



The Secret to the Fountain of Youth

Is there a secret to living longer, a proverbial fountain of youth?

Across the world, there are places referred to as "Blue Zones" where the percentage of people over the age of 100 is drastically higher than in other communities. The four Blue Zones include Okinawa, Japan; Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya, Costa Rica; and Icaria, Greece. In his book *The Blue Zones*, Dan Buettner identifies key characteristics shared by the people living in the Zones—characteristics that have been scientifically proven to increase longevity.¹

Buettner and researchers investigating centenarians in the Zones shed light on key concepts:

Eating Habits

- ✦ Eat slower and more mindfully (without distractions)
- ✦ Eat until 80% full rather than until no longer hungry
- ✦ Restrict calories to 2000 calories or less per day
- ✦ Use smaller plates to encourage eating smaller portions
- ✦ Consume unprocessed foods: beans, whole grains, and nuts in particular
- ✦ Consume less meat—only two or three times per week

Physical Activity

Spend lots of time doing regular, low-intensity physical activities. To implement this, be especially intentional about getting outdoors. This could involve activities such as walking or gardening.

Sense of Purpose & Family Relationships

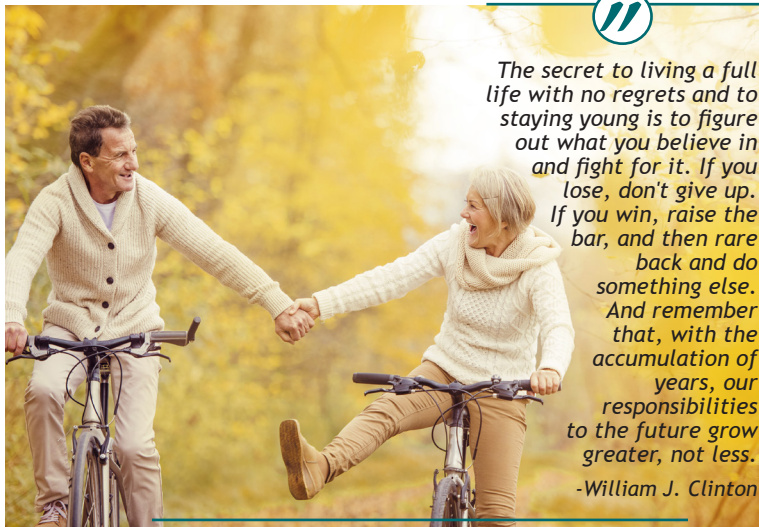
Have a purpose. In Okinawa, Japan, the idea of purpose is known as "ikigai," which roughly translates to "why I wake up in the morning." Life purpose is important. People who identify a purpose in their life have increased life spans compared to people who don't readily identify a life purpose.² Even then, some life purposes have added benefits. A focus on relationships with family and friends can have an impact extending into the community and culture.

Stress Management

Take breaks throughout each day, engage in meditation, and approach life situations with a sense of serenity. Stress management is linked to better immune function, while chronic stress has been shown to accelerate aging due to inflammation.³

Key Takeaway

The habits of people living in the Blue Zones can serve as a road map for us to navigate toward a longer, healthier life.



Resources:
 1. <https://www.bluezones.com/dan-buettner/>
 2. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/longevity-having-a-purpose-may-help-you-live-longer-healthierciated>
 3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5476783/>



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5 Ways To Care For Your Financial Health

Did you know that money habits can impact your mental health? Forming positive financial habits decreases stress and ensures that you are well prepared in the event of an emergency. If better budgeting is a resolution for the new year, try the steps below:

- 1 Take the time to track your spending.**
Identify areas where you are living outside your means or spending more than you realized.
- 2 Create money goals for the new year.**
This might be paying off debt or hitting a savings goal.
- 3 Revise your budget.**
Take into account your spending habits, changes in income, and the goals you have set.
- 4 Automate your savings.**
For every paycheck, allot a certain amount of dollars to be set aside. This ensures you are always putting money away even when you aren't thinking about it!
- 5 Stick to it!**
After you create a budget, monitor your spending so that you stay on track.



