

Move forward



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When I was younger, often I was advised to have a global view in my life when I was only looking straight ahead. As I considered this idea, I began to see the truth in that wisdom. I started to see a familiar pattern of only seeing what is directly in front of me, whether it was a difficult decision to make, a task to be performed or a challenge to overcome.

While there are several theories on experience and perspective, a common theme is that each phase of life changes us. Often the learning and transformation come from looking back and recognizing how

we are different now and how we've grown. What if we decided to take ownership of our growth by observing today? What if we asked ourselves what we can do to live a more fulfilling life right now?

Most letter carriers would believe one end to a means of having a more fulfilling life right now would include having a living wage and hostile-free work environment. As do I. This is having a global view from the perspective of pursuing a career, rather than just working any job while looking only at each day as it approaches.

Life is long, but life is short. When I was a young man, I told my father that I wanted to change the world. His only sage advice was, "Life is long, but life is short." This nugget of wisdom has stayed with me throughout my life, but it recently came to the forefront of my consciousness due to an array of unforeseen events over the last couple of years. Life is indeed short. It's unpredictable. It shouldn't freak us out, but this knowledge could be the catalyst for living in a way that is beneficial for us. We need to do things that are meaningful and have a positive impact not just on the present, but on our future as well. We should surround ourselves with those who are encouraging us, make us think, and help us be better people.

If life is short, then our careers are even shorter. Most of us work to make money so that we can have a home, clothes on our backs, food on the table, have medical care... you get it. The majority of letter carriers spend more time at their jobs than with their families.

Our careers need to be something that not only pays the bills, but also feeds our souls in some way. The latter for me has been representing letter carriers in one form or another for the past 38 years. For others it could be whatever it is that makes you feel your efforts are appreciated and worthy of your time.

We are all extremely different, and there is a cause that fits every individual. Finding our path does take hard work and time. Finding where we fit in is worth it. I believe that is why most of us really enjoy being a letter carrier...feeling like we fit in the communities we serve and being members of the National Association of Letter Carriers.

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Gratitude helps me define what I want in life. If I'm grateful for my job, then I'm going to work harder to secure it. If I'm grateful for my family, then I will be kinder and more giving. It's a chain of events that starts with a thought and results in decisive action that causes me to strive for what I want in my life.

Despite disappointments, obstacles that form and ever-present naysayers, we must always decide to move forward. How do we move forward in a way that adds more to our lives, our careers and our union? I do not want to just move forward. I want to move forward with purpose! This can happen by being intentional with your actions, being involved in our union, being engaged in what is happening around us, stopping to think about what's best and observe all. Learning from where we've been, enjoying where we are, and deciding where we are going. Recognizing the importance of time often comes when it's gone—because ultimately, it's a long life and career, but it's also a short life and career.