Twitter Thread by Andrew Stroehlein

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People frustrated with the negative sides of Twitter sometimes ask me what they can do about it. Here's a thread with some ideas.

Whether you have 100 followers or a million, you can do something to help… ■

1) Don't share the ugly stuff, not even to expose its ugliness, if it's just powerless fools looking for attention. (If you just can't help yourself, use a screenshot, never a link or RT.)

Do expose the ugly stuff from elected officials and others with power. Frame your tweets to be clear you are calling it out. And use a screenshot, not a link or RT, so you don't send them any clicks of encouragement.

2) Don't repeat the framing of the hate-mongers. If someone says, "all Ruritanians are terrorists", do not reply, "no, Ruritanians are not terrorists", because all you're doing is repeating the connection between the word, "Ruritanian", and "terrorist".

3) Never share links to hateful headlines & clickbait fishing for outrage clicks. Don't be a sucker. (If you just can't help yourself, call it out with a screenshot, so you don't encourage click-seeking media outlets to deliver more of the same.)

4) Do share links to good stuff. Every time you click on a link to an article, you are casting a vote for that article (whether you actually like the article or not). Editors & media executives want clicks – they tally those votes. Always click and share links with that in mind.

Your "votes" truly matter to them. Their business model (or at least part of it) is based on clicks they can deliver for advertisers. Click on the good stuff, and get others to do the same.

Click the links to good-sounding tweets even if you don't have time to read the whole article. This at least tells the social media people & headline writers that the right language, saying the right things, will attract clicks.

Think of clicking on links and retweeting as encouraging the behaviours (and type of language & story focus) you want to see in future.

5) Given all that, don’t just “like” things when you know you should retweet them. Don’t worry you’re tweeting too much or repeating yourself. It won’t hurt you, and you encourage more clicks for the good stuff. ■

6) Don’t waste your time arguing with anonymous trolls. Seriously, it is never worth your time, which they are deliberately trying to waste. Go click on good stuff and RT good messages instead – that’s far more productive.

7) Block early & often. Blocking prevents trolls and propagandists from using your replies for their nonsense in future. Your replies are your space; don’t let others spread lies & hate in the spaces you control.

My guide: https://t.co/ZyLacjbELV

> UPDATE - Please join me in blocking on Twitter:
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> \U0001f537 Fact deniers;
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> \U0001f537 Anonymous liars;
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> \U0001f537 Propagandists for abusive governments;
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> \U0001f537 Those using whataboutism;
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> \U0001f537 Those flinging hate;
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> \U0001f537 Those making straw man arguments;
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> \U0001f537 Nazis;
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> \U0001f537 Sealions;
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> \U0001f537 Nazi sealions.
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> — Andrew Stroehlein (@astroehlein) February 9, 2020

8) Report tweets and accounts to Twitter that are in violation of their rules, especially regarding hate speech, incitement and threats against you or others.