

This isn't working, so let's keep doing it

One of the biggest mistakes a walleye fisherman can make is so common it is almost funny. If the fish aren't biting typically you just move to another spot and try it for a while. You can see them on your fish finder. At least you think those are fish that you are seeing. Usually you will blame it on the weather. A cold front moved in, or the thunder and lightning yesterday spooked them. They have to start feeding sometime.

Most of the fishermen I know follow the principal "this isn't working, so let's keep doing it". That tackle box I mentioned before with the \$300.00 worth of tackle in it? It's mostly for show, and counterbalance of course.

Let's face it. If you like to troll, you probably don't spend a lot of time anchored and jigging. If you are a jig fisherman, trolling isn't even in your vocabulary. So all you do is move to one of your other favorite spots and do the same old thing with the same old presentation.

There are as many different ways to catch a walleye as there are fishermen. On a day when your normal offering isn't working try something new. Maybe the fish are hitting on a different color spinner, or perhaps they are feeding in shallower water, which requires casting a spoon or lure of some kind into shore and reeling it back slowly.

Sometimes it is the speed you are trolling at or the length of time you let your jig rest on the bottom. It isn't an exact science but it can be a process of trial and error.

One time I was out fishing with my friend Charlie on his pontoon boat. Now, Charlie by his own admission is not the world's greatest fisherman. He has a lot of fun trying but isn't the most successful in spite of his efforts. Anyway, Charlie, my wife Anna, and I were enjoying the afternoon fishing.

I was determined to show Charlie that I could catch a walleye, even in his lake where the walleye's can be hard to find. I tried everything I could think of to vary my presentation. Switching colors didn't work. Putting on more weight didn't work. I tried worms, minnows, leeches, Rapala's. Nothing could produce a bite.

Charlie didn't say anything but I was sensing that he had begun to doubt my prowess as a walleye fisherman. Hard to imagine but I just had that feeling.

After I had gone thru my tackle box twice, giving those fish all of my best moves, Charlie said "I think I'll try a minnow and a worm on the same hook".

I would never laugh at Charlie. Well, if I did laugh at him it was because he is a funny guy. But when he said he was going to put a minnow and a worm on the same hook I almost choked on my beer.

I said with all of the encouragement I could muster, “you never know what will work until you try it”.

His line wasn't in the water thirty seconds and he had a three pound walleye on the other end of it. The next three fish I caught were on a worm and a minnow on the same hook.

If you take one thing with you in reading this, remember “this isn't working, so let's keep doing it”, and then remember Charlie.