



# Newsletter 2016

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**Osborne Village**  
**RESOURCE CENTRE**

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# Message from the Editor

+ Jude Gaal

CAREER COUNSELLOR / WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

Learning is truly a lifelong endeavor that never has to end! This newsletter is devoted to sharing the experiences of individuals who have gone back to school to learn something new. My own experience started after my daughter entered the public school system. In my first attempt at post-secondary education I accrued a few credits and a lot of failures. After being out of school for so many years my confidence in being able to do the work was very low. I decided to start with a mandatory course in academic writing. With the encouragement of my professor and my diligence I succeeded. Despite the fact that it took

12 years of taking one class every year to get that degree, I wouldn't change one minute of my experience. A former OVRC client shares her experience of going back to school in the interview, *Why Not?*, and employment counsellor Emily Worthen, at the Salvation Army, provides inspiration and resources in the article *The Path to Success* for those who want to develop their literacy skills and go on to find employment. Rob Campbell, education director for the Horizon Learning Centres' program, talks with a former student in *Show Up For Class And Pay Attention*, and career counsellor Kristina Lonstrup here at OVRC provides readers with some food for thought in her article *Are You Ready For Change?* OVRC's centre coordinator Keith Robinson also shares his story of going back to school later in life and how that has changed his life for the better.

It doesn't matter when we get started, or where, or why or how, what's important is that we do get started and continue learning. I'd like to end with a quote from Nelson Mandela who continued his studies even while in a South African jail cell. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." In a world that needs change we can all be a part of the solution by continuing our learning and sharing it with the people around us.

## QUARTERLY QUOTE

“

*Incredible change happens in your life when you decide to take control of what you do have power over instead of craving control over what you don't.* ”

*Steve Maraboli*



# Why Not?

+ Jude Gaal

CAREER COUNSELLOR / WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

I met with N in 2014. A personal crisis sparked N to re-evaluate her life and the path that she was on. Although she had been successful in every job she had, something was missing. She wanted work that would have more of a positive impact on peoples' lives. As often happens, life's responsibilities came knocking on the door and N had to focus on getting a job to pay the bills. Career exploration was put on the back burner, and she returned to sales, her fall back occupation in which she knew she would succeed. And so she did. Upon taking a job with a furniture company, she not only became the top sales person, she also became manager of a department and won the respect of the largely male sales staff. Yet something propelled her to continue career exploration. A year later we met again. The seed of change had been planted and N decided to pack up and move to Toronto to study homeopathy. In October of this year I asked N if she would share her experience of going back to school for this newsletter and she graciously accepted.

**What was it about the career exploration at OVRC that stuck with you and propelled you to make this amazing life change?**

The thing that really stuck with me was that the exercises we completed during counselling made me aware of a very important truth. It was this: the things in myself that I had always viewed as flaws in character/personality were not flaws at all. I just needed to see these characteristics as the gifts they really are. Risk taking in a positive way is definitely not a flaw and being able to do many things at once is not a flaw either.

*My career counsellor asked me the question, "Why not go back to school?"*

**How did career counselling help you make the decision to return to school?**

My career counsellor asked me the question, "Why not go back to school?" At the time I had all kinds of excuses or reasons. However it stuck with me and it became obvious that if I wanted to find purpose in my work I just had to make a change.

**What do you find the most challenging about being back in school?**

I have to discipline myself to study consistently. It has been a challenge to say the least with all the other things that go on in one's life. However it is 2 months in and I am finding the balance.

**What qualities do you possess that help you succeed in life**

My spiritual beliefs and practices help me the most. However that is not the question so the answer is that I am very determined in my desire to help others in a positive way.

**What strategies have you developed to help you succeed with your course work?**

I am making reasonable demands on myself for study time and make myself scheduled times to study to coincide with my work schedule.

**Has your past work experience prepared you for your studies, and if so how?**

My past work experiences have always involved having to learn new things and so in that sense yes. Also I am prepared for juggling activities by previous experience and raising a family.

**What advice would you give to someone who is considering going back to school to pursue a new career?**

Make sure you research it extensively like OVRC trains you to do. Dig really deep into who your true self is - the one before society started judging and labeling you! Once you are sure that it is your true desire nothing can stop you.

