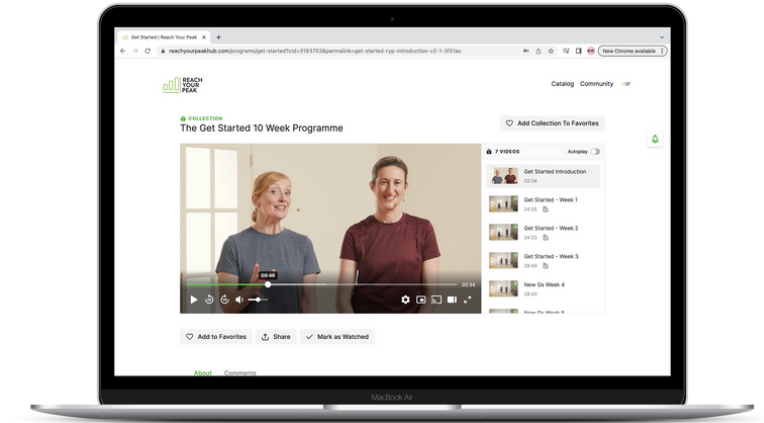


COMMUNITY SUPPORT AWARD

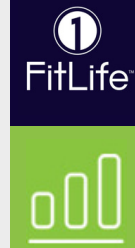
There is a growing body of evidence on the benefits of exercising for Parkinson's but forming an exercise habit is particularly challenging for this population. Access to online exercise can benefit many people with Parkinson's, ranging from those who are newly diagnosed and need to fit exercise into their lives, to those less mobile who struggle to access community classes. The collaboration between Reach Your Peak and 1FitLife has allowed us to create an evidence-based exercise programme which is suitable for a wide range of people with Parkinson's. It has beautiful content which engages and educates the audience, it's more than just online exercise.



AUTHORS

Reach Your Peak

An online exercise community for people with Parkinson's in the UK founded by expert physiotherapists. Our programmes provide education, expert advice, Parkinson specific workouts and access to like-minded people with Parkinson's. We empower people with Parkinson's to become their own expert at exercising for their condition.



1FitLife

A leading creative agency for wellness, health & fitness content. We bring years of specialist experience from different industries; rehabilitation, wellness, digital, TV & music, combined to create the perfect health & wellbeing content. We understand how to produce content that creates a powerful connection with the audience.

RATIONALE

There is strong evidence to support the benefits of exercise for people with Parkinson's (PwP) yet **PwP are about 1/3 less active than their age matched peers (1)**.

The barriers PwP report to engaging in exercise include (but are not limited to) lack of time, poor accessibility of exercise location, lack of an exercise partner and discomfort of seeing advancing symptoms of peers when exercising in a group (2). Online exercise programmes can provide an opportunity to address some of these barriers.

The **recommended exercise dose is 150 mins of moderate to vigorous activity each week (3)**. This is a challenging target to achieve and for someone who is not used to regular exercise may seem daunting. Therefore **understanding why exercise works** and how to steadily **build towards the recommended dose** is important for adherence and motivation.

Could we create a Parkinson's specific exercise programme which is delivered online and on demand to help teach PwP how to exercise for their unique set of symptoms and give them the knowledge and self belief to develop a lifelong exercise habit?

OUR OBJECTIVE

Produce an evidence based online exercise programme for people with Parkinson's that is engaging, fun, informative and inclusive.

- The programme should **build incrementally in intensity and duration** to gradually achieve the required exercise dose for clinical benefit.
- The participant should feel **engaged and supported** both by professionals and their peer group.
- Provide seated and standing exercise **variations to accommodate a range of abilities** and to provide the participant choice in consideration of their potentially fluctuating symptoms.
- The programme should include **education** regarding why & how exercise works for Parkinson's as well as how to develop a **lifelong exercise habit**.
- On completion of the programme participants should feel **empowered to be their own exercise expert** having increased their fitness levels and knowledge of Parkinson's specific exercise.

INTERVENTION

Reach Your Peak developed a **10 week programme of exercises** based on clinical experience, consultation with PwP and best available evidence. An **exercise handbook** was produced which supported the programme. It explains the theory behind exercise for Parkinson's and developing an exercise habit.

1FitLife coached the presenters on content delivery to ensure that **participants feel engaged and included** in the workouts despite remote delivery. Filming took place over 2 days and the workouts were edited to include **supporting graphics, timers and an upbeat soundtrack**.

Funding from Parkinsons UK (PUK) allowed us to offer the **programme at a subsidised cost**. It was offered to participants using social media and PUK information bulletins. There was an option for participants to receive just the **exercise handbook as a free eBook** instant download.

The **programme was delivered via our online gym** where participants can access their workout videos on-demand (at a **time & place of their choosing**). They were **supported via email and our community message board** in the online gym.

RESULTS

37 people have taken part so far....



20 people chose the free eBook

17 people chose the subsidised 10 week programme

We evaluated the data of the 17 participants who joined the exercise programme by asking them to complete a questionnaire before joining and on completion.

WE ASKED PARTICIPANTS HOW USEFUL THEY FELT THE EXERCISE PROGRAMME WAS OVERALL...



IT WAS RATED AN AVERAGE OF 9.5 OUT OF 10

OUTCOME & NEXT STEPS

The programme has received positive feedback from people who want to exercise online for their Parkinson's. We have gained some useful insights into potential improvements. The data will help us develop further exercise programmes and we are working on future opportunities for collaboration.

Our next step is to pilot a community-based hybrid version of Get Started in collaboration with local leisure centres. This will give participants of the Get Started programme the opportunity to exercise on-line and check in once a week to an in-person Get Started class in their local community.

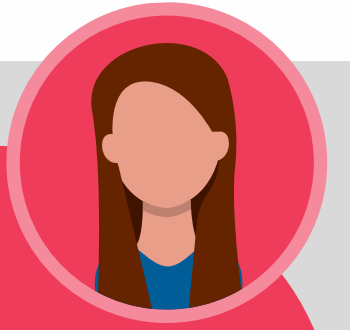


30 SECOND SIT TO STAND WAS USED AS A MEASURE OF STRENGTH. AN IMPROVEMENT WAS SEEN IN ALL WHO TOOK PART.



EVERYONE SAW AN IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR BALANCE.

TESTIMONIALS



“

I am still not at my 'Peak' as not up to 5 times a week, however it is my goal and I have felt my strength and stamina improve during the course.
- Arlene

”

“

I feel much fitter on completing the programme. I feel that I have formed better habits after completing the 10 weeks course and missed the routine of the exercise on completion. I have continued doing some exercise every day since. - Margaret

”



“

I had tried some exercises online and found them daunting. I couldn't keep up, getting very confused and getting down about it. However, the Get Started programme broke each exercise down into different levels, gradually increasing the involvement. At the beginning Reach Your Peak we're saying you have to train 5 x 30mins per week. I was thinking how on earth am I going to do that both in time and strength. Time - I wake up 10mins earlier. strength has gradually improved - Karen

”



References

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2. Schootemeijer S, van der Kolk N, Ellis T, Mirelman A, Nieuwboer A, Nieuwhof F et al. Barriers and Motivators to Engage in Exercise for Persons with Parkinson's Disease. Journal of Parkinson's Disease [Internet]. 2020; 10(4):1293-1299.
3. New Exercise Recommendations for the Parkinson's Community and Exercise Professionals, May 25, 2021, <https://www.parkinson.org/blog/awareness/exercise-recommendations>