. You're special.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: It empowered me. It made me feel strong. It made me feel respected. Of course, it was all false power, false respect, but coming from a place where I was bullied for all my life, it was very intoxicating.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: If we're going to help these efforts at de-radicalization, we have to understand the experience of what it felt like to be in that group.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: It was my family. It was my identity. It became the person who I was for eight years. I found comfort in it, mostly because I was angry at myself and my parents. And being a part of a hate movement gave me an excuse to remove my own pain and put it on other people, so that I could project it, not feel it myself. It's sometimes hard to really look inward and see that maybe the cause of your problem isn't the other. The ideology is secondary, and I'm talking about every type of extremism. Whether it's fundamental religious ideology or hateful or racist ideology, that's something that is just a layer on top.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: In the aftermath of September 11th, I wrote this op-ed piece called The Tale of Two Terrorists. And I compared Timothy McVeigh and Mohamed Atta, and they had really similar backgrounds. So Atta, he starts out as an architect, can't get a job. He goes to Hamburg, where he gets retrained as a draftsman. That's the best he can get. His older sister is a doctor, and his other older sister is a lawyer, and his father is saying to him, what are you? You're nothing. Look at your sisters. Girls are doing better than you. This idea of being humiliated is absolutely central to his experience. The same thing is true for Timothy McVeigh. He wants to go into work with his dad, but they closed the plant. So he goes off to Desert Storm. Comes back, he wants to join the special forces. They don't want him. They think he's a little bit too out there. So that's how he starts his drift into the extreme right. In his own diary, he says, what's left for white men these days? We can't even afford groceries for our families. That sense of you can't support a family. That's the essence of being a man.

SAMMY RANGEL: I just wanted to prep you that we're on our way. It's me and Frankie from Life After Hate. All right, brother, we'll see you in a little bit. OK?

THOMAS ENGELMANN: OK, take care.

SAMMY RANGEL: It's almost like they're saying, everyone has the swastika. It's a misunderstood symbol.

FRANK MEEINK: When people would call me a racist, I would be like, no I'm not. I'm just proud of the white race. Yeah. I got a swastika tattooed on my neck, but no, I'm not a racist. So the bait and switch goes like this. You want to be proud of your heritage? Just come join our group. That's what we're all about. Come to one of our meetings. We don't ever talk about our heritage. We only talk about their heritage, and their culture's messing up our way of life. Like, we only talk about the others. You can only talk about Leif Erikson so much.

THOMAS ENGELMANN: This is my first patch in Mississippi. That's my membership patch. I have my recruiter's patch here and my lightning bolts there. When I got in prison, in Mississippi, their reverse racism is so hardcore. I got everything from my palm, from my number, all the way up. It goes behind the ear. So I figured the best statement I can make is I can join the most vicious thing I can think of. And let them know, if you touch me again, I'm going to kill you, and nothing said that message better than the brotherhood. Much easier to recruit inside than out. When I get in

there, it's easy to exploit. You have that person 24/7 around you. It's not like outside, where they can go home, get a break, and maybe think a different thought than you want them to. In there, it's perfect. Like, this used to be a swastika here, like a round one, and I have them covered, hidden in all my tattoos.

FRANK MEEINK: So I used to be the guy with the swastika on my neck. Walking down the street, and people would pull their kids. Literally, I've seen people pull their kids away from me.

THOMAS ENGELMANN: You I see this one here I got. Right? So yeah, I get that reaction. Somebody just looks at me dead-on, they're like, look down. I said, uh-oh, there it went. So now, I try to keep the shirt-- it's like as much as possible trying to keep that out of view.

SAMMY RANGEL: What would it mean to you if you were to get some of this removed or covered up?

THOMAS ENGELMANN: Yeah, it would be life-changing, because like people wouldn't be able to see that and immediately make that judgment call without talking to me first. When you come up from nothing, and you really ain't got nothing, that little bit of power, it goes to your head. It's nice. It feels good. Feels good to think you're in control or something for once. That's like the whole thing for the brotherhood. It's power, power, power, power, power. You know? So yeah, it's hard to leave that. It's hard to give it up and go, OK, I will say, with all that blood I've shed, everything, all the knocks I've taken, all the bruises I've had, everything, and all the stress I've been through, all the years of torture-- you know what I'm saying-- prison. I'm just going to say, OK, that was for nothing. I'm going to leave that alone, and I'm going to go over here and be a nobody.

TONY MCALEER: I grew up not far from here. When I was active, I was active in this neighborhood. And so for me, it's been easy to speak to Jewish communities around the world, because I don't think they were as affected the same way. I think there's more shame around going face-to-face with the people that I had harmed the most. I think it's important for me, and I think it's good for the congregation.

NEWS STORY
Reporter: In 1992, McAleer was sentenced to two months in jail for violating a court order to shut down his racist hotline, but he is undeterred.
McAleer: It's not hard. Where there's a will, there's a way. When opportunities present themselves for me to do other things, which I think will be effective, I'll be in there like a dirty shirt.
McAleer: (on phone) At the tone, what have you done for your race lately?
Reporter: McAleer's other weapon in the race war is music. He manages a popular hate rock band in Surrey BC, Odin's Law.

