



Monthly Newsletter | January/February 2024



***Resolving to do 1% better  
in 2024***



People resist making resolutions. Probably comes from a repeated cycle of resolving to: “run a marathon, eat better or read all of the books on my bookshelf” and then not doing it. The “not doing it” happens more or less quickly and can involve some stern talks with ourselves.

However, the idea of doing something 1% better each day is catchy and more importantly, it feels doable. This is the idea put forward in Atomic Habits, by James Clear. He suggests that it is easy to overestimate the significance of a big moment and an abrupt change and underestimate the small improvements that can occur on a daily basis. These small changes add up and create a 37% overall change by the end of the year.

The book includes a lot of other tips about building better habits. These include determining the kind of person that you want to be, rather than the thing that you want to accomplish. Do you want to be a walker? – then read about health benefits of walking, buy some good shoes and join a group who walks together.

Finally, the idea of habit stacking is really useful. Good habits are formed by a Cue, a Craving, a Response and a Reward. If you desire to get to the gym then stack this behaviour onto a cue that you already do. Make it attractive by allowing yourself to listen to your favourite podcast only when you are at the gym. Make the habit easy by removing any barriers to the task and decreasing expectations – “I will walk for 5 minutes rather than 40 minutes.” And document the steady work involved by using reinforcements like a chart on the wall or a habit tracker app. This will reinforce parts of your identity that you can celebrate.

- For more ideas please see Atomic Habits by James Clear.
- If you would like support as you engage in healthier habits, or address the things that are keeping you stuck, please call the Portage Medical Family Health Team to be connected to one of our mental health staff. 905-354-9393, ext. 1
- If you would like to find an identity as a walker, please join us bi-weekly Wednesdays at the Gale Centre.

**Follow us on social media for updates!**





## Portage Medical Family Health Team

### **Our Vision**

Improve the mental and physical health of all members in our community.

### **Our Mission**

Provide patient-centered care, including advocacy, health promotion, disease prevention and best practices in chronic disease management to encourage people to be healthy, community participants.

### **Our Values**

The core values of the organization are: **collaboration, continuous learning, equitable access to care, integrity and transparency.**

## **Mental Health Matters!**

**We are committed to promoting mental health education, wellness and services.**

**Please call if you are struggling and would like to book with a counsellor.**

**905-354-9393 ext. 1**

*If you have any questions or concerns about Portage Medical Family Health Team, email [info@portagemedicalfht.ca](mailto:info@portagemedicalfht.ca)*

## **Public Health Agency of Canada and the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health unveil 9-8-8, country-wide suicide prevention helpline**

Canada has launched a new three-digit phone number, 988, for suicide prevention after three years of preparation.

The 988 helpline is a dedicated resource for individuals contemplating suicide or concerned about someone who may be suicidal. It provides quick access to suicide prevention support 24/7. The initiative is led and coordinated by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and is financially supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) with a funding of \$158.4 million.

The 988 helpline builds upon the foundation of the Talk Suicide Canada helpline (1-833-456-4566), offering an easier-to-remember three-digit number for assistance. Canada sees approximately 12 suicides daily, totaling nearly 4,400 suicides each year, making it the second most common cause of death among young people. Certain populations, including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities, are more susceptible to suicide.

988 will have 1,000 trained responders from 39 partner agencies across all provinces and territories, ensuring continuous availability. The helpline offers assistance in English and French, as well as Cree, Ojibwe (Anishinaabemowin), and Inuktitut through the Hope for Wellness Helpline. Interpretation services are available for other languages, and ASL interpretation is provided for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Calls will be directed to agencies within the caller's region based on their cellphone area code, promoting local support. If no local responders are available, calls will be routed to a central hub. In most cases, police or emergency services will not be involved. Exceptions are made in cases of imminent risk, where 988 responders will work with the caller before involving emergency services.

People with non-suicidal mental health concerns are encouraged to contact 211 or visit [211.ca](http://211.ca), a Canada-wide resource for non-clinical health and social services.

**Need to chat? Call 905.354.9393 or email [info@portagemedicalfht.ca](mailto:info@portagemedicalfht.ca)**



# BeneFITs Walking Group

**Take that first step to engage in regular exercise  
with our Portage Medical Family Health Team**

Meet others in your community and gain some support for coping with everyday life.  
Our goal is to have a positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of everyone.  
All ages and fitness levels are welcome!

## MEETING LOCATION

### Gale Centre

5152 Thorold Stone Road, Niagara Falls  
Rink 1, Second Floor

## MEETING DATES AND TIMES

**Group meets twice a month on Wednesdays at 1 pm**

**To register for our BeneFITs Walking Group,  
Call 905.354.9393, ext. 1**



**4256 Portage Road,  
Suite 303, Niagara Falls**



*Portage Medical*  
Family Health Team

**For more information  
visit [portagemedicalfht.ca](http://portagemedicalfht.ca)**