

LIAISON

December 2021

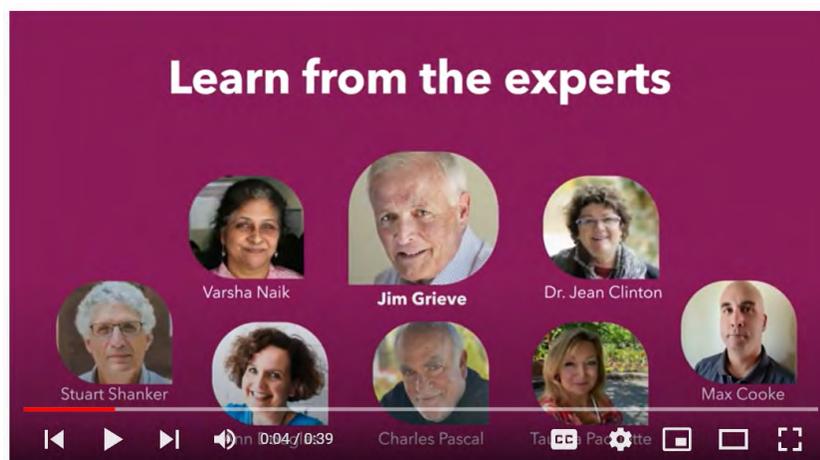
RTOERO video series shares wellness wisdom for healthy start to 2022



As the end of 2021 approaches, it's natural to think about our intentions for the year ahead. If wellbeing and self-care are on your priority list, consider signing up for the RTOERO video series *21 chats on wellness*.

In this series, CEO Jim Grieve interviews the following notable thought leaders. Here is a brief preview of what to expect in the series:

- “It’s never too late to age well.” Jean Clinton, internationally respected psychiatrist
- “Education is the engine of wellness.” Charles Pascal, professor of psychology and human development
- “We need to be our own best friend and to honour all the gifts within us.” Taunya Paquette, Ontario’s director of Indigenous education
- “Vulnerability takes courage.” Max Cooke, CEO, EdCan Network



Sign up for the series at 21chats.ca. Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email, and the first weekly video will arrive by email the following week. Or consider sharing the information with a friend or colleague who is working in education.

Wrapping up 2021 with your achievements



The new year is just around the corner and many of us will consider setting new year's resolutions for ourselves. Instead, why not consider reflecting back on the past year and acknowledging your accomplishments?

While the pandemic heavily affected life for us all in 2021, we all still had successes and little victories that deserve some time for reflection, recognition and perhaps even celebration.

Some of these triumphs (not matter how small) were achieved despite the pandemic, while others were achieved as a result of a challenge brought on because of it; either way it is cause for acknowledgement.

We often don't spend much time celebrating our accomplishments. We have a personal "yay" moment or share a photo on Facebook, but how often do you take the time to actually celebrate what you've achieved? As the year winds down, start a list of your little (or big!) victories, whether it's finally finishing that book on your nightstand, planting that herb garden you've always wanted, clearing out the basement or the fact that you've made it through the lockdowns; your list of achievements will help you end the year in a positive way.

Social Isolation Awareness month campaign

The RTOERO Foundation's fourth annual Social Isolation Awareness Month campaign wrapped up at the end of October. The aim of this campaign was to inspire RTOERO members to increase their awareness about the issue of social isolation, and start taking action to help address and prevent social isolation.



During Social Isolation Awareness Month, the RTOERO Foundation:

- Hosted a [webinar with Dr. Samir Sinha](#): Practical Ways to Address the Growing Epidemic of Loneliness & Isolation in Older Adults.
- Launched [Chime In](#); a regularly scheduled, weekly online chat, for RTOERO members to engage in open discussion and social connection.
- [Published a blog](#) providing an update on a grant we funded in 2017, which is still demonstrating long-term impact today.
- Fundraised \$78,012 thanks to considerable donations from RTOERO members. Thank you also to our generous sponsors: [Johnson Insurance](#) who provided Gold level support for the campaign again this year. Thanks also to [Sun Life](#) for additional support.

