

PARKINSON SOCIETY  
SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO

# MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT

for people affected by Parkinson's  
disease

[pssso.ca](http://pssso.ca)

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Try to make something  
good from a difficult  
experience.

**FRANK C. CHURCH**



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	INTRODUCTION
02	COLOURING SHEETS
03	JOURNAL SHEET
06	MEDITATION
08	MUSIC
10	EXERCISE
11	MENTAL WELLNESS
12	RESOURCES FOR YOU

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## ABOUT US

When you or someone you love is diagnosed with Parkinson's, the first question often asked is "Where do I go?" Our answer is simple: *home*. Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario is *home*. Home for all those living with Parkinson's Disease in Southwestern Ontario. Home for you to find services, workshops, and groups dedicated to growing the support and community around Parkinson's Disease. Home for education and research initiatives built on spreading awareness, care, and support for Parkinson's Disease.

But most importantly, *home* for You.

Please note all information provided in this toolkit is for information purposes only. Please be sure to ask your healthcare professional before addressing any of these topics on your own.

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# INTRODUCTION

Up to 50% of those living with Parkinson's have anxiety symptoms. Care partners are at risk of anxiety too and should consider reaching out for help if they need it.

Reaching out to a network of friends and peers (or to PSSO) is a start for support. They can share what worked for them if they had a similar challenge.

Additionally, this toolkit is your all-in-one guide to relaxation containing colouring sheets, journal sheets, a meditation and music playlist, and other resources for you.

