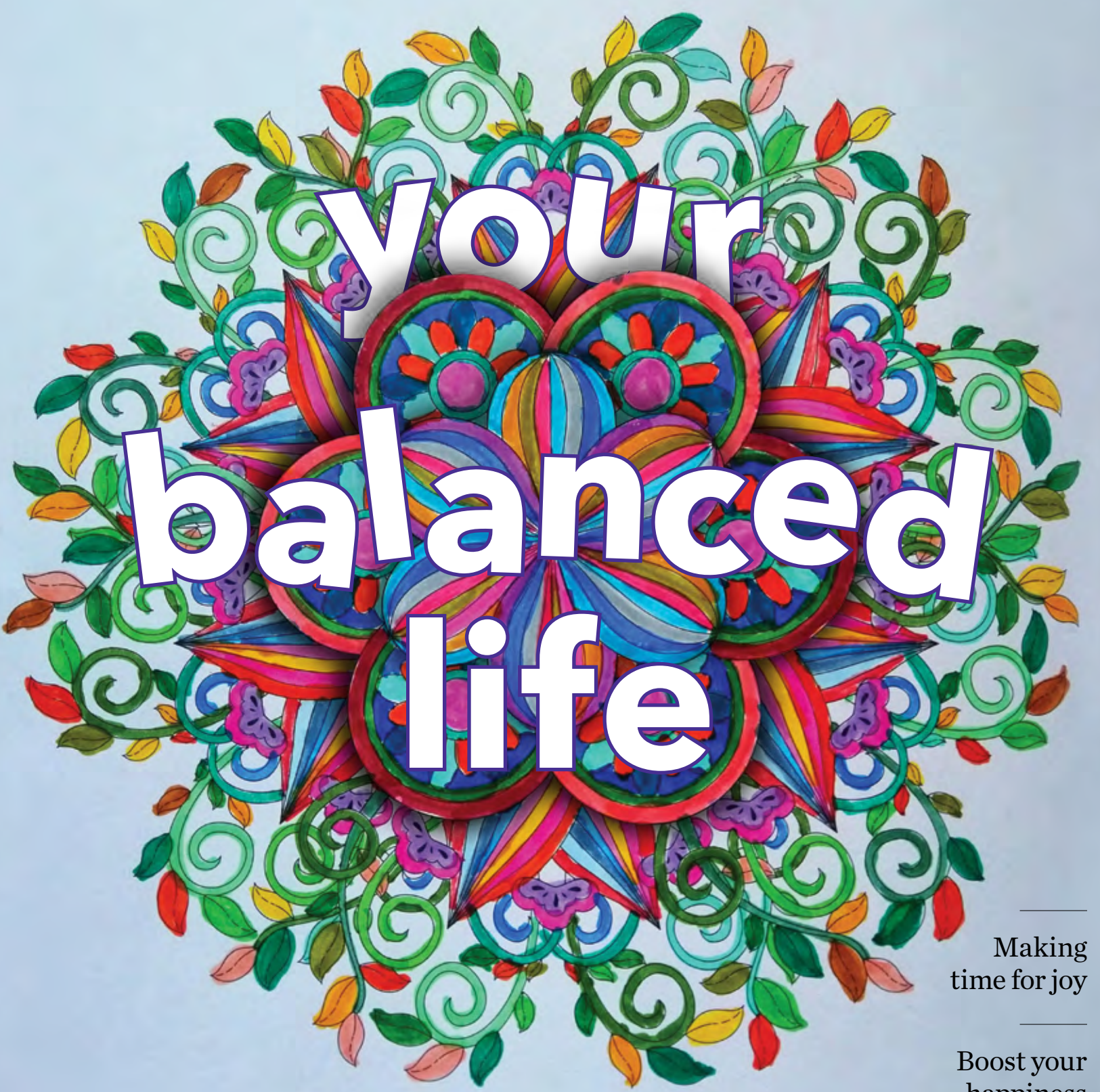


renaissance

RTOERO Magazine

Spring 2022

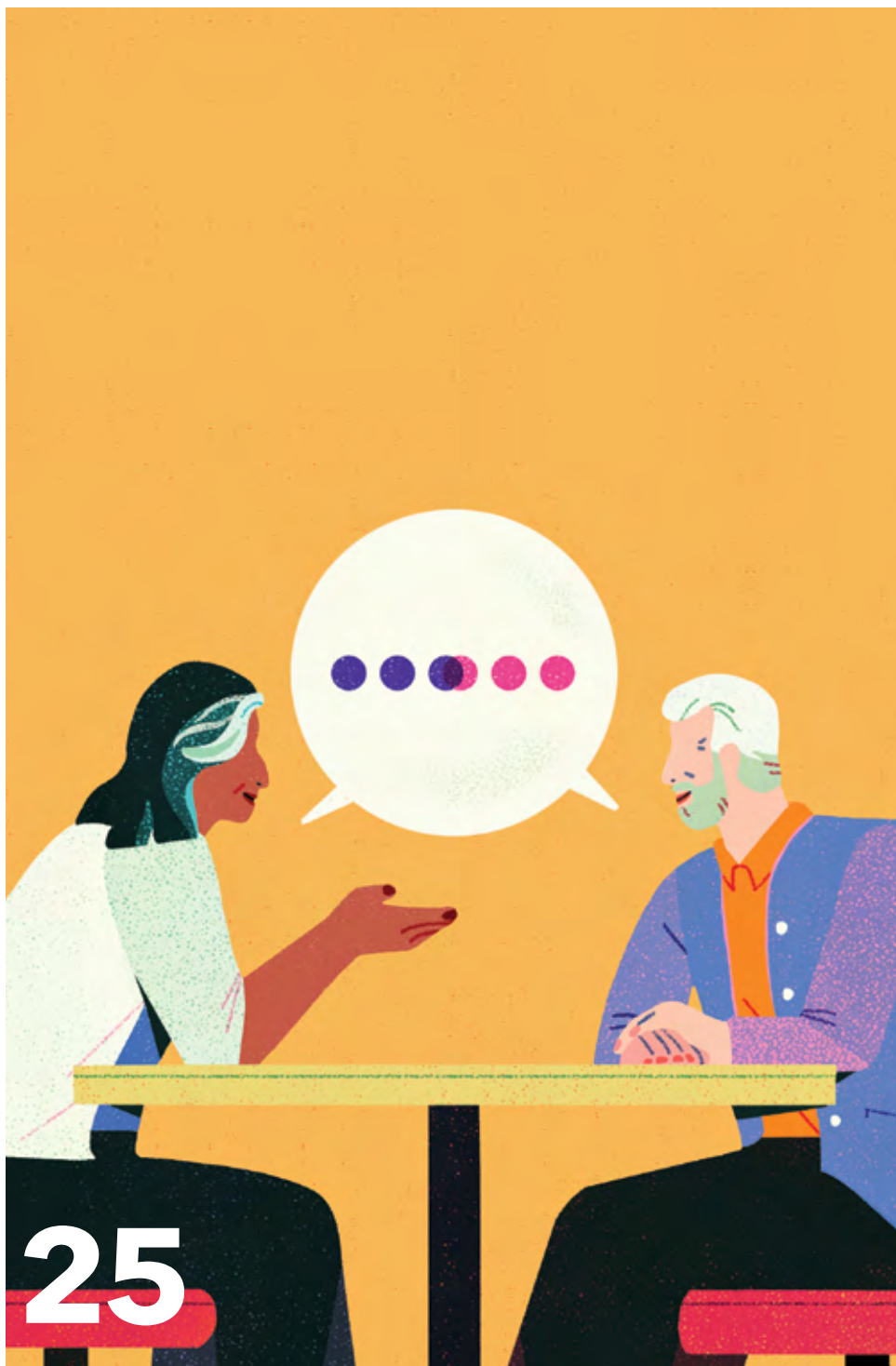


Your balanced life

Making
time for joy

Boost your
happiness

How to say no to
negative people



ILLUSTRATION, JEANNIE PHAN

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Making time for joy
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Creative pursuits can put a smile on your face
- 25** **How to say no to negative people**
Set healthy boundaries and build better relationships



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Mandala created by Kerry Black
from *Express Yourself in Colour*
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Entertainment, with support from
the Government of Canada.

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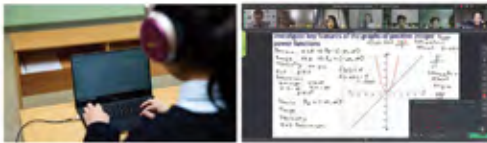
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Reader letters

I always enjoy reading my *Renaissance* magazine. I think it's a good idea to give themes to develop the articles. The photos and writing are always very inspiring! Thank you for these beautiful stories!

—Monique Marion
(District 45 EstariO)

Why would anyone allow themselves to be controlled by the tiresome notion that financial planning is the only way to assure a fulfilling retirement? Our imaginations, attitudes and ability to play contribute so much more to enjoying life to its fullest, at any time! Thank you to all who shared how they are composing their lives in retirement in the fall issue. *Renaissance* is my happy magazine.

—Christine Johnson
(District 27 Ottawa-Carleton)

I read "Health benefits of self-reflection" in the winter issue of *Renaissance*, and although my journals are not totally about gratitude, I feel I have followed the idea. Years ago, I watched an Oprah show where she spoke of being thankful every day. Having kept daily journals for over 60 years, I changed that day and started beginning each entry with "I am thankful for..." and continue to write about anything and everything, from being thankful for a warm home when it is -40°C, to having my family around during COVID, to having the internet to connect to friends and family, to living in an area of Ontario that may get snow but never a flood or a real tornado (high winds don't count), to having had wonderful years of teaching and still keeping in touch with some of those students, to being

able to bike at 83 or swim in the community outdoor pool all summer, to being involved in the community of Nipigon. When I am doing a lay worship service in church, I am sure some members get tired of me playing the hymn/song "Count Your Blessings."
—Glena (Barratt) Clearwater
(District 2 Thunder Bay)

I thoroughly enjoyed the winter 2022 issue of *Renaissance*. Adele Blair, in her article "I didn't see it coming," writes about the many complex feelings experienced as one ages. Like her, I also dislike those humiliating birthday cards depicting women my age shrivelled up, with sagging breasts and waving their canes over their heads. Then there are the invitations one receives in the mail, advertising nursing

homes, or the first time some 20-something calls you "hon" or "dear." I, too, never saw it coming. But I do like her suggestion that more seasoned women should no longer be referred to as "little old ladies" or "old biddies." Yes, let us be referred to as "classic" or "heritage" women, a term that celebrates our life experience. For me, the first time it happened was last spring. A 20-something male sales clerk called me "young lady," as I was completing my transaction for a purchase of CBD gummies in our local marijuana shop. Smart alec!
—Stephanie Nielsen
(District 14 Niagara)

Elder abuse resources

After reading the story on elder abuse in our winter 2022 issue, members asked us to publish resource numbers across the country.

Alberta

Family violence info line
Toll-free in Alberta:
310-1818, 24 hours

British Columbia

Seniors Abuse and Information Line
Seven days a week
(excluding holidays),
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. PST
Vancouver: 604-437-1940
Toll-free: 1-866-437-1940

Manitoba

Seniors Abuse Support Line
Toll-free: 1-888-896-7183

New Brunswick

Seniors Information Line
Toll-free: 1-855-550-0552

Newfoundland and Labrador

Seniors Resource Centre of Newfoundland and Labrador
Toll-free: 1-800-563-5599

Northwest Territories

Seniors information line
Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Toll-free: 1-800-661-0878 or
867-920-7444

Nova Scotia

Senior Abuse Information and Referral Line
Toll-free: 1-877-833-3377 or
902-424-3163

Nunavut

Elders Support Line
Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. (or leave a message)
Toll-free: 1-866-684-5056

Ontario

Seniors Safety Line
Seven days a week
Toll-free: 1-866-299-1011

Prince Edward Island

Family Violence Prevention Services
Toll-free: 1-800-240-9894 or
902-892-0960, 24 hours

Quebec

Ligne Aide Abus Aînés/Elder Mistreatment Helpline
Toll-free: 1-888-489-ABUS (2287) 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., seven days a week
Montreal: 514-489-2287

Saskatchewan

Victim Services: Information and referral to local community-based programs
Toll-free: 1-888-286-6664

Yukon

Seniors Services/Adult Protection Unit
Toll-free: 1-800-661-0408 (ext. 3946) or 867-456-3946

We asked Heather Beaumont, Suzanne Read and Charlene Rooke to tell us how they find balance in their lives.



HEATHER BEAUMONT

"I spend too much time sitting at my computer. So, for me, balance involves getting away from my desk. Sometimes I do Body Combat or step exercises in front of the computer, but at least I'm standing

up! I enjoy listening to music, cooking and baking (and eating) and going for meditative or brisk walks in different parks.

I make time for the people who make me laugh and who appreciate me. At night, I review what brought me joy, things I need to work on, and I say thank you for the day's gifts."



SUZANNE READ

"I find balance when I take a weekly tai chi class and practise routines almost daily by myself. It's a wonderful moving meditation as I pay attention to the individual forms and focusing the *xi* (chee or life energy).

I find balance when I work in my garden, pruning the Eastern redbud trees I grew from seed and admiring the early blooms that cover the trunk and branches every spring.

I find balance when I observe the birds that visit the feeders that hang from the branches of the redbud tree.

I find balance with my granddaughter, as she measures and mixes the lard, peanut butter and seeds for winter birdie seedcakes.

I find balance when I correspond with friends and far-flung relatives, especially those older than me, as I listen to and record their memories of days gone by.

I find balance when I correspond with women I have known since we were 11, especially when we gather to reminisce and fundraise for our alma mater.

I find balance when I FaceTime visit with my daughters or dear friends, coffee or tea in hand."



CHARLENE ROOKE

"To balance my week, I exercise daily and eat very clean — but I also save Friday afternoons for happy hour with friends! It wasn't until I quit my media executive job six years ago that I found

true balance in my life. I'm naturally a night owl, and 25 years of early-morning commutes, 10-plus-hour days and the stresses of management were difficult. Now I've followed my own rhythm, rediscovered what I love about journalism and found a niche writing about drinks."

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

We welcome your feedback, so please send your letters to renaissance@rtoero.ca. Letters may be edited for length and clarity at the discretion of the editor.

