

Transcript for Self care throughout the retirement journey

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Muriel Howden:

Welcome everyone and thank you for joining us today.

Before we begin, we want to inform you that this RTOERO webinar will be recorded and shared.

RTOERO is a bilingual trusted voice on healthy, active living in the retirement journey and today's Webinar topic is self care throughout the retirement journey.

My name is Muriel Howden I am the Executive Assistant and Senior Outreach Advisor for RTOERO.

I will be moderating today's session and providing active offer for any participants who wish to ask questions or have information relayed in French. Throughout the webinar, feel free to use the Q&A feature to submit your questions for the panelists.

[content repeated in French]

Before we begin the Webinar today we would like to pay our respect to the Indigenous lands that connect us across Canada.

I am speaking to you today from the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississauga's of the Credit the the Anishnabek, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat Peoples, which is now home to many diverse, First Nation Inuit and Metis Peoples.

We acknowledge, recognize and honour the ancestral traditional territories on which we live and work and the contributions of all Indigenous Peoples to our communities and our nation.

[Content repeated in French]

Thank you. Miigweech.

So I would like to remind you to submit your questions in English or French using the Q&A box.

If your question is directed to one panelist in particular, please include that in your question.

The chat will not be monitored, so please ensure that questions are entered through the Q&A feature.

[content repeated in French]

And now I'd like to introduce our RTOERO board chair, Rich Prophets, who will introduce today's speakers.

Thank you Muriel.

Rich Prophet:

Our presenters today are Alka Chopra and Shindujan Yogaratnam.

Alka Chopra is a registered dietician, a certified diabetes educator, and a self care advocate.

Alka's self care system is an inclusive approach that takes into consideration of colours of wellness which are physical, social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, environmental as well as financial and occupational.

And Shindujan Yogaratnam, is a registered Kinesiologist with the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario and a level two certified with exercises is Medicine Canada.

Shindujan has developed a significant interest in working with physical activity programs for those dealing with chronic diseases and physical impairments.

Alka and Shin the floor is yours.

Alka Chopra:

Thank you so much, Muriel.

Thank you so much, Rich.

Okay.

I'll start by sharing my screen.

I hope everyone can see it.

All right.

Okay.

So the topic that I have for you today is self care through the retirement journey and oftentimes I find lots of my own patients missing that piece.

So that's why it's an important, significant topic.

So that's what we'll be talking about.

So in my professional opinion and my judgment and of course, life experience as well, self care is an investment, and it's not really a waste of time.

It is something that is very sustainable and it makes you more productive.

I can go on and on, on this, but in the interest of time, I just know that it is important and it makes the use of the time that you have more sustainable.

You can do much more if you invest yourself in self care.

So these are some skills that the World Health Organization has recommended.

There are ten of them.

But for the purposes of this presentation today, the main focus is on decisionmaking, self-awareness interpersonal relationships, management of stress and management of emotion.

And the reason why I picked these five is because as we embark into retirement journey, all of you on the call today, some of you might have just retired.

Some of you might have been retired for a longer period of time.

So everyone is in a different state.

But these five skills are something, something that really, I think bind all of us together.

And now these are some of the roles as a person.

When we are active in our jobs, we work as an employee, we are a leader for our children or in the role that we play in our jobs, a colleague, a friend, a spouse, a parent and a child, a sibling, or maybe social contributor network.

So we play different roles.

But this is pre-retirement.

Things begin to change when you are in your retirement, after you're retired in the early stages or in the later stages.

For some people, we might want to choose a second career, which is probably less stressful.

And that's where I see myself.

Well, of course I'm not retiring very soon, but I see myself getting into a second career.

There are relatively less responsibilities, probably the children have settled or you don't have the pressure of bringing up little children coming back to daycare.

And all those some of us might even have some financial freedom as well.

These things are not generic.

Every situation and every person is different.

And on the other hand, there might be some limited financial resources as well, because you're not working like full-time,

On the other hand, there is some time flexibility as well, because you're not stuck in a nine to five unless you are doing a second career.

But a second career could be maybe a working part time.

So there is more flexibility now in due to the driving phase.

This is again my own personal opinion.

Some of you might differ on that is that there's a big emotional transition for many people after being in a in a role for a significant number of years.

When someone enters into the retirement phase, it's an emotional change for them, and it takes a while for people to adjust to that.

Some people are just ready for it.

But for some people, it is an emotional transition and takes a little bit of time to get settled because it is a really big change.

Now, the ultimate role you need to perform at this life stages.

Really take care of yourself.

Because my motto is that if you don't take care of yourself, no one will.

So I live by that motto.

And I do.

And that is why I'm a self care.

I like to call myself a selfcare advocate, talking to patients, talking to my family, my husband, my children, everybody and even my parents.

My parents are in their 80s, and, you know, this is something that we have been taught from the from the get go.

So really take care of yourself, give yourself the priority and give yourself the credit of all that you have achieved in your active years.

And now you're in the retirement is you deserve that.

So you really, really need to take care of yourself.

There's one message that I'd like you to take from today is definitely give yourself that importance.

Have a good relationship with yourself.

So the importance here and I mentioned about it a little bit before, but I'll mention it again here a little bit.

So when we keep sacrificing our needs again, I'm not saying that do not pay attention to the needs of the family is very important.

However, if you are sacrificing continuously that's poor self care and that often leads to fatigue, burn out, and there's a lot of dissatisfaction which actually leads to more problems.

On the other hand, when there is good self-care, you take good care of yourself, there's more satisfaction, there's more resilience, and it becomes life becomes much more more fun, and it is definitely more worth it.

So there is a saying that you can't save a drowning person if they don't know how to swim.

So if you don't know how to swim, there's no one who can really save you.

So using self care as an instrument, I use it as a tool so that you are able to keep yourself in tune with yourself so that you're able to help others.

So it's actually a full circle in my mind again, going back to the importance of health care and in my bio, I said so my bio does include that I believe in the pillars of wellness.

So these are the pillars of wellness.