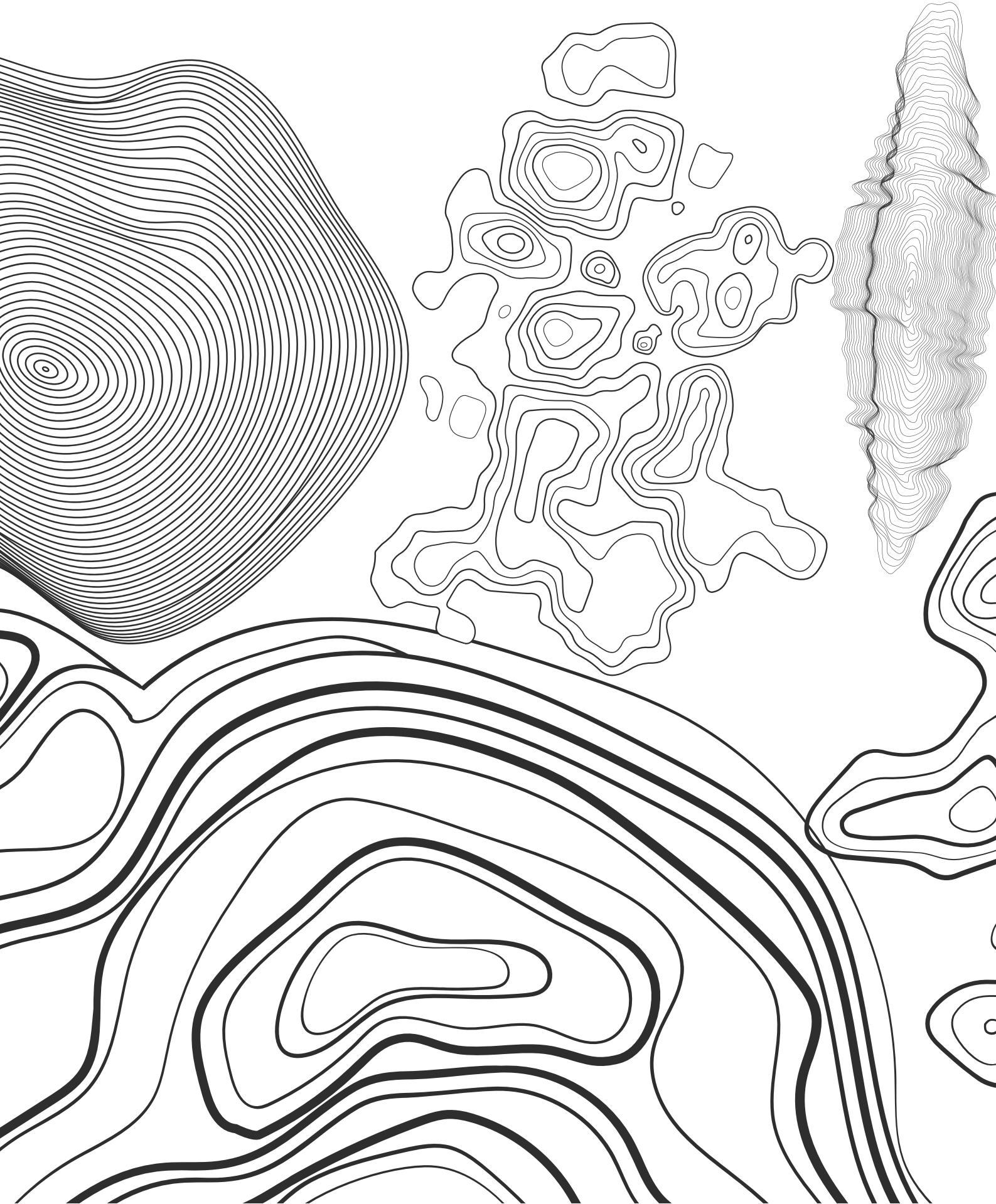
# COLOURING SHEET

A colouring sheet may feel like a simple thing to do but it has the ability to relax you. By colouring, you relax your amygdala which is a part of your brain responsible for fear.

A simple activity like colouring can also help you lighten your mood and reflect, creating a similar effect as meditation. This provides a sense of calm and peace, helping you focus on the present.

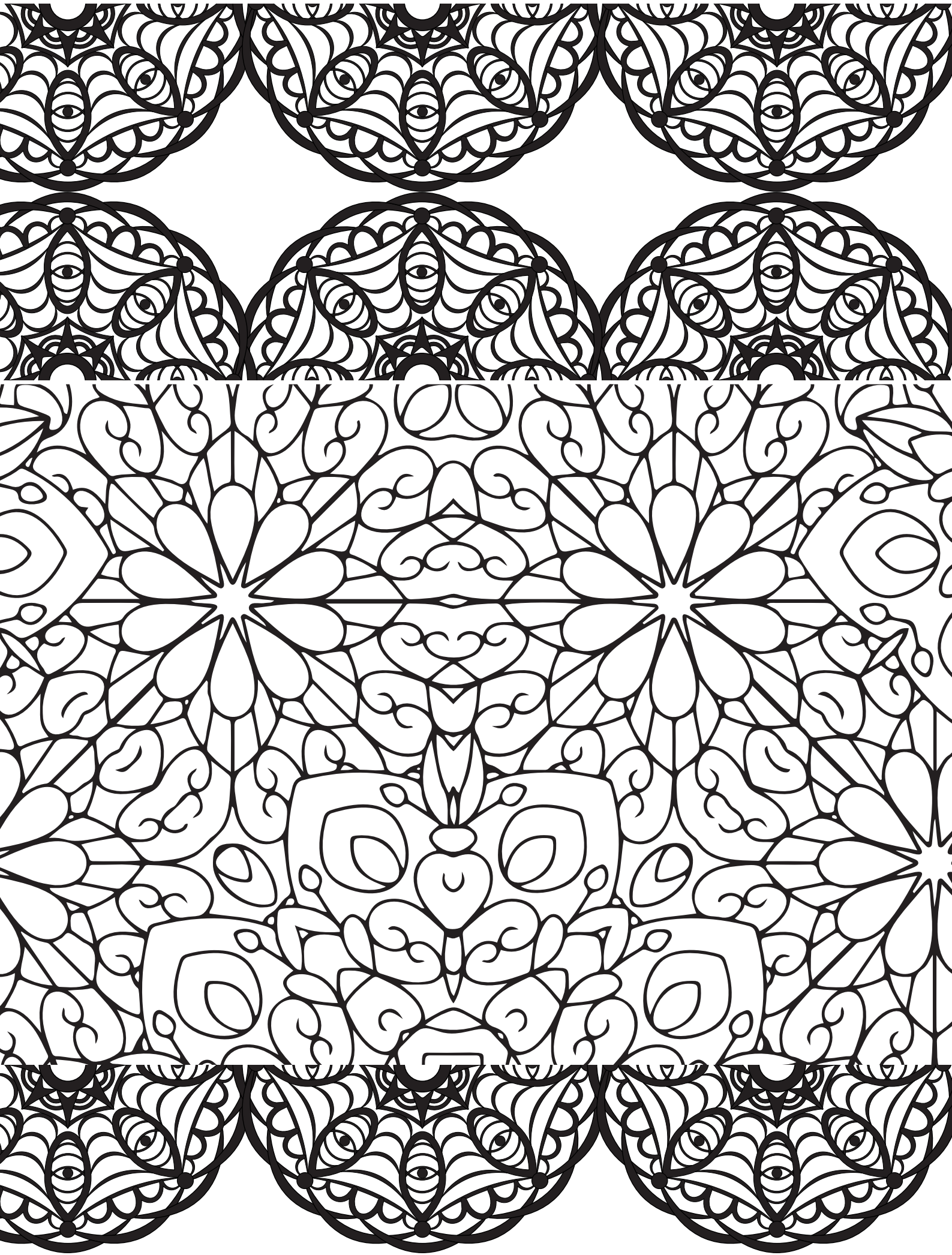














# JOURNAL SHEET

Journaling is an important tool to help you track your progress and growth. You can journal about your goals and aspirations which can inspire you to work towards them. Journaling is also an activity that can help improve your self-confidence while reducing your anxiety.







