

Welcome!

Hi Gang!

Welcome to the first issue of the NeuroFIT Neuron for 2023.

For our "Spotlight On" segment, we interviewed David Beardsley. Since joining us, David has always brought a positive attitude and energy to the class and more importantly, always laughs at my jokes! Get to know a little more about David in this issue.

Bill will be doing his techy thing and talking about music therapy for PD and Alexa Together. Bill is a trove of information, so if you have any questions, ask away!

We've had some interesting groups come and give talks from doctors to DBS representatives. I'm very happy to say that the doctors were very impressed with our program and

are recommending it to several of their patients. This has led to the program growing in leaps and bounds and it's very exciting that we can reach and help more people. We also couldn't do it without the help of you all advocating for the program so a big THANK YOU!

Mike, Ray, and Betty joined the group. Welcome all of you to the craziness and as always, a thank you to our volunteers, some you see some you don't, especially Sandy who helps us in numerous ways and Lori who is the new coordinator for the monthly support group.

"Coaches Corner" covers motivation and discipline and, finally the "Closing Bits" is a recap of some of the fun things that we have done and will be doing.

So, sit back and enjoy!

Coach Heidi

Spotlight On David

1. Why Neurofit?

Neurofit gives you a great combination of activities to help slow the progression of PD with both physical and mental challenges incorporated into the program. There are a large

variety of activities used to accomplish this goal so it keeps you interested and engaged. The coaches do a wonderful job of designing and implementing the program to not only make it effective but to also incorporate fun into it as well.

February 2023
Issue 5

Inside

Welcome!	1
Spotlight on David	1-2
Assistive Tech	1
Coaches Corner	2
Medical News	2-3
Closing Bits	3

Assistive Tech

It's a fact of life that falls happen with Parkinson's Disease. What if you fall and don't have your cell phone or can't reach a land-line phone? If you have an Amazon Echo (Alexa) in the house you may be in luck! Actually, more than one is better depending on the size of your house. Then Alexa is always within earshot.

Amazon now has a program called Alexa Together that can offer assistance in an emergency. For \$19.95 a month an Amazon Echo device can call a member of your family in case of a fall or other crisis. All you need is an Echo Device within voice range of the device. The service is also compatible with several fall detection devices. Go to Amazon.com and search for "Alexa Together" for more details.

David continued ...

2. What was your reaction to being diagnosed with PD?

It took nearly six months from the time I started having tremors until when I could get an appointment with a neurologist. In that time I did a lot of research about my symptoms and kind of suspected that it might be PD so I was somewhat prepared but it still numbed me a bit initially to have it officially diagnosed. I then made up my mind to find out what I might do

to combat it and also what studies I could join to help further PD research.

3. Where do you find support?

From my wife, Mary Ellen, who is always there for me in so many ways and also from everyone in the Neurofit group who are truly an inspiration to me.

4. One piece of advice for newly diagnosed - Parkinson's patients.

Join a PD group/organization so that you have a source of support

from others who are also dealing with PD. It is a great way to learn more about what is available for people with PD and what the experiences of others have been.

5. How do you like to spend your free time?

I enjoy doing things outdoors such as bicycling or walking when the weather is agreeable, and getting together with family or friends. Spending time with our 4 dogs is also a pleasure. And being retired, I also enjoy just doing things spontaneously whenever the opportunity arises.

Coaches Corner

Nike got it right- "Just Do It."

Motivation is a feeling.

Discipline is a choice.

Motivation and discipline are two of the most important elements to success. Do you feel excited about new goals, feel like you could take on the world?

That feeling is called motivation, but if you are not careful, you will give

motivation all the kudos when you succeed and all the blame when you fail.

REALITY CHECK- you will NEVER feel motivated every single day, and it will make trying to achieve your goals even harder if you rely solely on motivation.

Discipline is hard work, digging in, and getting it done. It's not something you can buy at a store, nor is it a mystical force. It's a choice to do something even when you don't

feel like doing it. Some days you will lose both motivation and discipline, and that's when you must remember that while we wait for motivation to find us, discipline waits for us to find it. Who knows? After finishing the workout you never wanted to do, that satisfying feeling of success just might bring back the motivation for your next workout.