So there are seven of them and that's emotional, financial, social, spiritual, occupational, physical, intellectual and environmental.

So if you take a look at these seven, eight of the pillars of wellness, this is really a holistic approach, because health really is not just eating healthy.

It's not about eating vegetables or eating lean meats or going for a walk.

That's not what health is, health is all these pillars when they come back, come together and they become like homogeneous.

It's only then that you feel well, you feel good.

So, some critical challenges that again, these are based off my own experiences that a lot of people will say to me if I ask this question that, do you have a self care system and they look at me like, okay, like what are you talking about?

Really?

I don't have the money to spend on expensive vacations or I don't have the time to spend at the spa.

Well, self care is not about going to the spa.

It is not about spending hundreds of dollars going on a destination vacation.

Well, you can't do that anyways.

Right now, however, the challenges that most people have are they are workaholics.

They are stressed and they don't even recognize that there is burnout.

There is no boundaries.

They do not know how to say no.

And there's always excuses that I have no time.

I have so many things to do, just can't do it.

It's expensive.

Like I'd mentioned to before, people pleasing they're always out to make others happy, other people very happy.

They're perfectionist.

Now, perfection is a very subjective term.

Perfection.

Something which is perfect for me might be completely imperfect for someone else.

So it is a very subjective thing.

However, they choose to believe that they are more perfectionist.

Then there's life transformations.

Their life is not static.

It is not a straight line.

Things change.

And then there is compassion fatigue.

This is something I see so much that lots of people will show compassion towards their neighbour or to someone else.

But there is no compassion towards themselves and not having that compassion towards your own selves and giving yourself that due importance that you have, it really burns you out and it really fatigues you out.

So something to be really cautious about.

So with all this being said right, how do you recognize what is going on?

How do you know that something is not right with you?

So there are some red flags and warning signs which you probably could look out for.

That there's lots of pleasure or enjoyment in your personal life.

So you're suddenly feeling that something is not right.

You're not enjoying the things that you used to enjoy when you were in your full work life.

Things have changed.

There's depression that is setting in.

And now clinical depression is completely different.

So that is out of the scope of this presentation.

But you are feeling depressed.

You are feeling sad.

You are not enjoying yourself.

This problems, concentration.

You can when you're working on something, you are completely in some other kind of world.

So there's a problem with the concentration and you get anxious very quickly, any little thing, and you begin to get anxious.

So look out for these warning signs.

There you make too many mistakes or errors, and there's lots of objectivity.

So this is very important because sometimes when people are what they will try to think is that everything that is happening around them, anything that goes wrong is directed towards them.

And that is because the relationship with themselves is distorted.

And that really comes from that compassion suite to get depression.

And all those points that I had mentioned to you before and lots of people who start isolating themselves, they do not want to go out for a coffee with their friends.

They do not want to pick up the phone and maybe talk with their children.

Or maybe you do not want to stay with their spouse.

So they start to isolate themselves from others.

So these are some things to really think about.

And then there's emotional reactivity.

So there's an outburst for anything that anyone says to them.

There is a Newton's lot for every action has a reaction.

But this reaction is different where you are reacting in a very negative manner to anything that is being said to you.

These are some more here relationship issues.

So when you are this compassion fit and even when you're isolating there's emotional activity, all this leads to relationship issues and you can't sleep properly or the disturb sleep and fatigue.

So you're tired.

You wake up in the morning and you are tired and you're you're tired for the entire day.

So these are some signs to really, really look out for.

And if you find any of them, I think it's a good time to maybe talk to somebody.

Maybe you want to talk to your doctor.

There's help out there the support out there.

But all this can be avoided if you really think about self care and we'll get into that now, how do you get aware of that?

How do you know something is the same, right.

So these are the stages of awareness where number one is you're unaware someone is completely unaware what's going on?

No clue what's there.

Then the second stage is pain aware.

All this comes from being aware and being alert on what is really going on around you.

What is going on with you?

And once you are on level two where you are aware of something is not right.

Then level three is where you begin to find for solutions.

You begin to find ways as to what can I do?

Something is not right.

Do I need to seek some support?

Do I need to seek a new hobby?

Do I need to go for a walk?

Do I need to leave the house?

Maybe I'm homebound.

Covid has really taught us many, many things, although it's not the best situation.

However, it has taught us many things.

So being solution aware, what can you do to overcome that situation?

And then there's product aware what is available out there to so many online sessions the fact that you're here today to really attend this event today is all about.

Self care is one of the products.

I'll say where you are being aware of what is going on and being physically present.

And then finally, the last stage is most aware.

And when someone is most aware, those people will actively look out for some solutions as to how can we get into how can I get myself into a self care system?

Self care is something that you've got to really get into actively.

It's not a passive thing.

It's not a one and done thing.

It's okay.

You you get it something last month.

No, you've got to invest and indulge in self care every single day.

So how can your self care system really look like?

So it is you recognize.

So you've recognized.

So here we went through these stages of awareness.

So you are at stage five where you're most aware and when you're most aware, you've recognized it.

So you want to try something new.

Maybe, like I said, you want to try a new hobby, maybe you like to dance, you like to do some painting, maybe you like to learn music, anything like that.

So you want to try it, explore practice, just doing something once does not cut it.

You've got to try it.

You've got to practice it a couple of times to get the real and experience the real benefit.

And it's only then that you will understand the real benefits.

And then you've got to constantly remind yourself every single day.

Okay.

Like I remind, I am an avid Crafter and I paint.

I do lots of crafting activities.

So I had to mind myself every single day in the morning that I'll come today.

There is something that this is what you've got to do, at least during whatever time of later, whether in the afternoon, whether later at night, whatever.

But it's a constant reminder to myself that I need to take care of myself, then share.

So sharing really helps, because when you share your wins, when you share your happiness, when you share your own, what's going on in you with anybody, who you trust, who you think you can share, whether it is your partner, whether it is your husband, whether it is your children, whether it is your close friend or any or maybe previous colleague.

