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## Resumes: Sea of Text or Brevity?

BY LISA TRUDEL

**T**he answer to this headline is brevity. Your resume should have less text and more concise accomplishments written in a way that grabs the attention of the reader. Resume writing is storytelling however it is not a long-written version of the whole tale of your life. A resume is a story of your professional life in one or two pages maximum.

At Achève, the career centre where I work, I read hundreds of resumes and the resumes that secure job interviews use the following simple yet effective formula:

### Contact information

The first line should be your name. The second line is your city and Province and the third line is your phone number and email address. The fourth line is the link to your LinkedIn Profile.

### What you are looking for

In the past, this line was called “objective”. You no longer need to write the word “objective” on your resume since it is a waste of text space. Instead, simply write a line that states who you are and where you are going. For example, if I was job searching, my own resume might state: “Experienced Career Specialist, Writer, and Diversity Inclusivity Advocate seeking contract-based remote projects”. You need to know who you are and where you are going.

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# MASTERING THE ART OF WORKING REMOTELY: A CHECKLIST



**BY CARTER  
HAMMETT**

**A**fter COVID-19 hit back in March 2020, few realized the impact it would have on the world of work. Working remotely is now part of the “new normal.” But for many workers, it’s anything but. Overnight, employees were asked to navigate unfamiliar territory and the challenges that went with it. Fortunately, there are pundits to help with practically everything! With that in mind, here are a few tips from the pundits themselves to help you keep your space—both physical and mental—in good working order.

### A Room of One’s Own?

And that doesn’t mean bed! Whether it’s the kitchen table or a balcony in warmer weather, anyplace will do so long as you associate it with work. One day people might even be able to return to their local coffee shops. In downtown Toronto, where space is at a premium, this could be challenging, but as long your designated area is associated with tasks, this will make your job easier. I choose to work in as much natural light as possible in an area usually reserved as the dining room. This spot’s between my kitchen and balcony, both in easy reach of breaks if needed. Add your own elements, like pictures or specific lighting if you feel it will help you be both more productive and comfortable.

### Time Management

There’s exactly 168 hours in a week, which leaves you plenty of time to both start and maintain a schedule. Whereas we once structured our day around commuting to-and- from work, that model has gone the way of the dodo. Some feel that productivity suffers, but anecdotally there are several people who report being more productive working from home.

### Some tips include:

- Try to start and finish your day as you would if commuting
- What outcomes need to be achieved by the end of the day?
- Try to keep meetings at the same time each day
- Review emails and return phone calls at the same time everyday as well. These are important for service continuity, while helping you stay organized.

### Breaks Breaks Breaks

Many people don’t take self-care into account while creating their own structures, so this makes taking breaks even more important. Keep them short and space them out across the day. Also, sometimes it’s a good idea to step away from your workspace, to create a psychological break as well. While at the office, I used to take walks during lunch, which helped me prepare for the afternoons ahead. No reason why that can’t continue while working from home. Breaks are supposed to be rejuvenating and should be no different than breaks that would normally be taken working from any other location. Some folks factor in time for a lunch time nap or catching up with friends. Whatever works, so long as you create some cognitive space between you and your work station.

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*Lisa Trudel, Career Specialist with Achiev (formerly the Centre for Education and Training), wrote this article. You can contact Lisa at [ltrudel@achev.ca](mailto:ltrudel@achev.ca)*

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# Resumes: Sea of Text or Brevity?

## Summary

This is the most important part of a resume. It is the highlights of your best skills in no more than 8 bullet points that introduces who you are and convinces the reader to contact you. Your resume is usually initially read by a resume scanner or applicant tracking system, however once your resume passes this software, a person will be reading it. That person might only glance at the first 3 to 4 lines, so you need to capture attention by writing your accomplishments with the results first. The secret to doing this is to borrow the STAR formula often used for interviews. STAR stands for: situation, task, action and results. Take this formula and reverse it. Instead of starting with the situation, start with the results. Here is a before and after example:


## Before:

- Assisted with creation of monthly newsletters and worked to increase subscriber base

## After:

- Increased monthly newsletter subscriber list from 1,500 to 3,000 in 3-month period resulting in 15% increase in revenue

STAR is quantifying your accomplishments by including facts and figures, which provides evidence to show that you are skilled at something. You cannot add numbers to all of your summary bullets so just aim for two. Employers like statistics thus incorporate them into your resume whenever you can. Become a star candidate by using STAR in reverse the next time you write your resume summary and instead of a sea of text, create a resume with brevity.

To find out more about resumes, career planning and employment preparation, contact your local Employment Ontario Career Centre and find out if you meet the criteria to use their free services. 

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# MASTERING THE ART OF WORKING REMOTELY

## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

### Boundaries Boundaries Boundaries

With COVID-19 looming overhead, a number of people suddenly found themselves stuck with the kids. News outlets and social media have been great sources of inspiration when it comes to setting creative boundaries with children, but sometimes it's difficult to separate work from private life. There's going to be details in your life that you just can't control. But what you can control is how those boundaries are stated and framed and being clear about when you're going to be accessible. Kids are more likely to respond when they know and understand you'll be available. It will also give both of you something to look forward to.

### R-E-S-P-E-C-T

While this should be taken as a given, it's not always easy to be aware of our feelings, or the feelings of others. We all have different coping styles and triggers and take it as a given that we will often never know when we've crossed a boundary until it's too late. Likewise, some people may be coping just fine, thank you very much and that might be uncomfortable to others as well.

You will never understand what others are going through, so try at least being mindful of how your co-workers and clients are experiencing isolation and being cut off from potential support

systems. Some people have never worked from home before either and may be finding it difficult to cultivate an infrastructure for themselves.

