

Parkinson's Fundamentals: Mental Health and Wellness

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My Background

**Research Coordinator
with Dr. Greg Pontone
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- Quality of life in PD
- Care partners for people with PD

**Postdoc at the National
Rehabilitation
Research & Training
Center on Family
Support**

- Anxiety related to On/Off Fluctuations
- Mild Cognitive Impairment
- Psychosis

**Doctoral Student in
Mental Health at Johns
Hopkins Bloomberg
School of Public Health**

- Interventions to improve quality of life for people with PD and their care partners.

Objectives

1. Become familiar with how mental health can be impacted for people with Parkinson's disease.
2. Recognize signs and symptoms of mental health issues in PD.
3. Review the best evidence treatments.
4. Discuss general wellness guidelines.

Dealing with a New Diagnosis

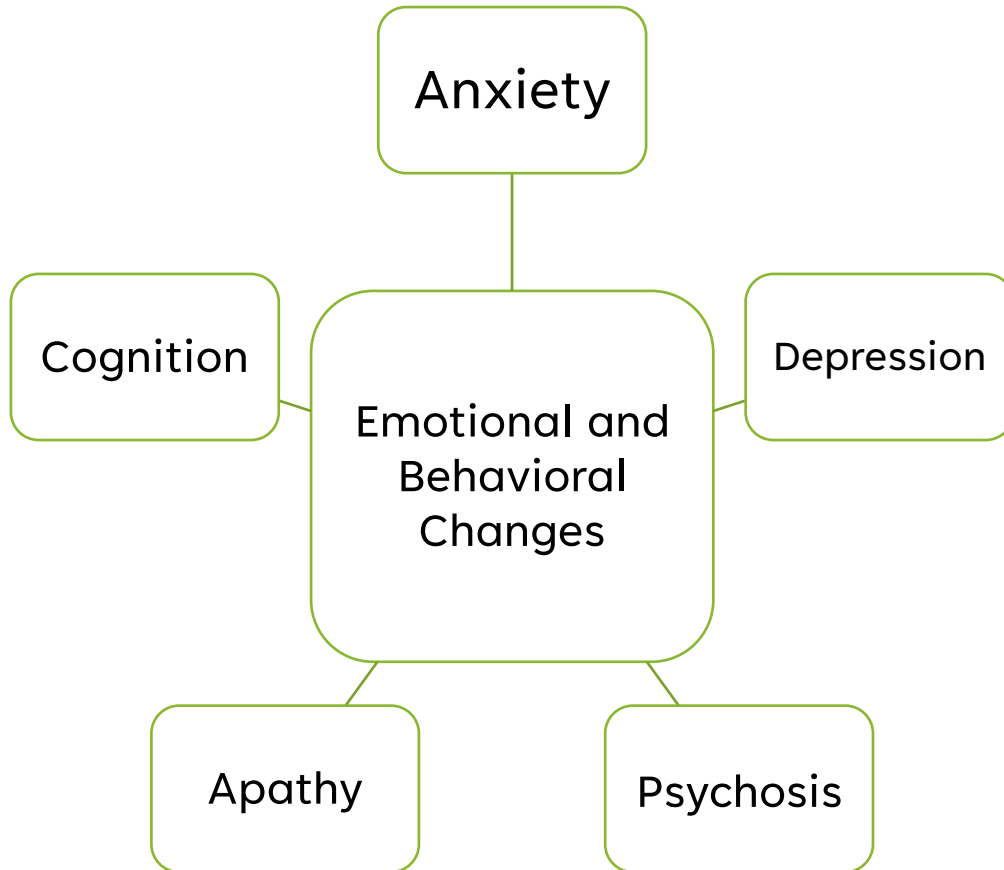
- People diagnosed with PD can experience a range of emotions and reactions:
 - Loss and grief
 - Body image and self-concept changes
 - Stigma
 - Uncertainty and unpredictability
 - Decreased quality of life
- Critical time to find resources to help move forward proactively

Mental Health in PD

An Overview



Mental Health in Parkinson's Disease



- Non-motor symptoms can impact your quality of life and social interactions
- You are not alone in your experience of these symptoms
- **Reminder:** *Not everyone develops every symptom of Parkinson's disease*
- Treatment can improve quality of life and functioning



Depression

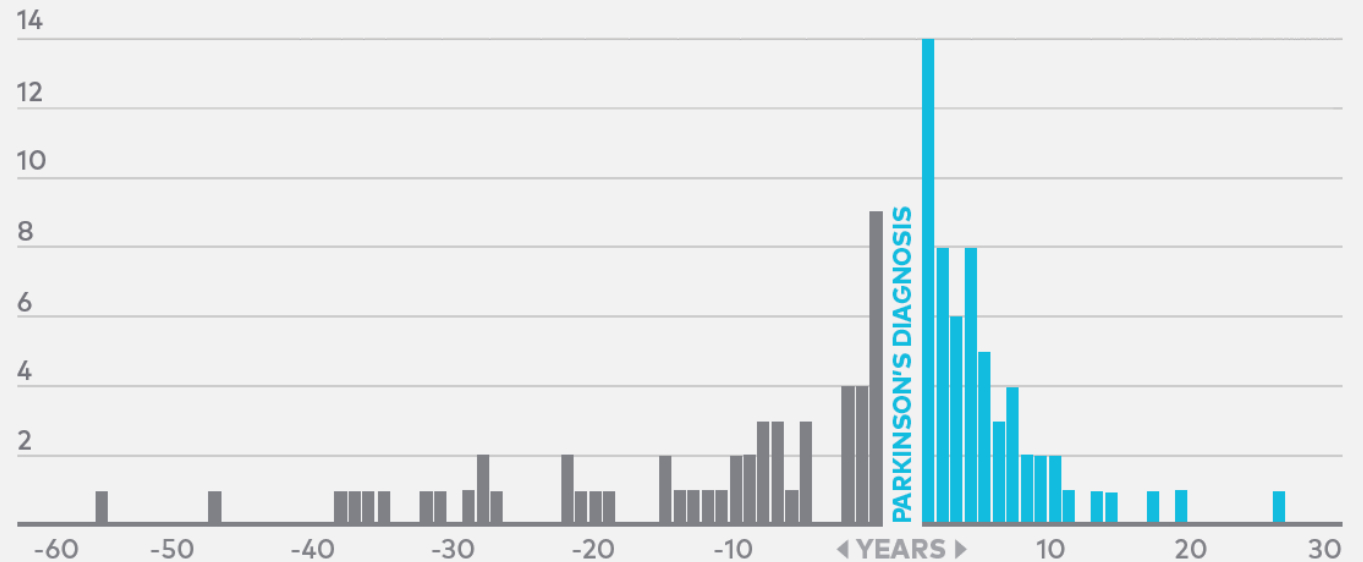


Depression

- Up to 50% experience some form of depression
- Tends to be more severe in people with worse motor symptoms.
- More likely to occur in people who experience severe cognitive impairment.

Duration Between Earliest **Depression** Episode and PD Diagnosis

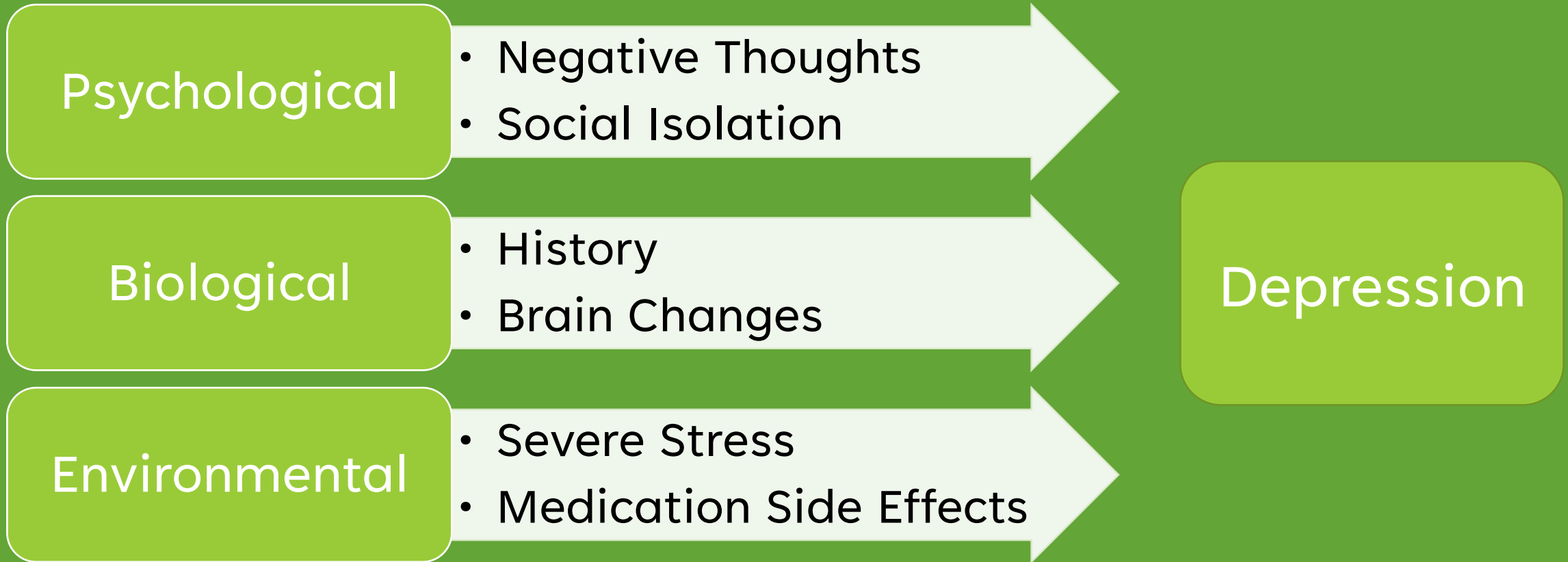
FREQUENCY



Ishihara and Brayne 2006



What contributes to depression?



