

A close-up photograph of a person wearing a blue and white striped shirt, sitting at a desk. They are holding a blue marker and writing on a newspaper. The newspaper is spread out on the desk, and a black mug is visible in the foreground. The background is slightly blurred, showing a wooden desk and some papers.

CANADIAN SCHOOL Counsellor[®] MAGAZINE

Finding the Best Fit

Helping students with Learning Disabilities
Transition into the Right Career Path

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à faire la transition vers le bon cheminement de carrière



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Photo courtesy of Free The Children

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I am ready for a vacation! My job is not the reason; I actually enjoy the work I do. It's winter. I am sick of the short days and cold weather. As far as I am concerned, winter and snow are great until December 26th, after that it just starts to depress me. By February, I need to recharge my battery with some warm weather and sunshine, preferably on a beach somewhere.

As a student, February and March were the worst months for me; my level of motivation was almost non-existent. Winter break was over, and spring break followed by the hope of summer seemed too far away to be of any real comfort. I wouldn't be surprised if many people begin to feel the onset of emotional exhaustion at this time of year. As counsellors, you need to be aware of these feelings in yourself. You are often so busy taking care of others that you forget to take care of the most important person – you. If burnout is beginning to creep up on you, read this issue's Last Period for some helpful tips on how to recharge your battery to keep you going throughout the rest of the school year.

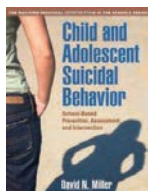
Two specialists, Dr. Narain and Dr. Wellborn, were kind enough to share their expertise and knowledge in their respected fields of anger management and child motivation with us. I also would like to extend a special thank you to the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario and the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta – Calgary Chapter for their contribution and assistance with the second article of our three part series on learning disabilities. This issue discusses how counsellors can assist their students with learning disabilities in making career choices that provide the "best fit" with their abilities.

In researching organizations for our Great Idea feature, I discovered a great program in Quebec, Partners for Life, which provides educational workshops to students as a means to prevent suicide. The topic of suicide is further discussed in this month's Mental Health feature which addresses prevention techniques and in Counsellor's Corner where a fellow counsellor shares their knowledge on how to create a safety plan with students.

Instead of stressing over when winter is going to end, students can look forward to warmer weather by preparing for summer employment or look to Spencer West as means of inspiration.

Keep warm and enjoy the read!

» On the Bookshelf



CHILD AND ADOLESCENT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR: SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION, ASSESSMENT, AND INTERVENTION

by David N. Miller PhD (Author), with forward by Alan L. Berman PhD | The Guildford Press, December 2010

Providing current knowledge on adolescent suicide prevention for schools, the author recommends best practices for developing school wide prevention programs, conducting risk assessment and interventions for students at risk. Includes reproducible handouts for teachers, students and parents.

170 pages | ISBN: 978-1606239964

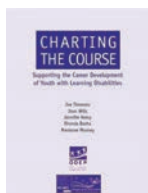


THE ANGER WORKBOOK FOR TEENS: ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU DEAL WITH ANGER AND FRUSTRATION

by Raychelle Cassada Lohmann (Author), with Foreword by Julia V. Taylor | Instant Help; Workbook edition November 2009

This workbook contains several exercises designed to provide adolescents with insight into the factors that trigger their anger and examine how they react. Teens will learn how to identify the physical symptoms they experience when enraged, how to calm those feelings and respond to others in a more sensitive manner without ever losing their cool.

144 pages | ISBN: 978-1572246997



CHARTING THE COURSE: SUPPORTING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

by Joe Timmons, Joan Wills, Jennifer Kemp, Rhonda Basha, Marianne Mooney | Developed by the National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD/Youth), 2010

Created for youth service professionals to assist teens with learning disabilities develop individual strategies that will enable them to succeed in the workplace. This guide includes numerous quick reference charts, tables, and tools for counsellors. Strategies and approaches may be of practical use for other youth.

122 pages | complimentary online download: http://www.ncwd-youth.info/sites/default/files/ld-guide_2.pdf

Walmart Scholarship Programs

Walmart offers three scholarship programs for Canadian students graduating from high school and heading to a college or university. Scholarship recipients must be full time students registering with an accredited Canadian college, CEGEP or university in the Fall 2013 term and entering their first year of post-secondary studies. The scholarship money will be paid directly to the college or university; twice a year over 4 years @ \$500.00 per payment.

➤ **Community Scholarships**

The Walmart Canada Community Scholarship Program offers educational grants to graduating high school students who aspire to continue their education at the college or university level. A total of six awards will be given away, two per region: Eastern Canada (Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, P.E.I., and Quebec), Ontario and Western Canada (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Nunavut).

The Walmart Canada Community Scholarship is an academic award. It applies to tuition and academic fees first and foremost. If these

expenses are covered and funds remain from our scholarship, these funds can be applied to books and on-campus room and board. The intent of the Walmart Canada Community Scholarship Program is to pay expenses as designated and outlined by the college.

➤ **Associate Scholarships**

The Walmart Canada Associate Scholarship Program offers educational grants in the form of scholarships to graduating high school students who work for Walmart or who are dependents of Walmart associates who aspire to continue their education at the college or university level.

The Walmart Canada Associate Scholarship is an academic award. It applies to tuition and academic fees first and foremost. If these expenses are covered and funds remain from our scholarship, these funds can be applied to books and on-campus room and board. The intent of the Walmart Canada Associate Scholarship Program is to pay expenses as designated and outlined by the college.

➤ **Lou Puim Memorial Scholarship**

In his 30-year career with Woolco and Walmart Canada, Lou Puim made his way from stock rooms, to sales floors, to merchandising,

operations, and ultimately to the position of vice president of marketing. At each stage, he strived to learn more, to seek out new experiences and to create a career – even pursuing a university marketing degree shortly after joining the company straight out of high school. Lou lead the Walmart marketing team from 1994-2006.

The Lou Puim Memorial Scholarship was established in 2006 to assist students pursuing a post-secondary education in a marketing-related discipline and to extend Lou’s legacy in the industry.

An independent panel of judges assess all applications based on the following criteria:

- 20% High school transcripts (grade 10 onwards)
- 20% Financial need
- 20% Extracurricular, volunteer activities, community involvement and environmental stewardship
- 40% Essay

Applications must be submitted no later than May 31, 2013. For more information visit: <http://walmartcanada.ca/Pages/Scholarship%20Programs/190/193/193>

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Complex U.S. University admissions process require that Canadian students start earlier in planning and preparation for application

The U.S. University Admissions process is complex, time consuming and highly competitive. Canadian High School students intent on gaining admission to a U.S. University or College, and particularly those who wish a scholarship, (either academic or athletic), must start early and plan ahead.

The application process including standardized and supplementary tests, personal statement, additional essays, and reference letters can be very intimidating to a student.

With over 3900 Universities and Colleges to choose from and hundreds academic programs unique to US schools, narrowing down selection, can be daunting for a student and their family. Of course most people are familiar with the famous Ivy League and elite schools, but in reality these institutions

are largely celebrated for their graduate studies. In truth, there are many hundreds of excellent Colleges and Universities that are virtually unknown to Canadian students. The sheer magnitude of schools, make it very difficult to decide what can be the best options.

Some of the biggest differences include the expectations about when to start the process. In the U.S. students start to prepare for U.S. University/College admission in Grade 7; while in Canada, too often Canadian students wait until Grade 11 or 12 to start and then find themselves very short of time.

The U.S. College EXPO in Canada is the most targeted educational fair of its kind in Canada. It was created because we recognized a need in Canada, for a forum that allowed students and their families to come to engage in meaningful discussions with U.S. University and College Admissions Officers and Athletics Reps. It was created exclusively for American Universities and Colleges (you will not find any other international school present) and allow students to truly understand what school fits their academic/athletic needs.

The types of schools you can expect include: Ivy leagues, state public and private universities, (including several division I, II and III schools), liberal arts colleges, health and science universities, art, design and theatrical arts colleges, universities of architecture and engineering, and universities of pharmacy: and several faith-based universities.

The US College EXPO event was created to accomplish the goals of education, networking and selection. We succeeded in all areas.

In the morning on Friday April 19, 2013 – the event is a private closed door workshop, dedicated to orient High School Guidance Counsellors with the nuances of the U.S. Admissions process. You will receive hands-on training in the US admissions process from U.S. Admissions Officers. You will be trained to assist students with their reference letters, personal statements, and supplementary essays. You will network with U.S. school representatives and learn what they can offer your students and you will walk away with a tool kit of information and a guide that will make supporting US bound students an easier process for you.

To register to participate in this limited seating event – US College EXPO in Canada – April 19, 2013, Roy Thomson Hall, Toronto ON, 10am-2pm, contact info@uscollegeexpo.com.

CCPA 2013 Annual Conference

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association's annual conference is being held May 15th-17th at the Westin Nova Scotian Hotel in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

This year's Keynote Speakers and topics include:

- Michael Ungar – "Building Resilience Across Contexts and Cultures"
- Sylvia Giasson – "Depression was not my Career Plan"
- Martin Antony – "Transdiagnostic Treatments for Anxiety Disorders"

For more information on the conference, specials on flights and hotels, or to register please visit <http://www.ccpa-accp.ca/conference> or contact Alene Holmes at conference@ccpa-accp.ca.

The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national and bilingual association of professionally trained counsellors engaged in the helping professions, which is dedicated to the enhancement of the counselling profession in Canada. The association has provided leadership and has been involved in the promotion of counselling since 1965. It offers the opportunity for its members to be in contact with other counsellors, who are active in a variety of work settings, worldwide, in order to exchange ideas and best practices, provide mutual support and promote professional development.

TD Discovery Days in Health Sciences

For 15 years, The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame has been introducing students from Grades 10 through 12 to the joys and realities of a health-related career through their national TD Discovery Days in Health Sciences program. The ability to help young students across Canada experience a career path in health sciences and medicine – and get excited about it – is what prompted the TD Bank Group to partner with The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame and sponsor the Discovery Days program.

TD Discovery Days in Health Sciences are unique daylong events delivered at universities across the country. The Day is comprised of a dynamic keynote lecture, hands on workshops and a career panel discussion. Students gain a clear picture of what it would be like to be a health professional by interacting with researchers, clinicians and educators in their real-life work setting.

Discovery Days are currently offered at:

- **University of Waterloo**
Waterloo, ON
April 16, 2013
- **Western University and Fanshawe College**
North Campus Building, The University of Western Ontario, London, ON
May 3, 2013
- **Queen's University**
Atrium, Biosciences Complex, 116 Barrie Street, Kingston, ON
May 7, 2013
- **University of New Brunswick**
Saint John, NB
May 22, 2013
- **McMaster University – Hamilton Health Sciences**
Hamilton, ON
May 27, 2013
- **Memorial University of Newfoundland**
St. John's, NL
May 29, 2013

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Since The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame launched this innovative education program in 1997, more than 20,000 students and teachers from across Canada have benefited from these interactive learning days. To make them completely accessible, there is

no cost associated for the student or the schools participating. For more information on The Canadian Medical Hall of Fame and TD Discovery Days in Health Sciences visit www.cdnmedhall.org.



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Survey Shows Majority of Canadians (83%) feel Skilled Tradespeople are Important to their Everyday Lives

Skilled Tradespeople: An Everyday Resource Canadians Can't Manage Without

A survey was released in November 2012 by Skills/Compétences Canada, conducted by Harris/Decima, illustrating the importance and extent to which Canadians rely on the skilled trades for some of their everyday activities. From ensuring that they have running water, that their car runs, that they can turn on the lights, and that they have a leak-free roof over their head, there are hundreds of skilled trade professions in Canada that touch on numerous sectors of the economy.

