

TAKING BACK YOUR LIFE: Parkinson's Disease and Interactive Metronome

On June 11th the Parkinson's community of the DC area was introduced to a promising new tool in the fight to regain lost function. The speaker, Mary Schlesinger, a certified Interactive Metronome provider with Timing 4 Life, LLC spoke to the gains of a Fairfax County woman who went through sixteen one-hour sessions of IM training.

The 65 year old woman with PD who was discussed at the Parkinson's Foundation meeting is a patient of Dr. Linda Sigmund. She was diagnosed ten years ago and is currently prescribed Sinemet and other PD medications to control symptoms. She exercises regularly with a personal trainer and lives a busy life but has missed the energy, flexibility and balance she once took for granted.

She completed the program in sixteen visits (just over sixteen weeks). Some of the benefits she noticed included bursts of energy lasting 5-6 hours or up to two days, and more instances when her medications felt "on". Also, she felt more agile and confident walking up and down stairs. She was able to play the piano with more flexibility and was able to get more done around the house. Her personal trainer noted that she was having some of her best sessions yet.

The training involves listening to a steady metronome beat through headphones, and tracking with the beat through a series of non-aerobic exercises while the program sensors measure performance to 1,000th of a second. With every movement the person receives instantaneous feedback indicating whether they are responding too quickly or too slowly. The person then works to bring their timing in line with the metronome.

The IM program improves focus and concentration, information processing speed, and rhythm and timing. MRI's done on individuals going through IM training show the basal ganglia, pre-frontal cortex, and cerebellum are affected.

The Medical College of Georgia is currently researching IM and its impact on Parkinson's. Walter Reed Army Medical Center utilizes IM with its veterans returning from Iraq.

*Mary Schlesinger is an IM Provider in Fairfax, VA with Timing 4 Life, LLC
You can visit their website at www.Timing4Life.com*