



## Press Kit

Book title: *Are We Done Fighting? Building Understanding in a World of Hate and Division*  
Author: Matthew Legge  
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## Book Description

### Brief

In many places hate crimes are on the rise and societies are becoming increasingly polarized. *Are We Done Fighting? Building Understanding in a World of Hate and Division* brings together fascinating research findings from fields like neuroscience, social psychology, and behavioural economics to consider how we can make respectful and fulfilling interactions more likely. The book offers many surprising insights, stories, and group learning activities in an easy format that will help readers build practical skills. It's written with one goal: to be immediately useful.

### Longer

Unfounded beliefs and hateful political and social divisions that can cascade into violence are threatening to pull the world apart. Responding to fear and aggression strategically and with compassion is vital if we are to push back against the politics of hate and live in greater safety and harmony.

But how to do it?

*Are We Done Fighting?* is brimming with the latest research, practical activities, and inspirational stories of success for cultivating inner change and spreading peace at the community level and beyond. Coverage includes:

- An explanation of the different styles of conflict
- Cognitive biases that help explain polarized and lose-lose positions
- Practical methods and activities for changing ourselves and others' minds
- When punishment works and doesn't, and how to encourage discipline in children without using violence
- The skill of self-compassion and ways to reduce prejudice in ourselves and others
- Incredible programs that are rebuilding trust between people after genocide.

Packed with inspiration and cutting-edge findings from fields including neuroscience, social psychology, and behavioural economics, *Are We Done Fighting?* is an essential toolkit for activists, community and peace groups, and students and instructors working to build dialogue, understanding, and peace as the antidote to the politics of hate and division.

*Are We Done Fighting?* is available in paperback, eBook, and audiobook. It was awarded a 2019 Nautilus Book Award in the category of Social Change and Social Justice.

## Endorsements

“No, we are not done fighting, but we can fight in a better way. This book tells you how.”

— Johan Galtung, founder of the academic discipline of peace studies, founder, Transcend International

“In this exceptionally valuable and timely book, rather than just lament or shout back at the rise of hate and conflict in our world, Matthew Legge offers practical solutions that make a difference in our own lives and in the broader communities that surround us. Yes, a manual for peace, but also for human rights and, at the end of the day, plain human decency. Not only to be read, but put into action.”

— Alex Neve, Order of Canada, human rights lawyer and Secretary General of Amnesty International Canada

“This book is a joy. The research is fresh and fascinating, the writing is clear and crisp, and the book offers new material (stories and science)...”

— Stephanie Van Hook, Executive Director, Metta Center for Nonviolence

“...*Are We Done Fighting?* is a much-needed antidote to the risk of depression and despair. In page after page, and with a multitude of sources to back up the arguments, Matthew Legge gives us plenty of hope stemming from experience. The next decade should be a time of great promise in the face of great challenges and *Are We Done Fighting?* is both timely and inspiring in pointing the right way.”

— Paul Rogers, emeritus professor of peace studies, Bradford University, UK

“I read this book too fast, and it finished too soon. I will read it again and savour every word, every surprising insight, every amazing bit of evidence that tells me I need to change my thinking. I will keep highlighting portions and I will wear it out.”

— Mary-Wynne Ashford, MD, International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War

“This is the book many peace, justice, and reconciliation advocates have waited for. Enabling, practical, and clear-minded, Matthew Legge offers readers—individuals or groups—a road map to transform our deepest conflicts. Each chapter provides analysis, tips, resources, and skills needed for the journey.”

— Paul R. Dekar, emeritus professor and co-founder of the peace studies program at McMaster University, Canada

## Author Bio

**Matthew Legge** loves exploring the evidence and sharing interesting stories.

He's worked in the nonprofit sector for the last 14 years, with a focus on building health, dignity, and human rights. He's supported locally-led peace initiatives in North America, Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

Since 2012, Matthew has worked for [Canadian Friends Service Committee](#) (CFSC), the peace and social justice agency of Quakers in Canada. Quakers are widely respected for their efforts to prevent war and transform conflicts, as well as their impartial support for war victims.

As CFSC's Peace Program Coordinator, Matthew has had the opportunity to learn from Quakers across Canada and in the US, Europe, and Africa. This is his first book. He writes the [popular blog](#) *Are We Done Fighting?* for *Psychology Today*.

## Sample Interview Questions

Hate crimes are increasing as many countries backslide into authoritarianism. What are some things that everyday people can do?

Why is it that very bright people are so deeply divided and polarized that they struggle to even talk to each other?

What's keeping us from having more positive and enriching conversations? What are the biggest pitfalls your book identifies?

Your book has some 750 citations and draws together academic findings and real-world stories. What did you learn over the course of researching and writing this book?

Can you share a story from your book that particularly moved you?

What surprised you when you did the research for this book?

You identify increasing hatred and prejudice as problems, but aren't they just part of human nature?

Your book promotes understanding, but what if the other side is actually dangerous or evil?

Your book discusses nonviolent approaches to social change. Doesn't nonviolence make people complacent in the face of injustices?

In your book you recount incredible stories about people protecting each other and building peace in challenging situations. What commonalities did you see among these different success stories?

You've spent the last few years researching some of the very worst things people do. What makes you hopeful?

How did this book come about? What was your personal interest in writing it?

What is your hope for this book?

## Select Quotes from *Are We Done Fighting?*

“Sometimes we want to be contrarians, to cheer for the bad guy, to do what we’re told not to. Peace thinkers often downplay this, overlooking the fact that for many, violence is exciting, even beautiful.”

“Joseph Campbell studied spiritual traditions from around the world and found that the violence inherent in life is one of the uncomfortable truths they all grapple with. Life eats life. Our world is perpetually destructive and creative. Can peace be consistent with such a violent world, or is it a total fantasy?”

“Peace is actually powerful and exciting. It moves between us... like a virus. What incentives do hosts (folks like you and me) need to spread peace, to make it go viral?”

“Each of us needs to feel heard before we can hear criticism.”

“As much as our confidence makes us resilient in the face of life’s hardships, it can also make us tough to talk to.”

“Our understanding of other people’s views improves when we have to explain what they think, but only if we feel accountable to them to be accurate in the explanation.”

“Acknowledgement—seeing and being seen—is an ancient and deeply powerful experience. Having a complete stranger just sit with you while you do something painful reduces the pain you experience compared to doing it alone.”

“We don’t need to be as concerned about what happens to us as we do about our ways of being.”

“Many of us are surprisingly uninformed about ourselves.”

“We get a bit too good at dissecting the world to find violence lurking, and forget to build ourselves up by building up those around us.”

“Believing we don’t have enough (apparently whether we’re right or not) creates increased mental strain, leading us to make worse choices and be less successful in resisting temptations.”

“Perhaps we think we deserve to suffer for the wrongs we’ve done, helping us maintain the belief... that the world is fair. There’s some evidence to support this. The longer people administer painful electric shocks to themselves, the less guilty they report feeling afterward, and brain scans have found that guilt and shame can generate activity related to feelings of reward.”

## Book Excerpt

A sample chapter is available for free download at <https://AreWeDoneFighting.com>. The chapter is all about beliefs—how we come to believe what we do, what makes it so tough to talk to folks who don't agree with us, and tips we can use to have the best chance of being heard.

Review copies are available on request.