Positive step for those with Parkinson’s - video transcript 30/1/14

Narrator:

Watching Zofia Joshi dance you would not think she had lived with Parkinson’s for five years. She is uncomplaining, saying she doesn’t shake much and only endures sporadic stiffness. Remarkably, when she dances, any rigidity disappears.

Zofia Joshi:

Physically it makes me feel good – it’s a form of exercise, lets face it, at the end of the day, its fun but it is exercise. The mental aspect is being aware of your partner and being able to respond to his movements.

Professor Meg Morris:

People with Parkinson’s find it very difficult to move, and that’s partly because they have a problem with the internal queuing of their movements and what the music does it to trigger the movements that are trapped inside.

Narrator:

La Trobe University’s Professor Meg Morris is a world-renowned expert in Parkinson’s. In conjunction with dance researchers at the University of Melbourne, she is at the centre of break through trials using dance to assist to alleviate some Parkinson’s symptoms. She is helping lead a global study into its healing effects.

Professor Meg Morris:

People with Parkinson’s have low dopamine levels and what the dancing does is to increase dopamine and serotonin, and other neurotransmitters to make people fell better but also move quickly.

Shane Murphy:

My balance has gone right out the window, so even standing here still now I’ve got to constantly think about it, otherwise I’d be taking ten steps back. The discipline is in the dance, in moving forward from the hips, it just makes you think about it a bit more about stepping and how you’re standing.

Narrator:

The dancing for Parkinson’s project is run with a growing consortium of people worldwide. Professor Morris collaborates with colleagues in Italy, Amsterdam and Ireland.

John Sewell was diagnosed with Parkinson’s more than thirteen years ago. He finds the dance classes help him mentally as well as physically.

John Sewell:

It gives you a better balance, for a start. Overall it’s fun to do, it’s always important to enjoy it.

Narrator:

Global momentum for professor Morris’ expertise in treating Parkinson’s and running the dance program shows no sign of abating. This year she will return to work with colleagues in Europe.

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