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# *Realize* Resources

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National Lead, Episodic Disabilities

## Who is *Realize*?

- ***Realize*** is a national non-profit with the aim of fostering positive change for people living with HIV and other episodic disabilities.
- Established in 1998, ***Realize*** emerged as an innovator in bridging the traditionally separate worlds of HIV, disability and rehabilitation.
- Our work improves the daily lives of people living with episodic disabilities in direct and meaningful ways through research and education that leads to changes in policy and practice.

## Our Work in Episodic Disability

- National Episodic Disability Forum (EDF)
- Developed the IDEAL Framework (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Leading to belonging)
- Partner on national & provincial research projects
- Policy work with government representatives & advocacy groups across Canada
- Host the annual National Summit on Episodic Disabilities & Employment
- Develop accredited online trainings for HR Professionals
- Offer free & low-cost workshops & trainings for workplace leaders and staff

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# Episodic Disability Education

# Workshops

For executive teams, staff,  
and Human Resources

- **Episodic Disabilities and Work**
  - About Realize
  - Introduction to Episodic Disabilities
  - An Employee Perspective
  - Stigma, Mental Health, and Work
  - Accommodation at Work
  - Disclosure
  - Creating a Supportive Workplace
  - Resources

# Workshops

Immersive Learning Experiences

## ■ Immersive Learning Experiences

(Audience: Organizational Leadership)

### ● **Session One: Considering Disability**

- Framing the discussion including disability models
- Challenges of defining disability
- Personal experiences living with episodic disabilities
- Introducing episodic disabilities
- Uncovering ableism
- Living with episodic disabilities

### ● **Session Two: Beyond DEI to IDEAL**

- Episodic disabilities & IDEAL Principles
- Recognizing barriers to equity efforts
- Increasing the experience of equity at work
- Is belonging a value or an outcome
- Increasing belonging
- Integrating universal design

# Workshops

Immersive Learning  
Experiences

## ■ Immersive Learning Experiences

(Audience: Organizational Leadership)

### ● Session Three: Centring Lived Experience

- Considering privilege
- Fostering a mindset of flexible change
- Listening to learn
- Introducing reverse mentorship

### ● Session Four: Organizational Communication & Episodic Disabilities

- Contextualizing communication & episodic disabilities
- Principles of inclusive communication
- Practical ways to enhance your communication



Workshops

IDEAL Ready Certification

## ■ **IDEAL Ready Certification**

- Introduction to Realize & Disability Essentials
- Introduction to Disability & Episodic Disability
- Foundational Learning
- Based on organizational plan (see below)
- Application of Principles & Certification
- Three Immersive Learning Experience Sessions



## Online Courses

### ■ **An Introduction to Episodic Disabilities**

(Audience: HR practitioners)

- Living with episodic disabilities
- Supporting people with episodic disabilities at work
- Barriers & benefits to accommodation
- A legal framework for episodic disability accommodation
- A work culture for all
- Conducting a workplace assessment

### ■ **Accommodating Workplaces: Episodic Disabilities and Leading Practices at Work**

(Audience: HR practitioners)

- Workplace communication & episodic disabilities
- Universal workplace design
- Personalized work accommodations
- Involving key stakeholders throughout the process
- Working with insurers
- Examining case studies

# Online Courses

(continued)

- **Understanding and Supporting Employees with Episodic Disabilities: For Managers and Supervisors** (Audience: Managers & Supervisors)
  - About episodic disabilities
  - Understanding workplace accessibility and accommodation
  - Introducing the Case Studies
  - Discussing episodic disability accommodation in the workplace
  - Getting started with workplace accommodation
  - Making accommodations work
  - COVID-19 continues to impact our lives

# Online Courses

(continued)

