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## **Feel Better with a Free Workshop**

If you're interested in feeling as well as possible, and doing more of the things you love to do, then you should know about the free Healthier Living Workshop. I took it myself, and I heartily recommend this six-week program to anyone with a long-term health challenge. I already knew a lot about healthy living and healthcare, and still this program was amazingly helpful.

In the Healthier Living Workshop we discovered we're all in good company when it comes to most of our challenges, feelings and frustrations. And whether we have arthritis, high blood pressure, asthma, CFS, depression, heart disease, fibromyalgia, COPD, or anything else chronic, there is hope. In the supportive setting of the Healthier Living Workshop, we explored new directions, set our own goals, and solved problems with the help of other participants. It was often fun, at times inspiring, and always gave us power to move forward and improve our daily lives.

The Healthier Living Workshop encourages self-directed problem-solving in the face of long-term health conditions, with the help of a supportive small group. It's not an exercise program, but will help you set realistic goals for your physical activity and nutrition. I was very impressed with the quality of the information, the effectiveness of the activities, and the skill of the leaders. Leaders have been through the Workshop because they have a chronic condition or care for someone who does, so they know what they're talking about!

We got a lot of good information and practice on reducing stress, changing negative thinking, reducing pain, and many other helpful strategies. We also got a wonderful free book and relaxation CD. There was no bias against alternative or mainstream care. We learned techniques for setting achievable goals, asking for help, communication, and other valuable skills as they relate to our health.

While this free workshop is valuable for a great many seniors, adults of every age with chronic conditions can do it. Caregivers are welcome too! Based on research by Stanford University, the Healthier Living Workshop has been proven to reduce the need for doctor visits and to improve people's health by several measures. It is being held all over Vermont, throughout the year, and will continue into the foreseeable future. These FREE six-session Workshops are part of Vermont's Blueprint for Health to prevent illness and complications. If it seems difficult to find time to attend, think of it as an investment in your well-being. You deserve it!

The Workshop is routinely held at local hospitals, senior centers, and other public places. Contact a local coordinator to ask questions or sign up. The coordinator for Brattleboro & West River Valley is Jessie Casella at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, [jcasella@bmhvt.org](mailto:jcasella@bmhvt.org) 802-257-8357. The coordinator for the greater Bellows Falls area is Nancy Schaefer of Springfield Medical Care Systems, [inmotion@vermontel.net](mailto:inmotion@vermontel.net) 802-869-3053. You may also pick up a flyer at Sojourns Community Health Clinic on Route 5 in Westminster.

*Janis Hall*

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*Creating Opportunities for Seniors and Adults with Disabilities  
to Live with Dignity and Independence in the Community.*