It's never a bad idea to reach out and "check in" with each other. You never know what effect a simple gesture like that might have on someone's day. A question like, "how are you doing?" just might tighten the fabric of someone's day a little more.

### Communication: Can We Talk?

Out of sight out of mind? While working from home, communicating with the people you're accountable to should be top of mind. There will be calendars to update, Zoom meetings to schedule, check-ins to be aware of and the dreaded emails will most likely be even more important to read.

### Some tips for staying in touch:

- Try to have at least brief, daily check-ins (preferably via video) with your team or superiors
- Consider a mentoring or a coaching program or, at the very least, an accountability partner to keep you on track, to check in and commiserate with.
- Despite the obvious benefits that platforms like Zoom and Google Hangouts offer, they don't replace face-to-face communication.

Sometimes body language becomes more difficult to read and non-verbal cues get missed. Try to be as mindful as possible about this.

These are just a few suggestions for managing a sudden shift in expectations, both of yourself and others. Don't be afraid to ask others, especially on social media, how they find themselves coping. You never know: a

suggestion you never thought of might help steer you into the sunlight and out of the perpetual emotional dusk you may have been feeling. **LC**



## OPINION PIECE:

# When You Are Alone with Disenfranchised Grief



**SONNY WONG,**  
**M.ED., RP**  
in **sonny-kh-wong**

**T**here comes a time when one is thrown into transition or chaos and then out of transition again. What are the automatic responses to disruption? Certainly, we have all responded in our own ways during this pandemic. In order to make sense of chaos we have made numerous behavioral and emotional adjustments to create our own certainties and we continue to do so.

For some we cope through creating a newness in our lives through rationalization, feel-good feelings, and doing the best to pamper and protect ourselves. However, adapting to the newness may come with abandonment issues, such as the death of friends and/or family, loss of employment, and even the dissolving of meaningful relationships. These losses are accompanied with some level of grief. There is a type of grief that is not talked about unless you have supportive individuals who can relate via their own firsthand experiences.

Disenfranchised grief is something which is more ambiguous and subtle. For the person experiencing this type of grief this period can be very lonesome and isolating, after all it is the new normal. The latent messaging is that somehow the grieving person is not

adaptable or even strong enough to transition through it. Think about the time when we were in lockdown—we felt something was not right. To protect ourselves from the virus we had to abandon normal behaviour, in turn experiencing some sense of loss. Remember those losses—no hugs, no live interactions, no daily rituals with family or colleagues. No to the many basic things which bring us joy, excitement and fulfillment.

To minimize our grief, we quickly recreated the term new normal. This conceptualization is a reconstruction of reality to minimize our pain. For many people, preserving a positive outlook and striving to achieve change have led them to a foreign place. But the subtle affects of achieving the new normal for some is the denial of the self to grieve the loss. As we are merging back to the "old normal", are we just supposed to stay calm and carry on? The things that we have missed or lost are now rationalized as "covid induced". The term serves only to reconceptualize grief once again as the new normal.

It is vital that we see disenfranchised grief as losses, not the new normal or Covid related issues. The friend who has decided to move across the country to find fulfillment is a loss to your daily well-being. The colleagues who have quit now represent a gap in your work relationships. The social bubble relationships that were cultivated have dissipated as a result of pandemic restrictions becoming more relaxed. Most importantly, the routines and habits you have created to survive are again

different. Rationally you understand that change is constant but emotionally you recognize individuals' choices have impacted your own level of joy. Behaviorally you are left standing alone, and that is disenfranchised grief.

Once again you are faced with another new normal. This time, however, people are excited rather than fearful. When you express your grief about your losses, you are once again told it is another version of the new normal. So when do we get to truly grieve? Can we keep up with the grief? Let's take the time to reflect on our own feelings.

You CAN grieve. Recognize that grief is not only for big losses. Small losses can trigger complex emotional responses. Sadness, loneliness, self-doubt and despair are all examples of normal responses. When society will tell you to get over it, implying it is part of change and that you are not adapting, in essence, those messages have taken away your chance to grieve. So guess what? You will have to be your own best friend. Take the time to allow yourself the sadness which comes with that loss. Listen to what you are saying to yourself and focus on you. If you can not do that, try to remember who was nurturing to you when you were down. Imagine what would this person say to you now which may bring comfort during this low moment?

Keep up with your grief. When you are constantly told that your disenfranchised grief is something you need to get over, rushing through the grieving process only serves to help dismiss your feelings. Grief is complex and

has many stages. You will experience denial, anger, bargaining, sadness, and acceptance. It can be helpful for the individual to process the stages of grief via journaling and/or talking about each. We start to feel better about it and believe we have accepted it, but grief is tricky at the bargaining stage. Here we learn to cope by postponing the sadness and engaging in self-negotiation activities. What if I grieve later and just get through these work deadlines? This is a short-term coping mechanism. In the long term it does not help the individual recognize their emotions. Give yourself the permission to spend time analyzing your complex emotions and find ways to note the small progress, looking for clues to enhance your own recovery.

Validating small losses. To be emotionally honest with ourselves, we must recognize that small losses are a constant experience during uncertain times. Acknowledgment of the loss begins with processing the pain, even when the rest of society does not sympathize. Rather than visualizing what you don't have, give yourself some time to focus on what has been lost and your inner resources to move forward. The secret to making sense of what has happened is in the way you explain your losses to yourself.

Finally, understand that if things will never be the same—maybe they could just be different? Trust that your past experiences and abilities will help carry you through this difficult stage—and remember, time is always your friend. **LC**





# TORONTO VOICES

BY LISA TRUDEL

**T**hree women sit patiently next to a downtown Toronto Speakers Corners stage. Each will be allowed to record a 2-minute message. Each will speak their truth about living, learning and working in Toronto.