How do you detect depression?

- A person must experience one of the following symptoms most of the time over the previous two weeks:
 - Depressed Mood
 - Loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities once enjoyed
- **Additional symptoms:**
 - Changes in sleep or appetite
 - Decreased concentration or attention problems
 - Increased fatigue
 - Feeling slowed down or restless
 - Feeling worthless and guilty
 - Suicidal thoughts or a wish for death

Most people diagnosed with a serious illness will feel grief or hopelessness at some point, but clinical depression is a distinct medical condition.

Challenges with Depression in PD

- Can be overlooked
 - Sleep problems
 - Feeling slowed down
 - Hypophonia
 - Facial masking
- Often undertreated
- Can interfere with a person's ability to function at home or work.
- Intensified by movement and cognitive symptoms of PD

Ask a care partner or loved one if they notice mood changes.

Discuss concerns with your healthcare team.

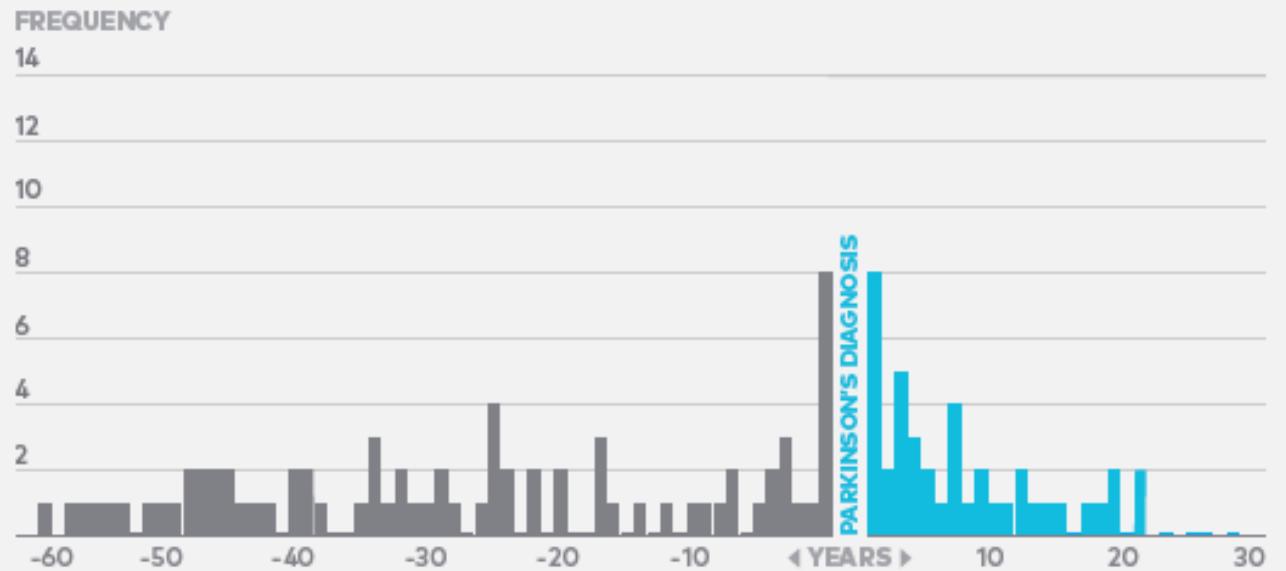
Anxiety



Anxiety

- Worry, unease or nervousness that persists and interferes with daily activities.
- Up to 55% have clinically significant anxiety symptoms
- 31% of people have an anxiety disorder.

Duration Between Earliest Anxiety Episode and PD Diagnosis



Anxiety Disorders

Type	Symptoms	Prevalence
Generalized Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Recurring thoughts of worry and fear- Worry more than is normally expected- Feeling out of control	14%
Panic Disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- sudden, severe sense of physical and emotional distress- Trouble breathing, heart attack-like symptoms	6.8%
Social Phobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Avoid everyday social situations because of fear of embarrassment- Social situations induce severe anxiety	13.8%
Specific Phobia	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Intense, irrational fear of something that does not pose danger.	13.0%
Anxiety Not Otherwise Specified (NOS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Anxiety that interferes with daily functioning.	13.3%

What contributes to anxiety?



Psychological

- Fears and worries
- Social Isolation

Biological

- Brain Chemicals
- “Off” periods

Anxiety

How do you detect anxiety?

- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle tension
- Sleep problems
- Increased heart rate
- Changes in blood pressure
- Increased sweating
- Hot and cold flashes

Tip:
Keep notes
about the
timing of your
symptoms.

Apathy

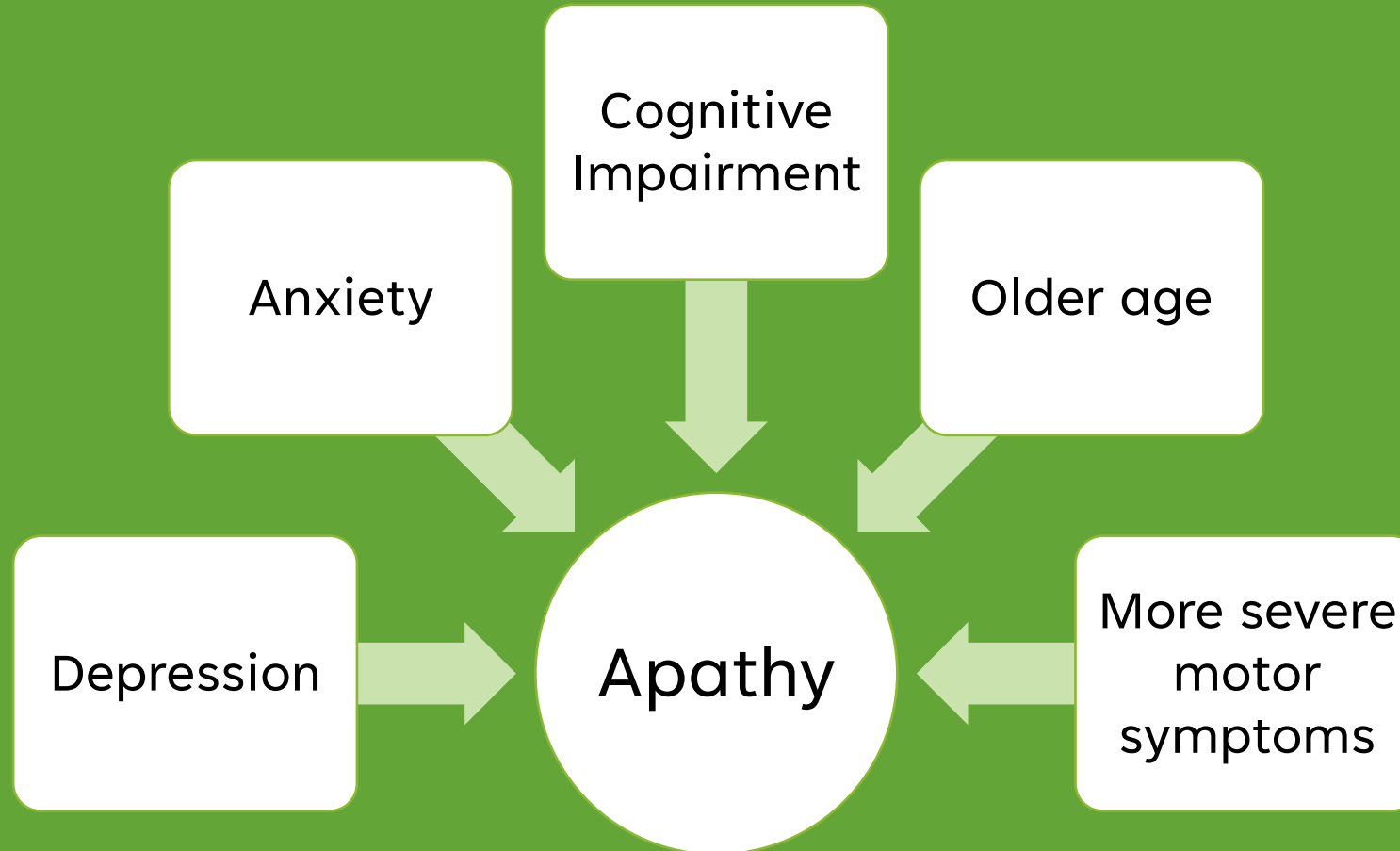


Apathy

- Lack of interest, enthusiasm or motivation
- 1/3 of people with PD
- It can be brief or long-term



What contributes to apathy?



