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HAPS HAPPENINGS

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2700 SOUTHWEST FRWY. #284
TELEPHONE: 713-626-7114

HOUSTON, TEXAS 77098
FAX: 713-521-3964



My Valentine Wish for You **COPE WITH HOPE**



Nina Brown

This article may seem familiar, but it's so important, it bears repeating. When I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 1985, I realized that living with a "progressive" disease was going to require continuing adjustments and accommodations through the years and that the word "cope" would hold new importance in my vocabulary. I also recognized that the decision as to *how* I would cope was mine, as it is yours. I chose to focus on the positive. Life is certainly more difficult for me today, but whatever the circumstances, I still feel a smile and a positive attitude make it easier to face the future. I'm not suggesting a "don't worry, be happy" attitude; but life should be looked at as an adventure to be lived rather than a problem to be solved. Perhaps some of the following suggestions will be helpful.

Concentrate on the positive. You may not have the ability to change what is happening to you, but you *can* change how you relate to it. People generally find what they expect to find. Listen to that little voice in your head as you tell yourself how you are doing. Listen to the louder one as you tell others. If you expect to feel bad, your body won't disappoint you. You will feel bad. If you expect to feel good, there's a greater possibility you *will* feel good. It's also easier for family and friends to offer support to someone with an optimistic attitude.

Parkinson's has been described as a "yo-yo" disorder...one hour up, the next down, one day good, the next bad. It helps to remember that one bad day is only one bad day. It does not constitute a trend. Assume tomorrow will be better. According to studies on the "placebo response" your mind can help heal your body when bolstered by hope and expectation. Better symptom control lies not only with pills or surgery, but with ourselves as well.

Acceptance. Acceptance does not mean you need consider yourself "sick." Parkinson's is just something I have...like brown eyes; so I refuse being referred to as a "patient" unless I'm in a doctor's office. Unlike having a headache though, Parkinson's can be difficult to hide. It's easier not to try. Be open with others. I have found that people are interested in learning about the disease and are appreciative that you shared the information. Rather than think of Parkinson's as a problem, consider it more a situation, a challenge, an opportunity to make changes in your life. You will be less anxious, less frustrated and less stressed, which will result in fewer symptoms.

Become informed. Knowledge is the first positive step toward being in control. Be responsible for your own health care. You know your body best. It's vitally important to read everything you can find! Check out books from HAPS library, request to be put on mailing lists for newsletters and medical updates, use the Internet and attend lectures. You'll better understand why symptoms occur which will

Cope With Hope continued

allow you to know what questions to ask and how to properly describe the problem when you see your physician. Find a doctor who has knowledge and experience in treating people with Parkinson's...one who is interested, patient, understanding, cooperative and willing to take the time to work with you. Your pharmacist is another good resource for information. Join a support group for valuable, shared, personal advice and support.

Set achievable goals. You may need to set new and more achievable goals because of the limitations Parkinson's has placed on you. It's important to learn to pace yourself. When adapting to a less active schedule, there is a tendency to overdo when you feel good. After a busy period, schedule activities that don't require a lot of energy. Have an alternative in case your symptoms require you to cancel a planned event. Planning ahead gives you the flexibility to accomplish things when you feel good. For instance, you can shop in advance for birthday and anniversary presents. Address cards ahead of time.

Keep a sense of humor. Laugh at yourself. A laugh a day is more important than an apple in keeping the doctor away. When a chuckle would feel good, go to the closest drug store or card shop and tickle your funny bone by reading greeting cards. A laugh is much better for your immune system than getting angry or frustrated.

Simplify your life. Learn to say "no" without feeling guilty. Find easier ways to do things. Determine your priorities. Eliminate the unnecessary.

