

To start things off

Occasionally on US television, there is something other than dance moms, ab machine sales and politicians dragging each other down.

Despite the archaic language, it was impossible to ignore the power of the words in the last section.

*"....Though much is taken, much abides; and though
we are not now that strength which in old days
moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
to strive, to seek, to find,
and not to yield."*

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

My paraphrase: "Even though Parkinsons has taken a lot, there is still so much to be thankful for, so much to look forward to and the courage to never give up."

Important lessons learnt from Parkinsons:

Acceptance:

"Always remember to let every situation be what it is rather than what you thought it should be."

Acceptance doesn't mean resignation; it means understanding that something is what it is and that there's got to be a way through it. —Michael J. Fox

Family:

Forever thankful for such a wonderfully supportive family. In many ways, this condition affects them just as much as it affects me.

Especially my amazing wife who “gets me up the mountain”.

Patience:

When you’re late for work and it takes 5 minutes just to tie your shoelaces – that’s a real lesson in patience

A glimpse of what discrimination feels like:

This is something most middle aged white guys will never experience:

Being refused entry to a restaurant. This has happened twice (the lack of balance is sometimes confused with intoxication).

Going to a shop in an “On” state, then visiting the same shop at a later date in an “Off” state. It’s striking how differently I am often treated.

Mocked by an airline cabin crew member for my tremor. As an aside, I also watched that same cabin crew member bully a junior crew member later in the flight – I was right up front, in seat 1A, so had a clear view on what was going on. I laid a formal complaint on both counts, which the airline took very seriously. Lesson: Don’t mess with the shaky guy!

Friends:

PD has brought some friends closer, but others have cut all contact. A little bittersweet this one.

Human Kindness:

I’m often blown away by the willingness of strangers to help out when I’m out and about and the drugs wear off. Students offering to carry stuff for me at work. A homeless guy in Manchester who assisted me when I dropped some stuff – we then ended up talking for about 30 minutes about the effect of drugs on the brain (his experience was with a different class of drugs than mine, but some common ground – a very articulate, knowledgeable guy. The customs guy in Glasgow who saw he right across the check in hall, came across and fast tracked me through the diplomatic channel.

Dinner in Ireland with complete strangers who cracked open some Crowded House in honour of the Kiwi at their table.

People with Parkinsons

Links

<https://www.parkinson.org/blog/raise-awareness/10-Interesting-Facts-About-Parkinsons>