## Voice One

The woman smiles, stands with perfect posture, lifts her head toward the camera and her unfocussed gaze becomes focused.

“I don't know how it happened. I loved where I lived. My parents are terrific and I liked

living with them. After I got my Bachelors Degree, I got a Masters Degree in Commerce and immediately got a job with a bank. Then one day at a family dinner my older brother stood up and proclaimed that he was moving to Toronto. He told me I should do this too and that we could each have fantastic careers and live in condos near the CN Tower just like in the postcards we had gotten from our cousins who moved to Toronto 10 years ago. It was like he was describing a fairy-tale.”

The woman moves closer to the camera. Her face is brighter and more animated.

“It was a struggle when I first moved to Toronto. I had a resume but I wasn't using LinkedIn. Luckily, I found a career centre down the street from where I was living, and got lots of advice about how to find work and now I cannot imagine living without LinkedIn! Here I am 2 years later: I use LinkedIn and I have a great job! I work as a Customer Care Associate at a downtown bank in the shadow of the CN Tower. I work 3 days customer-facing and 2 days remotely from home. This month I am moving into a new home too. A one-bedroom condo that has a dishwasher, in-suite laundry and a view of Lake Ontario. I am part of the Toronto postcard fairy-tale!”

## Voice Two

This woman winks at the camera and slouches back into the chair. She rises out of the chair, and runs her hand through her blonde hair and her grin broadens as she speaks.

“I don't know how it happened. I moved to Toronto because I wanted to be part of the nightlife. I wanted to dance, go to concerts, and shop on Queen Street West. I was an A student in high school and my teachers told me to go to university but I dreamt of downtown Toronto. When I was in Grade 10 my Dad took me to a Blue Jays Game at the Rogers Centre. I bought a Blue Jays t-shirt and a postcard with a picture of the CN Tower surrounded by condos. I dreamt of living in one and having season tickets to the Jays. My friends told me it was a stupid fairy-tale. I didn't listen to them. A couple of months

after graduation, I packed up my Grandmother's old Volvo which she wasn't driving anymore, and drove south to my new condo in downtown Toronto. Grandma told me to call her old friend who owned a big marketing company and sure enough I got a junior assistant job. That was 2 years ago and I haven't looked back!”

She stretches, and half-shrugs and her smile explodes into a booming laugh.

“I realized that to move ahead in my work, I would have to get that degree so last year I became a university student and started my degree online. From my 32nd floor window I can see Lake Ontario as I study and work remotely from home. I don't know how it happened but I love my choice. I love Toronto.”

## Voice Three

This woman stands up from her chair, smooths her coat to make the wrinkles disappear and exhales as she lifts her eyes up. She shifts back and forth for a few seconds with her hands clasped together and in a quiet trembling voice starts to talk.

“I don't know how it happened. I had the same job for almost 25 years as an Administrative Assistant. I loved my job and everyone I worked with. We were in an office near the Toronto Convention Centre on Front Street and near the CBC Building on John Street. Do you know where that is? It was a great job and I had so much fun! At lunch we used to go to the food courts in the underground PATH. Sometimes in the evenings a bunch of us would stay after work to go to a musical at one of the theatres on King Street. The best was Come From Away at the Royal Alex Theatre. It was the musical about 9/11 and the people of Newfoundland. Did you see it? I visited Newfoundland once and bought a postcard that I intended to mail to my mother but I kept it for myself instead. That one postcard still sits near my monitor to inspire me.”

As soon as the woman mentions the postcard, her voice changes to an upbeat yet slightly frantic energetic pace.

“When COVID appeared, we all lost our jobs. Fortunately, we were told about a career centre that helped us with writing our resumes and cover letters, and we even found out about free online courses. I have 3 new certificates now, and I went to more than 12 job search webinars and meetings on Zoom. It took about 4 months, then I finally I got an interview. It was on Zoom too for a remote Executive Assistant with a company that doesn't even have a physical office. Everyone works from home! I love it. Sometimes I miss seeing my colleagues in person but we Zoom every day at 4pm so I feel like I am in an office. Yesterday I got a postcard from one of the old gang and guess what?! The show Come From Away is returning to the Royal Alex in December. We will all be going again in our matching evening face masks. I love Toronto.” 

## CAN'T FIND THE SUMMER ISSUE OF LEARNING CURVES? GO ONLINE.

Learning Curves along with many of its partners in education and community services, has been affected by COVID-19. Our Fall issue drop-sites continue to be affected. Unfortunately, we cannot effectively cover our usual distribution of the paper: a print run of over 16,000 located at over 650 sites in Toronto and the GTA.

We would be happy to send you hard copies of the Summer issue or drop them off. Simply contact us at [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com).

We thank all our readers, and our advertisers without whose support Learning Curves could not have existed for the past 20+ years. Look for us in all the usual places as the province opens up. Many of our back issues are online at [www.learningcurves.org](http://www.learningcurves.org)

