

PIF6401 - UFCW 832 Full Event Transcription  
November 14, 2023

Marie Buchan:

Good evening, everyone. My name is Marie Buchan. I'm the secretary treasurer of your union, UFCW Local 832. I want to welcome you all to the November 2023 telephone town hall general membership meeting for members of UFCW Local 832, which is now called to order. As long as the sun shines, the grass grows, and the river flows, UFCW Local 832 acknowledges that we are gathered and work each day on ancestral lands, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, the Cree, OG Cree, Dakota, and Dene Peoples, and on the homeland of the Metis nation. Our offices are located on Treaty One and Two territory, and our work extends into Treaty Three, Four, and Five. We recognize the injustices done to the indigenous peoples of this land and are committed to supporting and collaborating with indigenous communities in a spirit of truth and reconciliation.

I'm filling in for President Jeff Traeger tonight who is out of town on union business. With me tonight I have executive advisor to the president, Ron Allard, director of IT Facilities and Privacy, and our office manager, Max patches. Crystal Klippenstein, one of our two communication coordinators, is also with us ensuring everything runs smoothly. And tonight is our fourth and final general membership meeting, telephone town hall for 2023.

I'm also pleased to welcome our special guest, Lisa Houtkooper. Lisa is an occupational health nurse from the Manitoba Federation of Labor Occupational Health Center. Max will be having a discussion with Lisa on psychological health and safety in the workplace. This discussion will be divided into two segments during tonight's GMM. As we normally do, we'll take breaks in between our conversation to answer any questions you may have for tonight's guest or about anything relevant to all UFCW members. Remember that if you have a specific question about a grievance or an issue that affects your workplace alone, I will ask that you contact your full-time union representative whose name and contact information are available on the UFCW bulletin board in your workplace or online at [UFCW832.com](http://UFCW832.com).

So, let's get started. The first order of business required by our bylaws is that we vote to approve three reports of this meeting, and they are the minutes of the previous full membership meeting held on September 19th, 2023, the secretary treasurer's report on the current finances and the president's report. We will not be reading these reports, which give us more time for our guest and free to ask any questions you may have. All three of these documents, however, have been previously posted on our website at [UFCW832.com](http://UFCW832.com) for you to review. They will stay posted there in our archives so you can see all of the documents from all of our telephone town hall general membership meetings anytime you'd like.

Just a reminder, if any of you would like to ask a question, please press the star key followed by the number three and you'll be placed in a queue to ask your questions. I would once again ask that you please remember that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss issues or ask questions about matters that affect all UFCW Local 832 members, and that if you have a question specific to your workplace or a specific grievance that you contact your full-time union representative.

So, we will now need a motion to approve the minutes of our last meeting, which took place at 7:00 PM on September 19th, 2023.

Ron Allard:

So, moved.

Max Paches:

Seconded.

Marie Buchan:

It has been moved and seconded. So please vote yes by pressing the number one on your keypad or no by pressing the number two on your keypad. Once again, to get in the lineup to ask a question, simply press the star key followed by the number three key and you'll be placed in the queue. I'm now going to turn it over to Max and Lisa for the first segment of psychological health and safety in the workplace. I want to welcome you both, and thanks for taking the time to put this together for our members.

Max Paches:

Thank you, Marie. And Lisa, welcome. Lisa Houtkooper is a registered nurse and currently works with the Occupational Health Center. She has over 30 years of experience working in healthcare in a variety of roles as both a nurse and a nurse practitioner. She's passionate about developing and delivering services and programs that enhance the capacity of workers, workplaces, and communities to protect their health and safety. She has a Master of Nursing degree, a certificate in leadership development from Mediation Services. She's a certified trainer in deescalating potentially violent situations, and she's a workplace mindfulness facilitator. Hello and welcome, Lisa. We're going to talk a little bit about ensuring for the psychological health and safety in the workplace. And I will start with a question. Can you help us, Lisa, to understand what mental health is and what is the difference between mental health and mental illness?