When you share, the experience becomes even richer.

Because what happens is I trust the form a community.

And when you start to form a community, the self care system becomes very alive.

Okay, I went really fast.

So now something to recognize is that there is no limit on what you can do or take care.

Right?

You can continue to do lots of things.

Just recognize that.

Try again.

This is really, this whole thing.

I just went a little quicker within the interest of time.

But the since you're recognizing, then you're trying lots of things and then you're exploring and practicing, get regular exercise to fun activities and remind yourself now, this is also very important that when you are reminding yourself you cannot fix everything in the world, you cannot.

So recognize that as well.

And you do have the support and sharing is all about community that I just mentioned to you.

So living mindfully.

And I'm pretty sure everyone has you heard the buzz word these days.

Mindful living.

So when you live mindfully, it actually leads to happiness.

So good stuff happens as time goes on, good stuff happens, bad stuff happens.

This is life.

It's not a straight line.

There are ups and downs and we all learn to live with that.

Okay.

This is just a short video that I have for you here and I'm going to play it.

(Video audio)

You may have heard this word mindfulness.

It's become something of a buzz phrase of late.

I'm going to give you one simple serviceable definition, which is this mindfulness is the ability to know what's happening in your head at any given moment without getting carried away by it.

Imagine how useful this could be.

Just as an example, driving down the road and somebody cuts you off in traffic.

How do you normally react?

I think most of us we normally react by having a thought, which is, I'm pissed.

And then what happens next?

You immediately habitually reflexively inhabit that thought.

You actually become pissed.

There's no buffer between the stimulus and your reaction with just a little bit of mindfulness.

In that same situation, you might notice my chest is buzzing, my ears are turning red. I'm having a starburst of self righteous thoughts.

I'm getting angry, but you don't necessarily have to act on it and chase that person down the road, screaming at them with your kids in the back of the car thinking you've gone nuts.

Not now.

You might be thinking, don't I need to get angry sometimes?

Aren't I justified?

I would say yes, but probably not as much as you think.

The proposition here is not that you should be rendered by mindfulness into some lifeless, non judgmental blob.

The proposition is that you should learn how to respond wisely to things that happen to you rather than just reacting blindly.

And that, my friends, is a superpower.

How do you get it?

The way to get it is through meditation.

I believe that meditation and mindfulness are the next big public health revolution in the 1940s.

If you told somebody you were going running, they would have said.

Who's chasing you.

But then what happened next?

The scientists swooped in.

They showed that physical exercise is really good for you.

And now all of us do it.

And if we don't, we feel guilty about it.

And that's where I think we're headed with mindfulness and meditation.

It's going to join the pantheon of no brainers, like brushing your teeth, eating well and taking the meds.

Your doctor for you.

Let me just close by saying mindfulness is not going to solve all of your problems.

It's not going to render your life a nonstop parade of unicorns and rainbows.

Nonetheless, this is a superpower and one that is accessible by you immediately.

Alka Chopra:

Okay, so that was just very quick and about mindfulness and just a very quick some ideas of your sleep, exercise, eating well, relaxation, connection, and really expecting to go through stages of emotions, which is normal emotions is part of being human and structuring your days, setting small goals, growing your friendships and having community and maybe consider an encore job, something small, having a new budget to volunteering.

These are just some ideas that just came through my head and give yourself the flexibility to really figure it out.

So this is in closing here so you can pour out of an empty cup.

You want to take care of yourself first.

Thank you very much.

And now it is Shin's turn.

Shin Yogaratnam:

Thanks a good afternoon, everybody.

This topic, as I was creating, but slides I felt was more appropriate given where we are with the pandemic, whether we're retired or not, we have been relegated to using our workspaces at home, whatever home office may be.

So I felt that I think it was appropriate to talk about office ergonomics but creating that, healthy home space for us to enjoy and be safe.

Next Slide.

So, ergonomics, really, if you were to break that term down it's Ergo means work and nomics is the meaning of natural rules or laws.

So when you put the two together, ergonomics is really the science of work and the person's natural relationship to that work.

It's a huge hot topic discussion right now in many workplaces, even my current job, I deal with a lot of work and all the requests all the time, but it's very important to understand how that work impacts the requests and the need for such demands.

Next slide.

So there's two categories of factors that we do need to consider when we're setting up our workspace and how that influences our bodies when they react to the kind of work we do.

And in particular, when we're at home, we're using our personal computers for a prolonged period of time.

What we need to consider the two that I violated here are the environmental conditions that we're exposed to.

So this is our physical surroundings, hearing vision, general comfort.

When I speak to general comfort, I'm referring to hard seats, cramped spaces, temperatures, and each of our homes are made differently.

So that sort of encompasses the environmental conditions that we're exposed to as well as the physical stressors.

So the kind of the type of activity that we're doing and how that affects our body.

Okay, so in speaking more about physical stressors, these can place additional stress or specific body parts and how we recently perform our work will be directly affected by the stress is placed on the body for it.

So if we're looking at improper lifting that can evidently cause substantial strain in your low back, which can then result in pulled muscles or slipped disc, depending on how the improper lift is.

And repetitive movements can then also cause chronic damage to nerves, tendons and joints.

And these repetitive injuries are called cumulative trauma disorders, or CTDs.

We probably also heard through your teaching careers or where else you worked at repetitive strain injuries, RSI or musculoskeletal disorders.

Next slide.

Cumulative trauma disorders.

So I've kind of broken it down to again, three components so that we understand what term comes from.

Cumulative really references something occurring gradually over a period of weeks, months, years.

Okay.

Trauma is the bodily injury to our tendons, nerves, tissues, tendons and points.

And then the disorder is the conditions that are causing physical elements for abnormal conditions.

Okay, so that's sort of a Webster's Dictionary breakdown for you guys.

Next slide.

And so we're talking about CTDs, RSI, MSD's.

Any of those terms are changeable.

Some examples can include carpal tunnel syndrome, so this is very common for those who do a lot of administrative work for the duration of their careers or have been exposed to it doing stuff at home, Epicondylitis.

