Nice AF

In an AIDS United guest blog post titled "I'm clean. U B 2—How Dating App Chats Can Go From RudeAF to NiceAF," Tony Taylor, a project manager at Building Healthy Online Communities, urges kindness. Below is an edited excerpt.

September 30, 2019 By Tony Taylor

What do you say to a guy on a dating app when you're not into him? How would you want to be told that he's not into you?

We know that chatting with guys on a dating app can be hit or miss. And the pressure can be higher for those of us living with HIV. One of the most hurtful phrases to read in a dating profile is "I'm clean. U B 2"—as if living with HIV is somehow dirty.

And if you've ever been rudely rejected by someone or felt lesser-than by reading "no fats, no femmes, white guys only—just a preference," then you also understand just how hurtful the power of "preference" can be.

We're determined to #StopHIVStigma and other stigmas that are prevalent in online dating culture. Regardless of your age, race, body type, HIV status or gender identity or what you like to do in or out of bed—dating apps should be fun, welcoming places for everyone.

NiceAF.org is an online campaign where dating app users can post real-life stories to share with others about the best ways to be, well, nice as fuck.

You can submit a screenshot of an interaction. Don't worry: We won't publish the screenshot itself. We will protect your identity and the identity of the person you chatted with and not reveal which app the dialogue took place on. (We're also asking you not to say which site you were on so the sites are not identified.)

We're also looking for your best online dating stories. Submit a video telling us how you've dealt with an insult and risen above it to make your own online experience a better one.

"When I've been online, sometimes guys will say, 'U=U isn't true,' 'You're a sexual predator' or 'You're a danger to men's holistic health,'" says Bruce Richman, founding executive director of Prevention Access Campaign, which launched the Undetectable Equals Untransmittable movement in July 2016, in a submitted video.

"At times I wanted to respond with 'You're a moron' and then block them. But it feels better and is

more productive to send them the UequalsU.org website with a couple of hearts [emojis]. It's kinder. I feel better. It puts positive energy into the world. And hopefully it educates them."

Insults from your own community can run deep. "There's more and more evidence that when we treat each other badly within the community, it can be even more harmful than when people outside the community insult us," says Jen Hecht, director of Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC).

"There's no reason you can't find what you want without making everyone else feel terrible," says BHOC cofounder Dan Wohlfeiler.

NiceAF is a first-ever team effort of five different dating apps and sites—Adam4Adam, Daddyhunt, Grindr, GROWLr and POZ Personals—working with BHOC, a consortium of organizations addressing HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Together, we are all committed to making our diverse online communities more welcoming through the NiceAF.org campaign.

Chime in! Let us know how you turned around a hurtful interaction. Send us a video or screenshot detailing a dating app experience that turned out niceAF.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/nice-af-tony-taylor