

# ***BETter Living ...***

**Bernadette Trieb**

**Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent**

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## **Keys to Embracing Aging – Aging 101**

I hope your summer has been going well! For the next 12 columns, I will focus on twelve steps to successful aging. This will pertain to all ages of readers as we are all aging. It is very important that we look to take care of ourselves at all steps of our lives.

K-State Research and Extension worked with the University of Arkansas and University of Kentucky to adapt their program Keys to Embracing Aging for use in Kansas.

There are twelve keys that the program focuses on:

1. **Positive Attitude** – affects overall happiness, health, and well-being.
2. **Eating Smart and Healthy** – well-balanced diet.
3. **Physical Activity** – associated with decreased death and disability from diseases such as heart diseases, diabetes, arthritis, and cancer.
4. **Brain Activity** – crucial to survival, growth, and everyday successes.
5. **Social Activity** – people are often healthier, happier, less depressed, and demonstrate enhanced brain vitality.
6. **Tuning-in to the Times** – promotes lifelong learning, which increases knowledge, problem-solving skills, and decision-making.
7. **Safety** – helps keep you out of harm's way.
8. **Know Your Health Numbers** – certain health numbers can save and extend your life.
9. **Stress Management** – appropriate stress is healthy and useful, but when stress overwhelms you, it can become distress, causing anxiety, tension, irritability, and a number of health problems.
10. **Financial Affairs** – good financial management is important whether you earn minimum wage or are a millionaire.
11. **Sleep** – major impact on overall health and quality of life, including the way you look, feel, and perform on a daily basis.
12. **Taking Time for You** – you juggle multiple priorities and responsibilities and likely make time for others before making time for yourself. But you are important too.

It is important to take care of your mind, body, and spirit throughout your whole life. Please check back, as we explore the twelve keys in more depth.

For more information, contact the Wabaunsee County Extension Office at 785-765-3821 or email Bernadette Trieb, [btrieb@ksu.edu](mailto:btrieb@ksu.edu).