Also commonly known as tennis elbow,

Tenosynovitis, the trigger finger or Bursitis.

These are some common conditions that we may be exposed to that can be classified as an RSI.

Some of the risk factors that attribute to that are repetition.

So I've mentioned the interchangeable term repetitive strain injuries, so that pretty much encompasses that when you're doing something on a repetitive nature for a prolonged period of time, chances are you may be putting your body or your joints the risk of injuring itself in time to complement repetition when you're always exposed to

awkward positions or postures, that's also something to note of, and also excessive pressure force that you exert when you're completing a task.

Further.

So we're looking at awkward positions.

So I kind of put a little diagram here what you most commonly see with those there's children at home or ourselves included.

And sometimes I'm also guilty of this where you find yourself leaning forward in a flexed position in front of a chair.

You know, in an awkward position where you're typing with your wrists that out angles.

You have raised shoulders while you're typing.

All of these factor into a lot of workplace entries for discomfort that people experience at home or again, just to further extend on the awkward positions.

Discussion reaching to use the mouse.

So say, I currently have my mouse right here and at a millimeters reach.

But some people may have further out based on the way the desk is set up, which force that individual to keep reaching.

So that also attributes to the concept of awkward positioning, twisting your neck to look at a monitor or to look at your phone and imagine doing that on a repeated basis.

The amount of strain you put on your upper back and neck is also an identifiable restructure.

I mentioned excessive force, so when we're talking about excessive force, I've highlighted the few that we should be aware of.

So typing with too much force or in slang for us pounding the keys.

I see my siblings do this a lot where they're just going at it.

It's hard to interpret whether or not they're typing faster, if that's just the way they utilize the keyboards stamping.

So we may have formwork administrator work that we do that require stamps.

So imagine in a flexed position with your wrists and you're always the repeated delivery of this motion can attribute to that.

Lifting heavy boxes or carrying office equipment.

So heavy boxes is applicable really in any setting, we do groceries, we may carry them in boxes.

We're moving that excessive force.

That would be a typical on most occasions relative to what we do on a daily basis.

And I find this is also very important using improper grip.

So if we do not have a good grip on what it is that we're transferring, are you're going to be straining a lot of stuff with the body.

But as much as all that information was, you know, eyebrow raising, the good news is there are simple ways to really help yourself.

That's where we're going to use the rest of the presentation to talk about and which are prevention strategies.

So one of the things I focus on with most workplace parties is really looking at simple ways of sort of taking care of your body and you're back in particular if you can't help so.

So one of the things that my stress is avoid leaning forward at your desk or spine is a natural.

It's a natural s-curve.

So we want to maintain

that as much as we can.

So you want to look at supporting your lower back where you can if you have any support devices that help with giving that comfort for your low back.

You may want to utilize that in the chair, whichever chair you have, and further keeping your feet supporter on the floor or using a foot rest if you needed to be elevated.

The whole notion is you want to be ideally sitting in a very comfortable, lean back, relaxed position as if you're sitting in a living room chair, talking to a friend or a family member.

It's got to be extremely relaxed further to this, your elbow again, just looking at the whole chair positioning, should be at a comfortable angle where while hanging at the side from your shoulders, shoulders should remain relaxed and lower position while typing.

So I'm not typing right now speaking to you guys directly, but if you notice how I'm looking at you all, it's very relaxed.

I'm not feeling any strain at all with my upper back or my shoulders or my wrists, or also extremely comfortable.

When we're talking about typing, you want to avoid typing with your wrists at odd angles.

You want to maintain a neutral position, not bent up or down or side to side.

So the image that I included on the slide actually sort of illustrates what we're kind of looking at.

If you're driving a car, you want to be as relaxed as possible because you do on jerky movements to affect your cognition or your experience.

And the same thing when it comes to typing, you want to feel as if you're just coasting this image, especially with where the hand is controlling the mouse is exactly ideally, how you want to handle your computer accessories neutral risk position.

So when we're looking at the keyboard.

So this is where a lot of the carpal tunnel syndrome behind issues come into play.

The keyboard should be located at an elbow height and rest flat on the desk.

You want to have your feet on the feet of the keyboard should always be retracted.

Some people like to have different angles going, but I typically encourage that it's flat so it's easier to sort of maintain that constant.

A positive angle towards the user should be avoided, although negative, it away from the user can be allowed.

I typically tend to again encourage people to keep their keyboards flat where you can.

This keyboard, for instance, has this stand kickstand that you can sort of pick out.

But if I do this, it allows me to keep a more neutral position with my keyboard so something to factor in.

But again, each to your own as long as you keep in mind of how your positioning is and the arm should float over the keyboard as if you're playing a piano.

So again, very, very relaxed still.

And even with my position right now, my elbows are resting on the arm rest of my chair.

I'm easily just floating way on my keyboard.

If I need to type something so it should be extremely relaxed.

And again, the angle of your keyboard needs to be altered.

Appropriately by all means, do so as long it's not causing further strain.

So again, I kind of mentioned this a little bit in the previous slide keyboard should be just lower the normal desk height.

If the keyboard is not low enough, try raising a chair height.

You want to prevent your legs from dangling by using a foot rest, ideally.

Keep your home row keys at elbow level, so anything that you commonly tend to access in terms of your key functions on your keyboard, try to keep that accessible height.

And the biggest thing is adjusting a chair.

So you want to be able to adjust a chair to the comforts of your height and what you feel safe where you're not causing further back or cervical strain.

So just at a high level, there's a lot of stuff that I could sort of throw in here on the slide, but this is sort of what you consider to be a neutral computer posture.

So this is again applicable in any desk, whether it's at work or at home.

The key thing is you want to have your monitor in front of you again.

Nowadays we all have LCD LED monitors, but you want to keep your monitor in front of you and then about arms length away so you should be able to see all the characters on your screen nicely if you're typing something, if you have a document holder that's close to the monitor, it's even more effective.