Lisa Houtkooper:

Hi Max and hi everyone out in the void. I'm really happy to be here. I want to just say thank you to the crew here this evening at UFCW. I was saying earlier it feels like I already know folks even though I've just met you. So that's always a good feeling. I'm definitely going to talk about mental health and mental illness. And so Max and I are going to have a bit of a discussion over the next 30 minutes. We're going to touch on a variety of topics including burnout, bullying, and de-escalation skills in particular.

So Max, in response to your question, what is mental health and what's the difference between mental health and mental illness? So, I think a good place to start would be to speak to the scope of the problem, which I don't think would be surprising to listeners out there. One in five Canadians experience a psychological health problem or illness in any given year. This fact, this might be a little bit more surprising to folks. Psychological health problems and illnesses are the number one cause of disability in Canada and almost 50% of working Canadians consider their work to be the most stressful part of their day. So, these statistics really point to how significant this problem is, but also the statistics don't point to the impact on family, friends and the larger community around them.

So in terms of mental health, I'm going to just define it as per the World Health Organization, and this is really your mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to their community. So really mental health, we all have mental health, just like we all have physical health, and it can change hour by hour and day by day. Mental illness is not the same necessarily as feeling sad, unhappy, or stressed because of difficult or challenging situations. People with mental illness may feel distressed regularly and they may not feel in control of their lives. And mental illness can impact how we see ourselves, how we see the world, and how we interact with the world. And often this is a diagnosis that is given by a healthcare provider and that can be things like depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and things like that.

So that is really the difference between mental health and mental illness. And sometimes that is confusing for folks, but hopefully that clarifies things.

Max Paches:

It does. Thank you. Certainly. Lisa, we hear a lot from our members about stress and burnout. How do we know when we might be experiencing a burnout and what are some of the causes?

Lisa Houtkooper:

Yeah. So, this is a question that comes up a lot and the significance of burnout. I mean, I think during the pandemic and post pandemic, this is what we hear a lot about, right? People are really, really struggling in the workplace. I want to talk a little bit about burnout and how it's different than stress or the day-to-day stressors in the workplace. Burnout is really this extended period of workplace stress that's not successfully managed. And at the end of the day, it feels like it's just not getting better. So, burnout really occurs when a worker is really chronically exposed to excessive stress at work.

So, I want to just talk about, we talk about three dimensions of burnout. So, people will ask, how do I know I'm experiencing burnout? So, we look at burnout as having three dimensions. One of those dimensions is physical and emotional exhaustion. And what that means is that it's pervasive fatigue. So, it's not the same as ... or I shouldn't say it's not the same, but it's this type of fatigue, you don't recover after a day off after a weekend after a vacation. So, it's really significant and you're just constantly tired and you can't seem to get your energy back. There can be also physical symptoms like headaches and GI, stomachaches. That's very common as well. I think to sum it up, it would be the sense that I've got nothing left in the tank. I've got nothing left to give. So that's one dimension.

The second dimension is the sense of feeling not as engaged, disconnected from your job. Workers begin to distance themselves emotionally. They may be more frustrated and negative at work. They may be not wanting to participate as much in meetings. There's lack of motivation and there's this sense of I just don't care anymore. And that can be particularly hard, I think, for folks in the caring industries where part of the work we do, and I'm speaking for myself as a nurse, is to care for others. And when we find ourselves feeling that lack of empathy and lack of compassion because we're so stressed, that can be difficult as well.

And then third, decreased job satisfaction. There's this sense of the job you used to love; you hate. You feel less capable at work and at the end of the day you don't feel like you add value anymore.

Burnout, again, is not a mental illness, it's defined as an occupational phenomenon, but it can negatively impact your mental health. And then in terms of other things that might help, if you're wondering if you're in burnout and you're struggling, is obviously talk to a family, a friend, a therapist, a healthcare provider. And then there's also tools online, the Maslach Burnout Inventory is sort of that gold standard tool that folks can go to, respond to questions and may get them some idea of if they are in burnout. And any resources that I talk about this evening as well, I will have available. And so, I think what's going to happen is if folks are interested, they can get ahold of Max, and we'll send out resources.