For more information on how you can help us reach our fundraising goal by the end of the year, please contact the RTOERO Foundation at: foundation@rtoero.ca or: 1-800-361-9888 ext. 271, 416-962-9463 ext. 271.

RTOERO post-secondary scholarships deadline: January 14, 2022

Next year RTOERO will award 20 scholarships valued at \$3,000 each to students recommended by RTOERO members who are enrolled in college or university programs that lead to careers either in education, environmental stewardship, or seniors health and wellbeing.



This year scholarships were awarded to students in programs ranging from geriatric medicine and public health, to age-friendly technology. Some standout recipients include:

- Jamie Struthers, Doctorate of Pharmacy
- Laurel Pierroz-Wong, BAsC – Environmental Engineering
- Austin Teshuba, BEngSc – Software Engineering

Jamie recently completed a co-op placement with a geriatric pharmacist, and is now writing his licensing exams in the hopes that he can continue “to offer support to seniors in regards to their medications and overall health”. Lauren is currently completing a co-op placement working with a non-profit organization that “retrofits seniors’ and lower income homes to reduce energy consumption”. Austin continues to work on creating inclusive and age-friendly digital spaces, most recently with an internship at Google working on improving the accessibility of Google Play. RTOERO is proud to support such deserving students in their quest to improve the lives of seniors in Canada. The upcoming scholarship deadline is **January 14, 2022**. For more information please visit rtoero.ca/giving-back/scholarships

Understanding presbyopia



Have you increased the font size on your phone lately? Are you reading restaurant menus at arm's length? If so, then you may want to get your eyes checked! You may be experiencing symptoms of presbyopia.

No need to be alarmed, presbyopia is not a serious condition. In fact, this is an inevitable and natural part of aging.

Presbyopia, which translates to “old man” in Greek, is the gradual hardening and stiffening of the protein in the eyes’ lens. When we are young, our lenses are malleable and change shape in order to provide sharp images to our retinas but, as we age, the lens loses its elasticity making it difficult to focus when looking at something up-close.

Despite it being an irreversible condition, there are treatments available. For most that’s glasses or contact lenses, and for some, surgery. Left untreated, presbyopia can cause eyestrain and headaches. Your eye doctor will help determine the best treatment option based on your needs and lifestyle. [Article courtesy of IRIS](#)



5 ways to give back to yourself this season

It’s the season for giving and while it’s important to give to others, it is also beneficial to give to yourself. Here are 5 ways you can start to show yourself more appreciation:

Invest in a hobby

Perhaps you’ve always wanted to play the guitar or learn to sew. Search second hand and thrift retailers to find everything you need to try a new hobby. Look for free online or community classes offered from organizations like the YMCA or libraries.



Make a promise to yourself

Whether it's making your all-time favourite meal once a week, dedicating a weekly "spa" hour to yourself at home, or setting time for a special interest like making your way through a to-watch movie list; set the intention to make time for doing something that you enjoy.

Invest in personal or physical therapy

Therapy can be very beneficial for supporting individuals in managing personal goals, relationships, and mental and physical health. Members of the RTOERO insurance plan can access therapeutic resources through the plan and partner services like [Best Doctors for RTOERO](#).

Get back to the books

From Greek mythology to cyber security, you can learn just about anything online! Enrol in free or paid virtual courses on websites like [Coursera](#) or [Udemy](#).

Reach out to a cherished friend

It may sound simple, but maintaining social connections can sometimes be challenging. Make the effort. A simple phone call or setting up a coffee meet-up, dinner or walk can make a positive impact on our own wellbeing.



Vibrant Voices webinars increase awareness on advocacy issues

We have come to the end of our Vibrant Voices webinar series for 2021. Over 2,300 RTOERO members, community partners and friends have logged on to attend our six-part webinar series that started this past spring. The webinars are a part of RTOERO's strategic focus on our [key advocacy issues](#)—seniors' strategy, geriatric healthcare and environmental stewardship. The Vibrant Voices initiative supports our goal to be a trusted voice in the broader education community.



