

balance

... what it's all about

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Remembering Ken Kramer

By Christine Gordon



What does it mean to be a member of a Board of Directors for a society like Technology for Living? Let's look to Ken Kramer as an example. Ken was a founding Board member and still serving on the TFL Board at the time of his death on June 5, 2023.

You must be passionate about the values of the organization. Ken was a champion for the idea behind TFL. As a member himself, he never hesitated to put the ideals of independence and self determination forward. For a quiet person, he was forceful about values.

You must also be empathetic and supportive. Ken was a go-to person for fellow Board members or Executive Directors who needed a sounding board. He understood both the text and the subtext of every conversation; he was discrete and thoughtful. He gave his whole attention to your problem and helped you see how to solve it.

You must be generous with your knowledge, expertise and networks. Ken was a lawyer. He never hesitated to share that skill with TFL. He knew many people in all walks of life and

he went out of his way to connect these diverse people to one another. For Ken, connection is the key to everyone's success.

You must care about the details that help an organization to fulfill its mission. Ken focused on budgets, policies and procedures, no matter how tedious, because he knew that the integrity of an organization depends on it. No governance issue was too small for Ken's notice.

You must not hesitate to act boldly if needed. TFL has weathered crises that have demanded quick Board action. Ken never shied away from a crisis. As Chair of the TFL Board, my gratitude to him for being there, strong as a rock no matter the adversity, is immense. We could not have founded TFL without Ken.

Honour him by being an active member. Ken would want you to speak up, to act and to show that you care, as much as he did, about TFL.



BALANCE NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY TECHNOLOGY FOR LIVING

📍 #103-366 East Kent Ave. South
Vancouver, BC V5X 4N6

☎ 604.326.0175 📠 604.326.0176

✉ info@technologyforliving.org

🌐 technologyforliving.org

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ruth Marzetti

DESIGN / EDITOR

Britt Permien

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Taylor Danielson • Dr Stacy Elliott
Marnie Essery • Christine Gordon
Chloe Gratton • Rachel Nicoletti
Wayne Pogue • Krysten Polsky

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Technology for Living houses the Provincial Respiratory Outreach Program (PROP 1.866.326.1245) and the Technology for Independent Living Program (TIL 604.326.0175). PROP is funded by the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Health through Vancouver Coastal Health. TIL is funded by the Province of British Columbia Ministry of Health and other independent funders.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 41682526

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Technology for Living round up

2023 Kinsmen Golf Tournament



The Kinsmen Foundation of BC hosted its annual charity golf tournament on July 13, featuring challenging rounds and exciting auctions. The funds raised support individuals with disabilities. Technology for Living is especially grateful for the support our Automatic Door Program is receiving. By installing doors across the province, we strive to make accessibility a reality for those who need it, empowering them to navigate their lives with greater ease. Kudos to the dedicated Kinsmen and volunteers for making a resounding impact on lives. We are looking forward to next year's event!



Congratulations, Paul!

Technology for Living congratulates Paul Gauthier on receiving the Order of Canada! His unwavering dedication, tireless efforts, and exceptional contributions to our community are commendable. Paul's commitment to improving the lives of individuals with disabilities in British Columbia has made a lasting impact.

At Technology for Living, we are honoured to have played the pivotal role in putting forward the application that made this well-deserved commendation possible. Thank you also to Janice Maxwell, Chris Hofley, and Ken Kramer (who sadly passed away recently) for their invaluable support and contributions in being a part in putting forward the application.

We are privileged to stand alongside Paul in our shared mission of enhancing accessibility and empowerment.

Technology for Living's Peer Team on the Road in Kelowna

On July 15, 2023, TFL supported by a New Horizons for Seniors Grant, organized an event in Kelowna, BC. Taylor Danielson, Community Coordinator, and Ean Price, Innovation Strategist and Peer Team Lead, had the privilege of speaking to a group of seniors with disabilities. They discussed how SMART home technology can enhance independence and enable 'aging in place'.

While technology can be daunting, the focus was on dispelling fears and demonstrating how user-friendly SMART technology can be with simplified and customized commands. Imagine uttering "watch a movie," and your home responds by dimming the lights, turning on the TV, and closing the blinds!

This event reflects our commitment to supporting all physically disabled residents of B.C. in their pursuit of increased independence.