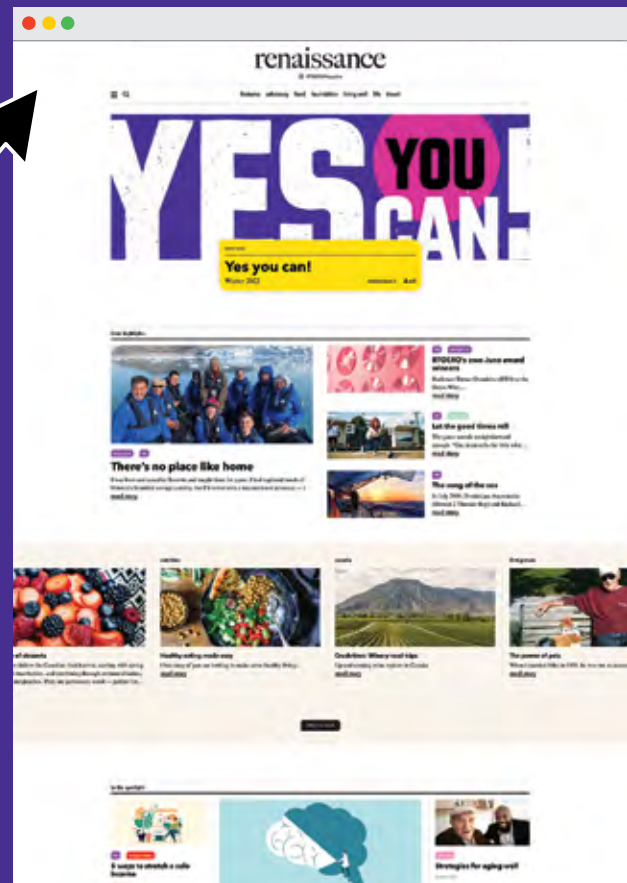
As we go to press with this issue, the pandemic continues to affect our lives. We plan and produce *Renaissance* months before it lands in your inbox or mailbox, so some stories or images might not reflect COVID-19 protocols or practices at this time.

Stay safe,
Stefanie Martin
Editor-in-Chief

eRenaissance has arrived!

eRenaissance is **RTOERO's** fresh, new, user-friendly digital version of the magazine you count on to live a healthy, active life in retirement.

eRenaissance will be updated as each new issue of *Renaissance* magazine goes to press. You can still read the PDF versions of past issues on the **RTOERO** website, and printed copies will continue to be mailed to members who prefer a hard copy.



Life in balance

Finding joy in the everyday



by **Rich Prophet**,
RTOERO Chair

What does it mean to live a balanced life? For me, finding balance means creating well-being in all aspects of life — in body, mind and spirit. While focusing on a healthy lifestyle by exercising and eating right is great for our bodies, balanced living means protecting our mental and emotional health as well. Managing our responses to stress needs to be at the top of our list.

Creating balance in our lives is something we considered as we approached retirement.

People often ask me when they should retire. My response is to pose a question back to them: “What do you plan to do in retirement?” It doesn’t matter if they choose to be an expert gardener, take up an artistic pursuit or play sports — as long as they’re passionate about what they’re doing.

When thinking about wellness, we continue to learn about the importance of social connections. That’s why the RTOERO Foundation has a special focus on combatting isolation in older adults. Recently, the foundation started the Chime In program. It allows people who feel isolated, or who just want to talk, to meet virtually once a week with other members across Canada.

Our districts have numerous activities in which members can participate, including monthly lunches, trips to plays, cross-country ski ventures and travels to distant places within and outside Canada. Participating in these activities enriches our member experience and builds our healthy active retirement lifestyle.

One common activity for many of our members is volunteering. More than 70 per cent of members are active volunteers. We enjoy giving back to our communities, and volunteering gives us a sense of purpose.

To me, ultimately, a balanced life means being happy — bringing a positive outlook to every day so we can find true enjoyment in every facet of our lives. 🍀

Here’s to balanced living!
Rich

Staying in touch

Relationships are the foundation of RTOERO



by **Jim Grieve**,
RTOERO CEO

Members and staff have, for two years, coped incredibly well with a pandemic-enforced physical separation and virtual communication from our home/work stations. For some, that has meant managing up to four screens of data or Zoom calls, simultaneously.

This pandemic forced us to transform and advance RTOERO’s connections and communication abilities by many years. Monthly meetings with all presidents, committee members, the Board of Directors; liaison meetings with district leaders; annual meetings; and forums have all carried on without a break. We’ve learned new and valuable skills that are now part of how we connect with one another.

Aside from hearing the ever-present “You’re on mute!” or “Please turn off your sound,” we will continue to use Zoom technology because it is all about relationships, regular connections and equity. Districts can eliminate the geographical distances across their memberships using Zoom accounts. The board and staff are in constant touch with district executives across the country, regardless of the weather or the season.

The best part of our world’s reopening: We are no longer confined to home or a screen. We have the hybrid alternative. We can gather in districts; we can come together at committee and board meetings but still use technology if the roads are bad or the flights or the trains are cancelled and some members can’t attend.

Two years of working with your talented RTOERO staff as they sat at home, at desks like mine, and responded directly to your calls and emails, has revealed their remarkable talents and dedication to our members and prospective members. Along with you and the leadership of the Board of Directors and our committees, our organization continues to grow and thrive.

I can’t wait to greet you — face to face (masked, of course), not screen to screen. 🍀

Best wishes,
Jim

The power of friendships

Staying connected is key to health and well-being

by **Stuart Foxman**



Nowhere to go, no one to see, no end in sight. The COVID-19 pandemic forced millions of Canadians to live in social isolation. For most, the restrictions were a temporary situation. For others, however, social isolation is an everyday reality.

“Older people are at risk,” says Dr. Mary Pat Sullivan, a professor of social work and social gerontology at Nipissing University in North Bay, Ont., and lead of an RTOERO Foundation-funded research project.

While social isolation can be an issue at any stage of life, Statistics Canada suggests that upwards of one-quarter of Canadians over age 65 feel isolated from others and would like to participate in more social activities.

“We know that an absence of quality connections can impact people negatively,” Sullivan says.

She received a grant from the RTOERO Foundation to study social isolation and dementia care. It’s one of the ways the foundation is trying to have a positive

impact on older adults’ quality of life.

The mission of the RTOERO Foundation is to foster respect, self-determination, better health care and social connections for older adults. The foundation raises awareness and funds to support the research, ideas and actions that will build a better future for all of us as we age.

Few foundations invest exclusively in initiatives related to healthy aging in Canada, or target social isolation. “We’re starting to see a conversation in this

Risk factors for isolation include living alone, mobility challenges, lower income, retirement, critical life transitions (losing a spouse, for example), changes in access to transportation, and worsening or chronic health issues.

space,” says Mike Prentice, executive director of the RTOERO Foundation.

Isolation is not the same as loneliness. You can be alone and happy. Or, you can be surrounded by people but still feel lonely if you lack meaningful activities or relationships.

Sullivan says loneliness is subjective — how you feel about your network and emotional bonds. Social isolation is a more objective assessment of how well people are connected.

Risk factors for isolation include living alone, mobility challenges, lower income, retirement, critical life transitions (losing a spouse, for example), changes in access to transportation, and worsening or chronic health issues.

Dementia is one of those issues. At Nipissing University, Sullivan and her colleagues are looking at how people with dementia can also become excluded and isolated, as cognitive capabilities decline or language skills become impaired.

That’s a growing concern as the number of Canadians living with dementia is rising, projected to go from about 500,000 today to more than 900,000 in 2030, according to the Alzheimer Society.

Sullivan’s project aims to produce educational resources for professionals and families to recognize social isolation and loneliness and implement coping strategies for care partners and people living with dementia.

Another RTOERO Foundation grant has gone to the Schlegel-UW Research Institute for Aging (RIA) in Waterloo.

This project will create a community conversation guide about social isolation for residents and caregivers in Woolwich, Ont., a rural township of just over 25,000 people in Waterloo Region.

Dana Zummach, an evaluation coordinator at RIA, says the guide will give community members the knowledge and skills to identify signs of potential isolation, and also the confidence to approach and assist others in need by connecting them to programs and services.

The guide is intended to be used by anyone in the community, including neighbours, friends, family and frontline service workers from bank tellers to grocery store clerks. It will be released later in 2022.

Zummach points out that seniors who are caregivers are at risk for isolation too. “When you’re caring for someone else, you can get so tired and burned out that you don’t take the time to be with family and friends,” she says.

In addition to making project grants, the RTOERO Foundation funds the RTOERO Chair in Geriatric Medicine at the University of Toronto, held by Dr. Paula Rochon. She conducts research related to aging and the societal health challenges faced by older adults and mentors graduate students who are studying geriatrics.

The pandemic has highlighted social isolation, and Prentice hopes that the attention and empathy don’t wane. “Just remember the experience we all had,” he says, “and imagine that this is forever.”



GET READY TO CHIME IN

Feeling isolated? The RTOERO Foundation invites you to Chime In every Wednesday from 1 to 2 p.m. EST. You can join using Zoom or call in by phone.

Chime In launched in October 2021. Foundation volunteers host this opportunity for open discussions and social connections. RTOERO members need to register just once to gain access and can then join the conversation any week, as often as they wish.

To register for the program, visit rtoero.ca/rtoero-foundation/get-involved/chime-in/.

Whole health strategies to age well

Advocate for yourself,
your family, your friends
and your community

by **Patricia Ogura**



Humans are more than physical beings, but we devote most of our time to ensuring that our bodies function before considering the other factors — spirit, mind, outlook — that influence who we are and how we feel.

Taking a more holistic approach to living is at the core of RTOERO's advocacy program, Vibrant Voices, addressing the welfare of older Canadians physically, mentally and spiritually.

Holistic advocacy begins at home. We safeguard our homes to keep young children or pets safe. We groom properties to avoid accidents on walkways. We offer guests good food, a nice environment and camaraderie. Yet we often fail to take care of our own needs as we age.

Here are some ways that you can advocate, holistically, for yourself — and for your family, your friends and your community.

Aging well at home

The better we plan our aging journey, the more likely we are to enjoy it. The Government of Canada website A Safe

Living Guide: A Guide to Home Safety for Seniors is a good starting point. In the spirit of aging well at home, this guide is simple, intelligent and helps Canadians prepare for living well throughout their older years. The content champions home safety, inside and outside; physical health and activity; and mental health and activity — respecting the whole person. bit.ly/3wAVJrB

Health and happiness

Dr. Keri-Leigh Cassidy founded Fountain of Health (fountainofhealth.ca), a national program for older people that promotes mental health to reduce the risk of dementia and improve cognitive function. Through science-based research, Cassidy and her colleagues have identified five lifestyle factors that maximize your health and happiness as you age:

- Physical activity
- Social activity
- Challenging the brain in new ways
- Taking care of mental health
- Positive thinking about aging

Research suggests that 15 minutes of light, physical exercise daily may increase life expectancy by three years

and that positive thinking about aging can promote life expectancy by seven and a half years. Cassidy spoke at an RTOERO webinar about aging and mental well-being in November 2021. To watch or listen to the webinar, visit rtoero.ca/webinar-paths-to-wellness-for-older-persons-body-mind-spirit.

Take control of your future

The federal government's Thinking About Your Future? Plan Now to Age in Place: A Checklist is a holistic how-to offered in collaboration with the provinces and territories. The checklist helps you measure the degree to which you're ready to age well at home with an eye to sorting out what you can do now to maintain your health and independence for as long as possible. Content covers a number of critical factors — from safe homes to physical and mental health to age-friendly communities — and includes a useful bibliography. bit.ly/3D7ECQG

Advocate for tomorrow

The spirit of advocacy starts at home but goes beyond to influence family and friends to ensure you live in an age-friendly community. Consult municipal leaders to see what programs are underway in your area. Not much? Consider advocating for age-friendly initiatives in your community. The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) identifies the attributes of an age-friendly community and how to focus your advocacy efforts. bit.ly/3wzfyQd

A winning strategy means planning ahead. As Walter Gretzky advised Wayne, "Skate to where the puck is going." To discover more about RTOERO's advocacy programs, visit rtoero.ca/vibrantvoices. 🧡



Processed food: OK? Or not?

Quick and easy options to popular processed food

by **Fran Berkoff**, registered dietitian

Processed food has a bad reputation, blamed for a host of health issues including obesity, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes.

But guess what? Processed food is more than deli meat, frozen pizza and fast-food burgers.

Homemade soup, whole wheat bread, ready-made salad dressing — yup: processed food.

Processing essentially means doing something to a food to change it from its natural state. In many cases this is not a bad thing. We know that unprocessed foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables

are our healthiest choices. But so are minimally processed foods, like frozen vegetables and fruit with no added sugar or salt; pre-cut, prewashed vegetables such as spinach; dried or fresh pasta; canned beans with no added salt; whole grains; milk; plain yogurt; or fresh/frozen meat, fish or chicken. These foods may be pre-cut, dried or cooked, but nothing significant is added to or taken from them.

The problem lies with ultra-processed foods, which are generally high in unhealthy fats, salt, sugars, additives, refined starches and usually calories.

They also are often low in fibre, vitamins, minerals and health-promoting antioxidants. We think of them as convenience or ready-to-eat foods, quick to heat up and enjoy when time is limited. And they usually taste pretty good because of what's been added to them.

So, should we eliminate these sorts of ultra-processed foods from our diet? In a perfect world, yes. But life being what it is, it makes most sense to try limiting how often you eat highly processed foods and ramp up whole, minimally processed and nutrient-rich meals.

Here are some quick and easy ways to make that happen.

Stock your fridge, freezer and pantry with staples that are easy to turn into quick meals. For example:

- Canned tuna or salmon make an easy sandwich or salad.
- Canned beans and lentils can quickly turn into chili, tacos, soup or a salad.
- Hard-boiled, scrambled or poached eggs make a fast breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- Cottage cheese mixed with fresh fruit or vegetables is a yummy lunch.
- Frozen edamame beans quickly defrost into a great snack.

Instead of buying instant noodles (approximately 600 to 1,000 milligrams of sodium per serving), cook your own noodles (approximately 10 milligrams of sodium per serving) and add your favourite seasonings. It's less expensive, healthier and tastier. Instead of fancy seasoned rice that has more than 500 milligrams of sodium, cook plain white or brown rice.

Buy a roasted chicken. If you're watching your fat intake, remove all or part of the skin. The rest is just chicken, unaltered and very convenient. Or, roast a turkey breast for a main course or sandwiches.

Read labels so you'll pick healthier, less-processed foods like tomato sauce, whole grain bread and canned fish. Especially look for the amount of added sodium and sugar.

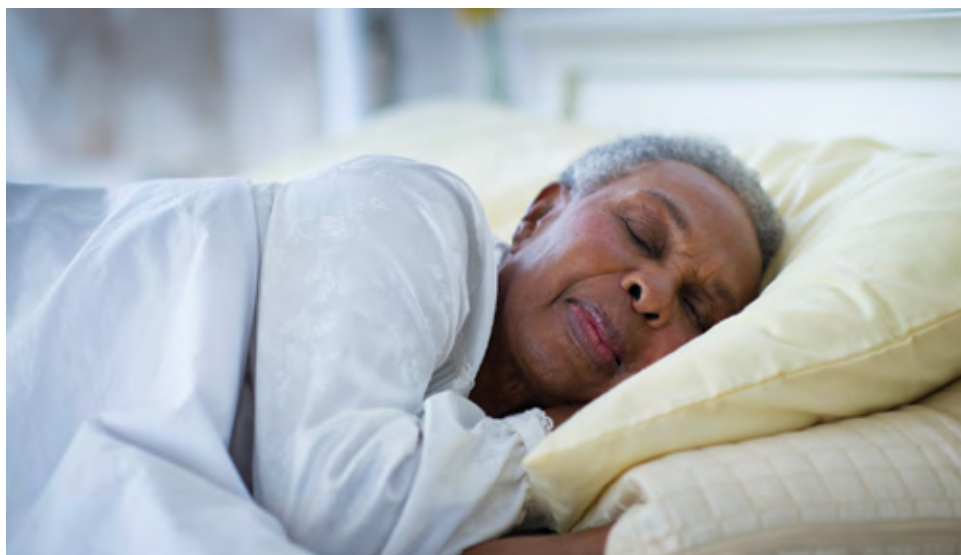
Pay attention to ingredient lists. Choose foods with short ingredient lists on the package and preferably with little or no added sugar, salt or fat.