*Has N's journey been a bed of roses? Absolutely not! She sent me an email shortly after starting classes confiding that she questioned what she was doing. Instead of curling up in bed, she made some good healthy food and started on the coursework. Did this work? Yes! On her first Anatomy & Physiology quiz she got 95%. Will N ever question her decision again? Probably. However, she knows to keep her eye on her long term goal and continue to use her strong work habits and qualities to quickly get back on track. Her enthusiasm for life, love of learning and desire to help people has propelled her into this next chapter of life. She is a wonderful example for all of us to never let anything (N is 56 years old) stop us from working towards our dreams.*

# Show Up For Class And Pay Attention

+ Rob Campbell

EDUCATION DIRECTOR, HORIZONS LEARNING CENTRES

“I did a Google search under adult education and Horizons Adult Learning Centres came up,” claims Jonathan. “Horizons seemed to be the best fit for what I needed to complete my grade 12 and move on to further education. So last December, I signed up, left Brandon where I was living at the time, and attended classes at Horizons.”

Jonathan was short mathematics and English to graduate and he felt that Horizons would provide him with the means to achieve his goal. He had attended another adult learning centre, but it didn't meet his needs.

“Horizons was more like a classroom,” says Jonathan. “The teachers were really helpful and I was able to get one-on-one instruction whenever I needed it.”

“I'm a fairly smart student so I didn't have much trouble with the course material,” he adds. “And because I had the drive to succeed, I was able to achieve my goals at Horizons.”

Jonathan graduated from Horizons in June 2015 having attended both the Portage Place and Elmwood Centre in order to finish both of his needed courses by the end of the year. Getting his grade 12 Diploma enabled him to apply for, get accepted into and attend the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT) to train as a Motosport Technician.

“That's a 10 month course and we work on small engine repair,” says Jonathan. “We repair lawn mowers, snowmobiles, boats, motorcycles and other small engines. Hopefully there will be a job for me in that field when I graduate.” He adds that he works on other engines on his own time and has been into hobby grade remote controls for about 8 years. That is what got him thinking of becoming a Motosport Technician.

Jonathan says that the main difference between Horizons and his MITT course is that he spends a majority of his time in the shop applying theories versus all the time in the classroom.

In praise of Horizons, Jonathan credits Elspeth Campbell with guiding him through the English course. “English has always been my least favorite course and Elspeth made it fun. Lorna Hunter was also a big help with her cheerful attitude as I came into school every day,” he adds.

“My advice to students attending Horizons is simple. Just show up for class and pay attention to the instructors. Most people get behind because they don't attend class regularly. Classes move at a very fast pace so it's easy to fall behind if you don't attend. You definitely have to be there.”

Horizons Learning Centre is entering our 15th year, providing quality, flexible high school programming to adult learners in the diverse communities that we serve within Winnipeg. Our program is designed to assist learners in completing their Mature Student High School Diploma, or upgrading in order to gain admission to post-secondary institutions. All daytime courses are delivered on a (9 week) quarterly system. Optional courses offered are computers, psychology, law, family studies, physics, chemistry, biology, global issues and drama. Classes are held weekdays and evenings. Horizons Learning Centre is in partnership with the Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology (MITT). For more information on programs and class times, call our locations, or visit our website at [www.horizonslearning.com](http://www.horizonslearning.com).

*“The teachers were really helpful and I was able to get one-on-one instruction whenever I needed it.”*



+ SHOWN HERE Horizon Learning Centres – 2015 Grad



# The Path To Success

+ Emily Worthen

EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLOR AT THE SALVATION ARMY –  
WORK READINESS PROGRAM

Close your eyes for a minute and try to imagine getting through a day, just one day, without reading anything. Imagine not being able to read text messages or e-mails from family members and friends; not being able to read street signs, mail, newspapers, websites, or this newsletter. Many Manitobans struggle to read on a daily basis, a skill that many of us take for granted. Illiteracy is one of the biggest barriers for the vulnerable people, yet the ability to read is correlated with finding employment and keeping it long-term.

*Many Manitobans struggle to read on a daily basis, a skill that many of us take for granted.*

When people come through the doors at the Salvation Army's *Work Readiness Program (WKRK)* to get help finding employment, we start by assessing their reading level using the *Test for Basic Adult Education (TABE)* assessment. If an individual is below a grade six level we will suggest they start with the *STEP* literacy program to enhance their reading skills. The *STEP* literacy program has two stages: Stage 1 is for students with reading levels ranging from non-reader to grade 3; Stage 2 is for reading levels of grade 3 to grade 6. After completing *STEP*, students are ready to go into *WKRK* and start their job search.