The next event is on Wednesday, September 27, 1:30 PM in Victoria at the West Community Centre, 521 Craigflower Rd, BC V9A 6Z5, in the Fireplace Room.



Taylor Danielson and Ean Price discussing assistive technology at the Kelowna senior's event with participants.

BITS & BYTES FROM TIL

TIL's services have been expanded to provide assistance to BC youth (ages 12-18) with disabilities through our Youth Assistive Technology (YAT) pilot program. Help us raise awareness about this important initiative.

While youth solutions often align with adult solutions, we recognize youth's unique technology needs. That's where YAT comes in. Our technicians are able to integrate conventional SMART technology utilized by TIL members with the specific needs of young people. Even if young people do not require SMART technology installation at their residences, our tech experts can collaborate with them to optimize the utilization of their existing smartphones, tablets, and other devices.

CONTACT US!

*We are always happy to discuss any member's needs. Simply phone us at **604.326.0175** or send an email to info@technologyforliving.org*

TIPS & TRICKS

TIL is advising its members to not use SMART button pushers, like Switchbot and Fingerbot, on equipment that can leave you in a vulnerable position, like bed controls or lift recliners.

We have discovered that when these devices run out of battery power, sometimes the SMART button pusher doesn't have the power to retract again and it continues to push the button.

Using your phone out and about

By Wayne Pogue

Although TIL is primarily focused on assistive technology and automation solutions for the home, it is equally important that our members continue to be "connected" when out in the community. Whether going to work, school, or elsewhere in their community, many of our members require the ability to use their SMART phone throughout their day.

For most TIL members, SMART phone access is not as simple as pulling it out of their pocket. They need to be able to access it independently, and this access can look very different for each of our members.

Mounting

In order to ensure accessibility of SMART phones for the majority of TIL members, it is necessary to mount them in a manner that allows easy visibility without obstructing wheelchair access (driving, transferring etc.)

Also, the mounts need to be robust enough to keep the SMART phones securely mounted while commuting in their wheelchair.

At TIL, we have a huge variety of mounting options, not only for SMART phones, but also for switches, voice assistants, mouthpiece ventilation, cups, etc. With this vast variety of mounting options, we are able to make SMART phones accessible, while at home and out in the community.

SMART phone access

After getting the SMART phones mounted in an appropriate location, TIL will then work with the member to figure out how to access the phone. If



our members are unable to touch their phone screen, then we typically need to try either voice control or switch control.

Voice control has come a long way over the past few years. For instance, with a newer model iPhone, using Siri and voice control, peers can fully operate their iPhone just using their voice, including making, receiving, and ending phone calls. Although members don't need TIL to provide any additional technology for voice control to work on an iPhone, we're happy to assist our members to determine how to use voice control efficiently.

If our members are not able to use voice control, we can setup switch controls. Using a set of 1-4 ability switches, including TIL's Sip & Puff switches, peers can fully operate their SMART phone using scanning methods.

Of course, mounting is also an essential part to consider, as the switches need to be installed in an accessible location.

INHALE / EXHALE



Summertime in BC brings along sunny days, picnics by the lakeside, and refreshing hikes through picturesque trails. However, it's important to remember that the summer months can also be accompanied by smoky skies. This means it's crucial to stay mindful of your BiPAP machine's filters to ensure you continue to breathe clean air during this hazy season. The smoke particles can find their way into the air we breathe, making it essential to check and change your filters frequently to maintain optimal air quality. Stay proactive and change your filters so you'll be able to breathe easier.

CONTACT US!

If you need respiratory advice or support please contact the PROP team at [1.866.326.1245](tel:1-866-326-1245)

IDEA CORNER

Sleep soundly, breathe easy! Since first developed in 1972 by Japanese bioengineer Takuo Aoyagi, overnight oximeters have revolutionized respiratory care. By monitoring oxygen levels and heart rate during sleep, healthcare professionals can detect potential issues, optimize treatment, and ensure a restful night's sleep. A small device, a big impact!

When to call 911 vs PROP

By Krysten Polsky

As part of our ongoing commitment to maximise the independence of our members, PROP has after-hours telephone assistance for any of your urgent equipment issues outside of our normal business hours. This means that you will always have an experienced and knowledgeable respiratory therapist at your fingertips!

Please note that PROP is not an emergency service and we do not provide urgent supplies or services. Therefore, it is important to be prepared and understand when to contact PROP and when to call emergency services/911.

