



PANC

UPDATE

Parkinson Association of Northern California

Building Community for the Journey -- May 2024

PANC SUPPORT GROUPS

"Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes... including you."
Anne Lamott



SAVE THE DATE!

PANC's Annual Education Conference September 28, 2024

"Empowered Minds Want to Know"
with Keynote Speaker Sharon Krischer ("Twitchy Woman")

Save the date for PANC's upcoming popular conference. Gain insight, knowledge, tools, and inspiration from leading experts that support you and your family through the Parkinson's journey. Registration opens July 15. For a preview of the event, view the conference flyer [here](#).

Interested in conference sponsor and exhibitor opportunities? E-mail Jan [here](#)

Take A Pause -- A Simple Method to Calm

by Donna Rixxman, MA, RYT, CAP, MMT

People with Parkinson's (PD) are vulnerable to the negative effects of psychological distress such as anxiety and depression, which can heighten both motor and non-motor symptoms. Additionally, caregivers of people with PD may experience caregiver burden and therefore physical and psychological health struggles too.



Self-management strategies are essential to reduce the effects of chronic stress and can help us live calmer, more relaxed, lighter, and healthier lives. Mindfulness-based interventions encourage individuals to self-manage stress and adapt to challenges in life's situations.

I am a firm believer of the many benefits these practices can provide for the PD

community. My journey through loss and chaos led me to a profound exploration of mindfulness. Following the tumultuous events of my father's passing and 9/11, I immersed myself in a silent mindfulness meditation retreat. This immersion taught me to observe the ceaseless stream of thoughts and emotions, rather than being swept away by them. The comfort I found in this practice has stayed with me over the years. I am driven to share this awareness, especially for those in the PD community, to empower you to embrace life's fluctuations with clarity, balance, and experience true inner peace.

When engulfed by strong emotions like fear, worry, frustration, or impatience, I highly recommend practicing a simple "Pause" method. This technique aids in recognizing the signals indicating stress and helps shift out of stress-mode fairly effectively.

How it works --

BODY:

Notice any physical sensations in your body like a racing heart, tightness, or restlessness. These sensations are signals that a pause in life or thought might be necessary.

Example: John noticed a tightness in his chest when Mary insisted that he not leave her alone for a much-needed meetup with a friend for coffee. This might signal a pause is necessary to re-evaluate respite care so Mary can be with someone she feels comfortable with in his absence and John can recharge as a care partner.

BREATH:

Shift your focus to your breath when you feel stressed. Place a hand on your belly and practice abdominal breathing. Taking 3-5 deep breaths can help you relax and center yourself in the present moment.

Example: Jim was very upset with Joan because she hadn't heard his request for help the first time. Joan was involved in doing the laundry and wasn't in the same room. Jim put his hand on his belly to calm his breath, letting his anger subside.

NEED:

After calming your breath, ask yourself what you need at that moment to navigate the stress. It could be stepping away, finding quiet time, or simply taking a moment to breathe. This pause allows you to re-engage with more comfort and calmness.

Example: After a challenging situation between a care partner and the person with PD, perhaps suggest that you both take a break, have a cup of tea, and resume the discussion later.

Using the "Pause" Method, individuals in challenging situations can opt for a break and find a calmer mindset and mental clarity. This method fosters an understanding and compassion of life's situations and caregiving scenarios. With practice, this process of calming can happen quickly and serve as a valuable tool for everybody, on a Parkinson's journey or not!

Donna Rixmann, a dedicated volunteer for Parkinson's support groups for 10 years and a group facilitator for 7, is currently teaching 'Introduction to Mindfulness' both in-person in Folsom and online via Zoom. As a student of Jack Kornfield and Tara Brach in the MMTCP program for mindfulness teachers, Donna, a certified yoga therapist and PANC ParkinsonWISE instructor, also conducts chair yoga sessions in-person and virtually. Explore more at www.yogapeace.net

A Simple Thank You Isn't Big Enough!