EHS EMPOWER HEALTH SERVICES

LEARNING ABOUT RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)



With cases of RSV on the rise, you may have questions about how to stay healthy and protect your family. To help you learn about respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), including symptoms and who's at highest risk, we've compiled tips on what you need to know.

What is RSV?

RSV is a respiratory virus, causing mild cold-like symptoms. Typically, most adults can recover from the illness in a week or two. However, RSV can be more serious for older adults and children. It can be especially dangerous for infants and those under the age of one.

How is RSV transmitted?

RSV mainly spreads through:

- Coughs or sneezes.
- Direct contact with the virus, such as kissing the face of a child with RSV.
- Touching a surface with the virus (like a doorknob) and then touching your face, including your eyes, nose or mouth.

What symptoms should you look for?

People usually show signs of RSV within four to six days after becoming infected. Symptoms also tend to appear in stages, instead of all at once. Here are common ones to look for:

- Runny nose
- Decrease in appetite
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Fever
- Wheezing

In very young infants with RSV, they'll sometimes only show irritability, breathing difficulties and lower activity and appetite.

Who is at high risk for RSV?

RSV can be especially dangerous for some infants, young children and certain adults.

In children, those at greatest risk for severe illness include:

- Premature infants.
- Very young infants, especially those six months and younger.
- Children younger than two years old with chronic lung disease or congenital heart disease (present from birth).
- Children with weakened immune systems.
- Children who have neuromuscular disorders, including those who have a tough time swallowing or clearing mucus.

In adults, those at highest risk for severe RSV infection include:

- Older adults, especially 65 years and older.
- Adults with chronic heart or lung disease.
- Adults with weakened immune systems, such as transplant patients, those undergoing chemotherapy, or those on medications that weaken the immune system.

How can you prevent RSV?

To help prevent the spread of RSV, here are some tips you can practice:

- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your shirt sleeve.
- Wash your hands often, using soapy water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid close contact—such as kissing, shaking hands, and sharing cups and eating utensils—with others if you have cold-like symptoms.
- Clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces, such as doorknobs and mobile devices.
- Ideally, when you're under the weather, it's best to avoid contact with infants and others who may be at higher risk for RSV.

With these tips in mind, you can have a better understanding of RSV and how to protect those around you this season!

Sources: www.cdc.gov/rsv/research/index.html

Q: *I've noticed more and more gluten-free products. I've been trying to lose weight and be healthier, and I'm wondering if I should go gluten-free?*

Ask the Health Coach



I too have noticed a surge in gluten-free products on the shelves of my grocery store and on the menus of local restaurants. While I cannot tell you whether you should go gluten-free, I may be able to help you in your decision-making process.

A small percentage of people have an autoimmune condition called celiac disease. This lifelong genetic condition poses significant health risks if gluten is ingested. People with this disease give up all forms of wheat, barley, and rye because they contain gluten, the protein that gives dough its elasticity.

So, the question becomes: *If you don't have celiac disease, should you go gluten-free for your health?* It depends.

If you feel unwell (or horrible) after eating gluten products, you may have non-celiac gluten sensitivity (NCGS) or a wheat allergy.

Likewise, if avoiding gluten gives you more energy and generally makes you feel better, it's worth experimenting with a gluten-free diet. Try out gluten-free grains and healthy gluten free-foods such as beans, seeds, nuts (without flavorings), eggs, lean meat, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. Be wary of purchasing prepared/packaged gluten-free foods; manufacturers often replace gluten with added fat, sugar, and salt.

Switching to a gluten-free diet takes some getting used to. If you try making the switch, I suggest you keep a food-mood diary to monitor daily changes in your physical, mental, and emotional health.



NUTRITIONAL SPOTLIGHT: YAMS

GOOD SOURCE OF:

- Complex carbohydrates
- Soluble dietary fiber
- B-complex vitamins
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin A
- Beta-carotene

SERVING TIPS:

Cook yams like potatoes. They are especially tasty when steamed or baked with their skin intact.

IS IT A YAM, OR A SWEET POTATO?

