

building civic muscles

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Education without social action
is a one-sided value
because it has no true power potential.

Social action without education
is a weak expression of pure energy.

Deeds uninformed by educated thought
can take false directions.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
Where Do We Go From Here, Chaos or Community? (1967)

A Practical Civic Bibliography:

- ★ *Enough is Enough:
How to Organize a Successful Campaign for Change*
Diane MacEachern (1994)
- ★ *Not in My Back Yard: The Handbook*
Jane Anne Morris (1994)
- ★ *The Quickening of America:
Rebuilding Our Nation, Remaking Our Lives*
Frances Moore Lappe & Paul Martin DuBois (1994)
- ★ *The Great American Gripe Book: Over 1000 Government
Offices You Can Contact to Complain, Right a Wrong, Get
S a t i s f a c t i o n !*

Fitness Plan for Democracy

Take Stock of Your Civic Health

- ★ Am I and all eligible members of my family registered to vote at our current address?
- ★ Do I know who represents my interests at all levels of government and when they are up for re-election or re-appointment?
- ★ Do I know about public resources available or organizations that work on issues relevant to me?
- ★ Do I know how to participate on issues of importance to me?

Warm-up on a Daily Basis

- ★ Did I read the newspaper today?
- ★ Do I know what is going on in my world, locally, nationally, and internationally?
- ★ Did I make a phone call or send a letter for democracy today?
- ★ To my public officials?
- ★ To/for organizations in which I participate?
- ★ To my friends and associates?
- ★ To a radio show or a newspaper?
- ★ To mobilize anyone?

Follow Proper Technique

- ★ Am I familiar with how to request government-held information?
- ★ Do I know about the Open Meetings Law?
- ★ Did I go to any public meetings?
- ★ Do I have the facts? Have I read or heard information from more than one source?

- ★ Have I looked at all sides?
- ★ Have I reached an educated opinion?
- ★ Do I have specific recommendations?
- ★ Do I know the effects of the actions I am recommending?
- ★ Do I know how my governments operate?
- ★ Have I made my opinions known to those responsible for the situation?
- ★ Have I volunteered publicly?
- ★ Have I told others about the issue?
- ★ Do I call in to radio programs?
- ★ Have I written a letter to the editor?
- ★ Have I volunteered on a cable access show?
- ★ Did I send e-mail?
- ★ Do I belong to any civic organizations?
- ★ Have I circulated or signed a petition?
- ★ Do I know how to put a question on the ballot?

Build Endurance

- ★ Have I set an example for others?
- ★ Have I organized others to become active?
- ★ Have I made a contribution of time or money to organizations dedicated to my concerns?
- ★ Have I become or encouraged others to become a leader?

Evaluation of Program

- ★ Have I followed through on my program?
- ★ Do I need to make revisions to make participating on a regular basis possible?
- ★ Am I happier leading an active civic life?
- ★ Have I made a contribution to my community and country and world?