Then lastly, what are some of the causes of burnout at work? I mean, this is a short time that we have, but one of the main causes, and I'm taking this from a book called the Burnout Epidemic, the Rise of Chronic Stress and How We Can Fix It. This is by Jennifer Moss. Workload, number one, cause of burnout. No surprise. Perceived lack of control and high demand jobs, so those jobs where you feel you have very little control over the way you work, how you work, your schedule, and lack of recognition and reward in the workplace. So, when you come to work, and you don't feel like the work you do matters. This is where later on we'll talk about what managers can do to mitigate burnout in the workplace. And then poor relationships and lack of fairness.

And so that sums up, I think this question, Max. And I think we'll have one more question before we go to a bit of a break.

Max Paches:

Absolutely. It's just such an interesting topic and it's so interesting to see a different perspective of a professional actually answering questions like that. But another question that I have is actually what can individuals do if they're feeling burnt out? And what can managers and organizations do to mitigate the burnout in the workplace?

Lisa Houtkooper:

Yeah. And so, I think I will speak to this as per your question, I'll speak to this in sort of the three areas. So individually, if you're feeling burned out and struggling, and then what can managers, leaders, organizations do to mitigate burnout in the workplace.

So individually, let's start there. And again, I think I come from also personal experience in my 30-year career of working as a nurse, there have been different times in my career where I have struggled with burnout in different times. And so, I think, and again, just speaking for myself and speaking to those in healthcare, the first step is admitting that you're struggling, and that can be very, very difficult. There's a great book that Dr. Jillian Horton wrote. She's a physician here in Winnipeg called *We Are All Perfectly Fine*. And this is the lie that many of us tell ourselves, we're just fine, when we know we're actually not.

So, the other big point I want to mention is don't ignore early symptoms. So, the symptoms of burnout can be quite subtle. And what can happen is that we go along, and we go along, and we go along, and we go along and then we can't anymore. And then we hit that crisis point and we may need to take time off work for an extended period of time, when had we maybe paid a bit more attention earlier on, we may have been able to do something earlier on. And pay more attention to all of a sudden, I'm not sleeping well at night and I'm not coping as well as I used to and I'm more irritable and taking a look at that. So that's a big thing. So really admitting to yourself that there's a problem.

There's a lot of shame and guilt with burnout, lots of individuals suffering in silence. So, talking to a trusted friend, family member, work colleague, therapist. And then in terms of self-care, again, I think sometimes this word self-care is overused. I'm going to speak to the common things in terms of taking care of yourself, a creative outlet, spending time in nature, moving your body, connecting, connection, nutrition, and rest. And another big one is understanding your unconscious beliefs about self-care. And maybe they're conscious as well. For example, a common one is self-care is selfish. And having that belief may actually prevent you from doing things that might help you.

And I'm just looking at the time and so I think I'll just talk for another two minutes if that's okay. And then setting healthy boundaries, learning how to say no. So, a little bit later in the presentation, I'll give a few quick tips. One is just saying no with excellence, it's helped me in my life. It's not for every situation, but it can be helpful for setting clear boundaries for ourselves. And the message is that you can obviously or absolutely recover from burnout, but workers need to be supported in their wellbeing. So, this is another point that I want to make that self-care is not necessarily the cure like Jennifer Moss would say in another article that she wrote. So that's where we talk about managers and the organization. So, from a manager's perspective, really being able to recognize early indicators of workplace stress in their employees, noticing what's going on with their employees. Are they calling in sick more than usual? Are they quieter than usual in meetings? Really the importance of cultivating safe, brave, accountable spaces and model this to their employees. So, what does that look like? Being accessible, actively listening to employee's concerns, responding effectively and timely to workplace conflicts, and leading by example for respectful workplace behaviors.

Another interesting, I was watching a little while ago, a video by Simon Sinek on YouTube and he's a leadership expert and an author. And he talked about getting a coffee every day at his local barista. He would go down, get his coffee, and the barista was so happy all the time and he was like, "Wow, you

seem really happy. You like working here?" And the barista's like, "I love my job." And he said, "It's interesting, I have a similar job. I do the same thing at a different place, but I don't love it there, but I love it here." And so, Simon talked about asking him, "Well, what is the difference?" And the barista thought about it for a bit. And he said, "You know what? The difference is, is that every day my manager comes down and checks in on me." That was the only thing that made a difference for him. So really important, it doesn't have to be a lot.