How do you detect apathy?

Do you have energy for daily activities?

Does someone have to tell you what to do each day?

Do you have plans and goals for the future?

Are you interested in learning new things?

Are you neither happy nor sad, just in between?

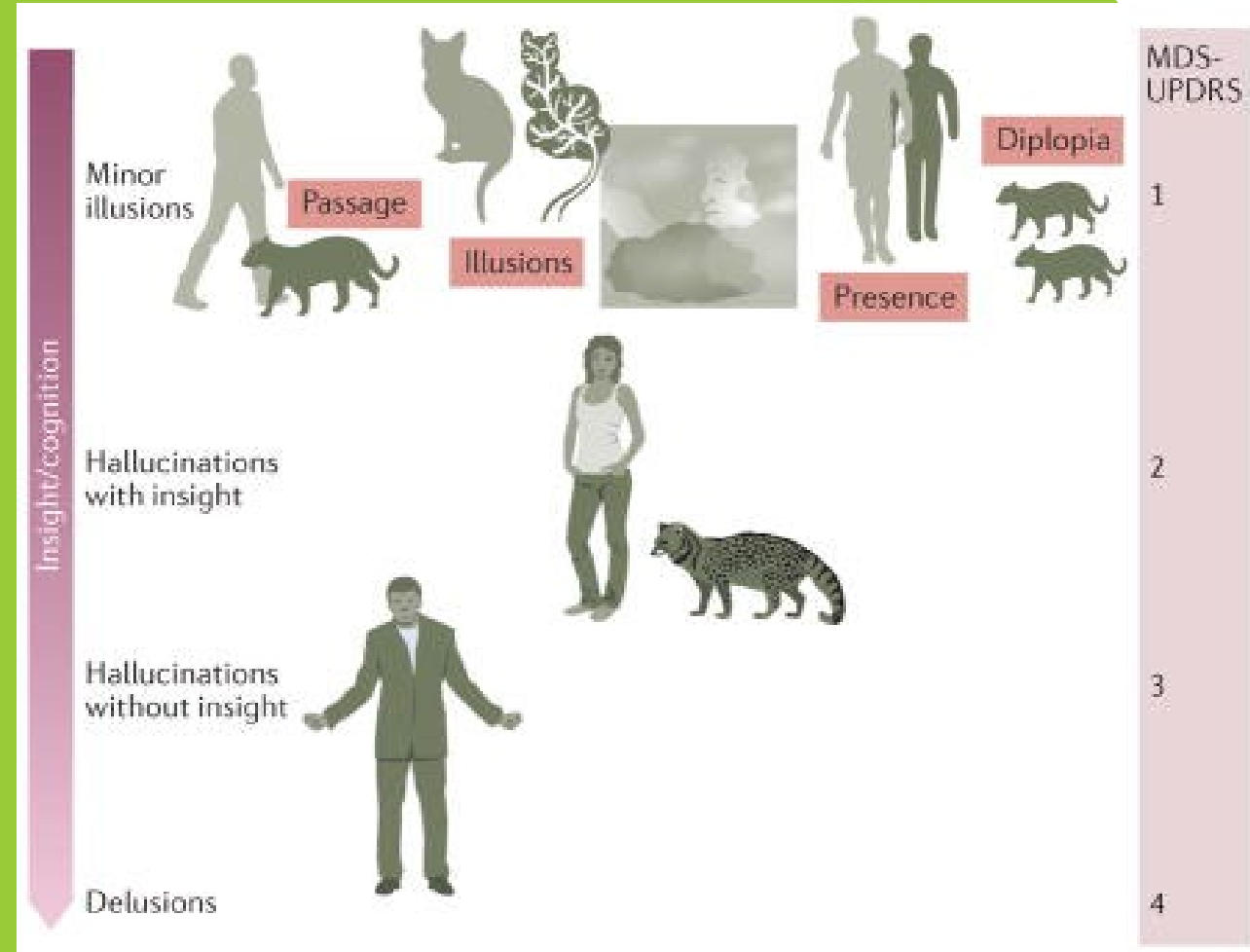
Remember that **apathy** is a **symptom** of the disease, and the person with PD isn't necessarily being lazy or making excuses.

Psychosis



Psychosis

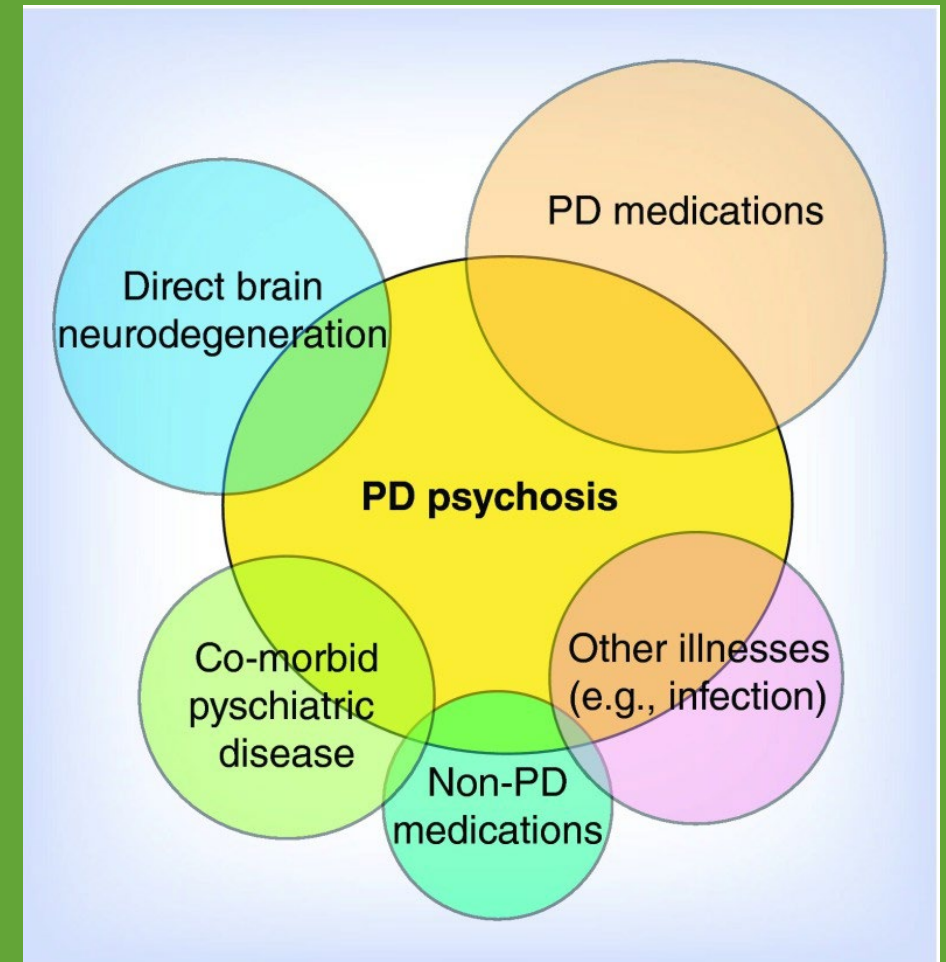
- Between 20-40% experience of hallucinations or delusions
- Illusions
- Hallucinations
 - Visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, gustatory
- Delusions
 - Jealousy, persecutory, somatic



What contributes to psychosis?

- Medications (dopaminergic drugs, anticholinergics, amantadine)
- Dementia
- Delirium
 - Infection
 - Imbalance of electrolytes
 - Other disease
 - Vitamin B12 deficiency
- Risk Factors
 - Depression
 - Sleep disorders
 - Impaired vision
 - Older age
 - Advanced or late-stage PD

Tip:
Keep an up-to-date list of your medications to share with your clinicians.



How do you detect psychosis?