The bottom line: Enjoy more whole foods or minimally processed foods and reap big health benefits. 🌱

You can sleep sounder

Here's how to get the sleep your brain and body need

by **Pauline Anderson**



Getting a good night's sleep is one of the three important pillars of a healthy lifestyle.

"Sleep is now viewed as equivalent to having a nutritious diet and getting a good amount of physical activity in terms of being fully healthy," says Dr. Charles Samuels, medical director at the Centre for Sleep & Human Performance and the Sleep Institute, and clinical assistant professor in the University of Calgary's Faculty of Medicine.

Studies have consistently shown an association between inadequate sleep and worse health outcomes, including cognitive health.

One recent study in the medical journal *JAMA Neurology* found that both short (six hours or less) and long (nine hours or more) sleep durations are associated with decreased cognitive function.

The study included 4,417 older adults in Canada and elsewhere with an average age of about 71. It linked short sleep duration with more amyloid beta (a protein linked to Alzheimer's disease) in the brain and poorer performance on memory tests. It also found an association between long sleep duration and poor performance on executive-function tests (these examine mental processes that let you plan, focus your attention and juggle multiple tasks).

Samuels stresses such impairment doesn't necessarily mean dementia. "You can be cognitively impaired on a day-to-day basis and that has nothing to do with dementia. It's simply sleep deprivation or sleep disturbances that affect your cognitive abilities."

The *JAMA Neurology* study also found that inadequate sleep was associated with more symptoms of depression — persistent sadness, for example, or lack of interest in things you used to enjoy — and a higher body mass index.

We need sleep to help our bodies and brains recover, Samuels explains. So if you're chronically sleep-deprived, your health risks go up, especially when it comes to cardiovascular/metabolic disease, in particular weight control.

To address a sleep issue, seniors should talk to their doctors and avoid self-medicating with over-the-counter herbal products or other sleep aids, Samuels advises.

If you need help getting a good night's sleep, your family physician might recommend medication. Canada recently approved lemborexant (brand name Dayvigo) for the treatment of chronic insomnia, the most common sleep issue. The medication works by blocking the neurotransmitter orexin.

Two drugs are also now available for

TIPS

Adults need between 7.5 and 9 hours of sleep a night, depending on lifestyle and other factors. To help you hit that target, here are some tips from sleep expert Dr. Charles Samuels:

- Follow a routine: Go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- Take a 20- to 30-minute afternoon nap. Napping is "a critical part of normal sleep health as we age," says Samuels. "It actually improves health overall."
- Avoid or limit alcohol.
- Stay away from or limit stimulants such as caffeine and nicotine.
- Don't keep computers, phones or other potentially intrusive technology by your bed.

treating excessive daytime sleepiness: solriamfetol (Sunosi), a dopamine and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor, and pitolisant (Wakix), which increases levels of histamine and other compounds that promote alertness.

Daytime sleepiness could be caused by narcolepsy, a neurological disorder that affects the sleep-wake cycle, or by obstructive sleep apnea, which occurs when the throat muscles intermittently relax and block the airway, causing breathing to stop and start during sleep.

But the "foundation" of treatment for many sleep disturbances — for older adults and others — is cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBTI), not drugs, says Samuels. CBTI is a structured program that aims to replace thoughts and behaviours that cause sleep problems with those that promote healthy sleep, such as maintaining a consistent sleep schedule.

Retirement may have an impact on the risk of some sleep issues. Not having to commute to work may reduce stress, which Samuels says is a major contributor to sleep disruption. On the other hand, retirement itself can be stressful as it breaks a sometimes years-long routine. ☁



What's your activity personality?

Choose the right activity and you'll stick with it

by **Ylva Van Buuren** Illustrations by **Jori Bolton**

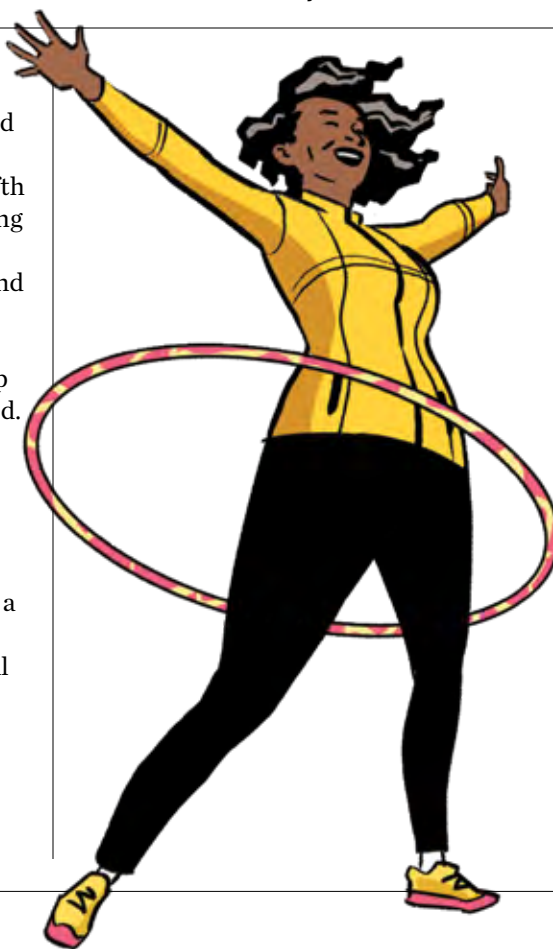
Everyone knows that regular activity is good for your health.

Unfortunately, statistics show that only one-fifth to one-quarter of Canadians of all ages are meeting the minimum fitness guidelines for good health, says Steve De Ciacca, a clinical physiotherapist and program consultant at the Canadian Centre for Activity and Aging at Western University.

The good news: Activity options are opening up again now that COVID-19 is being better managed. And while personal choice is often based on cost, convenience and physical condition, the key to sticking with any fitness routine is finding one that suits your personality and talents. Not a joiner? Then a yoga class may not be for you. Poor eye-hand coordination? Tennis is probably a non-starter.

“What you're really looking for is the emotional — and motivational — hook,” says De Ciacca.

When you choose an activity that fits your personality, you're on the road to success!



1. FUN LOVING

As long as you're having fun, you're all in.

Get moving: Enjoyment is the number-one motivator for exercise, says seniors' fitness expert and instructor Kelsey Harvey. If you love to dance, find a dance club, dance in your living room or take lessons. Throw a ball with grandkids or ask older ones to teach you how to play frisbee. Take a dog for a walk. Try something silly — the hula hoop, for example, can be a great workout for limber adults. Sign up for a fun activity such as volleyball, learn to kayak or try the latest ballet-inspired barre workout (there are classes for older adults).



2. SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

You prefer a social activity to working out solo.

Get moving: Sharing an activity is highly motivational, says Di Ciacca. Choose group activities like low-impact aerobics at a fitness club, an activity-based group like a hiking or cycling club, or a team sport such as badminton, volleyball or table tennis at a local recreation centre. Or, make it really simple and walk regularly with friends in the neighbourhood.

3. PLANNER

You're a pragmatic, outcomes-oriented problem-solver.

Get moving: You know that research supports exercise as a key to aging well. Exercise can reduce symptoms, prevent some conditions and help fight the effects of aging, says Di Ciacca. If sleep is an issue, start walking every day. Support brain health by learning a new activity – a dance class, water aerobics or table tennis. Build muscle strength – sign up for a strength-training class or walk with Nordic poles. Improve your balance with tai chi or yoga.



4. HIGH ACHIEVER

You set the bar high in life – and with activities.

Get moving: You're not hard to motivate, says De Ciacca – you just need to find an activity you can excel at. Whether it's rowing, cycling or long-distance running, chances are you're considering competing in your age group. But remember: "An aging body needs more time to recover," Harvey says. So recognize that you're not 25 and listen to your body. Add active recovery days (walking or yoga) to your running routine. If tennis is your game, alternate with pickleball.



5. SPIRITUAL SEEKER

You look for peace and harmony in everything you do.

Get moving: Being physically active can help your brain settle into stillness and reconnect you with what matters most in life. Classic activities that quiet the mind and offer serenity include yoga and tai chi. Any activity that consists of a repetitive motion can calm your thoughts. Go for an early-morning hike. Walk through quiet neighbourhoods. Do the front crawl in a community pool. It's all about finding your happy place. 🌿

STAY STRONG, MENTALLY FIT, INDEPENDENT

Canada's 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Adults recommends that people 18-plus do at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic activity every week (30 minutes of activity five times per week) and muscle-strengthening activities at least twice a week. People 65-plus should add physical activities that challenge balance (this can simply be walking) and get seven to eight hours of sleep a night.

"People who are moving more regularly throughout the day tend to have better health outcomes," says Kelsey Harvey, PhD, seniors' fitness expert and instructor.

Following these guidelines can reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, weight gain and several cancers, and can improve bone health.

Into the woods

Spending time in nature offers surprising benefits

by **Brooke Smith**

Little Red Riding Hood didn't choose the best path in the woods, but you can. Why not try forest therapy, or *shinrin-yoku*, Japanese for “forest bathing”?

Forest bathing is a “slow, gentle walk in the forest or any other natural place by a river, in meadows or a combination of all three,” says Andrea Prazmowski, founder of Forest Therapy Ottawa and a certified forest therapy guide. “You’re guided to awaken to your experience in nature. We come into the present moment.”

These private and public guided walks are offered throughout the year — weekdays and weekends — by certified guides and last anywhere from two to three hours. Cost is about \$30.

A walk begins with an invitation, allowing participants to come into contact with their senses, says Frances Mills, a certified forest therapy guide. “I encourage people to close their eyes,” she says, adding that when they open their eyes, they’re “usually blown away with how much they just never noticed before.”

“The really important part of forest bathing is slowing down,” says Beth Foster, a certified forest therapy guide. She says most people walk briskly in the woods, maybe walking dogs or pushing buggies.

“When you slow down, there’s a lot more to see,” she says. “You’re conscious of the smells, you allow yourself to be quiet, and you can hear. You can inhale the air.”

But most important, she explains, it’s a form of self-care. “We don’t just think we feel better, we actually are healthier.”

And research bears this out. One Japanese study suggested that people in a forest environment have lower concentrations of cortisol, lower pulses and lower blood pressure than those in an urban environment. Another study of more than 700 participants showed that those in a forest environment had both lower systolic and lower diastolic blood pressure than those in a non-forest environment.

Forest therapy can even boost your immune system. “The compounds trees emit to protect themselves as part of their

immune systems [called phytoncides] also boost our immune systems,” says Prazmowski.

“That’s why they call it forest bathing,” Foster adds. “You’re bathing in the essences that trees and living green things emit, and inhaling those essences gives you demonstrated physiological effects.”

There have also been reports of improved memory and focus and boosted creativity. And even an increase in your sense of awe, says Mills: “You start looking at the world a little differently — and that is something we definitely need.”

At most, participants walk one to two kilometres, and some



PHOTO, RURAL EXPLORER



guides can offer accommodation on certain trails. “I guide sometimes out of the Hollidge Tract, which is an accessible trail in York Region,” says Foster. “It’s a wide, flat, bright path, so it’s suitable for those with buggies or walkers. It’s light-coloured grey and easy to see.”

Collapsible chairs are also a great accommodation; people can engage in the forest experience right from their chairs, she adds.

Prazmowski says that on a walk she tells participants, “We’re going to bring attention to nature without and nature within. I don’t say more than that because I don’t like to tell people what they’re going to experience.”

Forest therapy can lead to any number of experiences, depending on the person and where they are at that moment. But what does happen, says Prazmowski: People talk about their feelings of belonging, connection, gratitude, support, solace. “That’s really getting to the core of our health and, on another level, our spiritual health, our emotional health, our psychological health.”

While Foster believes that people can access the benefits of forest therapy better with a guide, you can do it on your own, although it’s easier if you learn from a few guided sessions first.

The research shows it takes just two hours a week in nature to see healthy benefits. And you can divide that time to suit your schedule — for example, four days of 30-minute bathing.

“We’ve been disconnected in so many ways from many of our everyday rituals — walking to a bus stop, going to an office and having coffee together,” says Foster. “We need forms of connection.”

And forest therapy is all about connection. “It’s not a ‘take two hours of forest time and call me in the morning’ prescription,” says Prazmowski. “It’s not just about getting your dose of nature. It’s about a relationship.” 🌿

**INTERESTED IN A FOREST WALK?
CONTACT ONE OF THESE GUIDES.**

Beth Foster

beth@forestbathingwithbeth.com

Frances Mills

francesamills@gmail.com

Andrea Prazmowski

foresttherapyottawa@gmail.com

**INTERESTED IN FINDING A GUIDE IN YOUR
AREA, OR IN TRAINING TO BE A GUIDE?**

Association of Nature & Forest Therapy

natureandforesttherapy.earth

Global Institute of Forest Therapy

giftoftheforest.com

BOOKS ON FOREST THERAPY

Forest Bathing with Your Dog
by Nadine Mazzola

Healing Trees: A Pocket Guide to
Forest Bathing by Ben Page

Your Guide to Forest Bathing
by M. Amos Clifford

Less

is

Making time for joy

by **Alison LaMantia**

more

Retired or not, life gets busy. Counters and drawers fill up with stuff. Days feel overscheduled. To-do lists morph into multiple pages.

And no wonder. Life today is all about more — be more, achieve more, do more, get more.

How great would it be to press pause, slow life down and catch your breath? But when you're pulled every which way, that's easier said than done.

Simplifying your life is ... well ... pretty simple: Focus on what's important to you and find easier ways to do the things you have to do so you can carve out guilt-free time to do the things you want to do.

And that will bring peace to your body and joy to your being.

"We're always at the mercy of uncontrollable factors in life that might throw things into disarray. So, why not control the things we can in terms of creating a little bit more peace and space?" says Carly Fleming, registered psychotherapist and director of everwell (everwellcounselling.ca), an Ontario-based online mental-health-care service.

"The more obligations, the more tasks, the more not good enough — all the things that come with the complexity of life on overdrive create chronic stress. When we are stressed too much, we're in a state of fight or flight, even when we don't need to be," explains Fleming.

Chronic stress leads to overactivation of the sympathetic nervous system, which controls different body functions like breathing, digestion and blood pressure. Great if you're fleeing from a tiger — but harmful if you're not.

“There are all sorts of health risks that come from constant, chronic stress,” Fleming says.

It was serious health issues that started Donna Young on her journey to simplify her life. At the time, she was a nurse in the mental health ward at a hospital.

“You give, you give, you give, and then all of a sudden you have a health challenge,” says Young. “I realized I had to slow down and smell the roses, which I always taught my mental health patients to do. But I just didn’t.”

She continued to chase opportunities at work and moved farther from her workplace into a large home. She didn’t slow down. And then another serious health challenge happened.

That’s when she committed to making changes, starting with her career. She now supports student mental health and addictions, a role she finds very fulfilling. And she began the process of downsizing her home to move to a lakeside condo. She bought the condo before construction, so it was a gradual, manageable process.