TONY MCALEER: If I go and speak to a Jewish community in Orlando or at the Museum of Tolerance in LA, there is an impersonal part to that. What I said with my words and what I did with my deeds probably didn't affect them the same way that it did to the people here. That's stuff that I carry the shame about. When I looked at it, I feel shame. There's a whole mix of emotions going on. Well, I spent 15 years, from the mid-'80s to the mid to late '90s, involved in the whole world of white supremacy. I was involved in neo-Nazi groups, quite violent and extreme ideologies, Aryan Nations. And I set up a phone line, here in Vancouver, called the Canadian Liberty Net which was like a computerized voicemail system that was prosecuted twice under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

NEWS STORY
McAleer: You have reached the Canadian Liberty Net for Sunday, August 21, 1994.

TONY MCALEER: I've spoken at the Museum of Tolerance in LA. I've spoken to Jewish communities in different areas, but I've never spoken to this one. And I ask myself, why? Why in my own backyard is that conversation conspicuously absent? This synagogue is ground zero, because the very first anti-Semitic act I did was to place a National Front sticker on that front door.

- Really? Wow.

TONY MCALEER: It's come full circle right back to here.

- I'm just letting that sink in for a moment. (Laughter)

TONY MCALEER: The size of the whole alt-right, that whole spectrum, I think is much larger. There's the online technology, which what it does is it lowers the bar to entry. So back in the '80s and '90s, you would have to go to a public meeting somewhere, and you'd risk violence. You'd risk being identified by the police. There's an anonymity to the internet which allows people to tiptoe their way into it at a much lower threshold. I think the other dangerous thing is that, instead of waiting for a book to come through mail order and then ordering another book to come through mail order, you can consume the information at the rate that you can consume it. And that you can radicalize, like in the case of Dylann Roof who started off with the question about black on white crime, and then you can go right down the rabbit hole. And if you want to spend 24/7 for a month consuming that information, you can do that. You couldn't do that before. The internet has opened up the anonymity and the flow of information, so you can radicalize in weeks and months, not months and years.

JARED TAYLOR: I don't think there is a single group in the United States, that I know of, that can be accurately described as white supremacist. A white supremacist is presumably someone who wants to rule over people of other races. That's a term from the history books. As the United States becomes increasingly non-white, it will be less hospitable to the people who established and founded this country. White Americans are increasingly becoming refugees in their own land.

JACK RICHARDSON: The alt-right at large is a pro-white movement. Our primary concern is whether or not you are pro-white and whether or not you're willing to go act on that.

RICHARD SPENCER: If you're born in 1978, like I was, or 1988 or 1998, you've experienced being a minority. You've experienced, let's say, undergraduate life, where you've gone through some you know white guilt indoctrination. You've experienced trying to get a job at a major corporation, where you know that their hiring is geared almost totally towards not hiring you.

JACK RICHARDSON: People such as Richard Spencer are able to articulate things that have vexed a lot of us for a long time.

JARED TAYLOR: The people in America who have been forgotten by our political and media class are white people. Everyone is obsessed about what could be of interest or benefit Hispanics or Asians, blacks in particular, but who cares about white people? I simply want my people to have an opportunity to survive.

JEFF: Progressives used to be for these things. I don't agree with what you say, but I'll defend your right to say it. That kind of rhetoric is something we're seeing less and less of. And when non-whites advocate on behalf of their racial groups, it's considered civil rights, and when whites do that, it's considered racism, bigotry, Nazism, all these horrible terms.

RICHARD SPENCER: For us as Europeans, it is only normal again when we are great again. Hail Trump! Hail our people! Hail victory! [Cheering]

RICHARD SPENCER: In terms of living in an African climate, it's just a lot easier. That's why they're different. Like food's falling off the trees.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Black on white crime--

RICHARD SPENCER: Have you looked at victim surveys?

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I've looked at a lot of victim surveys. I don't know which ones you're looking at.

RICHARD SPENCER: How many white male on black female rapes were there in the last 10 years?

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I don't know.

RICHARD SPENCER: Approaching zero.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: OK.

RICHARD SPENCER: OK. So like there are huge discrepancies in terms of crime, and that's just a fact.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: But you think that they're more predisposed to being criminals?

RICHARD SPENCER: Yes. Africans? Yes.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Or do you think it's--

RICHARD SPENCER: That's just what it is. I don't blame them.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: You don't think it's a product of our systemic failures in law enforcement and the justice system and in the schooling system and the fact that, up until very recently, very recently in our history, where parents were alive, they weren't allowed to have the same access that white people have.

RICHARD SPENCER: I think a lot of conservatives will say, well, Africans were destroyed by the welfare state. I don't really buy that. I think there was a certain--

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I think they were destroyed by slavery. How are immigrants affecting you, right now, here in Whitefish?

RICHARD SPENCER: Whitefish is deeply segregated. Do you think we need to bring in more Syrian refugees?

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: No. I don't think we need to bring in anybody, but I also don't think we need to exclude anybody, if they wish to come in.

RICHARD SPENCER: Right.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: How do you feel about that?

RICHARD SPENCER: Well, I would ultimately exclude people. Yeah. But I'm willing to say it. Like, I'm willing to defend the community, and most people won't recognize it.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: From what, though?

RICHARD SPENCER: I'm doing everything I can to protect my people and civilization.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I went down a path, and like you, I was passionate. I was willing to die for it. I was willing to do what it took to make the vision come to a reality. I think you're lost, like I was for eight years, and I want to know what sent you down that path?

RICHARD SPENCER: I have a higher ideal of what the white race can be, and I actually have a superhuman ideal. I'm not caught up in justice or security or comfort. So white people are just, they're so good and so nice. It makes me want to puke. They really are accepting towards the other. They want to trust people, but you ultimately need people like me, who are guardians of these naive people.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: We live in a country that's enriched by its diversity.

