

Resident Affairs

Official Newsletter From the Resident Affairs Team



DMNB ASSISTANT DEANS MESSAGE

[DR. LISA SUTHERLAND](#)

Bits of conversations from the week of January 10, 2022 are rattling around in my head: "It's January, it's Monday, it's Omicron", "everyone I talked to feels scatter brained", and "the days are getting longer"! These are difficult times on many levels. This welcome message is to challenge you to consider your "time confetti", a term coined by Brigid Schulte and written about by Ashley Whillans. I love the concept of protecting treasured moments of down time and not interrupting it with multitasking on work related and stressful topics, or on devices, for whatever small stretch of time you can manage. The effect of time confetti on our ability to refresh from time off is a pernicious undermining of relaxation and reminder of the yet to do tasks. We can give ourselves the gift of time, even for 5-10 minutes if that's what there is. This small measure can help us cope with the lack of control and the "time famine" so typical of medical training and practice. Think about your time confetti and check in with each other on how it feels to stay "off" when you finally get a wisp of time to do so.



YOUR WELLNESS SPOTLIGHT

[SHARON FORWARD,
DIRECTOR](#)

"Whatever you want people to become, you have to model it first."

The article, [Maintaining a Weekly Planning Ritual is the Highest Form of Self-Care](#), reflects my own practice.

Without the rituals/practices I put in place my day to day would be pure chaos. Even with careful planning some days still are. Which is why resetting is also important.

I invite you to read the mentioned article above by [Emily Madill](#), "Emily is an author and certified professional coach, ACC with a BA in business and psychology. Emily is one of Thrive Global's Editors-at-large. She has published 11 titles in the area of self-development and empowerment."

We hope you enjoy the newsletter, and we welcome any feedback. Please follow us on Instagram at [@dalmedwell](#).



LIVE LIFE (CV TIPS)

[DR. RENEA LESKIE,
DMNB RESIDENT
AFFAIRS ADVISOR](#)

Applying for an enhanced program, subspecialty match or a full-time position? If so, your CV will need updating. Here are some tips help.

1. Use your old CaRMS CV as your template. Much of the sections will remain the same, allowing you to only add and delete info.
 - a. Sections which are not on your original CaRMS CV you may want to include are additional training you may have done and/or teaching experience you may now have.
 - b. Also, you won't need to include your undergrad electives but should include any clinical experiences relevant to what you are applying to.
2. Always...edit, edit, edit! Make sure there are no spelling/grammar mistakes and stick to an easy to read font.
3. Interests outside of medicine are important. They're often a great ice breaker.
4. Update your contact info.
5. Lastly, reach out! Sharon Forward, Director, Resident & Student Affairs, (sharon.forward@dal.ca) at DMNS and Renea Leskie (renea.leskie@dal.ca), Student & Resident Affairs Advisor, at DMNB.

RESIDENT AFFAIRS

FEATURE ARTICLE

BY DR. CAROLYN THOMSON, DMNS ASSISTANT DEAN

PETS...FRIENDS WITH BENEFITS

I love animals. All animals...well maybe not reptiles. A new study out by Narrative Research suggests there has been a significant increase in pet ownership in Canada since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Results released in November 2021 showed that of current pet owners,

18 per cent have taken in an animal since March 2020. A study from Abacus Data in June 2021 indicated that 900,000 Canadians (3% of the population) got a pet who didn't have one before.

Those of you with pets are no doubt aware of the joys of companionship, entertainment and unconditional love. But they are more than that. Studies have shown repeatedly that petting an animal can produce reductions in blood pressure and heart rate. The mere presence of a pet can lower arousal and autonomic stimulation that results from exposure to moderate stress. A study by Serpell et. al. demonstrated there were decreases in minor physical ailments such as headaches, colds and hay fever following the acquisition of a dog or cat and subsequently visited the doctor less than non-pet owners. Pets are strong facilitators for recovery from illness but this is truer for dogs than cats. Anderson and colleagues discovered that pet owners, especially males, had lower risk factors for coronary artery disease. Because they are generally more active, increased levels of physical activity among those with dogs may also contribute to this benefit.

At times of stress such as a break-up or loss of a loved one, pets can reduce levels of anxiety, loneliness and depression and promoting a sense of autonomy, confidence and self-esteem. Animals are a great way to stave off the blues in providing companionship and in their ability to promote laughter and playfulness. Through walking, feeding and grooming, there is a predictable routine that enhances emotional stability.

We have all seen the effect of animals, particularly dogs, in social settings. As "social lubricants" they facilitate interactions between people even if they are unknown to each other. Case in point, it is hard to resist a goofy, adorable puppy! There is also a significant body of research that discovered that pets could reduce loneliness and isolation, particularly in the elderly.

For those of you with pets, this may be preaching to the choir. But if you haven't considered pet ownership before (and you like animals, of course), perhaps you will be more convinced of the unique joy and many benefits of a companion animal. Residents often feel they are too busy to have a pet especially with long hours at work. Cats are ideal in these circumstances but if you long for a dog, consider "doggie" daycare or a dog walker. That way you can work guilt free and still come home to your best friend.

Tell us what you thought of this newsletter.

Send an email to Resident.Affairs@dal.ca to be entered into a prize draw.

Our winner from the Fall 2021 Newsletter prize draw is first year resident, Katie (Catherine) Marriott. Dr. Marriott commented, "the newsletter was centred on wellness and offered tangible suggestions on how we can move toward improvements".

No conversation about animals would be complete without mentioning the many homeless pets needing adoption and saving a life just feels good.

"Animals are reliable, many full of love, true in their affections, predictable in their actions, grateful and loyal. Difficult standards for people to live up to".

Alfred A. Montapert



INTERESTING ARTICLES

[DR. ROBERTA PRESON, DMNS LEARNER DEVELOPMENT OFFICER](#)

The following article provides a quick overview of how to create a bullet journal to stay better organized. There is also a 4-minute video embedded in the article to help get you started.

[The Art of Bullet Journaling and the Improved To-Do List](#)

On behalf of everyone at Resident Affairs, we wish you a successful year ahead.