Your PROP respiratory therapist (RT) can assist you with questions about alarms on your equipment, or help you adjust your settings if you feel that it's needed. However, the on-call PROP RT cannot make urgent home visits or assess your respiratory status over the phone. Think of the on-call PROP RT as an IT person for your respiratory equipment. They are available to troubleshoot your equipment related questions, just like an IT person can troubleshoot your computer related questions. Should you feel that you're having a respiratory related emergency, or any other medical emergency, please call 911.

Here are some ways that you can be prepared, to avoid a stressful situation:



For our ventilated members:

- › Ensure you always have enough supplies on hand
- › Know where your emergency bagger is and always ensure it is functioning properly
- › Have spare inner cannulas and tracheostomy tubes on hand
- › Ensure your suction machines are charged and functional
- › Ensure your ventilators are plugged in and charging from an appropriate source
- › Have a source of backup power in the event of a prolonged power outage. Ask a PROP RT about approved backup power sources for your ventilator if you're unsure.

For our BiPAP/BiLevel users:

- › If you're dependent on BiPAP therapy (ie: you cannot sleep without it or you use it for more than 12 hours per day), please call PROP to arrange a backup unit
- › Ensure you have a spare mask/cushion and tubing for your BiPAP machines
- › Have a source of backup power in the event of a prolonged power outage. Ask a PROP RT about approved backup power sources for your BiPAP if you're unsure.

For any urgent matters that need immediate assistance, please call 1-866-326-1245

ASK A PEER

Ean Price has seen the world and shares his experiences as a part of our peer community.

Navigating through life's complexities with extensive medical needs, Ean has masterfully journeyed through Canada, the United States, and a host of countries across Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean. He hones his travel expertise with each adventure, often dedicating 4-6 months to detailed trip preparations. To Ean, the rich experiences and cherished memories that travel offers far outweigh the logistical hurdles. His true passion lies not only in exploring new horizons, but also in empowering others with disabilities to chart their own paths around the globe. Feeling the call of the open road? Tap into Ean's wealth of knowledge and get inspired to embark on your own journey!

CONTACT US!

*We are always happy to discuss any member's needs. Simply phone us at **604.301.4208** or send an email to peer@technologyforliving.org*

TIPS & TRICKS

For those with disabilities journeying within Canada, carriers must provide free adjacent seating for a required support person. This rule does not apply if your trip includes international flights, so plan accordingly!

Remember, knowledge is power when planning your trip.

Introducing your Peer Support Program

By Taylor Danielson

In the journey toward independence for peers, understanding the challenges and reaping the rewards needs to be a collective effort. Enter the Peer Support Program at Technology for Living.

Peers are more than just community members—they're catalysts for connectivity and growth. Drawing on their diverse lived experiences, they foster meaningful relationships between people with disabilities and relevant organizations in our community. It is this combined knowledge of shared experiences and *unwavering* support that helps peers in overcoming barriers, maximizing independence, and growing an environment of inclusivity.

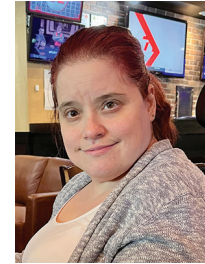
Our peer network is a group of individuals from varied backgrounds, each having unique experiences. The insights and knowledge we all bring to the table are invaluable to our community, making the sharing of experiences an essential component of peer support.

Meet Ean Price, our Peer Team Lead and Innovation Strategist.



With an unwavering passion for exploration and travel, Ean's worldly experiences offer a unique lens on independence. Alongside his tech proficiency, Ean harnesses his extensive community connections to assist others in charting their own paths. Engage with Ean to benefit from his immense travel experience and expansive community network.

Meet Nicole Whitford, our dedicated Community Advisor.



With a wealth of life experiences, from advocating for respectful, equal access for all, to equestrian dressage, Nicole is passionate about assisting others on their unique path to independence. Engage with Nicole to share your challenges, victories, and strategies for independence.

Meet Taylor Danielson, our Community Coordinator.



Initially starting as a technician and delivering tech assistance to our members, he now devotes his energy to coordinating our community programs. Armed with his own lived experience with Spinal Muscular Atrophy III, Taylor is eager to share his insights and learn from his peers. Engage with Taylor to unlock a trove of knowledge, resources, and equipment to enrich your personal journey toward independence.

