

## Restored or Renewed with a Diagnosis of Dementia

*Insights from a person living with Lewy Body  
by Robert Bowles*



Restoration is defined as, "that which is restored or renewed." After being asked to write this article, I reflected on my entire life. My parents led me to develop a strong faith. That faith has sustained me through my journey with Lewy Body Dementia (LBD) which is now in its fifth year.

During my professional career which included 38 years of owning my pharmacy, I rarely took time for restoration. My Dad was a workaholic and I was too. Most weeks were consumed with 60 to 80 hours of work... still taking time for church, family, community, and recreation. Restoration was never to the extent of slowing down and smelling the roses. I approached recreation just as I did work. Am I proud of this? Absolutely NOT.

Being diagnosed with LBD at the age of 64 was like being hit by a Mack Truck. Several months after diagnosis, I began feeling as if I was a convicted murderer... the physician had entered the charges, the jury had found me guilty, and the Judge had issued the death sentence without appeal.

My life experiences beginning as a child have enabled me to accept my diagnosis of dementia, have a positive attitude, maintain being socially active, and find my new purpose in life. I strongly believe that these four things will improve the journey with dementia.

Through my prayer life and six months after diagnosis, I realized that my life was not over. God still had purpose for me. It was through this experience that I realized I could do the same thing after diagnosis that I did while practicing pharmacy... love my patients, care for them, educate them, and assist them with things that might be taking place in their lives. To accomplish this purpose, I just had a different venue.



Purpose is a motivating part of life. Without purpose we will struggle. It becomes difficult to face tomorrow. There is no light at the end of the tunnel. All too often without purpose, we do not know what to do, what to think or what to say. We are groping in darkness.

Finding this purpose transformed my life. It gave HOPE. It gave me the desire to get outside of myself and think of others. No more wallowing in the mud could be part of my life. I had a mission that I needed to complete.

Following this purpose has provided RESTORATION in a manner that is beyond my comprehension. The peace that I have is beyond what I could have imagined.

Eighteen months after being diagnosed, my colon ruptured resulting in an ileostomy. Three months later, the ileostomy ruptured. It took 13 months to get over what took place. Thanks to God, I came out of it stronger. January 2015, I began a website [LBD Living Beyond Diagnosis](#) and a Facebook Page, [Lewy Body Dementia Beyond Diagnosis](#).

Realizing there is life beyond diagnosis, TRUE RESTORATION occurred. Focusing on other people instead of myself enabled me to have a better quality of life. Yes, the road with LBD is a difficult journey. It is a very complex disease.

Fortunately for me, my memory is still in the MCI range. My processing and retrieval have declined. My Parkinson's symptoms have increased. My audio and visual hallucinations, nightmares, and dream acting have increased.

Some mornings I feel that I have been hit by that MACK TRUCK. Over the next one or two days as I recover, I realize that I have learned something that I can use to help others. Peace and joy are part of restoration. These things allow me to forge ahead with LBD.

I challenge each of you regardless of your situation to find RESTORATION and your own inner peace.

### **Fight Like a Tiger - Be LBD Strong**

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