FOUNDATION for Parkinson's
Empowering people to move

May 10, 2026

"How do lumberjacks know how many trees they cut?"
"They keep a 'log."

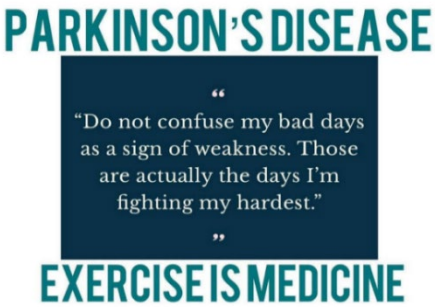
FOUNDATION for Parkinson's

Events located at Jamestown Presbyterian Church
1804 Guilford College Rd, Jamestown, NC 27282

Learn more about our events
contact: Alesia at 336-365-2745
alesia@hamilkerrchallenge.com

SAVE THE DATES

01/24/2026	PD Gathering	10:00am-1:00pm
02/08/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
03/08/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
04/11/2026	HKC Bike.Run.Walk Event	
05/03/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
06/14/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
07/18/2026	PD Gathering	10:00am-1:00pm
08/09/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
09/13/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
10/17/2026	PD Gathering	10:00am-1:00pm
11/08/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm
12/13/2026	Support Group	2:00pm-3:30pm



Click the icon for the past two weeks' class recordings:

HKC Strength Classes

HKC Parkinson's Fitness Classes

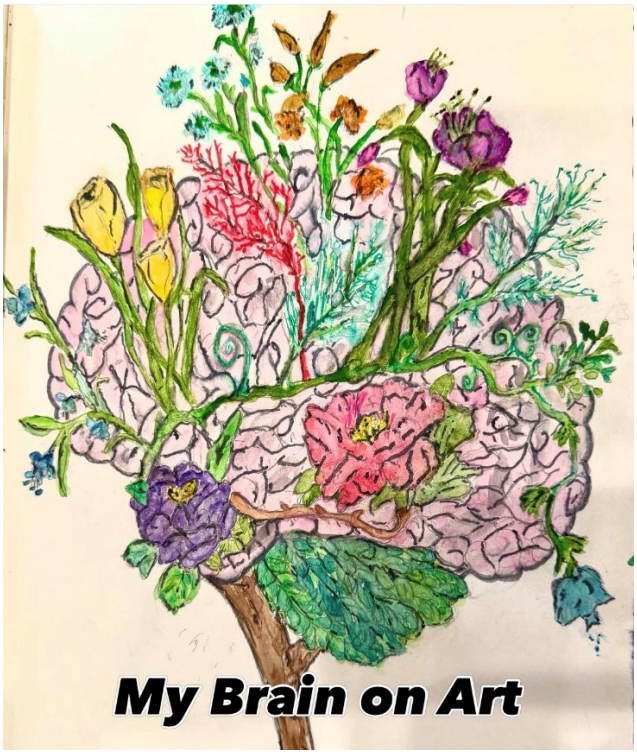
****

Please read Larry Linton's first chapter of the book he is writing and let me know what you think and I will pass it on.

Chapter 1: The Day of Diagnosis The moment of diagnosis is brief. The meaning you assign to it is not. — Larry Linton

Chapter 1 The Day of Diagnosis (1).pdf

***



In the words of Susan Monk Kidd, *"I painted this image of "my brain on art" in response to the impact that painting and dancing have on my Parkinson's symptoms. When I paint, my tremors nearly always fade and often disappear. When I dance, my gait and mood tend to improve in real time. Occasionally, these benefits will last for a few hours.*

I can't explain what's going on in my brain when these responses occur, but it's as if my little grey cells sprout a small, temporary bloom of dopamine.

This surprising phenomenon led me to read about the emerging fields of neuroaesthetics and neuroarts, which are deepening our understanding of how the arts measurably change the body, brain, and behavior. Susan Magsamen, founder of the International Arts + Mind Lab at John Hopkins University

School of Medicine envisions "a future in which the arts can deliver potent, accessible, proven health and well-being solutions."