You want to keep your mouse next to your keyboard, both at a height that's equivalent to your seated elbow height.

I mentioned on the slide about adjusting your seat height.

You can factor that in your backrest also should be provided should provide firm support and the seating, the seat pan should also be able to support your full thighs, and it should not contact the back of your knees.

So all of that factors into an ideal neutral computer posture.

I think this is common sense, but in terms of the keyboard used to avoid really the carpal tunnel triggers.

Try to use a light touch when you're typing when you're doing any sort of typing at all, try using two hands to perform double key functions like Control C or Alt F instead of using one hand to sort of maneuver.

That would be ideal.

So just getting familiar utilizing bilaterally where you can it would be very helpful and position frequently use items so you don't have to always keep reaching.

So I usually have my coffee mug on my left hand side of my desk set up here.

I just know that I don't have to keep reaching out to the back, on the side or in front where I'm not causing further strain.

So just keeping items that you want to reach very instantly where you're not thinking about it and it's not going to cost for stream actually can go a long way this diagram right here illustrates sort of the breakout from your usual work area, what you do occasionally and what you do that's non-working area.

So this is kind of the ideal measurement set up.

You want to sort of factor in terms of the link to which you would be reaching at.

So it's not a hard science per se as to where these numbers come from.

More or less commonly sort of recommended measures for your ideal set up where you can.

Again, placing a monitor in front of you, not at an angle, if you can.

The next point I cannot stress enough taking breaks to stretch and relaxes.

Absolutely important.

Anytime you have 20 minutes after a task, the reading an article in front of you or chatting with somebody online, just take a break for about a minute, two minutes where you can.

So it just gives your eyes a little bit of a break and give you back a bit of break too.

So do factor that in as you getting involved more with your computers, holding your mouth slightly and further to that, keeping your hands and arms warm, warm muscles, joints tend to function a lot better, less in occurrences for injuries.

Excellent.

And then this is more of a self recognition task, and that is paying attention to signals for everybody.

So if you sense that I mentioned work here, but if your neck tends to hurt while you're staring at you monitor for 15 minutes, you may want to look at how your body's positioned to sort of identify what the root cause could be for the soreness.

So a question that you could ask yourself potentially, are you holding your neck at a knock wrangle while you type or talk on the phone?

Now we tend to say if we're writing something, we have our cell phone right here and we're sort of doing this.

Chances are you're going to be straining not only your right side of your neck, but you would also be a hyper extending your left.

So just keeping an eye out of that.

And what are some ways to mitigate those those poor practices if you're looking at vision you want to employ a 20/20 rule, which is basically to refocus your eyes for 20 seconds every 20 minutes.

So again, I mentioned earlier, if you're looking at and watching or reviewing something for 15-20 minutes, you want to sort of take your eyes off and monitor and do something else to really re-adjust and get your eyes refocused.

Keeping your monitor screen very clean.

This is highly important.

The amount of itchy eye complaints or the complaints that I hear about is quite profound.

So you want to be able to keep your work area clean where you can and having regular vision care is also helpful to reduce your eye stream.

Some other vision related sometimes that you should be identifying with your doctors includes tingling, pain loss, of strength on this.

These are things you want to keep an eye out for when you if you do experience them, please do seek physician care immediately.

Excellent

Headaches.

Many headaches are caused by some of the stuff that I mentioned earlier, like dry eyes.

But further to that monitor glaring or strained eye muscles or tired muscles, which can be attributed to just again, just prolong the focus or lack of sleep.

Right.

So you want to factor that in the next slide.

And these are things that I've highlighted here in terms of what you can do to help avoid eye strain where you can.

And if you focus on the last point where it said looking up in a way every few minutes or so is actually not just good for your eyes.

It's also good for your neck in terms of really getting that fluid motion for your surplus.

Fine.

It's absolutely imperative.

Next slide.

I've mentioned here some Ergonomic products that you may want to consider.

You can be done in consultation with an Ergonomist, or it can be done really by good self judgment.

There's a lot of Ergonomics supported keyboards, wrist pads, wrist rest, mouse pads, chairs, adjustable desk screens that can be consumer purchase, so the stand workstations may be applicable depending on who the audience is.

So you may want that for your own desk, but cost can be factored in, but that's also an option to look at if you especially want to been benefiting from straining your back.

The next slide is just an image of what one six to ten desk is.

It basically gives you the option to set with the chair or you can take a break stand and still use it.

And you're still getting the full benefits of your workstation.

And that brings me to the end of my personal presentation.

Muriel Howden:

Wow.

Alka and Shin, thank you.

Thank you for sharing your knowledge, your research, accident tips and information.

What great presentations you both provided us with so a big thank you.

So I see that we've received some great questions and we'll go to as many questions as possible in the time that we have today before we do.

So I would like to remind you to submit your questions in the in the Q&A box.

If your question is directed to one panelist in particular, so to Alka or to Shin, please include that in your question and remember, the chat will not be monitored.

So please ensure that questions are entered to the Q&A feature.

[content repeated in French]

Okay, so let's look at our question.

I'm going to start with the first one with Alka.

So Alka, here's the question.

Covid has impacted all our lives and routines.

Do you have any tips for adjusting self care practices in the pandemic world?

Alka Chopra:

Yeah, that's a great question.

As COVID has impacted everyone.

It's not a very good situation, but it has impacted every single person.

So what I would say is the first thing is that you start with what you like to do.

You've got to do things at home.

There are lots of online sessions depending upon your interest.

If you like to do exercise, or if you would like to take up some art classes and craft classes, dancing classes, in the last one year, I've seen lots of classes which are really geared towards the older adult population.

So just a little bit of research definitely will be required.

And yeah, I'll start with what you enjoy.

So like what I said in my presentation.

What is it that in short list three, four things and then start with one.

Don't overwhelm yourself and then just get into it depending upon something that you probably wanted to do when you were in your full-time job.

That is a good time to really do it this time.

Muriel Howden:

That's great.

Thank you.

