Narrating stories of struggle, motivation and passion

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Abstract
With an aim to inspire young scientists, the idea of motivational journeys came into the picture. There are plenty of online materials available in the form of books, podcasts, animations and videos. However, these materials can lack the field specific knowledge and thus young scientists find it more difficult to relate to. In the ‘Motivational Journeys’ series we have share the struggles and advice of experienced scientists who are currently working in planetary science with the aim of inspiring early career researchers in our field.

Project and philosophy
The idea for the ‘Motivational Journeys’ series came from a personal experience. Being an international student, working towards a PhD project in a different country away from my comfort zone has affected my self-confidence and ability to focus. Under such challenging conditions, I either chose to read a book on my favourite subject or try to watch short movies or series based on autobiographies to look for inspiration. After following this approach for some time, I realised rather than looking for the motivation outside, why not get it within my own professional field? With this thought, I started to plan the project and further discussed with my colleagues and peers too who positively supported the idea.

We planned a short series of interviews in which experienced scientist could share their stories of how they overcame the more difficult hurdles during their early career span. They told us how, with their passion for science and dedication and ‘never give up’ attitude, they conquered the difficulties and pushed forward their professional career. In this series, we aimed to have a dialogue and discussion on various aspects of struggles. All the scientist we interviewed came from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures. However, the passion and struggles described by the interviewees to achieve their dreams connects each Motivational Journey to the others in the series.

Today, when so many early career professionals face issues related to mental health and self-esteem, we hope that this series of interviews may help to them to find out how others have approached related struggles and to motivate them in to overcome difficulties.

We successfully recorded 8 interviews during the EPSC-DPS Joint Meeting 2019 in Geneva. Our first interview was launched in October 2019 and since then we released one interview per month up to

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