RICHARD SPENCER: How did it become this way?

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: The only way it's going to become that way is if it comes down to a civil war.

RICHARD SPENCER: I think there will be a terrible fragmentation. I don't know when it's going to happen. It might happen tomorrow. It might happen in 50 years or so on, but this thing can't go on.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: What do you think you're really going to accomplish?

RICHARD SPENCER: I've already accomplished so much.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Like what?

RICHARD SPENCER: Identitarianism, the alt-right, and-- I mean, not to be egotistical-- but my name are now household terms.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: Right. To meet what end, though?

RICHARD SPENCER: To create a more beautiful world.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: That's exclusive of everybody but white people.

SAMMY RANGEL: I've been telling my story a long time, and I feel like I've been improving the reasons I tell it and the way I tell it. Before, my story was all I had to share. That's all I had to give the world, that what I've overcome, any of us can overcome. What I have forgiven, we all have the ability to forgive. When the Sikh Temple shootings happened, I didn't know about the Sikh people. I didn't even know Oak Creek was a city by me, but I knew that this was an act of extremism. And I knew that I had been to other parts of the country to deal with it, but this was in my own backyard. This was something that happened in real time, and I felt compelled to go.

POLICEMAN: (ON RADIO) I thought I heard shots. Can you confirm that? I've got a man with a gun in the parking lot. Drop the gun!

AMAR KALEKA: As a survivor family, what I've noticed is that people do get fatigued about talking about this stuff, because it's so emotionally draining. Growing up with no racist thoughts, growing up in a time where it felt like we were becoming the United Nations of America. At that time, I never thought to myself I'd come home one time from California, and on Sunday, we'd all be going to church, and a white extremist would just open fire. And lo and behold, it happened, and it's still happening. We asked everybody in the community to put down their arms, because if you remember the day after, there were people in New York with blades, like kirpans, in parade, ready to go after some people.

TONY MCALEER: The mission statement of Life After Hate is to inspire people in communities to a place of compassion and forgiveness for themselves and for all people, and what you did on that second day was to inspire just that.

SAMMY RANGEL: I don't remember so much just the fact that the Sikh Temple was a victim of violent extremism. What overshadows that was the response that came out of this temple in the face of that.

AMAR KALEKA: So we as an official capacity, chose to forgive first and that forced us to do some soul-searching ourselves. We were able to give forgiveness, understand it, and build compassion and empathy for more people that are in this situation, like he was.

SAMMY RANGEL: When we talk to people who are radicalized, moving over to extremism, how innate the need to belong and relate to people is. I think the need for that is so great that they'll even follow an extreme pathway that may even violate their senses at a certain point.

AMAR KALEKA: I ended up doing a lot of talks and being very objective about the murder. So it hit me maybe four years after, and when it hit me, it hit me like a ton of bricks. It shattered the way I look at the world. I became less optimistic.

TONY MCALEER: The white supremacist was coming from this disconnected place, that as I was given those experiences where I could understand and feel the connection that there was a commonality below the surface of the color of skin, that was actually more powerful than the color of skin. And that was an incredibly powerful experience for me.

AMAR KALEKA: Can I show you guys the bullet hole?

SAMMY RANGEL: Yeah.

AMAR KALEKA: So we made the decision to leave just one bullet hole in visible sight so that people could feel the gravity of the situation because when you look at that hole, it's going through metal. And it's a big hole. With a nine millimeter semi-assault gun that it has, like it's already been juiced up. Imagine what it could do to a body. And so it's almost like ultimately, everybody stops here and touches it. And I think their mind instantly goes to that moment. I think it re-traumatized America because Aurora just happened two weeks before. And then this

happened. And it felt like nobody was safe anywhere they went. You couldn't go to church. It's hard because with white supremacy, Tony, I was going to ask you. Can it ever be fully reformed out?

TONY MCALEER: I believe so.

AMAR KALEKA: So I just don't understand how you can change it or what happens in the change.

TONY MCALEER: I'm a big believer that the level to which we dehumanize other people is a reflection of how disconnected and dehumanized we are inside. The question is, can we heal that disconnection? Can we heal that dehumanization inside?

SAMMY RANGEL: To have faith in a person's capacity and ability to change doesn't mean you have to be gullible or naive about the likelihood or success rate of that. We can't afford to give up this idea that people can change completely.

AMAR KALEKA: Everybody kept saying, oh, he's just a psycho kid, right? And I said to myself, nobody becomes that psycho without society doing this, right? So instead of blaming him, I said, I'll forgive him. But I don't know if I'll forgive society yet. Because a lot of this is this isn't new stuff. This is old stuff. This is racism 101. You'll never be whole again after a trauma like this. You'll never be the same person. But can you pick up the pieces of the mirror and put it back together in a way that is better for society? That's all you can do.

TONY MCALEER: There was no program when I left. I kind of-- and all of us at Life After Hate kind of stumbled our way through it. And then we can take the lessons that we've learned from that and shrink the time frame down. So there's less wandering in the wilderness, so to speak.

JASON DOWNARD: When I was in the movement, the last two years of before I left, I was struggling with, do I want to leave? Part of me wanted to leave. And the other part didn't. I had been battling with it. I said, if I leave, I have nothing to fall back on. I have nothing positive to do. I have nobody to go to. You know what I mean? I've lived around this for the last seven years. I have nothing.