Survey highlights:

Almost all Canadians (98%) surveyed admit they have used a skilled tradesperson at least once in the last few months:

- ▶ 91% have gone out to eat at a restaurant
- ▶ 72% say they have taken their vehicle in for maintenance or repair
- ▶ 69% have been to a hair salon, spa, or barber

The survey was conducted by Harris/Decima via teleVox, the company's telephone omnibus, from November 2nd to 4th, 2012. A total of 1,003 Canadians were surveyed. Results are considered accurate +/- 3.1%, 19 times out of 20. More information is available at www.skillscanada.com.

Mike Holmes, Canada's Most Trusted Contractor, and the Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, salute Canada's Best Trades talent as they begin their journey to WorldSkills Leipzig 2013

Skills/Compétences Canada, a not-for-profit organization that actively promotes careers in skilled trades and technologies, officially welcomed the 35 members of Team Canada who will compete at the 42nd WorldSkills Competition being held in Leipzig, Germany, from July 2nd-7th, 2013. Representing Canada's best in skilled trades and technology, the talented youth gathered in Ottawa on January 25th for a Champions Breakfast, marking the final leg of their journey to WorldSkills Leipzig 2013.

The Champions Breakfast was followed by a team orientation meeting for the Competitors as they undergo final training and mental preparation in the lead up to WorldSkills Leipzig 2013.

The Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development, was at the event and provided words of encouragement and support as WorldSkills Team Canada 2013 makes their final preparations to compete against the world's best skilled trade talent.

"On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to wish Team Canada all the best at the WorldSkills Competition in Germany," said Minister Finley. "You are the future of Canada's skilled workforce and we'll be cheering you on as you compete on the world stage."



Photo courtesy of Skills/Compétences Canada

From left to right: Donavon Elliott, President of SCC, Minister Diane Finley, Mike Holmes and Shaun Thorson, CEO of SCC, with WorldSkills Team Canada 2013 (in uniform) at the Skills Canada Champion's Breakfast, on January 25th, 2013 in Ottawa, ON. (CNW Group/SKILLS/COMPETENCES CANADA)

De gauche à droite: Donavon Elliott, président de SCC, Ministre Diane Finley, Mike Holmes et Shaun Thorson, chef de la direction de SCC, avec Équipe Canada WorldSkills 2013 (en uniforme) au déjeuner des champions de Compétences Canada, le 25 janvier 2013, à Ottawa, ON. (Groupe CNW/SKILLS/COMPETENCES CANADA)

Un sondage révèle que la plupart des Canadiens (83 %) estiment que les professionnels des métiers spécialisés jouent un rôle important dans leur quotidien

Professionnels des métiers spécialisés : une ressource indispensable dans la vie quotidienne au pays

En novembre 2012, Skills/Compétences Canada a diffusé les résultats d'un sondage, effectué par Harris/Decima, qui montrent dans quelle mesure les Canadiens comptent sur les métiers spécialisés pour certaines activités de leur vie quotidienne ainsi que l'importance qu'ils leur accordent. Qu'il s'agisse d'assurer une alimentation en eau potable ou en électricité ou de veiller au démarrage d'un véhicule ou à l'étanchéité d'un toit, il existe des centaines de métiers spécialisés, qui sont nécessaires à une multitude de secteurs de l'économie du Canada.

Voici quelques points saillants du sondage :

Pratiquement tous les répondants (98 %) ont indiqué avoir fait appel à une travailleuse ou à un travailleur spécialisé au moins une fois au cours des derniers mois :

- 91 % sont allés au restaurant
- 72 % ont mené leur véhicule chez un garagiste pour son entretien ou des réparations
- 69 % sont allés chez le coiffeur ou la coiffeuse, le barbier ou à un spa

Harris/Decima a réalisé le sondage par le truchement de téléVox, sondage téléphonique omnibus national de la société, auprès de 1003 répondants, du 2 au 4 novembre 2012. La marge d'erreur est +/- 3,1 %, 19 fois sur 20. De plus amples renseignements sont présentés à www.skillscanada.com.

Mike Holmes, l'entrepreneur le plus respecté au Canada, et Diane Finley, ministre de Ressources humaines et Développement des compétences, se joint à Skills/Compétences Canada pour saluer les meilleurs talents du Canada dans les métiers spécialisés, qui entreprennent le dernier volet des préparatifs en vue du Mondial des métiers 2013, à Leipzig

Skills/Compétences Canada, organisation sans but lucratif vouée à la promotion des carrières dans les métiers et les technologies, a procédé à la présentation officielle des 35 membres d'Équipe Canada, qui participeront au Mondial des métiers 2013, à Leipzig, en Allemagne, du 2 au 7 juillet 2013. Représentant les meilleurs talents du pays dans les métiers et les technologies, les jeunes



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A leading advocate for skilled trades and official spokesperson for Skills Canada, Mike Holmes, was also on hand to support the future members of Canada's skilled trade labour force. Holmes provided an address encouraging the competitors to do their "very best" on this last stretch of training before the "test of their lives" in Leipzig. The host of Holmes Makes it Right™ on HGTV and Canada's Most Trusted Contractor, said that there is nothing better than witnessing the success of these young individuals as they reach for excellence in their respective skill categories – a testament to the growing popularity of careers in skilled trades. "The look on a kid's face when I put that medal around their neck says everything."

WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 represents Canada's 12th participation at WorldSkills, an international competition which takes place every two years, bringing together the world's best and brightest skilled trades and technology students and apprentices. The 35 members of WorldSkills Team Canada 2013 will compete in 32 of the 45 skill categories against more than 1000 Competitors from 61 Member countries/regions. The four-day WorldSkills Competition is the biggest of its kind in the world.

More information on WorldSkills Leipzig 2013 can be found at WorldSkills Leipzig 2013.



hommes et les jeunes femmes, se sont réunis le 25 janvier, à Ottawa, à l'occasion du Petit-déjeuner des champions qui marquait le début du dernier volet de l'aventure qui les mènera au Mondial des métiers 2013, à Leipzig.

Après le déjeuner, les membres d'Équipe Canada ont participé à une séance d'orientation; ils entamaient ainsi la dernière partie de leur entraînement et préparation mentale avant leur départ pour Leipzig.

Diane Finley, ministre de Ressources humaines et Développement des compétences, a assisté à cet événement. Outre des mots d'encouragement à l'endroit d'Équipe Canada WorldSkills 2013, elle a réitéré son appui aux concurrents et concurrentes qui se mesureront aux meilleurs jeunes talents du monde entier dans de multiples métiers spécialisés.

« Au nom du gouvernement du Canada, j'aimerais souhaiter bonne chance aux membres d'Équipe Canada à l'occasion du Mondial des métiers qui aura lieu en Allemagne, a déclaré la ministre Finley. Vous représentez l'avenir de la main-d'œuvre qualifiée au Canada, et tout le pays sera derrière vous pendant la compétition. »

Représentant de premier ordre des métiers spécialisés et porte-parole officiel de Skills/Compétences Canada, Mike Holmes était lui aussi présent pour appuyer les futurs travailleurs et travailleuses spécialisés du pays. Dans son allocution, il a encouragé les concurrents et les concurrentes à fournir « leurs meilleurs efforts » durant le dernier volet de leur entraînement avant « l'épreuve de leur vie », à Leipzig. L'animateur de l'émission Holmes Make it Right™, au réseau HGTV, et l'entrepreneur le plus respecté au Canada a souligné que rien n'égalait le bonheur d'être témoin du succès de ces jeunes gens et de leur cheminement vers l'excellence dans leur domaine de compétence respectif, et que leur parcours montre la popularité grandissante des carrières dans les métiers spécialisés. « L'expression d'un jeune quand je place une médaille autour de son cou est unique. »

Le Mondial des métiers 2013, à Leipzig, marque la douzième présence du Canada à cette rencontre internationale, qui a lieu tous les deux ans et qui réunit les meilleurs étudiants et apprentis du monde dans les métiers et les technologies. Les 35 membres d'Équipe Canada WorldSkills 2013, qui sont inscrits à 32 des 45 domaines de compétition, se mesureront à plus de 1000 jeunes de 61 pays et régions membres de WorldSkills. S'étendant sur quatre jours, le Mondial des métiers est la plus grande compétition du genre au monde.

Pour obtenir d'autres renseignements sur le Mondial des métiers 2013, à Leipzig, veuillez consulter le WorldSkills Leipzig 2013.

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Searching for Work:

Tips for Securing a Summer Job



Students looking to gain some experience, save towards university expenses or just put some extra cash in their pockets this summer should start polishing their resumes and checking the want ads now. According to Statistics Canada, 2012 summer employment rates were down for students of all age groups (15 to 24 years) and were among the lowest on record at 47.9% last year. This year government funding is in place for 36,000 new summer jobs for students; however, most of these positions will benefit university students. In their search for summer employment, high school students, especially the younger students (15 to 16 year olds), have found it harder to find a seasonal position than college or university students. The largest hurdle that young students face is experience, but they need a job to get that experience. The next obstacles are not having an effective resume and not knowing where to look. Here are some helpful reminders for students looking for summer employment.

1. Finding or Creating an Opportunity ▶ Start early – this is the perfect time for students to get started. Brainstorm with students on where they would like to work. It helps if they enjoy the environment or type of work for which they are applying. However, the economic climate is not robust, so if students have parents, family or friends willing to offer them a position, they should seriously consider accepting it. It is a great way for them to gain experience especially if they don't have any. They can also ask community members whom they know or previous employers about available positions. Many opportunities can be found online, and student job search engines can be useful. The federal, provincial, and municipal governments often have student work experience programs available (e.g., www.jobbank.gc.ca). Golf courses, local offices, museums/cultural institutions, and restaurants are also great places to ask if they are hiring for the summer. Keeping listings for summer job opportunities in your office will also be helpful for students.

2. Secure References and a Letter of Recommendation ▶ Employers usually request three references. They should not be family members, and teens should ask their references for permission. If students are at a loss for references, recommend that they ask a teacher, coach, minister, doctor, or past employer that they know. References should know them well and be willing to vouch for their credibility. They may also ask one of their references if they are willing to write a letter of recommendation highlighting their positive attitude, work ethic, and character.

3. Preparing a Resume ▶ Students should prepare a resume which accurately portrays their skills and experience yet immediately grabs an employer's attention. By doing a skills assessment with students, you can help them determine what skills they have based on their hobbies, strengths in school, sports, or volunteer experience. Remind students to keep their resumes current and to develop a good cover letter. Cover letters should be customized to each employer to inform them what the applicant can do for the company, not just repeat the contents of their resume. Advise teens to ask a parent or other adult to read over

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their resume, cover letter, and list of references to find any overlooked mistakes or typos. Prospective employers are attracted to well-written and presented documents – it implies positive characteristics about the applicant – and may be a deciding factor on which pile the application falls.

4. Planning a Visit and Looking the Part ▶ Students should preplan visits to possible employers. They should be conscious to avoid peak business times (e.g., Saturdays are a bad day to visit any retail establishment). It helps to practice a short personal introduction summarizing their strengths either through role playing or by themselves in front of the mirror or in the car. Teens also need to remember to be polite with all employees that they meet and to be upfront with the employer about their availability (i.e. summer employment, no weekends). It is also important that they dress appropriately for the position they are looking to secure. If it is in an office, wear business attire. If the job is more casual and they are planning to wear jeans ensure they fit well, are clean, and not torn. Good grooming is essential, and wild hair styles, wearing too many piercings, or too much makeup should be avoided.

5. Making an Impression ▶ Students should check back with promising employers or follow up their visit with a phone call or email.

Finding a job, especially a first job, is no easy task. Students having difficulty may want to consider volunteering to beef up their resumes. Volunteer work can provide skills, a new network of possible job opportunities, additional references, and shows potential employers a student's level of commitment. 🌟CSC



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Suicide Intervention: Preventing the Preventable

No one wants to talk about suicide, especially when it comes to our children – be they our flesh and blood, friends, or students. But talk we must. Suicide is the second highest cause of death for youth aged 10 to 24 according to the Canadian Mental Health Association. They estimate that an average of 294 children and teens die each year from suicide, and that suicide attempts are twenty times more common than completed suicides. What makes this number, and this topic, all the more alarming is that suicide is preventable.