# LEARNINGCURVES



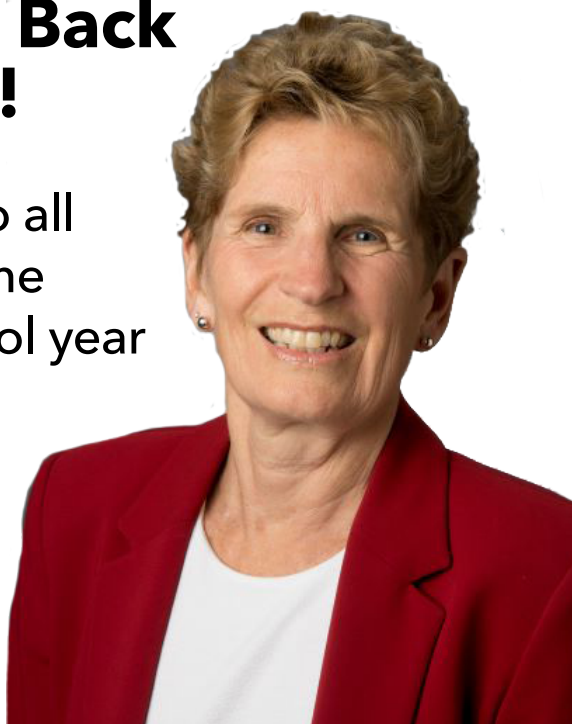


# Kathleen Wynne

MPP Don Valley West

## Welcome Back to School!

Best wishes to all students for the 2021/22 school year



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# UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY: LEARNING TOGETHER

JOANNE MACKAY-BENNETT

**R**esilience is one of those words that you hear all the time now. It is often used to describe an individual who has admirably stared down adversity or a community that has overcome misfortune. But it is also used almost as shorthand, a quick and easy way to signal that the challenge, whatever it may be, will be met.

A neighbourhood has suffered from the effects of a tornado. A person has suddenly lost their job. A country has been at war for decades. If the reporting of the event describes those involved as 'resilient,' is it a sign that the rest of us should just move along?

A more thoughtful response to understanding the word resilience might be to consider when we use it and why. If you were down and then somehow you rebounded, you might very well be described as resilient. It's a word that works well for finite activities like games – especially zero-sum games where my win is your loss. This could be because it's harder to be resilient when the challenge you are facing is one that does not have a short-term solution.

How do we meet the challenges of life's long in-betweens? Those times like the recent lockdown where we had to struggle to stay connected to friends, to families... and to ourselves? In *The Lonely Century: How to Restore Human Connection in a World that's Pulling Apart* (2021), author Noreena Hertz describes loneliness as disconnection from the personal, social and institutional anchors of our day-to-day lives.

Sometimes loneliness might feel as if we are drifting through hours, days, and weeks. It is antithetical to the unrelenting, minute-by-minute updates of 'breaking' news. So massive were the numbers of people suffering from isolation during lockdown, in fact, that Hertz describes loneliness as 'not just a subjective state

of mind: [but] a collective state of being.' (Tara Henly, *Globe and Mail*, September 6, 2021.)

What if we were to think of time as something that contains but is not limited to 'the small now' of short-term thinking?

University in the Community (UitC) is a small, informal, free-of-charge, ten-week program for adults. We are a community of students from different backgrounds and experiences who come together as partners in learning.

This Fall, we will explore how understanding a longer view of time might lead to another way of experiencing life in a large city like Toronto. Could thinking of time as something other than right now encourage us to look out for others, to be generous, to move from what is to what if?

The three articles on this page were written by UitC students. They are representative of the students in the class in that all three writers are committed lifelong learners who read, want to feel connected to this city and the wider world, and enjoy asking questions. In these pieces, one writer answers what is (FAQ on nutrition), one imagines what if (short story), and one asks why (emotions and decisions).

This Fall, UitC will meet on Zoom.  
Dates: September 29 - December 1, 2021.  
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If you think you would like to join our program, all you have to do is get in touch!

[universityinthecommunity@gmail.com](mailto:universityinthecommunity@gmail.com)

NOTE: UitC is a non-credit program. We ask that students make every effort to attend classes for the full ten weeks of the term.

# OPINION: WHAT ROLE DO EMOTIONS PLAY IN OUR DECISION-MAKING?

BY A. KERR



**T**he definition of emotion in the Oxford Dictionary states that it is "a natural instinctive state of mind deriving from one's circumstances, mood, or relationships with others." There are several different human emotions; here are a few basic ones: anger, fear, happiness, love, sadness, and surprise.

What role do emotions play in our decision-making? The state of mind that an individual is in could alter their decision-making. This could lead to a rash of judgment or judgments. It is best to think about the outcome or the consequences before making a decision.

Emotions are natural reactions in human behavior. While I believe our emotions play a role in our decision-making, I also think that past experiences could be a factor in the decisions we make. Other people are also instrumental in one's personal decision-making because of the reaction they may display toward the decision-maker.

Reference Retrieved from website [www.lexico.com/en/definition/emotion](http://www.lexico.com/en/definition/emotion)  
Download April 14, 2021. Oxford English Dictionary, Oxford University Press.

# NUTRITION AND YOU: IS DRINKING LEMON WATER GOOD FOR YOU?

BY ELMA MORGAN

**E**lma Morgan is a student in University in the Community. She has a passionate interest in nutrition and its impact on our health and well-being. Elma studied at Humber College, U of T, and Mount Royal University in Calgary Alberta. During her college years, she worked part-time as a food service aide and then proceeded to work full-time in a hospital in Alberta for almost 18 years. Here, Elma considers some of the benefits of drinking lemon water along with advice about when we should limit our intake.

## What does lemon water do for the body?

Drinking lemon juice with warm water every morning helps in maintaining the pH balance of the body. It acts as a detoxifying agent and helps maintain digestive health. Along with being a detoxifier for the liver, it contains vitamin C. Lemons are also a rich source of potassium, calcium, phosphorus, and magnesium.

## Is it OK to drink lemon water every day?

The daily consumption of lemon water provides a number of health benefits including preventing dehydration, assisting with digestion, and supporting weight loss. It also contains vitamin C which boosts your immune system, and helps flush out toxins in your body, cleanse the liver, and improve digestion. Drinking lemon juice with warm water the first thing in the morning is especially healthy.