A we had a question from Danielle, and I think it came from your presentation, Alka, and she was asking if you could elaborate on resilience.

Alka Chopra:

Yeah, resilience, I equate. resilience to tolerance.

You know, when we are at homebound we have too much of each other, sometimes it's nice to go and sit in the separate room away from everybody, because when you are with your own self, you learn to really be more tolerant and more calm and more patient.

So really just be very and again, when you start to take care of yourself, you will find that you will build that resilience in yourself if you continuously ignore yourself, ignore your needs.

I stress a lot about the burnout signals in my presentation being more mindful that last video that was there, I would say, because I'm assuming you'll get a replay for this.

Look at that video again and you can actually find it on YouTube as well.

And I can even send the direct link to maybe Muriel or Stephanie, anybody people want to watch that video so resilience in this time and age.

And the thing is Covid is not going away very quickly.

It's going to be here for a long time.

So definitely building that resilience and a little bit patient.

Patient number one with your own self, your own emotions and because of our outbursts are all the result of our emotions.

Starts with self care.

Start small.

Muriel Howden:

Wonderful.

Thank you Alka.

Actually, the next one is for you and Shin the following question is definitely for you.

Alka, if you have never followed a self care routine, how can you start?

Alka Chopra:

Yeah.

So I kind of answered that question many, many times, but I will say start small.

Self care can also be going to the dollar store, getting yourself an adult colouring book or maybe Sudoku, for example, and sit alone in a separate room.

Maybe it's your patio.

It's really good.

We are enjoying the weather right now.

Enjoy it while it lasts.

Maybe go sit outside whatever area you have where you can be by yourself.

It is important that you spend time with your own self extremely, extremely important.

So if you start really small, don't.

And again, you don't have to spend lots of dollars on getting into a routine and do it every single day.

I whether you allow ten minutes,

You need to make self care of culture.

You need to make it a lifestyle and only then that you will be able to see the impact on yourself.

And then you will also build resilience as well that we were just talking about.

Muriel Howden:

Great advice and probably good for all of us.

Thank you.

So the next question is in French.

So, Shin, I'm going to read it in French for and then in English.

The question is

[content repeated in French]

So, I often catch myself hunched leaning forward over my desk when I'm on my laptop.

Any tips to help break this habit?

Shin Yogaratnam:

Yeah.

So I would recommend I think the easiest tip that I really suggest to folks is to get out of the chair because we're very habit driven.

So goals are into, for the most part that we want to just get the task done and then move on with the next thing.

But the price that we pay for that is more is more profound.

So just getting out of the chair actually just automatically breaks the routine.

Get that stretching and incorporate it right there.

Also being a little bit more mindful about back support.

So I mentioned on the slides about if you have, say, a pillow or anything that supports your lower back to give you that support will actually augment your posture a little bit better.

Those are two things that I would recommend we're now in a smart, smart device world.

Right.

So I spoke about the vision care incorporating the 20/20 rules, so that same rule can also apply for how long we sit.

So if you were to take your smartphones, assuming all of us have smartphones using the timer time function on our phones and set a timer for anywhere between 15-20 minutes.

Let that run out that the alarm signal will then basically trigger us and say, oh, that's it.

Let's get up.

Let's move on.

Those are like small, easy to adapt habits that we can take on to sort of break that cycle of poor posture.

Muriel Howden:

Yeah, that's right.

Small, but make a big difference.

Right.

A very good person.

Thank you so much.

So the next question is for Alka.

And after that, after this question,

I will actually call the chair of the board Rich Prophet and our CEO Jim Grieve since we have a question for all the panelists.

So it'll be a group question, and we're looking forward to that.

So for now, Alka, here's the question.

How can I get back into a healthy routine after COVID, my partner and I have different approaches.

So I have to say this is a great question, because I think you touched on that Alka earlier.

Everybody has reacted differently to Covid, right.

And some people have done pretty well and some people not.

So how do you work with that?

Alka Chopra:

You know what?

If you and your partner have different approaches, it's completely okay.

Like I had said to you that you're not the one person who will solve the world's problems.

You can't do it.

So if it is different approaches, really, that is again, the resilience piece comes in, the tolerant piece comes in.

It is completely okay.

Although what I will say is that it would be nice that if even with the two different approaches, learn to enjoy each other's system.

Right.

So even if it is for five minutes, it doesn't matter.

Time is not the issue here.

It is learning to acknowledge each other's interests and acknowledging and taking interest in what your partner is enjoying and being a part of it.

My husband, I'll give you my own example my husband likes to do karaoke.

He just sits in the living room and has the music on and he'll just sing.

Do I sing?

Of course not.

I don't sing.

But I will just sit with him for five minutes, six minutes.

And then I'll quietly go to the other room to do my own stuff.

But does that mean that I am singing with him?

I'm not.

But it's just that 5,6, 7, 10 minutes where even I have learned to enjoy him singing.

He's not the best singer, but he enjoys it.

And I enjoy him seeing he's enjoying himself.

It makes me laugh, too.

Sometimes I'll do a video recording and I'll send it to everybody in the big group, and then we'll laugh together.

So it's just understand in each other's little.

These are small things.

There's no money involved in it just to enjoying each other's company.

Yeah, this is okay.

Muriel Howden:

Actually, by doing that, you're not only connecting with your husband, but with your whole family.

Exactly.

Amazing.

Alka Chopra:

Like what Shin had mentioned, we all have those electronic devices.

Use it to your interest.

What that can be used the way you make your life, you define your life the way you want to do it.

So really try to find those little little things which will make it better.

Muriel Howden:

That's right.

And actually, this is what we're going to talk about right now.

So I'm actually going to call the chair of the board, Rich prophet and our CEO, Jim, Grieve.

It's gonna be really nice to have the four of you.

I respond to this question, so maybe we can start with Rich.

And here's the question.

Can you share your favourite self care practice or routine?

Rich.

Rich Prophet:

Thank you, Muriel.