RISK FACTORS

Characteristics associated with increased suicide risk:

- mental illness – including depression and conduct disorders
- family stress/dysfunction
- access to methods or means of suicide e.g., presence of a firearm in the home
- situational crisis (abuse, death of loved one, etc.)
- previous suicide attempts
- substance abuse
- family history of suicide or exposure to other suicides
- feelings of hopelessness or desperation
- physical illness
- impulsive or aggressive tendencies
- social loss or hostile school environment
- relationship loss
- isolation or lack of social support

Suicide is preventable because it is a process, not just an event. When someone is thinking about suicide, they often give warning signs or alter their behaviour. If parents, peers, and teachers are able to notice these changes, they can intervene.

The reasons that lead teens to contemplate suicide can be complex. Adolescents are just developing their coping mechanisms and any event – a routine event such as breaking up with a boy/girl friend or an overwhelming event such as sexual abuse or bullying – can lead them to begin suicidal ideation. It is not the event itself, but their feelings about it that lead them down this road. Combine these feelings with any of the risk factors and you could have an explosive situation. Teens feel helpless and hopeless, and they lack the life experience to realize that things really can, and ultimately will, get better. They want their pain and suffering to end; they don't necessarily want to die, but they see death as the only way out.

School plays a major part in the everyday life of adolescents, and therefore, a suicide prevention program in the school just makes sense. Programs differ but are generally of four types – those with content promoting suicide awareness in the general school population, those focusing on behavioural change and coping strategies in regards to suicide prevention directed at the general school population, programs aiming to reduce the risk of suicide in students who had been in contact with a suicide victim, and programs that focus on life-skill training and social support for at risk students.

If your school does not have a prevention program, there are still several things you can do. The best prevention technique is education. Counsellors should take the time to learn the signs of depression

and be able to identify the risk factors and warning signs of suicide. Suicide prevention training workshops are available and give counsellors/teachers vital information and skills. Basic topics should include identifying students at risk, responding effectively, causes of suicide, facts and misconceptions, who/how to refer students for help, how to assess the severity of risk, crisis management procedures, coping skills to help suicidal students, monitoring students in school, and how to notify and work with parents.

Schools can also help by creating a safe and positive learning environment. By allowing students easy access to counselling and providing time for students to talk, we open the door to discuss issues such as suicide and depression.

Mental health screening programs also can assist students in identifying underlying issues that can contribute to feelings of helplessness. Anti-bullying policies, peer mentoring, and self esteem building lessons also can help teens reach out to those around them, and feel better about themselves.

It is natural to be apprehensive about beginning a discussion about suicide with a student; however, breaching this topic can become the first step towards getting the help they need. Talking about suicide will not increase the person's risk.

Once you identify a student as suicidal, how do you keep them safe? Continue to talk to them calmly, asking them to talk to you about their thoughts. Admit your fear and concern but do not react to or judge their feelings or them. Never agree to keep their thoughts about suicide a secret. If they have a means of suicide, ask them to turn it over to you and develop a Safety Plan with them. Prepared with the student, safety



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plans outline coping strategies and supports available to them when suicidal urges arise. These proactive strategies provide opportunities to rehearse problem solving and coping strategies. Never agree to keep their thoughts about suicide a secret. Keep them under constant supervision, and do not under any circumstances let them leave the school premises alone. Discuss with them what the next few steps will be and what outside help will be involved.

A vital part of suicide prevention is parent notification. Once the parent has been notified, responsibility usually falls upon them to seek assistance. However, you should be familiar with your school's protocols when dealing with students who disclose thoughts of suicide as you may also be required to contact other services (e.g., administrator or crisis response service).


Parents not only need to be informed but involved, and they may also need support and direction. Familiarizing yourself ahead of time with the local resources available for students in crisis will assist you in making referrals. Always stay with a student until their parents assume responsibility. While parents may take over at this point, it is vital that you show you care for your student by continuing to make yourself available to them.

The tools for suicide prevention are far from perfect, but when implemented we can make a difference. In a perfect world we could intervene and prevent every child from committing suicide, and while we may not be able to do this, it is definitely worth trying.

For more information on how to develop a safety plan with your student please read this issue's *Counsellor's Corner*. 

WARNING SIGNS: Observable behaviours that may signal suicidal ideation

- suicide threats – direct or indirect statements
- suicide notes and plans
- prior suicidal behaviour
- making final arrangements – giving away possessions, writing a will
- preoccupation with death – write poems/songs about death
- change in behaviour, appearance, thoughts and/or feelings e.g., risk-taking behaviours
- withdrawal from family and friends
- loss of interest in school and/or activities they enjoy



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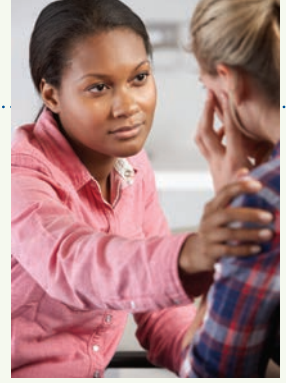
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Safety Planning with Youth

When working with at-risk, self-harming, or suicidal youth, we often feel a sense of anxiety when it comes time for them to leave our office. I have often heard counsellors ask the question "But now what? How can I know they will be safe?" It is important to note that if a youth is in immediate danger of harming themselves, we must contact emergency services and have them brought to a hospital for assessment. In most cases though, a youth is safe and stable enough to leave our office, yet we still yearn for a guarantee of their safety when we are not available. Each school district has a clear protocol regarding when to involve parents and which additional supports (e.g., mental health services) we should refer to. However, we cannot get around the fact that neither we, nor parents, nor any other support, will not be with them at all times. No one can be. This is why we need to help youth begin to find ways to help themselves. For youth who have contemplated suicide, this means creating a safety plan that provides them with a practical, realistic and easy to follow set of tools that they can use if they are distressed or begin to have thoughts of hurting themselves. When I form a safety plan with a youth, I have them (on a small piece of paper that they can take with them) brainstorm answers to the following questions:

- What are 3 things I can do to feel better (e.g., go for a walk, have a bath, eat a favorite meal)?
- Who are 2 or 3 friends that I can talk to right now (either to share how I'm feeling, or even just to distract me)?
- Who is a trusted adult that I can go to for help (e.g., counsellor, teacher, social worker, parent)?
- Where can I go where I know I won't hurt myself (e.g., counsellor's office, a friend's house, the living room where others can see me)?
- What are the crisis numbers/resources that I can contact if none of the other things are working?

Remember that this safety plan is for the youth. This is a way for them to begin to take ownership of their own safety. It must contain ideas that they will find helpful, not what we think would be helpful. When a youth has contemplated suicide, often they have gotten to that point because they do not have any faith that their situation will get better. It can be very empowering for a youth to realize that they do in fact have some tools to help themselves out of a difficult situation. And in my experience, it is also a valuable tool to begin fostering hope and a sense of control in their lives. **✦ CSC**

Laura Hamilton, M.Ed., works as a mental health counsellor in the Vancouver area. She has a background in Social Work, School Psychology and Mental Health. Her professional interests include child and adolescent mental health; the impact of complex trauma on later functioning; and building resiliency in at-risk youth.

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Partners for Life + Solidaires pour la vie



This year's animators

Photos courtesy of Partners for Life

Quebec has one of the highest rates of suicide in the world, and it is also the leading cause of death among young adults in this province. Sixteen years ago, five adolescents in the Eastern Townships committed suicide in a five month period; it was this terrible tragedy that led to the creation of *Partners for Life* in 1998.

The link between mental illness and suicide is well established. Depression is not only one of the leading causes of suicide, in Quebec, it is also the leading cause of students dropping out of school. In adolescence depression often goes undiagnosed and therefore teens do not receive necessary treatment. *Partners for Life* is a wide spanning initiative organized by the Mental Illness Foundation to prevent depression through education and early detection. Offered in both French and English, the complimentary program is offered to high schools province wide, as well as to select schools in Ottawa. Since its inception the program has succeeded in changing attitudes around mental illness and has mobilized students to seek assistance for their depression.

Le Québec affiche un des plus forts taux de suicide au monde qui est également la cause principale de décès chez les jeunes adultes dans cette province. Il y a 16 ans, cinq adolescents des Cantons de l'Est se sont suicidés dans une période de cinq mois. Ce fut cette terrible tragédie qui a mené à la création de *Solidaires pour la vie* en 1998.

Le lien entre la maladie mentale et le suicide est bien établi. Au Québec, la dépression n'est pas seulement une des principales causes du suicide, elle est aussi la cause principale du décrochage scolaire. La dépression chez l'adolescent demeure souvent non diagnostiquée ce qui fait que les adolescents ne reçoivent pas le traitement nécessaire. *Solidaires pour la vie* est une initiative de grande envergure organisée par la Fondation des maladies mentales afin de prévenir la dépression par l'éducation et un dépistage précoce. Disponible tant en français qu'en anglais, le programme complémentaire est offert aux écoles secondaires de toute la province ainsi qu'à certaines écoles choisies à Ottawa. Depuis sa création, le programme a réussi à changer les attitudes entourant la

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This interactive and dynamic classroom workshop is given to youth by youth. Led by two animators and supported by two team leaders, the presentation sensitizes participants to the signs of depression and promotes local resources that can help prevent, detect and treat depression. All animators go through an intense 150 hours of training covering topics such as presentation skills, suicide emergency training, youth intervention, communications, theatre, and mental illness training from specialists in psychiatry and psychology. Each 50 to 75 minute educational session is divided into three segments, beginning with defining and identifying depression, the myths and stereotypes that surround it. Animators use humour and role play to discuss how to recognize the distress signals of depression and end by teaching students how to help reassure and comfort friends in need, how to evaluate urgency and assess the situation, and about the local resources available to them.


"In school, teens form groups and spend a lot of time with each other, making them most likely to notice a change in a friend's behaviour," explains Catherine Burrows, Director of Youth Programs for the Mental Illness Foundation. "The mission of *Partners for Life* is to teach them (teens) to respond effectively to these changes, either by guiding their friends, or themselves to a resource that can help."

Additional presentations are available for parents and school staff. To date, the *Partners for Life* program has helped raise awareness about depression, school dropouts, and suicide among 788,500 adolescents, 9000 parents, 22,500 teachers and advocates in 690 schools across the province of Quebec. Mrs. Burrows is proud of the program's success, "among the young people we met, more than 15,000 were treated or followed up for depression, while 1,000 were hospitalized. The facilitators of the programs also conducted 3,900 direct interventions in schools, reported 735 young people in distress and conducted 180 emergency calls." Clearly the message is getting through to teens. This year they plan on visiting 300 schools, and informing an additional 60,000 teens. Their team of ten animators can present from three to ten sessions per day, every day.

Statistics on the annual number of adolescent suicides have shown a consistent decline since 1998, when the program began. While these numbers are not solely as a result of this program, the Réseau québécois de recherche sur le suicide recently highlighted the importance of the program and its contribution to this greater than 65% reduction in youth suicide rates in Quebec. The Mental Health Commission of Canada has recognized *Partners for Life* as a suicide prevention through education program and now includes it in its Mental Health Strategy for Canada, which shapes policies and practices from coast to coast.

"The result of our work in schools shows us that we are having a significant impact on youth. The program encourages students in distress to seek help from resources close to them and from guidance counsellors at their schools. Following *Partners for Life* presentations, there has been positive feedback about an increase in students' requests for help in schools," states Mrs. Brigitte Germain, General Director of the Mental Illness Foundation.