You don't have to have a chronic disease in order to experience a sense of wellness from engaging with the arts, nor do you need to be good at them. Write a story, write a poem, listen to music, make music, draw, doodle, paint, visit a museum, dance…

If you have Parkinson's, art won't cure you, but aside from the sheer pleasure of indulging in art for art's sake, you may find it turns down the volume on a symptom or two and brings a flowering of wellbeing, beautiful while it lasts. "

Bestselling author Sue Monk Kidd has spent her life telling stories. But when she was diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2019, it was not the story she imagined for herself. Her father had died at 103 after a relatively healthy life; her mother at 99. She thought this would be her story, too: resilient, healthy, strong.

When a minor tremor appeared in her left hand in 2018, deep down she knew it could be serious, but she hoped it was just a nuisance, maybe too much caffeine? So when the movement disorder specialist at Duke University sat her down and said, "Sue, you have Parkinson's disease," she was stunned. When she stepped over the threshold from the doctor's office into the hallway, she thought, "I'm stepping onto a new planet." It was like "being thrust into a completely different world."

It would take her three more years—and a descent into depression—to move through the waters of her grief and rekindle her life's spark.

Sue is no stranger to booming book launches: her first novel, *The Secret Life of Bees*, became an international phenomenon, selling more than 8 million copies worldwide. It was eventually adapted into an award-winning film. Her third novel, *The Invention of Wings*, achieved the holy grail: it was selected by Oprah for her book club.

For that novel, Sue spent three months on a 32-city book tour. But last fall, six years after her diagnosis as she prepared to launch her memoir on the "wellsprings of the inner life," things looked different. Parkinson's had reared its head in the form of crushing fatigue and she had a choice: ignore her body or heed it.

Knowing when to push your body and when to protect its limits is tricky. "It isn't easy for anyone with a chronic illness to understand where their balance is, their sweet spot," Sue said. "And, when you do understand it, to stand by and guard it." Sue wanted to show up for her book and for her readers. "You put this little love child you've created into the world," she said, "and you want to support her, to be there. I yearned to do that, but I was also trying to be realistic about what was possible for me."
After Sue was diagnosed with Parkinson's, she had a dream: in the dream, she was sitting on a lifeguard stand beneath an umbrella. She was guarding her life. When she woke, she knew what she had to do: try her best to understand and advocate for her boundaries.

When *Writing, Creativity, and Soul* was released, Sue chose to be her own lifeguard. With the understanding and support of her publishers, they arranged a handful of key interviews, but no travel. The book landed with acclaim. Even with new boundaries, her book became an instant bestseller.

In 2019, when Sue was diagnosed and was thrust onto a new planet, she didn't have time to reckon with the new terrain. It was May and the novel she had been working on, The Book of Longings, was due in August. She still had to write the ending. She buried her head in work. By the time she looked up, COVID-19 had swept the globe and she dove into a virtual book tour of nearly 90 online events. It wasn't until three years after her diagnosis, when the swirl of her work finally quieted, that depression came knocking.

By this time, her symptoms—once just a mild hand tremor—had amped up, becoming impossible to ignore. "I had to face it," she said. She opened the door to the darkness and let it in.

Sue Monk Kidd was put on this planet to tell stories. Her books are audacious and engrossing and, for good reason, have garnered her millions of beloved fans. To an outsider, her creative spark seems inextinguishable. But the thing about chronic, life-changing illness is that it can unmoor you, stripping you of who you think you are. It can change your narrative. When depression hit, Sue felt bereft of light. "The creative spark," she said, "which is the spark of life, had completely gone out. I didn't think I could [create] ever again. I had no sense of meaning in this life." She felt untethered from her soul.

Even in the pit, life rarely gives up on us; it continued to reach for her, to speak to her, including through the books she read. In the midst of reading the diaries of Holocaust victim Etty Hillesum, Sue was arrested by this message: "There are moments when I feel like giving up or giving in, but I soon rally again and do my duty as I see it: to keep the spark of life inside me ablaze."