## Does lemon water help clear your skin?

Starting your day off with a glass of lemon water has innumerable benefits, including increasing the amount of collagen in your skin. That means you'll produce fewer wrinkles. Its vitamin C can also fight off toxins that cause breakouts.

## Is it good to drink lemon water at night?

Drinking warm water before bed will keep you hydrated through the night and may help the body to rid itself of unwanted toxins. If plain water is too bland, or if you're trying to beat a cold, consider adding lemon to your water before bed.

## Are there any unhealthy side effects of drinking lemon water?

Consuming too much of anything is a bad thing, even when it comes to lemon water. GERD, also known as gastroesophageal reflux disorder, is triggered by acidic foods like lemon juice and can cause heartburn, nausea, and vomiting.

Citric acid, which is a property of lemons, may erode tooth enamel. Although lemon water on its own may not lead to the development of cavities, if you typically sweeten it with sugar or use concentrated lemon juice instead of a freshly squeezed lemon, then you could have a problem on your hands... and teeth.

Finally, if you drink lemon water while dealing with a mouth sore, you are probably making it worse without realizing it. And if you deal with headaches or migraines of any nature, it is safe to say you do not want to take any chances by eating or drinking something that could trigger them. Most citrus fruits, including lemons, fall into that category.





# BRUSHES WITH THE PARANORMAL?

BY LUIS DE ESTORES

A long-time member of the local arts community and of UItC, Luis' creativity shines forth in his prolific output as a multidisciplinary artist. Visual artist, writer of short stories, film producer, director, editor and script writer, Luis firmly believes that living a life, in itself, is an art.

Have you ever experienced anything supernatural? Like really, for real? Ghost, fairies, and haunted houses, or even the Divine? Any of the world's cultures would have stories of these; my native culture is no exemption.

In fact, the province where my family comes from is known for its stories of vampire-like creatures, called Aswangs in ancient Filipino lore. Unlike their European counterpart, Aswangs split in half and fly off as their upper torso grows wings, in search of newborns to eat, or even the unborn, or sometimes the hearts of young, naive men who are easily seduced when the creatures appear in beautiful human forms. In their vampire form, they also grow long fingernails and fangs. Whenever they are around, a black bird follows, making that "tik... tik... tik..." sound. The best way to kill them is to cut the lower half of the body and pour salt or ashes where the cut is. That way, the upper half can't reunite with the lower half, and they just shrivel up and die.

When you're a child, everything seems bigger. The world may even seem magical with good and bad wielders of magic. Like other kids my age, I used to believe that Aswangs were real. I was always on edge when I visited our province, to the delight of my cousin who loved scaring me. Apparently, they can also be warned off by holy water, so I devised a plan of putting holy water in a water gun as a weapon. For sure, even as a city dweller, it was kinda creepy in our town. Having full electricity was years away, and there were kilometers and kilometers of rice paddies, and afterwards, the jungle. There were many animals there you've never heard of that make all sorts of scary noises.

But have I really experienced anything paranormal? No, not at all, well, maybe. I do keep two washed out memories of things that happened when I was in grade school. The first was when we heard screams from our neighbour. I saw somebody, probably a witch doctor, hitting the old woman because she was under witchcraft. The belief was that if a person is being hexed, it is the witch not the person who will feel pain. As I remember it, the old woman was kneeling, asking for mercy. A lot of neighbors were watching. Apparently, the woman was okay afterwards. As a child, I was scared and curious at the same time, but thinking about it now, I think it's silly. If I were that woman, I would have said anything to make the hitting stop.

It makes me wonder now what that woman's mental health was. But for the people around her, they thought that what they were witnessing was the correct way to cure the old woman.

That also reminded me of another memory where a person was under the influence of a Divine Spirit. Sapi is a word used to describe when the spirit of another is joined with the spirit of a living person. A possession you might say, but not quite. In this particular case, the woman was joined with the spirit of the Holy Child, Jesus. I saw her there, on a mat, kneeling, and looking so serene. She spoke to me and my mother in a childlike tone, even laughing at times. Eyes closed, she said she recognized me in a joking manner. Again, when I think about that memory now, I'd say it's all balderdash. While I admit that I am not too knowledgeable about the spiritual realm, I still find it hard to believe that Jesus would come back in the spirit of a toddler, only to join with this woman. Didn't Jesus grow up and die on the cross? He would have been more than two thousand years old. As it was, nothing happened, and I never heard anything about her afterwards. But there were people in the neighborhood who believed it was all true. Nowadays, all that is half forgotten.

So fast forward to a few weeks ago, in Toronto. I was walking with my friend to McDonald's for some ice cream. It was evening and we had to pass by a cemetery. The cemetery

was open and I suggested that we sneak in. She got scared, and said no. True, it was pretty creepy. But as you may have guessed, I no longer believe in any of that crap from my childhood. I was more concerned about finding a creep hanging out at the cemetery. It's the twenty-first century, and it's cyber- anything and everything! I guess for most people, a paranormal explanation makes sense when scientific explanation is out of reach. Their concerns about the paranormal are as normal as our concerns with computer viruses or hacking. But hey, while my friend was on the other side of the sidewalk, I popped my head out to look for anything at the cemetery, and found exactly what I expected to see. I saw... I saw... well, nothing. Just the quiet darkness of the cemetery.

Maybe, I shouldn't push it though. What if there really is such a thing as the paranormal? Okay, so I may say I am a non-believer for now but everything in me wants the supernatural to be true because I want to believe that there is life after death. Don't you? That someday, when we die, we will continue to exist? Perhaps a glimpse of the paranormal is a glimpse of that hope.

Even if I sort of want to believe in some aspects of the supernatural, my fear of ghosts is not nearly as strong as it was when I was a child.