RANDY BLAZAK: Sometimes it's hard. If they've got a swastika tattooed on their neck, it's hard for them to just to say, I don't do that anymore. It's kind of a long process. It's not like you just leave it one day. And you're like, woo-hoo, I'm glad that's over.

CHUCK LEEK: I had been out of the movement before I got connected with these guys. But I was on my own and didn't talk about it and had a lot of buried shame and guilt. And then I met these guys. And I saw Frankie talking, Arnold talking. It helped me get past that barrier of feeling like I had to hide this from the world. That opening up has really just taken my healing process and my evolution to a whole 'nother level really.

SAMMY RANGEL: What I say is that if you can get someone on that phone or in person to talk with you, that's called a gem because people don't have to tell you shit. They don't have to share the most intimate parts. Just like today, everything each of you shared is major to me. My major concern is that we respect that because I recognize how important that is. That's vital. That's the life breath of what we're doing and getting people to open up like that. You've got to find a way to find an affirmation in every discussion, no matter how bad it feels that it's going. You've just got to be able to acknowledge it takes guts to do that. Try to help them discover the abilities that they have. This is why we don't want to foster dependency. This is why the intervention can't rely on my charisma. They go from being untrusting, hateful, spiteful, distant to begging for more interaction, another phone call, another meeting, tell me more. And don't be surprised when they say, that's the best conversation I've had in a long time. That is something that's very routine that comes out. People just want to be listened to. And we're trying to teach you how to listen to them well.

TONY MCALEER: We hold a mirror up so the person can see their humanity reflected back at them through our eyes. But when we treat them as human beings, treat them for the suffering person that they are, and they are on the receiving end of that, they get to see that hey, there is a human inside me. And that's the-- I think the incredible power of compassion.

SAMMY RANGEL: It was very impactful when someone finally came along with no fear, no judgment. He heard my story, did nothing to challenge it, but validated it. As soon as I started talking about my mother, tears came out. I just spilled my guts about everything she had done to me, letting her brother rape me and my sister, denying the rape happened, making us go back around him, how many times she tried to kill me or split my skull open, broken bones, bruises, the starvation, the sleep deprivation, the humiliation, making me swallow my own piss and shit. My brothers and sisters watching this. Turning my brother against me, keeping my sister away from me. I had never had a chance to just unleash all of it. And I probably went on for an hour of just the stuff she did to me. And then he says, well, I want to ask you another question. And he's like, have you ever done this to anyone else? It just-- in that moment, it was like I'm just like my mother.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: I just remember at my record store, there were two instances that I'll never forget. One was an African-American teenager who came in to buy a hip hop record. He explained to me that he had lost his mother to cancer. And suddenly, I could empathize with him because I had gone through something similar with my mother when she was diagnosed. And when I saw the gay couple who loved their son. And it was the same love that I felt for my own children. And suddenly, there were more similarities than differences. But what really changed me was receiving compassion from the people that I least deserved it from, when I least deserved it. These people knew who I was. It was a small town. They knew what I was capable of and what I'd been doing for eight years. And they didn't attack me. They didn't break the windows of my store. They didn't argue ideologically with me. They came in. And they were empathetic towards me. And they treated me with compassion despite the horrible person that I was at the time.

FRANK MEEINK: A buddy of mine offered me a job carrying in and out antique furniture at the Cherry Hill, New Jersey mall for a weekend, three days, 100 bucks a day. And I told him, I said, I'll take the job. He goes, well, I've got to tell you, before you say yes, the guy that owns this company is a Jew. And I said I don't care. I don't have to talk to him. Do I? And I went to work for this man. About six months, still is thinking I was a neo-Nazi. Keith would fit every Jewish stereotype you could-- he wasn't religious. He didn't wear a yarmulke. But he was, oy vey, hey, don't break my furniture. So anyway, I broke this marble top table. And I was like, Keith, I'm so stupid. I'm so sorry. I was so embarrassed for him. So I was so embarrassed. I did it right in front of the customer that he just bought it off of. I remember he drove me home. And I was waiting for him to fire me still eventually. But I remember I had my Nazi boots on that day. And I just kept my boots under this little seats of this truck that we were in. You couldn't really put him any further than they were. And I remember my knees were hurting so bad because I was just trying to hold them up there. For the whole ride home, this swastika that looks at him every day like he doesn't know I'm a neo-Nazi. And I just didn't want him to see my boots that day because I knew what them boots meant, what they did for me. And he dropped me off. And he gave my full pay, didn't take anything out of my pay. He goes, I'll see you Monday. And I walked home. And I just couldn't wait to get them boots off my feet. Ripped them things off my feet and never went back.

AMERICAN HISTORY X (1998)
- I'm not scared. I don't want it anymore. I'm done with it. I'm through with this. It's bullshit, Stacey.

TONY MCALEER: There's two parts to getting out of a violent extremist group. The first part is disengagement, which is where you leave the social group. You leave the behavior. You leave the-- but you probably still have the ideology.

RANDY BLAZAK: You've been given this nice recipe for how the world works. And you take that away from somebody. And then what do they have? They were looking for an analysis. And you've taken away their analysis. So what's left? Drugs? I mean, there are all kinds of things that they can just sort of fall into. So you have to be very careful about it. And when you're bringing them out, you will alert them to the risks. This isn't going to be easy. And there are going to be people that are angry that do this because they've lost someone they've invested some time and energy in. We do debriefing. If you're going to be on the outside, we need to know everything you know about how it works on the inside because you're not going back in. So we're essentially going to burn those-- help you burn those bridges so you can't go back in, take everything away that was associated with that world. We take away your white laces. We take away your Nazi flag because it's too easy to go back.