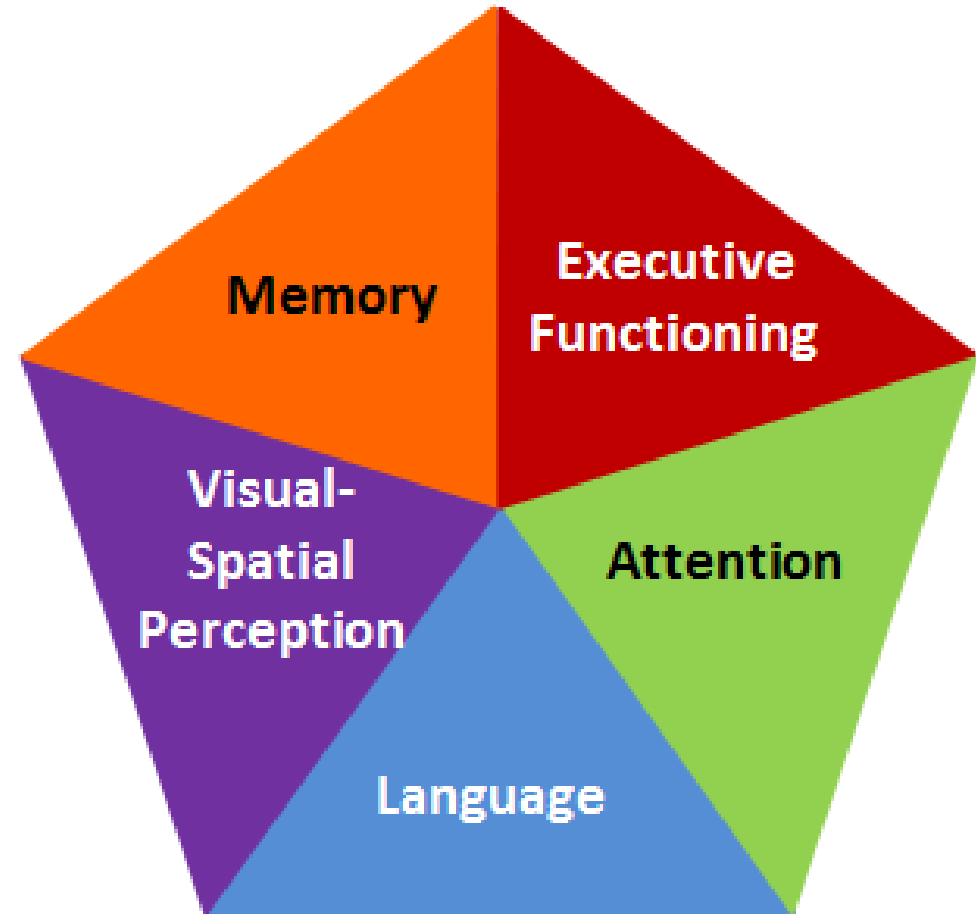
- Presence of at least one of the following:
 - Illusions
 - False sense of presence
 - Hallucinations
 - Delusions
- Symptoms occur after the diagnosis of PD
- Recurrent continuous symptoms for 1 month
- Exclusion of other causes

Cognitive Changes

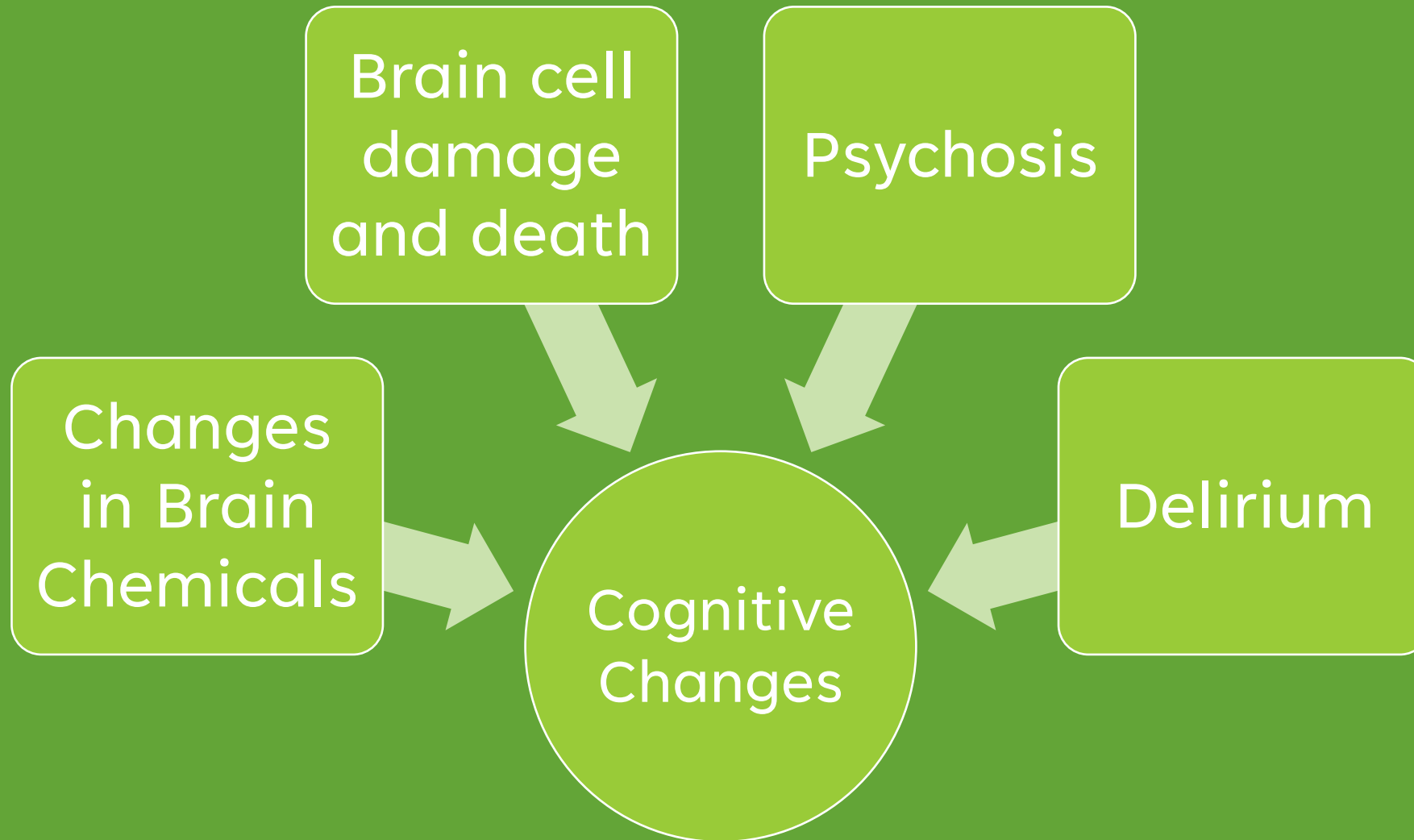


Cognitive Changes

- Mild cognitive impairment
 - Distractable
 - Disorganization
 - Finding it difficult to plan and accomplish tasks
 - Challenging to divide attention
- Approximately 50% of people with PD



What contributes to cognitive changes?



How do you detect cognitive changes?

	Changes
Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty with complex tasks that require maintaining or shifting attention• Problems with concentrating during a task.
Mental Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A delay in responding• Taking longer to complete tasks
Executive Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trouble planning and completing activities• Difficulties in generating, maintaining, shifting and blending different concepts
Memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty with common tasks (e.g., making coffee, balancing a checkbook)
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Issues with word-finding, known as “tip of the tongue” phenomenon.• Difficulty with language when under pressure or stress.• Problems in naming objects
Visuospatial	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Difficulty with measuring distance• Difficulty with depth perception

Treatment Options



Mental Health Support Team



Neurologist

Diagnosis and treatment of PD.



Primary Care Provider

Manage overall health



Social Worker

Connect with important resources.



Psychologist/Counselor

Coping with diagnosis and managing stress.



Neuropsychologist

Diagnosis and treatment of cognitive and behavioral disorders.



Psychiatrist

Diagnosis and treat psychiatric disorders, including prescribing medication.



Occupational Therapist

Help develop healthy routines to maintain physical and mental health.



Family & Friends

Provide social support and can help recognize symptoms.

Depression Treatment

- Treatment Options:
 - Psychotherapy (e.g., CBT)
 - Medication (e.g. SSRIs)
 - Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)
 - Experimental Therapies
 - Lifestyle interventions:
 - Exercise
 - Social support
 - Nutrition
 - Complementary therapies

Successful treatment of depression is one of the most significant ways to decrease disability and improve quality of life.

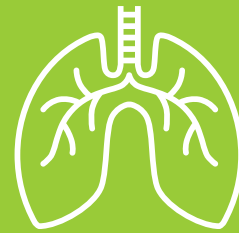
Guidelines to help prevent or get treatment for depression:

- Get screened for depression at least once a year.
- Discuss mood changes with your doctor.
- Bring a family member to your doctor appointments who can help you talk about depression symptoms.