So... Boo!

LC

## LEARNINGCURVES

**Learning Curves has changed. We've been hard at work behind the scenes creating an even better website experience for our readers!**

The [learningcurves.org](http://learningcurves.org) site has been UPDATED, so you can find recent articles as well as older ones under subject headings. Not only will you be able to enjoy Learning Curves in print and online, you'll have even more ways to enjoy it on the go as the new site is more mobile friendly.

You'll have free access to all of our content, updated frequently, with access to the archives as well.

We will continue to update the site so visit often. We will be updating the progress on our twitter feed in the coming weeks.

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# CHANGE AT THE MICRO LEVEL BY WENDY TERRY

In our Summer 2021 issue I did a story on Canada- A Learning Nation Dec., 2020 Report to show how the “Macro Level of Decision Making Affects the Micro Level of Courses For Adults” See [www.learningcurves.org](http://www.learningcurves.org) for this Summer issue and story. pg.10

In our Fall 2021 issue in this story I will summarize the changes I could see from the priorities recommended by the Report found in a scan of course offerings for the Fall term.

## Micro Credentials

For priority Four New and Innovative Approaches to Skills Development and Validation such as Micro Credentials, this development was clear on the Website for the School of Continuing Studies at the University of Toronto.

Search [learn.utoronto.ca](http://learn.utoronto.ca), select Programs and Courses then select Unique Programs @ UofTSCS then select Micro Courses and Micro Credentials. They note U of T SCS is one of the first Canadian university continuing education units to offer micro courses.

Each course is short- up to six weeks, each course can be “stacked” with other micro courses to be equivalent to a full length course.

What we found interesting about this site is they actually refer you to their Financial Assistance web page. Adults often think there is no financial help for them so Learning Curves often encourages adults to reach out to the financial aid office and ask. Often there is help.

They specifically mention the Canada Training Credit. Learning Curves wrote up this Benefit in our spring 2020 issue. pg 3. see. [www.learningcurves.org](http://www.learningcurves.org) And OSAP has been adjusted to support those taking Micro Courses. In fact the micro courses were designed to be supported by the Canada Training benefit.

They refer you to [ecampusOntario](http://ecampusOntario), a not for profit organization funded by the Government of Ontario, where if you look under Contacts you can see [ecampusOntario](http://ecampusOntario) members listed- other universities and colleges in Ontario that offer micro courses, credentials

In checking out these members I found under Programs and Courses that Centennial, Seneca, Sheridan listed Micro Credentials and Humber listed Rapid Skill Courses ( ½ day or 1 day mostly)

## User-centered design Community programs

For Priority Two Equality of Opportunity for Lifelong Learning, the action area summary notes we should “Apply user-centered design” Learning Curves goes on to note that community-based- programs are most often based on user-centered design. We recommended going to 211 Toronto to find listings for community programs, select Employment and Training then search sub menus.

By searching the subheading Employment Programs I found: The YWCA Toronto program for Women and the Skills trades which we had noted in the Summer 2021 issue story on Canada- A Learning Nation Report. This program reflects the Report’s priority for user-centered design to address underrepresented groups in growth occupations.

We also found Tropicana Community Services Organization which focuses services on the Caribbean, Black and African Community. One of their services is an Employment Centre. They have day care services which support the Report’s suggestion that “wrap around services” be included in “user-centered” programs to help adults overcome practical challenges.

Skills for Change was another user-specific community program found on the 211 website under Employment and Training. The offer user centered programs for Immigrants and Refugees, Women, Youth.

Access Employment is another one with specific programs for newcomers in particular one to Start a Business in Canada.

Keep searching on 211 to find more user-centered programs

## User-centered design Corporate Training (for individuals too)

The Canada a Learning Nation Dec. 2020 Report notes that “Many Canadians want to learn in the workplace rather than pursuing classroom learning outside of work hours.” Most colleges have a Corporate Training Department but most adults have sought training through CE classes after work.

This is changing as our review of Corporate Training programs shows a trend to reach out to individuals and small businesses to make sure this user-centered training is more visible in these college departments. You need to contact these departments to see if they can help you individually and your workmates.

The Report went on to note that “Of Canada’s 1.8 million businesses, 98% employ fewer than 100 people and almost three quarters, have fewer than nine people.”

We have a market that wants to learn at work and many small businesses that would need help in developing courses to offer on site, so the corporate training sector of the colleges is ripe for growth.

This is most clear. In the **Centennial College SOLV** program. “Solv is one of a kind business service revolutionizing the way industry ( business of all sizes, across all sectors) can engage with an academic institution.” “Through a single point of contact companies are seamlessly connected to a variety of business enhancing opportunities and services across Centennial College for free.” [Solv.centennialcollege.ca](http://Solv.centennialcollege.ca)

**Seneca College** uses the traditional Corporate Training program title. They make it clear they offer professional development training for both “individual learners and corporate teams.” They also note that “Businesses may be eligible for financial support through the Canada Ontario Jobs Grant.”

These two facts were not mentioned in the SOLV website which is typical of websites, what you see on one but not mentioned on another institutional site does not mean such is not available just it is not mentioned. Ask if it is, most likely it is. [senecacollege.ca/employerscorporatetraining/html](http://senecacollege.ca/employerscorporatetraining/html)

**Humber College** uses Corporate Training Solutions as a program title. However they note that “businesses (are) supported from family-run to multinational corporations” Corporate includes SME’s (small to medium enterprises) They also note like other college programs that individuals are supported. They also note there is financial assistance through the Canada Jobs Grant.