Sue copied down the quote. And she knew: "This is what I must do." Throughout her life, Sue liked to draw "little sketches," but she didn't consider herself an artist and had never painted. But an impulse inside her called her to create, to reimagine her story through images. She called an art therapist. "The greatest, strongest, deepest impulse in humans is toward wholeness," Sue told me. "And I feel like we have to trust that. I decided to trust that it was there in me, somewhere. I had to find the creativity to bring forth a way to live on this new planet—and not just to live there, but to find meaning in it." On the phone, she asked the art therapist, "I want to find my spark again. Can you help me?" The therapist replied, "I believe we can do this."

Every week for the next seven months, Sue painted, each image a little window into herself. One day, she painted a woman in a black top hat. The woman was releasing very dark balloons. On the back of the painting, Sue wrote that anxiety and depression were ballooning and she needed to let the air out, to let the wind take them and fly away.

In another, she painted herself alone, curled into the fetal position.

On the back, she wrote, "*When you are alone and vulnerable, when you feel everything falling away, and there you are—exposed, when people stare at your tremor, when you stumble and your gait is awkward and clumsy, when your body won't be still, when you are anxious and so very tired, when you don't know how to make anyone understand the strangeness in your body—the rigidity, pain, and slowness—it will be OK; it really will. You are not the sum of your symptoms. Your vulnerability makes you human and beautiful.* "

With each painting, she was recreating her story. The more she painted, the more she navigated her central questions: How do I respond to my Parkinson's? How do I make meaning out of it? How do I live alongside it? "I found that, in creating these images, I myself was recreated," she said. "That's what creativity does. It recreates us."

"Six and a half years after my diagnosis," Sue said, "I think the core of me has found that place of peace and acceptance." She describes her attitude like the Dag Hammarskjöld quote: "For all that has been, thanks. For all that shall be, yes."

She admits that this is not a constant state; never perfect. "We are self-contradictory people," she said. "There are days we feel it and days we don't. But the core of us knows we can always return there." In fact, she describes living with Parkinson's as a paradox: "There's this mystifying coexistence of joy and acceptance and peace and suffering and loss and grief. They're always all-present, but typically we don't feel them all at the same time."

"Parkinson's is a thief," she said, laden with loss and limitation. But during the last few years—during what she calls "a renovation of my most self"—her view has expanded: What if, alongside grief and loss, something is gained?

When the writer Virginia Woolf was 42, she had a nervous breakdown. From her bed, she wrote a quintessential essay called, "On Being Ill." Sue read me a quote from it: "In…sickness, how we go down into the pit of death and feel the waters of annihilation close above our heads and wake thinking to find

ourselves in the presence of angels." Chronic illness brings devastation, yes. But layered inside is something else: spiritual change.

Sue quickly admits that she says that carefully, "tremulously," because when you're in the midst of a depression or facing the shock of a diagnosis or the debilitating pain of your symptoms, you may not even want to hear somebody talk like that. She knows; she was there. But she also knows—because she has lived it—that illness can "awaken us." "It causes the world to become alive," she said. She described moments—like when a bird lands on the feeder in her yard and she watches it steadily, like a meditation—that "reframe [her] world." "It's the gift of attention," she said. "I notice things more. It's so beautiful to me now. I would never in a million years, when I was on a 32-city book tour and doing all of this lecturing and traveling and writing, have had that experience. In this way, we can say that illness can have a creative and liberating effect."

In the midst of crushing fatigue and muscle pain—the kind of pain that seems to take over—Sue has found pockets of joy, micro joys. In these moments, gratitude spontaneously wells up inside her and she wonders: "If someone gave me the choice right now and said, 'You can keep your Parkinson's gifts or you can be perfectly normal like you were before, I would have a very hard time deciding. I probably would choose to be where I am now."

For several years after her diagnosis, Sue was not ready to share it with the world. "I didn't have the words yet," she said. But when life swerved and went dark and she moved through art therapy, she found courage.

When she publicly disclosed her diagnosis, it initiated her into "another gift, into love." As people began to reach out to her with compassion and with their own stories, she felt, "These are my people. I don't know them, but I love them. They are a part of me, and I'm part of them…The love that people sent me, I wept almost every time I read it." She went on, "I think love and compassion are as important in Parkinson's as exercise. It's healing."

