

## Living with Parkinson's

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I retired from Tata in 1998. After retirement I was given an assignment to collect and edit the letters of JRD Tata. So I went through 40,000 letters and selected 300 for publication. The book was published during centenary celebration in 2004. Even when I was completing the project I could feel that something sinister is happening to me, I used to feel weak and developed forgetfulness. After some time I could see and feel tremors in the right side of my body. I approached 2-3 neurologists; they diagnosed my condition as Parkinson's disease.

To start with I went to a homeopathic doctor and later on went for magnetic therapy. These doctors claimed that they had cured 3-4 patients, which I later realized was false. Then on a friend's recommendation I visited a therapeutic neurologist, who has been treating me for last 3 years. I am quite happy with the treatment.

The disease came in the way of my normal routine. I can't use my right hand (I am right handed), I took time in daily rituals, found difficulty in walking, traveling in public transport, handling things and dressing up. Gradually I tried to work out ways in which I would tackle this problem. As far as possible I didn't take anyone's help, even while walking on the street I objected to others helping me cross the road. For eating I started using my left hand and for writing one of my friends helps me by taking dictation over the phone. I made it a point to walk every day for about ½ hour and meet a physiotherapist in a hospital in my area to do some exercises. I have also attended three programs of yoga organized by PDMDS.

Once in a while I also used to attend meetings conducted by Ummang at Nanavati Hospital. There I found a lot of people suffering from various ailments, mentally depressed. I made it a point to not get depressed. I have come to a conclusion that in such illnesses the attitude of the individual counts. I do a lot of reading, watch some T.V., attend dramas, but take extra care when in public places.

Coming back to my book on JRD Tata, it was extremely well received throughout India. It was also translated to Hindi and Marathi, as President Kalam himself suggested that the book be published in these languages. Writing books is my hobby. I don't let Parkinson's come in the way of my hobby, I still continue to write and will also do so in the future. I am looking forward to join singing classes in the near future as this is recommended by my physiotherapist and also because singing is my second hobby. Once again I emphasize that attitude of the patient matters the most.