Clearly, *Partners for Life* is responding to an urgent need among adolescents and proves that prevention can be achieved through a low-cost, large scale community initiative.

This year the Mental Illness Foundation is partnering with the Mental Health Commission of Canada (MHCC) and will be offering a new course "Mental Health First Aid: for Adults Who Interact with Youth" for school staff and mental health providers. Offered in French and English the course will assist in identifying mental health problems and applying appropriate first aid intervention strategies. For more information on this or the *Partners for Life* program please visit www.mentalillnessfoundation.org. 



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maladie mentale et a mobilisé les étudiants pour qu'ils demandent de l'aide pour leur dépression.

Cet atelier interactif et dynamique en classe est donné par des jeunes à des jeunes. Menée par deux animateurs et supportée par deux chefs d'équipe, la présentation sensibilise les participants aux signes de la dépression et elle fait la promotion des ressources locales qui peuvent aider à prévenir, détecter et traiter la dépression. Tous les animateurs suivent une formation intense de 150 heures couvrant des sujets comme les compétences de présentation, la formation en urgence suicide, l'intervention chez les jeunes, les communications, le théâtre et la formation en maladie mentale donnée par des spécialistes en psychiatrie et en psychologie. Chaque session de 50-75 minutes est subdivisée en trois segments commençant par la définition et l'identification de la dépression, les mythes et stéréotypes qui l'entourent. Les animateurs utilisent l'humour et les jeux de rôle pour discuter comment on reconnaît les signes de détresse de la dépression et terminent par l'enseignement aux étudiants des moyens d'aider à réassurer et reconforter des amis dans le besoin, comment évaluer l'urgence et la situation puis ils les informent des ressources locales qui leurs sont disponibles.

« À l'école, les adolescents forment des groupes et passent beaucoup de temps ensemble ce qui les rend aptes à noter un changement dans le comportement d'un ami, » comme l'explique Catherine Burrows, directrice des programmes jeunesse pour la Fondation des maladies mentales. « La mission de *Solidaire pour la vie* est de leur (adolescents) enseigner à répondre efficacement à ces changements soit en guidant leurs amis ou eux-mêmes vers une ressource qui peut aider. »

Des présentations supplémentaires sont disponibles pour les parents et le personnel enseignant. À ce jour, le programme de *Solidaire pour la vie* a aidé accroître la sensibilisation à la dépression, aux décrocheurs et au suicide parmi 788 500 adolescents, 9 000 parents, 22 500 enseignants et défenseurs dans 690 écoles dans la province de Québec. Mme Burrows est fière du succès du programme, « parmi les jeunes gens que nous avons rencontrés, plus de 15 000 ont été traités ou suivis pour dépression pendant que 1 000 autres ont été hospitalisés. Les facilitateurs des programmes ont également réalisé 3 900 interventions directes dans les écoles, ils ont rapporté 735 jeunes personnes en détresse et ils ont répondu à 180 appels en urgence. »


Clairement le message se rend aux adolescents. Cette année ils prévoient visiter 300 écoles et informer 60 000 adolescents de plus. Leur équipe de dix animateurs peut présenter de trois à dix sessions par jour, chaque jour.

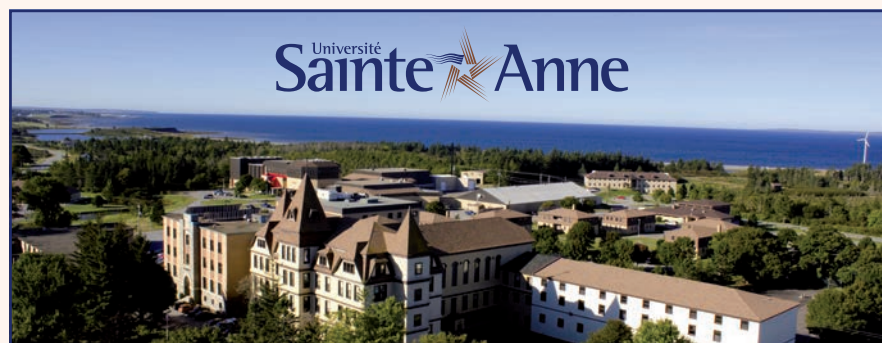
Les statistiques annuelles à propos du suicide d'adolescent sont en constant déclin depuis 1998, l'année où le programme a débuté. Bien que ces nombres ne soient pas uniquement le résultat de ce programme, le Réseau québécois de recherche sur le suicide a récemment souligné l'importance du programme et sa contribution à cette réduction de plus de 65 % du taux de suicide chez les jeunes du Québec. La Commission de la santé mentale du Canada a reconnu *Solidaire pour la vie* comme programme de prévention du suicide par l'éducation et l'inclut maintenant dans sa stratégie en santé mentale pour Canada qui façonne les politiques et pratiques d'un océan à l'autre.

« Le résultat de notre travail dans les écoles nous montre que nous avons un impact significatif sur la jeunesse. Le programme encourage les étudiants en détresse à rechercher de l'aide auprès de ressources près d'eux et des conseillers en orientation de leurs écoles. Suivant les présentations de *Solidaire pour la vie*, il ya eu une rétroaction positive concernant l'accroissement des demandes

d'aide d'étudiant dans les écoles, » souligne Mme Brigitte Germain, directrice générale de la Fondation des maladies mentales.

Clairement, *Solidaire pour la vie* répond à un urgent besoin parmi les adolescents et prouve que la prévention peut s'accomplir par une initiative communautaire à grande échelle et faible coût.

Cette année, la Fondation des maladies mentales s'est associé comme partenaire à la Commission de la santé mentale du Canada et offrira un nouveau cours « Premiers soins en santé mentale : pour adultes qui interagissent avec la jeunesse » pour le personnel enseignant et les fournisseurs en santé mentale. Offert en français et en anglais, le cours aidera à identifier des problèmes de santé mentale et à appliquer les stratégies appropriées d'intervention de premiers soins. Pour plus d'information à ce sujet ou à propos du programme de *Solidaire pour la vie*, visitez le www.mentalillnessfoundation.org. 



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les troubles d'apprentissage

by/par **Tania Moffat**

Every child dreams of finding the perfect job. Young children make choices based on what they perceive to be cool, heroic or fun, whether it is realistic or not, like becoming an astronaut, firefighter, or pirate. As we mature we begin to refine our choices to include jobs that match our interests and meet our financial and emotional needs. Job choice is one of the most important choices we make, and it is one that should not be made lightly. Jobs provide us with financial stability, new relationships, social status and, when we find a position that matches our abilities, they increase our self esteem. Career selection can be a difficult choice, especially for students with learning disabilities (LD). Making sound career choices depends not only on one's interests but also on choosing positions that maximize one's abilities and minimize the impact of one's disability.

Tous les enfants rêvent de trouver l'emploi parfait. Les jeunes enfants font des choix basés sur ce qu'ils perçoivent comme cool, héroïque ou amusant, que ce soit réaliste ou non, comme devenir un astronaute, un pompier ou un pirate. En gagnant de la maturité, nous commençons à raffiner nos choix pour qu'ils incluent des emplois qui satisfont nos intérêts et nos besoins financiers et émotionnels. Le choix d'un emploi est un des plus importants choix que nous faisons et il ne devrait pas être fait à la légère. Un emploi nous procure une stabilité financière, de nouvelles relations, un statut social et, quand nous trouvons une position qui répond à nos aptitudes, il accroît notre estime de soi. Le choix d'une carrière peut être difficile, spécialement pour des étudiants avec des troubles d'apprentissage. Faire des choix sains de carrière dépend non seulement des intérêts d'une personne, mais aussi du choix de positions qui maximisent les aptitudes et minimisent l'impact du handicap d'une personne.

Employability for students with LD is not an issue, provided they receive the necessary training, support and accommodations to obtain and maintain employment. Students with learning disabilities are employable; however, without the proper assistance they may find themselves underemployed or unemployed. While similar Canadian statistics are not available, the National Longitudinal Transition Study in 1994, (NLTS1), in the United States reported that 85% of students with LD enter the workforce in the first year following high school. Of the 71% who were working only 57% were working full time and most were being paid lower wages.

Disadvantages occur in areas of job readiness and in making choices that match their skills to the essential requirements of the job. In order to truly guide our students, we need to understand and help them to understand how their learning disabilities will impact their employment, and provide them with the appropriate job readiness skills. Developing a sound transition plan with students to ease their move into the workforce or assist them in choosing a career is critical. These students should leave high school prepared to make educated choices about their future; unfortunately, this is not always the case.

The implementation of learning strategies and recommended courses to prepare students for the transition out of high school vary across the country and in some provinces even from school to school. In the province of Ontario, schools are required to develop a transition plan as part of their Individual Education Plan (IEP) for students with LD over the age of 14, and school boards offer courses on career studies, co-operative education courses, volunteer placement and youth

apprenticeship. In Alberta, students with learning disabilities are required to have an Individual Program Plan (IPP) and career studies are part of a mandatory course called Career and Life Management (CALM) that is generally taken during the grade 11 year. Vocational courses can enhance employment for these students, but this is dependant on what the courses offer and their relativity to today's workforce. To ensure our students receive the job related skills necessary for them to succeed, counsellors should take the following advice into consideration.

Finding the Best Fit

The primary ingredient for achieving career success is finding the best fit between one's skills and job choice. It is even more crucial for students with learning disabilities to find this fit. In order to do this, students must understand their disability, their strengths/weaknesses, and how their disability will affect their essential job duties. Essential job duties are the tasks, skills or parts of a job which make up the majority of the work that the job entails. Making the best career choice means matching those duties to a student's strengths.

"The most important thing for counsellors to consider, and for students themselves to consider, is to look at career options that are in line with the student's strengths, as outlined in a recent psycho-educational assessment. Finding a good fit with strengths is the key to success for students with learning disabilities. Of course interests are important and provide motivation, but pursuing a career where the majority of the work will be in areas of weakness instead of strength can be a very frustrating process. The school counsellor can help the student explore



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L'employabilité des étudiants avec des troubles d'apprentissage n'est pas problématique tant qu'ils reçoivent la formation nécessaire, le support et les accommodations pour obtenir et garder un emploi. Les étudiants avec des troubles d'apprentissage sont aptes à occuper un emploi. Cependant, sans une aide adéquate ils peuvent se retrouver sous-employés ou chômeurs. Bien que des statistiques semblables ne soient pas disponibles au Canada, la National Longitudinal Transition Study de 1994 (NLTS1) rapporte que 85 % des étudiants américains avec des troubles d'apprentissage accèdent au marché du travail dès la première année suivant le secondaire. Des 71 % qui travaillaient, seulement 57 % travaillaient à temps plein et la plupart recevaient des salaires inférieurs. Des désavantages apparaissent dans les secteurs de la formation de préparation à l'emploi et dans les choix qu'ils font pour que leurs aptitudes répondent aux exigences de l'emploi. Afin de vraiment bien guider nos étudiants, nous devons comprendre et aider ceux-ci à comprendre comment leurs troubles d'apprentissage influenceront leur emploi et leur fournir les aptitudes adéquates de compétences d'employabilité. L'élaboration d'un plan de transition sain avec les étudiants pour faciliter leur intégration au marché du travail ou les aider à choisir une carrière est essentielle. Ces étudiants devraient quitter le secondaire préparés à faire des choix éclairés pour leur futur, malheureusement, ce n'est pas toujours le cas.

