

October More Voices: Getting Motivated

Category: Getting Motivated

written by Paul Gross | October 1, 2024

Dear readers,

A good part of my career as a doctor was spent trying to motivate patients to do what was good for them, like eating more fruits and vegetables, getting exercise or remembering to take their pills.

Most patients wanted to do the right thing—go to the gym, stop smoking and get their diabetes under control. They felt bad about themselves for not doing better.

With that in mind, I didn't think it was productive to lecture them and make them feel even worse. I thought they'd be more likely to get motivated if they felt hopeful and positive—so I did my best to offer some understanding and encouragement rather than criticism.

When I went to my own doctor for check-ups, I was grateful that he didn't grill me about how often I exercised (which was less often than I would have liked). And now that I'm retired and life is a little less frantic, I've been out running several times a week.

It's easier to be virtuous—to act on your motivations—when you have the time and opportunity. Before throwing stones at anyone, it's helpful to remember that most of us are trying to do our best, even when that best falls short.

As I pen this, I've been writing postcards to swing-state residents encouraging them to vote early, if possible, and definitely by November 5.

Will my cheerful, multicolored postcards be motivating? Will some motivated individuals run into unexpected obstacles on Election Day?

And will I be motivated to do more once I've finished the 200 postcards I'm committed to?

October's *More Voices* theme is [Getting Motivated](#). What's been your experience of trying to motivate yourself—or others—to do something health-related?

Share your story using the [More Voices Submission Form](#). For more details, visit [More Voices FAQs](#). And have a look at last month's theme: [Palliative and Hospice Care](#).

Remember, your story should be 40-400 words. And no poetry, please.

We look forward to hearing from you!

With warm regards,

Paul Gross

Editor