



A Letter from Brian

Football season is here and my excitement for the game has grown since my son, Jaydon, started playing. I'm proud of him and all my kids – I'm the proud dad of five college graduates, with another graduating next year. And my two youngest sons (we call them "the littles") are already tearing it up in football, baseball, and soccer. This summer I took the littles to see their older brother practice with the Raiders. I don't have the words to describe how much joy I felt that day.

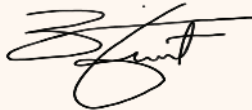
Most of my kids were in grade school when I was diagnosed with Parkinson's. Some of them don't know or can't remember a time when I wasn't living with the disease. For many years I was worried about how Parkinson's would affect my ability to be a father, especially when I was dealing with my own mental health struggles. I didn't want Parkinson's to negatively impact my kids, but I also didn't want to hide it from them. So, I was open and honest about how I was doing and made sure to involve them in the Parkinson's community from the very beginning. And as it turns out, they have become intelligent, compassionate people who want to do what they can to help others.

My kids are the greatest joy of my life and my purpose. When this disease gets me down, I remind myself that I'm raising amazing kids and that I get to be a part of their incredible lives. We share a purpose in the Brian Grant Foundation, and we're grateful that you're a part of it with us.

Brian Grant Foundation empowers people impacted by Parkinson's disease to lead active and fulfilling lives.

Learn more at briangrant.org.

Power forward,



In This Issue:

- Living with Parkinson's Profile
- Tips for Women with Parkinson's
- Seasonal Changes and Parkinson's – Fall
- Upcoming Virtual & In-Person Events

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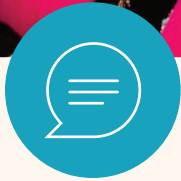


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BRONZE:





Discover more inspiring stories from the Brian Grant Foundation community at briangrant.com/stories.

“Parkinson’s Diva” Maria De León

SPECIALIST, CAREGIVER, AND PERSON WITH PARKINSON’S OFFERS HER ADVICE

Maria De León had no intention of becoming a doctor. She began her studies in neuroscience, where she gained an interest in Parkinson’s. That led to many years studying and training to be a neurosurgeon. But when Maria realized that her “people person” nature was more suited to neurology, she changed her focus and became a movement disorders specialist.

“I wanted to be able to meet people, talk to them, and get to know them,” Maria says. “So, my passion became neurology.”

While Maria was finishing her fellowship, her grandmother started developing Parkinson’s symptoms. Maria was the doctor who diagnosed her with the disease. In the last year of her grandmother’s life, she lived with Maria, who became her full-time caregiver.

It wasn’t long after her grandmother passed that Maria started noticing her own symptoms of Parkinson’s. While examining her patients, Maria realized that she was having a hard time tapping her fingers, walking straight, and balancing. She also started to notice problems with her handwriting.

“Doctors are known for their atrocious handwriting,” Maria says with a laugh. “But when I really couldn’t read my own handwriting and nurses were writing my notes and prescriptions, I realized I most likely had Parkinson’s.”

Despite Maria’s specialty training in Parkinson’s and family history of the disease, it took three years for her to finally receive a diagnosis.

“I attribute 90% of the difficulty in receiving a diagnosis to being a woman,” Maria says. “I had doctors that would just dismiss me, saying it was stress or that I was overidentifying with my patients. I had one doctor who just walked out.”

As a caregiver, movement disorders specialist, and person with Parkinson’s, Maria has a lot of great advice for people living with the disease, especially women.

“Don’t settle for ‘it’s psychological’ or ‘this disease doesn’t happen to women or young people,’” she says.

For Maria, it was also important to her to lead by example.

“At first, I didn’t want to be seen as someone who has Parkinson’s,” Maria says. “But what do I tell my patients? I tell them to embrace it. So, I made a T-shirt that says, ‘I make Parkinson’s look sexy.’”

You can view a photo of Maria wearing her T-shirt on her website parkinsonsdiva.org, where she offers resources for women with Parkinson’s.

On-Time: A Parkinson’s Podcast, Season 6

Episode one launches on **Monday, October 7, 2024** with the first of a four-part series on environmental toxins and Parkinson’s disease.