Anxiety Treatment

- Medications
 - SSRIs
 - Benzodiazepines
- Psychotherapy
- Exercise
- Relaxation Techniques



Apathy Treatment



Psychosis Treatment

Controlling triggering factors

Treat infection

Balance electrolytes

Treat sleep disorder

Reduce medications

Reduce psychiatric medications

Reduce antiparkinsonian drugs

Add medications

Add atypical antipsychotics

Add cholinesterase-inhibitors

Psychosis Treatment



Caution:

Many antipsychotic medications can worsen motor symptoms and should not be prescribed for people with PD. Some of these medications, such as haloperidol (Haldol), are commonly prescribed in the hospital setting for patients who are agitated or anxious.

Treat in

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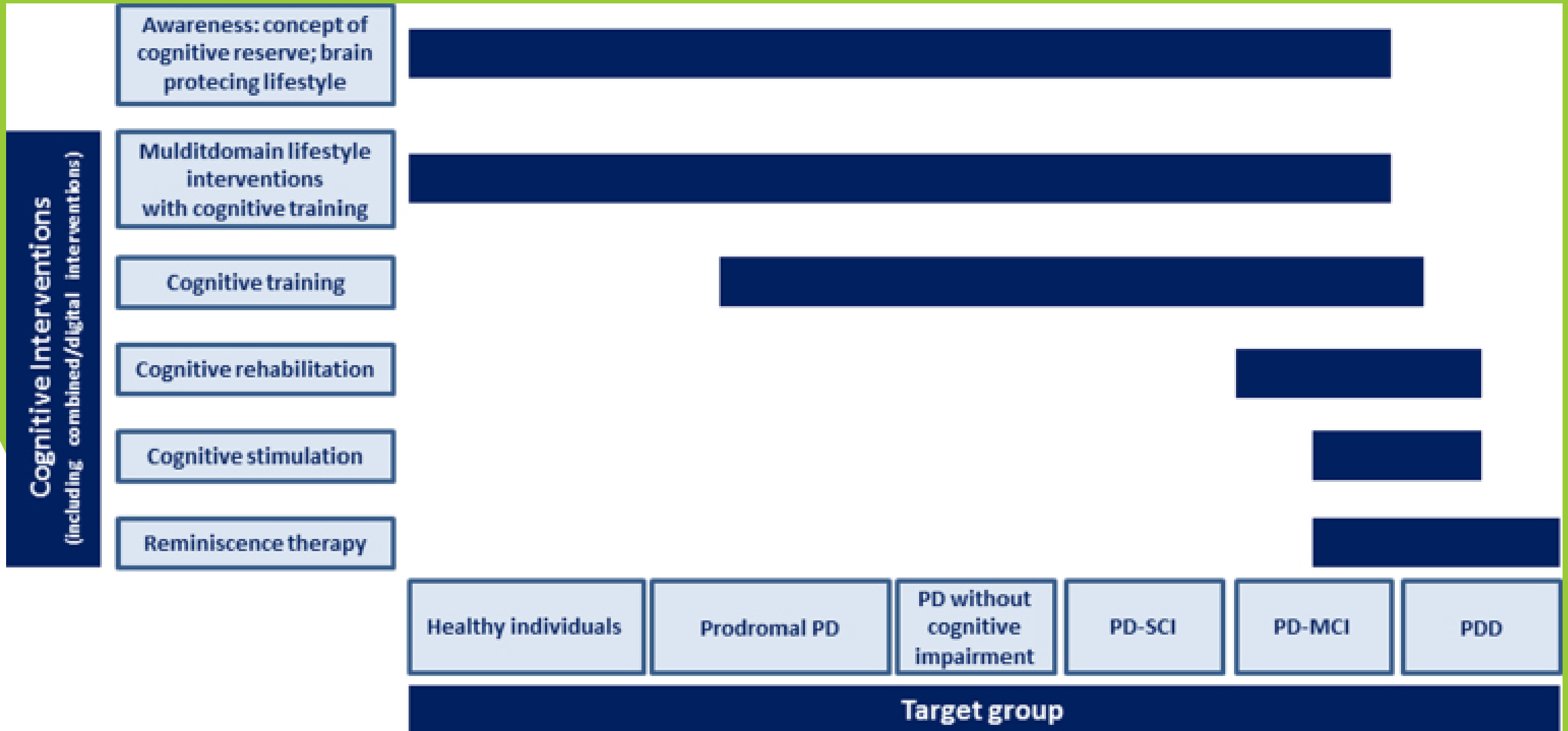
Reduce ps

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Add atypical

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Treatment for Cognitive Changes