And then from an organizational perspective, we talk about policies, violence, harassment, respectful workplace. But policies are not enough. Main reason workplace policies don't work, this is per Valerie Cade, who's an expert on bullying in the workplace and wrote the bestselling book, *Bully Free at Work*. And this is a direct quote, "People with authoritative power do not use their power effectively to uphold the policy." So, management and union reps must hold each other to the highest standards of workplace behavior. So, policies need to be living documents. They can't just sit on a shelf. Workers need to know what's in them, the different things, investigating reporting. And for example, if you're in a workplace to do mock drills of different source depending on what your policy is, so it needs to be a living document. So, I think that's a good time to take a break.

Max Paches:

Thank you, Lisa.

Marie Buchan:

That was great. Thanks. I'm really looking forward to the second part of that discussion. We're just going to take a quick break before we move to the second part of that discussion with Max and Lisa. And I see that the motion to approve the previous minutes have passed. We are going to take a couple questions on the line. So, I'm going to start with an unknown inbound caller.

Hi, are you there? Go ahead.

Russell:

Hello?

Marie Buchan:

Hello.

Russell:

Hi, hello. Can you hear me?

Marie Buchan:

Yep, we can hear you. It's a little bit muffled and a little bit breaking up, but we're going to try and hear the best we can. And if it does get disconnected, I'd ask you just to call back in.

Russell:

Okay.

Marie Buchan:

Okay, go ahead with your question.

Russell:

Okay. Can you hear me now?

Marie Buchan:

Yep, that's much better. Thank you.

Russell:

Okay, this is Russell calling from Brandon. Hi Marie, how are you doing?

Marie Buchan:

I'm good, how are you?

Russell:

Good. I just wanted to make a quick point to all the Safeway workers out there that have just recently we have acquired a new benefits plan, as you well know. And I just wanted to make them all aware to make sure that they check their Blue Cross cards are accurate and have all of their dependents listed. I've noticed that there's been a few people in our store that only have themselves and their spouse or partner on their cards but don't have their children, for example. So, I just want to make sure that everybody checks their cards and make sure all that information is correct. And if it isn't, then they need to go to the email address that's on the UFCW website and send them the email to the address that's provided there so they can get that information corrected.

Marie Buchan:

That's perfect. Thank you, Russell. I couldn't have said it better myself, so I'm not going to say anything more on that because I think you covered everything for us. But yeah, that's great advice to make sure that all of that information is up to date and relevant and to make sure you're checking that. So that's great. And again, you can check our website if you have any questions about that.

We're going to move on to Melody. Hi Melody.

Melody:

Hi. Can you hear me, okay?

Marie Buchan:

Yeah, we can hear you great.

Melody:

Okay. I live in Brandon and where I'm at, at Life's Journey, they have a \$100 allowance for a gym membership here in Brandon, which means they'll reimburse you the \$100 a year, but in Winnipeg they have agreements where you don't have to pay. And I'd like to see us have a bigger chunk of reimbursement for a gym membership because I think that would help not just my mental health, but a lot of mental health people, people with any sort of mental health. Sitting in the gym working out or swimming or whatever is a little easier than going for a walk in the woods, so to speak, because there's not really many woods here unless you're around private property.

Marie Buchan:

Okay. You know what, Melody, that's a great suggestion. And what we're going to do is take down your information and we're going to have your union rep give you a call just so they can flush out a little bit more details. So, in the next day or two, you can be expecting a phone call from your union rep and then we can get some more information from you on that.

Melody:

Great. Thank you.

Marie Buchan:

Okay, no problem. Thank you. Have a great night.

Okay, we're going to take a call now from Robert. Hi Robert.

Robert:

Hi there. How are you doing this evening?

Marie Buchan:

How can I help you? Good, thanks. How are you?

Robert:

Well, good. I was going to ask you people; security guards are very stressful job and one thing that the previous government did that didn't help matters at all is they got rid of the security guard minimum wage. I think we should maybe approach our new government to reestablish a security guard minimum wage because it's something I truly believe the security guards deserve.

