

# LIAISON

February 2021

## Light and colour can affect your mood and mental health



Humans need light, especially sunlight. As a result, light therapy is commonly used as a treatment method for seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Light is very important because it influences your circadian rhythm, which is known as your body's "internal clock".

Brain cells tend to be the most sensitive to blue wavelengths and least sensitive to red wavelengths; red and amber light is the least likely to impact your circadian rhythm, especially as you prepare to rest. Be mindful that light comes from many sources, including screens. Adjust your lights and the settings of your devices and screens to complement daylight hours.

Use colour and light to influence your mood. Since light, hue, colour and saturation all carry psychological impact, you can moderate these elements to create a space that's most pleasing to you! Light and colour can also contribute to comfort and memorization of geographical space. You can use colour, lights and window coverings to expose or diffuse the light and tone in your space to your liking. Studies show that humans are more comfortable in spaces with colour than in those without.

There is a range of warm to cool colours, and we can change the perceived warmth felt in a space by painting walls with warmer colour tones. Since humans are drawn to warm colours, such as reds and oranges, there is a certain comfort felt in warm-toned spaces.

## Vibrant Voices advocacy webinar series starts Feb.10 - register today!

RTOERO will host the first Vibrant Voices webinar of the series on **Feb. 10**. This three-part series will focus on our [key advocacy issues](#)—geriatric health care, seniors' strategy and environmental stewardship—and will feature experts and thought leaders in the industry.

To register, click on the title of the session(s) you would like to attend and complete the registration form in the link.

### [Rights of Older Persons: Support, Ratify, Demand Now](#)

**February 10, 2021**

**1:00 – 2:15 pm**

During this session, panelists will discuss the importance of supporting the United Nations Convention of the Right of Older Persons while exploring national standards for long-term care facilities.

### [The Aging Continuum: Secure the Support Necessary for The Journey](#)

**March 17, 2021**

**1:00 – 2:15 pm**

Speakers will explore the aging continuum and the infrastructure needed to support Canadians as they age and confront health and other challenges.

### [Our Earth, Our Responsibility: Take Action](#)

**April 29, 2021**

**1:00 – 2:15 pm**

Taking care of the environment is our responsibility. Webinar panelists will illustrate how to coordinate activities, accomplish goals and take action-oriented steps to help protect the planet.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Danielle Norris, manager of marketing and communications at [dnorris@rtoero.ca](mailto:dnorris@rtoero.ca).



# Johnson Inc. contributions hit \$1 million mark

The RTOERO Foundation is very pleased to announce that Johnson Insurance, with its most recent contribution, has reached a cumulative giving total of one million dollars. Johnson has been a generous and reliable partner since the birth of the Foundation in 2011.



“Johnson is proud to support the RTOERO Foundation, because the issues that face aging Canadians impact all of us,” says Richard Harrison, VP of Affinity Client Solutions for Johnson Inc. “The Foundation is fulfilling a critical role in supporting health research, and delivering programs and solutions to Canadians. We share its vision of supporting the experience of healthy aging.”

Johnson’s commitment to philanthropy, and to the health and wellness of older adults in Canada, has helped the Foundation launch its social isolation grant program. It has also provided the core operational support required for the Foundation to stay focused on its mission and have a greater impact year after year.

Thank you to everyone at Johnson Inc. for your exceptional dedication to research and innovative programs that are enhancing the lives of older adults.



## 5 ways to celebrate notable days in February and March



Each month features notable days to celebrate and causes to bring awareness to. Here are days in February and March to consider:

Feb. 11 - [International Day of Women and Girls in Science](#)

Feb. 13 - [Wear Red Day for Women’s Heart Health](#)

Feb. 17 - [Random Acts of Kindness Day](#)

Feb. 20 - [World Day of Social Justice](#)

Feb. 24 - [Pink Shirt Day](#)

March 8 - [International Women’s Day](#)

March 14 - [Pi Day](#)

March 20 - [International Francophonie Day](#)

March 21 - [International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

March 22 - [World Water Day](#)

Here are 5 ways you can be involved:

1. Follow organizations working on these causes on social media. Share on social – a picture (e.g. wearing pink for Pink Shirt Day) or expressing your support for the cause. Tag RTOERO in your social post.
2. Read a book or article related to the theme.
3. Learn more about people connected to the awareness day.
4. Donate to a charity connected to the awareness day.
5. Write a letter to your elected officials or local newspaper to express your views on the issue/cause.

