

THE POWER OF 2 LETTERS

PUT THEM TOGETHER AND THEY CAN SAY SO MUCH, WRITES MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR
Column

O and K.

Those are the letters. O and K. Together they say acceptance, approval and non-judgement, and they can be a huge asset to our own mental wellness and make a difference to how we support others.

So, how can just two little letters mean so much? Think about these ideas:

- However you're feeling is OK. We will all feel stressed, down, overwhelmed, angry and any other range of emotions at one time or another. We

may also come down on ourselves when we think we are feeling a way that we shouldn't and call ourselves things like "weak," "dramatic," or "too sensitive."

Remember that feelings are individual, real and always changing, and naming and accepting them can help us cope and be kinder to ourselves. Something like, "I'm feeling overwhelmed ... and that's OK," or, "I'm feeling hurt because my friend didn't call me ... and that's OK," can help us let go of negative thoughts.

- Reassuring others that their feelings are OK is OK. Just like we can accept our own feelings, we can accept others' as well. If someone

chooses to share with us that they are experiencing challenges or mental health problems, one of the best things we can do is listen and validate. Something like, "You're feeling really down. That's OK. Tell me about it," can bust stigma and create a safe space for them to talk and share without feeling that they're being judged.

- Not reaching a goal is OK. Our best plans can go awry and we may not accomplish something we wanted to or do it as quickly as we wanted. Again, cue the potential self-criticism: "I'm lazy," "I didn't try hard enough," "I'm a failure" - thoughts we can likely all relate to. But, falling short now and then is OK as long as we learn from it and focus on making a new plan. The new plan may even include ditching the goal if

we decide it wasn't worth it after all - and that's OK.

- Taking a break is OK. Give yourself permission to care for yourself and slow down when you need to. I often get funny looks when I tell people that I went to bed at 9 the night before (something that happens frequently). They're surprised that I missed watching a TV show, missed doing the dishes and missed making the next day's lunch. But to me that's OK, because I needed the extra sleep.

I hope you found this OK. If not, it's OK.

Melanie McGregor is the communications and advancement specialist at the Canadian Mental Health Association Halton Region Branch, which provides mental health/addiction community support and education. Visit www.halton.cmha.ca for more information and follow @cmhahalton on Twitter.

SNAPSHOTS



Flo Bellman photo

This confident fox ran across the road in front of the photographer recently on Sarah Street in Georgetown. If you have a recent shot of Halton Hills wildlife you'd like to share, send a high res photo to Steve LeBlanc at sleblanc@metroland.com.



Canada's Largest Golf Show
February 7-9, 2020
International Centre

- DEMO RANGE
- LEADING INSTRUCTORS
- GIVEAWAYS & MORE!

TICKETS ON SALE

torontogolfshow.com   

theifp.ca



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!
We look forward to entertaining you in 2020.



DO YOU HEAR Ringing? Buzzing?
Book a TINNITUS Consultation Today!

NORTH HALTON
BETTER HEARING CENTRE



Hearing Testing, Hearing Aids and Accessories

Ph: 289-891-8833 120 Mill Street, Georgetown