La réalisation de stratégies d'apprentissage et de cours recommandés pour préparer les étudiants à la transition postsecondaire varie dans le pays et dans certaines provinces elle varie même d'école en école. Dans la province d'Ontario, les écoles doivent développer un plan de transition faisant partie de leur plan d'enseignement individualisé (PEI) pour les étudiants avec troubles d'apprentissage âgés de plus de 14 ans et les commissions scolaires offrent des cours sur les études de carrières, l'éducation coopérative, le placement de bénévoles et un programme d'apprentissage pour les jeunes. En Alberta, les étudiants avec troubles d'apprentissage doivent avoir un plan de programme individuel et des études de carrière font partie d'un cours obligatoire nommé programme de préparation à la vie personnelle et professionnelle (CALM) qui est habituellement suivi en 11^e année par tous les étudiants. L'enseignement professionnel peut augmenter l'emploi pour ces étudiants, mais le tout dépend de ce que les cours offrent et de leur relativité à la main-d'œuvre d'aujourd'hui. Pour assurer que nos étudiants reçoivent les compétences nécessaires associées à l'emploi afin qu'ils réussissent, les conseillers devraient considérer les avis qui suivent.

Trouver le meilleur mariage

L'ingrédient principal pour atteindre la réussite professionnelle est de trouver le meilleur mariage entre les compétences d'une personne et le choix d'emploi. Il est encore plus important pour les étudiants avec troubles d'apprentissage de trouver ce mariage. Afin d'y parvenir, les étudiants doivent comprendre leur handicap, leurs forces/faiblesses et comment leur handicap affectera leurs tâches essentielles rattachées à l'emploi. Les tâches essentielles rattachées à l'emploi sont les tâches, les compétences ou les parties d'un emploi qui composent l'essentiel du travail requis par l'emploi. Effectuer le meilleur choix de carrière signifie de marier ces tâches aux forces d'un étudiant.

« La chose la plus importante que les conseillers et les étudiants eux-mêmes doivent considérer est de rechercher les options de carrières qui s'alignent sur les forces de l'étudiant comme ce fut décrit dans une récente évaluation psychopédagogique. Trouver un bon mariage avec les

forces est la clé du succès pour les étudiants avec troubles d'apprentissage. Certainement les intérêts sont importants et fournissent la motivation, mais poursuivre une carrière où la plus grande partie du travail se situera dans les zones de faiblesse plutôt que celles des forces peut s'avérer un processus très frustrant. Les conseillers d'école peuvent aider l'étudiant à explorer les exigences de diverses carrières, » mentionne Diane Wagner, directeur principal des politiques publiques et l'éducation chez l'association Ontarienne des troubles d'apprentissage (LDAO). « En second lieu, les étudiants ont besoin de comprendre quelles accommodations les aident à compenser des zones de faiblesse et explorer comment l'utilisation de ces accommodations pourrait s'appliquer en milieu de travail. Finalement, apprendre des compétences en autonomie sociale est primordial. Les étudiants doivent pouvoir discuter de ce qu'ils font bien, de ce qui pourrait être une difficulté et comment ils peuvent les contourner avec succès »



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the requirements of various careers,” states Diane Wagner, Senior Manager of Public Policy and Education at the Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario (LDAO). “Secondly, students need to understand what accommodations help them compensate for areas of weakness, and explore how the use of those accommodations could apply in the workplace. And finally, learning self-advocacy skills is key. Students need to be able to talk about what they do well, what might cause them some difficulty, and how they can successfully get around those difficulties.”

Helpful Advice to Keep in Mind When Assisting Students With Career Choice

► **Understanding Their Disability** – Students need to develop a clear understanding of their disability and accept that it is part of their reality. Janice Nelson, the Information and Resource Coordinator at the Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta – Calgary Chapter encourages counsellors to “help the students to really understand themselves more. We find that the students don’t understand their learning disabilities enough to be able to articulate how the LD affects them and what supports they need to compensate for their areas of weakness. What are their strengths as learners? I think that because there is often a lot of focus on the students needs that there isn’t enough recognition of what they do well.” It is crucial students recognize their strengths, acknowledge their weaknesses, and make career choices based on their abilities. “Best Fit” choices are roles that allow them to utilize their strengths, employ reasonable accommodations, and

match their interests e.g., students with poor written skills interested in journalism may be able to utilize voice recognition software to assist them in becoming a writer for a newspaper or magazine or they may find they are better suited to becoming a television or radio newscaster or photojournalist.

- **Finding an Interest** – Once students identify an area that they are interested in and show some aptitude for it, it is time to brainstorm how they can succeed in their chosen career field. This can be accomplished by using accommodations or creative thinking. For example, students with difficulty reading can use a text to speech software program to help manage a task.
- **Acquiring Skills and Additional Training** – Investigate the training and essential job skills required for employment and plot a course of action to acquire any additional skills or training necessary. This could include summer courses on communication, social skills or self advocacy, choosing a post secondary institution or community/technical college courses, an apprenticeship program, or getting volunteer experience. Students should make their own choices and be honest with themselves – they need to decide how much additional training they are prepared to commit to in order to obtain a job in their area of interest.
- **Developing Job Readiness Skills** – Job readiness refers to the point at which an individual is prepared for employment based upon the possession of necessary work skills, social competence, job seeking



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► **Comprendre leur handicap** – Les étudiants doivent développer une compréhension claire de leur handicap et accepter que cela fasse partie de leur réalité. Janice Nelson, coordonnatrice de l'information et des ressources chez la Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta - Chapitre de Calgary - encourage les conseillers à « aider les étudiants à se comprendre réellement plus. Nous découvrons que les étudiants ne comprennent pas suffisamment leur handicap pour être en mesure d'articuler comment les troubles d'apprentissage les affectent et quelle aide ils ont besoin pour compenser leurs faiblesses. Quelles sont leurs forces comme apprenants ? Parce qu'il y a souvent beaucoup d'attention apportée aux besoins des étudiants, je crois qu'il n'y a pas assez de reconnaissance de ce qu'ils font bien. » Il est primordial que les étudiants reconnaissent leurs forces et leurs faiblesses et qu'ils fassent des choix de carrière basés sur leurs compétences. Les choix « Best fit » sont des rôles qui leur permettent d'utiliser leurs forces, d'utiliser des accommodations raisonnables et de marier leurs intérêts par ex. des étudiants avec peu d'habileté à l'écriture intéressés au journalisme peuvent peut-être utiliser des logiciels de reconnaissance de la voix pour les aider à écrire pour un journal ou une revue ou ils peuvent constater qu'ils ont plus d'aptitudes pour devenir des présentateurs de nouvelles à la télévision ou à la radio ou encore devenir photojournalistes.

- **Trouver un intérêt** – Une fois que les étudiants ont trouvé un secteur pour lequel ils ont un intérêt et où ils ont également certaines aptitudes, il est temps de faire du remue-méninges pour voir comment ils peuvent réussir dans la carrière qu'ils ont choisie. On peut y arriver en utilisant des accommodations ou la pensée créative. Par exemple, des étudiants avec des difficultés de lecture peuvent utiliser des logiciels de conversion du texte en paroles pour les aider à gérer une tâche.
- **Acquisition de compétences et formation supplémentaire** – Rechercher la formation et les compétences de travail essentielles pour l'emploi et établir un plan d'action pour acquérir toutes compétences ou formation additionnelle qui sont nécessaires. On pourra y inclure des cours d'été sur la communication, les compétences sociales ou l'autonomie sociale, choisir des cours dans une institution post secondaire ou dans un collège communautaire/technique, un programme d'apprentissage ou de l'expérience en bénévolat. Les étudiants devraient faire leurs propres choix et être honnêtes avec eux-mêmes - ils doivent décider à combien de formation additionnelle ils sont prêts à s'engager afin d'obtenir un emploi dans leur secteur d'intérêt.
- **Développer des compétences d'employabilité** – L'employabilité se réfère au point auquel un individu est prêt pour l'emploi basé sur la possession des compétences d'emploi, des compétences sociales, des habiletés pour la recherche d'emploi et pour les entrevues. Aidez les étudiants ou suggérez des cours qui les aideront pour écrire un

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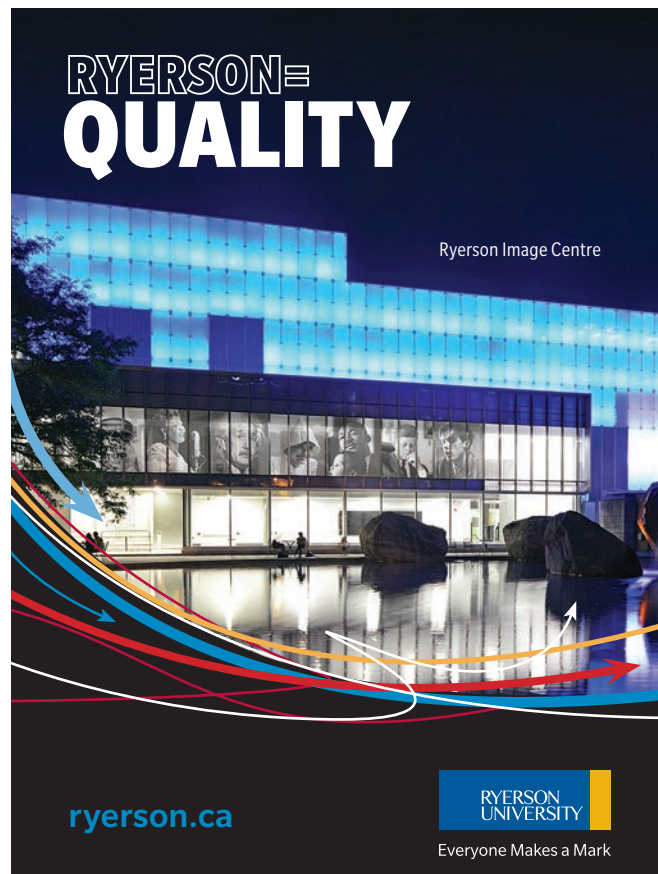

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and interview skills. Assist students or suggest courses that will help them with writing a resume and introductory letter, how to search for a job, how to prepare for interviews, time management skills, social, and etiquette skills pertinent to the workforce (e.g., being on time, calling in sick, taking orders from a supervisor).


- ▶ **Developing Social Skills** – Appropriate social skills such as punctuality, good communication skills, taking responsibility, following direction, and the ability to work as a team are also essential factors that need to be mastered in order to maintain a position in the workforce. Employers want employees that can adapt to various work environments and follow basic etiquette. Students struggling to read social situations or understand nonverbal communications may experience difficulty and benefit from courses that practice social skills in small groups.
- ▶ **Identify Necessary Job Accommodations** – If accommodations will be required in order to get and/or keep a job, students will need to know what they will need and where it can be obtained so that they can advocate for themselves with an employer (e.g., identify to the employer the speech to text software with which they are familiar).
- ▶ **Self advocate** – Students should be able to clearly explain to an employer their disorder, how it affects them, how it will affect their ability to perform their job, and what, if any, accommodations they will require to assist them .
- ▶ **Determining Disclosure** – A decision also needs to be made on whether they will disclose their learning disability to an employer or not, and if so, when – in application, in interview, or after they have been hired. There are pros and cons to each decision, and while it is the student’s choice, they should weigh their options. If they choose to disclose, they need to be able to explain their disorder clearly to their employer and positively frame what accommodations they will require and how it will affect their job performance. The better the fit between skills and career choice the less likely this will be an issue.
- ▶ **A Strong Work Ethic** – Success in any career is based on one’s work ethic. It is especially important for those with learning disorders – showing up for work on time, showing enthusiasm for your work, and taking initiative all help to counter negative ideas others may have.
- ▶ **Other Helpful Advice** – Finding a mentor, attending workshops, open houses, unpaid work placements or volunteer experience can give students further insight into their career choice and help them determine if it is the right one for them. They can also research employers in their field of interest and, if possible, seek employment with those who are disability friendly (e.g., Marriott, IBM).