Marie Buchan:

Yeah. And you know what, Robert, at UFCW, we couldn't agree with you more. I think as you alluded to that, UFCW was someone who championed that when we had a previous NDP government. And it's something that both our negotiator, Blake Caruthers and Sandy Foray, the union rep for security have already talked to us about and it's something that we're definitely going to be pursuing with this new government. So, appreciate you calling in and we will definitely make sure we keep all of our security members posted on what's happening at that front.

Robert:

Thank you.

Marie Buchan:

Thank you. And we're going to take one more call and we have Malcolm. Hi Malcolm.

Malcolm:

Hello Marie. How are you doing?

Marie Buchan:

I'm good, thank you. How are you?

Malcolm:

I'm fine, thank you. Yes, I would like to say to the nurse so far, all the information you have been giving us is very informative. And I would like to know, do you have any pamphlets available for mental illness, mental awareness, and burnout? Because what I would like to do is to speak to my store manager and maybe have a section where we can put pamphlets up there so it's accessible for the staff. Most people may not go online and if it's right there, they can just pick it up and look at it earlier. Is there something we can do with that? Is there a way we can have pamphlets so I can try and get that implemented in my store?

Marie Buchan:

So, what we can do, Malcolm, I think that's a great suggestion. So, one of the things that we had committed to is that we're going to have Lisa supply Max with some links to some websites and then we'll see what she can do about pamphlets or posters that can be posted onto our website. And then we can get that information. Either people can download that or print it right off our website, or if they want something printed, they can always contact the full-time union rep and we can make sure that we get that done for sure.

Malcolm:

Okay. Thank you very much, Marie.

Marie Buchan:

No problem. Have a great evening.

Malcolm:

You as well.

Marie Buchan:

Thank you.

Malcolm:

You're welcome.

Marie Buchan:

So those were all great questions. Thank you very much. And before getting back to our interview, I will need a motion to approve the Secretary Treasurer's report.

Ron Allard:

So, moved.

Max Paches:

Seconded.

Marie Buchan:

It has been moved and seconded. So please vote yes, pardon me, by pressing the number one on your keypad or no by pressing the number two on your keypad. And again, a reminder, if you have any questions about the Secretary Treasurer's report or anything else at all that's relevant to UFCW'S membership as a whole or to our guest tonight, please press star three and we'll gladly take your questions. So, I am going to turn it back now to Max and Lisa for the second segment, pardon me, of the discussion on mental health.

Max Paches:

Hello again. Lisa, for the second segment, I've collected some questions from our executive board members that represent various industries that UFCW 832 supports. I'll start with the first one. Do you have any tips for dealing with a bully in the workplace other than reporting them to a supervisor or a manager?

Lisa Houtkooper:

Yes, absolutely have some tips. And before I go into just some basic tips, I think that everybody will find useful, I do want to just define bullying a little bit, what it is and what it's not. So that might be a good place to start. So different places have definitions. So obviously the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation has a definition. I'm using the definition as per the Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety. Workplace bullying is seen as acts, verbal comments that could mentally hurt us or isolate a person in the workplace. It usually involves repeated incidences or patterns of behavior that are intended to intimidate, offend, humiliate a particular person or group of people.

It usually is repeated incidences, but it also just may be one incident, especially if that one incident has a lasting effect. So, examples of bullying could include things like spreading rumors, isolating someone socially, making jokes that are obviously offensive. And by law, and probably many listers already know this, but by law I think it's part 10 of the regulation, employers must develop and follow a written policy and action plan to prevent harassment in the workplace and make sure that all workers know and follow the policy. And that's what we talked about earlier where really that importance of policies and making sure that the documents are living documents. What bullying is not. So bullying is not expressing differences of opinion, offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about work-related behaviors.

So, in having said that, what are some general tips that may be helpful depending on the situation that you're in? So, I'm going to give a few different tips, but the individual needs to discern depending on the situation that they're in what might be useful for them other than reporting, making a report. So, there's different approaches. One is just really the direct approach, and that's really directly confronting the individual if you feel safe to do this. So, it really depends on whether you feel safe in this situation. If you do, it's explaining to the person who is bullying why the behavior's unacceptable, describe how it affects you. Focus on the behavior, not the person. And this is difficult trying to stay as non-reactive as possible and not take things personally, which can be really difficult, and do not retaliate. So that direct approach.