In general they describe their program as follows: “Humber Corporate Training Solutions provides comprehensive, personalized, learning that is future focused and results driven. Whether you are a professional looking to upskill, or change your career, or an organization ready to empower your workforce to meet your strategic goals, our industry experts are ready to support you.” “We offer user-centered course tailored to your workplace”. [corporatetraining@humber.ca](mailto:corporatetraining@humber.ca)

If you search **Sheridan College** Corporate Training you land on of page that describes courses offered and then you are referred to the Opportunity Centre at the Continuing and Professional Studies department for help.

They describe their program as follows: “Our corporate training solutions offer programming and courses that can be tailored towards your specific business needs.” User-centered programming. [caps@sheridancollege.ca](mailto:caps@sheridancollege.ca)

**Durham College** also gives you a general outline of what they do but then gives contact emails to then discuss your specific needs. In general they say they have a client-focused approach that allows them to design training programs that are customized to deliver the results for your need. [corporate.training@durhamcollege.ca](mailto:corporate.training@durhamcollege.ca)

For **George Brown College** contact Kathleen Abbott, Associate Dean. George Brown does not have a specific department but Ms. Abbott will connect you with the appropriate department given your needs. [kabboott@georgebrowncollege.ca](mailto:kabboott@georgebrowncollege.ca)

## Wrap around Support - Second Career programs

In recommendation 2.2. of the Canada-A Learning Nation Dec. 22 report suggests to include “wrap around supports” Second Career is a funding program the provides wrap around supports. It is different than a program like OSAP that is tuition based support.

Learning Curves first wrote about the Second Career program in their Nov/Dec 2009 edition. See [www.learningcurves.org](http://www.learningcurves.org) for back issues.

We did a internet survey of college Second Career programs. as usual each web site gives you a piece of the picture, but Second Career Programs are the same so ask if one site does not tell you what another one does. To show this we quoted from different college sites for Second Career. By looking at each one you get a broader picture of the whole.

## Humber College Second Career Program

“The Second Career program aims to help people rejoin the workforce quickly. That’s why the program is focusing on supporting training programs that take 52 weeks or less, including micro-credential programs.” “People who want to attend training longer than one year can apply to the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) for a mix of grants and loans to help them pay for their postsecondary education.”

## George Brown College Second Career Program

Second Career program is a cost sharing grant that helps laid-off and under-employed individuals retrain for jobs in a growing fields. Qualified applicants can receive financial help with tuition, books and supplies, transportation, and living expenses associated with their education.

Second Career is an Ontario government grant that provides financial support to help qualified laid-off workers train for careers in demand. It is a cost-sharing program. Based on financial need, you may have to pay part of the costs associated with your studies.

## Seneca College Second Career

Second Career involves two procedures: the Funding Application and the College Program Application. It can take months to complete. Researching and planning ahead of time is recommended. For the Second Career Funding Application, you’ll work with an Employment Ontario Service Provider, where employment counselors are trained to help you decide if this program is right for you, and if it is, to assist in completing your application. For more information, visit the Employment Ontario website and find an Employment Ontario Service Provider in your area. Advisers at Seneca can answer your questions related to the College Program Application and provide program research documents for your application package.

## Centennial College Second Career


Second Career is a provincial government program committed to helping Ontario residents who have been laid-off since January 2015. Eligible participants may qualify for up to \$28,000 towards tuition, books, and transportation and living expenses on a case-by-case basis. Centennial College offers a range of certificate and diploma programs to choose from to meet your career goals. To check your eligibility for Second Career, please call Employment Ontario at 1-800-387-5656. Durham College Second Career Programs

**Eligible applicants are individuals who:** Are laid-off or have been laid-off since January 2015  
Are unemployed or working at an interim job  
Are choosing to retrain for a career that is in demand.

## Sheridan College Second Career

Second Career is an initiative offered by the Ontario government to fund eligible laid-off workers with skills training to help them find jobs in high-demand occupations in Ontario. It’s a cost-sharing grant provided on the basis of need; applicants may be required to financially contribute to their training or education. Second Career may cover such costs as tuition, textbooks, transportation and basic living allowance. Additional support may be available to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities, dependent care, costs of living away from home and Academic Upgrading or ESL.

## Wrap around support- Career Colleges

Career Colleges are often seen through their advertisements. As there are many like community programs it is not as easy to identify them in the adult education mosaic, somewhat like trying to find a overview listing of community programs. Career Colleges do offer funding programs to their students like Second Career. To see ones which ones are members of the Career Colleges Ontario check out the CCO web site. 



# Building Future Generations

ANGIE CHENG IN CONVERSATION WITH MINA WONG

**A**ngie Cheng is a parent, worker, and university student. Earlier this year, she told Learning Curves (Spring Issue 2021) how her family of five had lived through a year of COVID.

Last week, I asked her to tell me more about her life since coming to Canada twenty years ago.

*Angie, you gave Learning Curves an awesome story about your family during COVID. How is everyone doing five months later?*

I think all of us have learned a lot about getting along in a health crisis. I also think we are stronger individuals from solving problems together every day.

My husband, Steve started going to his office again in June. With him not working in the living room, our apartment suddenly seems larger. The kids are again their normal, noisy selves.

Getting fully vaccinated has been a priority for Steve, Sammy, and me. With Lilli and Billy too young to get the vaccine, we just need to watch them carefully in September.

But Sammy and Lilli are excited to start Grade 8 and Grade 5.

Kindergarten was a bit choppy for Billy, but he will be in Grade 1 next month.

I am starting a gerontology degree this fall. With luck, my classes will be in real classrooms on campus.

*You have dealt with everything so calmly. But I understand moving to Canada was your parents' agenda. How was it for you, a teenager suddenly brought to a new country?*

My family and I came from Chongqing, Toronto's sister city in China. We already knew a lot about Toronto because my dad's brother, Jinping had moved here in 1985.