According to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada the average Canadian will have on average approximately three careers and eight jobs over a lifetime. Job requirements change, promotions and layoffs are all part of the reality we face in today’s workforce. While the choice your student makes with you prior to graduating will not likely be their final career or job, they can learn important job readiness skills, self advocacy and an understanding of how to best match their abilities to any future choices they make. It is this skill set that will help them to succeed, no matter what job they end up in. 🇨🇦 CSC



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- **Développer des compétences sociales** – Les compétences sociales appropriées comme la ponctualité, de bonnes compétences en communication, prendre des responsabilités, suivre les directives et les habiletés à travailler en équipe sont également des facteurs essentiels qui doivent être maîtrisés afin d'obtenir et d'entretenir un emploi dans le marché de l'emploi. Les employeurs veulent des employés qui peuvent s'adapter à divers environnements de travail et qui suivent l'étiquette de base. Les étudiants qui ont des difficultés à identifier les situations sociales ou à comprendre les communications non verbales peuvent être désavantagés et ils bénéficieraient de cours en petits groupes qui pratiquent les compétences sociales.
- **Identifier les accommodations nécessaires pour l'emploi** – Si des accommodations sont nécessaires afin d'obtenir et/ou maintenir un emploi, les étudiants devront savoir ce qu'ils auront de besoin et où ils peuvent l'obtenir afin qu'ils puissent défendre leurs intérêts auprès d'un employeur (par ex. identifier pour l'employeur le logiciel de reconnaissance de la voix avec lequel ils sont familiers).
- **Défendre leurs intérêts** – Les étudiants devraient pouvoir expliquer clairement leur handicap à un employeur, comment ils en sont affectés, comment il affectera leurs habiletés à exécuter leur travail et quelles accommodations, s'il y en a, ils auront besoin à titre de support.
- **Décider de la divulgation** – Une décision doit également être prise pour savoir s'ils divulgueront ou non leurs troubles d'apprentissage à un employeur, et, dans l'affirmative, quand cela doit être fait - au moment de la demande, lors de l'entrevue ou après avoir été embauchés. Il y a des avantages et des désavantages pour chaque décision, et, bien que ce soit le choix de l'étudiant, ils devraient soupeser leurs options. S'ils choisissent de divulguer, ils doivent être capables d'expliquer clairement leur handicap à leur employeur, circonscrire positivement les accommodations dont ils auront besoin et comment cela affectera leur performance au travail. Pour meilleur que sera le mariage entre compétences et choix de carrière, il sera moins probable que cela représente un problème.
- **Une forte éthique du travail** – Le succès de toute carrière est basé sur l'éthique du travail de la personne. Cela est spécialement important pour ceux qui ont des troubles d'apprentissage - se présenter au travail à l'heure, démontrer de l'enthousiasme pour son travail et prendre de l'initiative sont tous des facteurs qui aideront à contrer les pensées négatives que les autres peuvent avoir.
- **Autres conseils utiles** – Trouver un mentor, participer à des ateliers et journées portes ouvertes, faire du travail sans salaire ou bénévolement sont des moyens pour donner une meilleure idée aux étudiants de leur choix de carrière et les aider à déterminer si c'est le bon choix pour eux. Rechercher des employeurs dans leur champ d'intérêt et chercher un emploi chez ceux de ces derniers, si possible, qui favorisent le plus l'insertion des personnes handicapées (par ex. Marriott, IBM).

Selon Ressources humaines et Développement des compétences Canada, le Canadien moyen aura en moyenne trois carrières et huit emplois pendant sa vie. Les exigences d'emploi changent, les promotions et les licenciements font partie de la réalité à laquelle nous faisons face dans le marché du travail d'aujourd'hui. Bien que le choix que les étudiants font avec vous avant leur graduation ne soit vraisemblablement pas leur carrière ou emploi final, ils peuvent acquérir des compétences liées à la préparation au marché du travail, l'autonomie sociale et une compréhension du meilleur moyen pour marier leurs compétences à tout choix futur qu'ils feront. C'est cet ensemble de compétences qui les aidera à parvenir au succès, peu importe l'emploi qu'ils obtiendront. ➤ CSC





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In many ways, architecture is more a calling than a profession," states Michael Cox, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada's (RAIC) Regional Director for Manitoba and Saskatchewan. "You must have a passion for the work if you are to survive the long training period before you can become licensed."

While it is true that architects create homes, offices, schools, and other buildings, they can also be involved in building renovations, urban design, management and project co-ordination, consulting, feasibility studies, and improving building performance among numerous other responsibilities. Architects must understand structural analysis, heat loads, electrical distribution, traffic flows, and as well deal with building codes and by-laws set by the municipal, provincial, and federal governments. They can practice on their own, with a firm, developer or government agency. On any given day they might juggle a meeting with clients, solve problems, provide a cost estimate, produce detailed working drawings or scale models, draw up building specifications, call tenders, visit construction sites, or lead teams of contractors and engineers on a project.

The journey to become an architect is a long and difficult one, and students should be aware of what type of career they will be getting into. Richard Witt, a principal with Quadrangle Architects in Toronto, recommends students "spend some time seeing what architects actually do. There's a lot of misunderstanding about what the job entails, what a typical workday is like, and what the role of an architect really is. It's a great job, but it's not for everyone. Find a placement, get a tour of an architect's office, and see if anyone you know knows an architect so that you can get real and dependable information."

The Three E's – Education, Experience and Exams

All architects must complete the three E's – education, experience and exams in order to become licensed. The Canadian Architectural Certification Board (CACB), is the only agency authorized to accredit Canadian professional degree programs in architecture. In Canada,

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a Master of Architecture degree (M.Arch.) from an accredited program, which may take anywhere between 3 to 6 years to complete, is a prerequisite for licensure and professional designation. The RAIC website is a great resource for students and provides a list of universities that offer training. An apprenticeship program is also offered through the RAIC Syllabus Program. Prerequisite courses required for admittance will vary based on the post secondary institution that they choose, so students should do some advance research before applying.

Upon completion of their master's degree, students must then complete the Internship in Architecture Program (IAP). The IAP provides students with the experience necessary to become an architect. The program is administered by the provincial or territorial regulatory associations, and students are required to have a registered architect as their mentor. A minimum of 3,720 hours of work experience – accumulated under three main categories and 15 subcategories – is obtained by interns under the supervision of their mentors. It takes a minimum of one and half years to complete the program. During that time students are responsible for maintaining a continuous record of their work experience in the Canadian Experience Record Book (CERB), having it certified by their employer and mentor, and approved by the provincial or territorial association.

The last hurdle to pass before licensing is to pass the professional examinations. Students will take either the recently adopted new Examination for Architects in Canada (ExAC) or the Architect Registration Examination (ARE) to test their competency in the field of architecture. All provincial and territorial associations recognize either exam, with the exception of British Columbia, which does not recognize the ExAC, and Quebec, which does not recognize the ARE. Both exams test areas such as programming, site and environmental analysis, cost management, coordinating engineering systems, schematic design, design development, bidding and contract negotiations, construction phase, project management, and code research.

Upon passing this final exam, provided no additional provincial requirements are necessary, graduates may finally apply for licensing with their respective provincial architectural associations. There is an annual fee and a continuing education requirement that architects must complete each year to maintain their designation. "The continuing education requirement amounts to about 30 to 40 hours per year. Fulfilling these requirements can be accomplished by attending some seminars on building technology or latest design thinking, participation in industry organizations such as architect's societies, mentoring younger architects to achieve their licence and more. There's a lot of opportunity and most of what gets you points should be done in day to day activities anyway" states Mr. Witt.

Before investing all of the time and effort required, students will want to know if there is a future for them in this field once they become licensed. According to Service Canada, job prospects in this occupation are good. While demand for these positions is largely dependent

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on trends in the construction industry, the demand for architectural services in Canada remained steady throughout the recession in the 1990s and has continued to show growth in part to the expanding range of services provided.

"It has often been said that if you have to ask the price of a Rolls Royce, you should not be in the showroom. Architecture is a bit like that – if your first question is "How much money does an architect make?" you should probably be looking at some other profession. You must first have a passion for the work – success will follow, but remember, accumulated wealth is not always an accurate measure of success." says Mr. Cox. "Compared to many other professions, salary ranges are low to moderate – forty-five to fifty thousand per year for a junior architect and one hundred thousand for a senior architect."

If the process of becoming an architect is too daunting or if university is not for your student, they may want to investigate courses at their local technical school or community college to become an architectural technologist, architectural technician, a draftsman or a CAD (computer assisted drafting) technician.

However, if students still hear the call to become an architect they will be on their way to an immensely diverse and rewarding career. **CSC**



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A Hero's Journey: Spencer West

by Alison Zenisek

"We can redefine what is possible," says Spencer West, who has undeniably lived out this philosophy in his personal journey. He was born in Rock Springs, Wyoming, with a congenital defect known as sacral agenesis, an abnormal development of the spine. The doctors' initial prognosis was dire. He would never sit up and possibly not live into his teens. His life would be a sedentary one. But Spencer had a significant advantage going for him. His family accepted him for who he was – their Spencer. They saw beyond his disability to his potential as a human being. It was this acceptance that influenced his childhood more than anything else. A series of childhood surgeries eventually left him with no legs at all as they were amputated at the hip. West did not mourn the loss of his legs. "For me, my legs never worked and they were in the way. So, going to the doctor and having them removed so I could get around easier was best. I never saw it as that I lost something because I didn't have it to begin with. It made me independent. It wasn't terrible; it was a gift," says Spencer.

Today Spencer either walks on his hands or uses a wheel chair. His upper body strength is phenomenal. West studied communications at Westminster College in Salt Lake City, but was haunted by fears and loneliness during his studies and after graduation. He struggled for years with the feeling that his life lacked meaning and purpose. He identifies this time in his life as "in the belly of the whale." Joseph Campbell's mythical premise of the steps in a "hero's journey" resonates with West and helped clarify his struggles. In his book *Standing Tall*, he describes how Campbell's "call to adventure," and the subsequent step of "refusing the call" because of fear, can result in despair. The question of what West was meant to do with his life haunted him. A subsequent surrender to the "quest" brought about a transformation to West's life in what Campbell describes as the stage of "supernatural aid." West sensed a guiding force at work as he moved forward in his commitment to be authentic to his vision and himself.



Photos courtesy of Free The Children

Training

Then he got a phone call from a friend who asked him if he wanted to go to Kenya. There he learned that the continent of Africa has a way of calling people back to themselves. Through his friend Reed, he was brought into contact with Save the Children, which in that time and place was working with the Maasai people

