BWY and Parkinson’s UK partner to bring accessible yoga to people with Parkinson’s

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The British Wheel of Yoga (BWY), the UK’s largest yoga charity and National Governing Body for yoga in England and Wales, has partnered with Parkinson’s UK to make yoga more accessible for people living with Parkinson’s, their families and carers.

On Friday 10 April, to mark World Parkinson’s Day (11 April), the organisations will host a free 45-minute online chair yoga class designed specifically for people with Parkinson’s, those who support them, and yoga teachers keen to adapt their classes for this community.

Led by Special Yoga Teacher and BWY Tutor Richard Kravetz, the session will share safe, practical movements and breathing techniques that can be done seated, with or without additional support.

Recent figures from Parkinson’s UK estimate that around 166,000 people in the UK are currently living with a Parkinson’s diagnosis, with figures expected to rise due to an ageing population. Parkinson’s is a progressive neurological condition that affects movement, causing symptoms such as tremor, stiffness and slowness.

A recent study of the effects of yoga on people with Parkinson’s disease found that yoga improved motor function, balance, functional mobility, anxiety, depression and quality of life in people with Parkinson’s.

BWY Chair, Diana O’Reilly comments: ‘Yoga can be hugely beneficial for people with Parkinson’s. Gentle chair-based practices can be adapted for almost everyone, which means people can participate safely whether they are newly diagnosed or have been living with Parkinson’s for many years. Through this partnership, we want to give more teachers the tools they need to welcome people with Parkinson’s into their classes and to make sure no one feels that yoga ‘isn’t for them’.’

Jed Parsons, Physical Activity Delivery Manager for Parkinsons UK, comments: ‘I’m really excited about our partnership with the British Wheel of Yoga because it has the potential to make a genuine, lasting difference for people living with Parkinson’s. Yoga can be a powerful way to support strength, balance, mobility and wellbeing, but too often people feel that classes aren’t accessible or suitable for them.

By working together, we can give yoga teachers the confidence, skills and understanding to adapt their practice, create welcoming environments and ensure that people with Parkinson’s feel included from the very first session. This partnership is about removing barriers, challenging perceptions, and making it clear that yoga *is* for everyone, whether someone is newly diagnosed or has been living with Parkinson’s for many years.’

For full event details and to book your place, visit the event page: **https://portal.bwy.org.uk/user/events/1122**. Please note, you will need to create a free account on the BWY website or log in to your existing account to complete your booking.

About The British Wheel of Yoga

BWY is committed to sharing yoga’s transformative power and rich heritage through events and education. Guided by yoga’s principles and traditions, BWY’s mission is to enrich lives through yoga, increasing accessibility and inclusivity. Established as a registered charity in 1965 and recognised as the National Governing Body for Yoga by Sport England and Sport Wales, BWY serves more than 5000 members and is supported by a 100-strong local volunteer network and a small central team.

About Parkinson’s UK

Parkinson’s UK is the leading charity for people affected by Parkinson’s, here to support every Parkinson’s journey, every step of the way. The charity campaigns for better health and care, funds groundbreaking research into new treatments and runs life-changing support services, uniting a powerful community with one mission: improving life with Parkinson’s. Physical activity is a key part of this, helping people manage symptoms, stay mobile, build confidence and support their mental wellbeing. Parkinson’s UK works to make sure people with Parkinson’s have safe, inclusive and meaningful opportunities to move, stay active and remain independent for as long as possible.

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