# MEDITATION

Meditation helps gain perspective when you are stressed. It can help you manage yourself while focusing on the present, allowing you to not focus on negative emotions and experiences you may be having.

Meditation has cognitive benefits in terms of memory and decision-making. It is often beneficial to meditate in the morning as you may not have a lot to worry about and can set the tone for the rest of your day.

Mediating regularly can also leave you in a happy mood as it increases your serotonin and dopamine levels- the "happy" hormones.

# MEDITATION

BREATHE IN... BREATHE OUT... AND  
SCAN THE QR CODE FOR A  
MEDITATION PLAYLIST!



If you are unable to scan the code, use this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6egHdOU-Cn8>



# MUSIC

Music is a great tool to help you de-stress as it reduces anxiety and improves mood. It can be used as a way for the person with Parkinson's and carepartner to connect as you will engage together in a fun way! It can also be used as an expressive outlet for your emotions during stressful times.

There are additional cognitive benefits of music such as improving memory and task endurance. Singing along to music and enjoying it may also increase your oxytocin levels, leaving you feeling more positive and energetic!

You can join Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario's Music Choir for therapeutic singing led by an accredited music therapist.

Use this link to sign up:

<https://psso.ca/programs-services/parkinsons-music-choir/>

# MUSIC

SCAN THE QR CODE TO LISTEN TO  
PSSO'S VERY OWN MUSIC CHOIR!



If you are unable to scan the code, use this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6egHdOU-Cn8>



# EXERCISE

Exercising is key not only to your physical health but also to your mental health. In addition to reducing your risk of sickness and improving your strength, exercise can help you de-stress and relax. When you exercise, stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline are reduced which can decrease your stress and anxiety.

You also release endorphins when you exercise which act as natural painkillers and boost your mood. Exercise is also a social activity that you can engage in with your loved one, it can be a good time to bond and help you both relax.

You may want to consider some of the following:

- Yoga
- Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Aerobics
- No Contact Boxing
- Dance

You can use this link to see the exercise groups available through Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario and join an exercise group:

<https://pssso.ca/programs-services/exercise-groups/>

# MENTAL WELLNESS

It is often helpful to seek ways to support one's mental health such as joining counselling programs, exercise groups, and support groups.





# MENTAL WELLNESS

**Counselling Programs** enforce conversations with someone about your challenges. Counselling services can help ease stressors such as adapting to a Parkinson's diagnosis, workplace uncertainties, sharing a diagnosis with family and friends, depression and anxiety, etc.

**Exercise Groups** can be an important part of your plan to treat and manage Parkinson's disease. Studies have shown exercise to reduce the risk of Parkinson's and to slow its progression. Exercise can help you avoid isolation as many people exercise with a group of friends or family, making exercise a social activity.

**Support Groups** are a great way to join a community of other carepartners. Support groups can help nurture a positive and supportive environment helping you share your feelings and experiences. It may also help you cope with the challenges. You can learn about new resources and coping methods while socializing with a supportive group.

# RESOURCES

Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario is here for you. We offer a supportive community that you can join:

- **Counselling Program:** For more information on our counselling services, visit <https://pssso.ca/programs-services/counselling-program/>
- **Exercise Groups:** To find out more about our exercise groups and programs offered in your area, visit <https://pssso.ca/programs-services/exercise-groups/>

# RESOURCES

- **Support Groups:** Our support groups can offer assistance, for more information visit <https://pssso.ca/programs-services/support-groups/> to join a support group
- **Young Onset Parkinson's Disease Support Group:** <https://pssso.ca/programs-services/young-onset-parkinsons-disease-yopd/>
- Follow our social media accounts and check out our website to learn more about Parkinson's Disease, join our live webinars, participate in our events, and learn how you can be involved!

# RESOURCE APPENDIX

- <https://pssso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Parkinsons-Update-Magazine-Issue-77-1.pdf>
- <https://www.beaumont.org/health-wellness/blogs/health-benefits-of-coloring-for-adults#:~:text=REDUCE%20STRESS%20AND%20ANXIETY,a%20long%20day%20at%20work.>
- <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/health-wellness/healtharticle.7-benefits-of-keeping-a-journal>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/exercising-to-relax>

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