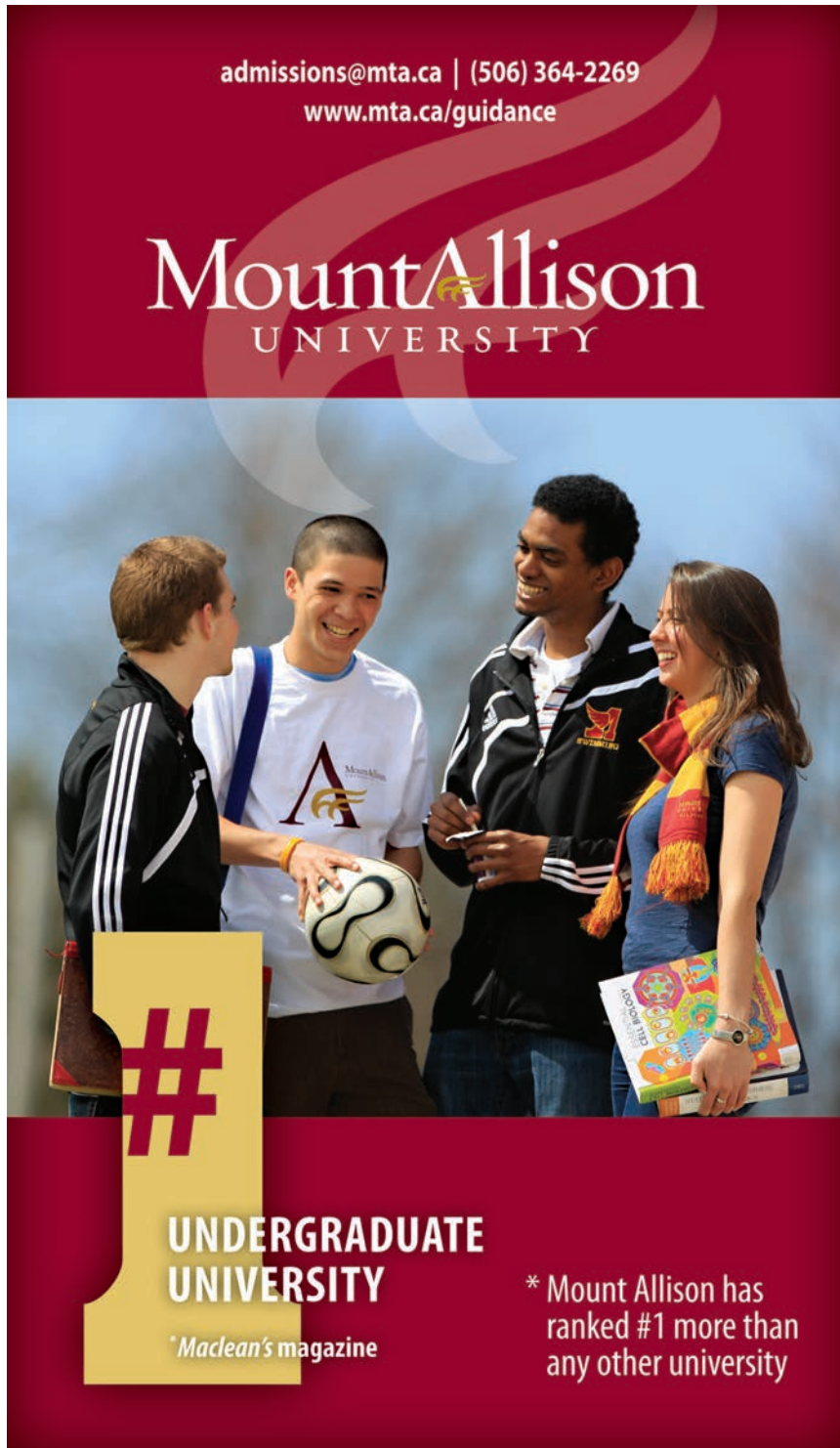
building schools in the Maasai Mara. In one of West's magical encounters with his "angels," a little Maasai girl spoke the words that he will never forget. "You know," she said referring to his wheelchair, "I didn't know that things like this happened to white people." Her statement made him realize that there was value in his

story. Later he heard that one of the village men had thought him a shining example because "anything was possible" if someone like him with no legs could travel the great distance to build a school.

And so it was here among the villagers that West discovered that his story of overcoming the odds could help youth discover their own power to make a difference. Africa had helped him find his path and had indeed called him back to himself. His gift to the world would be his story, but his return to the United States proved difficult. West says of it, "Everything that I saw and experienced felt like an injustice to me." Spencer was about to journey into "the field of adventure" which is how Joseph Campbell described leaving the known limits of the hero's world and moving into the unknown and dangerous realm where limits are not known. A few months later, he heard that Free the Children was looking for a motivational speaker. Spencer packed up and moved to work with Free the Children in Toronto, Canada. The organization was founded in 1995 by children's rights activist Craig Kielburger and now has one million young people involved in 45 countries. The goal is to free children from poverty and exploitation. This past June Spencer returned to Africa to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the continent's highest peak with the support of two trusted friends. The adventure's purpose was to raise money for securing clean water for some 100,000 people in East Africa.

Since Spencer began speaking, he has reached millions of students, educators, and organizations with his inspiring story. He has captivated audiences at WE Day events with his motivational message of redefining and reimagining what is achievable, and how to intertwine personal goals with a greater purpose. He advocates for strength through reliance on others in the community. These concepts work to create a blueprint for students of all ages and awaken them to the power of community action. Me to We, an arm of Free the Children, measures the bottom line, not by dollars earned, but by the number of lives changed and the positive social and environmental impact made.

Spencer's family support and his own tenacity and sense of humour did not spare him the experience of being bullied. His physical condition made him a target for bullies who often called him names. One attack by one especially malicious boy still haunts him.



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"He thought it would be funny to grab the back of my wheelchair going down the hall, so I stopped abruptly. My books fell on the floor. I ultimately tumbled after them. Horrible. It was horrible. And I was telling myself, 'You're not going to cry...'"

Spencer uses the painful experience to connect with the students in his messages.

"Bullying continues to happen in schools across North America and the rest of the world. And people are singled out for looking different, for not having the coolest clothes, the latest gadgets. I personally believe bullying perpetuates hate. Instead of singling out each other for differences, why don't we celebrate our difference?"

West's approach of building a team of reciprocal trust and support and creating major change through small but steady steps is directly applicable to both individuals and organizations. He assists teens in realizing their individual and collective power to make a difference in the global community. Spencer believes that of the many students he meets, most are passionate about societal and environmental problems, but are unsure about how to effect change. He focuses on making them aware of their gifts and how they can use them for the greater good. Spencer doesn't believe they are apathetic; they just need to be equipped for the task. He is grateful for the chance to do just that. In 2008 a group of Maasai warriors chose a name for Spencer as he said goodbye to the village and people he had grown to love. "Olopiro" was the name he received, the Swahili word for the *wind* that lifts up a bird. ♣ CSC



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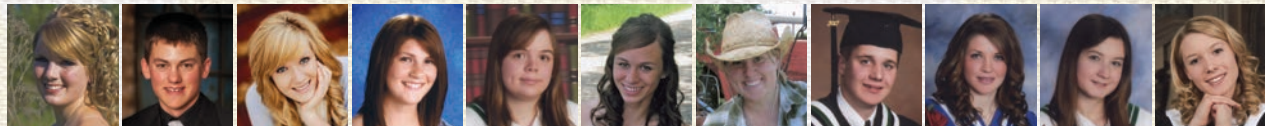
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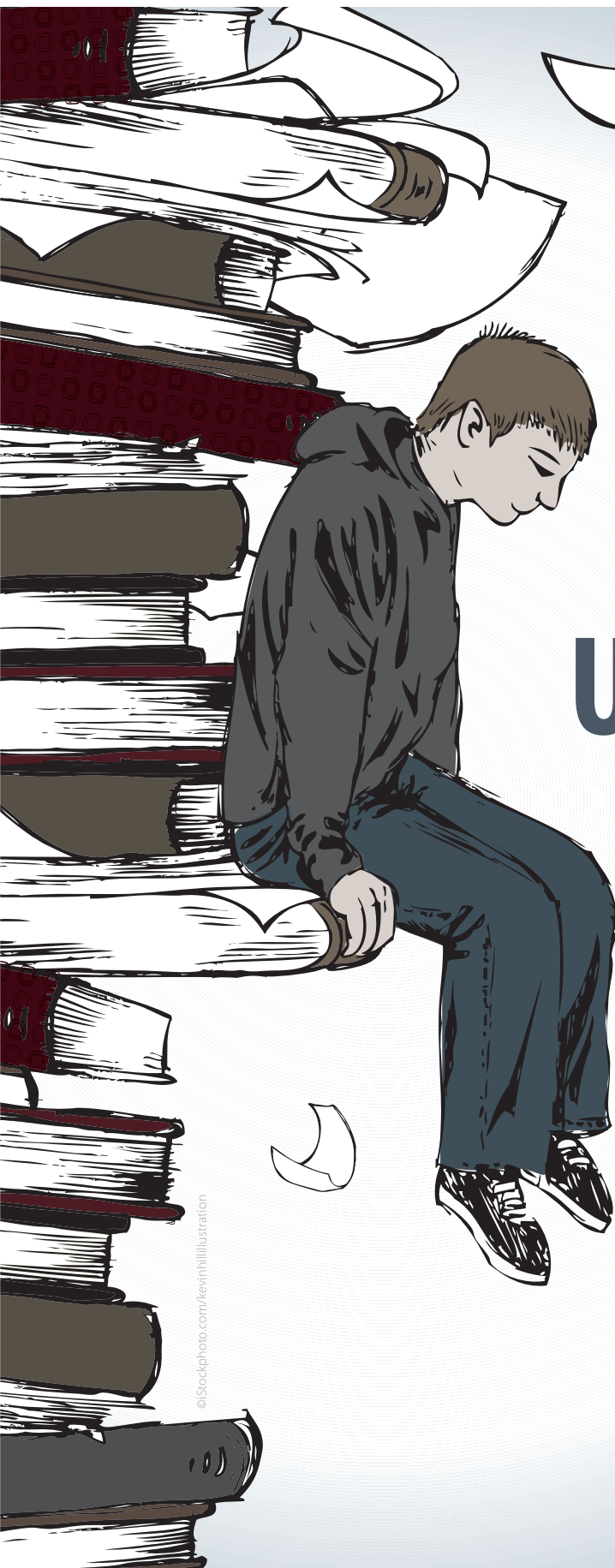


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Motivating **UNMOTIVATED** Students

From **Theory** to **Practice**

Unmotivated students have always been the bane of educators. As such, many theories and even more research have focused on understanding what motivates students. As in-(school) house professionals, counsellors are uniquely positioned to directly address student motivation problems as well as to consult with educators, administrator, and parents about techniques for encouraging students to become more engaged and active learners. But as practitioners in every applied field know, it is one thing to study academic theories of behaviour and development, it is quite another to translate these theories into day to day dynamic strategies to help students become more successful, happy, and motivated in school.

Psychological Needs and Academic Motivation

Research in motivation has demonstrated that there are three psychological needs students will actively try to fulfill (Connell, 1990; Connell and Wellborn, 1991). They will look for every opportunity to feel a real connection

to the people around them (i.e., relatedness), to be effective and successful at academic tasks (i.e., competence), and to pursue educational opportunities that are personally relevant (i.e., autonomy). The more they experience a sense of relatedness, competence, and autonomy while learning and in school,

the more energized, directed, and actively engaged in learning they become (Skinner, Kindermann, Connell & Wellborn, 2009). Conversely, when students can't fulfill these needs in school, they will look elsewhere, becoming disaffected with school and learning. In other words, unmotivated.

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Motivating Students

There are specific aspects of the school environment that promote (or, alternatively, undermine) these important psychological needs and, consequently, student motivation. Being emotionally close to people at school and having real connections with teachers, students and other adults in the school environment (i.e., involvement), leads to the fulfillment of a student's sense of relatedness. Clear and consistent expectations and responses (i.e., structure) promote a student's ability to competently complete academic tasks and effectively learn. Finally, the opportunities for personal choice and pursuit of unique interests (i.e., autonomy support) afforded to students in school encourages a sense of autonomy and intrinsic motivation toward learning. The more these qualities are present in the school setting, the more motivated and engaged students become (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner, et al., 2009). The absence of these qualities directly undermines a student's motivation in school.

So, one way to address student motivation, especially in an unmotivated student, is to increase the involvement, structure, and autonomy support in school and in the learning process.

Developing Personal Relationships

Education in schools occurs within the context of relationships: teachers, other students, administrators, and counsellors. When a student is unmotivated, the first question to ask is "Who is personally connected to this kid?" The things you learn by having a personal relationship with students also allows educators to discover ways to draw them back into active learning: What matters to them? What stresses them? What is difficult (and easy) about school and learning? Personal relationships are the context for encouragement, affection, positive regard, and empathy. The involvement of teachers

and counsellors also provides an effective opportunity for them to instill optimism and hope in demoralized or otherwise unmotivated students.

The first order of business in turning an unmotivated kid around is to get them personally connected to an adult in school.

