



Membership Year Extended



VAD has extended the 2019-2020 membership for all its' members due to the pandemic. In the next quarter,

VAD will be sending out renewal forms and new member forms to our contacts. Please watch for this form in the mail and return it for the 2021 membership year. It is available for download on our web page: <https://vadsociety.ca/social-action/adf/become-a-member>

AGM Announcement

VAD has moved the virtual AGM to September 17, 2020 at 7:30 pm. If you are interested in attending this Zoom event, please email vad@vadsociety.ca and request the zoom

password and link or a proxy form for members unable to attend.



Virtual Disability Awareness Presentations Now Available

With the pandemic happening, VAD has had to rethink how to present the Disability Awareness Presentations for schools and businesses. In response, we have gone virtual! Book a zoom meeting with VAD and have the Education Coordinator present to your class or at a staff meeting through Zoom. VAD will present a custom presentation or workshop catered to your needs. Learn about etiquette, myths, and ways to interact with individuals that have disabilities in a positive and healthy way from a presenter with lived experience.



Accessible Driver Appreciation

It is time to start planning the annual Accessible Driver Appreciation Week events! This year the event falls between November 8 -14, 2020. VAD has a sample proclamation, news release and assets on our web page for participants to start planning their events for driver appreciation. The 2020 Poster graphic will be available in October for download. Please use the hash tags **#AccessibleTransportation** or **#AccessibleDriverAppreciation** for posting social media, photographs and testimonials! New posters and graphics for 2020 will be available for download in October. <https://vadsociety.ca/Accessible-driver-appreciation-week>

Ways to get involved:

- Display posters – make copies and hang it in your offices or where seen by the public.
- Share the 30 second Video on social media.
- Hand out stickers to people who use accessible transport or those who come in contact with drivers and dispatchers.
- Share the poster on social media (during the second week of November) along with a shout out to those making accessible transportation possible.
- Take and share pictures on social media with the hashtags for tagging.
- Provide coffee and/or treats for the drivers during the week – pick a day to promote the event.
- Encourage your clients to let their drivers know that their services are much appreciated – provide Thank





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You cards for patrons to sign.

- Ask your local government official for a proclamation about Accessible Driver Appreciation Week, a sample is available for copying on the website. *This needs to be done at least 6 weeks in advance.*
- Send a News Release to local news outlets for inclusion about your event.

Back to School & Work

Taken from the CMHA Ontario Return to the Workplace: A psychological toolkit for heading back to work

For some, our changing reality may be even more challenging than the pandemic itself. While news about the pandemic has been difficult to hear and cope with, it came with fairly clear guidance from public health authorities about how to physically distance, where our behaviours could be altered and where to go for more direction and information. Complicating these matters are a variety of mixed messages, from information about irregular spikes in COVID-19 cases, to news about reopening the economy. Further complications include concerns of safety among schools and childcare centres, which impede parents' abilities to return to the workplace. These complex challenges can create feelings of fear, anxiety and frustration, on top of the difficult emotions we have already been coping with while staying home. It is important to keep in mind that everyone responds differently to the effects of a pandemic and that feelings can be fluid. Our experiences may change over the course of time, and the guidance provided may be helpful for some at some points in time, and not others.

As the conversations about returning to the workplace emerge in each of our spaces, you may experience symptoms of anxiety, stress, panic and worry. You may also experience trouble with sleep, your appetite and your interactions with colleagues and friends. These reactions are normal and expected.

COVID-19 is experienced by our bodies as a stressor and has created multiple other stressors in our daily lives. Returning to the workplace is an anticipated stressor. Our bodies use the same mechanisms to respond to acute and chronic stressors. Chronic stressors can make

us physically sick.

Our thoughts impact our feelings and behaviours. Our thoughts can create a vicious cycle, making it hard to create change. It is possible to break this cycle. Our thoughts are informed by years of experience and observation, and with time and practice, become automatic responses to the external environment. These automatic responses are experienced by everyone and are informed by the thinking styles we identify with most.



Tips for Speaking with Your Employer

Start the conversation: Sometimes, even the most astute manager will not notice when something is wrong. Start the conversation by asking for a meeting in private. Do not feel like you need to disclose everything but let them know you may need some additional support as plans for returning to the workplace get outlined.

Focus on effects: Accommodations should be effects-based. Focus on what would make your workplace more conducive to your well-being. For example, you might consider a graduated re-entry into the workplace with shorter hours and days and gradual increases over time. Make an appointment with your health care professional: After the initial conversation with your manager, make an appointment with your care provider to ask for their input on what an effective accommodation might be. Be sure to request documentation that states the limitations.

