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New workshops energize people with ongoing health conditions

- Special to the Daily Leader

For most of her adult life, Doris didn't worry much about her health. Then at 67, she was diagnosed with diabetes and high blood pressure.

She tried to follow her doctor's advice to take her medications, exercise and eat better. But often she was tired and even a little depressed. "I figured it was just part of getting older," she recalled.

Then a friend told Doris about the KOHP (Kansas Optimizing Health Program) Workshop – six weekly sessions hosted by K-State Research and Extension.

Developed at Stanford University, the workshop has been offered at hundreds of locations throughout the United States. It helps participants with ongoing health conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, high blood pressure, anxiety, heart disease, depression and others to:

- o Find better ways of dealing with pain and fatigue;
- o Discover easy exercises to help improve or maintain strength and energy;
- o Learn the appropriate use of medications;

- o Improve nutrition;

- o Talk effectively with family, friends and health professionals;

- o Understand new treatment choices; and

- o Feel better about life.

“I now have a new sense of being in control,” said Doris, “The workshop has really helped me put life back in my life.”

Taught by specially trained volunteer leaders, some who have health conditions themselves, the program covers a new topic each week and provides opportunities for interaction and group problem solving.

“We are really more like coaches,” said Seward County K-State agent Kathy Bloom, a leader at the Liberal site. “The answer to someone’s question is usually in the room.”

The KOHP Workshop offered begins March 30 and will take place every Tuesday for six weeks from March 30 to May 4. Class size will be limited to the first 12 that enroll.

For more information or to enroll in the KOHP, call the Seward County K-State Research and Extension office at 624-5604.

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