



WOMEN'S PROBUS CLUB OF VANCOUVER

Next meeting: **Tuesday, Sept 6th, 2023 – AGM**

9:30 a.m. - Arrival Point Grey Golf Club
10:00 a.m. - Meeting 3350 S.W. Marine Drive

*We acknowledge that we meet on the unceded lands of the
Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations*

Masks are optional

*** Note that there is no August meeting ***

SEPTEMBER SPEAKER

Speaker:
Ashley Gowanlock,

Topic:
**"My Opportunities Just
Dress Up As Obstacles."**



Ashley is a three-time Paralympian in Para-Dressage, representing Canada at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games, the London 2012 Paralympic Games, and the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. She also rode at the 2010 and 2014 FEI World Equestrian Games (USA and France, respectively). Her career highlights include top-10 finishes at both the Beijing 2008 and London 2012 Paralympic Games.

She began riding at the age of two, after being diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy. Her parents were told horseback riding would be great physiotherapy and help with her stretching and balance. She was soon hooked, and by 2006, made her debut on the Canadian Para-Dressage Team in Langley, B.C.

Ashley has engaged in public speaking for many years, and since 2014, has been an ambassador for Right To Play, an organization dedicated to educating children about healthy, active living. She published her first book, *My Opportunities Just Dress Up As Obstacles*, in late 2015.

"You have to wake up everyday and make the decision that today you will choose joy no matter what obstacles you may face. And when in doubt it's always a good idea to laugh at yourself."

Women's PROBUS of Vancouver:

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JULY SPEAKER

Melanie Galloway

Preventing Falls

Falls happen to everyone at some time. The problem with falls as we age is that our bones are more fragile and there is an increased risk of a fracture.

Extrinsic reasons for falls include:

- Poor stair design or lack of proper railings Lack of bathroom grab bars
- Dim lighting or glare Obstacles & tripping hazards Slippery or uneven surfaces Psychoactive medications
- Improper use of assistive devices

Intrinsic reasons for falls include: Previous falls & fear of a fall Muscle weakness

Gait & balance problems Poor vision

Dropping blood pressure when standing up

Chronic conditions which affect movement, energy or cognition

EDUCATION: Being aware of what the risks are for falls helps to reduce the incidence of falls. A 50-year-old may catch their foot on a curb, stumble and re-adjust position.

At 70 a person may fall and at 80 they may fall awkwardly and break a bone. It is usually the loss of SPEED which leads to falls as people age. Building strength is important; building speed is critical.

AGILITY: this is what keeps people safer when moving. It is the ability to change the direction you are moving with speed and coordination. Practice improves all aspects of agility when done regularly.

A class which aims to reduce falls should include:

Strength - stronger muscles have a better chance to hold body weight up

Speed - faster muscles can move to where they are needed in time to stop a fall Coordination - muscles need to act together

Direction change - stop movement in one direction to reverse direction is important Balance - both static and when in motion helps keep us upright

Reactions - at both the brain and the muscle reflexes and reactions need to be fast Multi-tasking - the

ability to talk and walk at the same time improves safety

AGE: CHRONOLOGICAL age cannot be changed but BIOLOGICAL (the condition of our organs) can be helped by good diet, reduced stress and appropriate exercise. FUNCTIONAL age (what we can do with our body) can be improved through exercise.

FEAR OF FALLING: Mobility issues can lead to falls but "fear of a fall" slows people down so they lose the ability to move as efficiently or as fast. Inactivity or

doing "less// leads to more falls. An important goal if someone is fearful of a fall is to start doing more activity in a "safe and controlled" class situation. Build the ability to move more and to do it with better awareness. Know where to move slowly and where to practice speed and improve agility.

VISION: The eyes tend to work less well as we age. We can work on activities which improve our use of them in group classes where we challenge visual ability. Eye exercises can help but there is benefit in

group interaction.

BLOOD PRESSURE: When we stand up from sitting or lying down the blood pressure must rise to push blood to the brain. With age the body's response may be slower. If a person is also on a drug to lower blood pressure there may be a slower response. Be aware! Whenever you stand up, tighten your legs and bottom. Stay near a support if you feel light headed when you stand. If you have been sitting for a long time then move your legs before you try to stand.

CHRONIC CONDITIONS: Almost all older adults are likely to have one or more chronic conditions which put them at greater risk of a fall. Any condition which causes pain on motion or leads to less energy or to any cognitive slowness is a risk for falls.

Appropriate EXERCISE is good for all conditions. If you can hang on to the ability you now have that is great. If you can improve on your ability that is a bonus.

