



Victory Summit: Exercise

Welcome and Inspiration with Davis and Polly

Davis Phinney Foundation

Note: This isn't a flawless, word-for-word transcription, but it's close.

Polly Dawkins (MBA Executive Director, Davis Phinney Foundation):

Good morning Davis, and welcome to the Victory Summit all about exercise.

Davis Phinney (Founder, Davis Phinney Foundation):

Yes. My favorite tip.

Polly Dawkins:

So, Davis, tell us when you were diagnosed back over 20 years ago, what were you told about exercise or, really, about anything?

Davis Phinney:

I was not told much about anything other than that I should be feeling fine for some time to come and to take it easy. And-

Polly Dawkins:

How have you done with that prescription?

Davis Phinney:

And I listened to that prescription for about a week and then I sort of found my own way.

Polly Dawkins:

Well, and what did your personal experience tell you? What did you find by trial and error?

Davis Phinney:

Well, I mean, for me, I'm in a lifelong athlete, so it was, it was harder to say take it easy than to not. Mm. But, I've, what I've discerned over time was that exercise is extremely helpful in slowing my symptoms. And so, in the course of the disease and be that I've found a pace for myself that works well and so that I'm not either pushing it too hard or else taking it too easy.



Polly Dawkins:

How, over the last 20 years, how has your approach to exercise evolved or changed?

Davis Phinney:

Well, and I think part of that is, was the answer that I just gave with finding a pace that sustainable and enjoyable. I mean, the thing with exercise is you have to find something that you're going to do continuously and that you find an enjoyment of. Otherwise, it's just like torture and we're tortured enough with hers so it, if there's anything I've learned, it's that finding a sustainable pace for something that I like to do is important.

Polly Dawkins:

So, what types of exercises are you doing today compared to 10 years ago?

Davis Phinney:

Well, 10 years ago I didn't have access to the classes that I do now. And that's the, unfortunately, somewhat changed by the pandemic, but there's still access to classes through technology like this and those classes have been really lovely. Like David Leventhal stands for pre-classes, just one example of many that are out there that are, that are catered to our needs and our level of ability and so does that. But 10 years ago, I was ride riding my bike and I'm still riding my bike. I just use, again, technology to my advantage by riding an e-bike and electric bike so that I have that little bit of assist as need as needed. And that's been very, very, very helpful. So, the e-bike has been one way to moderate what I'm doing, but all the 10 years ago I was not riding indoors, and I started doing that with the spent spinning class peddling for Parkinson's Cup at the health club here in Boulder. And that was really lovely. Yeah. Lovely, a lovely class. That was inspiring and engaging and touched a lot of important things with my Parkinson's, which were not just taking advantage of the exercise to improve my overall health, but also, it was a way of connecting me, with the community. And we had a fantastic group. And I'd say that unfortunately in the past tense because that went away when COPE came in.

Polly Dawkins:

Yeah. Well, hopefully, those opportunities will come back as people feel more comfortable getting back out into the community and doing.

Davis Phinney:

Right. And I think that that is true. And so, I mean, but I've kept up the variety both indoors and out just because it's so good for me and I feel that it's good for me. And my Parkinson's has been fairly stable now for a long time. That's largely due to my ability to exercise.



Polly Dawkins:

And it probably affects your mood as well when you affect it.

Davis Phinney:

Yeah, there's no question. I mean, I don't get quite the buzz that I used to from exercise, but it's still a pivotal part of my day and I feel like as a lifelong athlete that it's long been the cornerstone of my successfully managing this disease and part of that is being upbeat and staying positive. And if I was not exercising, I would find that tremendously difficult. Yeah. To stay positive and not be,

Polly Dawkins:

Yeah. What is the best exercise that you've found while living with Parkinson's?

Davis Phinney:

Well, I mean, that's an interesting question because I feel like the best exercise is the one that you're going to keep up with. And if you've heard anything from me, you've heard my moniker that something is better than nothing. And so even if you have just something that doing motion-wise, it's flexing some muscles for five or 10 minutes, that is fine because it's better. It's five or 10 minutes more than what nothing would give you. And so, there is that, and for me, I mean, my corner cornerstone is always going to be cycling because it's something that I've done for so long and I continue, continue to be able to ride safely and successfully and

Polly Dawkins:

Yeah. So, something is better than nothing.

Davis Phinney:

Yes.

Polly Dawkins:

It's, and so the type of exercise really doesn't matter to you as long as you're moving.

Davis Phinney:

I mean, it's, it doesn't, it matters to a degree, but it's all in degrees of what you're trying to improve. And if, you know, if your hands are struggling working, then, you want to them in some form of exercise or if you're losing all your muscle top, then you want to engage yourself in other ways. So, there's a myriad of ways with which you can get exercise.



Polly Dawkins:

Yeah.

Davis Phinney:

But what's the very best, again, at least initially, it's the thing that you're going to keep doing. And for me, at the end of the day, if I've done nothing else, I'll pull out my kettlebell and heft this thing off over my head a few times.

Polly Dawkins:

That makes sense. You know, I know you've mentioned our friend and movement disorder neurologist, Helen Bronte Stewart has often advised us that you are training your weaknesses. So perhaps not always doing the thing that's easiest or

Davis Phinney:

Right. Do you

Polly Dawkins:

Have any comments on

Davis Phinney:

That? That would be, I would say it's for someone who, who's committed to exercising and is found a form of exercise that they can, they've may, may the habit. And then I would say that you can look beyond your ha your habit somewhat and start to include that philosophy because it is easy to train your strengths, so to speak. But it's hard to look at yourself critically and say, well, you know, geez, I'm, I'm just so weak and I need to work on that aspect, which I can relate to because my, one of my weak points is my voice could, and yet I could work harder on it, but I just choose not to, which is unfortunate for me and all of you,

Polly Dawkins:

We could hear you fine. Well,

Davis Phinney:

I know, but you know what I'm saying. Yeah. The, you know, you, I just don't get as much bang for the buck by doing voice drills as I do for other things. Like, listen, this guy

Polly Dawkins:



So, Davis, as we wrap up and are getting started to spend the morning and a better part of the day about exercise and learning about the different modalities, any words of wisdom that you'd like to send folks out with?

Davis Phinney:

Well, I would just say that, you know, we are so fortunate to have the level of presenters that are joining us today with Boss being the headliner. And so, I would say that I welcome you all, and please take these messages to heart from everyone and get busy with some form of movement. Because you are only hurting yourself by being passivity and Parkinson's don't go well together. In terms of Parkinson's, it has the upper hand. And you just don't want that to ever hap happen. Yeah. So, enjoy your day, and let's get on with this great show.

Polly Dawkins:

Thank you, Davis.

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