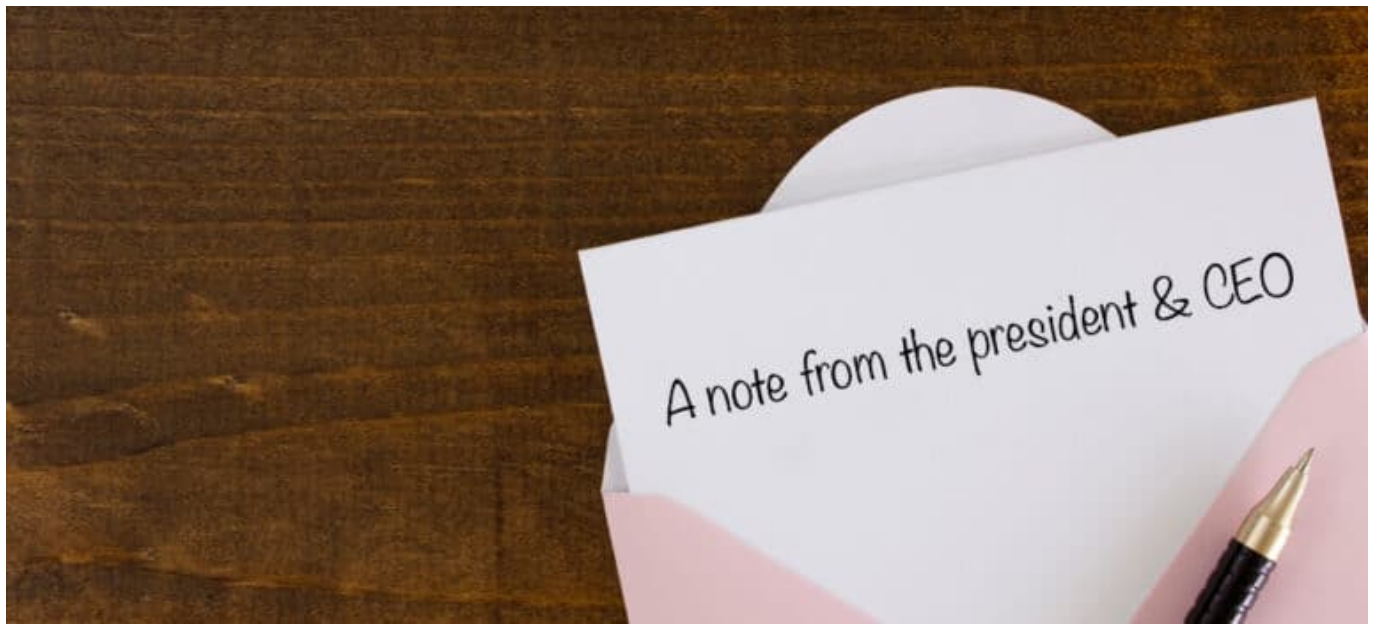


Finding the right balance



by Cyndi Zagieboylo



Momentum readers aren't shy when it comes to expressing opinions about the magazine. We, **Momentum** Editor Jane Hoback and I, receive many comments—many positive and some negative. You tell us what you learned or enjoyed or were inspired to do and you share personal journeys. We also get complaints that the magazine is too positive, too pie in the sky, or that the articles don't reflect your struggles with multiple sclerosis. For some readers, the magazine speaks to them. For others, it doesn't.

Sometimes the same article can spur opposing viewpoints. For example, a story titled "[Run the world](#)" (Winter 2018-19) about a woman living with MS named Cheryl Hile who ran marathons on every continent over the course of a year drew both praise and protest.

Leslie Touchton of Pennsylvania wrote: “I’ve been getting more down over the past year over [my] foot drop, and I was running less because of it. The article and Cheryl Hile’s determination made me feel so inspired! It was published at the most perfect time. It is making me get out there and just do it! I wanted to give her a huge thank you for her story.”

Yet Dorothy R. Dickhaus of Indiana had a different reaction: “Please quit with the ‘I can climb a mountain if I can pay someone to carry me,’ ‘I can run a marathon’ baloney. While it might be reality for one person, this is BS for most people with MS. Shame on you for making us feel ashamed that we cannot all run marathons.”

Of course, we don’t want to shame anyone. I’m sorry that Dickhaus felt that way, even for a second!

Dorothy’s letter (published in the Spring 2019 issue), titled “[No more pie-in-the-sky stories](#),” inspired a wave of comments from readers. From Robert Baznik of Pennsylvania: “Stories should be told about people like myself who are in a wheelchair and battle every day just to be able to get out of bed. That’s my personal ‘marathon’ that more people, both with or without MS, should be made aware of.”

Robert Hickey of Louisiana hit us hard for a story about an active person with MS striving to overcome heat sensitivity to be able to play tennis again. “I rarely even read your publication because all the ‘feel-good’ BS makes me a little nauseous,” Hickey wrote. “I have used a wheelchair exclusively since 2000 and my heat sensitivity is through the roof. I see some guy whining about not being able to play tennis. This is the kind of thing that makes me toss the unread magazine into the trash.”

Rose Gentile of Virginia, on the other hand, found the story “super helpful. I just wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed reading every page of your Summer 2019 edition.”

We aim for a balance of perspectives and stories in **Momentum**. We want to give everybody a voice.

We don’t want to shy away from the difficult issues you face. Our goal is to be a place where people connect, know they’re being heard and find solutions. We don’t always get it right. But we are trying, and we are listening.

How can we strike that balance? What are your ideas?

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Let me know your thoughts. Email me at cyndi@nmss.org.