

"You have a right to be  
joyfull!" – Howard  
Shifke

# The Little River Post

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DIVE RIGHT IN!

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## FIGHTING PARKINSON'S: THE HOLISTIC APPROACH OF A MAN WHO DEFEATED PARKINSON'S

By ROXANNE FISHER

In his book, "Fighting Parkinson's and Winning," Howard Shifke describes his holistic approach to recovery from Parkinson's. Shifke chose to fight Parkinson's without Western medicines because Parkinson's medications only treat symptoms, not causes. Using a combination of breathing exercises from stretches, balancing exercises and prayers or meditation, and Eastern practices such as Qigong, Shifke found that the best approach to helping his body was to treat the mind, body and soul at the same time. He focused on returning the neural networks of his body to a state of balance instead of trying to eliminate pain or struggles. Shifke found that acceptance of his body was crucial so that there was not a battle between his mind and body, since Parkinson's is a disease of both mind and body. He found that his emotions played

a huge role in affecting his physical symptoms. The more angry he was, the worse the symptoms would be. So, in addition to the physical stretching and balancing exercises he was working on, he practised exercises to try and maintain a baseline of joy and gratitude. Shifke said that so many people already told him that he had a right to be angry, but what he told himself was that he had a right to be joyful. Nine months after beginning his "Parkinson's Recipe for Recovery," Shifke fully recovered.

## ASK YOUR PT: WHAT SHOULD I DO DURING A PARKINSON'S EPISODE?

By LISA FISHER

Many Parkinson's patients have freezing episodes where they suddenly can't move or episodes in which they are involuntarily moving quickly with shorter and shorter footsteps. The most important thing in this scenario is to let the body know that the brain is in charge. I tell my patients to calm down, place their hands on their hips, stand up straight as they can and think 'I'm the boss.' Shifke's book is also a great resource for understanding how one patient connected with his brain

and body. But you will need to find what works for you to calm your mind and body. If you try to shuffle into a chair during an episode you are likely to fall. Instead, think of yourself as the hero of an action movie who slows down and blends into the crowd instead of running when hunted.

## BALANCE FOR PARKINSON'S

By LISA FISHER

One of the most crucial things for a Parkinson's patient to focus on is balance. Posture is integral to maintaining balance, because it's hard to maintain your balance when your weight is being pulled forward. Visit our YouTube channel to see the balance routine that I use for everyone which can be modified for anyone from elite athletes to Parkinson's patients. The right level for you is one in which you feel the motion in your feet and ankles but your hips are steady, not flailing all over the place. Flip over this newsletter to find a flyer for Dr. Fisher's balance routine with a link and QR code to our YouTube channel.