

Notes from Nancy Davis Presentation 1/13/14 on Emotional Health

What are the everyday challenges you face with neuropathy?

Hands don't work

It prevents me from doing yard work and gardening

My balance, I wait before I move

Don't sleep much at night

Grocery shopping has become too hard. Electronic carts are a Godsend, but hard to use emotionally.

I have to "prove" I'm sick to get the help I need.

My financial situation has been affected which creates extra stress which affects my neuropathy.

Summary: everyday things we take for granted are harder now. The simple things in life can get you down and may lead to thinking you can't do things, then you don't do them, then you really can't do them and then things get worse. The key is to modify and try to stay active doing the same types of things as before but modified or pick new things.

Why does this happen? Physical changes are often due to our outlook.

What have you done to pull yourself out of the "I can't do it" mental outlook?

I forced myself to water walk even when it was hard.

Modified my lifestyle

Looked at the bright side of things

Kept trying

Borrowed enthusiasm and energy from others for a couple of hours. Others can lift us up.

Walk with my wife and we hold each other up. I even carry her purse sometimes.

I shift from what I can't do to what I can do and replace the old with something new.

I get involved with something else or focus on others.

I make a commitment to someone else.

Summary: stress can escalate neuropathy because the mind gives messages to the body. It is important to live in the present moment, count your blessings, think of the positive things in your life and choose to be thankful and grateful.

What do you walk away with when you attend the neuropathy meetings?

I'm not alone.

I educate myself

I gain a different and better perspective

It speeds up the process of learning

I forget about myself and want to go out and help someone else

It changes my perspective

Some cognitive Techniques to try: Mindfulness meditation and behavior modification techniques