She’s found activities she enjoys, including yoga, walking and kayaking. “I’m at peace with my decisions and where I’m at in life,” says Young. “I think the greatest learning experience I’ve had is because of these health issues; it’s made me a better person.”

If the gap between where you are and where you want to be seems too big, try taking a page out of Marion Gadsby’s (District 12 Norfolk) guidebook.

For starters, don’t focus on the big picture, she advises. “If you look at things as a whole, it’s daunting. If you break it down into smaller parts, you can get through it.”

Gadsby trained as an engineer and wrote and taught math and science courses at the high school level her entire career. “For me, I see a problem — where’s the problem? What don’t I want to happen, what do I want to happen, what could I do? And I’ll try it.”

Her where’s-the-problem approach has helped her develop novel solutions to challenges around the house, including storing computer passwords on recipe cards and filing them in an obscure location. But she also takes a one-thing-at-a-time approach to emotional challenges. After her husband died suddenly a decade ago, she found that embracing the idea of doing “one thing” helped.

“You take one day at a time; you do one thing you have to do. One thing for yourself, one thing for the estate and one thing for your house. And that’s it. If you look at the big picture, you do nothing,” says Gadsby. 🍷

15 PRACTICAL WAYS TO SIMPLIFY LIFE

YOUR SCHEDULE AND ROUTINES

1) Look for ways to include simple health and self-care activities in your day. Try adding activities between commitments — short walks, reflection, deep breathing for example.

2) Try different activities to find what feeds your joy. Take inspiration from others but see what works for you. Make a list of the moments in a day where you feel most joyful and you’ll find clues to what you need more of.

3) Ask yourself: Do I have time to do the things that bring me joy? No? Then take a hard look at your schedule and commitments, save the best, and jettison the rest.

4) Create routines at the start and end of your day that include small activities for yourself, like a quiet cup of coffee in the morning or writing in your journal before bed.

5) Use a planner to block out chore times in your day or week — and stick to it. You can also add workouts to your planner.

YOUR HOME

6) Declutter your home. Tackle a room at a time and choose what to keep and what to give away or sell.

7) Consider creating spaces in your home that support how you want to feel and activities that help you feel that way. For example, a comfortable spot for reading or a place to work on an interest like art or woodworking.

8) Would downsizing to a smaller home or property help reduce demands on your time?

9) Tidy as you go. Put things away as you use them, or do a quick five-minute tidy in the evening.

10) Deal with digital clutter. Spend 10 minutes a day deleting and organizing files, emails and photos.

YOUR MINDSET

11) Unfollow social media accounts that don’t support how you want to feel.

12) Avoid the 24-hour news cycle. Consume as much news as you need to stay informed.

13) Add check-ins throughout your day. Notice how you’re feeling. This is also a chance to notice whether you’re feeling at ease regularly and what you’re doing when you feel that way (see number 2).

14) Look at a variety of mindfulness activities and consider what you might try. The “check-in” (see number 13) will help you get started. You could also try journaling as part of your evening routine, adopting a regular deep-breathing practice, or being intentional on a walk, appreciating your surroundings along the way.

YOUR APPROACH

15) Take a problem-solving approach to challenges and break them into smaller tasks. Then, focus on the next thing you need to do, not the full list of tasks ahead.



Creative pursuits can put a
smile on your face

by **Suzanne Read** (District 16 Toronto)

Illustration by **Kerry Black**



The Look Hong family.
Read is fourth from the left.

was introduced to timed writing as a form of mindfulness while supervising at a weekend retreat for girls in robotics. The *Renaissance* Yes, You Can! Challenge had me thinking about how to marry this technique with recording the stories of my family, something I have long talked about, especially after my mom died in 2019 and I have been reminiscing

with my children about the “old days.”

I am a second-generation Chinese-Jamaican. This means that both sets of grandparents were born in China and my parents were the first generation to be born in Jamaica. We immigrated to Canada in the mid-1970s, along with many other Jamaican families, because it was perceived that political changes and increasing violence on the island would make for a very uncertain future.

I envisioned that my writing would include conversations with relatives and friends, because what I know or remember being told doesn’t always correspond with what others remember. Perspective matters!

In early 2021, I started work with two notebooks — one for my dad, one for my mom — a fountain pen and a bottle of ink.

There is something calming about the physical act of writing every day. I would set my timer for 30 minutes, listen to movie music by Ennio Morricone — after all, one’s memories are rather epic! — or Yo-Yo Ma, a favourite artist, and write. One

day, I would write about Dad’s family, the next day, about Mom’s. Becoming interested in some specifics of the family tree, I used the Toronto Public Library’s resources to find dates of birth, death and marriage, and even crew and passenger manifests.* There were discrepancies in the spelling of surnames, which is fairly common among Chinese when our names are anglicized, and transcription errors are common when cursive writing is digitized.**

I started to correspond with relatives and close family friends, asking about their memories and perceptions of events and people.

Dad’s family, the Chen Sees, were shopkeepers in the rural Jamaican village of Ginger Hill, St. Elizabeth parish. Montego Bay was the closest large town to the north, some 25 miles of winding roads through the hills. From Ginger Hill, it was a night’s journey by truck to Kingston, where they obtained dry goods such as salted codfish, sugar, flour and oil, as well as other items such as fabric, thread, rope, jewellery and shoes. They sold these items to locals, who did not then have to travel all the way into town to obtain staples. The family also bought ginger, tanned goat skins and other materials from locals, later selling these in Kingston. Eventually, the family moved to Kingston, owning and operating a hardware store named Hole-in-the-Wall on King Street. The warehouse on Harbour Street later became another store.

This is a common story of many Chinese in Jamaica. Writer Easton Lee has published poetry on this very subject, about growing up underneath the shop counter and eavesdropping on the news of the day, in a time when children were seen and not heard. Chinese-Jamaicans made up much of the so-called middle class, owning and operating many of the island's supermarkets, pharmacies and bakeries — at least, this was the case when we left in the mid-1970s.

Grandfather Charles Chen See was one of four siblings. I never knew them and don't know many of their descendants, despite the old saying that all Chinese-Jamaicans know each other. Grandfather was married to Anna Chang. It was an arranged marriage. Great-grandfather Chen See returned to China to bring back 14-year-old Anna as Charles's bride; the families apparently knew each other in China.

Mom's parents were restaurateurs and entrepreneurs in Kingston. My grandmother (I called her Japo — mother of my mother; in Chinese, there are specific terms to denote family relationships) once told me how she and her husband (Jagung) came to live in Jamaica. Great-grandfather Look Hong (or Look Kam, according to one official record) ran a restaurant, sending money to his wife in China. People in the village were jealous and threatened to harm my grandfather, James, so his mother sent him to his father. Japo said he was sent when he was six years old; an aunt said she thought he was 12; another aunt said she thought he was nine and came with his father. Great-grandfather had taken a second wife in Jamaica, since the wife in China would not join him there. This was apparently common practice, so one would hear about the kids of the first wife or the second, and as a child, I always assumed that the first wife had died!

Japo said that my grandfather had insisted that his half-siblings be raised by his mother, the first wife, and that his sisters owed him their lives because they had made very good marriages. As a child, I met these glamorous aunts in Hong Kong. They spoke exclusively Cantonese, and only as an adult did I learn that they were of mixed race.

Eventually, it came time for Jagung to marry. His mother sent photographs of eligible candidates, and he selected Suevon Liang. His mother wanted him to pick someone else, because she was an only child and her father was dead, but he said it was her or no one. They were married and she came to Jamaica at 16, knowing no English. Together they raised six children, my mom being the eldest, and owned and operated several restaurants and even a night club. They came to Canada in the mid-1970s, too, with the rest of the family.

I have since written in my notebooks about the tragic death of Dad's elder sister, about which he never spoke; the conversion of Jagung to Catholicism on what he thought was his deathbed — he had an ulcer, likely from running all those restaurants; Dad's parents sitting in the backseat when he arrived for a first date with Mom; teenage Mom talking the maids into making Jamaican dishes, such as ackee and saltfish and mackerel rundown, because they were not allowed to eat the "local" foods at home; the *peek a pyow* man who took bets; the elderly Chinese men sitting on the sidewalk calling to the passing young women: "Who you *syang*? (What is your lineage?) Who you madda/fadda?"; the aunt who encouraged her son to escape the United States draft in Europe — she saw too much violence and death as a girl in Japan-occupied China ...

Writing has expanded beyond a deliberate mindfulness

SEEING THE WORLD IN A NEW WAY

One of the rooms in the condo complex where Kerry Black (District 22 Etobicoke and York) lives is designated as the art room. "The art room offers a quiet, friendly environment away from the typical noisy home," she says.

Black meets a few times a week for two or three hours with other women — all painters, whose paintings hang on the room's walls.

"It's a time for us to get together and socialize," she says. "It lifts our spirits to be chatting and interacting with one another."

But it's not only the socializing. "We can provide one another with encouragement and support of our creative endeavours. This boosts our confidence and happiness."

Black doesn't paint; she colours in colouring books designed for adults. "I have 100 markers, so I'm free to imagine the world in a new way in many shades and shapes," she says. "And the bright colours cheer me up."

—Brooke Smith





The Chen See family portrait with a formal backdrop. Read's dad, lower left, is about three years old.

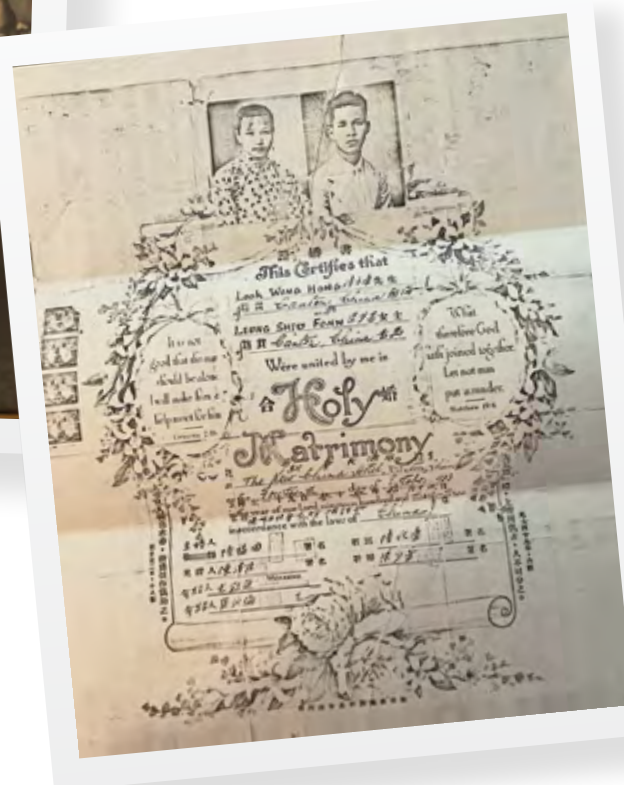
exercise. I discovered *The Jamaica Reader*, one of a series published by Duke University Press in 2021, on history, culture and politics, and rediscovered Ray Chen's 2005 *The Shopkeepers*, which was published to mark 150 years of Chinese in Jamaica. Reading the essays and contributions has given me a greater appreciation of, and insight into, the politics of the times when my grandparents immigrated to Jamaica and our subsequent immigration to Canada, as well as the history of Chinese in Jamaica since 1854, the earliest known date of a ship manifest. I will likely purchase copies of my own, to reread and ponder at leisure, and to share with my children.

As a science teacher and former teaching assistant, I have long taught others to write in the third person of observations and conclusions. As a vice-principal, I learned to write economically and sparingly, thinking carefully about my audience. When I write for myself, it's like I am writing a letter; I am both writer and recipient. When I recount someone else's memory/story, I try to include their perception and context of the event, so I choose my words carefully — it's not free-form-whatever-comes-to-mind writing.

Recording my family's history has confirmed what I guess I always knew: Perceptions colour our memories. And where we came from colours who we are. 🌸

*Toronto Public Library members may access online resources through "Local History and Genealogy." I used the research tool HeritageQuest to access records from the Caribbean, specifically civil and church records from Jamaica.

**My maternal grandfather's family name is Look; however, he and his offspring are officially recorded as Look Hong, and he was often referred to as Mr. Hong. His half-siblings and their offspring are recorded officially as Lukong. My paternal grandmother's death notice recorded her surname as Chen Lee, rather than Chen See. Similarly, an uncle's surname is recorded as Chen Su.



A copy of the Look Hong marriage certificate.

CREATIVITY AND MINDFULNESS

After her retirement, Carla Waites (District 11 Waterloo Region) embarked on a second career as a mindfulness facilitator.

"I do workshops and work with a lot of educators with the Waterloo District School Board," she says. "My creativity comes out more in ideas, like putting together workshops and events, solving problems."

And to find that creativity, Waites needs stillness — "not necessarily meditative, but time just to be," she says. "It's not dependent on who I'm with or where I am," she says. It's about simply appreciating her surroundings.

Though we can't really stop the thoughts in our heads, Waites says, we can train ourselves to pay less attention to them.

"We often think if we have a thought or feeling we have to do something about it. To be creative and to have any peace inside, we have to notice we have these thoughts, but we don't have to do anything about them."

—Brooke Smith



Black doesn't paint; she colours in colouring books designed for adults and imagines the world in shades and shapes.

Get in touch with your creative side

Creative people aren't only your left-handed sister or your friend who paints. Everyone has the capacity to be creative. Dancing. Singing. Gardening. Baking. All creative pursuits. And guess what? Get creative and you'll benefit physically, emotionally and mentally.

Searching for your inner John Travolta circa *Saturday Night Fever*? Then get out your boogie shoes. Dancing is a great creative pursuit — and it's also good exercise.

One study showed that participants taking Zumba classes reduced their blood pressure and triglyceride levels. Another study of breast cancer survivors found that dancing helped improve the range of motion in their shoulders.

But if disco fever doesn't raise your temperature, don't worry. Simply listening to music can get those creative juices flowing. One study indicates that creativity was higher for participants who listened to "happy music" while completing a task than for those who completed the task in silence.

But why just listen? Sing the song! Research shows there are many health benefits to exercising your vocal cords.

Doctors reported that the blood pressure of one 76-year-old woman — who had high blood pressure prior to knee replacement surgery — dropped when she sang religious songs.

Your posture, too, can improve if you take up choral singing. After all, good singing technique requires good posture. When you stand up straight, your shoulders erect and back, your chest doesn't sink when you exhale. And, in an erect position, your diaphragm — a key apparatus for singing — functions properly and efficiently.

That good posture also promotes better balance and strength. According to a University of San Francisco study, seniors in 12 choirs from the Bay Area actually had fewer falls and had stronger legs. Another study from the Institute for Health and Aging at the University of California, San Francisco, found that 30 per cent of older participants who had shortness of breath said their breathing improved.

If your singing is relegated to the shower, or you have two left feet on the dance floor, try a more cerebral creative

Doctors reported that the blood pressure of one 76-year-old woman — who had high blood pressure prior to knee replacement surgery — dropped when she sang religious songs.

activity: writing. In one study, HIV-positive patients were asked to write about their painful life experiences, for four days, half an hour each day. Not only had they positive things to say about their essays, their CD4+ lymphocyte counts (or T cells, the white blood cells that fight infection) increased.