- **Belonging at Work** (Audience: Anyone interested in DEI)
  - Introducing episodic disabilities
  - Beyond DEI – Integrating the IDEAL principles
  - Listening to learn (from your employees)
  - Aligning your work & values
- **Introduction to Episodic Disabilities for Post-Secondary Students** (Audience: Post-secondary students)
  - Framing the discussion using disability models
  - Challenges of defining disability
  - Personal experiences living with episodic disabilities
  - Introducing episodic disabilities
  - Communication & episodic disabilities

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Websites

**Realize Website**

realizecanada.org

# How We Work

**Realize** engages in a multitude of endeavours related to HIV, disability, and rehabilitation. Our programs focus on the following three strategic directions: healthy aging, optimal health and well-being, and meaningful social inclusion.



**HIV and Aging**



**Optimal Health and Well-being**



**Episodic Disabilities**

**Our Work**

- Rehabilitation
- Aging
- Work and Income
- How We Work**
- Optimal Health and Well-being
- Episodic Disabilities
- HIV and Aging
- Annual Forums

# What is Episodic Disability?

**X Episodic Disabilities List:** this list is ever-changing and expanding

- Anxiety
- Arthritis
- Asthma
- Bi-polar Disorder
- Cancer
- Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIDP)
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (including chronic bronchitis and emphysema)
- Chronic Pain
- Crohn's Disease & Ulcerative Colitis
- Cystic Fibrosis
- Depression
- Diabetes
- ALS
- Guillain-Barre Syndrome
- Epilepsy
- Fibromyalgia
- Hepatitis B & C
- HIV/AIDS
- Long-COVID
- Long-Term Pain
- Lupus
- ME/CFS
- Meniere's Disease
- Migraines
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- Parkinson's Disease
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- POTS (Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome)
- Repetitive Strain Injury
- Schizophrenia
- Substance Use Disorder
- Tuberculosis

**Our Work**

- Rehabilitation
- Aging
- Work and Income
- How We Work
- Optimal Health and Well-being
- Episodic Disabilities
- HIV and Aging
- Annual Forums

# The Forum

A Resource Website


[forum.realizecanada.org](http://forum.realizecanada.org)

**The Forum** Home Employment Resources Workplace Resources Factsheets and Toolkits About The Forum Français

## Jill – an Episodic Disabilities Case Study

Meet Jill: Jill is not a real person, but her story is real, and it captures the reality of thousands of Canadians with episodic disabilities. She has been working reliably for 25 years even after being diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis seven years ago. This past year, Jill has experienced flare-ups that are unpredictable and last from a few days to a month. Her sick leave entitlement does not cover her situation, so last month she had no choice but to quit her job and go on disability income support.

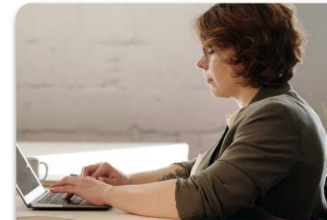
[Read more of Jill's story](#)



### The Issues in a snapshot

Advances in medical technologies mean that many diseases and conditions that were once considered fatal or debilitating are now more treatable and disabling symptoms can often be reduced, managed, or delayed. As a result, more and more Canadians are living with lifelong episodic disabilities. Most people affected are in their prime working years and tend to be experienced workers with needed skills and talent. The price of excluding people with disabilities from the

### Explore Resources



#### Workplace Resources

[Explore workplace resources including: disclosure in the workplace, stigma and discrimination, work-life balance, accommodations, and more.](#) →



#### Toolkits and Factsheets

[Explore the Episodic Disability Toolkit and Factsheets for consumers, employers, supports from insurers and more.](#) →



#### Employment Resources

[Explore employment-related resources about counselling, income security, rights and standards, extended drug benefits, returning to work, and more.](#) →

## Disclosure Guide

[Disclosureguide.realizecanada.org](https://disclosureguide.realizecanada.org)

# Workplace Disclosure Decision Guide

For people living with HIV

GET STARTED

For people living with Episodic  
Disability

GET STARTED

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Thank you!

Connect with me at  
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