Our peer support network serves as a bridge to connect you and your care team with community resources, guide you through the adult healthcare system, and provide 'Accessible Nature Wellness Programs! We invite you to engage with us, explore these resources and make the most of our thriving community. Embark on your journey with us today!



Unlocking Potential

The Impact of Volunteers with Disabilities

By Marnie Essery

Growing up, I couldn't play sports due to severe rheumatoid arthritis. I wanted to do something with my free time, so I started volunteering. I had no idea what life lessons I would gain from it. Since I had arthritis, I was asked to volunteer in a *United Way* campaign as *The Arthritis Society* was one of the beneficiaries.

In elementary and high school, I was also active in *Girl Guides*. I made new friends, learned new skills, participated in a lot of community events, went camping and enjoyed being in nature. Adult leaders showed the value of lending a helping hand and networking.

**I came to understand that volunteering is the time you give to strengthen your community and improve others' quality of life as much as your own.
And: I was having fun!**

Through high school, I was active in Student Council, and I volunteered with the Red Cross Youth. I developed communication, leadership, and public speaking skills. It also taught me organizational skills, how to facilitate groups and about the value of peer support. It gave me self confidence and taught me responsibility as I mentored younger people.

An absence of volunteers living with disabilities

There are a lot of barriers people with disabilities face every day. Some days I feel more exhausted than others. Talking to other volunteers living with disabilities this sounded all too familiar. Mary: "Just getting through the day can be an accomplishment. It is not that I don't want to volunteer, I just don't have the energy to cope with anything extra."

Unable to plan ahead and being dependent on transportation and caregiver support is an ongoing concern for Brett: "I would love to volunteer and offer support but so many puzzle pieces have to fit together so I can participate. My heart cares and wants to be there. But realistically it is often better to not volunteer because I won't let people down if I can't follow through on my commitment due to factors beyond my control. Then, I watch these events on the news and am sad that I wasn't there."

Confirming that there is accessible access and bathrooms is essential before volunteers living with disabilities can sign up. This often requires site visits to ensure that an individual's needs can be accommodated. People living with disabilities have learned that relying solely on someone else's word can lead to unfavorable outcomes and unfortunate situations.



Steering clear of potential pitfalls when working with volunteers with disabilities

- › Sometimes, in volunteering situations, honorariums, gift cards, or other kinds of benefits may arise. It is important to note that people with disabilities should not be excluded from receiving these bonuses. The value of their time and contributions is equal to that of anyone else's.
- › Never assume that a person with a disability attending an event is not there in the capacity of a volunteer. This misconception can be easily avoided by providing all volunteers with name tags or t-shirts for identification.
- › People with disabilities, like everyone else, have diverse needs and requirements. While some may appreciate assistance to participate, others are fiercely independent and prefer not to receive help. However, it's important to remember that everyone chooses to be there and wants to contribute in their own way. It's crucial for everyone involved to recognize that patience can often be more meaningful. Opting for a quicker and easier approach is not always the most rewarding path.
- › Volunteering can develop empathy and social responsibility. It can grow a deeper understanding of how others live. In other words: before you form an opinion about someone, take a walk in their shoes.

Other volunteers with disabilities I have talked to say that even though they can't give money to support causes they care about, they can give their time. It's about offering a helping hand, giving back, and making a difference.

I certainly have experienced physical and mental health benefits from volunteering. It keeps me active, distracts

me from my pain by giving me a different focus, helps my mood. It even helps lower my blood pressure and stress levels by releasing 'feel good' endorphins. It provides me with a sense of purpose and allows me to contribute to my community.

Some thoughts about how to start volunteering.

- › Choose something you are interested in and are passionate about. You will meet new people who have common interests, make friends, and grow your social network.
- › Maybe volunteer with a friend or family member. For example, Barb, a very active senior, wanted to spend more time with her dad. She signed up to volunteer at Lions community events. Not only did she end up spending a lot of fun times with her father, but it also ended up being a lot of fun and her social calendar is usually full now.

By volunteering, I have learned a lot and met a lot of wonderful people who have inspired, mentored and taught me so much. I look forward to more volunteering opportunities in the future. My motto is: 'I have people to meet, places to go and things to do.' Maybe I will see you there?

