

# August More Voices: Coping

Category: Coping

written by Paul Gross | July 31, 2022

Dear *Pulse* readers,

For years my family has attended religious services at a Unitarian Universalist congregation. In this congregation, our minister gets Sunday off every few weeks, and the service is led by a different group of congregants. Everyone gets to participate.

The themes of these congregant-led services often involve coping. They might be summed up as: “What keeps me going?”

Truth be told, we are all trying to cope. Cope with the latest calamity on the news. With a climate veering out of control and threats to our democracy. With jobs that are sometimes maddening and families that can be trying. With children who are finding their way and parents who are aging, dying or no longer here to comfort us or make amends with.

And if that weren't enough, our own mortality looms.

In the exam room, my patients are coping with all these things—and with bodies in various states of complaint or disrepair. A blood sugar that lurches out of control. A heart that is weak. A nagging pain that won't go away. A mind that turns every twinge into a harbinger of doom.

In that same exam room, I'm coping with my own challenges: Can I separate the signal from the noise? Figure out what's causing the distress? Provide some relief? Wrap up this visit without forgetting anything? Can I stop thinking about the fact that I'm an hour behind and there are four patients stewing in the waiting room?

Can I ever be good enough?

How do I cope? Imperfectly—the same as everyone else. I worry reflexively. I try to keep doctoring from overwhelming my life. I throw myself into nourishing pursuits—like being a husband and father, editing this publication, writing songs and being an involved citizen.

Meditation helps. And seeing a therapist has rescued me more than once.

How about you? What are you coping with—and how do you manage? The August More Voices theme is [Coping](#). Use the [More Voices Submission Form](#) to send us your lived experience.

For more details, visit [More Voices FAQs](#). And have a look at last month's theme: [Abortion: Then and Now](#).

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

We look forward to hearing from you.

With warm regards,

Paul Gross  
Editor