Sue hopes to write about this—the spirituality of illness. She's been collecting notes. "But having a spiritual relationship to our illness, seeing meaning in it, doesn't imply there's passivity," she said. "It doesn't mean that I don't fight this disease with every fiber of my being. I exercise five or six days a week. I do whatever I can to slow its progression. I'm not a fan of Parkinson's."

It's complex. We must hold all of it—dark, light, shades of gray; devastation and awe; grief and growth; abandonment and grace—at once. This is how we rewrite our stories. This is how we kindle our spark.

****

Now, check out these “cheat sheets” that may help traverse your Parkinson’s journey.

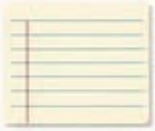
WAYS TO IMPROVE HANDWRITING *with* PARKINSON’S

Small changes can make a big difference.
Practice, patience and the right tools can help you write with more ease and confidence.

1 USE THE RIGHT PEN

Try a pen with a larger, soft grip and smooth ink flow. Gel pens often work well.

2 CHOOSE THE RIGHT PAPER



Use larger or bold lines to help guide your writing. White or bright paper can reduce contrast difficulties.

3 WRITE BIGGER

Bigger letters are easier to form and help reduce freezing and crowding.

4 SLOW DOWN AND PAUSE

Take your time. Pause between words or letters if you need to.

5 USE GOOD POSTURE

Sit upright with both feet on the floor and your wrist supported. Good posture improves control.

6 TRY WEIGHTED TOOLS

A little extra weight can improve stability and reduce tremor.
Ask your therapist what’s best for you.

7 WARM UP FIRST

Do hand and finger stretches or gentle exercises before writing to improve flexibility.

8 PRACTICE REGULARLY

Short, regular practice is more effective than long, tiring sessions. Try writing lists, notes or a daily journal.

MORE HELPFUL TIPS

- Reduce distractions. Find a quiet, comfortable space.
- Use visual cues like lined paper or margins.
- Break writing tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- Celebrate progress. Every small step counts!

You can still make your mark.
Keep going—you’re not alone.

Consistency, the right tools and self-compassion can help you write more clearly and confidently.

Talk to your occupational therapist for personalized strategies and tools that can help.

Move with Purpose. Live Better.

TYPES OF EXERCISE THAT HELP PARKINSON'S

AEROBIC EXERCISE

Get your heart pumping.

Walking, cycling, swimming, dancing, elliptical

IMPROVES STAMINA & MOOD

STRENGTH TRAINING

Build muscle. Support your movement.

Weights, resistance bands, machines, bodyweight

IMPROVES STRENGTH & EVERYDAY FUNCTION

FLEXIBILITY & STRETCHING

Stay loose. Move with ease.

Yoga, stretching routines, tai chi

IMPROVES FLEXIBILITY & REDUCES STIFFNESS

BALANCE TRAINING

Improve stability. Prevent falls.

Tai chi, balance exercises, single leg stands

IMPROVES BALANCE & CONFIDENCE

BIG MOVEMENT TRAINING

Think BIG. Move BIG.

LSVT BIG, dance, boxing, large amplitude movements

IMPROVES MOVEMENT AMPLITUDE & FUNCTION

MIND-BODY EXERCISE

Calm your mind. Strengthen your body.

Yoga, tai chi, meditation, breathing

REDUCES STRESS & SUPPORTS OVERALL WELL-BEING

MOVEMENT IS MEDICINE

KEY BENEFITS

- SUPPORTS BRAIN HEALTH
- IMPROVES MOBILITY
- BUILDS STRENGTH
- BOOSTS MOOD
- ENHANCES QUALITY OF LIFE

Find what you enjoy.
Be consistent.
Every move matters. ♡

CONSISTENCY OVER INTENSITY. SMALL STEPS. BIG IMPACT. | YOU'VE GOT THIS. ♡

PARKINSON'S VIEWPOINT

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO PARKINSON'S PILL TIMING

RIGHT MEDICATION. RIGHT TIME. BETTER DAY.

01 WHY TIMING MATTERS

Proper timing helps medication work better and reduces OFF time.

02 CONSISTENCY IS KEY

Take your medication at the same times every day.

