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## TIME TO REST AND RENEW

by Marion Davis, M.D.  
Jones, OK

Control is something every post-polio person has worked very hard to achieve in various ways and to various degrees. First is the superhuman struggle to breathe independently on a respirator or rocking bed, or the massive effort to wiggle a big toe, or move a thumb a half inch. That is the start of taking control of one's life after Polio.

Next in the recovery of the control process may be renewed control of a paralyzed bladder or leaning to operate a brand new wheelchair after the big body sag gets a semblance of control. Another step may be putting on a back brace and long leg brace and attempting to control a pair of crutches that seem to have a mind of their own.

Later, come new driving techniques with hand controls and finding a job to bring about at least partial financial independence. Driving a car seems to represent the ultimate in control and freedom. Behind the wheel of a car, a disabled person feels a part of the world - with power beneath the hood, wheels that go far and sometimes fast, and control of the power steering like you wouldn't believe. That is control to its fullest. That is independence and 'being normal'.

Then, 30 or 40 years down the highway of life, come the late effects of polio - Post-Polio syndrome, Post-Polio muscular atrophy. Call it what you will, the changes that creep up on the Post-Polio body and mind bring

about alarming limitations, devastating discomfort, frightening dependency, and the hard-won control starts slipping.

A weakened leg may suddenly refuse to move from accelerator to brake. A fatigued arm reaches for a casserole in the oven and goes into space or totally balks at gripping the dish. Once agile fingers that could run a scale on a piano, type a letter or thread a needle with efficiency suddenly refuse to perform the fine movement of putting on an earring or tying a shoe. A formerly upright back that has supported the trunk so straight and proud for so many years gradually starts folding forward, and bringing about sagging bust and drooping head. Driving a car and loading a wheelchair become too much.

The hard-earned independence is slipping away. The eagerly sought control over life is moving beyond our grasp. This is not the end of the road although there are times when we may be convinced that it is. There is an answer.

A revision in lifestyle is the answer. The Polio survivor, whether experiencing mild or severe Post-Polio syndrome, must give himself permission to slow down, to accomplish a little less than the superhuman achievements of the past.

For the first time since the Polio virus short-circuited the anterior horn cells that send the messages to tell muscles to move, the Polio

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## STRESS

by Peggy Moe  
NPSA Lincoln member

Stress--I guess it finally caught up with me. No matter how much I want the knot in my stomach, the tears and frazzled nerves to go away--it's still here. So I have to change what I can in my life to try to deal with it.

Being a Lincoln Area Representative for NPSA has been very rewarding, and I have learned a lot. But it is a lot of work and has become very stressful for me. I've been trying to do too much. So my physician and family have convinced me it is time for me to resign as co-representative, and to take a break from these responsibilities for awhile.

I have learned that just having a chronic illness causes stress because it strains your body, your mind, and your spirit. So just learning how to cope day by day is stressful. The stress you feel, chronic illness and pain all feed on one another. I needed to try to break this pattern.

It's difficult for me to admit I'm having problems because I can't handle stress. It makes me feel wimpy and out of control. But I know that it is so. It's the right thing for me to do for now.

### **INGENUITY, KINDNESS SELL MANY NPSA COOKBOOKS**

NPSA is so lucky. We have some wonderful members and friends. Take, for instance, Lucile Thomas of Hebron. Lucile decided she just wanted to do something nice for NPSA. So she placed an ad in the local paper, set up an NPSA Cookbook display in the window of Thomas' Jewelry, and put herself in the cookbook-selling business. Soon Elaine O'Neal began doing the same thing in her Hebron beauty shop, and before long the Thayer County Bank followed suit. Kindness is catching.

Omaha's Judy Kellerman took a box of books to her church's Christmas Bazaar to sell, and Sue Morfeld of Norfolk has been pushing the books for us at flea markets around the state.

Judy Bradford, Hastings Area Representative, had a neat idea. For the Hastings Area group's NPSA Cookbook and Bake Sale at Imperial Mall, she gift wrapped a number of our books and displayed them with a sign reading "Gift Wrapped for Your Special Cook." Terrific.

In Metairie, Louisiana, Fern Brownsberger took a number of books to sell to her polio group members there. Ima Jean Davi-

son and Jean Slagle of Ogallala hung a flyer at work and sold NPSA Cookbooks for us.

Chadron Area Representative Sheryl Marchant has had wonderful success selling the books to residents of nursing homes for gifts to their families and friends.

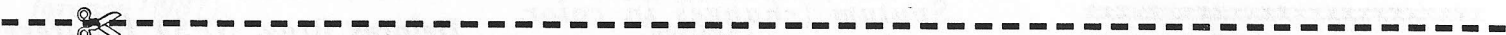
The Editor of the Polio Survivors Newsletter of the Pacific Northwest in Seattle and Joan Headley of the International Polio Network in St. Louis both volunteered to mention our Cookbook in their publications.

The stories go on and on--we cannot begin to tell you about all of the great things people are doing in our behalf. We are truly blessed.

