

9 Ways to Give Yourself a Break During Your Journey With Parkinson's (from <http://journeywithparkinsons.com>)

Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's is a neurodegenerative disorder. The average age of onset is >60 years old. Parkinson's is a progressively advancing disorder, and it is a chronic disease process. Parkinson's usually presents as a movement disorder, which is a slow progressive loss of motor coordination, gait disturbance, slowness of movement, rigidity, and tremor. Parkinson's can also include cognitive/psychological impairments and many other non-motor-related symptoms.

Have a Less Strenuous Exercise Day

You have committed to exercising 5 days (or more)/week using a combination of aerobic exercise and resistance training, mixed in with neuromotor therapy and stretching/flexibility exercises. You routinely exercise for 30-45 minutes per day. But you need to give yourself a break on occasion as well. It is okay to take a day and downgrade the planned exercise routine. However, only take the whole week off if you are sick or traveling or something big has come up.

Get Some Extra Sleep

There is no harm in giving yourself a break today, either by taking a nap or sleeping longer into the morning. There is a natural health benefit when you get extra sleep, primarily related to a brain health benefit and, in general, a boost of energy body-wide. Make the time to sleep more.

Ecclesiastes 7:20

"Surely there is not a righteous man on Earth who does good and never sins." No matter how dedicated you are to helping others, it's important to remember that perfection is unattainable. Be kind to yourself and take a moment to step back from self-criticism. Embrace your imperfections; they are part of being human.

A Walk With Your Partner

It is easy to be self-absorbed with your Parkinson's, partly due to its consumptive manner and required attention. Thus, taking it easy on yourself allows you to enjoy some special time with your Care Partner, including maybe going for a long walk.

Check Your Posture

One aspect of Parkinson's is linked to sedentary behavior. Therefore, if you find yourself sitting too long each day, work hard on maintaining your posture by stretching and getting up every 20 minutes or so. Give yourself this important break time.

Make A Gratitude List

Likely, there are many people you owe gratitude to, whether it relates to managing your Parkinson's or life in general. Thus, compose a list of names describing how they have helped you.

Contact an Old Friend

You may have lost contact with some of your old friends. You may have moved around over the years. Regardless of the reason, give yourself a break, contact someone you have dearly missed, reconnect, and smile some more.

Be More Aware of Your Surroundings

Parkinson's can give you 'tunnel vision' due to its all-encompassing focus. Thus, do not get down on yourself, but try to widen your focus on your immediate surroundings. Get reacquainted as you give yourself a break, go out and explore, and try to broaden your perspective on life.

Reward Your Body, Mind, and Heart

One recurring theme has been the all-consuming nature of Parkinson's. This disorder can take its toll on you and those around you who help and support you. Somehow, recuse yourself from the disease setting by giving yourself a break from the disorder and thus rewarding your body, mind, and heart.