Where can I volunteer?

www.volunteerbc.bc.ca/

www.uwbc.ca/you-can-help/volunteer/

www.volunteeringvancouver.ca

Equal Job Opportunities for People with Disabilities

By Chloe Gratton

As a resident of Northern BC living with a disability myself, I have experienced firsthand the challenges and limitations that come with finding employment. Understanding the difficulties involved, I find it even more essential to advocate for equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the job market.

Limited Post-Secondary Options

Many jobs require higher education. I believed that college was the only path to follow after graduation. However, my physical limitations made it difficult to find suitable programs at the College of New Caledonia. I also recognised that taking courses is one thing, but could I actually do the job after graduation? For example, I was thinking about a career in social work. In the end I had to admit the challenges around physical accessibility of offices or clients' homes plus filling out overwhelming amounts of paperwork made this career unsuitable for me. So I modified my plan, deciding to seek work first and getting into a position that suited my physical abilities.

Seeking Support from Work BC

I connected with Work BC (www.workbc.ca), an organization that connects job seekers with employers. Their disability counselors created a detailed profile of my skills and physical restrictions, sharing my resume with over 200 employers in Prince George: I received minimal responses. In the end, I managed to secure a job as a greeter at Home Depot through a friend's recommendation who already was working there. This highlights for me two things: personal networks are very important and an agency like Work BC needs to up their game to make potential employers see they are missing out on valuable employees by not giving a chance to all applicants no matter what ability.

The lost talent pool of people with disabilities

It is important to note that job restrictions do not only relate to people with physical disabilities but also to persons with cognitive delays – those of us who struggle with sensory issues, or a different level of interpersonal and executive functioning.



Chloe showing off the first paycheck from Home Depot.

Employers need to realize that hiring people with disabilities is actually an asset.

There is high demand for employees in multiple professions and disabled people are often overlooked. In reality, the majority of disabled employees are likely to be loyal and reliable due to limited job options. We work for money just like everyone else but are also working to be productive members of society; to be seen; for our community; to have a sense of purpose; and, ultimately to increase our quality of life.

Something else to bear in mind: having a disability is a full-time job. Often it comes with medical appointments and chronic pain and illness. Some people with disabilities can, or only want to work part time, thus allowing for more positions to be filled by other people.

By promoting inclusivity and offering fair opportunities, Northern British Columbia can establish a more balanced, stronger job market that benefits individuals with disabilities and the entire community.

Sex Talk, Taboos and Technology

Written by Rachel Nicoletti & Dr Stacy Elliott, Sexual Health Rehabilitation Service (SHRS)

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human, encompassing more than just sex and body parts. It reflects our values, beliefs, and attractions. All individuals, regardless of ability, have the right to express their sexuality and engage in safe, consensual experiences.

It's crucial to acknowledge that various disabilities, including physical, intellectual, sensory, and hearing or vision impairments, can significantly impact sexual health and sexuality.

Barriers to Sexual Expression for People with Disabilities

Persons with disability or chronic illness may face challenges around sexual health due to the disability itself, medications, etc. Many barriers that arise for individuals with disabilities come from the false societal belief that disabled people are not interested in sex. Some of the common challenges and barriers faced by individuals with disabilities when it comes to sexual expression may be:

Environmental

- › Potential lack of privacy
- › Inaccessible venues like bars, clubs, or restaurants where social events take place
- › Inaccessible clinics or exam rooms.

Societal

- › Institutionalization can lead to social/sexual exclusion and lack of opportunities for privacy, and sexual expression
- › Some healthcare professionals may assume individuals with disability are not sexual and therefore don't discuss sexual health, screen for sexually transmitted infections or ask if an individual has any questions or concerns about their sexual wellbeing
- › May be left out of sexual health education opportunities –for example, sexual health education classes at school.

Physical

- › Difficulties related to mobility or strength (especially hands)
- › Altered sensation – dulled or absent genital sensation, hypersensitivity

- › Spasticity, contractures, or limited flexibility
- › Pain or fatigue.

Cognitive

- › Low sexual self-view or altered body image
- › Depression, anxiety or other mental health issues.

Technology can help address some of these barriers to sexual expression for people with disabilities. Other barriers may require help from an experienced health care professional/counsellor.

Technology & Sexual Health

Technology offers various ways of promoting sexual health. One example is sex toys (gadgets made to promote sexual pleasure), but there are also other aspects like connecting with partners through apps or online platforms for real-time experiences or engaging in virtual reality and sexual simulations. Additionally, the development of AI-powered sex robots aims to address emotional and physical desires, although they are currently limited in availability and high in cost.