If you want a Cookbook or want to help us sell them, you can still order from NPSA. The books are \$7 each, with a USA mailing fee of \$2.50 for 1 to 5 books and \$3.75 for 6 to 10 books. We will bill the mailing fee separately in shipments outside the USA.



Lucile Thomas



I want \_\_\_\_\_ books at \$7 each--Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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**SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER ONLY**, payable to NPSA (Please allow several weeks for delivery)

Send books to:    Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone # (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

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### TIME SOMEBODY TOLD ME

*Time somebody told me  
That I am lovely, good and real  
That my beauty could make hearts stand still.*

*Time somebody told me  
That my love is total and so complete  
That my mind is quick and full of wit  
That my lovin' is just too good to quit.*

*It's time somebody told me  
How much they want, love, and need me  
How my spirit helps set them free  
How my eyes shine full of white light  
How good it feels to hold me tight.*

*Time somebody told me.  
So I had a talk with just me...nobody else...  
'Cause it was time somebody told me.*

*Submitted by Judy Bradford  
Hastings NPSA member*

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### NPSA OFFERS VIDEOS FOR COST OF MAILING

*Learn more about the Late Effects of Polio. Hear what leading polio doctors have to say about your polio problems. Borrow NPSA's VHS videos from the Fourth International Polio Conference (1987).*

*This offer is for Nebraska residents only at this time. Send your name, address, and phone number along with the title of the tape you want to view (one at a time, please). Enclose a check made out to NPSA for \$2.65 to cover the cost of Priority Mailing the tape to you. You must return the tape by Priority Mail within seven days--on time and undamaged.*

*These are the titles:  
1. Muscle Weakness*

- 2. Fatigue*
- 3. Pain*
- 4. Sleep, Breathing, and Swallowing*
- 5. Exercise/Weight Control*
- 6. Bracing, Mobility, and Seating*
- 7. Psychology of Disability*
- 8. Coping With Stress*

*We will also loan a tape of the Bernie Siegel, M.D., author of the bestseller LOVE, MEDICINE, AND MIRACLES, entitled AN EVENING WITH DR. BERNIE SIEGEL. The same guidelines apply for borrowing all tapes.*

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### TIME—from pg 2, col 2

*survivor must learn to rest more. She can no longer push beyond the point of fatigue. He can no longer exercise past the point of pain. They can no longer work at two jobs, raise a family and volunteer for a dozen jobs in that many organizations.*

*It is time to rest and renew. Overworked muscles must be protected from strain. Jangled nerves must be allowed to restore themselves. Frazzled minds must stop pushing to remember and ragged emotions must have a chance to collect themselves. Both must be set on crusamatic for a while.*

*Only then will restoration take place. Then we will be back in control of our lives once again.*

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**BUCK AND WING-ING IT**

Sounds idyllic, doesn't it--early retirement; hours, days, months spent at my leisure, lounging around with a book in one hand and a soda in the other.

No hacking through ice and snow on darkened winter mornings to get to work on time. No pressure to meet daily deadlines. No tangled traffic, no impossible bosses.

Ah--but also no paycheck. It's not the loss of income that bothers me so much, though goodness knows that's a major adjustment in itself. It's the way I feel not being ABLE to earn a living that is hard to deal with.

Apparently along the way I learned that personal worth is measured in dollars. In order to BE SOMEBODY, I had to be paid for what I did. "That good-for-nothing hasn't had a job in months." "Of course he knows what he's talking about, he earns six figures." Credibility, validity

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**NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE  
CHANGE CHANGE CHANGE**

Jane Smith, a Clarkson Hospital nurse, will give a slide presentation regarding PAIN AND HUMOR at the January meeting of NPSA's Omaha Area Support Group.

Since our regular meeting date falls on New Year's Day, we have rescheduled for January 8. Be there at 2 p.m.--IBM Building, 450 Regency Parkway (use the North door).

See you then for much information, fun, and fellowship!

as human beings are somehow transmitted through earning power.

I always tried to be the best. Sometimes people asked me to work for them, and when they did that, I held all the cards. I could dictate the terms. Here's what I'm worth to you. ...what I am worth.

Then one day I could no longer continue physically in my profession; I had to find a sedentary job. Yet it meant a paycheck. Somebody still thought I was worth something.

But for the past four years I have known that I could no longer do what it takes to hold a job. Occasionally my head would try to kid me into believing that if I did this--or that--my body would miraculously rev itself into action again and I'd be back in business.

But in my heart I knew it wasn't true. And after a brief period of trying one more time to reclaim what I used to have, who I used to be, I'd sink back to the realization that it wasn't working--and neither was I.

I've had to face the fact that this is it. I am who I am today. Yesterday is gone. And TODAY I'm o.k. with that. But, oh, there are times when I'd sure like to be out there under the lights tapdancing.

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Nancy B. Carter  
Nebraska Polio Survivors Assoc.  
P.O. BOX 37139  
Omaha, NE 68137  
(402) 895-2475

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