

Over the last few years, cycling has become a big part of my life and has helped me transform my life style. My passion for cycling began in the summer of 2008. I worked at Canada's Wonderland and commuted from Etobicoke to Vaughan via TTC and YRT. Having to transfer from two different transit systems was not only expensive, but also a nuisance. The schedules for connecting transit systems were sometimes unreliable and the probability of missing the bus was very high.

At the sight of this troublesome situation, I wondered if it would be crazy to strap on a helmet and do some riding. I decided it would be worthwhile to seek the opinion of my coworkers. However, almost everyone whom I had discussed this idea with thought that I had a wild imagination. At risk of being considered crazy, I dismissed the idea and went about my normal commuting practices. However, after missing a connecting bus and getting to work late, I decided that I had to give this crazy idea a shot.

The following day, I pumped up the tires, strapped on the helmet and left my house two hours from the time I was expected to start work. The plan was to take Steeles Ave. west and then head north onto Jane Street. After approximately 55 minutes of riding, I arrived at Canada's Wonderland; well ahead of my check in time. Following that ride, I began to ride to work for shifts that contradicted with the bus schedules and by the end of the summer, I was riding to work almost every single day.

However, the highlight of my summer was when I decided that I would ride my bike to my university in Hamilton, Ontario. Once again, my family members and friends pointed towards my wild imagination. However this time around, I liked the idea of being unorthodox because the last crazy thing I did, worked very well for me. So after the last day of my work at Canada's Wonderland I rode my bike to on Lakeshore Boulevard, through Toronto, Mississauga, Oakville, Burlington and finally into McMaster University Campus in Hamilton, Ontario. Sitting on the steps of Hamilton Hall within McMaster University I reflected on the summer that I had, and was amazed not at the so called crazy ideas I had chosen to follow, rather at the fact that I found something that I was passionate about.

To this day I thank myself for taking the challenge to ride my bike to Canada's Wonderland, as it sparked something that has stuck with me to this day and I still commute to work on a bicycle during the summer months. Through this journey I have taken part in many cycling events, met great people, seen amazing views and have overcome many "crazy" challenges.

- Bilal Sherazi