Choosing or adapting Sex Toys and products

It is important to remember that there is no 'one size fit's all' for sexual devices. Sexual devices and products can help to make sexual experiences more accessible, fun, or pleasurable. What might feel good for one person may be irritating or unpleasant for another. *Note: SHRS does not endorse or promote any specific items. Instead, we encourage you to assess your needs, conduct research, and visit local stores to personally examine products. Keep in mind that the sex toy industry offers a broad spectrum of prices and quality.*

What if I need help to set up a sex toy/clean up?

It requires you to have someone in your life that you trust and are comfortable asking for help. Some people fear that if they ask a caregiver for this assistance, it could compromise the relationship. It is within the scope of a support worker to set up and position a patient for sexual activity, leave the room, and return to assist with clean up once the sexual activity is complete.

Some things to consider

- > Fatigue
- > Weight of the vibrator/dildo, will I be able to hold this?
- > Is it possible to use this item with a universal cuff? (Rehab specialists may be able to manufacture these for specific products if there are no commercially available options)
- > Does it come with a mounting option, or can you purchase something separately such as a flexible gooseneck tubing to attach to your bedside? (www.snakeclamp.com)
- > Larger wand style vibrators or vibrating penis sleeves can sometimes be rested between the legs requiring limited strength.

Limited hand/arm dexterity

- > What are the buttons/switches like? Can I turn it off/on?
- > Does it come with Bluetooth connectivity to be controlled by a mobile app? Is the app open source? Some can be adapted for use with simple voice commands.
- > Could a finger vibrator that either fits on top of the finger or attaches to the finger with a rubber strap be a good option? (www.honeygifts.com/magic-finger-vibrator)
- > What about a wearable vibrator? There is a wide selection of devices that can be inserted or strapped onto the body for solo or partnered activity.

Decreased sensation

- > Is the device safe for parts of your body you can't feel? If using toys, equipment or outfits that are new to you, test them out solo first to make sure they don't create pressure, friction or constrict circulation on areas you can't feel.
- > Avoid putting pressure or friction on areas where you can't feel anything or when you can't check your skin or adjust your body position.
- > Incorporate skin checks as part of aftercare routine or tasking a partner (or care support worker) with the job of inspecting parts you can't feel.

Recent Technologies

Robotic Hands-Free Device

The *Rub Joy* is a robotic device with a stroker sleeve designed for a penis. The device is mounted to robotic arms providing flexibility, and can be clamped to a bedside, table, or seated on a plastic platform that sits under the users' legs. It simulates a natural motion, twisting and

tilting, while it goes up and down. This device is controlled by a smartphone app that connects via Bluetooth to the robot. The user can either chose a pre-set mode for the experience to be hands free, use a finger on their screen to control the robot, or even a handset gyro-control. It could also be fun for a partner to have control over.

(www.rubjoy.com)

The Bump'n Joystick

This product was created by sexual health and design experts, occupational therapists and members of the disabled community for people with hand limitations. This product consists of an upper foam pillow, connected to a lower rubber portion with 'holes' that can house dildo's, vibrators, and penis sleeves. (www.getbumpn.com/products/pre-order-the-bumpn-joystick)

Online Platforms & Apps

Technology facilitates connections between individuals using online dating apps and platforms, eliminating physical accessibility barriers present in traditional social venues (like bars and clubs). These platforms enable the upfront sharing of disability information, promoting understanding and compatibility. They offer opportunities for virtual relationships, chats, and video calls, expanding social and romantic connections. (*Note: When discussing online options, privacy and safety must be emphasized.*)

Privacy and Safety Online

Privacy is very important when it comes to technology-enabled sexual expression. People have the right to privacy and should be able to control their personal information, particularly in intimate and sensitive contexts. When using technology for sexual expression, you must have confidence that your personal data, images, videos, or conversations will remain private and secure. Privacy breaches can have severe consequences, leading to embarrassment, harassment, identity theft, or blackmail.

It's important to approach online resources with critical thinking, as not all information may be accurate or reliable.