TONY MCALEER: And then the next part is de-radicalization where the belief systems and the ideology are removed.

FRANK MEEINK: Oh, you can't go to go get a antivenom from a cobra for a copperhead snake. You have to go right to the same type of snake that bit you. That's how they do it. We are like the

antivenom to that hate. You know what I mean? Because we had that venom in us. So we know how to spew it. And we know how to also make it an antivenom. And we have the answers to it.

SAMMY RANGEL: I do believe the secret sauce is coming from a loving place. You can't hate this person and expect to communicate any of that. You can't judge this person and expect to counter that with empathy. Before you got out, what was pushing you to want to get out?

THOMAS ENGELMANN: I grew up in Jackson, Mississippi. Before and after prison, most of my best friends were black. It's like in prison, you know how you have to be. So you pretend to be it. And after a while, before you realize it, and it's scary is you actually become that image you were just portraying. I hated myself every day for getting myself locked up. So I looked at it, what made anybody else more special than me? So if I hate myself, I definitely hate them.

SAMMY RANGEL: Where did that shift come from? How come you-- one day you went from not thinking about that to really saying I need to start making some changes?

THOMAS ENGELMANN: It was watching my son grow up and visits. It was heart wrenching every time watching my son leave. You know what I'm saying? Living with another family because I can't be out there. The brothers didn't like that when they found out I was leaving because I mean, they could have just left me alone. And I would have left. And it would have been no big deal. Instead, they tried to kill me instead. Blam, I get shot. I go off the road. And then I remember coming to and saying, I got shot, brakes, car brakes. And then so I slam on brakes. And I remember somebody saying, shut off the car. I started praying. He's like, you praying? I said, yes. He says, good. You need to. It's bad. It went right across. And then it went inside my skull and opened this eye up. I was trying to get out and just didn't get out in time.

SAMMY RANGEL: If there was one thing, man, that someone stuck in that life, someone in that life who may not be aware that there's a way out, what would you say to them, man?

THOMAS ENGELMANN: Let go of all the hate, man. That hate ruins you. It poisons your very soul, man. And my soul's done a lot of healing this year.

SAMMY RANGEL: If you think of 100 people that we've helped, say 10% of them were the extreme violent radicals that would actually go into a mosque, or a Sikh temple, or a school or a church and shoot people down, we have some of those. We've reached some people like that who called us and said, I'm planning on walking into someplace and doing some damage. But I'm struggling with that thought. I'd like to talk to somebody. And we've met with that person. And when a man can go from saying, I'm going to shoot up people at this mosque to praying with the imam in that church, you know you've done good work.

TONY MCALEER: What started with the election cycle last year is a demand for our resource and a challenge that we've been asked to face. And take these people that want to follow in our footsteps and want to do the work that we're doing, we need to empower them and give them

the tools that they need so that we become scalable because six people's not going to cut it anymore.

HEIDI BEIRICH: So the term alt-right was created by white supremacists. It drops the white from the title. You can sort of slip your white supremacy in under the cover of a nice suit.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: The alt-right is a term that I don't really like to use because I know what the alt-right is. And it's no different than what we were 30 years ago. We were a neo-Nazi organization that wanted to expel if not murder anybody who wasn't white.

TONY MCALEER: I was on the *Montel Williams Show* twice. And in 1989, I was on the *Montel Williams Show* dressed like a skinhead. The second time I did Montel Williams, I was in a suit and tie. If I was going to be the spokesperson for the movement, then I had to shed that image. People will listen to a person in a suit and tie more than they will a combat jacket and Doc Martens.

RANDY BLAZAK: The US Census Bureau predicts that by the year 2050, the piece of the American pie that's white will be less than the non-white piece. They basically see that as the last chance to save America before it's no longer a white nation.

STEVEN GINSBURG: Since really during the summer in 2016, we started to see a significant, consistent increase in the number of incidents reported to our office.

HEIDI BEIREICH: We saw between 2015 and 2016, the number of anti-Muslim hate groups tripled.

NEWS STORY
- Tonight, the FBI looking into whether hate crime charges will be filed against an alleged white supremacist accused of stabbing two good Samaritans to death on a commuter train in Portland.

RANDY BLAZAK: The guy who did that was someone who had been in the fringes of the alt-right movement.

NEWS STORY
- Death to the enemies of America. Leave this country if you hate our freedom. You call it terrorism. I call it patriotism.

RANDY BLAZAK: We hear that all the time, go back to where you came from. And he just amped up that rhetoric that he wants to take his country back. And so that's the theme that runs through this.

DONALD TRUMP: And we're not going to let people come into our country who are going to destroy our country.

RANDY BLAZAK: I saw this guy running for president doing the exact same thing. And I couldn't believe that I was hearing it. But I knew that it would work. And that was the frightening thing because I'd seen it work in a Klan rally in Stone Mountain, Georgia. I saw that kind of rhetoric where people where yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, what do we do about it?

KLANSMAN: Their culture pressed on us. I don't want to know about their culture. Hey, if you don't like it, buddy, you can just go home. You know what? We ought to send people like that back to Mexico with the Mexicans. Maybe they'd be happy. [Applause] Yeah, dadgum right.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: It was as if a bucket of gasoline was kicked over. And it lit up all those little sparks that already existed into a large forest fire. And it brought them the conversation of this movement, of this ideology into a mainstream platform. It's become, in many regards, a very legitimate political ideology now.

