

## Anne Hellevik's recovery story

### Summary, excerpts:

#### [The Dopamine Dancer: The Value of Holistic Autotherapy in Parkinson's Disease](#)

[Anne Hellevik](#), [Karin Wirdefeldt MD](#), [A. J. Lees MD](#) Aug 2024

Anne Hellevik was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2018, and through a structured program of dance, meditation, yoga, and cognitive autotherapy continued over several years she has managed to gradually discontinue her L-DOPA therapy, and at the same time achieve a striking improvement in her functional capacity.

Anne Hellevik is a 60-year-old Swedish woman who developed anxiety, with episodes of excessive perspiration and weight loss in 2014. A year later she became aware of stiffness in her left arm, neck, and shoulder. She then started to drag her left leg and by 2016 had stress-induced tremor at rest in the left arm and left leg. By 2018 she had begun to scuff the sole of her left foot on the ground, was taking shorter steps, and had developed a noticeable limp. Her left arm slowly became weaker and more shaky and involuntarily flexed at the elbow when walking, as if she were holding a handbag. She also noticed that sometimes the fingers of her left hand would involuntarily flex. The shaking in her left hand worsened; she had episodes of trembling of her jaw, leg, and body, and complained of distressing internal tremors especially at night. A painful restriction of her left shoulder made it difficult for her to lift her arm above her waist. She had double vision with a squint, persistent excessive sweating, and nocturia (getting up 4 times each night to pass urine).

In 2018 she was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease by her general practitioner, which was later confirmed by 2 neurologists. She started on Madopar in February 2019, which helped. Pramipexole MR was then introduced to help her tremor.

Anne Hellevik then decided on her own initiative to begin reducing her medication, and by June 2020 she had stopped L-DOPA completely. She next started to cut back on pramipexole, but even small dosage reductions led to increase in her tremor. By April 2021, apart from some intermittent morning left-sided tremor, she was asymptomatic. She next started to cut back on pramipexole, but even small dosage reductions led to increase in her tremor. By April 2021, apart from some intermittent morning left-sided tremor, she was asymptomatic. She had occasional nonfrightening visual hallucinations in 2022, which disappeared immediately after pramipexole dose reduction. A further assessment in June 2024 the case notes mentioned that she formally exercises more than 420 minutes each week and does high-intensity workouts, including dancing and skipping, for at least 1 hour a day.

She meditates in a dark room before bedtime, and on waking, lying down in bed with eyes closed for between 1 and 2 hours a day. She begins with heavy breathing to build up energy and then focuses on manipulating the flow of energy through the 7 chakras. She employs visualization to feel the space her body occupies in the universe and to elevate her emotions.<sup>[10](#) [11](#)</sup> Through meditation she enters a new dimension, free from "her old self." The state of mind resembles one she has also occasionally felt while being totally immersed in the natural world.

It is possible that meditation, dance, and positive thinking may all energize the emotional locomotor system by activating the meso-cortico-limbic dopamine system and limbic cortex and so override the characteristic disturbance of movement in Parkinson's disease. This case of Anne Hellevik, the dopamine dancer, also illustrates the extent of improvement that can be achieved by self-motivation, hopefulness, and positive thinking, and serves to remind physicians to be nuanced and

circumspect when discussing the prognosis and course of Parkinson's disease at the time of diagnosis.

---

Another doc "My strategies" not related to the article above. It is my method described 12p pdf, updated 2024-03-01, it is focused on how I think and did when reversing my symptoms.

### **The Patient's Narrative**

I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2019 but it is probable that my illness began five years before that (see video 1) After I received the diagnosis I was in a state of emotional shock and denial . Surfing the internet and reading about Parkinson's made me feel much worse and increasingly hopeless. When I Googled 'Can you get better from Parkinson's disease' the search engine responded with 'Do you mean instead? " You can't get better from Parkinson's? It was if I had been given a life-sentence.

I started on levodopa in 2019 and had an excellent response to the medication with a big improvement in stiffness, slowness and walking but within a few months I started to experience peaks and troughs. . Seven months after starting medication I decided I needed to regain control, and without notifying my doctors I started to tail off my medicine.

I gave myself 2 years to see if I could modify the course of my illness using as little medication as possible. I read uplifting stories from other people with Parkinson's disease and took careful note of what each person had found helpful in reducing their symptoms. I was greatly influenced by Dr Joe Dispenza, author and citizen scientist, particular his meditation techniques that involved 'blessing of the chakra energy centres'.

I also began working on getting rid of past mental traumas and acquired techniques to expel all negative thoughts. I meditated for 1-2 hours every day and after about six months began to experience feelings of well-being and positivity that carried on for most of the day. I also did yoga and a challenging physical training programme that involved visualisation techniques to improve my gait, posture, dexterity, balance and stiffness.