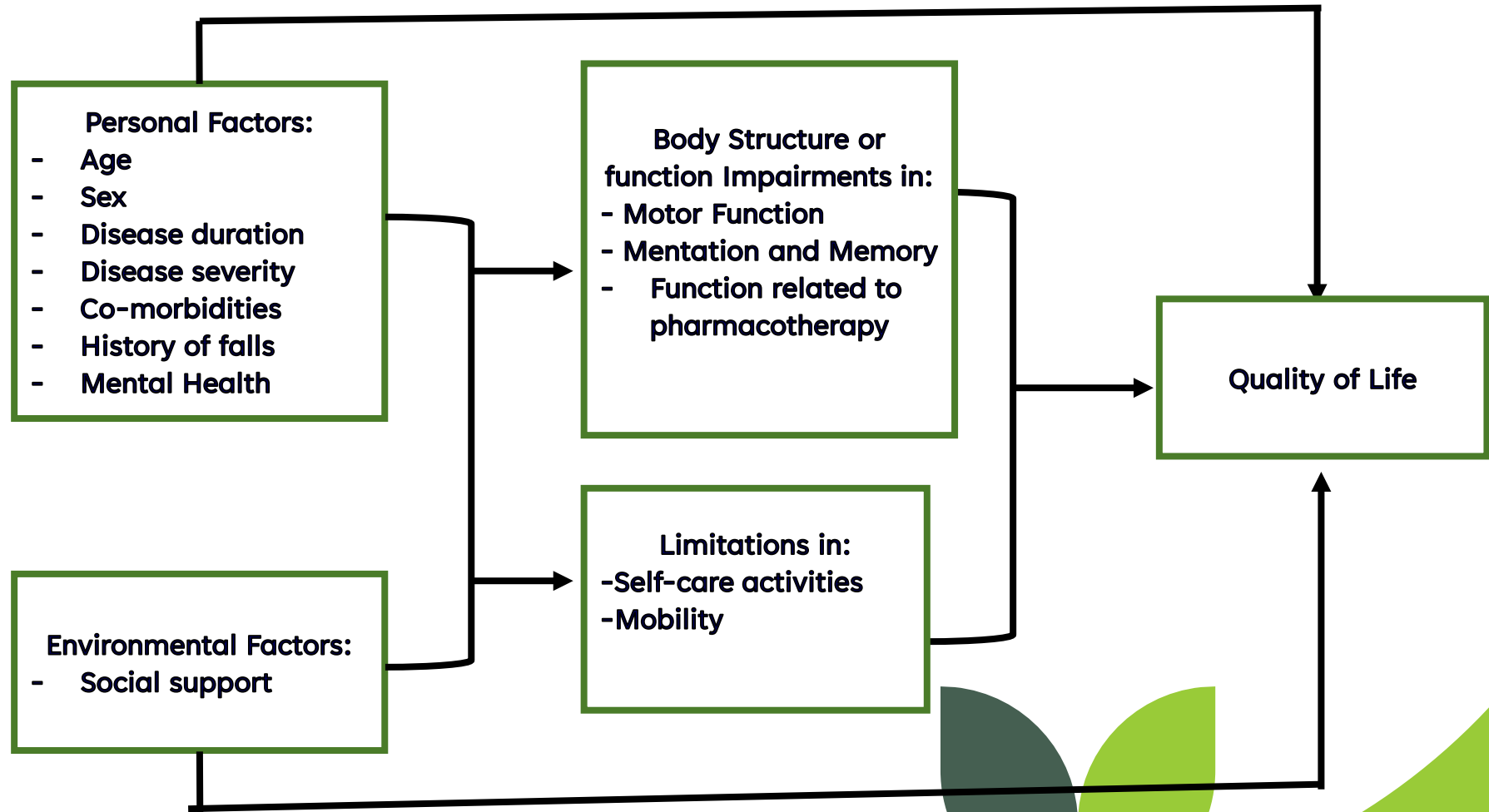


Quality of Life in PD

Perspectives of people with PD
and their care partners

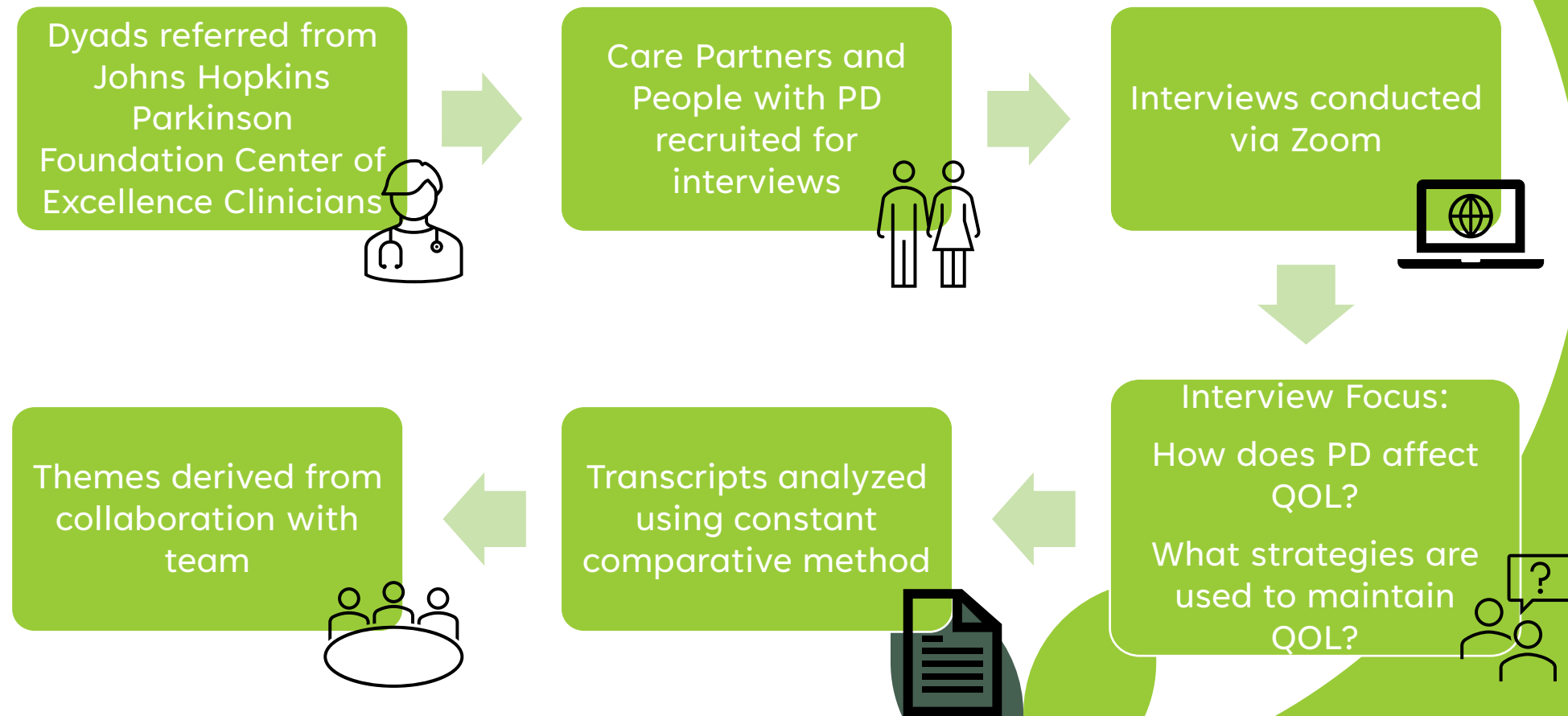


What affects Quality of Life in Parkinson's Disease?



Data Collection and Analysis

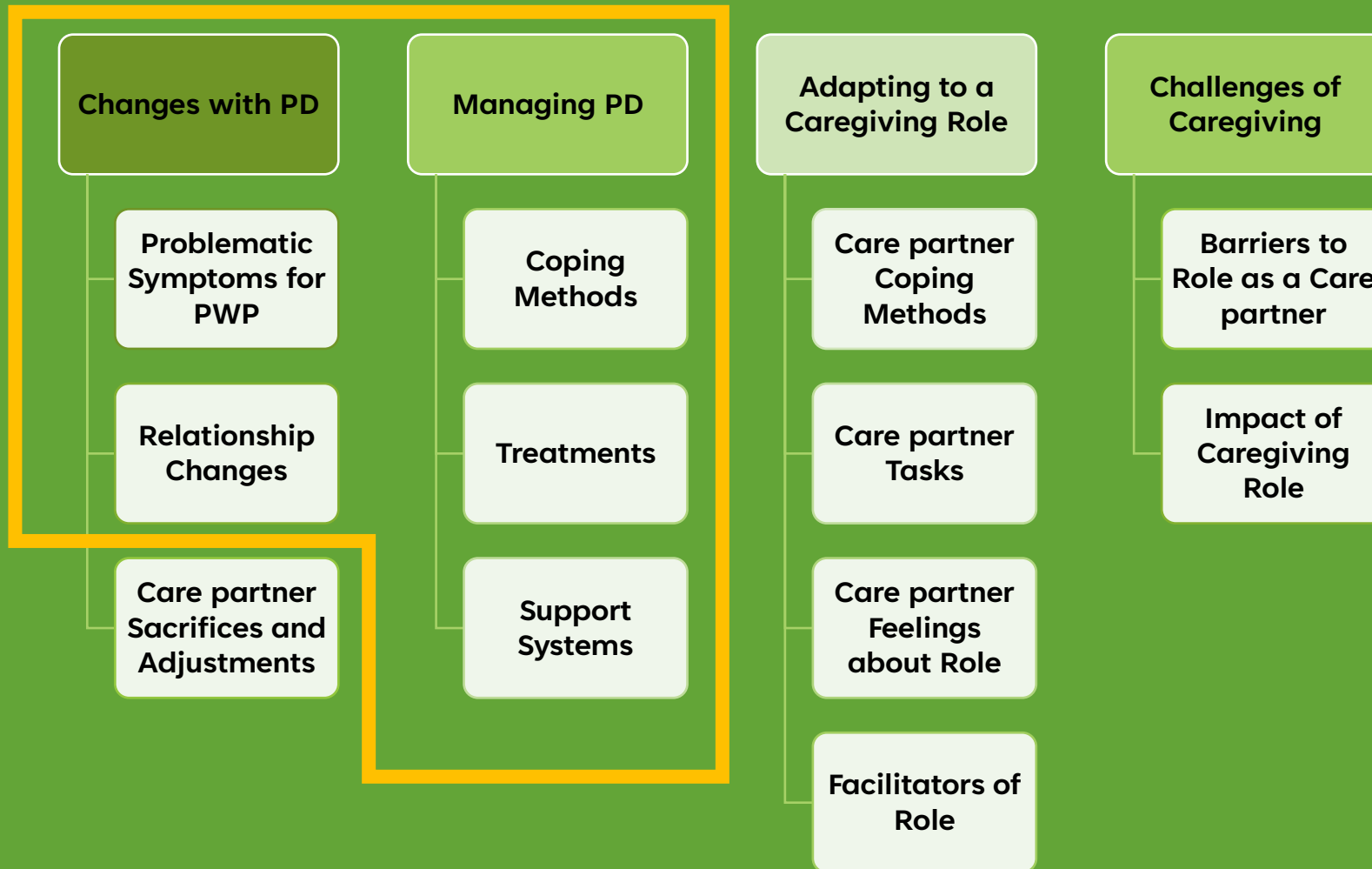
Aim: Explore care partner and PD care recipient perspectives on quality of life.



Study Sample Characteristics

Dyad Number	PWP Gender	Care Partner Gender	Relationship	Interview Type	Duration of PD (years)	PWP Reported Symptom Impacting QOL the Most
1	Male	Female	Spouse	Individual	7	Gait
2	Female	Male	Spouse	Individual*	7	Depression
3	Male	Female	Spouse	Individual	6	Tremor & Balance Issues
4	Male	Female	Spouse	Dyad	12	Communication/Speech
5	Male	Female	Spouse	Dyad	6	Depression/Hopelessness
6	Female	Female	Mother/Daughter	Dyad	15	Vision/Processing
7	Male	Female	Spouse	Individual	19	Anxiety
8	Male	Female	Spouse	Dyad	8	Anxiety
9	Female	Male	Spouse	Dyad	8	Sleep problems
10	Male	Female	Spouse	Individual	15	Tremor/motor symptoms