- ♥ Call stores to make sure they have the item you need.
- ♥ Shop during off-hours to avoid crowds and lines.
- ♥ Get a disabled parking permit.
- ♥ Use stores that deliver or have drive-up facilities.
- ♥ Use a cordless telephone; keep a telephone by your bed; consider using a headset so you don't have to hold the receiver; use an automatic dialer and/or a speaker phone.
- ♥ Always carry extra medication with you. Get a sports bottle to have water for taking pills.
- ♥ Keep a written schedule of your medication. Buy a pill container that has a weeks worth of dividers. This saves time and identifies if you've taken a particular dose.
- ♥ Get a timer to remind you when medication is due.
- ♥ Use stick-on labels or a pre-inked rubber stamp when you need to write your name or fill out forms.

Keep active. Exercise, both mental and physical, is essential in maintaining your lifestyle. It prevents your muscles from deteriorating, strengthens them, reduces tension and rigidity, improves your ability to rest and sleep and enhances other bodily functions. Walking is one of the best exercises. Choose activities that let you play. Take dancing lessons or enjoy some of the less strenuous sports such as golf, tai chi, bowling, horseshoes or swimming. The more active you are, the longer it will be before you need physical, occupational or speech therapy. Exercise *can* be fun and HAPS offers many of these options.

It's also important to keep active socially. Don't allow yourself to become isolated. Participate in our support groups to meet new people, develop new friendships and help avoid depression. Instead of focusing on yourself, help someone in need. It will get your mind off of yourself and you'll remember how much you have to be thankful for.

Have faith and never give up hope. Living with PD was once described as a little like venturing into the Himalayas while most others travel less rugged slopes. We can grumble about how steep and hazardous the climb...preoccupied with the expense of our climbing gear, the physical exhaustion and the fear as the slopes turn into shear walls of granite. Or, we can live in the moment and focus on appreciating the spectacular beauty found only in such imposing terrain. No one can take this choice from us.

While my heart goes out to all who live with this disease, have faith that with the research being done, the hope of finding a cure appears closer than ever. But I also know "hope" needs "help" and actively working as an advocate for Parkinson's and stem cell research to help find that cure gives me strength, courage and energy. I invite you to join me and *cope with hope*.



HAPS offers our HEARTFUL THANKS to all who participated in and donated to those who “ran for a reason!”

Top Teams

Debby Hurlbert and Friends Walk for HAPS
Carol Fry "Team Fry"
Mike Fry's Half Marathon Run for HAPS



ABC News captured Debby Hurlbert's sons leading their team to benefit HAPS

Top Fundraisers



"Hi" from
Kelly Gibson

Jill Haycraft
Pamela Papadopoulous
Julie Stevenson
Kerri Schultz
Cheryl Herring
Nicole Ceparano
Todd Dortch
Aubrey Calvin
Gabriel Zamora
Michelle Carr
Stephen Cravens

Kelly Gibson
Celina Garza
Celeste Guerrero
Shirley and Fred Krieg
Heather Galindo
Tracy Case
Leslie Foxhoven
Christie Bonczek
Winn Richardson
Courtney Altimore
Steve Lowe

Patricia Sessink
Lise Bekker
Marissa Huizi
Linda Priegel
John McCall
Russell Carson III
Kristin Killoran
Janna Y'Barbo
Joshua Sinuk

Top Contributors

F Kenneth Rogers
Quin McWhirter
Stephen Cravens
Ben Smethurst
Denny Cahill
Carolyn Bradley
Debbie Horgan
Lillian Richey
Allen Grant
Richard Talarico
Stavros Spandonidis
Kurt Sommer
Patricia Sommer
H C Papadopoulous
Mary Byrd
David Volpe
James Moran
Charles Herndon
Joanne Ross
Martha Gonzalez
Tina & Alexander
Papandreou
Silvia Zamora
William Papadopoulous
Kelley Kerlick
Jeff Swift
Richard N. Thompson
Kelly Martin

