

SURVIVING YOUR DESK JOB: TIPS FOR BRINGING MOVEMENT AND RELAXATION INTO YOUR DAY

Speakers

Mary Kemper

Medical Editor, Mayfield Clinic, Cincinnati, OH; TriYoga instructor

Ann Winter-Vann

Senior Medical Writer and Consultant, Whitsell Innovations, Inc, Chapel Hill, NC

By Kelly Schrank, MA, ELS

This open session began with Ann Winter-Vann discussing why and how to bring movement into the work day and continued with Mary Kemper introducing attendees to yoga practice and leading them through breathing exercises and stretches meant to bring relaxation to their day.

Winter-Vann, a senior medical writer and consultant, moved quickly through news stories and journal articles (Box 1) on the health detriments of too much sitting and a sedentary lifestyle. While the studies showed that too much sitting was hazardous to our health, they did not, unfortunately, offer an answer to the question of *why*. Even for those who are active outside of their work hours, the effects of being sedentary for so many hours of the day can still be detrimental. One way to combat this may be through understanding NEAT, nonexercise activity thermogenesis, a topic she discussed in more detail. According to James Levine, author of *Move a Little, Lose a Lot*:

Box 1. Journal Articles Referenced in Session

MT Hamilton, DG Hamilton, TW Zderic. Role of low energy expenditure and sitting in obesity, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. *Diabetes*. 2007;56:2655-2667.

Lee IM, Shiroma EJ, Lobelo F, Puska P, Blair SN, Katzmarzyk PT, et al. Impact of physical inactivity on the world's major non-communicable diseases. *Lancet*. 2012;380:219-229.

Craft LL, Zderic TW, Gapstur SM, Vanlterson EH, Thomas DM, Siddique J, et al. Evidence that women meeting physical activity guidelines do not sit less: an observational inclinometry study. *Int J Behav Nutr Phys Act*. 2012;9:122.

Archer E, Shook RP, Thomas DM, Church TS, Katzmarzyk PT, Hébert JR, et al. 45-year trends in women's use of time and household management energy expenditure. *PLoS One*. 2013;8:e56620.

JA Levine. Non-exercise activity thermogenesis. *Best Pract Res Clin Endocrinol Metab*. 2002;16:679-702.

New N.E.A.T. Science Reveals How to Be Thinner, Happier, and Smarter (Crown Archetype; 2009), NEAT may hold the key to helping us live less sedentary lives. Through simple activities like parking further away, running up and down the stairs to get things done, or standing during a call instead of sitting, we can burn an additional 1,500 to 2,000 calories a day. While many of us strive to be efficient, when trying to increase NEAT, Winter-Vann said, "Efficiency is not your friend."

Anytime you can add a bit more walking, standing, or stair climbing, you are burning a few more calories and potentially extending your life (Box 2). For example, when deciding where to work in your home, you might choose a location farther from the kitchen or bathroom, or you might place the printer in another room so that you have to get up to retrieve print jobs. Whether you work from home or in a corporate office environment, you can put books you reference often on a higher shelf, so that you have to stand up to reach them, or you can put the trash can farther away, so you have to get up to throw things away.

Some tools Winter-Vann suggests to introduce movement into your day:

- Phone with headset, so you can stand or walk during conference calls
- Timer that you can set so alarms will tell you to stand up and stretch
- Standing desks, treadmill desks, or recumbent bicycle desks

To illustrate the different desk setups, Winter-Vann offered pictures of her own office, where she has a makeshift treadmill desk and a store-bought standing desk.

Kemper, a medical editor and yoga instructor, began her part of the session by asking everyone to remove their shoes and stand. While she dimmed the lights, Kemper walked the attendees through pranayama, or yogic breathing, differentiating between a person's natural breath and complete breath, in which a person fills the low, mid, and upper lung on the inhale, then draws in the navel to fully release the breathe on the exhale.

This was the first of 9 movements she demonstrated and performed with the attendees in the session: 1) yogic breathing/pranayama; 2) natural alignment; 3) healthy spine; 4) relax your shoulders; 5) wrist stretches; 6) neck stretches; 7) relax the eyes; 8) yogic path; and 9) mindfulness meditation.