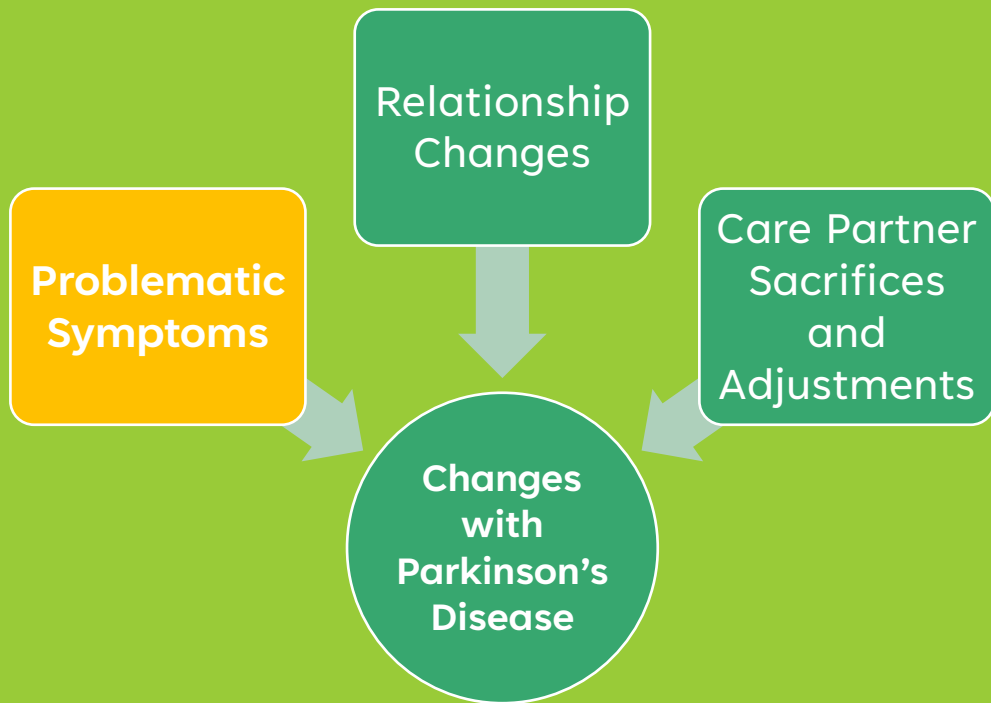
Key Findings



Theme 1: Changes with PD

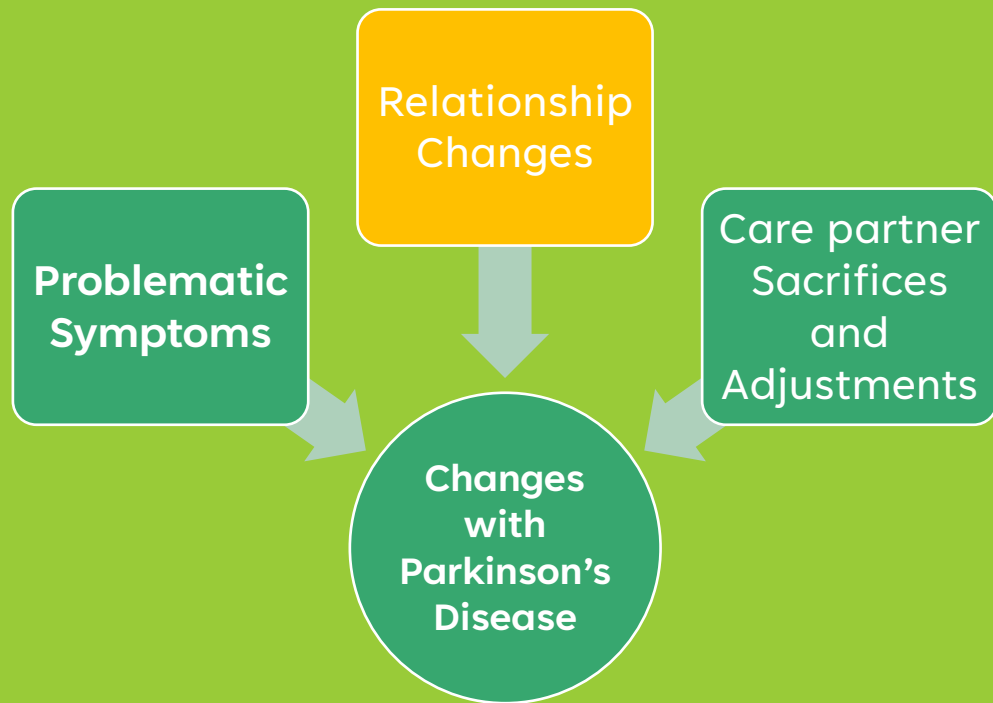
CP reported

PWP reported



	Care Partner Reported	PWP Reported
Anxiety	11%	50%
Apathy	11%	10%
Cognitive Impairment	66%	50%
Depression	22%	50%
Embarrassment	0	40%
Fatigue	33%	20%
Mood Changes	66%	30%
Motor Problems	66%	100%
Personality Changes	44%	0
Swallowing	0	20%
Sleep Changes	11%	20%
Social Changes	77%	90%
Vision Problems	22%	20%
Voice Changes	0	20%
Weakness	22%	10%

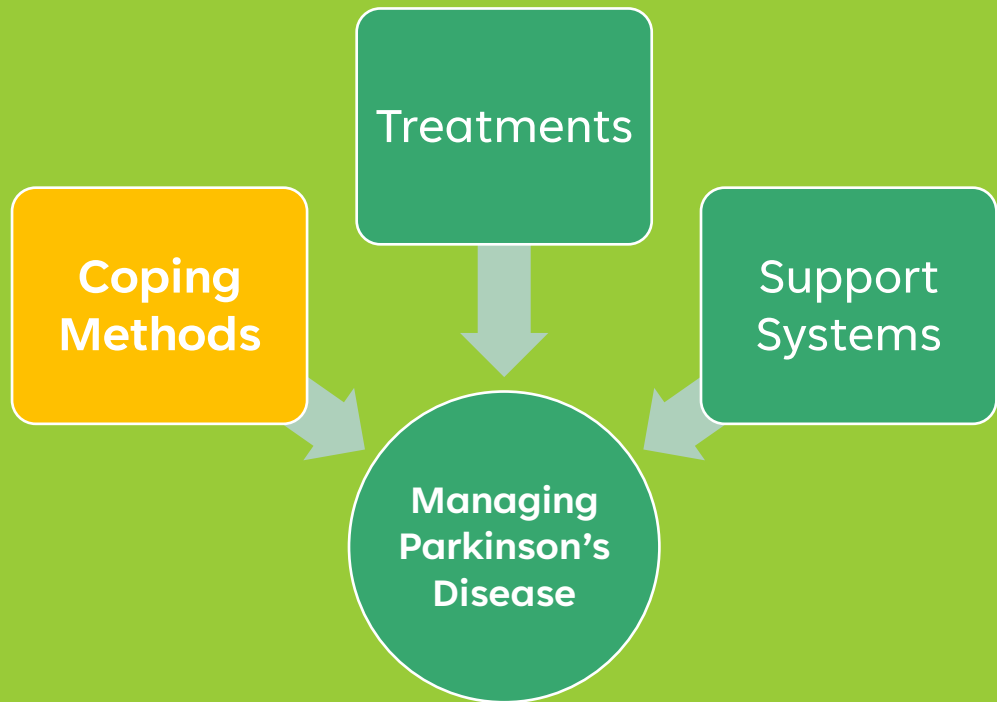
Theme 1: Changes with PD



“I've lost my partner, my friend, my lover, my confidant, everything and this other person is living here now. **I still love him. But he's not the same person. And he's not aware that he's not the same person.** He doesn't understand why I'm upset. He honestly has no idea what this has done to my life or our lives.” care partner 10

“I think our relationship is actually **at least as strong if not stronger,** than it was before Parkinson's.” PWP 1

Theme 2: Managing PD

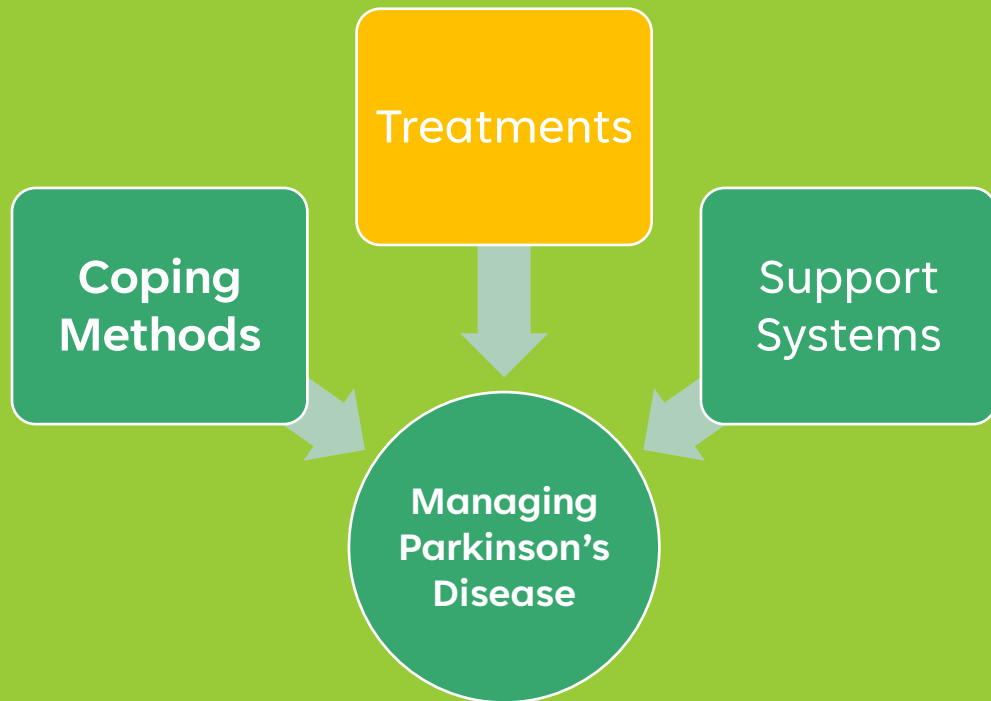


“I was active in the support group in [Place], there was a woman ... she had been in the role of sort of conducting the sessions. And she was wonderful.”