The most effective and rewarding form of exercise has been dance. Sometimes I will hear a tune by chance on the computer or radio which inspires me to dance spontaneously. I find music with a strong regular beat and fast rhythm especially motivating and energising ( e.g. Lady Gaga, Northern Soul and Techno). Sometimes I dress up before dancing and plan the choreography in advance. When I start to move to the groove I feel happy and joyful, my self-esteem increases and my aches and pains vanish (see videos 5 and 6 ). The longer I dance the freer my movements become. There is also a carry-over feeling of well-being after I have stopped that can last most of the day. I try to get eight hours sleep every night and set myself new challenges as well as continuing my hobbies of dog training and making jewellery.

I had stopped levodopa completely by May 2020 and after that I managed to cut back my pramipexole dose to 0.5mg once a day.

I can control internal stress much better now and have lost my fear. In the last two years there have been days, sometimes weeks, when I feel cured and am entirely free of all symptoms. At these times I jump out of bed without stiffness or tremor and have boundless energy. Friends and colleagues no longer consider me to be ill and comment spontaneously on my improved physical appearance. The shake of my left hand is aggravated by strong emotion but compared to five years ago it is less and

the internal tremors have disappeared. Even on mornings when I wake with tremor I am able to thread a very thin needle and have no difficulty lifting objects or doing housework. It is now very unusual for me to shake in the afternoon or evening. I can type quickly with very few errors and write without difficulty. Overall I have improved over 90 per cent in my ability to carry out everyday tasks quickly and smoothly and am much better now than I was in 2018.

I am planning to continue this programme of meditation, dance and exercise. Faith has played a large part in my improvement and I needed great determination and patience to get to where I am now. When I become aware of the return of a lost skill I feel pleased and grateful. The fact that I have done something that I was told was impossible gives me extra satisfaction. I have also successfully been able to help another young woman with Parkinson's disease through mentoring and teaching her the methods I have used.

#### *other facebook posts*

How I think about my Parkinson's disease. My opinion only. You don't have to agree with me, I just share what has been working for me. I have no medical knowledge, this is advice based on my experiences of getting much better from Parkinson's disease.

No AntiPDmeds cure me. Therefore I don't get occupied too much by them. Instead I use them as a tool so I can have the energy to do other activities that maybe hopefully really cure me a bit.

Not too occupied by trying different Supplements that probably not will cure me either. I can of course feel better if I really have a lack of certain b-vitamin, as an example.

I never start asking myself what should I take (more meds).. instead at first I think what could I do, what are the alternatives. this is what I found out.

For tremor it is activities to reduce inner- and external stress like meditation, deal with traumas, changed mindset. For motoric symptoms and stiffness it is exercise, visualisation, conscious movements. For balance it is balance training. For fine motoric it is fine motoric training. For non-motoric symptoms it is special training depend of the problem, often helped by meditation and mindset, example of non-motoric symptoms can be able to sleep better, avoid bladder problem. I have had all symptoms described above.

Do I have to do everything above? Yes. How often? Every day. Is it hard to do? Yes and no. Does it takes long time? Yes. When should I start? Today. When do I expect some results? In a couple of months. First you can get even worse when starting training for example.

Are there more to it? Yes. Very important also have a happy mood while exercise (dance and music helped me) set up goals, challenge yourself, looking forward to achieve some goals, celebrate your progress, believe it is possible, have hope, don't worry or be afraid, have faith for the future. All this emotion stuff really helps in a strange way. I think it is the chemistry in brain that changes.

How did I start? To believe it is possible, have faith, concentrate on the wanted future. Started to observe my thoughts, is it really the truth. Then I started to meditate and exercise on a daily basis.

Can I give guaranties that it works for you, no. Did it work for me, yes. Are there a lot of people that has been better and at the same time lower the meds, no not a lot of them.. yet.

My theory is that this method based on mindset/mood and more focused and target oriented training is just started to spread so in a couple of years it can perhaps be a lot of success stories out there. The main focus today what I have noticed is in stead meds sort and dosage, supplements,

diet, exercise. And new methods that we try for a while and costs a lot. The missing point is emotions, mindset, happiness, dedication, do daily.

I don't recommend mindfulness, because then you focus on the right now and your symptoms you have, better to have focus on the wanted future. The brain noticed more what you are thinking of, not always the reality.

Some positive things with my method.. very low cost, you can do the most by yourself and at home, it is getting easier and easier over time. I got more and more motivated to continue when I noticed the positive effect. If you manage to decrease PD symptoms you will get happier (can almost promise that) just stay at the same level is also fantastic. Slow down the paste is fantastic.

At last, was it worth it? YES, got my life back, happy every day and a lot of energy, enough to write this post in order to inspire other.