



WORK-ABLE NEWS

October 2017

Profile on: Laura Durling

Laura Durling is a registered Occupational Therapist and has provided health and wellness appraisal and counselling to individuals and groups for over seven years. She began her career in health starting when she completed a 4-year degree in Kinesiology and Applied Health from the University of Winnipeg and practiced as a Certified Personal Trainer (CSEP) for over five years. Laura's interest for helping others live to their fullest potential led her to completing a Master of Occupational Therapy degree at the University of Manitoba. Laura brings her physical health background into the field of mental health where she has provided mental health counselling and has facilitated recovery and wellness focused groups in a community setting for over three years. She is dedicated to supporting individuals in strengthening the link between their own physical and mental wellness.

Laura has experience working with individuals living with chronic disease, serious mental health challenges, developmental disabilities, and has worked with people of all ages from children to older adults. Laura has continued to pursue professional development opportunities by receiving certificates in Practical Facilitation Skills through the University of Winnipeg and in Expressive Art Therapy through the W.H.E.A.T. Institute. From these experiences, Laura brings with her a creative and engaging skill set while working with individuals one-on-one and in developing and facilitating workshops and therapeutic groups.

Laura has particular interest in mindfulness and how to pay attention to the body and mind to engage in meaningful occupations and facilitate long-term wellbeing. Check out the mindfulness tips created by Laura on page 2!



Happenings

October is Occupational Therapy Month!

Check us out on Facebook! 

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Spotlight on: Early Intervention Services

In recent years, Canadian employers have identified mental health as the leading cause of both short term and long-term disability claims¹. Mental health related illnesses in Canada cost employers more than \$6 billion per year in lost productivity from absenteeism, presenteeism, and turnover¹.

Early intervention strategies targeting mental health in the workplace have been shown to reduce disability costs, increase productivity, and prevent absenteeism by improving health.

Our ERA Mental Health Program provides an evidence-based continuum of services to support employers and employees, improve productivity, prevent time loss, and facilitate successful return to work.

Early intervention services can include:

- Training and support for managers so they can confidently support employees with mental health distress and manage workplace issues proactively
- Training for the entire workplace on self care and resiliency skills (such as Mindfulness)
- Workplace assessments and interventions with employees who are struggling with a mental health condition to develop skills, manage work demands, and find supports to help them stay at work and be productive

Additional workplace interventions include:

- Work readiness and work accommodation assessments for employees who may be at work or re-turning to work
- Activation programs and return to work planning
- RTW support and job coaching to employees and their managers to facilitate a sustainable return to work and reduce the chance of reoccurrence

1. Mental Health Commission of Canada

LIVE WELL... BE MINDFUL!



Work-Able SOLUTIONS
Occupational Therapy Consulting Services

Solutions
for Living
Well

Mindfulness is the new buzzword in the health world and with good reason! There is a lot to be said for the benefits that mindfulness can have on your body, mind, and spirit. In turn, this impacts the way you work, play and live. Here we have some simple ways to start paying attention!

CHECK IN

"Checking in" means taking a moment to listen to what our bodies and minds are telling us. Take a minute to check in with yourself. Sit down in a comfortable position and slowly scan through your body. What is going on?



TAKE 5 DEEP BREATHS

Inhale for 5 counts, hold for 5 counts, and exhale for 5 counts. Do this 5 times. Deep breathing helps to lower your heart rate and blood pressure, decreases stress hormone activity and also reduces muscle tension. Ahh..



DAILY SELF-REFLECTION

Set aside a few minutes every day to think about how things are going for you. Journaling is a great way of making note of your thoughts. Try writing down 5 things you are grateful for!



DO WHAT IS BEST FOR YOU

It is easy to fall into old ways of doing things, but are they really what is best for you at the moment? Tune in and ask yourself "What do I really need right now?" "What activity will best honor my body and mind?"



LOOK AND LISTEN

Use your senses to focus on the present moment and reconnect with the world around you. What are 5 things you can see? 5 things you can hear? 5 things you can feel?



To sit, or to stand - that is the question.

Written by Elaine Huzel, Occupational Therapist

Is it just me, or are we being inundated with information about the perils of sitting and the benefits of standing at work? While there is no clear evidence that we are on the right track with sit-stand workstations², they certainly are becoming increasingly popular ("Three Cheers!" say the manufacturers of sit-stand desks). Most people are surprised to find that standing in one spot to work can be quite challenging.

As a health care practitioner who is responsible to make recommendations supported by evidence, and who does not benefit from the sale of any equipment, I advise my clients that the sit-stand workstation:

- Has pros and cons, depending on the type of work you do
- Does not work for every person, or help with every physical condition
- Has been shown to reduce sitting time by about 20% of the workday
- May have design flaws that affect comfort and pose ergonomic risk
- Can be costly
- Must be utilized properly, with frequent transitions up and down throughout the day to be effective - and this takes diligence on the part of the user



A simple solution you can do now is to move around more! Walking is a natural solution to combat the effects of sitting that is supported by research, and has more health benefits than just standing still. In fact, even if you have a sit-stand desk, movement breaks of 2 minutes for every 30 minutes of work are still recommended.

If you would like help determining if a sit-stand workstation is the right choice for you, what model will fit your needs or the needs of your organization: contact us for assistance. Work-Able Solutions provides a wide range of ergonomic services including individual office ergonomic assessments, whole office assessments, ergonomics training, and ergonomics program development. We also provide ergonomic consultations to assist with decision making around new equipment purchases and office renovation projects.

2. Shrestha N, Kukkonen-Harjula KT, Verbeek JH, Ijaz S, Hermans V, Bhaumik S. Workplace interventions for reducing sitting at work. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2016, Issue 3. Art. No.: CD010912. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD010912.pub3.

Work-Able Services

- Office and Industrial Ergonomic Assessment
- Ergonomics Workshops
- Employee Training and Wellness Workshops
- Physical Demands Analysis
- Cognitive & Psychological Job Demands Analysis
- Workplace Accommodation Assessment
- Functional Capacity Evaluation

Solutions for Living and Working Well

- Return to Work and Stay at Work Programs
- Community and Workplace Mental Health Services
- Activation Programs
- Cognitive Assessment
- Brain Injury Rehabilitation
- Personal Care Assistance Needs Assessment
- Home / Activities of Daily Living Assessment

Contact us:

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