

The Promise of Possibility

Category: A Fresh Start

written by Ronna L. Edelstein | January 2, 2019

I excel at making excuses, especially when those excuses have to do with exercise. "I'm too tired" leads the list of why I am not outside walking or at the gym on the treadmill; "I'll do it later" comes in a close second. Ironically, I consciously deprive myself of exercise, even when I know that I feel more energized when I do engage in some kind of physical fitness.

From mid-April, when I ended the spring semester as a university teacher, until late August, when I began teaching again, I walked every morning for an hour. I either listened to the Broadway music emanating from my iPod or conversed with my colleague from work when she chose to join me. I came home feeling good—alive and eager to start the day.

Then, I returned to work—and to excuse making. As September gave way to October, Mother Nature provided me with wonderful excuses to stay home—rain, cold temperatures, strong winds and even snow and the possibility of icy sidewalks. I quickly returned to my couch potato life.

Now, with the start of the New Year, I—like so many other people—hereby resolve to begin walking again. I need to do this because I recognize how my mental well-being improves when I feel physically fit. Walking diminishes my depression, keeps me away from my M&M stash and allows me to sleep better. Walking gives me a sunnier view of myself and my world, even on the gloomiest of days. It does not make my jaw pain from five unsuccessful surgeries go away, but it does give me the ability to better handle that pain.

The past does not disappear just because a new year has begun. However, entering 2019 is like starting the first day of school when I taught middle school students. The blackboards were clean, the desks were in rows, the bulletin boards were untouched by staples or thumbtacks and the books were unmarked by pencils or pens. The classroom had an aura of possibility—just like the possibilities that come with a new year. I have the power to transform possibility into reality—simply by putting on my tennis shoes and rejoining the dog walkers and other exercisers who know that a bit of leg stretching and a lot of fresh air can do the soul and body a world of good.

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