Other studies showed that people who wrote in a journal slept better and healed more quickly from injuries. For example, in a small study in New Zealand, 49 participants, all over age 65, were asked to write about an upsetting issue or a neutral topic every day for three days. Two weeks later, all the participants had arm biopsies. Those who had been writing about the upsetting issues healed 34 per cent faster than those who wrote about their day-to-day schedules.

While creative pursuits can have physical benefits, engaging in any kind of creative pursuit can boost your mood, too.

In the practice of positivity psychology, there's something called the "flow state." That's when you're "in the zone," focusing on and enjoying what you're doing.

In a Cleveland Clinic blog post, art therapy manager Tammy Shella said this flow state happens when you're creating art. "During this time, you're in the zone and completely focused on the task at hand. You're not worried about the time, bodily sensations or any other needs."

Better physical and mental health? Great! Better brain function? You bet!

One Mayo Clinic study on aging looked at almost 2,000 participants over the course of four years. After adjustments for age, sex and education, the researchers found that "mild cognitive impairment" decreased 28 per cent when participants engaged in craft-based activities, 23 per cent when they engaged in social activities, and 22 per cent when they played games.

Whatever your creative pursuit, here's the takeaway: Don't quit. As a participant in a Vancouver-based arts initiative said: "The wonderful thing about being creative is that you don't have to retire. It isn't something you have to retire from."

—Brooke Smith

How to say



Set healthy boundaries and build better relationships

by **Heather Beaumont**

Illustrations by **Jeannie Phan**

Good friends are worth their weight in gold. They provide you with emotional and practical support and make you feel valued. Time spent with good friends always seems to fly.

Contrast the uplifting moments you share with good friends with the time you spend with people who leave you feeling drained. Time crawls more slowly than an injured tortoise and tempts you to think about moving — without leaving a forwarding address.

Negative people can be constant complainers. Or maybe they criticize you or make unpleasant generalizations about other people. They're glass-almost-empty kind of people, and sometimes you wonder, Is it them or is it me?



“We often think development happens when we’re kids and teens, but there is a continuing adult development stage that sometimes includes looking at friendships,” explains Dr. Tiffany Lippens, a registered clinical psychologist at Clinic Psychology Manitoba (clinicpsychology.com). “It can be very healthy to see this as your time for things that are meaningful and in alignment with your values. And that would include having people around you that fit.”

So, maybe it’s time to assess the qualities that make someone a good friend for you. Dr. Frederick Grouzet, associate professor of psychology at the University of Victoria, who conducts research on personal goals and values, says, “A friend might be someone you feel good with but not necessarily someone who you always agree with.” He adds, “It’s good to have friends who disagree with you because that could be a way to grow as a person and address challenges.”

Psychologist Dr. Emily Blake, clinical director at Montreal’s Blake Psychology (blakepsychology.com), agrees. “People don’t need to be the same to get along, as long as there is mutual respect and the possibility for discussion and common ground.”

For relationships to thrive and endure, it’s important to share your perspective with a kind and tactful approach.

“It was eye-opening when I first started researching relationships. Some arguments potentially arise out of perception and how actions or words are appraised,” says Dr. Mariana Bockarova, who teaches a course called The Psychology of Relationships in the University of Toronto’s

School of Continuing Studies. “The nice thing is, the key to making relationships work is as cliché as it sounds: communication.”

As the years go by, we change and grow, and people are not mind readers, Blake notes. “Factors that contribute to how we set boundaries might change over time, so it’s good to check in with others.”

Blake, who specializes in interpersonal difficulties, defines boundaries as “the spaces around and between people. They help people feel safe.”

Violence, racism and sexism are non-negotiable boundaries, but when other boundaries are crossed, says Blake, you can respond with respect.

For example, if an acquaintance stands too close for your comfort level, you can shift away a little. A friend insults you? Let them know their comment hurt your feelings. Your grandkids launch into a long conversation when you’re rushing out the door. Tell them you’re pressed for time and ask if it’s urgent or if you can talk later. Your daughter borrows the lawnmower without asking — tell her she’s welcome to use it, but you’d prefer that she ask first.

Grouzet says that when you address issues depends on you and the person you need to speak to, “but it’s important not to procrastinate.”

Telling people how you feel puts yourself out there, says Lippens. “There’s vulnerability in explaining or letting the person know when something they’ve said is offensive or gets

We often think development happens when we're kids and teens, but there is a continuing adult development stage that sometimes includes looking at friendships.

interpreted in a particular way without knowing how they're going to respond."

Say you repeatedly tell your friend she hurts your feelings when she snickers about your challenging but rewarding relationship. You don't feel heard or haven't received the apology you expected, and you are left feeling like the light that shines inside you has dimmed.

"There's a philosophy in life called 'win-win' or 'no deal.' This means if the relationship cannot feel like a win-win, then perhaps it's not a relationship that is meant to be," says Blake. "While compromise can be important, being so flexible that you bend way beyond your values can lead to a win-lose dynamic, which will most likely end up in a lose-lose dynamic."

Before you pull the plug on a no-win relationship, Lippens stresses the importance of knowing that you really tried to communicate your perspective. "That helps people to get to a place of being peaceful with the decision."

Lippens recommends sitting down for a conversation, but if it's a demanding person and you're unsure that you'll be able to stand your ground, write out your thoughts. "At the end of the note you can suggest a future conversation. Often, you may have a similar social circle, so there's a desire to leave it in a place where, if you run into each other, you feel OK saying 'Hi.'"

You can also take a less intimidating approach to ending a relationship. You might simply tell the person you need a break to focus on your own mental or physical health. ☸

HOW TO MANAGE NEGATIVE SITUATIONS

We don't want to be perceived as troublemakers. We want to appear nice, we doubt ourselves, we fear the consequences. "We are shocked. We don't have the words. We're in a state of fight, flight, freeze or fawn – please and appease," explains psychologist Dr. Emily Blake, clinical director at Montreal's Blake Psychology. So here are some communication tools to help you say "no" to negative people.

Implementation intention: Psychologist Dr. Frederick Grouzet, associate professor of psychology at the University of Victoria, suggests you plan ahead. "Determine before the event what you're going to do if something happens. For instance, if your friend says something negative about your new woodworking hobby, then you will say or do something specific in response." Implementation intentions are "if ... then" statements that prepare you to face uncomfortable situations.

Boundary map: Dr. Mariana Bockarova, who teaches The Psychology of Relationships at the University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies, suggests you identify earlier experiences when you felt discomfort, anger, resentment or frustration with people. Clearly define what your intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual boundaries are with the different people in your life. Then create a chart outlining what you feel comfortable sharing with each individual.

Broken-record technique: You say, "I'm not able to do that," and when the person comes up with another reason why they want you to do something you don't want to do, repeat yourself, says Dr. Tiffany Lippens, a registered clinical psychologist at Clinic Psychology Manitoba. "We think we need to come up with another reason why we can't do it. The broken record is 'No, I'm not able to do that,' and I'm just gonna keep saying this until the person gets the message."

Direct versus vague feedback: "If someone tends to take the truth well, you might be more inclined to give them honest feedback," says Blake. "However, if you anticipate that your honesty will result in harsh consequences, you might be inclined to provide a vague answer. When you've been avoiding someone who is draining you, you could say, 'Sorry I haven't been around lately. I feel very tired and I don't have the energy to socialize.' Or, you can try a more direct approach: 'I feel like the help you need is beyond what I'm capable of providing. Is there someone else who can help you? Can I connect you to other resources?'"

COVID-19 reminder

At press time, restrictions on travel as a result of COVID-19 were still in flux. So we're sharing the travel stories in this issue as inspiration so you can dream now and travel later.

Tee time: A golf roundup

Some of the best golfing in the world can be found right in our own backyard

by **Doug Wallace**

These public Canadian courses are the best there is, each unique in its own right — serene, unusual, remote, championship and beyond. Tee up and tell the tale.

PHOTO: J. SJÖMAN



NOVA SCOTIA

Cabot Cliffs & Cabot Links, Inverness, Cape Breton

Claim to fame: Best in show Here between the Atlantic Ocean and the charming town of Inverness, visitors tee up for extraordinary golfing. Considered two of the best courses in Canada, they also enjoy world-class status, due to challenging holes paired with the East Coast's stunning natural beauty. Carved out of the landscape, the Cliffs sports panoramic views, its rolling fairways designed by Bill Coore and Ben Crenshaw. At the Links, which was designed by Rod Whitman, every hole has an ocean view, with five holes right next to the beach. A new, short 10-hole course called The Nest sits at the very top of Cabot Cliffs.

Cliffs stats: 18 holes, par 72, 6,186 metres, slope 144

Links stats: 18 holes, par 70, 6,267 metres, slope 132

Extracurricular: Canada's number-one island has lots to see and do. If you ever tire of the Cabot Resort (which you won't), you can hike, fish, kayak, even square dance. But be sure to experience whisky tastings, lobster boils and live local music, too.

CABOTCAPEBRETON.COM

ALBERTA

Fairmont Jasper Park Lodge, Jasper

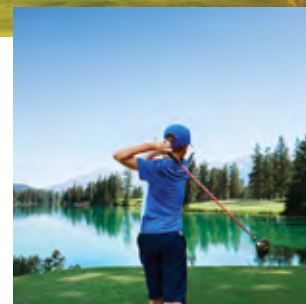
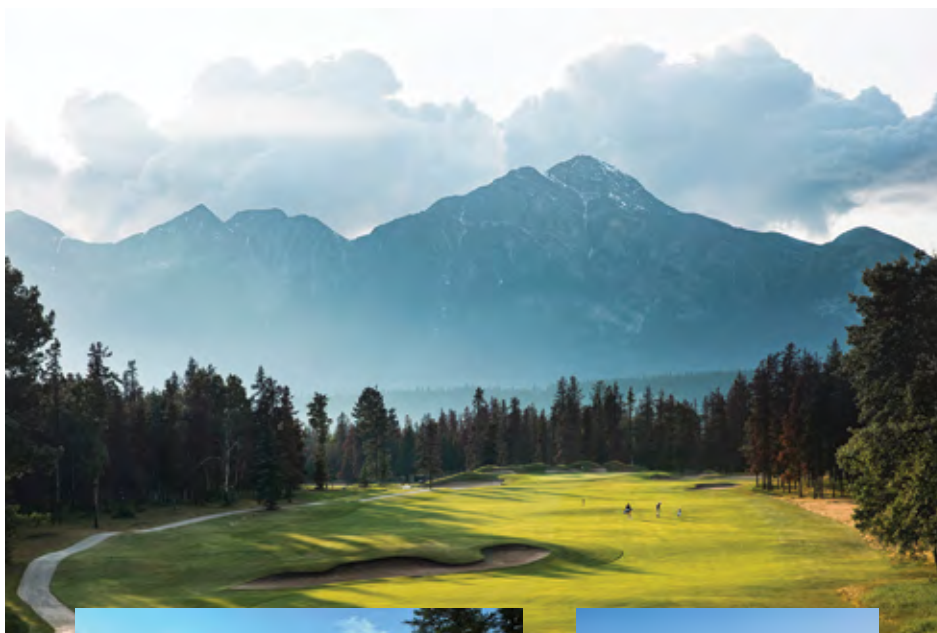
Claim to fame: The majesty of Old Man Mountain

With spectacular, jaw-dropping scenery to the point, you'll be hard-pressed to keep your mind on your swing. The view from the second tee is particularly arresting. The beautiful, expansive and in some spots unconventional design by Stanley Thompson is well known for being both fun and challenging — an elusive combination.

Stats: 18 holes, par 71, 6,093 metres, slope 130

Extracurricular: Guided fly fishing and whitewater rafting, mountain biking and horseback riding, glacier walks and icefield helicopter tours — there's lots to do here. The Fairmont also has a sumptuous spa, a boathouse full of paddling gear and its own planetarium — Jasper National Park is the world's largest accessible dark-sky preserve.

FAIRMONT.COM/JASPER/GOLF



ONTARIO

Muskoka Bay Resort, Gravenhurst

Claim to fame: The amazing clubhouse
Ninety minutes north of Toronto, this championship course set in the Canadian Shield is an architectural masterpiece of rugged rock and marshland. Like a fine wine, it has a stimulating start, gets more complex in the back half and finishes with gusto. Golfers enjoy natural views and changes in elevation, punctuated with rocky outcroppings and wetlands. Keep an eye out for beaver — how Canadian can you get?

Stats: 18 holes, par 72, 6,736 metres, slope 146

Extracurricular: The resort itself has plenty of luxe amenities: a full spa, tennis courts and an infinity pool, not to mention firepits and fine dining. Visitors can also hop on a steamship or take in the opera in Gravenhurst, count the stars at Torrance Barrens Dark-Sky Preserve or hike the Hardy Lake Trail.

MUSKOKABAYRESORT.COM

TOP PHOTOS, COURTESY OF FAIRMONT JASPER PARK LODGE;
BOTTOM PHOTOS, COURTESY OF MUSKOKA BAY RESORT

QUEBEC

Le Diable, Mont Tremblant

Claim to fame: Vexation!

Two things: 1. Tremblant is not just a ski resort. 2. They don't call the golf course The Devil for nothing. Expect a ton of unexpected surprises at this playful course, one of several in the Mont Tremblant area. Designed more than 20 years ago by Michael Hurdzan and Dana Fry with trademark red-sand bunkers, large greens and long, narrow fairways, Le Diable will challenge your skills in intriguing ways.

Stats: 18 holes, par 71, 7,452 metres, slope 135

Extracurricular: Exhilarating activities abound on the mountain with hiking and mountain biking, and on the lakes with paddling and boat cruises. There's also a 12-kilometre paved cycling path that's great for walking and in-line skating. Pop into the casino for a game of chance or dive into sensory forest experience Tonga Lumina for a magical trail of light and sound.

TREMBLANT.CA/GOLF



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

The Links at Crowbush Cove, Morell

Claim to fame: The terrific value. Undulating rolling fairways, pot bunkers and challenging multitiered greens all come together here for a golf experience with a view of Prince Edward Island's north shore dunes. Designed by Thomas McBroom, Crowbush Cove is popular with locals and visitors alike, who tee up for the nice layout and variety of hole lengths — and the great value for your green fee.

Stats: 18 holes, par 72, 6,312 metres, slope 146

Extracurricular: On the north shore, Prince Edward Island National Park sports an interpretation centre to discover the area before heading to Greenwich Beach for the sand and surf. Lakeside Circle T Trail Rides can take you horseback riding around the region, or you can head over to St. Peters Harbour Lighthouse for a heritage hit.

PEISFINESTGOLF.COM

NEW BRUNSWICK

The Algonquin, St. Andrews
by-the-Sea

Claim to fame: New and improved. Established in 1894, reworked in the 1920s and renovated recently by Rod Whitman, this historic course has been elevated once again to national star status. Adjacent to Passamaquoddy Bay, it sports breathtaking ocean vistas, excellent putting surfaces and bunkers in tune with the natural surroundings.

