



I remember vividly the day an act of hate changed me and the way I saw the world, I watched, in silence, as three young boys beat a homeless man nearly to death. I myself wasn't a huge fan of the poor, I loathed the poor. I saw them as fools, they were the damned; the filthy parasites that infected the community. They were worthless and intolerable.

I stood there at the mouth of that alley, speechless. "Stop!" I wanted to shout, "Please leave him alone." I wish my words hadn't failed me, but how could I bring myself to hypocrisy? After all, I loathed that poor man in that alley. I ran all the way home. I had just witnessed hate in its purest form. As I reflected upon what I had seen, my perception of the poor changed. I realized that all human life is precious. I swore to change my ways.

When I got home, I tore down the poster of Martin Luther King, Jr. that hung accusingly in the corner of my room. I wasn't worthy. I felt embarrassed and ashamed. I was no better than those boys in the alley. I had enabled their hate. I needed to let people know that apathetic passers by are just as responsible for hate's cancerous spread as the devilish souls who express their hate fused with violence. I needed to become the change I so desperately wanted to see.

Ignorance is bliss. There are thousands of people who are blind (or pretend to be) to the hate that swarms around them daily. These are the people I want to reach. Attempting to alter a fixed notion in the minds of the apathetic is not an easy feat. People, oftentimes, need to be moved by some powerful force. I knew exactly what my community needed; an old fashioned 60's style awareness rally. An entire Saturday committed to educating the masses about the harsh repercussions of unleashed hatred.

I want to bring this image in my head to life. I can see it all clearly in my head now; huge rented speakers, a stage, volunteer guests, and an enormous crowd of people whose eyes have been opened. I could turn this plan into action.

The rally would consist of mainly guests who feel they have an important story to share. A few scheduled speakers would also appear. Around the stage there would be tables with representatives from different charities willing to share information with guests and fully prepared to take donations. I would supply my community with one day of peace. If I could reach and change just one person it could make all the difference.

I believe that one moment can change a person for the better. I want to be a part of such a moment. I want to join the long overdue war against hate. If we all unite, we can make people listen. We can prove that love will always trump hate.