BE AWARE OF SITUATIONS WHICH INCREASE THE RISK OF A FALL...



- ▶ If you are tired - poor sleep, a busy day or an exhausting exercise class
- ▶ If you are not well - colds/flu or a flare up in your chronic condition
- ▶ If it is cold - muscle do not respond as fast in cold
- ▶ If it is hot- if you are dehydrated or overheated blood pressure changes can happen
- ▶ If you are taking medications which slow your mind; sleeping pills that have not worn off
- ▶ If you are "distracted" - rushing to the toilet is a common reason for a fall

LOOK BEFORE YOU COMMIT TO A STEP...

Take your time to check your surrounding if you need to turn or change direction

GET PRACTICE IN SAFE PLACES...

Find an activity or class which gets you up and moving with other people

Additional advice given by Melanie:

- If using poles, don't use the wrist traps
- Cold muscles don't react as quickly – on slippery surfaces walk like a penguin; wider and flatter.
- WHO recommends at least 150 minutes a week of strength, muscle building, balance and dual activity.
- Incorporate daily chores into exercise routines.
- Practice balance at home with heel/toe walk – like a tightrope.
- After sitting, flex legs and feet to move blood up – tighten your bottom too!

Staying stable and balance important; especially at older age.

Gravity very important to all of us. We fall all our lives; toddler onward; a problem when age catches up.

Areas causing falls:

*Extrinsic reasons – lack of stair and stair handrails (poorly designed), lack grab bars in bath rooms (should be on a slight slant not horizontal), dim lighting, obstacles, clutter on

floor, slippery surfaces, know your medications (sleeping pills).

Intrinsic – can't change; age, previous falls/fear of falling, muscle weakness, gait and balance problems, poor vision, postural hypertension (bp), chronic conditions contribute risk of falling.

Be aware – household dangers, wires, clutter, spills, carpets, loose clothing, socks on stairs, climbing on (dangerous) chairs, to decrease risk; have OT visit for risks in and out of home.

*What can we change: lack of stair handrails, rules against wedge stairs now, grab bars cross hatch bathrooms, lighting when up at night, hotel/guest rooms when traveling, pets in the way, non-slip in shower.

Poles – don't use wrist straps.

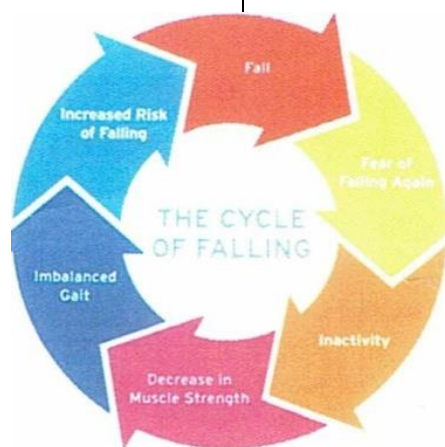
Cold muscles don't react as quickly. Walk on slippery surfaces like a penguin; wider and flatter. Keep hands free. Not heel/toe walk. Non-slip soles on shoes. Cleats should be easy to remove.

Intrinsic – can't change previous falls; can do something about fear of falling.

Can do something:

about Muscle weakness, improve strength and gait, poor vision, postural hypotension,

Chronical age, what is biological age strength muscles, functional age, can sit up, get up, lie down. Age not chronological.



Fear of falling after injury– inclination to slow down, be careful, reduced inactivity is the real problem. We need to replace activities for reaction, etc. – in safe places.

Gait, etc. – get out in safe places for strength, reaction brain awareness,

WHO recommends 150 min a week for activity – 2 days concentrate muscle strengthening; 1 day makes a difference. Don't skip 10 days.

Ways to strengthen muscles; make work more than normally do once/twice week. Walk on flat; good heart/lung. Need uphill, rough terrain for

muscles more than normal. Why build muscles – men who train at age 80, same as 40.

Speed improves safety – (showed pic of fall down stairs)

Fall happens in 400 milliseconds - keep hand free to grab something.

Don't lift heavy objects but need to move body quickly.

Bladder problems cause people to move faster than usual.

Training speed – use aspects strengthening, speed, balance, direction change, coordinating muscles, dual tasking (practice as it's difficult to combine physical/mental exercise – brain takes precedence; muscles for what to do. – Hard but need to practice; persist.

Social side important for dual tasking – dance groups (folk), racquet sports, (safe one- Aqua-fit. Do power training. Balance training (we did balance exercise) one foot in front of the other; knees soft knees – be aware feet/ankle feeling. Switch feet – if can raise arms do out to side. (have chair in front) Raise thumbs with arms out to side. Could close eyes, if possible.