03 SPACE IT SMARTLY

Follow the right intervals between doses for steady symptom control.

04 PROTEIN AWARENESS

High-protein meals can interfere. Space protein away from medication.

05 TRACK & ADJUST

Track your medication schedule and symptoms. Review and adjust with your doctor.

06 PLAN FOR REAL LIFE

Plan ahead for outings, travel, meals, and sleep routines.

QUICK TIPS FOR BETTER TIMING

- Use reminders or alarms
- Keep a medication log
- Work closely with your doctor
- Involve your care partner
- Small changes in timing can make a big difference

BETTER TIMING.
BETTER CONTROL.
BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE.

Maintaining Balance and Walking More Confidently in Parkinson's:

4 Practical Strategies That Work

Many people with Parkinson's notice:

- Feeling unsteady when walking
- Short, shuffling steps
- Difficulty turning or changing direction
- Fear of falling — especially in crowded or narrow spaces

This can slowly reduce confidence and lead to avoiding movement altogether.

But here's something important:

Balance and walking can improve with the right strategies and practice.

Let's talk about them.

1 Take Bigger, Intentional Steps (Research-Based)

Research shows that Parkinson's reduces movement amplitude — meaning steps naturally become smaller and more shuffling.

Training "bigger" movements improves:

- ✔ Walking speed
- ✔ Stability
- ✔ Coordination

What to do:

- Think: "Big steps" as you walk
- Lift your feet slightly higher than usual
- Let your arms swing naturally

This may feel exaggerated — that's exactly the point.

2 Use Rhythm to Guide Your Walking (Research-Based)

Studies show that rhythmic cues (like music or a metronome) improve walking in Parkinson's.

They help the brain:

- ✔ Time each step more effectively
- ✔ Reduce hesitation and freezing
- ✔ Improve stride consistency

What to do:

- Walk to music with a steady beat
- Count steps out loud (1–2, 1–2)
- Use a metronome app if helpful

Your brain uses rhythm as a guide when internal timing is disrupted.

3 Practice Weight Shifting Daily (Real-World Strategy)

Many balance issues come from difficulty shifting weight from one foot to the other.

What to do:

- Stand behind a chair or near a counter
- Shift your weight slowly to one leg
- Hold for 3–5 seconds
- Shift to the other side

Repeat 8–10 times daily.
This builds the foundation for stable walking.

4 Slow Down During Turns and Transitions (Real-World Strategy)

Falls often happen not while walking straight, but when:

- Turning
- Starting or stopping
- Changing direction

What to do:

- Take small, controlled steps when turning
- Avoid pivoting quickly
- Pause briefly before changing direction

Think: "Slow and steady, not fast and reactive."

5 Create a Safer Walking Environment (Practical + Proven)

Your surroundings play a major role in balance confidence.

What to do:

- Remove loose rugs and clutter
- Keep walkways well-lit
- Use supportive, non-slip shoes
- Add grab bars where needed

A safer environment reduces fear — and fear itself affects balance.

Try This This Week

- ✔ Focus on taking bigger steps during one walk
- ✔ Practice 5 minutes of weight shifting
- ✔ Slow down when turning
- ✔ Walk once using rhythm (music or counting)

Final Thought:

Balance problems in Parkinson's are common — but they are not untouchable.

With the right strategies, you can:

- ✔ Move more safely
- ✔ Feel more confident
- ✔ Stay active longer

Confidence in movement starts with small, intentional changes.

Learn more and find support at
www.parkinsonviewpoint.com

You are not alone.
We're here to help.

MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER WITH PARKINSON'S

SMALL CHANGES. BIG DIFFERENCE.