One thing that always attempted to do as I listen very strongly to help as a strong recommendation that repetition is key.

So Consequently, on the hours that I'm not working with, RTOERO.

For six months of the year I got five days a week, which is key, and the other six months for a year.

I play hockey five days a week, and in between times.

Then I'm teaching myself how to play the piano and of course, at the top of the list of courses, being with my family.

Muriel Howden:

That's fantastic.

I don't know if we can equal that, but Jim, shall we hear from you.

Jim Grieve:

I definitely can't top that Rich.

It's just awesome to do that.

I love it.

Well, my favourite really is playing my drums.

They are about two and a half meters away from my desk.

I'm working home, obviously with RTO.

And as she said, that 2020 is the perfect.

So when my Zoom call is over, I stand up, I go over.

They're electronic drum, so no one else to me can hear them.

Although I love to share them, that I can play with some of the biggest bands in the world and nobody knows it but me.

And it's just great, great practice because I'm still in the band.

So that plus walking and swimming, you got me.

Muriel Howden:

So Shin and Alka you see what you're against at this minute, right.

Shin, so you want to give us your favourite self care routine?

Shin Yogaratnam:

Yeah.

This is actually something I do.

Religiously

I foam roll at night just before I go to bed.

Just the nature of my work. I always on my feet now with COVID, we tend to be sitting a lot.

I always find my upper back, hip, neck area very stiff and so I don't want that to affect my sleep and my sleep quality.

So I take three to five minutes just before I get into bed.

Foam roll just really focusing on deep stretching.

You can buy these foam rollers winners, they sell it and the various fitness stores.

And I can recommend a few after this presentation through links, but I do it all the time.

And honest to God the fact that I feel the next morning where I feel fresh, just well rested, no stiffness whatsoever.

It just leads to a more productive day.

And that's something I just bought into and I do it.

And I got my family, my wife, they also sort of bought into that concept too, and they've seen a difference too.

And it does go a long way.

Muriel Howden:

That's amazing.

Such a great tip.

Alka.

Let's hear from you.

Alka Chopra:

So for me, like I had mentioned I am a crafter.

I love to get my hands dirty with paint, with plaster, like anything that I can get my hands in.

I'll do that.

So every single day, even if it could just mean going and touching my art supplies.

If I have no time, but I will go to the room, I will touch a bit of organization if I don't have the time to paint or craft anything.

I work with clay and I work with pastels.

So that is what I do religiously every single day, even for it.

Let it be for 15 minutes.

And the second thing that I do religiously as I do meditation, like every single day again when I'm getting into bed and I always do it in bed or in the morning, the first thing in the morning or the last thing at night.

So that has really kept me afloat.

I got into meditation a few years ago when I was having a very stressful job, and that is what really helped me come back to who I am.

Muriel Howden:

I find amazing how between Rich and Jim and all kinds, you're all covered in the self care routine, the body, the mind, the spirit and the activities.

It's just fantastic.

Lots of great ideas for many people.

Thank you for that.

Alka Chopra:

Just keep in mind that I will emphasize it a lot that you need to bring in self care as your lifestyle, the way you breathe, the way you eat food, you know, go to the washroom, brush your teeth.

It has to be a part of you.

If it's not a part of you, it's not a culture.

It will not happen.

Muriel Howden:

So a change of your mindset to thank you.

And I think I'm going to send this next question to you.

It's from Lisa.

And the question is, what if you work with two monitor screens?

What's the best set up?

Shin Yogaratnam:

Good question.

So I swear by two monitors myself.

So I totally advocate for it.

It comes down to the desk.

So certain desks allow for the installation of a clamp Mount.

So you can basically it's like think of a clamp they use at an auto shop that used to grip something.

So the same concept, there's mounts where there are dual arms that support the monitors that you can clamp on the desk, sort of off to the side that gives you that support what I have at home.

I don't have a gap to install clamp mount.

So I have sort of a flat, a flat bed dual monitor.

So this is sturdy.

It's a very heavy base that supports two monitors, and it works well.

I can adjust based on my need.

I would recommend that anytime you can get a mount, it just gives a bit more flexibility in terms of your vision, a little bit more support.

I find that I can see better.

I'm not straining myself the ones that come in from the factory.

Meaning that comes with the monitors.

I would avoid doing that.

And further, it creates more space on your desk if you can, you know, play something else that's more valuable to you, like your laptop or books or whatever, by all means, get them out.

Muriel Howden:

Amazing.

Thank you so much.

I think so.

I'm going to send the next question.

I think it's a Jerry's question, actually, to Alka.

And after that I will call back again the chair of the board Rich Prophet and our CEO Jim Grieves for the next question, since it's related to RTO.

But Alka, here's Jerry's question, could you comment on the role of social media and the news media in negatively impacting our well being?

Alka Chopra:

That's a great relevant social media is now part of us.

Whether you hate it, whether you love it, it's there.

So the wise thing is to really have boundaries.

Now, in my presentation, I had mentioned boundaries.

Now you need to have boundaries with people.

You need to have boundaries in social media.

It is so important and even with news as well.

So here's the way I do it.

So yes, I am on Instagram.

I'm on Facebook.

YouTube is not social media, but mainly.

And I'm not on Twitter.

Twitter is not my cup of tea.

However, if you are on social media, you probably want to start thinking of assigning times to it.

Right?

So do not be on your phone 24 hours, not for the entire time you're awake and do not get to your phone or your social media account the first thing in the morning.

That is the worst thing that people do.

So you want to refrain from that.

So if I would suggest something is of course, you need to know what's happening in the world.

You need to know the news and social media is a great way of getting what's current.

Sometimes things get quicker on the social media than anything else.

Right.

So you really need to be aware, be aware.

But to have your frame your boundaries.

So what I do is I'll go on my social media accounts, maybe after in the morning, when I wake up, I do my meditation.

I get out of bed about 5-10 minutes in the morning, then 5-10 minutes in the middle of the day, and then later on and in the evening.

That's the kind of routine that I follow.