Like Nike says, "JUST DO IT"!

Coach Heidi

Medical News

Music Therapy for Parkinson's Disease

Music Therapy is another tool to use for fighting Parkinson's Disease. But, just what is music therapy? Is it sitting on the couch listening to your favorite oldies? Definitely, not! Does attending a drum or flute circle or singing in a choir comprise music therapy? While those activities may be part of a music therapy session, they

Music Therapy for Parkinson's Disease continued ...

don't comprise music therapy alone. Drum and flute circles, choir singing, and music played in a care home or hospice setting fall into a class of music called therapeutic music and don't usually require a music therapist. Music provides therapeutic benefits in several ways. Here's a short definition of music therapy supplied by Kalani Das (MT-BC), a Board-Certified Music Therapist: Music-based experiences, delivered by a board-certified music therapist, designed and customized to help clients reach their therapeutic goals.

Simply listening to music can be helpful. It can lower heart rate and improve mood. Many musicians provide music for hospitals, assisted living homes, and schools. These musicians deliver therapeutic music. Certified music therapists use music as a beneficial tool to help their clients with physical and emotional problems. They work with the rest of your Parkinson's Disease team to target specific issues.

Music therapy can assist people with emotional, mental, and neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's Disease (PD), Multiple Sclerosis (MS), or stroke. PD disrupts the body's ability to move with a smooth rhythm. A very early symptom of PD is loss of arm swing on one side of the body. The walking gait on that same side is also shortened. A trained music therapist can select music that encourages the arm to swing in a longer arc. The improved arm motion will also improve your stride length (the two are related). The therapist is using a process named "entrainment." Entrainment is the body's natural tendency to move with a pulse or beat. How often have you observed a person tapping their foot to a beat? The tapping foot is entrainment in action! Walking with earbuds to the beat of your favorite song works wonders in maintaining a proper walking gait for a person with Parkinson's.

In the later stages of PD, freezing of gait (FOG) is a real problem. When a person with Parkinson's freezes, they cannot initiate motion. They are "frozen" in place. Music can help with FOG. The beat and rhythm of a song can provide an auditory cue to initiate movement. A simple rhythmic beat delivered by a smartphone app or smartwatch can produce similar results. Still, there is a critical difference between music and a beeping app. Music activates emotions and memories in a way computer apps and physical therapy exercises will never do. Broadly activating different memory and motor centers produces a healthier, more active brain. If you have a progressive neurological disorder, you want all the brain exercise you can get!

In part two of this series, I'll review therapies aimed explicitly at PD. For more info on music therapy itself, go to these websites:

American Music Therapy Association: <https://www.musictherapy.org>

Kalani Music: <https://kalanimusic.com/services/music-therapy/>

Closing Bits ...

What a fun filled start to 2023 for NeuroFIT.

We've had several groups come and give talks including Medtronic and Boston Scientific both giving presentations for DBS. Several doctors observed the program and I'm happy to say they were very impressed and are recommending it to several of their patients.

Lori has agreed to be the new NeuroFIT monthly support group coordinator so please give her a big welcome.

Closing Bits continued ...

If you have any ideas for the support group or groups that may like to come in and give a presentation, please let myself, Coach Cheryl or Lori know.

Coach Cheryl and I held a special Saturday class for SEAYOPD, the Seattle area Young Onset Parkinson's Disease activity group. It was a great success, and we are in the process of working out the details to hold a monthly class just for them. They age from 40-60 and hike, kayak and play in the snow on a regular basis. Check out their website at seaopd.com. Some of you met Brain, the founder of the group, who is hoping to join us on a weekly basis to work out when his work allows. Thank you to Jany and Mark who came down and helped the class run smoothly.

We have several fun activities in the works. Judi from Victory Drumming and Rose Beattie a Vocal Instructor will hopefully be visiting soon. Dates and times to follow.

Don't forget to check out the new look Longevita website at longevitapilates.com and see all the different classes that are offered. Everything from NeuroFIT, Pilates, Yoga, Barre to Personal Training. We really are lucky to have this studio right on our doorstep!

A one closing bit from your friendly editor. If you ever want a NeuroFIT Neuron back issue you can find them (along with lots of other fun stuff!) at: <https://neurofitmembers.org>
