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### New Beginnings

Whether starting a new paper, a new class or a whole new direction in life, starting can be the hardest part. Stephen King wrote in his novel *On Writing*, "The scariest moment is always just before you start." This quote particularly resonated with me as I am starting my own new chapter - in writing this essay as well as with life in general. King is correct that starting is the hardest part, but the thought applies to more than just writing.

Imagine sitting in a class and being told that in under a week the class will be writing an essay from scratch in under an hour and a half. This is the sort of terrifying beginning to which King is referring, seeing a body of work in need of creation, as of yet unplanned and unwritten, looming down the road. From my first day of eighth grade, writing essays has been a nerve wracking process for me. I was starting at a new school - my first day in public school, in fact - when my teacher proudly stated that in her class students would "Only use Three Paragraph Format." I had never heard of Three Paragraph Format before in my life, yet all these students around me were nodding their heads in agreement and seemed utterly unphased. Despite a lot of research, preparation and outlining, I actually threw up in fear about ten minutes before class. I was terrified. And at 9:30 am on a Tuesday I started writing. However, by 9:35 I had forgotten my fears and was just writing freely. When the class ended and with all the papers turned in all that nervous fear had evaporated completely, leaving me wondering what had terrified me to the point of nausea at the start of class. Despite the fact that I did get an A on that first assignment, every writing assignment in that class always started with a trip to visit the toilet beforehand to

deal with the unending butterflies doing cartwheels in my stomach. The process of starting becomes the hardest part - the rock you must push up and over the hill that simply does not want to start rolling.

Newton's First Law of Motion, "An object that is at rest will stay at rest unless a force acts upon it," was the first parallel to come to mind when reading Mr. King's quote. It is easier to stay at rest than to face that you need a force to get you started. When you are starting something new, whether an essay for a class or a new job, you need some kind of force to push you into starting. It is easier to not write than it is to write. It is easier to not start than it is to start. This thought can be applied to life outside of writing just as easily as it can be to writing itself. "The scariest moment is always just before you start" - while the quote may come from *On Writing* it is also a reflection on life in general. I can particularly relate to this topic as I have just made a huge new beginning for myself, and starting was absolutely the scariest part. Two months ago I was working in a job in which I felt stuck - not only could I no longer advance in the company I was with, but I also had an in-box full of tasks that were my least favorite parts of the job. I knew I needed a change, but in order for a change to happen, I needed to start. This is a familiar feeling to many people - that idea that once one has a job they must stick with it because the idea of starting something new is terrifying. The inertia grabs ahold and the idea of what it will take to knock life back into motion once again is terrifying.

Once objects are in motion they like to stay in motion, according to Newton. So on a Monday at 8am in dim January light, I stood ready and waiting to start writing my own "essay," my own future. The opening paragraph of my new story begins waiting for a bus to take me to Point Park for the first day of college classes I have taken in over eleven years. Much like the start of my essay in 8th grade I felt those butterflies stirring. Deep in my abdomen the terror was beginning - I could just skip this bus and not get started. I needed to face down that challenge

so I could start my momentum - I needed to overcome the fear of being pushed into motion.

Whether in writing or in real life, everyone needs that same initial force to get them moving into action - because while it may be terrifying to feel the impact of that force, it is the only thing that stops the inertia holding us in place. The bus comes and we get on it. The cursor blinks and we start typing. The impact has occurred, we have started motion, and then the fear fades away.

This is the same for life as it is for writing. By the time the cursor hits the third page a writer is typing away with less fear, with less hesitation and with more confidence. As soon as I stood on the bus to start at Point Park for my first day, the fear faded away and the bouncing butterflies in my stomach flew off to inhabit a new person. As soon as the first word is typed or the first step taken, the inertia disappears and momentum takes over. This is what Mr. King was referring to - the fact that once the writing has begun your scariest moment will be over.

Mr. King's quote is one which readers will all understand, whether young or old. All writers have faced the fear of a new project staring them down, just as all people have faced the fear of a challenge or a change. However, writing must begin, just as all new things must begin - with taking a moment to get over the fear of leaving our inertia, and finding our way into momentum. Once begun, the words take over and the project completed before the writer is even aware it is ready to be done.

Works Cited

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