Delay is another approach. What do I mean by that? Delay is another option to address the issue a few hours or a few days later. And what that does is it gives you a chance to take a breather, size up the situation. And from a calm and grounded perspective, you can determine the best way to deal with the situation. And this is really where taking some time can help you respond rather than react. So that can be an approach.

Sometimes a tactic can be distraction. So sometimes in the moment when you're being targeted, distraction to get somebody off your back can be changing the subject. It could be accidentally spilling a

drink, for example. So doing something to change the focus on yourself. Document. So, so far, I think we've talked about a few Ds. So direct, delay, distract, document. So documenting is really important. Documenting, collecting evidence to support and protect yourself. That includes things like dates, times, harm, descriptions, it could include voice recordings, email messages, voicemails, things like that.

Lastly, but most importantly, you need to take care of yourself. Bullying is incredibly destructive and especially if it's in a situation that's been going on for an extended period of time. The destructive nature of bullying is that often the individuals being bullied feel like there is something wrong with them and they are the problem, not the person who is bullying them. So, reach out for support, maybe a friend, a family, a healthcare provider, a therapist, but you need to talk to somebody about what's going on and you cannot suffer in silence and shame. So, if you believe you're being harassed at work, you can talk to your manager. Sometimes if it's a code-based harassment, Manitoba Human Rights Commission can give some guidance. Workplace safety and health branch also can give some guidance.

And then lastly, before we go on to another question, I want to add that bullying affects everybody in the workplace, not just the individual who's being bullied. So, what can folks do if they're a witness to bullying? So, this is important, and these are sometimes called bystander interventions. One, if you see bullying in progress, you can gather coworkers, you can stand in plain view of the bully. The person who is bullying then will be aware that you are witnessing behavior and the target will feel supported. Also, keep records of what you are witnessing and offer the person who's being bullied support and you can encourage them to take action. Sometimes it could be you can act as a coach. They may want to run by a conversation with you that they want to have with the bully. So, all those things can be helpful and that's how workers can support also one another in the workplace.

Max Paches:

Interesting. That delay method, that almost seems like that the city is using with their traffic tickets where they write your ticket, but then you can respond only a month later when you're cooled down and you will not be making a scene in the courts.

Lisa Houtkooper:

That's very true.

Max Paches:

Lisa, I have another real-life question that's again from one of our executive board members. They're asking in our workplace, some of the staff are stressed when they're dealing with customers and the way they're spoken to. What are some tips that can help workers in dealing with angry and escalating clients or customers?

Lisa Houtkooper:

And so that is a great question, and I think I just want to speak to the individual who called in, I think someone who worked in security. Violence in the workplace is tremendously pervasive, right? We all know that. And since the pandemic violence has escalated tremendously and we all know that, and the statistics bear that out. And so, I want to talk a little bit about de-escalation skills that can help workers respond safely to conflict. So, what can you do when dealing with clients or customers who are upset, who are frustrated and may be escalating or may be climbing up we say Anger Mountain. And so, de-escalation tips, before I go into talking about that, there's two points I want to make that I think can be helpful. One is understanding this idea of the heightened anger baseline. And two, just speaking briefly to Anger Mountain or the anger cycle, because what we teach in our workshops is that when you

understand anger in yourself, it helps you better to help to deescalate another individual who's escalating.

So, the heightened anger baseline, I think that's a lot of what we're seeing out in the world today, meaning that people are walking around already on the mountain. So, when we say Anger Mountain, you have a trigger. It's sort of like a triangle. You have a trigger, you're climbing up the mountain, you're escalating, you're reaching your breaking point at the very top, and then you're coming down and there might be a period of recovery, guilt, and shame about what may have been said or done. And so, people walking around in a heightened anger baseline because of the world that we live in, quite honestly, and the state of the world and living through the pandemic, people have a decreased level of tolerance. And we see that everywhere. So, what may not have been a problem to somebody or even yourself earlier, it's now very easy to get triggered, although I don't love that word.