Stats: 19 holes, par 72, 6,524 metres, slope 131

Extracurricular: Canada's oldest seaside resort village is an 18th-century settlement and a bit of an icon. Visitors go whale-watching, take a kayak tour, explore the historic houses on Ministers Island, wander through Kingsbrae Garden or simply relax at Katy's Cove Beach. The elegant Algonquin Resort itself is a Marriott with a wonderful spa.

ALGONQUINRESORT.COM



BRITISH COLUMBIA

Greywolf, Panorama Mountain Resort

Claim to fame: The Cliffhanger — the dizzying sixth hole. There's little wonder they call it Panorama. This dramatic course at the base of the expansive Panorama ski resort in the Purcell Mountains of southeastern B.C. has ample alpine appeal and is exquisitely sculpted, with changes in elevation to keep golfers on their toes. The monumental view from the cliff-top hole, described by the club as "diabolical," is well worth the price of admission. The course was designed by Doug Carrick, one of Canada's top architects.

Stats: 18 holes, par 72, 6,529 metres, slope 144

Extracurricular: Hike the mountainside or the Monument Trail Network, or simply take the chairlift up the 1,600 metres for a good look around. Nearby Toby Creek Adventures can set you up with an ATV or UTV thrill-ride tour, and the same goes for Kootenay River Runners' whitewater rafting. 🐾

GREYWOLFGOLF.COM

Reminder

At press time, travel restrictions still applied, but we can dream!

To cruise or not to cruise

"What's the best way to decide where and when to go on a cruise?"



Now that cruise ships are back in the water, where do you want to go? As this particular travel landscape is still in flux at time of printing, there are some big benefits to doing the research now and reaping the rewards when you can. Here are a few steps:

1. Picture yourself in an environment. What do you want from this vacation? Sunshine and romance? Adventure and animals? Social activities or solitude? Maybe you're ticking a bucket list to somewhere far-flung or looking for an inclusive LGBTQ2I-friendly cruise line or itinerary. Or perhaps you just want to sit and watch the world sail by. Nail this down in your mind's eye.
2. Assess your activity level, make a list of things you like to do, then create a checklist to ensure the itineraries you scrutinize have what you want. If you like to hike and be outside all day, maybe a weeklong sail across the Atlantic isn't for you.
3. Evaluate the vessel. There are cruise ships with 3,000 passengers and those with 50, both equally fun but in different ways. Your activity checklist will help with this decision, but there are also small-ship adventures, intimate yacht experiences, classic tall ships to sail on and even polar icebreakers. Take the time to consider the tiers of accommodation and where they're located, considering the different layers of luxury, cabin sizes and balconies.
4. Research like mad. There are so many choices, planning a cruise is sometimes overwhelming, with destinations and itineraries to pinpoint, different cruise lines to vet, different ships to select and tiers of luxury to opt in to – not to mention travel protocols to stay on top of. And don't forget to determine what's included in the price and what's not in terms of meals and beverages – usually, but not always, alcoholic drinks and some special meals will cost extra.
5. Open the calendar.
 - The Western Mediterranean is best in June, with smaller crowds and better prices. The Eastern Med is hot and dry from October to March.
 - December through mid-April is high season in the Caribbean, but this is the warmest and driest time.
 - May and June are the best months to visit the Bahamas, because cruise ships and ports are less busy.
 - Go to Hawaii in the summer and fall for the least rain and fewest people.
 - In Alaska, June through August is the best time to witness the widest variety of wildlife.
 - Head to the Arctic between June and October, with nature on full display. The season for Antarctic expeditions runs from December to March, when it's "summer."
6. Go to the pros. For best rates book six months to a year in advance. Use a travel agent: They have the insider expertise to find deals and promotions you wouldn't, and perks like upgrades and shipboard credits. 🍷

Read the reviews online from other travellers and experts in the field like Cruise Critic (cruisecritic.com). Ask friends or your social media communities for advice.

Do you have a travel question?

Doug has the answer! Email your question to renaissance@toero.ca and it may appear in an upcoming issue.



Doug Wallace
Editor & publisher,
TravelRight.Today,
and your in-the-know
friend for travel tips
and trends.



Celebrating spring's bounty

Three simple suppers, plus an asparagus primer

by **Elizabeth Baird**

ASPARAGUS, SPRING'S TREAT

An esteemed vegetable in ancient Greece and Rome, asparagus faded away with the fall of Rome, re-emerging in the 16th century to find a renewed audience in Europe and the British Isles. Asparagus, known to scientists as *Asparagus officinalis* but to British growers as sparrow grass, followed newcomers to Canada. Here it has always been special: often a luxury, much anticipated after a winter of roots and tubers, discussed at length, eaten with gusto and pleasure.

Is it fresh? Yes, if the stalks are firm and deep green fading to white at the cut ends. The tips are tight, dark green or purple. The best stalks are straight, and in a bunch; look for them to all be of similar thickness. It's smart to harvest (buy) asparagus and enjoy it the same day. If that's not possible, remove the elastic bands that hold the bunch.

Do not wash the asparagus until just before cooking. Some cooks like to wrap the stalks in a clean kitchen cloth and enclose in a plastic bag.

Others are just as vehement about putting the spear bottoms in a jug of water; some wrap cut ends in damp towelling and enclose the asparagus in a reusable plastic bag. Refrigerate. Any stalks showing yellow or wrinkles aren't worth eating.

Green or white? Green's the top choice in Canada. Of the 3,500 acres given over to asparagus cultivation in the leading grower province, Ontario, only three acres produce the milder-flavoured less-grassy white asparagus. White is more labour intensive, as growers must hill soil over the asparagus plant to prevent light turning emerging stalks from white to green.

Thick or thin? It all depends. In the wild, the stalks were originally very skinny, but thick stalks got the nod, and growers cultivated increasingly stocky stalks. Nowadays, both are available. The thinner are often imported season-extenders; thumb-thick stalks are the pride of local growers. Use the thin for slicing into salads, soups and pasta, the thick for

wrapping in prosciutto and grilling for a fine spring appetizer, stir frying with mushrooms and Parmesan, as a starter course with melted butter and lemon. Or Hollandaise. Or vinaigrette. For roasting and grilling, thick is the way to go.

Bottom line: It's all asparagus, and that's all good.

Peel or not to peel? The tried-and-true method of prepping asparagus is to snap or cut off the woody white ends. Peeling asparagus has often seemed a little too "cheffy" for everyday, but with a two-blade peeler or sharp one-blade peeler you use for carrots, you will have asparagus that cooks quickly and evenly. And looks rather pretty. Reduce cooking times for peeled spears.

Some basics: How much to buy? As a side, count on 1/4 lb (125 g) per serving; when asparagus is the star of the meal, go up to 1/2 lb (250 g).

Immersed in a deep skillet of boiling water, or in a steamer, 2 to 3 minutes for the thin ones, 4 to 6 for thick. But whatever method, be ready to drain the asparagus or remove from the heat when it reaches the tender-crisp stage.

If serving asparagus hot, get it to the table on warmed plates PDQ. If serving asparagus cold, immediately plunge the stalks in a basin of icy cold water. As soon as they're cold, remove from the water and pat dry.

Try something new: How easy it is to roast a sheet pan of asparagus. A drizzle of olive oil, freshly ground pepper and a pinch of salt are all you need, and 8 minutes in a 375°F (190°C) oven does the rest.

- Quick tricks: Sauté in a skillet with garlic and olive oil or butter. Add a touch of stock or white wine vinegar, cover and steam a couple of minutes to finish.
- Serve cold with a vinaigrette featuring Dijon mustard and lemon juice.
- Serve hot with toasted sesame seeds, a drizzle of dark sesame oil and a splash of Japanese soy sauce. Steam or boil spears; drain and drizzle them with olive oil, a splash of lemon juice, minced garlic if you like, and freshly grated Parmesan, Grana Padano or Asiago.

SPRING FRITTATA WITH PAN-ROASTED CHERRY TOMATOES

Supper on a Tuesday night, just the time in the week for a quick and easy meal – all you need to add is a salad and toasted whole grain bagels. What makes this frittata special? Aside from the freshest of eggs and spring herbs is the addition of a pan-roasted cherry tomato sauce spooned over the frittata – as easy on the eyes as it is pleasing to eat. Bonus: Use up leftovers such as potatoes or short pasta – your planned-overs!

PAN-ROASTED CHERRY TOMATO SAUCE

2 tbsp (30 mL) extra virgin olive oil, approximate
2 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups (375 mL) red cherry or grape tomatoes
¼ tsp (1 mL) each salt and pepper
2 tbsp (30 mL) minced parsley

FRITTATA

1 tbsp (15 mL) extra virgin olive oil
1 onion, halved and thinly sliced crosswise
½ cup (125 mL) diced orange or yellow bell pepper
1 tbsp (15 mL) chopped fresh thyme or oregano, or
1 tsp (5 mL) dried
½ tsp (2 mL) salt
¼ tsp (1 mL) pepper
2 cups (500 mL) cubed cooked potato or 1 ½ cups (375 mL) cooked short pasta such as rigatoni
6 large eggs
½ cup (125 mL) crumbled feta cheese

Sauce: In a skillet or shallow pan, heat the oil over medium-low heat. Stir in the garlic and let soften slightly without browning, about 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper, stirring to combine the flavours. Cook gently, stirring from time to time until the tomatoes start to wrinkle and soften. Mix in the parsley. Remove from the heat and set aside. Reheat to serve, adding a splash more of olive oil if needed to loosen the sauce.

Frittata: In a 9-inch (23-cm) non-stick skillet, heat the oil over medium-low heat. Stir in the onion, bell pepper, thyme, salt and pepper. Fry gently until softened, about 4 minutes. Increase heat to medium and stir in the potatoes. Cook just long enough to heat and crisp the potatoes, but without browning the onion mixture.

In a deep bowl, whisk the eggs; pour over the potato mixture. Stir once to combine eggs and vegetables. Let the frittata firm up along the bottom and up the sides of the pan, about 3 minutes. The top will still be jiggly. Sprinkle feta over the top and broil just long enough to firm up the top, about 4 minutes. Cut into 6 wedges. Spoon the sauce over the top of the frittata and serve from the skillet. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

Tip: Leftovers? Wrap up what's left and enjoy for breakfast or lunch – as is, or warm and tucked into a sandwich.



FROM SIDE TO MAIN

It starts like a side dish – a plain but fluffy baked potato – but ends up fully loaded or stuffed, with seasonings, cheese and sour cream, and moves to centre plate as a main. Stuffed potatoes are well suited for solo suppers; simply multiply for more servings.

IT ALL BEGINS WITH STARTER SPUD:

1 oval russet potato, about 8 oz (250 g)
¼ cup (60 mL) sour cream
2 tsp (10 mL) butter
½ cup (125 mL) shredded old cheddar cheese or aged Gouda, divided
1 green onion, thinly sliced
2 tbsp (30 mL) diced red bell pepper
½ tsp (2 mL) chopped fresh sage or thyme, or ¼ tsp (1 mL) dried
Pinch each salt and pepper
2 slices cooked bacon, crumbled, or
¼ cup (60 mL) bacon bits, diced ham or smoked turkey

Preheat the oven or toaster oven to 400°F (200°C). Scrub the potato, then puncture in 4 places with a skewer. Set on an ovenproof pan and bake until soft when pinched and a skewer inserted into the middle of the potato goes in and out without resistance, about 1 hour.

Wearing oven mitts, cut potato in half lengthwise. Scoop potato flesh



into a bowl, leaving a thin coating attached to the shells. Mash the flesh until smooth. Mash in the sour cream and butter, half of the cheddar, the green onion, bell pepper, sage and salt and pepper. Spoon a quarter of the potato mixture into each of the potato shells; top each with a quarter of the bacon. Press in remaining potato mixture, doming and smoothing the top. Cover with remaining bacon and cheddar.

Makes 1 generous main serving, 2 sides if you must.

Variations:

- Instead of bacon: Layer ¼ cup (60 mL) chopped cold-smoked salmon or ½ cup (125 mL) hot-smoked salmon, trout or canned tuna between the potato layers. Dill is nice with fish.
- With an Italian touch: Pack each shell with 1 quarter of potato filling. Overtop, layer 2 to 4 chopped marinated artichoke hearts, 2 tbsp (30 mL) extra red bell pepper and 2 tbsp (30 mL) diced pitted black olives. Top with remaining potato filling. Make the cheese mozzarella and let oregano replace the sage.
- Vegetarian: Omit the bacon, replace the cheddar with shredded provolone or Gruyère and make the middle layer roasted cherry tomatoes or roasted peppers with shredded basil or parsley. No need for sage.

Spoon Overs can also turn baked potato sides into mains. Simply cut the top of the baked potato lengthwise and squeeze up the soft potato flesh into peaks and valleys. Spoon on:

- Baked beans and a little cheddar. Broil if desired.
- Ditto with chili and shredded Monterey Jack.
- Pasta sauces: tomato with basil or chick peas, or tomato and eggplant (pasta alla Norma), meaty sauces with ground meat, sausages, meatballs. Aged provolone or mozzarella. Broil if you like.
- Indian chicken or vegetable curries, Greek yogurt topping and minced fresh cilantro.

Tip: A toaster or other small oven is ideal for baking potatoes.



SUPER SIMPLE SAUSAGE SUPPER

This recipe, a household favourite, calls for a variety of vegetables, cooked one-pot style with full-flavoured sausage. You will need 4 to 5 cups (1 to 1.25 L) of long-cooking vegetables: carrots or parsnips, onions and potatoes, the last few radishes – yes, radishes! – a wedge of fennel bulb, cubed butternut squash and turnips. Last-minute additions, quick-cooking vegetables: a generous cupful of spinach, chard, green beans or small broccoli florets. Don't forget frozen peas. This list is only a starting point – mix, match and stir in your favourites.

1 cup (250 mL) vegetable stock or water, approximate

2 lean mild Italian or farmer's sausages, about ¾ lb (375 g), in 1 ½-inch (4-cm) pieces

4 to 5 cups (1 to 1.25 L) long-cooking vegetables, see below

1 tbsp (15 mL) chopped fresh thyme, oregano or sage, or 1 tsp (5 mL) dried

½ tsp (2 mL) salt

¼ tsp (1 mL) pepper

1 cup (250 mL) or more quick-cooking vegetables, see below

2 green onions, thinly sliced

¼ cup (60 mL) minced parsley

LONG-COOKING VEGETABLES:

All vegetables are washed and, with the exception of potatoes, peeled. Cut the carrots, parsnips, potatoes and squash into generous chunks, the onion into 6 wedges. Halve the radishes. Cut the turnips into ¾-inch (2-cm) cubes.

QUICK-COOKING VEGETABLES:

Wash and trim selected vegetables. Only 1 cup (250 mL)? Go ahead, add a little more – you'll like this touch of freshness.

Pour ¼ cup (60 mL) of the stock into a 4-litre saucepan. Add the sausages and cover. Over medium heat, cook the sausages, stirring occasionally, until the stock has evaporated, the sausages are browning and a little fat has been rendered, about 5 minutes.

Drain off any fat; deglaze the pan with the remaining water. Add the long-cooking vegetables, the thyme, salt and pepper and toss to season evenly. Simmer, covered, until the vegetables are fork tender and the stock is only about ¼-inch (6-mm) deep, moving and turning the vegetables and sausage as needed, about 15 minutes. Adjust the heat and add a little more stock if needed to prevent over-browning.