Structuring the environment and learning tasks

If the tasks are too hard, if there are constant disruptions, if students can't figure out how to succeed, or if there is insufficient instruction, practice or consolidation of information (i.e., inadequate structure), it is difficult for students to feel competent and effective in school.¹ They are likely to give up. This is where teaching effective study skills and learning strategies helps students be more competent. Academic planning that provides a schedule that is challenging without being overwhelming is also important. Unmotivated students get into a cycle of failure. They quit even trying. Providing positive feedback and encouragement for the smallest successes (especially successes that have been intentionally built in) are particularly important for these students. Recognizing and celebrating these small instances of success can get them back on the road to benefiting from grades and learning as rewards. If an unmotivated kid does not have at least one area in school in which they feel competent and effective, correcting that is another important place to intervene.

Supporting personal goals and interests

One of the more difficult motivational strategies to implement in the school environment is providing choice; opportunities for learning that are relevant to personal goals, and nurturing a student's intrinsic interests. There are things kids need to learn in school whether they like it or not. Unfortunately, if they don't understand why or see the personal value of what they are learning, you can lose them (or, at the very least, the quality of their learning is dramatically reduced;

¹ Learning differences and intellectual limitations and major life stressors like poverty and mental illness also have a huge impact on a student's academic motivation but discussions about motivating these students is beyond the scope of this article.

Deci & Ryan, 1985). How many opportunities do students have to make choices about their learning? Even limited opportunities for choice in activities result in motivational enhancement effects (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Do students have opportunities to pursue personal interests or to put their individual

mark on tasks or projects? Are the linkages between immediate educational tasks and a student's longer term personal goals made explicit? How often are students encouraged to play with knowledge and academic skills or learn for the sake of learning (without a grade hanging on the outcome)? Making

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opportunities for students to choose and pursue personal interests is a third way to enhance student motivation.

Counsellors can provide involvement, structure, and autonomy support directly to unmotivated students. Furthermore, by talking about psychological needs and providing concrete suggestions for ways to promote the fulfillment of these needs in students, counsellors are in a position to help their education colleagues more effectively motivate students to become more engaged in school. 🍁 CSC

Dr. James G. Wellborn, Ph.D. is a published author of scholarly works on motivation, coping in childhood and adolescence and academic engagement. He has been a consultant to school districts in developing system-wide programs to address motivation and academic engagement for at-risk youth in both New York and Tennessee. He is also the author of the book *Raising Teens in the 21st Century: Practical Strategies for Effective Parenting*.

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Motivational Resources These are a selection of books that provide more practical, specific strategies for motivating students

- Cushman, Kathleen. 2010. *Fires in the Mind: What Kids Can Tell Us About Motivation and Mastery*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- This is one in a series of excellent books on student motivation. It is also worth looking at *Fires in the Bathroom: Advice for Teachers from High School Students, Fires in the Middle School Bathroom, and Sent to the Principal: Students Talk About Making High School Better*.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety: Experiencing Flow in Work and Play*. New York: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Csikszentmihalyi has some wonderful things to say about intrinsic motivation and the components and development of expertise.
- Connell, J.P., Klem, A.M., Lacher, T., Leiderman, S., & Moore, W., with Deci, E. 2009. *First Things First: Theory, Research and Practice*. Toms River, NJ: Institute for Research and Reform in Education.
- This provides an introduction to the school-wide application of motivational principals to address student engagement. This report and many others on the work of the IRRE can be found at this link <http://www.irre.org/publications>.
- Wellborn, J. G. 2012. *Raising Teens in the 21st Century: Practical Strategies for Effective Parenting*. Brentwood, TN: 12 Mile Bayou Press.
- This is a brilliant book (not that I'm biased) that provides parents with strategies for a wide range of typical challenges in raising teens including several chapters on motivation problems and on academic performance issues.
- Karinch, Maryann. *Empowering Underachievers: New Strategies to Guide Kids (8-18) to Personal Excellence*. New York: New Horizon Press, 2006.
- Metcalf, L. 2008. *Counseling Toward Solutions: A Practical Solution-Focused Program for Working with Students, Teachers, and Parents*. New York: Jossey Bass.
- Solution oriented counselling techniques for encouraging motivation and behavior change are uniquely consistent with the motivational concepts discussed in this article. The strategies can be applied to academic issues as well.
- Murphy, J. J. 2008. *Solution-Focused Counseling In Schools*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.



The ABC's of Helping Teens Manage Anger

Everyone experiences anger at different times in his/her life. Anger in this context refers to excessive or out of control anger. For teenagers, dealing with their anger poses a special challenge because they are undergoing many hormonal changes and at the same time they are transitioning from childhood to adulthood. Teenagers also face another challenge in the sense that during this period there is a quest for independence from their parents. Often they do not know how to manage this newfound sense of independence and freedom which can result in conflicts. Conflicts can also result at this time from a clash of values between teenagers and their parents as teens begin to internalize their own value systems.

When discussing teenage anger, it is essential to understand some of the main causes before examining ways in which school staff can deal with these challenges.

Some main causes of teenage anger

Most often the situations that cause teen anger occur when they are faced with questions of their identity, separation, relationships, parent's separation or divorce.

- Coming from/living in an angry family
- The perception that nothing seems fair
- The perception that a teen has adult responsibilities but little or no freedom
- The teen's quest to make his/her decisions is being thwarted by those around him/her
- Physically maturing and dealing with hormonal changes and sexuality
- Being in the company of peers who are angry. Peers have an expectation that the teen be angry. In a way this is a transfer of negative expectations.
- Having a reputation for being angry and wanting to keep that reputation
- The teenager believing that anger is a source of power and control
- The teenager feeling bad about himself/herself and using anger to hide those feelings
- A teenager using anger to get attention

How do teenagers show their anger?

Teen anger can be expressed in a (a) physical, (b) verbal, or (c) emotional way. Consider the following examples: (a) teens can act out physically by hitting walls or engaging in other aggressive behaviours; (b) they can also yell, swear and verbally disrespect their family, teachers and peers; (c) sometimes they are so upset that they cry, or do negative things such as posting negative comments on someone's Facebook wall.



The ABC's of how school staff can deal with Teen Anger



Approach discussions from a supportive place. Avoid confrontations and power struggles as much as possible.



Be prepared to listen as much as you are willing to talk. Listen for content as well as feelings.



Counsel with an open mind. An open mind is one that is available to all possibilities.



Don't judge. Don't impose your values on the student.



Explore ways to help them diffuse their anger. The operative question is "how?" rather than "why?"



Feelings are neither good nor bad, they are just feelings which need to be acknowledged and resolved.



Get in touch with your student's emotional concerns. Try to understand the root causes of the student's anger.



Help them find alternatives to negative displays of anger, this is referred to as the "Substitution Principle."



If you have to confront the student, be aware of your motives.



Just listen with an open mind. Practice active listening for both content and feelings.



Keep information pamphlets and other important brochures near your office.



Let them see you as a role model. As Ghandi said, "Be the change you want to see in the world." Counsellors need to be aware of the powerful influence of their actions on teen behaviour.



Make sure they understand that anger can be expressed in a positive way, this means assertively rather than passively or aggressively.



Never let anger get out of control. Anger out of control is like a fire out of control; it can create a lot of damage.



Organize the challenging issues in order of priority. Then address one issue at a time, in an effort to resolve these.



Personal insults, accusations or bringing up past issues could lead to more anger.



Quit while you are ahead. Practice proactive thinking.



Recognize the sources of the student's anger; it may include the home environment.



State the facts only, never make it personal; this could avoid power struggles with teens.



Triggers need to be identified, so teens can be aware of, avoid or diffuse these.



Understand there may be occasions when you cannot help. There are some students who may be coming from dysfunctional families that you cannot help. Angry students often come from and live with angry families.



Verbal attacks on the student's character will only alienate them.



Wording is important. Avoid misunderstandings by being clear.



Xpect the unexpected.



You can make a difference in their life, don't give up.



Zap away negative thoughts. Don't blame or verbally beat up on the student.

To conclude, assisting teens with managing their anger requires a receptive attitude, patience, and understanding with respect to the concerns that teens are presenting/expressing – whether it is directly, indirectly, and/or consciously, unconsciously. Moreover, the suitable approach to be exercised in these situations is an open-minded, informed, and educated one, relative to the teen's concerns, issues or problems. Such an approach would foster solution-focused thinking and behaviour.

If your students are having anger issues, there are many good resources that are free that can help them. Students can find articles on anger management written by those who specialize in this field, on the internet, school libraries, specific magazines, and books. The "Anger Workbook for Teens" by Raychelle Cassada Lohmann is a great resource for both counsellors and teens. ♣ CSC

Latchman Narain, Ph.D., is an experienced family therapist who lives and works in Toronto. He specializes in anger management counselling for individuals, couples, and families. He has facilitated successful anger management workshops both in Canada and internationally.

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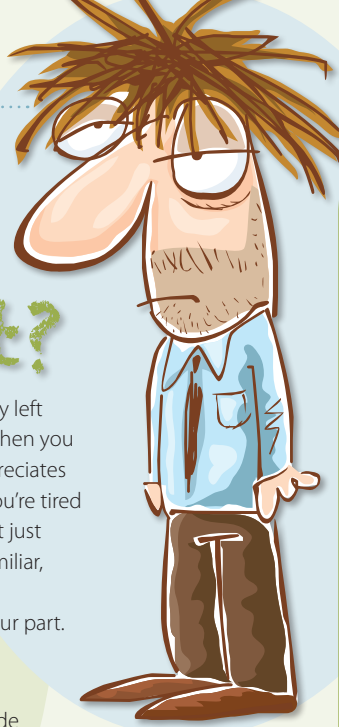
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Are You on the Road to Burnout?



Winter is dragging on, and the holidays are over so there is no joy left in the cold purgatory we are trapped in before spring. It's dark when you get to work, dark when you get home. It seems that no one appreciates the work you do, and that nothing you do makes a difference. You're tired and every day seems like a bad day. Work is overwhelming and it just doesn't seem worth the effort to care anymore. If this sounds familiar, you may be burnt out.

Preventing burnout requires constant vigilance and work on our part. The following tips may help:

- 1 Start the day with a relaxing ritual – This does not include 20 minutes of listening to your motivational CD while in line at your local Tim Horton's drive thru. Take time to do something for yourself that you enjoy – read the paper, go for a quick morning walk with the dog, meditate.
- 2 Adopt healthy eating, exercise and sleep habits – Don't just work, work out. Taking care of your body makes you feel better. What we eat affects our mood, so don't load up on just carbs all day long. Try going to bed an hour earlier.
- 3 Set boundaries – Don't overextend yourself. Learn to say no, whether it is agreeing to another after school project or running errands for a family member, there is no point in doing something that you are going to regret or resent later. If you have too much on your plate already, resign or back out of one of your current obligations.
- 4 Take a break – Take time during the day to unwind and regroup. I know it is practically unheard of in this day and age, but buck the trend and disconnect from your email, phone, computer and yes, even your TV for a night.
- 5 Re-engage your creative side – Try something new or resurrect an old hobby. Shine up your golf clubs or start scrapbooking. Be more than just your job.
- 6 Learn how to manage stress – Try yoga, boxing, jogging, volunteering, or meditation. Find something that works for you and do it.
- 7 Schedule social activities – Call your old friends or make new ones. You don't need to go out to the bar (drinking can actually increase your depressed feelings), but go for coffee, or watch a movie. Is all of this starting to ring a bell? Yes? It is called FUN, have some!
- 8 Stop making excuses and be accountable – Stop blaming others and start being accountable for your role in your problems. Then you can start taking steps to make things better.
- 9 Laugh – Tell a joke, watch a funny movie, think of something funny – humour helps to keep us all sane.
- 10 Ask for help – Sometimes we need to realize that we also need help from others to get through difficult times. Whether it is counselling, help with a project, or with time management don't try to always go it alone, it helps to swallow your pride and to ask for help on occasion. 

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