



EHS, Alison Walker photos

Clockwise from top left: This 1912 postcard shows the Georgetown Town Hall, which also housed the public library. It was destroyed by fire in 1968, and the property - at Guelph and Cross streets - is now home to a used car dealership. This historic photo series is courtesy of Heritage Halton Hills. Learn more about the group at haltonhills.ca/heritage.



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OPINION

RESOLUTIONS ARE DIFFICULT TO KEEP

INERTIA THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE, WRITES NADIA ALAM



NADIA ALAM Column

Each new year is a fresh start. It's why so many people set resolutions to eat better, sleep more, exercise harder and meditate to control their stress.

All of them are excellent intentions. In fact, all of them are foundational to good health.

But making that change and turning those intentions into reality is difficult.

Changing anything is difficult. You first have to overcome inertia. Think back to high school physics: Inertia is the force that keeps a body going in the same direction or keeps a body at rest - unless a force stronger than inertia is applied.

When applied to people, inertia can become a problem. After all, if you keep doing what you've always done, you'll get what you've always gotten.

I look at what I've always done and, I have to admit, change is needed.

Last week, inspiration walked into my family medicine office. It was Friday. My clinic was packed. My patient came in for a six-month check of his blood pressure.

Graham* looked nervous, excited. As I checked

him over, it was clear that the changes he had made in his life had made a profound difference. He had turned around his diet, minimized his alcohol intake, managed his stress.

And the biggest hurdle was exercise. He started walking. Then he saw men and women older than him running by.

He watched them and wondered: "How do they do that?" Then one day, something changed and he asked himself: "Can I do that?"

So he pushed himself. He started by moving his feet faster. Running after the other men and women. Metre by metre. Beyond his previous limits.

Graham now runs five kilometres a day.

I looked at the numbers on the blood pressure monitor. "I think it's time we drop one of your blood pressure pills. You clearly don't need them."

The significance of this hit us both at the same time. We both became tearful.

Sure, it took years to get to this place. Sure, it was painful at first. Sure, he had moments of doubt. But the numbers speak for

themselves.

He did it. He changed his own reality, the course of his health, the course of his future.

As the new year dawns, he is one of the many examples I will turn to as I change my life and as I counsel others to change theirs.

*Patient's name used with permission.

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