Be honest: If it is safe to do so, give as much context as possible to your supervisor so they can aid you in crafting an appropriate accommodation plan. Sometimes it takes a few attempts. It is important to let your supervisor know if the plan needs to be updated.

Participate in check-ins: Let your manager know on a regular basis how things are going. Partici-



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participating in check-ins, even if informal, is a great way to manage the accommodation plan.

Take care: Take care of yourself. Sometimes the best thing is taking some time away in order to focus on your care or use the time to assess your path forward. Speak with your supervisor about sick-leave policies and supports outside the workplace, such as benefit plans and employee assistance programs.

In addition to practicing these strategies for returning to the workplace, it is also important we take time to actively practice self-care. Self-care strategies may include finding ways to be active or to self-soothe so we have ways to improve our emotional experience when we are feeling distressed. Some activities listed below can help reduce the intensity of any distress you may be feeling and can increase feelings of mindfulness.



Activities that can help reduce stress

- Practice mindful movements or yoga
- Read a book
- Go for a long walk
- Listen to a podcast
- Pet and play with an animal
- Watch a favourite movie or a funny show

Disability Awareness Presentations Virtual Presentations are now Available

Our Disability Awareness Program is a service to educate about differences, while promoting acceptance and inclusion.



WHY YOU SHOULD PARTICIPATE

By educating people about disability related issues, people will:

- **Be Aware** of the diverse needs of people with disabilities.
- Work to create **inclusive** and **accessible** environments.
- Display a **positive attitude** towards people with disabilities.

To schedule a presentation, contact us at presentations@vadsociety.ca or call 789-488-9088 – Honorarium is appreciated or a donation to the Food Bank on our behalf.

LEARNING INSPIRES

- Removing **BARRIERS**
- Changing **ATTITUDES**
- Appropriate **LANGUAGE**
- Understanding **MYTHS** and **FACTS**
- Being an **ALLY**

Participants will gain knowledge in:

- How to treat and act around a person with a disability
- Appropriate use of language
- The meaning of disability
- Understanding of people with disabilities rather than myths and misconceptions
- Attitudes and barriers faced by people with disabilities
- Disability as a rights issue
- Programs and services available for people with disabilities

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities is a provincial cross-disability organization that has worked since 1973 to promote full participation in society by Albertans with disabilities

Look for us on Facebook and Twitter!

Voice of Albertans with Disabilities
 Hys Centre, 406-11010-101 ST NW
 Edmonton, AB T5H 4B9
 Phone: 780-488-9088
 Email: presentations@vadsociety.ca



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- De-clutter a space within your home, such as your room, closet or kitchen
- Spend time with your favourite people - in person, by phone or through virtual means
 - Make something for someone
 - Unplug from electronics for an hour
 - Wash dishes
 - Work on a puzzle
 - Light a candle
 - Get creative: draw, colour or paint



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- Take a long bath or shower
- Do some gardening
- Listen to soothing music
- Put on your favourite scent
- Focus on what is going well in your life
- Cook or bake something you have not tried before
- Meditate
- Enjoy sounds of nature
- Breathe slowly
- Write in a journal



You are Invited to a Webinar September 8, 2020

VAD is happy to host and would like you to attend:

Canada Revenue Agency - COVID-19 Measures, Benefits and Credits

September 8, 2020

2:00 to 3:30 pm

Zoom Webinar – please email for invite link

execdir@vadsociety.ca

This webinar will talk about the following items:

- Disability Tax Credit (DTC)
- Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)
- Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB)
- Enhanced Canada Child Benefit/GST Credit



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FROM EMERGENCY TO OPPORTUNITY

Building a Resilient Alberta Nonprofit Sector After COVID-19

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5aef5b46cef3728571e6c46c/t/5f2981a48dd96d177c927d2f/1596555687803/From+Emergency+to+Opportunity+CCVO+Report+July+2020.pdf>

It is time for the nonprofit sector to lead a vital conversation. A conversation that considers the resiliency of our sector and the value that we offer as leaders on the front lines of this pandemic and leaders in our collective recovery. This is a conversation that needs to be had within the nonprofit sector and, most critically, with the private and public sectors to co-create a strategy that will ensure the future prosperity of our communities and our province.

CCVO lays the foundation for this conversation for Alberta through an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on the nonprofit sector drawn from data collected in our Alberta Nonprofit Survey, data from surveys by the Alberta Nonprofit Network, Imagine Canada, and partner organizations across the country

Read more about this resource by following the link above. This great read offers:

- Common Impacts of Emergencies on Nonprofits
- Consequences of a Weakened Nonprofit Sector
- From Covid-19 Emergency to Opportunity
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