



FROM HATE SPEECH TO HOPE SPEECH

The Protestant Academy of Berlin developed workshops on responding to hate speech from a Christian perspective. Timo, the project coordinator, explains how they work.



Timo: One of the first actions we took in relation to hate speech was to carry out an analysis of hate speech and toxic narratives on Facebook within a Christian framework. We received excellent feedback, but those who read the report found it insufficiently concrete for people to actually put in practice. So we decided to create workshops as a way for people to reflect on the issue of hate speech in their own personal circumstances. The workshops take place offline, in order to facilitate interaction among participants.

For the workshops, we use a fake social media platform (which we called *Diss Kurs*) and we display real comments and posts from Facebook. We facilitate the ensuing discussion, as participants reflect on the comments and share their own personal experiences with similar content, online or offline. They also share their strategies for dealing with this content. Together we reflect on the contributions brought by everyone and add some suggestions.

We then invite a broader reflection on social media and the way we communicate. We want to move from an attitude of "There is nothing that can be done about it" to finding new ways, new possibilities for replying to hateful content. We also discuss the audience people are trying to communicate with: the authors of hateful content themselves, or the broader audience, the silent bystanders?

The workshops are targeted at multipliers, people who can replicate the experience in their own communities. The programmes are easily scalable, and can accommodate from 8 to more than 30 people. We've had workshops with pastors who can replicate them in their parishes, and also with teenagers, who can do them again in their own communities. This way, so far, we have been able to reach about 1,000 people. An example of a half-day workshop structure can be found on page 36.

For more information on the project, read here:

<http://www.wacceurope.org/projects/social-media-divide/hope-not-hate/>



**Kleingruppenphase II:
Dekonstruktion/Zerbasteln (20-30min)**

Die Reaktionsmöglichkeiten finden sich als Bastelmaterial in dem hopeSpeech-Koffer.

Die Kleingruppen können den Diss Kurs damit frei gestalten: Es gibt kein Richtig und Falsch!

Zur Aktivierung sollen die Kleingruppen zuerst die Kommentare auseinander schneiden.

The "Netzteufel" (NetDevil) initiative focuses on helping people in civil society and church networks to engage with the web and develop skills, know-how and stories to become positive "web devils". The workshops are based on the understanding that what takes place in the virtual world is real and needs to be taken seriously by both civil society and the churches.