

Successful Living with Arthritis

Manage Your Disease Alongside Your Colleagues

Meet Beckie Davis

Fifty-year-old Beckie Davis loves to spend her spare time outside fly fishing, hiking, and capturing it all through the lens of her camera. Despite her love of nature, like many other baby boomers, she spends much of her time in her office, often with nagging arthritis pain that seemed to cut into her productivity and motivation. Constant typing was causing her aching fingers to tingle, and hours spent sitting in a chair made already stiff joints even more painful. As Beckie recalls, **Arthritis “can make it hard to do anything.”**



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Beckie shared her painful day-to-day reality with 22.7 million other Americans who report arthritis-related activity limitations. She silently dealt with her arthritis pain, pushing through on a daily basis, until she learned about an exciting opportunity to help her gain control of her disease and her life. Beckie read about a local program called *Living Well*, a self-management course aimed at teaching people like herself how to manage and **take charge of chronic diseases**, such as arthritis, heart disease, and diabetes.

Support and Motivation at Work

Beckie began researching the *Living Well* program and was pleasantly surprised to learn the course was available at some worksites. It had even been approved to be held at her office. Once a week for 6 weeks, certified instructors taught Beckie and her colleagues the skills they needed to **manage their chronic diseases in the convenience of their own workplace**. They learned about the benefits of appropriate exercises, how to communicate with friends and family about their conditions, and practical ways to manage the symptoms of arthritis and other chronic diseases. As they practiced self-management techniques together, they became aware of each other’s everyday challenges and shared ways to cope. **“We bounced ideas off one another and it became easier to talk to people around the office about my disease,”** recalls Beckie. By the end of the program, participants were equipped with the skills and confidence they needed to regain control of their diseases, ease pain, increase energy, and improve their quality of life.

When asked what she tells others about arthritis self-management and the *Living Well* program, Beckie says, “Don’t give up! This program really works.” Beckie is living proof of that! She now **enjoys decreased pain, improved mood, more energy, and a better quality of life**. No longer isolated by her arthritis, Beckie now has a group of colleagues who understand the challenges she faces every day. With this network to provide support and encouragement, Beckie now knows how to **live well with her arthritis**.

Self-management programs really work! I now have colleagues who understand the difficulties of living with a chronic condition. The program was the trigger to building my support network.