So those are two important things to understand is this heightened anger baseline and Anger Mountain. So, what are practical tips? We do a whole day on this workshop. So just to talk about it in a few minutes really doesn't do this justice. But I think to start, listening. People who are escalating and angry want to be seen, heard and understood. Actively listening to a client's concerns without becoming defensive or argumentative. So that means being present to what people are saying and not in your mind thinking necessarily of a response. Pay attention to the words that you hear, but also to a client's facial expressions, their tone. Important to remember, clients who are emotionally heightened have difficulty explaining themselves. So, it's really important to try to hear what they're saying. And we're going to talk about the narrow range of attention that folks have when they're escalating and why that matters in just a bit.

So again, we feel it when someone isn't present with us. Presence is felt, and we absolutely know that when we're with another person. So, speaking. Clients who are escalating can't follow long or complicated explanations. They have a narrow range of attention. So, keep your explanations simple and concise. Setting clear limits. So, this is important. Clients need to be informed of acceptable and non-acceptable behavior and consequences in a non-confrontational and non-authoritarian manner. Watching for and understanding warning signs, pacing, raised voices, rapid breathing. When you intervene early, you can prevent potentially someone reaching their breaking point. Think of somebody in a waiting room who's pacing. You may want to approach that person. You may sense that something's off. Your approaching that person then may prevent them from escalating and then coming to the front desk screaming at you. Things to avoid, confrontational language, saying no, overreacting. And again, trying not to use the word no if you can. And then lastly, be safe because your safety is the highest priority. And disengage if there's extreme escalation.

Max Paches:

Thank you. And that's probably going to be the last question that I'm going to ask you. But still, there's a question from a board member also. We have several ethnicities represented in my workplace. Does the Occupational Health Center offer any resources that shop stewards of health and safety members could access to ensure everyone in the workplace is able to look after any mental health concerns?

Lisa Houtkooper:

Yeah, absolutely. So great question because we live in this multicultural world. So, several resources, and again, we'll provide those, but several resources that I could say right now. So, our organization, Occupational Health Center, OHC, MB.CA, we have a number of fact sheets, respectful workplace, stress at work, workplace health and safety rights, et cetera. They're in many different languages on our website. Another great resource, the Multicultural Mental Health Resource Center, their website's

excellent, has a number of resources in multiple languages to support culturally safe and competent mental health care. And then lastly, another great resource, the Center for Addiction and Mental Health. They have fact sheets in multiple languages, things like asking for help when things aren't right, what is mental health, what is part of the normal reaction to living in a new country, what are some tips for dealing with stress.

Max Paches:

Thank you so much. And as like Lisa said before, Lisa will give me the resources, informational resources that she was using during the interview, and I would be able to pass them on to the reps. And if any of the members or anybody who is on the call interested in them, I would be able to forward the links.

Lisa Houtkooper:

Okay. And Max, just before I leave, I just want to plug two upcoming free presentations, a webinar, Mindfulness Skills for Thriving in a Changing Workplace, free on November 21st. I'm doing that. And then Creating a Culture of Consent in the Workplace on sexual harassment prevention, November 23rd at 12:30. You can register on our website.

Max Paches:

Thanks so much, Lisa, it was a pleasure interviewing you.

Lisa Houtkooper:

A pleasure. Yeah, this is excellent. Thank you.

Marie Buchan:

So, a big thank you to both Max and Lisa. Again, we'll make sure we get all that information up on our website. And I see that the vote to approve the Secretary Treasurer's report has passed. So, it's time to make a motion to approve the President's report, which is the final document we have to approve at tonight's meeting.

Ron Allard:

So, moved.

Max Paches:

Seconded.

Marie Buchan:

It has been moved and seconded. So please press the number one on your keypad, pardon me, to vote yes and the number two on your keypad to vote no. If you have a question about the President's report or anything else at all, please press star three and we'll gladly take your questions. So, speaking of that, we're going to open up the phone lines to take just a few more questions. So, I see we have Savannah on the line. So, Savannah welcome.

Savannah:

I was just wondering; you were talking about the voice recording stuff. I was just wondering if we are allowed to do that in our workplace?

Marie Buchan:

Sorry, can you maybe just ... Sorry, Savannah, because I think we didn't hear the first part of your question. Do you mind just starting again so that we can hear your whole question?

Savannah:

Oh, I'm sorry.

Marie Buchan:

That's okay.

