

# Painting with Parkinsons

Canberra

For more information,  
artists' stories and examples of artwork  
visit our website

[www.paintingwithparkinsons.org.au](http://www.paintingwithparkinsons.org.au)

or contact Parkinson's ACT:

(02) 6290 1984



*Painting with Parkinsons* is part of Parkinson's ACT, a self help and support group for people with Parkinson's, their carers, friends, families and other interested people.

[www.parkinsons.org.au/ACT](http://www.parkinsons.org.au/ACT)

[parkinsons@shout.org.au](mailto:parkinsons@shout.org.au)

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The tulip motif is an internationally recognised symbol of Parkinson's.

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IN THIS TOGETHER  
**parkinson's**  
ACT

## Painting with Parkinsons

*Painting with Parkinsons* is an innovative art program for people living with Parkinson's.

It was pioneered by artist Nancy Tingey in 1994, who first came to the idea after her husband Bob was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Overseas studies funded through a Churchill Fellowship allowed Nancy to further evolve the program, and today the benefits of using art as a therapy for Parkinson's are well established.

Designed to provide a 'can do' activity for people whose abilities have been compromised by Parkinson's, a typical class begins with informal chat and refreshments followed by a meditation or centering down time to calm the nervous system and focus the mind. This is followed by exercises to kick start the body into action using prompts and triggers. Making the first mark, which leads to another, is in itself a major achievement for people who find writing difficult. And, although communication through speech is often compromised with Parkinson's, self expression flows through the use of high quality art materials which encourage confident experimentation. Magic happens.

Curiously, evidence suggests creative ability is enhanced by Parkinson's disease. Certainly it seems that when the activity 'kicks in' there is no stopping the artist at work.

As the session draws to a close with respectful discussion of the morning's work it becomes clear that participants are enjoying increased social interaction as well as experiencing relief from stress and depression. Feelings of self-worth are enhanced through creative art activity and Parkinson's symptoms, such as tremor, may be alleviated.

“ A frozen moment becomes a turning point using wet paint on wet paper.

A tremoring hand is stilled as colours flow from the brush. Frustration and anger become a series of intense explosive shapes and lines. ”

*Cheryl Jobsz*  
facilitator

“ When I am painting I forget about my Parkinson's and it forgets about me. ”

*Charles Armstrong*  
participant



The group is facilitated by a team of artists, therapists and volunteer helpers.

*Painting with Parkinsons* meets on Friday mornings in the Banks Building at the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra.

For details about the venue and access visit [www.anbg.gov.au](http://www.anbg.gov.au)