Both my parents were teachers, encouraged by Jinping to join his import business in Toronto. I had just finished high school and turned seventeen that summer.

My parents still expected me to always do as I was told. I didn't always think they were wrong, but in Canada, I wanted to make my own decisions. It took them many, many years to understand that I needed my own identity.

*What were some major conflicts between you and your family?*

My parents had a huge problem when I was eighteen. I wasn't ready for university or pre-med as my dad wanted. Instead, I took a personal support worker certificate and volunteered at the CNIB, so that I could help people with low vision and vision loss.

I liked working for the Ministry of Health, but my parents pulled such

long faces because my achievements fell below their expectations.

Then, my parents raged at me when I introduced Steve to them.

We had met in college and wanted to marry sometime. But Steve's Indonesian when my parents wanted a Chinese son-in-law. They told me I wasn't a dutiful daughter because I only cared about myself.

*When you and Steve married, you were both just nineteen. What important beliefs have sustained marriage and family for you?*

When my parents rejected Steve, I was heartbroken. But Steve said, "Let's marry now. We can live with my parents for a while. They'll love you like they love me."

Steve and I knew all families had challenges. We also knew marriage was about everyday give-and-take to respect, accept, and support each other.

We held a simple wedding at City Hall where Steve's parents spoke to mine through an interpreter: "You have done a wonderful job raising Angie who is the sweetest angel. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We will honor you for as long as we live."

Steve and I are also proud of our cultures, so that we can give our kids a sense of pride as Canadians with Chinese and Indonesian heritage.

*That is such an interesting story. What cultural values do you and Steve give Sammy, Lilli, and Billy?*


Steve comes from a long line of fishermen near Bali. Their endurance and generosity are gifts of courage and faith from the oceans. Steve's surname, Kadir means "bright light". He tells our kids so much about marine worlds and mythology from diverse Indonesian cultures.

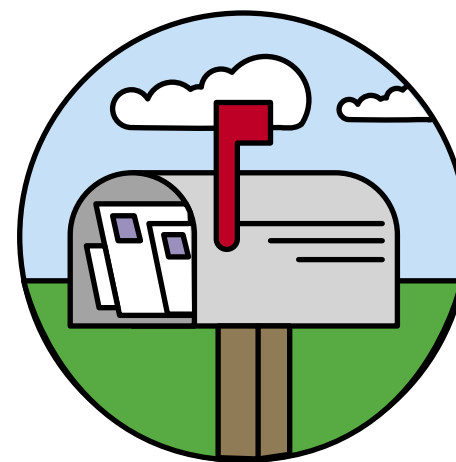
My surname, Cheng means "completion" in Mandarin, and I come from generations of teachers and healers dating back to the 1800s.

Steve and I teach our kids to celebrate success and learn from mistakes. We also accept other people who are different, and discover new things about cultures around us.

We are very blessed with three kids who are curious, adaptable, and caring. In turn, we will do our best to build future generations of resilient Canadians.

*Thank you for sharing amazing memories from your life. I wish you tremendous success in everything you do.*

It's been a privilege to share my simple story with you. Thank you for giving it to Learning Curves. 



## Dear Elcee

Dear Elcee is a feature written by Deborah Noel of Learning Curves. Send your questions about education, training, careers, and jobs to [deborahjnoel@gmail.com](mailto:deborahjnoel@gmail.com).

*Dear Elcee:*

*I am returning to school this year after being out of the classroom for over twenty years. My previous profession (the travel industry) has been seriously affected by the pandemic so I thought it might be time to change careers. I am going into the healthcare industry. I've recently been made aware that most of my courses this semester will be online. Although I am computer literate I am a little overwhelmed by this. Do you have any tips or suggestions to help me cope with this new world of online learning?*

*Panicked in Pickering*

Hi Panicked!

Calm down! You will be fine! First, let me congratulate you on making the difficult decision to return to school for a whole new field. Second, let me assure you that you are not alone in navigating the online learning system for the first time.

While online learning has many advantages and some disadvantages, there is no question that its here to stay. Becoming the best online learner you can be requires both discipline and flexibility. Here are some tips;

1. You need to treat your online courses as though you were attending in-person classes. That means you get up, get dressed and have breakfast as though you were actually leaving the house.
2. A dedicated workspace is key. Even if it is your dining room table, treat it as a workspace. Stay close to your wifi router to ensure your connection. Have your tools (pen, papers etc) at the ready. If your workspace is doing double duty, create a "desk in a box" and have it ready for classtime.
3. Eliminate distractions. Just as you would if you were going to work or in class, put your phone on airplane mode or silent. Turn off the tv and /or radio. Maybe put a sign on the door stating "in-class" or "Do Not Disturb".

4. Don't be afraid to ask for help. It is very easy to become isolated during these times. It can be doubly difficult if you are on a learning curve. Remember, this is new for many other people also so your questions may be welcomed.
5. Establish a support group. Learn to ZOOM! If you can set up a group with others who are studying in the same area, great, but if not, establish a group of people who are sharing your goals. They can provide support, empathy and some much needed companionship.

Well, Panicked, I hope this helps somewhat. As you already know, the pandemic has changed how we live, learn and work. Some of these changes will go back to a new normal but many of them will be here to stay. Change is necessary for growth but there are inevitable growing pains. Stay on course! Good luck!

*We value your opinion. Please let us know what you think about this column. Send comments to [learningcurves@hotmail.com](mailto:learningcurves@hotmail.com).*

TDSB COMMUNITY SERVICES

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\*Clients we've helped secure employment and training opportunities in the last four years.



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