Savannah:

I noticed that you were talking about voice recording in the workplace as a proof. I was wondering if we are allowed to have a voice recorder on us to have voice recording as proof, because my employer said that we're not allowed to have voice recording.

Marie Buchan:

So, I don't want to get too much into the specifics, and I want to make sure I fully understand. I think we maybe need to have a little bit more background. I know there are some laws in regard to privacy and whether or not you can record things. So, I don't want to try and pass off your question, Savannah, but I want to make sure we give you the right answer. So, what I'm going to do is we have your name and your phone number. We're going to get your union rep to follow up and maybe get a little bit more context to what you're looking at. And then we can provide you with an answer that's a hundred percent accurate so that you know exactly what your rights are. So, we'll make sure we get that done for you.

Savannah:

Okay, thank you.

Marie Buchan:

Okay, no problem at all. We're going to move to our next caller, which I see we have Ernie on the line. Hi Ernie, how are you?

Ernie:

Good. Can everybody hear me?

Marie Buchan:

We can hear you.

Ernie:

Okay. I don't know if this was partly covered, but I find I get really quite stressed out when I can't understand what the people are saying just because of the language difference. And I find it takes a lot out of me to keep asking, "What did you say?" And I'm wondering, are there any kinds of things I can do to maybe either get better at that or get better at working with people that they might have a really strong accent? I don't know. Maybe it's just me. I can't understand what they're saying, and I just don't

want to offend them and say, "What? What?" But I find it takes a lot out of me if I have to continually be talking to them and stuff. And I love all the people and I love all the people I work with, but I find that's hard. I'd rather just go work in a corner and just avoid it. But I find myself avoiding people in doing my job rather than deal with that. Did that come across clear?

Marie Buchan:

Yeah, no, that was a great question. And I'm going to maybe start off a little bit and then I will pass it over to Lisa. Again, we're just going to give some general thoughts and then we can definitely have your rep follow up and see if maybe there's some additional resources. But I think the fact that you recognize that that frustrates you, I think, is a great start. And also, just one thing I'm going to say is that recognizing that maybe that person who you're talking to is equally as frustrated and that they're not being able to communicate well with you as well. So, I think both of those things are important, but I'll turn it over to Lisa and she can maybe add a little bit and then we'll definitely get your rep to follow up with you.

Ernie:

Thanks.

Lisa Houtkooper:

Yeah, thank you so much for calling in. And I just want to say that I hear in your voice that this is really frustrating for you, so I just want to acknowledge that. And I don't have an easy answer. I think Marie gave some good tips. I would say I think it's just important to keep talking to one another, and that's not necessarily going to solve everything. But one of my girlfriends for some of us, some folks out there who are hearing impaired, it's also a similar situation, especially during the pandemic with masks. We have a lot of people going, "We can't hear, we can't understand, we can't see their face." So, this is a challenge and no easy answers, but I think like Marie said, she gave some great tips. And what I would say is just keep talking and when you come across, as I can hear in your voice, you're compassionate, you want to understand, when you come across that way, people feel that. And so, I don't know if that's at all helpful, but that's what I would say.

Ernie:

Okay, that helps. Thanks.

Lisa Houtkooper:

Okay, you're welcome.

Marie Buchan:

So, we do see that the President's report has been approved, so I want to thank everyone for that. And we don't have any more questions in the queue, so if you did have a question and you didn't have a chance to ask it or it wasn't something that you wanted to ask on air with us tonight, please feel free to contact your full-time union representative. You can find all of the contact information on the website at [UFCW832.com](http://UFCW832.com). I want to send, once again, a special thank you out to Lisa for a fantastic conversation and Max for putting all of that together. I think this is a conversation that I'm really looking forward to having more of the resources on our website and for our members to be able to access those. For the webinars and the courses that Lisa was talking about, you can go to the Occupational Health Center website and that's where you can find all of that information for the free webinars. And I want to thank

all of you for joining us on our November telephone town hall, GMM. We will be conducting our next GMM on Tuesday, February 6th, 2024, by telephone town hall beginning at 7:00 PM. Have a great fall, and I can actually say fall because it's plus digits outside tonight. So, everyone stays safe and well and thank you for everything that we do. We are now adjourned.