Plentiful Big Day of Giving Givers

- Marin Parkinson's Carepartner Support Group, Debby Thurlow, 415-302-0362, [E-mail](#)
- Redding Parkinson's Carepartners Support Group, Kim Hawkins, 530-945-7628, [E-mail](#)
- Sacramento Lunch Bunch Carepartner Support Group (Zoom), Gain Saetern, 916-728-9333, [E-mail](#)
- South Sacramento Area Carepartner Support Group, Jerry Miyamoto, 916-441-1020, [E-mail](#)
- Sonoma County Parkinson's Carepartner Support Group (Zoom), [E-mail for information and link](#)

Next World Parkinson's Congress May 24-27, 2026, in Phoenix!

Since the first World Parkinson Congress in Washington, DC in 2006, the event has been bringing the Parkinson's community together and making space for discourse and cross pollination with incredible outcomes across the globe.



Since the next event is in the United States, it makes it easier than ever to attend! With a rise in Parkinson's diagnosis' globally, involvement in the WPC 2026 is more important than ever.

Ambassador applications are open for science and Parkinson's ambassadors with a deadline to submit of May 31. Click [here](#) to learn more and apply.

Send a photo of yourself holding a sign that reads“**See you in Phoenix at the WPC 2026**” for the WPC social media pages and you'll be entered you into their [raffle](#) to win prizes to use while you are in Phoenix. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Together, we as a community can make a difference. Making sure we are all connecting, communicating, and sharing outside of the traditional silos that used to keep us apart, will help us move forward faster to new treatments and ultimately a cure for this disease to which we are ready to say goodbye. We hope to see the PANC constituency in Phoenix in 2026!



10 Tips for Hiring In-Home Help Through an Agency

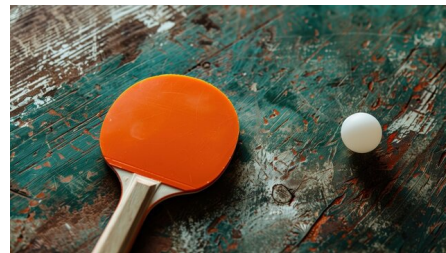
by Family Caregiver Alliance

Recently, Sandy's 82-year-old mother has agreed to having a helper come into the home a few times per week to help with meal preparation, grocery shopping, and some light housekeeping. As age and arthritis affect her ability to comfortably complete these daily tasks, Sandy and her mom realize that hiring an in-home caregiver will allow Sandy to maintain her current work schedule while ensuring that there is someone available to assist her mother during weekdays.

While both Sandy and her mother are excited about the prospect of some extra help, they're unsure of how to go about hiring an in-home caregiver. Although there are many reputable home-care agencies, families are often caught off guard by news stories of in-home caregivers who are abusive, undertrained, or completely unsupervised. Thus, researching home care providers and taking the steps to hire an agency, and caregiver, that best meet your needs can help ensure that your loved ones are safe and well cared

Ping Pong and Parkinson's

Depression and anxiety affect up to 50 percent of people living with PD, with mood shifts tending to decrease physical functioning, which may already be impaired because of the disease. Although there currently is no cure, treatment options that are helpful include medications, surgery, and preventive lifestyle activities such as exercise and mindfulness.



Research is showing that playing hand-eye coordination sports, such as Ping Pong (table tennis), can significantly help those affected by PD by encouraging balance and coordination and slowing the condition. Plus, low-impact exercises and leisure activities, are the world's most natural antidepressants. Tending to your emotional and physical health can help you sidestep depressive cycles, feel better, get better sleep, and experience less stress.

In several table tennis participant studies, researchers found that with the game of Ping Pong, the ball speed, ball projection, and airborne spins resulted in sharpened mental acuity due to hormonal boosts and seemingly slowed the deterioration of brain cell decline. The quick body movements of Ping Pong also help prevent cognitive decline associated with aging. Plus, it's fun and motivating for people of all ages and all skill levels. In Ping Pong, no one gets left behind!

Exercise is important for people with Parkinson's disease because it helps maintain balance, mobility, dexterity, and the ability to perform daily routines. Researchers have found that Parkinson's patients who exercise at least 2 1/2 hours a week also experience a slower decline in their quality of life. Keeping up with routine daily activities like washing dishes, folding laundry, yardwork, shopping — anything that keeps you on your feet — helps delay the progression of motor symptoms, according to Johns Hopkins Medicine in Baltimore, MD.