As a result of attending these webinars, 89% of attendees said they have a better understanding of our advocacy issues. Eighty-five per cent of attendees also reported that they view RTOERO as a national authority on seniors' issues, according to the webinar feedback survey. During the webinar, attendees heard from expert speakers and asked thoughtful questions during the Q&A period. Here are some comments from attendees:

"Excellent webinar. Well-moderated and with a well-chosen guest. Thank you!"

"Great encouragement for seniors to live full lives. Always wonderful expert advice!"

"Thank you for your series of very informative webinars on a wide range of topics. Can't wait for the new season."

Vibrant Voices webinar recordings available online. To access the Vibrant Voices webinar recordings, please visit rtoero.ca/resources

Vibrant Voices webinars increase awareness on advocacy issues

Hearing loss has been linked to social isolation, depression and other conditions; treatment could help address other concerns in your life that you never even thought were connected! Here are the top three reasons adults avoid getting their hearing checked, and why they should:



1. I'm too young

Although hearing loss is linked to aging, hearing loss can also be hereditary or brought on by damage to the ear. If you suspect you have hearing loss, don't let your age prevent you from getting your hearing tested. Every Canadian should have at least one baseline hearing test in their adulthood.

2. I can hear just fine

Early signs of hearing loss can often be ignored by turning up the volume, leaning in to hear a conversation, or asking others to repeat themselves. But, if others are noticing your hearing impairment, or if those around you don't respond to noise the same way you do, you should consider getting your hearing checked.

3. I can't afford hearing aids

Although hearing aids can be expensive, many hearing aid providers have payment plans that can help relieve your financial concerns. Your private insurance may also provide funding and, depending on the province you are in, public insurance can provide funding as well.

[Article courtesy of HearingLife](#)

RTOERO wishes Pauline Duquette-Newman all the best as she embraces the awesome years and retires from her role as Senior Manager, French Language Services at the end of this month. Pauline has spent 18 years with RTOERO, working tirelessly on behalf of our members to help make RTOERO the bilingual organization it is today. Here are some words of gratitude and well-wishes from those who worked with her closely:

Pauline has been such an amazing presence on the staff of RTOERO for many years. Her role in advocating for the highest quality of French language usage in our publications has served as an example for all of us and for other organizations. It has been a delight to be greeted every day at 18 Spadina Road by Pauline's welcome smile and her endless capacity to serve our members and staff. For me, it has been Pauline's constant support, especially in my efforts to improve my spoken French. I fondly recall standing in local parks near the office as we recorded several 'takes' on my videos for our members. I know that Pauline has some exciting travel plans for her first year of retirement and I wish her wonderful travels. I also know that she lives only 5 minutes from our office and, as a personal friend to all of us, she has a standing offer of a coffee and a chat on any of her neighbourhood walks. For your wonderful service to RTOERO and your advocacy for our Goodwill representative, a sincere thank you Pauline.

***Best wishes, Jim Grieve
Chief Executive Officer, RTOERO***

Pauline has made my volunteer engagement with RTOERO very enjoyable. Pauline and I met at my first Goodwill workshop in 2010. Recently named Chair of Goodwill in my district, a new retiree without experience, Pauline took me under her wing and guided me in this role that I still love. A few years later, when I became member, and then chair, of the Member Services Committee, she was a great source of valuable advice. I have always appreciated her help and over the years we became friends. Thank you, Pauline! Happy well-deserved retirement!

Suzanne Poudrette-Gagnon, RTOERO member and volunteer

It has been a pleasure to have known and worked with Pauline for the past almost 18 years. Her compassion for helping members, especially Francophone members and districts, and working tirelessly in areas such as Goodwill and Social Isolation have always been on display.

Simon Leibovitz, Chief Administrative Officer, RTOERO

Pauline has been an excellent colleague for translation and remains also a good friend. Her knowledge of the French language, her concern to find the right word, her understanding of the context have all been assets that she masters well for the benefit of her team. She also knows and understands the pressure under which her translators work sometimes. It's pleasant to work with Pauline. She really brings her heart and mind to work. Pauline, enjoy this well-deserved retirement. No doubt you will certainly remain quite active! All the best!

Claude Forand, Certified translator, ATIO

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