Host Larry Gifford speaks with Dr. Ray Dorsey, Professor of Neurology at the University of Rochester and co-author of *Ending Parkinson’s Disease, A Prescription for Action*.

Journaling Together

Join Rebecca Gifford as she leads a one-hour journaling class for people with Parkinson’s and their care partners on the **second Wednesday of each month**.

Visit briangrant.org/events to register.

Tips for Women with Parkinson's

BY SHARON KRISCHER



When I was diagnosed 15 years ago, there were not a lot of resources for women with Parkinson's. I did not know any other women with PD and the few support groups in my area met at times that didn't work for me. I had one male friend who was diagnosed about the same time, so the two of us became our own support group of two.

I have met many other women through the various PD organizations and at the three World Parkinson Congresses that I have attended. We have participated in studies about women with PD, attended events specifically for PD, and have worked hard to dispel the idea that Parkinson's is an old white man's disease.

I recently reached out to some of the women whom I have met and have given me inspiration over the years, to give me some tips for women with Parkinson's. All of them have been living with Parkinson's for 10 years or more. I hope that they give you inspiration on your journey with Parkinson's.

"Continue to do what you love." –Linda

"Keep looking ahead, keep a smile on your face and keep moving." –Carole

"Make yourself a priority." –Jen

"Find community, have meaningful projects to engage in."
–Farrell

"Find a mentor with Parkinson's." –Susan

"Ask for help. It's OK." –Naomi

My advice to you – listen to these wise women. Keep a positive outlook, do what you love to do. Exercise, take care of yourself physically and spiritually. Exercise! Find joy! Eat well and keep on moving! Finally, find your community.



Seasonal Changes and PD: Fall

Manage your TIME and MOOD when Daylight Savings ends on November 3. This time of year, your brain might release chemicals that cause depression symptoms. Talk to your provider if you notice:

- Low mood
- Lack of energy or interest in usual activities
- Changes in weight or sleep patterns
- Social withdrawal

Mood boosting activities are important:

- Stay socially engaged
- Be active outdoors
- Try yoga or meditation
- Get sun or use light therapy to release serotonin

DON'T LOSE YOUR COOL IN THE COLD

Cold can increase tremor, stiffness, and slowness. Keep cozy:

- Dress in layers, including a snug-fitting base layer
- Sip hot beverages throughout the day
- Keep a spare pair of gloves and a scarf handy
- Take a warm shower or bath

ENJOYING A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP WITHOUT GOING INTO HIBERNATION

When the sun sets earlier, our bodies get signals to go to sleep earlier. But don't be tempted to crawl in bed right after dinner. Try to keep a consistent sleep schedule. Support your body's internal clock with these strategies:

- Turn on interior lights during the evening to stay alert
- Set your thermostat for a comfortable room temperature
- Treat yourself to fun, active hobbies

Theresa Harczo, RN BSN, in partnership with our Silver Partner, Providence Brain and Spine Institute



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Upcoming Virtual & In-Person Events

RECURRING

Breath by Breath: Mindfulness Drop-In Class
Every Tuesday @ 11:30am-12:30pm PT (Online)

Journaling Together
Second Wednesday @ 5-6pm PT (Online)

On Time: A Parkinson's Podcast
Episode launch October 7, 2024 (Online)

YOPDX – Young Onset Parkinson's Disease Meet Up
Every second Monday @ 6:30-8:30pm PT (Portland, OR)

New Care Partner Meet Up – Starts October 28, 2024
Every fourth Monday @ 6:30-8:30pm PT (Portland, OR)

WELLNESS WEBCASTS

Second Wednesdays @ 12:00-1:00pm PT

October 9: Constipation and Parkinson's

MINDFULNESS-BASED STRESS REDUCTION (MBSR)

October 22 – Eight-week course begins
Every Tuesday @ 5:00-7:00pm PT

Visit briangrant.org/events for more information or to register.



New Community Stories!

Available to view now are the personal stories created in this year's video storytelling workshop. People with Parkinson's and care partners participated in the workshop, sharing their experiences with the disease.

Visit briangrant.org/our-community to view.