The *WKRK* program provides students the opportunity to learn about resume writing, interviewing, cover letter writing and many other job search skills such as learning how to manage their time effectively by balancing their personal lives and studies. Communication, problem-solving and teamwork skills are also enhanced by working

THE MORE THAT YOU READ,  
THE MORE THINGS YOU WILL  
KNOW. THE MORE THAT YOU  
LEARN, THE MORE PLACES  
YOU'LL GO.

~ DR. SEUSS



in a classroom environment. These are all soft skills that employers are looking for.

Many of the students in the *STEP* and *WKRK* programs have found their path to success, so get out there and find yours! For more information on the *STEP* or *WKRK* programs go to our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/wkrp.step](http://www.facebook.com/wkrp.step)

*The Salvation Army STEP literacy program is dedicated to providing a safe, caring and challenging environment that encourages mutual respect, high self-esteem and achievement of individual academic potential. The STEP program is designed to develop confident, responsible individuals with a lifelong desire for learning and achieve a grade 6 reading level. The Work Readiness Program (WKRK) works to improve the employability of high needs individuals through a holistic, community-based approach to literacy skills development, personal development, career exploration, counselling services and work experience. In order to be accepted into WKRK a grade 6 reading level is required.*

## READER FEEDBACK

### Subject: OVRC Fall Newsletter

VERY good newsletter (Fall 2016 – the mature worker issue) and so appropriate for me. I took away some great tips considering I'm 49 and looking for my next career. Thank you!

S. K.

# Are You Ready For Change?

+ Kristina Lonstrup  
CAREER COUNSELLOR

**D**o you feel a change coming on, or that a change is necessary? Perhaps that change involves returning to school. Change can be hard at first and it's normal to be a little frightened. Writing down your thoughts and sketching out a plan makes your goals seem less daunting and more achievable. To get you thinking about what factors need to be considered to successfully manage a life change complete this questionnaire.

***In what three ways would returning to school impact your life positively?***

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***What class, or training program are you considering taking? At what school?***

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***What is the school's contact information?***

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***Have you made an appointment to meet with an advisor/counsellor? If not, when can you call or send an email to make the appointment?***

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***Write about a time when you pursued and completed a successful project.***

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***How did you manage your time?***

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***Did you experience a temporary setback? What happened?***

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**How did you address the temporary setback?**

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**Did you ask someone for help? If not, why not.**

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**Name three family members or friends who you consider to be your support network:**

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**How can they help you succeed if you decide to return to school?**

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**Which family members would be willing to take on more household duties to allow you more time to study?**

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*Your change may inspire others to change.*

**Name three tasks you would delegate to your family members to free up more time for studies.**

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This exercise was meant to help you begin thinking of the changes you may have to make to achieve your goal. It is also meant to help you remember that temporary setbacks may happen and that it is important to ask for help. Making changes takes work but when the goal has been accomplished, life will look and feel better. Your change may even inspire others to change!

If you want to discuss your goals for change with a career counsellor, please call Osborne Village Resource Centre at 204.989.6503 and book an appointment!



# It's Never Too Late To Grow

+ Keith Robinson

CENTRE COORDINATOR

No matter what your circumstance, or your age, it is never too late to invest in yourself and learn new skills that will take you on a new career path. In my late thirties I worked as a Service and Parts Manager for a large farm dealership in Brandon Manitoba. When the business was sold I decided to leave and look for new opportunities. My next job was in sales promoting products and services to businesses in the area surrounding Brandon. It didn't take me long to realize that the job was not a fit for my personality and skills—it actually came close to breaking my spirit and took a toll on my confidence. I decided to apply for human resource positions as I had extensive experience in all aspects of management. I quickly learned that employers wanted more—employers also wanted credentials. If I was going to reach my goal of working in human resources I would need a diploma.

At the age of 40 I found myself talking with a friend, who also happened to be an Employment Counselor with the government of Manitoba, about going back to school. He set up appointments and assisted in guiding me through the funding process. After completing my research and providing him with the facts regarding the opportunities for long term employment in human resources, I obtained some funding for the two year Business Administration Program at Assiniboine Community College with a major in Human Resources.

Because I was only receiving partial funding I had to find a way to cover the additional costs for the next two years. My friend came through once again. He provided me with the opportunity to live with his family at a very minimal cost. Finally everything was taken care of and it was time to grow and learn.

