

A Different Kind of New Year's Resolution

Bet you're getting tired of all the media attention paid to New Year's Resolutions during the first part of January. If you're not being reminded to lose weight, exercise more, mend old feuds or get outside more often, you are encouraged to change your spending habits for the better, get more engaged in your community or simply be a better person (whatever that means!)

All of these types of resolution-making are based on a presumption that people need to improve themselves, that we have weaknesses, bad habits that need fixing. That's a really negative way of looking at ourselves. The reality is that each of us has a range of skills and talents, some we use every day and some that are tucked away because the opportunity to exercise them hasn't happened in awhile.

Unlike children and teenagers, who are being taught regularly, (and therefore having their skills assessed) adults, whether they are in the job market or want to be, don't often get the same opportunity to appreciate the skills they have. If you are over 18, unemployed and/or on income support (Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program or Employment Insurance), you're in the process of actively seeking work. In doing so, you may need to get your Grade 12, or refresh some skills that may have gone by the wayside due to underuse. You may be uncomfortable thinking about going back to school to do that, and you may not be ready for learning on-line using computers. Most importantly though, you may not have a good sense of what your skills strengths are, and how they match or don't match your job aspirations. If you're currently employed, but there are changes coming or you want a better or different job, you may have the same kinds of questions.

The Training and Learning Centre is here to help you build on your current strengths and decide on which skills you'd like to improve. Unlike making a traditional New Year's Resolution – let's fix something that isn't working or let's eliminate a bad habit, we believe very strongly that adults deserve the utmost appreciation of, and respect for, the life skills they've developed. If adults need opportunities to regain a skill strength or to add a skill to an existing toolkit, that's exactly the kind of help we can offer. The best way to keep a New Year's Resolution is to begin with appreciating all you currently have – and that includes work-related skills. Not sure what you've got? Come see us.

Next time: how TLC can assist employers in Renfrew County