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## Keep up-to-date with RTOERO news during ongoing pandemic

Visit a special alert page [rtoero.ca/prepared](https://rtoero.ca/prepared) on our website to:

- Find out the latest news about how RTOERO is continuing to serve members during the pandemic
- Read answers to a regularly updated list of frequently asked questions – or submit a question of your own
- Learn how to access the services of the RTOERO office or your district during the ongoing pandemic



## The “art” of improving cognitive ability and mental wellbeing



Art is a powerful tool that allows us to express creativity, thoughts, and feelings. Some even say that “art is food for the soul,” but can it also be “food for the mind”?

Visual art involves planning, making decisions related to the piece (what materials and techniques to use), thinking outside the box, talking about the artwork, relationship building

through interactions with peers, and even reflection on past experiences, reconciling certain emotions and conflicts, and coming to resolutions. These elements demonstrate how this visual art can contribute to cognitive stimulation; while also highlighting its therapeutic characteristics.

You don’t need to be Pablo Picasso to tap into your artistic side. Look into visual art programs available in your community. Due to COVID-19, where in-person programs are not recommended, look for online programs that can be done at home while still getting the benefits of supervision and group interaction. So, choose your art medium and give it a go! [Read the full article from the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal.](#)

*Article courtesy of the McMaster Optimal Aging Portal.*

## Shake up your story time routine by adding a little diversity



If you enjoy story time with the children in your life—grandkids, nieces or nephews—switch it up a bit and add some diversity to the mix. Introducing young readers to books with diverse characters promotes acceptance, respect and empathy for others. Whether reading time is in-person or virtual, try adding something new to your reading list throughout the year:

## Humor

- I am famous, by Tara Luebbe
- Please, baby Please, by Spike Lee
- Please clean your room, by Itah Siddu (\*Cdn)

## Love/identity

- Hair Love, by Matthew Cherry (\*)
- The antiracist baby, by Ibram X Kendi
- Malaika's Winter carnival, by Nadia Hohn (\*Cdn)
- Say something, by Peter H. Reynolds (\*)
- The proudest blue, by Ibtiyah Muhammad

## Grandparents

- Granddaddy's street songs, by Monalisa DeGross
- Pop pop and me and a recipe, by Irene Smalls
- Things I like about grandma, by Francine Haskins
- When possible, support local bookstores.
- (\*available in French / Cdn – Canadian author)

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# Be cognizant of tech distractions while driving, even if they're meant to help



We are aware that thousands of accidents are caused by some form of distraction. According to The National Safety Council, about 26% of all car crashes involve phone use. As stated by CAA, “checking a text for 5 seconds means that at 90 km/h, you’ve travelled the length of a football field blindfolded.” Would you want to be anywhere near that blindfolded driver?

Granted, distractions have been part of the driver’s life long before cell phones were invented, but this particular invention, and all of the new tech built into vehicles and promoted as convenience features have been front and center (GPS, comfort controls, touch screens). This technology makes visual and cognitive demands on drivers, distracting them from their one and only purpose at the wheel: driving! The bottom line is that anything that takes our hands off the wheel and our attention off the road is a distraction, and indulging in distracting activities brings potentially devastating consequences. By minimizing distractions and modifying our behaviors we can create a safer driving environment for everyone.

[Article courtesy of Johnson Inc.](#)



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[rtostore.ca](http://rtostore.ca)



## RTOERO STAFF PROFILE



**Name:** Daniel Carlyle

**Title:** Senior Web Developer

**How long have you been at RTOERO?** 3.25 years!

**How do you help RTOERO Members?**

I provide maintenance and regular publishing on the RTOERO website and create various events and landing pages. I also provide support for the district micro-sites, track metrics, create online forms and undertake various other day-to-day technical duties.

**What do you enjoy most about working at RTOERO?**

I love working with my team (Marketing and Information Technology) and helping provide solutions and services to our diverse membership, as well as our future members! Recently, it has been exciting to help incorporate the new RTOERO brand and design elements into the new website and other digital platforms.



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