JARED TAYLOR: Part of Donald Trump's huge appeal was that although he does not think in terms of race the way I do, he at least thinks in terms of nation. He recognizes that the United States is a nation with a particular people. And that not everybody belongs here. This is a great relief to millions of white people who have seen their nation transformed in the name of diversity, diversity that always comes at the expense of white people.

HEIDI BEIRICH: He spoke to some of the things that that angry white male wants to hear. We're going to put a wall on the border. We're going to make the Mexicans pay for it. We're going to bring manufacturing jobs back. So it's a kind of a populist message to white males combined with racism that was found to be very attractive. And every white supremacist liked that idea as well.

TONY MCALEER: There's not thousands or tens of thousands. There's hundreds of thousands of them that have an intellectual curiosity and an understanding of national socialism that no skinhead ever had.

STEVEN GINSBURG: There was a price you paid if you were public with your bigotry or anti-Semitism. It didn't serve you well in your career. Your friends in your neighborhood really weren't excited to hang out with you. Your kids might be embarrassed of you. Your parents would be really upset at you. And people learned that those attitudes were not going to be beneficial to their life. I think what we're concerned about now is that blanket that we put over it is being pulled back, that it's going to be really hard to put that back where it was.

JASON DOWNARD: I always looked at shoes because a lot of people wear Doc Martens around here. So it's like you want to see if they're laced up a certain way. There's white laces, red laces. And if they're barred up, then you're a skinhead.

RANDY BLAZAK: There had been a pretty violent murder here in 1988. An Ethiopian immigrant named Mulugeta Seraw was brutally beaten by this group, Eastside White Pride.

NEWS STORY
- The crime took place here on Southeast 31st early Sunday morning. Three black men, all from Ethiopia, were sitting in this car talking. When one left to head for his apartment, another car pulled up. Three young white men jumped out and began beating him.

RANDY BLAZAK: That murder really put Portland on the map. Portland had a vibrant racist Skinhead scene. It also had an anti-racist Skinhead scene. Portland became known as "Skinhead City" by the early 1990s.

NEWS STORY
- Police say Mieske, Brewster, and Strasser are members of Eastside White Pride, the most violent group of Skinheads in Portland.

RANDY BLAZAK: It makes you wonder if Mulugeta Seraw knew that he had a bunch of skinheads living right around the corner from him. He must have seen them.

JASON DOWNARD: Had to. I know when I talked to Kenny in prison, hearing the story, person to person, was almost makes you feel like you were almost there.

RANDY BLAZAK: How does he talk about it? Or did he talk about it?

JASON DOWNARD: He did talk about it. He actually opened up and talked about it one day, how-- and he demonstrated it on the prison yard how he took the baseball bat and beat it over his head. Everybody looked up to him when we were up in prison. We all looked up to him because we thought we were hanging out with a hero, a king.

RANDY BLAZAK: Well, the thing about this murder is in a way, it worked because it created such a wave of terror. I mean, it's really an act of terrorism if you think about it. It's meant to send a message. It wasn't about Mulugeta Seraw. Mulugeta Seraw never did anything to Ken Mieske. It was what he represented. And there was such a wave of fear through the Ethiopian community, and then the East African community, and then the immigrant community at large, and then the black community. And just sort of all these ripples of fear through the community where people were afraid to come out. And you knew Mieske. And you came into that movement after this happened. Is it weird being here in this spot?

JASON DOWNARD: Being in the movement, it makes you-- almost you're a part of that murder pretty much. You know what I mean? That's part of the history of the skinhead movement. It's like you almost did it yourself. That's what it feels like.

RANDY BLAZAK: If you could talk to the Ethiopian community that was so traumatized, and the immigrant community in general, but the Ethiopian community that was so traumatized and might to this day see someone looking like you walking through a neighborhood like this, what would you say to them?

JASON DOWNARD: As far as-- it's hard.

SAMMY RANGEL: He's made his decision. But he teeter totters emotionally and cognitively at different times. But I think he knows he ain't going back. But he's brand new. I think he's going to be feeling isolated, cut off from the world and everyone. And I think when I left, what I was doing, it was the only time I ever felt suicidal in my life. That's where all that uncertainty and fear and anxiousness comes in. You know what you're not doing. But that doesn't mean you know what you're walking into.

FRANK MEEINK: For me, it was kind of opposite where I loved that it was unknown because I knew for six years, I had the same feelings every morning, every day. You know what I mean? And this was new. Everything was kind of new. When people started to talk to me, it changed the game. It changed a whole thing for me.

SAMMY RANGEL: That's all I guess I really ever wanted was someone just to hear me out, man. Let me share my version of my life with you.

FRANK MEEINK: What do you expect of the life, though? Seriously, growing up, I can tell you what my goals were before a movement and after the movement.

RANDY FURNISS: Right now, just to be reasonably happy.

FRANK MEEINK: Just be happy.

RANDY FURNISS: Reasonably.

FRANK MEEINK: I've done every violent thing to a human being. No, it's fact. It's a fact. I've been charged with most of them. That isn't what gave me the PTSD. What gave me the PTSD was when my stepfather called me down when I was 11 years old in front of his friends and tried to embarrass me and said, you know how to read a tape measure, ditch digger? That's what he used to call me. So I said to him, I don't know. And he goes, that's cause you're a fucking know it all. And you don't know anything. And you won't learn. So for once in my life, I stood up for myself. And I said, why don't you teach me instead of doing this to me? He beat the living shit out of me. Every time I pull out a tape measure, I think of that fucking moment my life, every day.

