



The Personal Side of Parkinson's Disease

Personal Reflections on Parkinson's Disease Submitted by
Members and Friends of the Capital Area Parkinson's Society.

Why I Love Parkinson's

Robert Doyal

I love Parkinson's because when I was diagnosed I finally understood what was wrong with me. I do not have polio, coronary disease, or cancer.

I love Parkinson's because I am convinced that a love of nature, combined with regular exercise, is part of the cure. I thrive on warm sunshine, cold spring waters, and the changing of the seasons.

I love Parkinson's because I know I will still be around to enjoy my grandchildren, even though I am increasingly disabled.

I love Parkinson's because the disease has taught me that I do not need alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, or illicit drugs to get high on life.

I love Parkinson's because it has increased my awareness of diet and nutrition to combat the toxins that feed bad habits.

I love Parkinson's because I frequently experience stomach pain, which I am convinced is neurological in origin. My doctors are not convinced, but they don't know everything.

I love Parkinson's because when I take my medications I often feel light-headed, confused and irritable, not because I have Alzheimer's, Huntington's, or a brain tumor.

I love Parkinson's because my weight loss is due to loss of appetite, caused by nausea, dry mouth, and difficulty in swallowing, not because I am a victim of famine, starvation, or poverty.

I love Parkinson's because those closest to me understand my problems with speech, balance, and rigidity. They also recognize that my loss of facial expressions on the one hand and increased emotions on the other are part of the symptoms.

I love Parkinson's because during my sleep my medications induce vivid dreams and delusions of night people visiting me in my semi-consciousness. I welcome these images over wakefulness.

I love Parkinson's because I read more and appreciate the arts more, and value companionship more.



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I love Parkinson's because I can still do my work, despite memory loss and fatigue, and because I have learned to be more understanding of others with disabilities.

I love Parkinson's because my condition is due to a chemical deficiency in my brain. I am not a victim of a flood, earthquake, pestilence or terrorism.

I love Parkinson's because of the life I still have and the opportunities I have. I look forward to a future filled with new and exciting adventures.

Mr. Doyal, a geologist, living in Austin, Texas, was diagnosed for Parkinson's in 1996. He and his wife have two daughters.