At first I was very nervous about fitting in with the other students. I also wondered if I had the ability to learn and be in class all day. I was stepping outside of my comfort zone and had to decide whether I was going to push on or fall back to what was comfortable. I decided to push on and it was a fantastic experience. I became friends with many of my classmates and gained so much knowledge and wisdom from them! In fact I believe my fellow students helped me grow the most as a person.

My confidence continued to increase during this two year journey. I had a feeling of great pride and achievement turning in my first paper, writing my first test and making it through the first end-of-term exams. I enjoyed getting feedback not only from the instructors, but also from my fellow classmates. Everyone had different learning styles, work ethics and skill levels, yet somehow as a group these differences came together to produce a quality team effort. The communication and interpersonal skills that I developed during group work were vital to the whole learning and development process. My sense of accomplishment was well worth the effort and commitment I made to go back to school. I knew that I could do the work and that my education was preparing me to be successful in my career path. Not only did I graduate with my diploma in Human Resources, I also earned the Human Resource Management Award for Outstanding Achievement.

*I felt a great feeling of pride and achievement turning in my first paper, writing my first test and making it through the first end-of-term exams.*

During the summer breaks I worked with the Youth Employment office in Brandon. Realizing that I loved the work I changed my focus from human resources and decided to pursue a position in the employment counselling field. Looking back, my two year investment has given me the opportunity to work for more than 11 years in a career that I love. In 2013, I had the opportunity to advance in this field by taking on the role of Centre Coordinator here at OVRC.

Today there is nothing more satisfying than driving to work knowing that I am going to a job that I want to be doing—and that I am here because of my hard work and desire to improve. If you would like to talk about what it takes to invest in your future please come and talk to me and let's find a way to make your dreams happen!

I'd like to end by acknowledging Mike and Lorrinda Abbey. Had you not allowed me to be a part of the family for those two years I would not have been able to reach my goals. Thank you for your support and belief in me and my journey!



# MITT And ALCs Take The Power Of Synergy To The Next Level

+ Sunday Olukaju

COUNSELOR/ADVISOR – MANITOBA INSTITUTE OF TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY – ESL PROGRAM

What is synergy? The prefix 'syn' means "united". The definition of synergy, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is **the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.** American educator Stephen Covey describes synergy as "what happens when one plus one equals ten, or a hundred, or even a thousand! ...when two or more people or organizations go beyond preconceived ideas to meet a great challenge." Covey said, "Synergy is better than 'my way' or 'your way'. It's 'our way'." MITT believes in the power of synergy that opens more doors to opportunity.

MITT's synergistic relationships with Adult Learning Centres (ALCs) are brimming with great opportunities for newcomer students, refugees, adult learners and immigrants. Whether an individual is looking for work, or to improve their employability by upgrading their formal education, each person can take the power of synergy to the next level. Graduates of ALCs can have direct access to other core MITT programs to acquire the skills in sought after fields that employers want.



+ SHOWN HERE Auto Mechanics instructor Ken Komonko (front) and student (in back).

*Synergy is better than 'my way' or 'your way'. It's 'our way'.*

MITT's flexible and modern approach combined with its growing number of programs—designed in consultation with industry—can give students from ALCs the edge to succeed. With almost 90% of MITT grads getting jobs in their field of study within six months, the results speak for themselves. MITT's ACL partners include Crossroads Learning Centre;

Horizons Learning Centres; Portage Learning and Literacy Centre; St. Norbert Adult Education Centre; St. Vital Adult Learning Centre; and the United Food & Commercial Workers Training Centre.

To find out more, or request additional information about ALCs go to [mitt.ca/alc](http://mitt.ca/alc).

## Fundamentals of Personal Computing

*Mondays: February 29, March 7, 14, 21, Apr. 4, 5 - 7:30 pm*

*5 – 2.5 hour sessions (once a week)*

*In person registration required, \$70 (cash only)*

- Become proficient using the mouse
- Become familiar with Windows and its terminology
- Learn basic editing and formatting functions
- Learn how to surf the world wide web
- Set up and learn how to use a free email account