RANDY FURNISS: Regardless of what everybody else thinks about me being a racist, you're used to be accustomed to everyone thinks you're a piece of shit automatically. They don't see nothing beyond that.

FRANK MEEINK: It goes way back, man. And when I had to start fixing them problems with me, I became a better human being around it because I didn't have these moments. And I started to be able to address who I was and why I am the way I am.

RANDY FURNISS: It's reassuring cause you can relate. Once you dug that hole, there's no hope except keep digging it deeper. And that's the only hope that you have.

FRANK MEEINK: Eventually I'll get out the other side.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, that's right. You're gonna change it. You're gonna make it right.

FRANK MEEINK: Yeah, right.

RANDY FURNISS: The pain and hardships, I know that caused him. But I mean, the only thing I can do, which is struggle through the negative things, forgive myself. I can't make others forgive me. No matter how much I want to, or I can't do it. It has to be forgiveness is offered out of love, not because you have to.

FRANK MEEINK: I promise you in the beginning, it's a lot of work. But then real quickly, when it starts to become just a routine, it's not work anymore. And then you just feel good. You feel-- I know I did. I know I did, man. And it was the greatest feeling in the world.

RANDY FURNISS: I guess my biggest fear is once I stop fighting something, I've been fighting for so many damn years--

FRANK MEEINK: But what's it going to change?

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, exactly, yeah.

FRANK MEEINK: What's it going to change? Where we are right now is where it's going to change.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, it changed mine.

NEWS STORY
- It was a state of emergency in Florida as a white nationalist was about to take the stage.

RICHARD SPENCER: This is the free speech issue of our day.

NEWS STORY
- University of Florida is bracing for potential violence today at a speech by white nationalist leader, Richard Spencer.
- Hundreds of protesters gathering outside the site of the speech.

RICHARD SPENCER: Not everyone on the alt-right even agrees with my concept of the ethnic state. But I would say that effectively, everyone in the alt-right agrees to the notion that a racially or ethnically defined state, a nation state, is justified.

NEWS STORY
- And on that stage, Spencer tried to speak through the noise. But the chants continuing, drowning him out.
- This is the question we always wanted. Why the fuck you don't like me? Tell me.
- Well, you just don't? That's something like a two-year-old kid would say.

RICHARD SPENCER: Free speech is only in question, it only has meaning when someone says something controversial, when someone's willing to stand up to a mob like you all who have gathered here, to be frank.

CHANTING: Go home, Richard.

RICHARD SPENCER: I'm not going home.

- Why you don't like him? Why you don't like him? What is it about him you don't like?

RICHARD SPENCER: And y'all should be ashamed of yourself because y'all are pieces of shit, to be very honest.

- Motherfucker, get your arms around. Why you don't like me? Give me a hug. Give me a hug. Give me a hug. Yeah, yeah, give me a hug.

JULIUS LONG: He was by hisself, so with some swastikas on his shirt. Who's with this guy? This guy's fixing to get killed out here, man. Somebody's got to help this guy cause of the same people who's saying, oh, it's all love, we hate hate, anti-hate. We preach love, peace. All the same people mad, trying to beat him and spitting on this guy. What message does that send? That's pure hate. When I approached Randy, I came to him, like, hey, man, I want to talk to you, understand you. He was cool, no problem the whole time. We couldn't really have a discussion because these cameras and people pushing.

RANDY FURNISS: I kept telling him, let's go find a more intimate setting. I got no problem talking to you. He looked at me, he's like, really?

JULIUS LONG: And I guess our intimate setting was forced on us because we were both kicked out. So we encountered some police officers. And they were treating Randy how they would treat me on a regular day just off of what they perceived by his outer appearances. And I--

RANDY FURNISS: And they ended up wanting to arrest him.

JULIUS LONG: Yeah, and I'm like, man, this ain't right. This man just got beat on, spit on. You see the spit on the back of his head. You see his mouth bust. What is he doing wrong? Why are you asking him to sit on the ground, do this type of stuff? So we actually started walking and talking. And we found out we had things in common. I asked him his views about certain things. It was certain stuff--

RANDY FURNISS: Common ground on them both.

JULIUS LONG: Yeah, he was telling me he got involved in his teenage years in the Aryan Nation. And that's just how a lot of my friends and different people get involved in the Bloods, the Crips, in different gangs they join. That's what's around you. So whatever's around you, and your friends may be involved. With whatever happens, your mindset is going to be on that. So for me, I just saw the similarities of what my culture would deal with just in a little different way. There's nothing new up under the sun. His was just a different route. The angry white man and the angry black man is two different people. The angry black man is angry because he has no hope, he has no vision, he has no way to provide. Angry white people, especially in a lower income cause they have so many mentors and role models that you can just turn on the TV and see success. I mean, I would be deprived, too, if I'm down at the bottom with these black people. And they've got a reason to be down here. I'm white. What am I doing?

RANDY FURNISS: It is a deep seated anger. And when you're indoctrinated, what better way to focus that anger than on these people, people that are different, people of color?

JULIUS LONG: I can say the ignorant white man because he's angry because he doesn't really understand what's been going on in America. He doesn't even understand how he got to where he's at off of the blood, sweat, and tears of my ancestors' backs. I mean, everybody that's white in America has benefited off of that.