Balance -In hallway, heel/toe walk like tight rope – one side to another.

Slow walking is challenging to back (for balance)

Eye check – magnifying dangerous for younger people as they don't get eye checked.

Practice peripheral sight – Covid reduced practice of being aware of what is around us.

Postural hypertension – when stand up, within few seconds go to heart and brain blood should go up to brain; can take 2 min. for older people (BP medicine cld be risk). Tighten bottom when stand up.

Be aware, If hot/dehydrated/BP med tighten bottom and top of legs & core muscles. When stand up blood left on btm. Tighten btm; legs squeezing helps blood go up.

(blood left in legs by gravity)

Joint problems – when sitting long time, do

movements under table, pump muscles, lube joints, (move feet) .

Heart problems – tricky to find right kind of exercises for your needs.

Experts are available.

Regular excise is very important – don't skip a few days (10) and measure in beginning

Have a variety of exercises – strength, muscles, balance, dual tasking.

Gradual increase

We all have ability to make changes.

M. had handouts and a book

Can do exercises at a variety of times gardening, cooking, even sitting – multi task for even a minute.

The same risks apply to all people - young or old; in the home or out of the home.

We thanked Melanie for an enlightening talk given with humor in a “by suggestion” manner.

Sept. speaker Ashley Gowanlock 3-time Para-Olympian in dressage. She contracted cerebral palsy at age 2 and riding horses greatly improved her balance and strength. Melanie had polio at 3/1/2 para. Waist down – therapy was wooden rocking horse.

Mere sheepishly intro M. by saying she had fallen down stairs while talking on her cell phone. When you read this, she will have had reverse shoulder replacement surgery, and had to cancel a trip to Norway and Finland.

July Meeting Notes:

Thank you's to the greeters & badge ladies!

President Hodie welcomed everyone and thanked sole greeter Kay Collins.

Past President Donna Battye is having a challenge finding Greeters – please contact her if you could do this for at least one meeting. It's very easy to do; here is the job description; arrive at 9:15 AM, pick up your badge, and the yellow greeter badge from the M-Z desk, save your seat, go to the lobby and greet your friends until 9:55 when you will return to the meeting room.

Pauline Dunlap and Michelle Gambrel are not available in September and October to do the A-L badge desk. Please contact Mary Gillespie if you could help.

No meeting in August.

Treasurer Barbara Paterson announced an invoice for dues will be sent by email; please pay online or by cheque – no cash please – by September 15. If you bring a cheque to the September meeting please give it to Mary Gillespie (M-Z desk) and if you need to mail the cheque please send it to: Janice Brown, 904 West 22nd Avenue, Vancouver V5Z 2A1.

Vice President Meredyth gave a brief bio of the September speaker's impressive story. Ashley Gowanlock contracted cerebral palsy at age 2, and as horse riding provided physiotherapy and balance training, with determined effort she went on to join Canada's dressage team at three Paralympic Games; Beijing, London, and Rio.

Coincidentally, our July speaker had polio at an early age and her therapy was on a (wooden rocking) horse!

When Meredyth introduced our speaker, Melanie Galloway, she sheepishly confessed to catapulting down some stairs while talking on her cell phone. When you read this, Meredyth will have had reverse shoulder replacement surgery and to make things even worse, she should be on a trip to Norway and Finland! We wish her well with rehab.

Management Committee Contacts:

Women's PROBUS members will find the *confidential* phone numbers and email addresses on the last page of their Newsletter. Please contact them if you have any questions.

Newsletter:

Contributions of stories, poems, jokes and brain teasers are welcome. Please send them to the Newsletter Editor any time you wish.

Update Your Contact Information:

Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number? Please update your profile on the Club's website <https://probuswomen.com>
Or email womensprobus@gmail.com

Membership Fees Are Coming Due:

The 2023/24 membership fees of \$80.00 are due by September 15. Those with an email address will receive an invoice in July.

Payment by credit card is preferred – go to www.probuswomen.com, click the "head and shoulders", enter your email address and password, fill in your credit card information, and finish the transaction - don't forget to log off.

Your receipt of payment will be in your inbox in a few minutes.

Another option: write a cheque (\$80.00) payable to Women's PROBUS and send it to Janice Brown at 904 West 22nd Ave., Vancouver BC V5Z 2A1, or bring the cheque to the July or September meetings.



Apparently you have to eat healthy more than once to get in shape. This is cruel and unfair.

I always knew I'd get old. How fast it happened was a bit of a surprise, though.

I am starting to think I will never be old enough to know better.