If you haven't played it in a while, dust off that 1970's table tennis board in your backyard and practice your backhands, chops, and cross-courts with friends and grandkids alike. A great time will be had by all!

Here's a few resources on Ping Pong and Parkinson's:

- CBS Report -- [Ping Pong for Parkinson's](#) (after commercial)
- [Ping Pong Parkinson Organization](#) (no locations in NorCal to date)
- Inside Edition -- [Ping-Pong Helps Man with Parkinson's Disease](#)
- Brain and Life Magazine -- [The Perks of Ping-Pong for People with Parkinson's](#)

Upcoming Community Opportunities

Quinn's Gym/Rock Steady Boxing is considering starting a **Rock Steady Boxing program in Folsom**. If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact Kevin Quinn [by email here](#) or by calling 916-628-9478.

Dr. Robert Cochrane is a visual storyteller, motivational speaker/coach and Parkinson's care partner, who continues to test and research the positive effect of improvisation and storytelling on Parkinson's disease. He has the following three programs coming up if you

are interested. Contact him directly to register or for additional information.

- May 20 - [Turning Parkinson's disease Inside Out](#)
- June 18 - [Fielding your Dreams](#)
- Late Aug (date TBA) - [The Parkinson's Prison and the Hero's Journey to Escape](#)

Donna Rixmann, yoga and mindfulness teacher (see feature story above), will be teaching 'Introduction to Mindfulness' both in-person in Folsom and online via Zoom on Tuesdays through June 18 for anyone in the PD world. For additional information, contact Donna [by email here](#) or call her at 916-712-9642.

May Free PD Webinars

Wednesday, May 15 from 8 - 9:20 am

Meet Sharon Krischer by the Parkinson Social Network

Writer of the blog "Twitchy Woman: Adventures with Parkinson's" and host of the Twitchy Woman webinar series will talk about her PD journey since being diagnosed in 2009 after several years of experiencing odd symptoms.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Thursday, May 16 at 9 am

When Parkinson's Hurts: Treatments for Managing Pain with the Michael J Fox Foundation

An expert panel will discuss why Parkinson's causes pain and ways to treat it, from standard treatments such as medication adjustments and muscle relaxants to alternative therapies like acupuncture and cannabidiol, or CBD.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Sunday, May 19 at 10 am

Ping Pong for Good (for Women with PD) with Twitchy Woman

Information about the social and exercise benefits of this program and how to find or start a chapter near you.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Tuesday, May 21 at Noon

Parkinson's and Your Mental Health by the Parkinson's Resources of Oregon

An overview of the wide variety of approaches one can use to help maintain good mental health while navigating life with Parkinson's as well as the resources that are available if you find you are facing mental health challenges and how to access them.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Thursday, May 23 at 10 am

The Connection Between Parkinson's & Alzheimer's with the American Parkinson Disease Association

Learn the similarities and differences between the pathology of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) and Parkinson's Disease (PD), the differences between the cognitive challenges of AD and those of PD, the new treatments available for AD and their relevance to PD, and if it's possible for someone to have both diseases.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Thursday, May 23 at 11 am

Cognition's Impact on Daily Life with PD with the Parkinson Association of the Rockies

Cognition in Parkinson's and strategies for improving cognitive function in various settings. This is part five of a six-part series on "Navigating Parkinson's for Successful Management & Wellbeing."

[Register and Info Here](#)

Wednesday, May 29 at 10 am

Current and Emerging Methods to Aid Parkinson's Diagnosis with the Parkinson's Foundation

The newest criteria for diagnosing Parkinson's disease based on the current understanding of PD as well as emerging technology and advances in research that are helping doctors make a diagnosis or distinguish between Parkinson's and other similar conditions. Part of the "Wellness Wednesday" webinar series.

[Register and Info Here](#)

Thursday, May 30 from 2-3:30pm

PD Personal Care Series with the Parkinson's Resources of Oregon

Instruction and ideas regarding strategies and equipment to assist the person with PD with bathing, dressing, toileting, mobility, and cooking/feeding. CEUs available. First of a two-part series. Max registration is 20 participants.

[Register and Info Here](#)

* Contact Jan Whitney [here](#) if you are interested in placing a sponsor article in the *Update*.

www.panctoday.org

[Ways to Support](#)

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