RANDY FURNISS: Every time he answers that call or response, hey, man, sorry I missed it. I'm busy right now. It's given me hope.

JULIUS LONG: I got somebody to understand not just myself, but my culture as a whole and look at us differently just because of my individual encounter. We talk every week, man, probably two, three times a week at least.

RANDY FURNISS: Yeah, at least two, a couple of times, phone calls, hours of phone calls.

JULIUS LONG: Yeah, when we talk on the phone, it's for hours.

SAMMY RANGEL: I mean, when you think about what you've done just in the last month, the turnaround, the correction, what you've abandoned and what you've adopted, most people can't even lose the 10 pounds they want to lose, much less make an entire mental, emotional, and lifestyle change. You humanized him, which allowed him to humanize you. That's not rocket science. But yeah, it's evading the majority of the country right now.

JULIUS LONG: Seriously, I could never look at anybody in the Aryan Brotherhood, and the Nation, or anybody who got swastikas on and look at them the same way. Why? Because I got a friend that that was part of his past.

SAMMY RANGEL: It changes your narrative. And it changes his narrative. It's not that we agree with anything that comes out of the far right, it's that we don't ever forget that there are people inside of those people. There's a human being inside of this person. We just choose not to forget that.

JULIUS LONG: You don't really see a ex-Nazi and a black man have a lot of dialogue as we do. But I mean, I can consider him a friend. I was glad that I could have that effect on Randy to open his eyes up to see that something different, to see whatever may have been introduced to him or told to him was proven to be a lie.

RANDY FURNISS: I start with that every day. I had a soul. But I pissed it all away.

DR. MICHAEL KIMMEL: I think we often think about this in terms of the ways in which they are failing us. They are bad men. They are floating away from us. They are deviant. And I think we need to ask the other question also. We need to ask the question of how we are failing them. What kind of ways can we keep them in the center? And part of my answer to that is we have to find ways to keep them validated as men.

CHRISTIAN PICCIOLINI: It's really amazing when people feel more whole how quickly and how easily the ideology of hate falls away. And if you can reconnect them to the people that they thought they hated, it helps build that empathy so that they realize that they're actually a part of the solution rather than contributing to the problem.

JASON DOWNARD: The first time that I've ever felt accepted in any shape and form from anybody is actually with Life after Hate and other people I've met just recently. I feel peacefulness. It's the greatest feeling of all time.

THOMAS ENGELMANN: I want everybody to know that I'm a human being in here instead of yeah, you may see the tattoos. But I am a person. And to be able to have the different cultures and the different people here and the different religions, it's good to be able to coexist and to be able to interact because it teaches me that we're all in this together.

SAMMY RANGEL: This is a part of our evolution, man. Formers are evolving into a powerful force, man, of good, and justice, of equality, of love, peace, compassion.

TONY MCALEER: We are operating as human beings from one of two places, fear or love. And we get to choose which one that is.

CHUCK LEEK: Charlottesville happened. And in the days following, Boston happened. It was such a turnout. And just seeing that outpouring of support for countering that narrative of white supremacy, it really flooded me with hope. I am proud that I can be a voice against what I used to stand for.

SAMMY RANGEL: I feel like I have something to offer. I'm-- I have something to bring to the table. I'm on to bigger and better things while I'm still mindful of what I owe to society. But no one's better served by my guilt or shame at this point, including me.

AMAR KALEKA: With my father and our family, we had built four temples. And this was the first major one that was an undertaking. And when my dad drew the architectural plans with the artists and the architect, he envisioned four domes. We never got a chance to put those up. And then August 5, 2012 came around. The shooting happened. Seven people lost their lives. And we bought seven of these domes, one for each person. And I think now when we drive by, I see the domes. And it reminds me of my dad. And that is all I can ask for at this point.

TEXT ON SCREEN
During the past 30 years, the vast majority of the deadly terrorist attacks occurring in the United States have been perpetrated by domestic extremists. Since 2013, the number of fatalities due to violent extremism in the U.S. has quadrupled, yet U.S. counterterrorism strategy remains focused primarily on Islamic extremism.

POLICE (ON RADIO): 425, shots fired. Suspect carrying an AR-15 and a glock at this time. 71, suspect is talking about all these Jews need to die. We're still communicating with him.

TEXT ON SCREEN
10/27/18 – Pittsburgh, PA – Tree of Life Synagogue
11 Dead
Shooter inspired by extremist rhetoric & community support of Central American refugees

POLICE (ON RADIO): 315, hold a perimeter. We're under fire. We're under fire. He's got an automatic weapon. He's firing at us, running in the synagogue.

TEXT ON SCREEN
3/15/19 – Christchurch, New Zealand – Al Noor Mosque & Linwood Islamic Center
52 Dead
Gunman cites U.S. President Trump as a “symbol of renewed white identity and common purpose”

POLICE (ON RADIO): Shady and Wilkins, I have an officer caught who was shot in the hand.

TEXT ON SCREEN
8/3/19 – Majority-Hispanic community Walmart
22 Dead
Shooter’s manifesto states, “I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement”

POLICE (ON RADIO): 427-- [INAUDIBLE].

SHOOTER: Fuck.

POLICE (ON RADIO): 315, every available unit in the city needs to get here now. All units hold a perimeter. We're taking on AK-47 fire from out...

TEXT ON SCREEN
This film is dedicated to the victims, their families, and all communities devastated by and attempting to heal from acts of domestic violent extremism.

[END]