Nestle the quick-cooking vegetables among the sausage and other vegetables; cover and cook until tender and remaining stock has reduced. Ideally, there will be enough liquid to drizzle over the vegetables. Serve with sliced green onions, parsley and the pan drippings over the top.

Makes 2 generous servings. For 4 servings, double the ingredients, increasing the simmering time to make up for the larger quantity of vegetables. 🌱



Kitchen composter

Transform kitchen waste into natural fertilizer for plants, gardens and lawns

by **Andrew Dobson**

Turn food waste into fertilizer

One of the trendiest foodie gadgets to hit shelves this past holiday season was the Tero, an innovative countertop, electronic composting device. The unique technology transforms everyday food waste into natural, nutrient-rich fertilizer you can sprinkle on your indoor plants and outdoor garden.

The Quebec-based company was founded by Elizabeth Coulombe and Valérie Laliberté, two entrepreneurial women passionate about climate change issues, as part of their graduation project in product design at Université Laval. The Canadian soil sisters launched a crowdfunding campaign in 2019, raising more than \$1,750,000 in one month. Response to the campaign convinced the duo they had designed a product with overwhelming demand.

In just a few hours, Tero's drying and grinding process reduces the volume of your waste by 90 per cent without unpleasant odours. Say goodbye to smelly recycling bags that leak en route to the recycling bin!

The Tero container is dishwasher-friendly, holds up to four litres of food waste, is small enough to sit on a kitchen counter and is 200 per cent more effective than the leading food recycler. The device is also kid-friendly and a great teaching tool on how to recycle, reduce and reuse! (\$595 at teroinnovation.ca)



Apps for food lovers

Too Good To Go

(iPhone and iPad) is our favourite eco-inspired download in Apple's App Store. Use the free app to rescue surprise bags filled with delicious, unsold food from businesses in your neighbourhood. Simply search the map to find a restaurant, café or shop near you that has surplus food. Buy the food through the app for as little as \$2. It's debuting in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal but looking to launch across Canada this year; check to see if your city has signed up. (toogoodtogo.ca)



Kitchen Stories is the free app to help you get dinner on the table pronto. Developed in Berlin, Kitchen Stories delivers thousands of recipes that offer step-by-step instructions via photos and video. The app also includes a handy serving-size calculator, downloadable shopping lists and a global community of home cooks who share recipes and offer feedback and tips for your everyday cooking and baking challenges. Available for Mac laptops, iPhones, iPads, iPod Touch and Apple TV.



Multi-tool solution

If you're looking to reduce the number of gadgets in your kitchen, look no further than the innovative 8-in-1 kitchen tool. The compact bottle comes with a funnel, juicer, grater, egg cracker, shredder, cap opener, egg separator and measuring cup! \$13.99 (amazon.ca)



Mexican made easy

Mi Cocina: Recipes and Rapture from My Kitchen in Mexico

by **Bon Appetit** food editor Rick Martinez (Clarkson Potter/Ten Speed \$42.50) invites you to enjoy authentic Mexican dishes at home. Join Martinez on a culinary journey through all seven regions of Mexico and you'll find there's more to experience than tacos and margaritas. And don't worry: Martinez keeps availability of ingredients top of mind and offers substitutions just in case.

Mi Cocina arrives at Indigo May 3, 2022, but you can pre-order now. 🍷



Don't call them mocktails

Complex and flavourful no-and low-alcohol spirits

by **Charlene Rooke**

Sipping an elegant classic cocktail

is like releasing a big sigh after a long day. But as Dorothy Parker observed: "One Negroni, two Negroni, three Negroni ... floor."

The good news: the non-alcoholic "spirits" market is booming.

"They're adult drinks made to mimic alcoholic products," says Julian Holland, a partner at H2 Craft Spirits, makers of Spiritliss Non-Alcoholic Gins. "They appeal to cocktail enthusiasts," he says, noting that H2 makes a canned Hibiscus Non-Alcoholic Gin & Tonic

that, at about \$2.50, is an accessible way to taste the trend.

Or try Sobrii 0-Gin from Ontario (which also makes 0-Tequila) and Lumette London Dry from B.C. (makers of LumRum).

Back to that dangerously good weeknight Negroni: You could make an entirely non-alcoholic cocktail or, for a balanced option, substitute one or two of the traditional Negroni components (a 1:1:1 ratio of gin, Campari and sweet red vermouth) with placebos, for a lower-proof drink. ☘



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Unleaded Negroni

1 oz. non-alcoholic gin

1 oz. non-alcoholic red bitter

1 oz. non-alcoholic red vermouth

Stir in a mixing glass or the bottom half of a cocktail shaker 2/3 full of ice for at least 1 minute, until flavours are combined and drink is thoroughly chilled. Pour into an old-fashioned tumbler over a single, large ice cube; garnish with an orange twist. Makes 1 drink.



Renaissance Challenge: Part Two

Our Challengers discovered new ways to define success

As told to **Martin Zibauer**

In the winter issue, you met six RTOERO members who signed up for our Yes, You Can! Challenge. Each shared their goal and their plan to realize that goal. Did they? Was it a tough go? Were there setbacks? We checked in with Challengers four months later to find out what they learned about “success” and themselves.

1



IAN ROBERTSON

District 14 Niagara

Challenge: To finish building a 16-foot sailboat/rowboat with builder Skip Izon and complete a solo 1,300-kilometre loop of the Great Lakes via the Trent-Severn Waterway to fundraise for his favourite environmental organization, World Wildlife Fund Canada

Status: *Delayed*

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

"It's been a long slog. The *Greta T* is not a boat built from a set of plans. It's a completely new boat with many unique features. Skip Izon and I had measured drawings of the outline, and the whole shape that we could use to guide us where to put certain things, but all the fittings had to be made by us. I had to make the rudder, centre board and so on, and we weren't always sure what would fit where.

"I had planned to do this in the winter, when I could stay up in Grand Bend at a much cheaper rate. I burned through my building budget pretty quick, and by the end of August last year, I decided to take the *Greta T* home and finish it off there. Years ago, I built a loft on the top of my garage, and I've been working on the boat up there.

"The delay has actually been a useful experience. It has allowed me more time to consider what I'm going to take with me when I start the trip, and where to get it from and how I'm going to camp and so on. It has forced me to be a bit more pragmatic about it all.

"And also, to calm myself and say, 'Look, I didn't create this pandemic. It's just what's happened now. That's the way it is, and we'll just plug on and hope people will understand.'"

"Some time ago my daughter said, 'You need to have a business card with the website.' So we got one made up and I left some with Skip Izon, and I gave out a few at a sailing regatta I was at. And when I got back, I had received donations from some of the Laser sailboat centres, so that was very encouraging.

"I'm not discouraged. There are a couple more stages to go and then I can get on my way. I'm planning the trip

this May. The Trent-Severn opens on the May 24 weekend. I'm going to give myself about eight or 10 days to get up there and should hit it on the opening weekend, hopefully, or shortly after.

"I'm looking forward to the trip.

I've met so many people and that has energized me. And I've had more significant conversations with donors. It's been rewarding, even at this stage."

2



CHRISTINE INVERARITY

District 7 Windsor-Essex

Challenge: To exercise regularly and rebuild muscles that haven't been used in a long time, thanks to six major surgeries

Status: *Accomplished*

"When COVID shut down my gym, where I'd been going forever, I signed up for The Balanced Life, like at 5:30 in the morning, and tried Pilates online, at my doctor's advice.

"I injured myself four weeks into my training — I guess I did something wrong — and had to take six weeks off. It has been a long road getting back, and I'm at it again this past week after cortisone shots took their effect.

"I used that as an excuse to do nothing. I felt like a failure. But you know what? Setbacks happen."

"The Challenge gave me a little push, to be accountable, and it's been awesome. I now can walk 5.2 kilometres. Like, that's long for me.

"I'm back at The Balanced Life. It's a great workout. It's motivating. They're a supportive community and that's what I needed, even though it's online. They will send texts every now and then, and I also signed up for a positive text message on my cellphone. And if I see one I really like, I print it and I stick it on my mirror for the next week. It may seem hokey, but it keeps me going.

"I'm getting older and I'm going to slow down, but I think aging can be used as an excuse. Just because I'm not teaching or a principal anymore doesn't take any of 'me' away. I want to live the best I can. I have grandchildren and I want to keep up with them on our walks and in the pool. Just on the weekend, they came and we jumped in the hot tub and they go, 'Wow, Nina, how'd you get in the hot tub faster than us?' It's surprising how fast your muscle memory is and how quickly you can improve in your ability and your energy.

"Leave your running shoes right by your bed. Put them on as soon as you get out of bed in the morning. You're not going to put your legs back in the bed with your running shoes on, right? Right.

"Then put on your headphones and start walking out the door. You feel so much better when you're done. You might be tired, you might be sweaty, stinky, whatever. But you're feeling better mentally. And to me that motivation is everything."

"Failure is a part of [the] process. You just learn to pick yourself up. And the quicker and more resilient you become, the better you are."

Michelle Obama



3

JERZY "SMOKEY" DYMNY

District 47 Vancouver Island

Challenge: To ride the hilly Quadra Island road loop on his bicycle twice (a total of 32.4 kilometres), non-stop, except for water refills

Status: *Sidetracked*

"This summer was so busy: courses, I lost staff, I had to do renovations — my training schedule was wrecked!

"Now, I'm playing catch-up.

"I'm training on the loop. I'm going about every third day, or anytime I can break away from work. I jump on the bike and whip around the loop. Luckily, we have the hills. If I buy one of those cycle computers — they come with an altimeter — I'll know

how many hills I've climbed and how many metres I've climbed. I can just keep increasing my riding till I know I'm doing about 1,000 metres a day.

"I found a 40-year-old riding partner, a pilot who got hit by a truck on her mountain bike and was crippled for a while.

"She's trying to recover so she can go back to work.

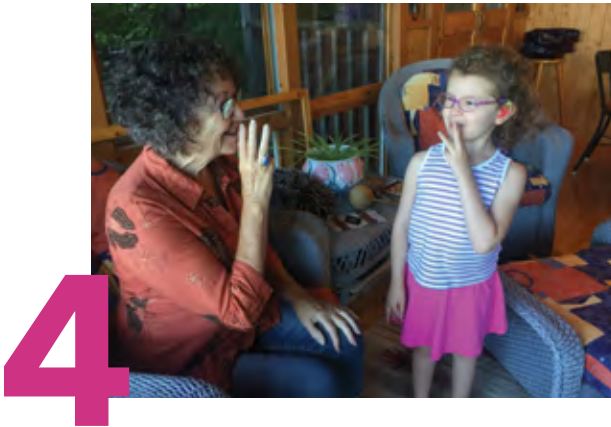
"She likes to go on the trail, and then I take her out on the road loop if I can.

"She was piloting around private executives in their Lear jets. Right? She was, you know, at the high end of

her profession at 35, until some idiot hit her with a truck. And have you ever heard of ketamine therapy? They had to put her under — [it] almost kills your central nervous system. You die for a few seconds, and then they reboot you, hoping that your nerves will come back properly. She's just gone and done that a second time. And she's put on weight because she's constantly recovering. Anyway, we ride together. Whenever she calls me and says she's going riding, I start getting all my gear on. She hangs her bike right here on my porch, the one I rebuilt for her. And she doesn't have to haul it here by car every time.

"Sure, we're competitive. That's the beauty of riding with someone. She's tearing up the hill a bit better than I am. So I'm chasing her all the way up the hill. And then I pass her on the downhill and she's trying to chase me, right? My bike rolls better and more aerodynamically on the downhills, but she's got younger legs. So I have to challenge myself to keep up on the uphill.

"It works. We're training together. She's better at some stuff, and I'm better at some stuff and so we push each other. It's always better to ride with somebody. Say you're on your own, going up the hill and you get lazy, you slack off. But if you're going up the hill and the young woman's getting ahead of you, you start honking hard."



BARBARA CHESTER

District 10 Bruce, Grey, Dufferin

Challenge: To become semi-fluent in American Sign Language

Status: *Accomplished*

“My daughter had been learning ASL, so she and I decided to do FaceTime every day. And that was really encouraging and fun. I’d do a 15-minute YouTube, and then I would contact her and we would share something that we had learned.

“At first, we were just doing words — vocabulary. And then we started having conversations, and that was challenging, but it was also fun.

“I walk every day, so I would call my daughter about half an hour after I got back. One day, my sentence was going to be ‘I went swimming in the lake with my noodle.’ And I couldn’t find the word for ‘noodle.’ So I told her I went swimming with spaghetti. She said, ‘What? With spaghetti?’

“Spending time with my daughter was absolutely a side benefit. She had to take time off work because of COVID, so she was available and it all worked out.

“We’ve covered a lot of signs. I have a notebook where I keep pages of signs. Of course, you can’t always recall them when you need them. But the beauty of ASL is once you learn the alphabet, you can fingerspell whatever word you can’t remember. And that’s perfectly acceptable, as Rochelle the YouTube teacher says. You don’t have to feel stuck because you don’t know the sign for that word. You can just fingerspell it.

“As far as communicating goes, I think I could absolutely make myself understood. I know the sign for ‘Please sign more slowly,’ so I can ask them to slow down so that I can catch it.

“When my daughter fingerspells to me, I just can’t seem to get it fast enough even though I can fingerspell quite easily myself. That’s been a challenge for me. But it’s coming. And one of the easy parts about ASL is that, unlike other languages, you don’t need to learn verb endings for ‘he,’ ‘she,’ ‘they,’ ‘we’ or whatever. And you don’t have to learn different tenses. So it makes it much easier.

“The other day I was learning some verbs, and one was ‘jump.’ If you want to sign ‘jump high,’ you don’t use the word ‘high’; you make the sign go up higher. Another verb is ‘cry.’ If you want to sign ‘cry a lot,’ you just use more fingers. Rather than sign ‘I’m very tired,’ you exaggerate the sign. And the facial expressions are so important. They’re part of the language; they’re not just an addition. If you’re saying ‘angry’ and use the sign ‘angry’ with your facial expression, you have to keep the facial expression while you finish the sentence. Don’t do the facial expression just with the sign; continue it.

“I do have a better understanding that ASL is a separate language. You’re not interpreting English — you have to learn a separate language.

“That’s why hard-of-hearing and deaf people consider their first language to be ASL and their second language to be English.

“I would like to see Ellie involved in the speaking community and in the deaf community. I want her to have the choice in the future. Whether to be part of both communities or just choose one.”



UTA SOJAT

District 34 York Region

Challenge: To write her late mother’s memoir as a gift for her children and grandchildren

Status: *On target*

“The manuscript is completed, with the appendices. And all the early photos from my mother’s early life, and from my grandparents’, have been scanned. I still have to scan some later photos and put those into the book. Then I’ll transfer it all to InDesign and create the book, ready to be printed.

“I worked on the manuscript almost every day — well, not weekends! Even while I was editing it, I remembered other small things that I wanted to include. I probably will remember other things after the book is printed that should have been included — but, oh well.

“If I hadn’t been disciplined, I would have been like a lot of people: feeling sorry for myself during COVID because I would have had all that time on my hands to think about all the things I couldn’t do or was missing out on or whatever, right? But I was busy. And that was a really good thing.