Nina and Joe Brown
Judy Kneppshield
Frank and Anne Reilly
Pat Irwin
Jonathan Garza
Lisa Maranto
Patrick Sanders
James Murray
Susan Bacsik
Heather Galindo
Martin Mathis
Mark Mathis
Barbara Hemphill
Terry Chapman
Charles Herndon
Doris Culberson
Michael Ceparano
Kerry Schultz
Phil Garner
Bette Gips
Maro Constantinou
Phil Garner
Lisa Carr
Daniel Lawson
Stacy Swedenburg
Christina Pafinos
Maria Xenakis
Reagan Neumann
Susan Breaux



Jill Haycraft got pledges to honor her 78 year old grandmother with Parkinson's

Janice Sutphin
Leslie Gibson
Julia Mannes
Darrell Moulton
Elizabeth McKee
Dennis Carney
Jennifer Green
Erik Galstad
Gina Annarella
James Mac Donald
Jim Hurlbert
Dennis & Pam Kasper
Thomas Hardin
Wayne Snead
Leo & Ayscha Caldera
Judy Connatser
Eric Dupre
Charles Gossett
Marsha Eckermann
Dorothy Vetrano
Sharon & Tom Pasquini
Marilyn & Frank Hrach

Low Cholesterol = Parkinson's?

A small study of 124 people found that the people with low levels of "bad" low-density lipoproteins (LDLs), which carry cholesterol from the liver to cells in the body, were three times more likely to get Parkinson's than those with high cholesterol. This has brought up the concern as to whether statins, that are designed to reduce levels of LDLs, could cause an increase in the numbers of people with Parkinson's.

The researchers are planning large-scale trials to determine whether the drugs are the cause. They also found that those in the trial who took statins were less likely to develop Parkinson's disease, though the study's leader suggested this could be because the group with Parkinson's had had low cholesterol all their lives and that the effect of low cholesterol could be cumulative.

Since "bad" LDL cholesterol can clog the arteries and lead to heart disease, researchers encouraged people to continue taking the statins.

A WARM WELCOME TO A NEW MEMBER OF HAPS STAFF

HAPS would like to welcome our new Director of Development, Anne Thobae, a native Houstonian, with a Master's Degree from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago with graduate studies in Art Education-Art Therapy.



Anne began her career as an Art Therapist in therapeutic settings in nonprofit agencies in the Chicago area. In the nonprofit sector in Houston, Anne worked as a fundraiser for St. John's School, the Houston Symphony, the Alley Theatre and, most recently, as Director of Development for The Park People.

She has also been involved in community service through extensive volunteerism at organizations such as Covenant House and the Houston Area Women's Center. We are thrilled to have her with us at HAPS!

Special Valentine "Thank You" to HAPS Board of Directors; Executive Director,

Anne Martin; Kathleen Crist, LMSW, Director of Social Services, Celeste Guerrero, LMSW and Alfonso Hernandez, Director of Therapeutic Services and Outreach, for the time and effort they expend in such a capable and conscientious manner!



CONTRIBUTIONS

Your donation is much appreciated. Your thoughtfulness helps HAPS continue to provide much needed services to people with Parkinson's and their families.

GIFTS

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IN HONOR OF

In Honor of Tom McCue at Christmas

Nancy McCue

In Honor of Pat Temple's Birthday

Joe and Cathy Jankovic
Harris Wexler
Sandy Ladky

In Honor of Nina Brown

Jerri Doctor

In Honor of Russell Neisig

Pete Neisig

In Honor of Carl Galloway on His Birthday

Dorothy Galloway

In Honor of Robert Nilsen II

Claus Pedersen

In Honor of Tod Mormon

Anna Welch

In Honor of Beau Bourgeois

George Bourgeois

In Honor of Barb Raney

Lin Drees

In Honor of Sally Rascoe

Mary Callaway

IN MEMORY OF

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Stacy Burns

In Memory of Dorothy Sampson

Marian Schultz

In Memory of Howard Kerr

Marilyn Kerr

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Dewella Urps

In Memory of Robert Sims

Laura Burns

John Koloen

Lucille McCombs

Martha Bohacek

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