

It is difficult to sum up in a few words the way in which Buteyko has helped me to deal with my COPD. That's why I haven't attempted to do so up to now.

But for fortune, I may never have seen the tiny advertisement in the local paper and gone along to the day long conference on COPD organised by our local BreatheEasy group volunteer. I learned more that day and in the subsequent BreatheEasy meetings than I would have got from my GP in a month of Sundays.

I found out about the British Lung Foundation which, as well as research, runs a telephone advice line and puts out really great DVDs and printed information. I met people running Pulmonary Rehabilitation courses and specialists in the medications, both NHS funded but not promoted at all by my local GP's surgery. Most importantly, I joined my local BreatheEasy support group and it was a member there who handed round some of Linda Meads' leaflets, as he had just done a Buteyko weekend workshop in London and benefitted tremendously.

As I said, but for fortune.... In the two and a half years since my diagnosis I have done Pulmonary Rehab twice and followed it up with regular trips to the gym- something I had never done before. Physical exercising and doing the Buteyko exercises may not stop the progression of my emphysema or extend my life, I know that, but they do enable me to have a better quality of life with less drugs and, so far, no further hospital admissions, than would otherwise be the case.

Just about the most debilitating aspect of the lung disease has been the severe limitation on mobility- I can only walk a very short distance and I cannot walk uphill at all. In town I get about on a mobility scooter but the thought of never being able to walk in the countryside again or enjoy the view from a hilltop really upset me. Last year, before the Buteyko course, an idea came to me that seemed completely absurd but it wouldn't go away; that if I could get back on a horse I could enjoy the countryside again. I had given up riding nearly twenty years before due to arthritic and other problems and although I had hankered after it I really felt that it was impossible. Now, with a death sentence hanging over me and nothing to lose, I went for it! Linda encouraged me all the way.

I have been riding again for 14 months and I have even done a bit of dressage and jumping. I am nearly 63 and I thank Linda and Buteyko for enabling me to turn around the nightmare and have some fun in the time that remains to me.

Jyoti

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