



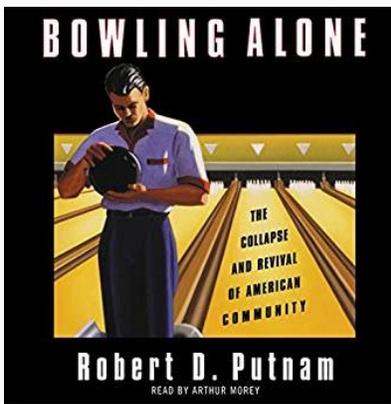
Bruce L. Rollman, MD, MPH
APS President



The President's Message

October 2018

Bowling Alone



“We all know that the way to get something done is to give it to a busy person.”
Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*

In his above titled 2000 book, Harvard professor of public policy Robert Putnam bemoaned the suffering of private and public institutions and the loss of "social capital" as a result of people becoming less connected to one another. *Bowling Alone* describes an array of factors contributing to this loss of social capital, including time devoted to television, the Internet, and increased commuting times (to these, I would also add email to his list!). Indeed, back in the 1940s, '50s and '60s, individuals joined social, civic, and political organizations and volunteered their time. Today, many of us simply "like" or share a post from our personal social media feeds.

As many APS members know, greater levels of social capital are associated with higher levels of quality of life and many other benefits including increased levels of cooperation, information sharing, and trust. It is these factors, Putnam goes on to explain, that can help transform an "I" mentality into a "we" mentality, and promote social cohesion and democracy.

APS Fall Council, October 1-2

Last week your APS Council and officers traveled to Alexandria, Virginia for the annual two-day Fall Council Meeting at which we review our Society's progress with meeting its mission and goals, and plan for its future. We were joined by our invited guests: Sarah Pressman, chair of our 2019 Annual Meeting Program Committee; Tasneem Khambaty, co-chair of our Emerging Leaders Initiative; Wijo

Kop and Vicki White, editor and managing editor, respectively, of Psychosomatic Medicine (via telephone); and by our professional management team of Laura Degnon and Sarah Shiffert, executive director and associate executive director of Degnon Associates, respectively.

To promote engagement, I began our meeting by reading aloud the *Harvard Business Review* Management Tip of the Day entitled "Get Your Colleagues to Put Down their Phones in Meetings" that fortuitously had appeared in my email that morning (below). Afterwards, I asked attendees to keep their cellphones in their pockets and purses until break times to get the most out of our time together. Remarkably, all did so for almost every moment of our 2-day meeting!

Better Together

While our Fall Council meeting began with most of us knowing each other as only professional acquaintances, I was delighted to observe us build "social capital" bonding over many hours of productive discussions. Indeed, we were so engaged that our Day 1 meeting continued for a full hour after its scheduled end, and then resumed over a 3-hour dinner at a nearby restaurant! The following day was equally as fabulous!

Build your social capital

While there is a general feeling of 'insufficient time' to do all the things we want to do and that work life has left less free time to engage in civic programs and organizations, *Bowling Alone* presents surprising evidence on the contrary: ***among workers, longer working hours are linked to more civic engagement!***

As I wrote in my August column, I attribute my success with getting my projects in heart disease funded to the social capital I built through APS. These activities, and the leadership opportunities APS has afforded me, have also inspired me to stay engaged with the Society for nearly 20 years and to promote it to my trainees and colleagues.

How about you?

Not a Member of APS? Join now.

Would you like to get more involved with APS? Consider volunteering for one of our committees and special interest groups and submitting an abstract to our Annual Meeting to be held March 6-9, 2019 in Vancouver, BC (abstracts are due October 20, 2018)!

Are you a new investigator? Apply to our APS Young Investigator Colloquium or for one of our travel awards.

Never bowl alone again!

Bruce L. Rollman, MD, MPH
President, APS 2018/19

PS: Are you registered to vote next month? Have you encouraged your students and adult children to register to vote (remind them to request an absentee ballot if needed)?

Vote for Science!



October 1, 2018

Get Your Colleagues to Put Down Their Phones in Meetings

If you've ever wondered whether you have a colleague's full attention while they're staring at their phone, stop wondering. You don't. But instead of getting frustrated that coworkers constantly check their devices during meetings, take action. You might start by sharing research that shows even the mere presence of a cell phone — much less its glowing screen and constant buzzing — is bad for productivity. Then talk with your team about the upsides and downsides of using devices during meetings. Propose ground rules like "Be totally present" and "Keep the phone in your pocket." The team could also agree to use a simple phrase like "Tech-check" as a friendly way of reminding someone to put their phone away. Once a few rules are in place, stick to them — and point out when a colleague doesn't. You might get some annoyed looks at first, but over time the team will set a new norm.

Adapted from "[How to Get Someone to Put Away Their Phone and Actually Listen](#)," by Joseph Grenny and Kelly Andrews

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