“I was disciplined because I knew I had a deadline. My children and my niece, my sister’s daughter, and my cousin and family still in Europe are all waiting for this!

“It was difficult, and often frustrating, trying to get documents from Germany. Everybody was working from home and couldn’t access their archives. I got the last missing date two or three days ago. It took some digging and searching, going from this municipality to another municipality, and then to be told the date

Success is
not final;
failure is not fatal;
it is the courage
to continue that
counts.

Winston Churchill

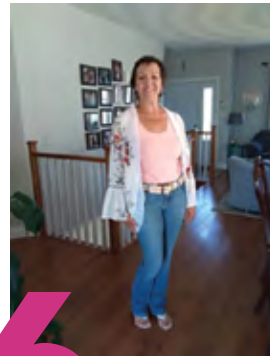
I was looking for was too old and has been archived. Everything takes time because people have their jobs to do, and that doesn't include looking for one date for somebody writing from Canada.

"I've started on the family tree — just the people who are in the book, because my one son said to me, 'Mom, we don't know who all these people are. Why don't you make a family tree at the beginning for everyone in the book?' I thought that was clever, so now that I have the dates, I've started the family tree.

"To make the story more readable, more interesting, I used my imagination to create some direct speech — my mom and dad talking about this or that and the other. And earlier conversations, like during my mother's childhood, starting with her birth and her father being disappointed because he was expecting a son.

"I think Mom would love it simply because we had asked her so many times to record her memories and to speak them on tape. And she wouldn't. So for her to know that those documents and the old photos have been preserved for posterity — she would absolutely love it. And she would love that her grandsons and her great-grandchildren who didn't know her would learn about her and would learn about their roots and would be happy about the really good life she had.

"I'm hoping to have the book printed this spring. Because of COVID, it wasn't done for Christmas. But there wasn't anything I could do about that."



6

ANDRÉE BOUDREAU

District 4 Sudbury, Manitoulin

Challenge: To lose 25 pounds and get back into shape

Status: *Accomplished*

“It’s been a slower process than I thought it was going to be. Because of the chemo and radiation, I have brain fog — some people call it chemo brain — and I’m working my way through it. Exercise has made me feel more like me; I’m less tired.

“I have stuck to my plan, with some sort of activity every day — walking or kayaking or swimming laps in the lake.

“Kayaking is just so freeing. You’re all alone on the lake, and there’s nobody to bother you. And it’s gorgeous!

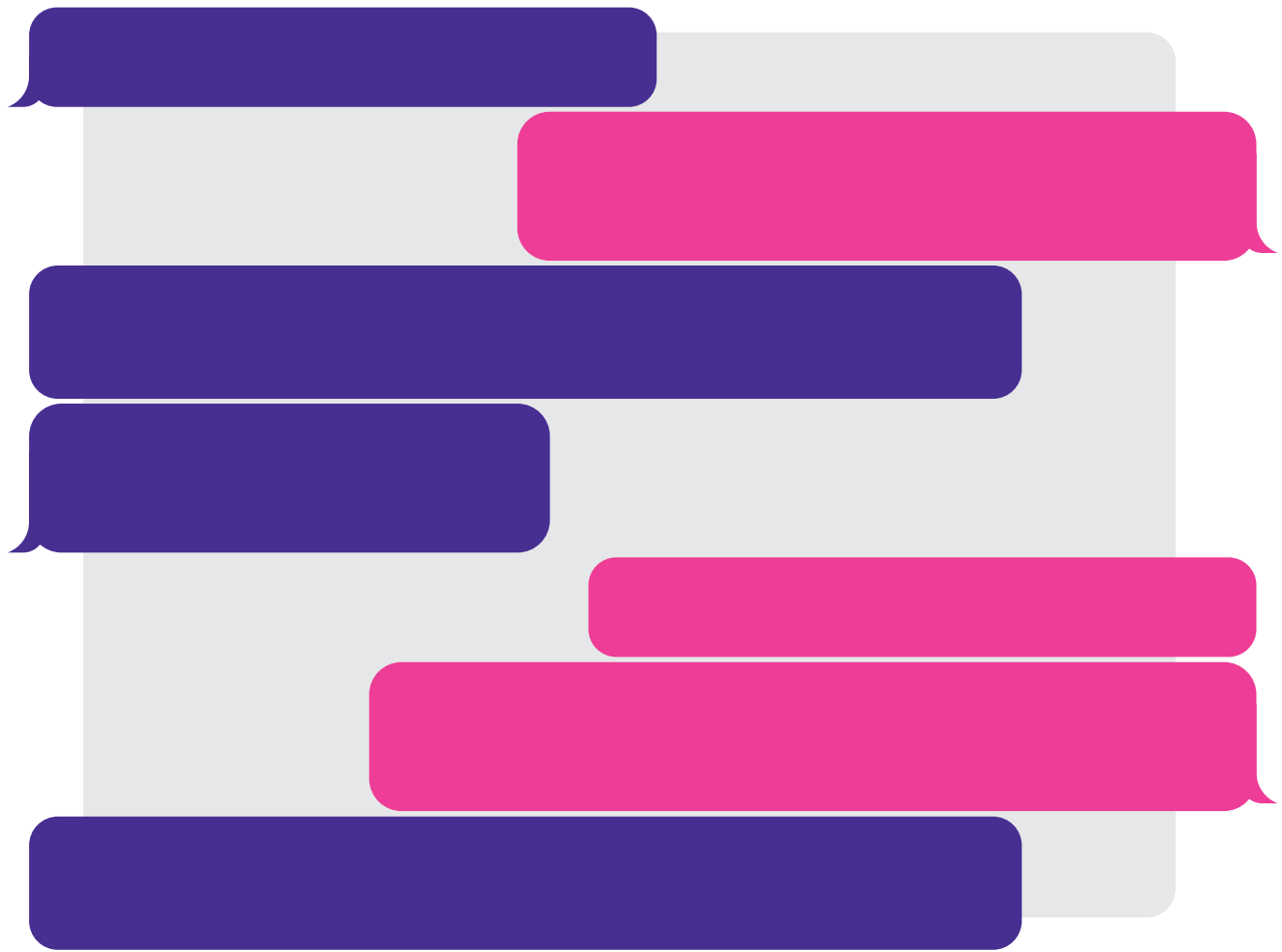
“My activities will change with the seasons, of course. I’ll transition to winter activities such as cross-country skiing, which I started a couple of years ago. I have snowshoes, so I’ll snowshoe this winter, too.

“I’m not a gym person. But if the weather is terrible, we have an elliptical at home, so I’ll do that.

“I lost the weight, and I am sticking to the no flour/no sugar diet I have been on. I am not going to gain that weight back!

“It’s a simple, healthy way to eat. Our meals are just, you know, a little bit of meat and veggies. I may have a couple of glasses of wine on a Friday night — sugar, right? — but the next day I’m back on track.

“I feel like this diet combined with the exercise component helped me reach my goal. But it helped me feel better, too. My outlook on life is really positive. My advice? Have a goal, make a plan, and then just do it.” 🍀



Reach out and text someone

Texting is a simple, easy way to keep in touch with friends and family

by **Brooke Smith**

“Reach out and touch someone,” AT&T’s 1979 advertising slogan said, reminding Americans to call their loved ones. Times change, and today, that slogan would probably be “Reach out and text someone.”

After all, in 2019, there were more than 30 million smartphone users in Canada, according to Statista, a market and consumer data firm. (That number is predicted to reach 33 million by 2024.) And the younger generations aren’t the only users; older generations are also embracing the digital life. A 2019 Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults reported that 68 per cent of people ages 55 to 73 own a smartphone, as do 40 per cent of those 74 to 91 years old.

While texting may not completely replace a phone call or an in-person chat, it’s a simple, easy way to communicate with friends and family — whether that’s to maintain your social relationships or organize an activity. And there are benefits.

First, texting is private. You can have a conversation without anyone hearing your side of it. So you can confide in a friend or grumble about your MPP, and no one’s the wiser.

Second, it’s fast. You’re more likely to get a quicker response to a text than a voicemail or email. Studies have shown that 95 per cent of text messages will be read within three minutes of being sent.

Third, it’s convenient. As long as your phone has a signal, you can send and receive a text anywhere, at any time. That’s what my mum, Phyllis Smith (District 17 Simcoe County), 86, likes about texting. “I only have the one person I text, and that’s my daughter, but I can text her any time of the day,” she says. “I can text her while I’m having coffee at Starbucks in the morning or at night when I’m sitting watching TV and I want to ask her a question.”

My mum got her smartphone two years ago and slowly began to learn the art of texting. “I wasn’t very good doing the keyboard, but I got better and wanted to do it all the time,” says Smith. At the beginning of this year, she discovered how to correct words when her fingers hit the wrong keys. “I now know to hit the space bar and the real word goes right into my message,” she says.



Texting is good for not only personal relationships but also businesses. According to Zipwhip's 2020 *State of Texting* report, 68 per cent of companies use texting to alert their customers to upcoming sales, new products and appointments.

Adrian Aguilera, an associate professor at UC Berkeley Social Welfare and a clinical psychologist, uses automated text messages to support his patients.

The self-study component of cognitive behavioural therapy is challenging for some patients, he says. "We developed this texting program about 10 years ago to help people keep practising on a regular basis." When patients receive the daily text, they track their mood daily and note what they're doing or thinking and how they're feeling, he explains.

Sometimes, patients start the therapy and then stop several weeks in. The text messages, Aguilera adds, help keep patients more engaged. "One of the things we saw is that people who were getting text messages were able to stay engaged, and showed up to about twice as many sessions and dropped out much later in the treatment than people who didn't receive text messages," he says.

Motivation and engagement aren't the only benefits. Qualitative results also indicate that his patients felt supported. "Some told us they felt cared for and supported because they still see [the text] as coming from the therapist — even though it's automated," he says. "There's a sense that somebody is at least reviewing the messages."

That's the way my mum feels. "When you're texting me back, I feel great," says Smith. "I'm right there. You're in touch."

While my mum hasn't yet mastered acronyms — I had to tell her LOL did not mean "little old lady" — she does love emojis. The emojis add a "personal touch to a text. It's like attaching a photo to an email," she says. And though she continues to text just me every day, she does want to find a few more friends to chat with. "I would like to have more people to text. I'll do my best and make the effort because I really enjoy it!"

Editor's note: As of publication, Phyllis Smith now has eight **texting** friends. 🌸

WHAT'S IN AN ACRONYM?

You may have mastered fat-finger errors on a smartphone to produce perfectly spelled words, but if you want to maximize your texting efficiency you can use some well-known acronyms. Here are a few to get you started.

BTW

By the way

ICBW

It could be worse

ICYMI

In case you missed it

IMHO/IMO

In my humble opinion/
In my opinion

LMK

Let me know

LOL

Laugh out loud

NP

No problem

PLS/PLZ

Please

TTYL

Talk to you later

TY

Thank you

Is cryptocurrency real money?

Your guide to the cryptocurrency market

by **Lesley-Anne Scorgie**



I expect you've been reading a lot about cryptocurrency. If you're a little confused — is it actually money? — you're not alone.

Cryptocurrency is a decentralized digital encrypted currency. So, there isn't oversight, like the Bank of Canada backing its value and regulating its distribution. Literally everyone in the world can have access to it if they have an account, money and the internet.

The cryptocurrency market is based on blockchain technology. Bitcoin and Ethereum are the most popular, but there are thousands of different cryptocurrencies in circulation.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

The blockchain is a program that verifies and records electronic payments using computer code. It's like a highly complex digital ledger. Many transactions are recorded to create a "block." Everyone who transacts using cryptocurrency has a copy of these blocks that make up the total blockchain, and whenever transactions happen, they are updated and verified in the blockchain.

"Proof of work" and "proof of stake" are two different validation techniques used to verify transactions before they're added to a blockchain. The companies that do this work — with heavy-duty server farms — are rewarded with more cryptocurrency.

MINING FOR CRYPTOCURRENCY ISN'T FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

Crypto "mining" is how new units of cryptocurrency are brought into the world. To get these units, you need to validate transactions, and that takes copious amounts of energy to process digitally. Theoretically, if you own cryptocurrency, you can mine it, but chances are you don't and won't have the computing power to pull it off.

PAYING WITH CRYPTOCURRENCY

Crypto is probably the currency of the future. But right now, it's not accepted as a mainstream payment method. However, big payment platforms like PayPal are now accommodating cryptocurrency payment methods, which is a sign of things to come. Until

cryptocurrencies are accepted more broadly, you'll be limited as to where and how you can spend it.

If you're trying to pay a person or retailer who accepts cryptocurrency, you'll need a cryptocurrency wallet — a.k.a. "cold storage" — which is a software program that interacts with the blockchain and allows you to pay with cryptocurrency or to receive it. The transfer happens using the QR code or wallet address of the person you are transacting with. And, transactions are not instantaneous; those heavy-duty servers need time to validate them.

INVESTING IN CRYPTO IS KIND OF LIKE BUYING A BAR OF GOLD, BUT IT'S DIGITAL GOLD

The intrigue in investing in crypto is high because a lot of people have made — and lost — piles of money by investing in the currency itself. Just like you'd buy stock from the stock exchange, you buy crypto from cryptocurrency exchanges, such as Coinbase and Bitfinex. And because cryptocurrency is in short supply (as I write this piece) the prices are high, and because the prices are high, if you go all-in on buying a few coins, it doesn't allow for the same diversification that you would get from a mutual fund or ETF.

SHOULD YOU INVEST IN CRYPTO?

Because it's new, unregulated and extremely volatile, cryptocurrency investing is considered high risk. So, your investment risk profile would need to be a five out of five (five being the highest risk level possible) for it to make sense for you to invest. It's speculative and subject to massive price swings.

Now, if you've got that itch to invest in crypto or in a crypto company because you believe in the concept, why not set up a "play" portfolio that allows you to explore with limited dollars invested, thus reducing your overall risk relative to the other, safer investments in your retirement portfolio. 🍀

The RTOERO road trip playlist

We asked: What do you listen to when you head out of town?



The Beatles, the Eagles, Blue Rodeo, Van Morrison.

—Donna Martin
(District 16 City of Toronto)

Sting — always a major must-listen-to for me. The Police, Adele, Keith Urban, and then I switch the radio channels. Good to mix it up.

—Mary Cecol
(District 15 Halton)

Blue Rodeo! Also Adele and Johnny Reid. But mainly Blue Rodeo!

—Sandy Stewart
(District 13 Hamilton-Wentworth, Haldimand)

I could use a Beatles road trip right about now!

—Lynn Opre
(District 39 Peel)

Texas rock band Fastball's "The Way" has to start every long road trip!

—Rose Brooks
(District 17 Simcoe County)

Harry Chapin, Garth Brooks, James Taylor.

—Judy Whitfield
(District 22 Etobicoke and York)

John Prine, James McMurtry, Leonard Cohen, Lyle Lovett and Kris Kristofferson are always good travelling companions.

—Olive Abeles
(District 48 Leeds and Grenville)

The Eagles, Journey, Sting, the Police, James Taylor.

—Joanne Forster
(District 33 Chatham-Kent)