Additionally, individuals should prioritize their safety, consent, and personal boundaries when engaging in any online activities. Consulting with trusted sources, joining reputable online communities, and seeking guidance from

TELUS Wise is a free digital literacy education program with resources to help folks of all ages have a positive digital experience.

www.telus.com/en/wise

Canada's National Tipline for reporting online sexual exploitation of youth has good information for anyone on how to stay safe online.

www.cybertip.ca/en/online-harms/sex-tortion/

experienced practitioners can enhance the learning experience and ensure responsible exploration of sexuality.

Virtual Reality and Simulation

Virtual reality (VR) technology can create immersive and interactive experiences, including sexual scenarios, that can be enjoyed individually or with a partner. This can enhance sexual exploration, intimacy, and fantasy fulfillment. Simulation games and avatars offer opportunities for self-expression and embodiment of different identities or experiences, allowing individuals to explore their desires in a safe and controlled environment.

Getting Adventurous

The internet can be a valuable resource to learn about non-traditional forms of sexual expression such as 'kink'. Kink can be described as alternative ways of expressing sexuality with yourself and others that include role-play, fantasy, costume, exchange of power and vulnerability, restraint and exploring sensations/stimulation not typically thought of as sexual. These are practices that are growing in popularity among a wide variety of people for fun, for intimacy, for self-expression, and may be especially valuable for people looking to find new ways to be sexual or new ways of thinking about sexuality. More information may be found here: www.scisexualhealth.ca/getting-adventurous. Online communities and forums exist for discussing kink and alternative sexual expression. These platforms provide a space for individuals to ask questions, seek advice, and engage in conversations with like-minded individuals.

Technology enables equal access to essential sexual health education and information for individuals, including

those with disabilities. Online resources, videos, and websites provide comprehensive guidance on topics such as sexual health, consent, contraception, and safe practices. This empowers individuals to make informed decisions regarding their bodies and relationships.

By promoting inclusive attitudes, providing access to sexual health services, using technology responsibly, and embracing alternative sexual expressions, we can support the sexual rights and well-being of people with disabilities.

The Sexual Health Rehabilitation Service (SHRS) at G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre

Dr. George Szasz established the SHRS in 1975. He identified that although healthcare professionals recognized the importance of sexuality to persons with spinal cord injury, they did not talk about it with their patients. SHRS now serves all persons with disability/chronic illness (and their supports). A team of rehabilitation nurses who specialize in sexuality and disability work alongside a sexual medicine doctor, to offer education and support to improve sexual wellness.

For some people, sexual health is difficult to discuss. The SHRS aims to provide a confidential, supportive way to help persons with disability/chronic illness with their concerns, and to restore, maintain, and promote what is optimal sexual health for them. Appointments are in-person, by phone, or by Zoom. For more information, check out the SHRS page on the Vancouver Coastal Health site: www.vch.ca/en/service/sexual-health-rehabilitation-service.

Other resources for sexual health concerns include your primary care provider, your health care team, or www.healthlinkbc.ca. You can also phone 811.

DISCLAIMER: The content in this article is for informational purposes only. We want to clarify that Technology for Living and Sexual Health Rehabilitation Service (SHRS) neither promote nor have any affiliations with the products or companies discussed. The inclusion of such content does not imply endorsement. Readers should exercise discretion and seek professional advice before making decisions related to the mentioned product or company.



Join us for the free
EcoWisdom Nature Wellbeing Program

*** September 23, 2023 ***

*** 12:00PM - 4:00PM ***

Discover the healing effects of nature through Shinrin Yoku (Forest Bathing), proven to reduce stress, uplift mood, and boost immunity.

Immerse yourself in a supportive community, enhancing relaxation and social connection. Accessible to all, co-facilitated by nature guides with disabilities. Hosted by EcoWisdom Forest Preserve and Technology for Living in collaboration with the Individualized Funding Resource Centre. Healthy lunch provided

For registration and more information,
email anwp@ecowisdom.ca



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2023

 **Thursday, September 14**

 **6:00-7:00PM**

Join us on Zoom for our 2023 online AGM.

Register in advance for this meeting:
<https://tinyurl.com/mvnnkjjk>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

For any technical support before or during the meeting please contact:

 tiltechs@technologyforliving.org

All required AGM documentation, including the Meeting Agenda, Meeting Minutes and the Independent Auditor's Report are publicly available on our website prior to the AGM.

www.technologyforliving.org



Special guest: Roger Jones, TFL member, will give a talk about the "Evolution of Assistive Technology".