Box 2. Toys for Increasing Movement in Your Day

- Apps (FitBit, Jawbone, Healthier, Time Out)
- Free weights
- Resistance bands
- Ankle weights
- Balance ball
- Wobble board
- BOSU balance trainer
- Punching bag

Yoga teaches natural alignment as an antidote to slouching. “There is no slouching position in yoga,” Kemper said. Natural alignment is done in conjunction with complete breath: On inhaled, you engage the core muscles to reset the natural curve of your spine; on exhaled, you relax.

Many of the yoga movements suggested were stretches. For a healthy spine, Kemper provided 3 stretches: spinal rolls (standing or seated), side stretch, and spinal twist. Two shoulder stretches included the stress buster (draw shoulders up and make a fist on the inhaled, and then squeeze in the shoulder blades and relax on the exhaled) and shoulder circles. Three wrist stretches included wrist rotations (circling wrists), finger stretch (gently pressing each finger against a desk), and traction stretch (interlacing the fingers, then stretching them in opposing directions). Neck stretches included a side stretch, a rotation, and circles.

Kemper prompted everyone to relax their eyes by looking up and down, then right and left, and then on a diagonal. Her handout also suggests that you cup your hands over the eyes to allow them to relax. Kemper’s handout listed the following items as part of “the yogic path”: healthy diet, rest, meditation, exercise, and a positive attitude. Lastly, Kemper discussed mindfulness meditation, explaining how yoga can help practitioners control the thought waves of their mind. The session ended with the following affirmation: I am relaxed in the present, letting go of past stresses and future worries.

Kelly Schrank works from her home near Syracuse, New York, as a medical editor for Med Communications Inc.

Author contact: headbookworm@gmail.com

HOW TO DESIGN, DEVELOP, AND EXECUTE A SUCCESSFUL WEBINAR: EXPLORING THE AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGIES

Speaker

Ruwaida Vakil, MS

Owner, ProMed Write LLC, Somerset, NJ

By Loretta Bohn

Ruwaida Vakil, MS, the principal of ProMed Write, has developed, designed, and conducted webinars for her clients. Webinars are cost-effective for reaching a large, geographically dispersed audience, and they can be convenient (offered live or on demand) and enduring (if they are archived). Most importantly, if done well, they engage the audience. In the open session, Ruwaida shared some specific strategies from her experience and offered a hands-on demonstration of registration and participation.

Consider these elements in designing and hosting a webinar.

1. Deciding on the webinar format. Consider what format might work best for the event—single speaker, interview, panel discussion, interactivity with audience, or some combination of these? Will you charge a fee?

- Free events have high registration rates, but just 30% to 50% are likely to attend.
- Paid events have lower registration but 75% to 98% attendance.
- Consider why an audience would pay for your content. Lots of free material is available.
- Attendees have higher expectations for paid events.

2. Choosing the webinar platform. Do you prefer a suite of conference tools or a webcasting platform? Options include do-it-yourself (DIY) paid, DIY free, and all-inclusive services. Major webinar service providers include Google Hangout, WebEx, and GoToWebinar. Understand what the particular platform offers: number of events, number of viewers and speakers, series availability, and interaction types.

- Are customization and branding available?
- Can you do a dry run or get training?
- Does the software support registration or do you have to set up a separate Web page?
- Can it send mass emails?
- How big can your audience be?
- What support services are available?
- Can you get real-time engagement metrics?
- Is audio provided via telephone, online, or both?
- How is content distributed?
- Does the platform support recording, mobile compatibility, and software download? (The ability to record a webinar for on-demand access will increase potential viewership.)
- Is it usable on both Mac and PC systems?

3. Selecting speakers. Make sure all speakers are engaging and well prepared.

- Audio is the key component.
- Presenters should be subject matter experts.
- Webinar skills differ from those for oral presentation—don’t allow pauses longer than 3 seconds.
- Know how to use the specific platform.
- Presenter must be available for rehearsals.
- Log on half an hour before the event.
- Do at least one dry run.
- Consider prerecording to avoid distractions.