

Successful Living with Arthritis

Best Friends in Sickness and in Health

Meet Sara Carr and Beth Wiese

Sara Carr and Beth Wiese have been best friends for a long time. They live in the same community, have many of the same friends, attend Bible study together, and when they were both **diagnosed with osteoarthritis**, they decided to face this challenge like they do everything else: together.



Both women discussed their treatment and management options with their doctors before deciding they wanted to try a **natural option** first. Beth began researching local classes and soon came across an exercise program sponsored by the Arthritis Foundation. She and Sara enrolled in their community's class, though they both were skeptical at first. Soon they saw that "Women came in on walkers and could still do the exercises!" That isn't surprising **considering the exercises can be completed either sitting or standing, and can be easily done at home**. Both Sara and Beth quickly realized they were mistaken. "I tried it and I thought there was nothing to it. But then I woke up the next morning and was actually sore," recalls Beth.

As Sara and Beth have continued with their exercise classes, they have noticed results. They both report **significantly reduced pain, improved flexibility, and a better quality of life**. "My husband and I are doing things together and going places," says Beth. "Yes," agrees Sara, "I do more walking and more outings. **I don't dread getting up in the morning because of my arthritis pain.**"

Their partnership has helped them remain accountable, "Beth calls me if I don't show up to a class," Sara admits, "and we look at each other to make sure we're doing what we're supposed to during the class."

No Need to Slow Down

These classes have become **a regular part** of Sara's and Beth's lives. As Sara reflects on how the exercise classes make her feel, she says, "I think exercise is my key. When you wake up you're slow and feel like a sloth. By the end of the day, you're like a monkey." And Beth agrees, "**Arthritis exercise means so much to me. I can tell if I miss even one class.**" Their personal improvements have inspired them to share these programs with others. Sara says, "Beth and I have different issues, but the class helps both of us. We're always telling others about it. We tell them what it's done for us. We say, 'Come in and try it! It won't cost anything to try!'"

Arthritis was not going to take our lives away!
Together we are in control,
and having fun!

Thanks to the **self-management skills and techniques** they learned in their classes, Beth and Sara now have the energy to invest extra time in fun and family. Beth is excited to keep her 8-year-old grandson during his spring break, and Sara is planning a 30-day cruise with her husband. It is important to remember the balance between rest and exercise. However, as Sara says, "**If you always rest, you might just rust!**"