And and also keep in mind that you are not there to save the world.

You cannot do it singlehandedly.

If somebody has written a negative comment on Facebook and Facebook is actually notorious for that.

I use the term notorious because it's not the greatest word, but people literally bite each other.

So remove yourself from those groups or from the discussion.

You do not need to react to everything, right?

You do not have to do it.

So think about your own.

Keep yourself first and really try to look at things which make you feel.

Even if you are commenting, if somebody has posted you're in some fun Facebook group, for example, somebody has posted a nice message or maybe a nice project someone has been working on.

You know, appreciate that person's work.

And when you start to appreciate what the other person has, does it's like you feel good internally yourself that you know what?

This is something nice.

I saw and I really commented.

And the person who say thank you to you so it's a really good feeling.

So you really decide your own boundaries.

What you want to do with social media.

Social media is there for a purpose.

Use it wisely and not against you and define your boundaries.

Define your own self, if that's in your hand.

Muriel Howden:

Yes.

No.

Absolutely.

Alka Chopra:

What you want to do with social media and entirely your call.

Facebook is not coming to you and saying, you know what is what, Alka, you've got to do this?

Absolutely not.

So you'll make your own definitions.

Muriel Howden:

Thank you.

Thank you very much, Alka.

So we have a few minutes in this webinar time is actually passing by very fast, so I'm glad to be welcoming again.

Rich Prophet, the chair of the board, and Jim Grieve, Ceo.

So here's Diane's question. Rich and Jim, it would be great to survey RTOERO members to see what healthy benefit priorities they have.

Self care can be expensive, and coverage through benefits would facilitate better outcomes.

Has there been any discussion about this new approach?

Rich Prophet:

Well, actually, Muriel, at the president's meeting next week, we're going to be discussing certain aspects of the membership survey that we've had during the past year, and we've had an overwhelming response from them from 82,000 members.

We've heard about 14,000, I believe.

But what we're doing, we have a variety of topics.

That's an interesting one to do.

We've done volunteering with respect to that, not only in the membership survey.

But part of that.

My goodness.

I think of our publications Renaissance.

There's one issue of what you're doing now to have an active lifestyle.

And in there it talks about setting goals for your life and that's just one copy.

And there throughout each copy. And there's challenges that are going forward with respect to wellness in life.

And one of the mandates of one of our committees is to recommend strategies and resources for wellness.

So thank you for that suggestion.

And we certainly will follow through strongly because this is a very important and timely topic, wellness.

Jim Grieve:

Well, then it's a super question, one that one would expect from our RTOERO members because they're so engaged. What I would say is that every one of our representative, and their prime role is to make sure that they are funnelling really good self help, healthy living ideas to the members at large in their district.

So, for example, we give them prices of work that's in the McMaster Optimal Aging portal, which is a very trusted source of really good information, and the same with Lumina Health.

Lumina, which is a Sunlife product, and we're part of Sunlife is available to our members with lots of great ideas or how they can live that kind of personal self help life that Alka and Shin have been talking about.

I think the issue of asking our members what they do is something that we should deeply consider either in our health.

When we do our health survey or when we do our next full on membership survey as well.

Good suggestion.

Muriel Howden:

Amazing.

Rich Prophet:

Muriel.

If I could just add one thing I forgot to mention is that that is presently just very recently on our website and it's coming to you in very new future.

If you haven't had it are a list of 50 activities that our members can do in retirement, and it's quite amazing and quite fulfilling.

If you can accomplish some of those 50 activities and look forward to them on our website, I don't want to say where they are.

You look and you shall find.

Muriel Howden:

Rich, this is brilliant.

Thank you.

I'm sure Shin and Alka, you know, approve, this is fantastic.

We'll live to this and with that, I will actually let Jim do the wrap up for today and thank you so much.

Jim Grieve:

Muriel as always a great job.

Thank you.

Listen, the theme of this series is

Thought leadership and that's where we want RTOERO to be right at the forward edge of thought leadership and what better topic than self care, especially we hope towards the end of the pandemic, people desperately are looking for these ideas.

Great suggestions in for the kind of the ergonomics and the appropriate way to lay out your home office or your home connection with grandchildren, etc.

That's almost always virtual these days.

Unfortunately.

And then Alka, this mindfulness just keeps coming up over and over.

We preach about it in schools.

We talk about it in the organization.

This organization and the value of meditation is so important for people on a daily basis and doing it's for you and making it part of as you call it, your culture is the point way it's going to work if it's just a fad, forget about it.

Right?

So honestly, thank you so much.

And Alka, for really great thoughts that have been put out into the 340 people plus that came to this webinar.

You can watch, I'll speak now to those of you who are listening.

You can watch the recording of this webinar because we're going to send it to you probably within two or three weeks so you can revisit some of the elements.

You can certainly revisit a beautiful little video that Alka showed you share the link you can absolutely, when you get it, share the link with your friends and relatives and tell them how great the issue of self care it is and some great advice that given to you.

Want to invite all of you who are still here and still listening that we have another webinar coming up.

It is on September the 29th at 1:00 p.m..

And listen to this.

Reviewing your finances throughout retirement.

This is one of the hottest buttons in retirement.

A. Can I afford to retire and B. Now that I'm retired?

What do I do to make sure that I still can afford to retire?

So we have Toronto Star columnist David Aston, and David Aston is coming to talk about current market investments, new options for investment advice, and maybe some portfolio tips for each of us who tune in.

So that's Wednesday, September 29th, again at 01:00 p.m..

Registration is open.

You can sign in now and for all of us and from all of us to Alka and Shin and the whole team that put this all together.

A sincere thank you.

And have a wonderful afternoon.

Thank you.

Alka Chopra:

Take care of yourselves.



Better lives for Canada's education
community retirees

Une vie meilleure pour les retraités du
secteur de l'éducation au Canada

Jim Grieve:

Yes, you too.



Better lives for Canada's education
community retirees

Une vie meilleure pour les retraités du
secteur de l'éducation au Canada