

BANISHING THE J-WORD

USING 'JUST' CAN MINIMIZE ONE'S FEELINGS OR CONCERNS, WRITES MELANIE MCGREGOR



MELANIE MCGREGOR
Column

You know those recommendations to use exclamation marks sparingly and avoid emojis in work emails?

Yeah ... I pretty much ignore both of those on a daily basis. And I notice something else — I tend to use the word "just" a lot.

If I'm checking in with someone on something they are supposed to do, it'll sound something like this:

"Hey! Just wondering how that thing is coming along.

Just let me know! Thanks! (insert smiley face)." That's three exclamation marks, one emoji, and two "justs."

I'm usually using these "justs" to soften things a bit — like saying I'm not nagging or bugging, I'm just checking in. And they don't have to snap to doing that thing — all I want is a status update.

However, I'm also aware of how the word "just" can sound minimizing or dismissive.

It's something to be mindful of when talking about what we feel, think, want and need.

Here's an example: you're feeling overwhelmed at work and decide to talk to your supervisor. You start off assertively with something like "I've been finding it hard to keep up lately."

Then, you throw in the j-word with "I'm just stressed out," "It's just a lot" or "I'm just letting you know."

Like in my emails, the "just" may be intended to present things a bit gently, but it actually suggests that being stressed out, having a lot to do or pointing it out aren't actually important.

It could give the supervisor an opening to put it all aside because it's "just you."

So banish the "just." Have the confidence to state what's on your mind with "I'm stressed out," "It's a lot" or "I'm letting you know."

And try to avoid the "just" with others as well. "It sounds like you're upset" is better than "You're just upset about what happened," and "You seem down" is better than "You're probably just sad." Focus on the feelings without minimizing them to show that what they are experiencing is important.

One little word can make a big difference.

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.

TO LEARN HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR OWN CONTENT VISIT THEIFP.CA

SNAPSHOT



Tony Fortunato photo

A female cardinal visits a backyard on Trafalgar Road in Georgetown. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

DEMENTIA CAN BE A FINANCIAL RISK

Managing personal finances can be complicated even when you are mentally alert. If your cognitive ability declines, then managing financial affairs could shift from difficult to impossible.

The Alzheimer Society of Canada recently issued a report titled Navigating the Path Forward for Dementia in Canada. It stated by 2030, almost one million people will have some form of dementia. That represents a 65 per cent increase during this current decade.

Dementia will cause many financial challenges for individuals.

Those affected will need to rely on others to make financial decisions on their behalf. This can be done with a power of attorney (POA) for property. Do you have a POA or have someone who could fill that role?

By 2050, it is estimated 1.7 million Canadians will



PETER WATSON
Column

have dementia. That will require more than 690,000 full-time jobs to provide assistance. Will you be able to afford these costs? Do you have a child available to help?

If a parent moves to assisted living, this will require additional expenses. Is this option affordable? Will one parent remain in the family home and is that affordable?

Growing old is part of life. Our challenge now is to plan.

Peter Watson is registered with Aligned Capital Partners Inc. (ACPI) to provide investment advice. Investment products are provided by ACPI. ACPI is a member of the Investment Industry Regulatory Organization of Canada. The opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily those of ACPI. Only investment-related products and services are offered through Watson Securities of ACPI. Watson provides wealth management services through Watson Investments. He can be reached at watsoninvestments.com.

MORE ONLINE

SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY NEWSLETTER AT THEIFP.CA

ABOUT US

This newspaper, published every Thursday, is a division of the Metroland Media Group Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Torstar Corporation. The Metroland family of newspapers is comprised of more than 70 community publications across Ontario.

This newspaper is a member of the National NewsMedia Council. Complainants are urged to bring their concerns to the attention of the newspaper and, if not satisfied, write The National NewsMedia Council, Suite 200, 890 Yonge St., Toronto, ON M4W 2H2. Phone: 416-340-1981 Web: www.mediacouncil.ca



newsroom@theifp.ca
IndependentAndFreePress
@IFP_11

WHO WE ARE

Publisher and Chief Executive Officer
Neil Oliver
Vice President, Content, Community and Operations
Dana Robbins
Regional General Manager
Jason Pehora
Director of Content
Lee Ann Waterman
Deputy Director of Content
Catherine O'Hara
Managing Editor
Karen Miceli
Director of Distribution
Charlene Hall
Circulation Manager
Kim Mossman
Directors of Advertising
Cindi Campbell and Graeme MacIntosh
Director Creative Services
Paul Gostlin

CONTACT US

The Independent & Free Press
901 Guelph Line
Burlington, ON L7R 3N8
Phone: 905-873-0301
Classifieds: 1-800-263-6480
Fax: 905-873-0398

Letters to the editor
All letters must be fewer than 320 words and include your name and telephone number for verification purposes. We reserve the right to edit, condense or reject letters. Published letters will appear in print and/or online at theifp.ca

Delivery

For all delivery inquiries, please e-mail lpolar@mitoncanadianchampion.com or call 905-234-1019.