PWP6

“She had been doing exercise classes online with a with a Parkinson's group... But that was something she would do a couple of days a week and I'd set the zoom up for her and she do her exercises. **We know exercise is important.**” Care partner 6

Theme 2: Managing PD

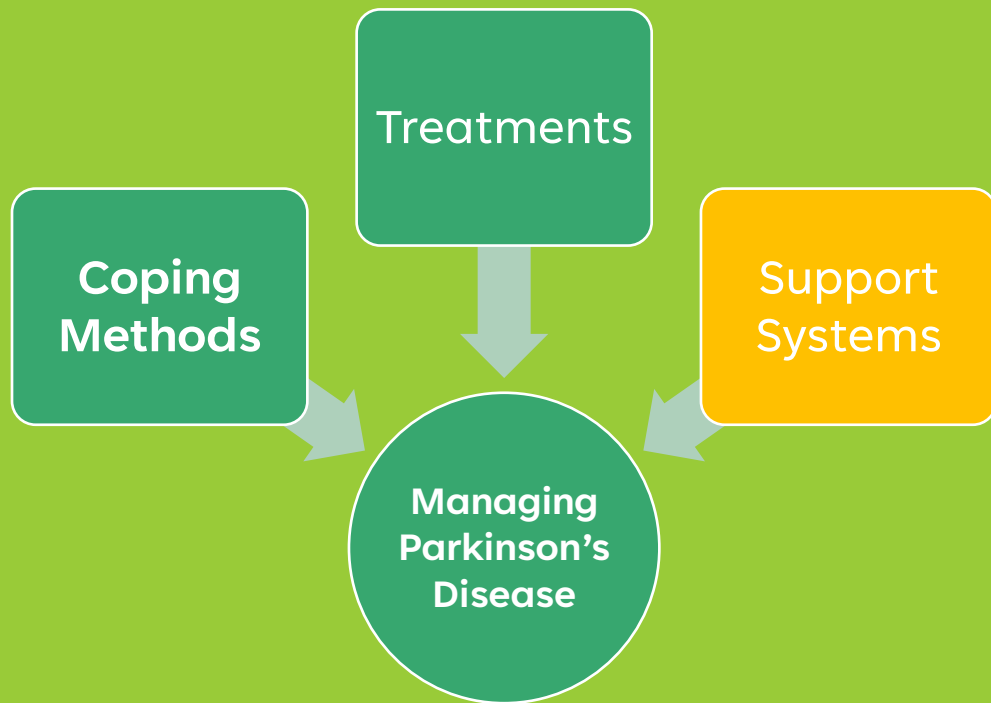


“I mean, Xanax, I get an anxiety attack almost every morning. Like around nine o'clock to 10 o'clock, I'll take a Xanax. And that'll kind of level off. I can't stand being in crowds anymore.” PWP8

“I went to therapy, and, you know, all kinds of I went through Neurofeedback and eventually got back on my feet, you know, in a better place, let's put it that way.” PWP2

“I've taken speech therapy several times and advanced speech therapy several times. It helps me when the vision become not the voice becomes halting.” PWP5

Theme 2: Managing PD



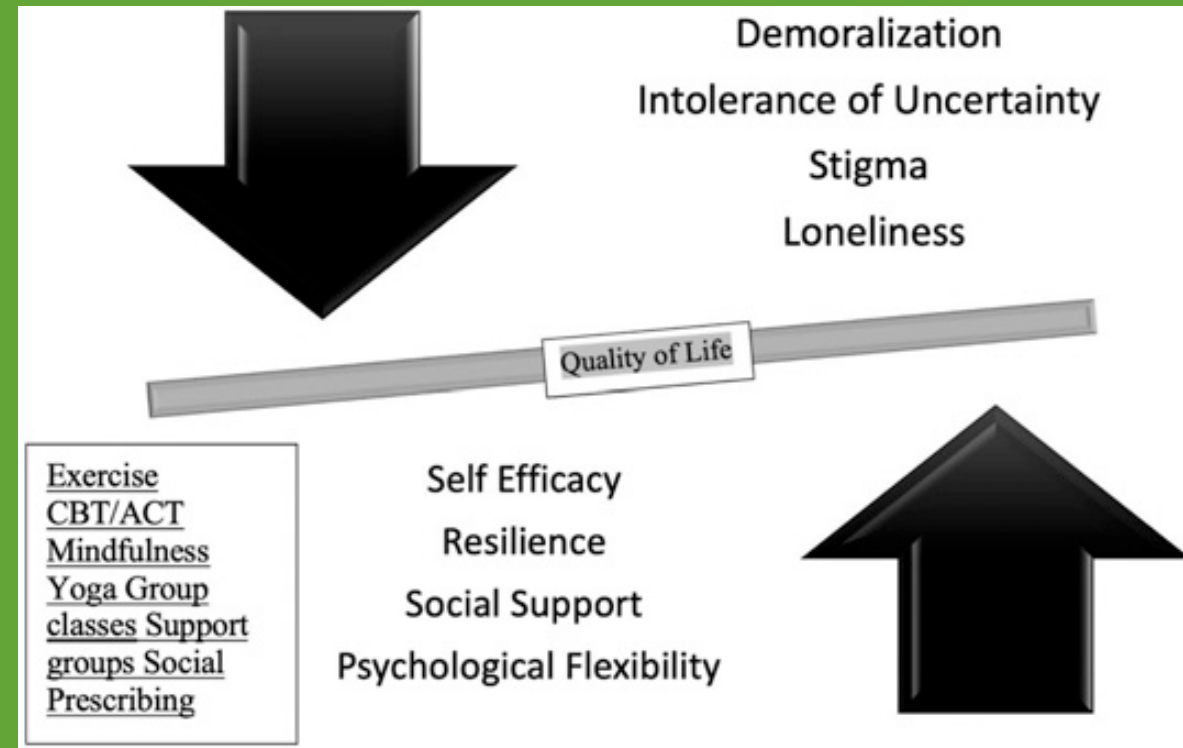
“I mean Rocksteady. I get there like about 20 minutes to 30 minutes early and some of the other boxers we shoot the shit, you know? And that's always nice. I actually go there early just to make sure I can converse with others, because they're in the same boat.” PWP1

“A spouse or significant other is a big part of it. I think and having living with someone who understands and appreciates what you're, what you're going through, is really reassuring to me.” PWP6

“Definitely have somebody to speak with someone who is aware of Parkinson's, and its effects on the brain.” PWP2

Wellness Strategies

- Seek Support
- Self-Compassion and Self-care
 - Do something everyday you enjoy
 - Socialize with friends, family
- Exercise
 - Strength training, aerobic activity, balance, agility & multitasking, flexibility



Activity for People with a New PD Diagnosis

From the Parkinson Foundation



What are some things that are most important to you?

1 Think about what is most important to you

Based on what's important to you, determine your personal goals and priorities. This will help you create an action plan to continue doing the things you love and care about most.

“The mind is not separate from the body. It directly affects the quality of life for people with PD and their care partners.”

– **Gretchen**, *person with Parkinson's diagnosed 2017*

Who is someone you can talk to?

2 Find someone **you can talk to**

“ We now have a whole network of people who understand. It may be hard at first, but connect with other people who are living with PD. You’ll be glad you did. ”

– **Karen**, *care partner, husband diagnosed 2002*

When you’re ready, we encourage you to talk to someone, whether that is calling our Helpline, **1.800.4PD.INFO (473.4636)** to ask questions, or reaching out to a family member or friend, or another person with Parkinson’s. Don’t isolate yourself, you are not alone.

What is a goal you can set to adopt or maintain a healthy habit?

3 Create healthy habits

Choosing healthy foods may help your medications work better and improve your energy. Getting enough sleep can help your body and brain recharge. Small changes can make a big difference and creating a healthy routine may help you feel better. Learn from others through our online community, **[Parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed](https://www.parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed)**.

What is an activity you enjoy doing?

4 Be active in whatever way **works best** for you

“Take a walk. Climb those stairs. Keep moving. Find activity everywhere you go.”

– **Dave**, *person with Parkinson's diagnosed 2004*

It's a fact: exercise can improve your quality of life. Visit our website, **[Parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed](https://www.parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed)**, to learn about the importance of exercise and find a Moving Day event near you. Get up, get out there, get active.

Thank You!

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