WHY IT MATTERS

People with Parkinson's have a higher risk of falls. Most falls happen **at home.**

CORE RULES

- CLEAR PATHS
- BRIGHT LIGHTING
- STABLE SUPPORT
- KEEP IT PREDICTABLE

5 SIMPLE HOME FIXES

1 REMOVE CLUTTER

- No loose rugs
- Clear walkways
- Remove cords

2 ADD LIGHT

- Bright rooms
- Night lights
- No dark corners

3 MAKE BATHROOM SAFE

- Grab bars
- Non-slip mats
- Shower chair

4 USE STABLE FURNITURE

- Chairs with arms
- Avoid low/soft seating
- Keep items within reach

5 SUPPORT MOVEMENT

- Add rails if needed
- Use walking aids
- Keep phone nearby

FREEZING? FIX YOUR SPACE

- Clear doorways
- Wide pathways
- Avoid busy patterns
- Keep layout consistent

NIGHT SAFETY

- Light path to bathroom
- Keep space clear
- Move slowly

FOR CAREGIVERS

- Watch where falls almost happen
- Fix high-use areas first
- Keep changes simple
- Ask what feels unsafe

START TODAY!

- REMOVE 1 RUG
- ADD 1 LIGHT
- CLEAR 1 PATH

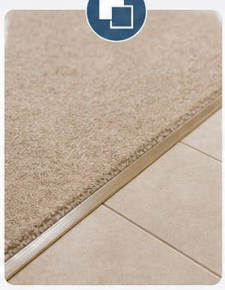
SMALL CHANGES.
SAFER MOVEMENT.
MORE CONFIDENCE.
Better days at home.

www.parkinsonviewpoint.com

HOME ADJUSTMENTS THAT HELP WITH FREEZING OF GAIT

Keep doorways clear and uncluttered

Maintain clear, predictable walking paths



Minimize sudden floor changes; use subtle contrast if needed

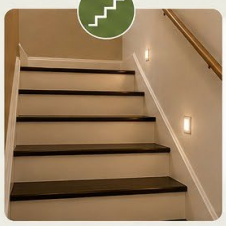
Keep the environment consistent and stable

Introduce any changes gradually

LIGHTING, CONTRAST, AND VISION SUPPORT

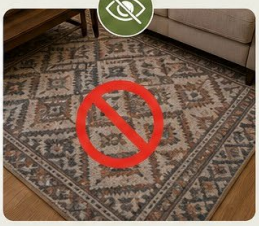
Ensure consistent, even lighting throughout the home

Use night lights or motion-activated lights for safe nighttime movement



Improve contrast on steps, thresholds, and edges

Use clear contrast between floors, walls, and furniture



Avoid busy patterns that can confuse visual cues

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

~Monday, 11am Hamil-Kerr Strength class (zoom) Coach Betsy

~Saturday 11am Hamil-Kerr Parkinson's Fitness (zoom) Coach Betsy

~Thursday, 3pm Zoom PD Spin, Ragsdale YMCA

~Thursday, 12pm In Person PD Spin, Spears YMCA

~ In-person Parkinson's Spin Class at YWCA of Highpoint, Tuesday and Thursday- 12:00

~In-person Parkinson's Spin Class at Ragsdale YMCA. Tuesday and Thursday- 10:15

~ In-person Parkinson's Dance with Hilary Savage – 1pm second and fourth Wednesday of every month, PurEnergy, 1905 Ashwood Ct

~Parkinson's Stretch Class at Rock Steady Boxing, Greensboro (spouses welcome)- Friday at 11:30am

~Rock Steady Boxing - Greensboro (in person)

~Rock Steady Boxing of Archdale (in person)

~Rock Steady Boxing of Asheboro (in person)

~Rock Steady Boxing of Lexington (in person)

~A.C.T. By Prince Deese

~Will Powell-Training - 336-706-0271

~For information on in-person 1:1 training, contact Alesia Pendleton

ONLINE RESOURCES

~Michael J Fox Foundation: www.michaeljfox.org

~Davis Phinney Foundation: Live Well with Parkinson's TODAY - Davis Phinney Foundation

~ Carolinas Chapter | Parkinson's Foundation

~Parkinson's & Movement Disorders Alliance: www.pmdalliance.org

~Parkinson's Association of the Carolinas: www.parkinsonassociation.org

~Parkinson's Foundation: Homepage | Parkinson's Foundation

And of course, reach out to me anytime.
Yours, Coach B

Rock Steady Boxing Certified Coach
Certified Parkinson's Disease Fitness Specialist
Certified PWR Moves Instructor
ISSA Certified Personal Trainer