

40 Ways to Fight Nazis: Forty Community-Based Actions You Can Take To Resist White Nationalist Organizing

By Spencer Sunshine, for Showing Up for Racial Justice



Since Alt-Right leader Richard Spencer became a meme after he was clocked in the face in January 2017, a discussion has raged about whether it is right to “punch a Nazi.” But lost in this argument is the need to mobilize people into taking the many legal, community-based tactics that help to counter White Nationalist organizing. SURJ (Showing Up for Racial Justice) has published Spencer Sunshine’s guide, “40 Ways to Fight Nazis: Community-Based Actions You Can Take to Resist White Nationalist Organizing,” which explains many of these. The forty tactics below are taken from the sixteen-page guide, which is available online at www.ShowingUpForRacialJustice.org/disrupting-white-nationalists.

I. GET STARTED

1. Learn who White Nationalists are and how they organize. Familiarize yourself with how their political movement organizes, what it sounds like, and who the major actors in it are.
2. Work with others to oppose White Nationalists. It’s a lot work to keep track of them, so find like-minded progressives to do the work with.
3. Start monitoring local White Nationalist activity. After you figure out what area you are going to look it, start to track their organizations, actions, and members.

II. TAKE ACTION

4. Release your research. Whether it’s feeding information to reporters or releasing it on a blog, figure out what the best way is to use your information to damage their movement.
5. Counter their organizing. When White Nationalists engage in a organizing campaign, help the communities they are targeting to push back against them.
6. Push institutions to oppose White Nationalism. Push institutions that have White Nationalist members, or which are recruiting targets, to renounce them.
7. Make it difficult for them to appear in public. Pressure privately owned spaces to refuse to allow White Nationalists to use them.
8. Answer their talking points. Create a list of these and rebut their lies.
9. Remove and replace White Nationalist stickers and flyers. Remove these, and replace them with your own message.
10. Utilize legal avenues. If doing this is in tune with your own your political belief, make the authorities aware of White Nationalists who violate legal requirements, including zoning codes.
11. Pressure White Nationalists at home and work. After identifying key members, out them in their neighborhood and pressure their workplaces to fire them.
12. Target their financial and communications infrastructure. Pressure digital platforms to remove White Nationalist accounts, and out those who fund their groups.
13. Prevent them from coming to progressive events. Remove White Nationalists who come to progressive events, and disrupt attempt to film us in public.
14. Drive wedges with other political groups. Out White Nationalists who join mainstream conservative groups, and push them to exclude them.
15. Find new allies in your community. Reach out to communities targeted by White Nationalists, see how they perceive the threat, and ask what kind of support they want.
16. Organize anti-racist bar crawls. Host a bar crawl that visits bars where White Nationalists are known to hang out.

III. BE PROACTIVE

17. Help White Nationalists leave their movement by promoting “exit programs.”
18. Be proactive in putting your message out. Use flyers, stickers, posters, and yard signs to make your community’s opposition to racist and bigoted ideas visible.
19. Run educational programs. Organize public talks, reading groups, and classes.
20. Host memorial events. Hold events memorializing the victims of White Nationalist violence.
21. Put on cultural events. Use concerts, art auctions, and plays to fundraise and educate.
22. Organize first aid, self-defense, and security trainings. Hold classes to equip your community with these skills.
23. Form an emergency response team. Prepare a group that can respond quickly to White Nationalist violence or unannounced events.
24. Recruit skilled people—like licensed security guards, translators, and techies—who you can contact when needed.

IV. COUNTER-DEMONSTRATE

25. Win the battle of public opinion. Don’t let pundits convince you to be silent in the face White Nationalist organizing, to downplay their violence, or to claim that “both sides” are equally at fault.
26. Push local officials to quash White Nationalist events. Pressure local governments to refuse or revoke White Nationalist rally permits.
27. Organize a counter-demonstration. If White Nationalists are holding a demonstration, get the opposition into the streets.
28. Pressure local businesses and rental spaces. Encourage them to refuse service or rental space to White Nationalists.
29. Document participants in White Nationalist demonstrations. Create high-quality video and photography of attendees.
30. Don’t be outgunned. If it is legal in your area, and consistent with your beliefs, come to the demonstration with firearms—in consultation and partnership with organizers of color.
31. Refrain from attacking your allies. Don’t condemn others who are on the same side at inappropriate times.

V. BE SUPPORTIVE

32. Support people being threatened. Support the targets of White Nationalist threats.
33. Establish a safe house. Have a person, who is off the radar of White Nationalists available to take people in at a moment’s notice.
34. Aid the injured. Reach out to the victims of White Nationalist violence and offer support.
35. Help the families of the murdered. Reach out to family members and offer support.
36. Have the backs of those targeted by the legal system. Support progressive activists who become entangled in the legal system through their opposition to White Nationalism.
37. Support imprisoned activists. Do support work for activists who are imprisoned through their opposition to White Nationalism.
38. If you discover threats by White Nationalists, warn their targets.
39. Sunlight threats and attacks. Publicize threats made by White Nationalists, which helps neutralize them and expose the violence of their movement.

VI. POSITION YOUR WORK

40. Embed your actions in a larger critique. Countering White Nationalists is a necessary, but not sufficient, part of the larger fight against inequality