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# BETTER THAN EVER: Robins Kaplan chairman on why he seeks adventure

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When your idea of a vacation is tackling Mount Everest Base Camp or summiting Mount Kilimanjaro, you need to be in good physical condition.

From a young age, Ron Schutz has always enjoyed an active lifestyle, and between growing up on a dairy farm to four years in the Army JAG Corps, that was also a job requirement. Now chairman of Minneapolis law firm Robins Kaplan, he has to be a little more creative and intentional about how, where and when he fits in an exercise routine. But he credits that dedication to maintaining a healthy lifestyle to helping him through recovery after a Leukemia diagnosis and treatment in 2016.

Schutz recently shared with the Business Journal how and why he trains for the challenging adventures he loves.

**On well-being**

**How long has wellness been a priority in your life, and why did you make it a priority?** I grew up on a dairy farm doing hard physical work from an early age. I played varsity sports in high school and intramural sports in college and law school. After law school, I spent four years in the Army JAG Corps stationed with the 7th Infantry Division where being in great physical condition was an essential part of the job. And that has never changed for me. Being in top physical condition gives a person a competitive edge in business and life.

**How do you typically start your day?** When I roll out of bed, I wiggle my hands and toes and thank the Lord that I live to fight another day. I then pick up my iPhone and scroll through my emails to see if anything needs immediate attention. Next, I make a protein shake and spend about 10 minutes reading The Wall Street Journal. I then proceed with my morning workout, which varies depending on the day of the week, but always starts with 10 minutes of yoga stretching.

**How do you typically end your day?** If I am not traveling, which was frequent for me pre-pandemic, most days after I get home from work I will do a shorter second workout – hitting the heavy



**Robins Kaplan chairman Ron Schutz walks 28 flights of stairs four times a day at his office.**

bag in the winter or swimming in the summer. My wife and I will then sit down for dinner and catch up on the events of the day. After that, I usually check emails again and do some pleasure reading. Once or twice a week my wife and I will watch an episode of a TV series before we head to bed.

**What is your typical fitness routine?** My routine varies depending on whether I am training for some event and what that event is. But my base workout four days a week is running 4 miles, the last 2 miles of which are high-intensity intervals. The other three days of the week I do strength training. In addition, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, I take my iPad and climb the stairs in my office tower, usually totaling 100 flights, but if I am in training mode, 200 flights. If I am training for a triathlon, I will increase the length of my runs and add a bike component. I am also a fan of Wim Hof's cold training and follow his minimalist dress code on my winter runs.

**How has your regular fitness routine been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic?** I've been able to exercise more. Pre-pandemic I would take 35 to 40 trips a year, and business travel always makes

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## AT A GLANCE

### Chairman, Robins Kaplan

Age: 65

**Family:** Married to my high school sweetheart, Janet Schutz; three adult children, Matt, CEO of Pracedo Ltd. in London; Erik, CEO of PROCare HR in Minneapolis; Kristin, customer success manager at Pracedo

it difficult to get in long workouts and makes it almost impossible to get in a second workout at the end of the day. I am fortunate in having a well-equipped home gym (free weights, power rack, treadmill, elliptical trainer, rowing machine, spinning bike and a heavy bag), so the closure of the health clubs had no impact on my fitness routine.

**What are you doing differently to stay physically and emotionally fit?** I haven't really changed my routine that much during the pandemic. I've tried to live as normal a life as possible under the circumstances. I have a very analytical approach to risk, and while I haven't dismissed the danger of the virus, I've refused to just take refuge at home. I have been in the office most days, my wife and I have taken several trips, and we had a dinner reservation the first day that restaurants reopened.

**You were diagnosed with and treated for a rare form of Leukemia in June 2016. What has your wellness journey been like since?** First, being in great shape helped me get through that very tough time in my life. When I left the hospital after seven days of chemotherapy, I was severely anemic and couldn't walk 100 yards without getting tired. But I walked every day and then started jogging and then running. Ten months after leaving the hospital, I ran a marathon.

**You ran the Boston Marathon in April 2017 as**



**Ron Schutz, chairman of Robins Kaplan, summits Mount Kilimanjaro in March 2020.**

**part of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society charity fundraising team; you ran the London Marathon in April 2018; you trekked to Everest Base Camp in Nepal in April 2019; in March 2020, you summited Mount Kilimanjaro; and this year, you plan to race the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon. What motivates you to take on these extreme physical challenges?** It makes me feel alive. These adventures are challenging, involve some modest risk to life and limb, and make for great stories. And at the end of the day, life is the collection of stories.

**What other adventures are on your to-do list?** I'm scheduled to climb Mont Blanc, the highest mountain in western Europe, at the end of August.