## Basic Microsoft Word

*Tuesdays: January 12, 19, 26, Feb. 2, 9,*

*9 – 11:30 am*

*5 – 2.5 hour sessions (once a week)*

*In person registration required, \$70 (cash only).*

*Prerequisite: Fundamentals of  
Personal Computing*

- Learn how to manage your files in Windows
- Become familiar with the components of the MS Word Window
- Review various techniques for selecting text: one word, one sentence, paragraphs, all text with single, double and triple click
- Learn intermediate formatting techniques: customizing bullets & numbering, borders and shading, fonts, indenting, cut, copy & paste
- Word with headers and footers, page numbers, tabs, tables, clip art and word art
- Learn to proof your document: page set-up, spell check, show/hide, print preview
- Word with multiple windows
- Learn the basics of the mail merge function
- Become familiar with ribbons and tabs

## Basic Microsoft Excel

*Mondays: January 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8,*

*5 – 7:30 pm*

*Tuesdays: March 1, 8, 15, 22, Apr. 5,*

*9 – 11:30 am*

*5 – 2.5 hour sessions (once a week)*

*In person registration required, \$70 (cash only)*

*Prerequisite: Basic Microsoft Word*

- Become familiar with the components of the Excel window
- Become familiar with the various mouse pointers in Excel
- Learn Spreadsheet terminology: books, worksheets, cells, columns, rows, and ranges
- Learn how to enter and edit text within a cell and apply formatting options
- Work with ranges and range names
- Work with basic formulas and simple calculations
- Learn how to proof your Excel spreadsheets: page set-up, set margins, paper orientation & page breaks, spell check, show/hide, print preview
- Learn the basics of Charting
- Work with multiple spreadsheets
- Link Excel spreadsheet into a Word document
- Become familiar with ribbons and tabs

## Ace That Interview Workshop!

Two-day workshop, Wednesday and Thursday,  
from 8:30 am to 4 pm

January 13 & 14, February 03 & 04,  
March 9 & 10, March 30 & 31, April 20 & 21

Get the skills and confidence to ace your next interview. This two day workshop will cover the following topics:

- How to make a great first impression
- How to identify questions employers will ask
- Confidently responding to all types of interview questions
- How to turn a negative situation into a positive outcome

You will have the chance to put learnt skills into practice, by rehearsing your responses in mock interviews, getting feedback from the workshop participants.

## Targeted Job Search Workshop

Fridays from 8:30 to noon

January 8, February 19, March 4, March 25,  
April 15

If you are still spending time applying for jobs on the job bank, you are missing out on most of the available jobs. This workshop will give you the tools for a more effective job search. Learn how to target specific jobs with organizations that you would like to work for.

Topics covered include:

- Why employers don't advertise and how to use this to your advantage
- Self-assessment of your top qualities
- How to research hidden jobs
- Presentation skills and marketing
- How to use social networking in your job search

## The Next Chapter Workshop

Two-day workshop, Thursday and Friday,  
from 8:30 am to noon

January 28 & 29, February 25 & 26,  
March 17 & 18, April 7 & 8, April 28 & 29

Are you still looking to find your perfect career, where you will feel fulfilled and most productive? This workshop gives you the tools to:

- Do a self-assessment which includes: Values, skills, attributes/strengths and interests/ hobbies
- Do a work assessment which includes:
- Your last three jobs (if applicable) and the work activities you enjoy
- Work preference, work activities, occupational interests, work/volunteer experience
- Research careers with Career Cruising
- Assess the sustainability of a career using all your assessments

## Living In Your Job Search Workshop

Wednesday from 8:30 to noon

January 20, February 10, March 16, April 6 & 27

Has the job search got you feeling down? In this workshop you will:

- Become aware of how negativity affects your life
- Learn three simple ways to amplify your positivity

You will also go home with a toolkit filled with positivity tools that you can use right away to amplify your positivity!

# About OVRC

Do you need help preparing a resume or getting ready for a job interview?

Do you need help preparing a cover letter?

Do you want to consult a career counsellor?

Call Judy, our client services representative at OVRC and schedule an appointment for any of the free services that we provide.

TEL: 204.989.6503 · FAX: 204.477.0903 · TWITTER: @O\_V\_R\_C

For further information visit our web site: [www.ovrc.ca](http://www.ovrc.ca)

If you have any comments, questions or concerns about our services, contact the centre coordinator Keith Robinson at [keith.robinson@mitt.ca](mailto:keith.robinson@mitt.ca)

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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## About OVRC's Newsletter

If you have an idea for an article you would like to see, or contribute to the newsletter,

or have any comments or suggestions, please contact:

newsletter editor Jude Gaal, at 204.989.6503 or [jude.gaal@mitt.ca](mailto:jude.gaal@mitt.ca)

Newsletter design and layout by our volunteer Kristin McPherson



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