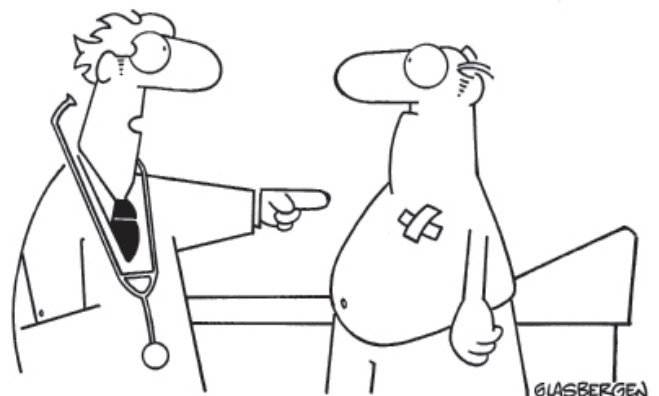
While yams look similar to sweet potatoes,

there are subtle visual differences. Yams tend to be longer and more cylindrical with thick, rough, scaly skin.

Sweet potatoes are shorter with thin, smooth skin, and the flesh of a sweet potato is paler than the orange-fleshed yam.



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"Whenever your cholesterol gets too high, a sensor will send out a signal that automatically locks the kitchen door and turns on your treadmill."

Resiliency & You

What distinguishes a resilient individual from someone that isn't? Is this a quality that is innate, or is it something that can be developed?

Healthy, resilient people have stress-resistant coping skills and learn valuable lessons from rough experiences. They rebound from major setbacks even stronger than before. When hurt or distressed, resilient people expect to find a way for things turn out well in the long term. They feel self-reliant and have a learning/coping reaction rather than the victim/blaming reaction that is so common these days. They are hopeful and positive.

Positive people recognize that challenges create opportunities and that you can learn and grow from change. Viewing life as stimulating, dynamic, and filled with opportunities sets one up to face life with resilience; it is the attitude that is the key. An attitude is simply a point of view about a situation. An attitude has three components: what you think, what you do, and what you feel.

No matter the circumstances, one can have certain thoughts, emotional responses, and behaviors within any

given situation. It is easier to change the way you think or behave than to change your emotions. However, it is usually our emotions that get our attention. It is our emotions that we most want to change. When we feel sad, angry, anxious, or frustrated, we don't like it. We want the feeling to quickly go away, so we start trying to change the emotion.

The emotional level, however, is the most difficult to work on. You can't "grasp" a feeling and force it to change. Feelings are powerful yet vague. If you want to change your feelings, you must start elsewhere. You must begin by changing your thinking or behavior. Since it is easier to get a "grasp" on thoughts and behavior, this is the place to begin the work of resiliency. Change what you think about! Change what you do! The emotions will eventually change, and you will be creating resiliency.

BE FOCUSED - Set goals and objectives, and follow through with the steps to accomplish your goals. Changing your thinking requires concentrating and not letting distractions cause you to lose sight of your goal. Determine where you are headed and stick to that goal in spite of barriers that may block your way. Think through different ways to get around the barriers.

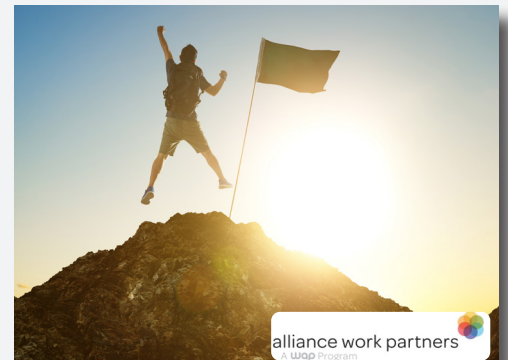
BE FLEXIBLE - When unexpected

changes occur, our goals or steps to accomplish those goals may need to be adjusted. Staying flexible makes it easier to follow through on goals. Open yourself to different possibilities when faced with uncertainty.

STAY ORGANIZED - Organization helps when responding to challenges and changes. A sense of order makes it easier to track progress and identify accomplishments. As much as possible, develop a structured approach when facing the unknown.

BE PROACTIVE - Plan and determine ways to "stay ahead of the game" so that when changes and challenges occur, you have options for how to respond.

Resiliency is a trait that we can all learn, and it is one that can sustain us through our most difficult times.



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A WOPD Program

FALL 2023
WELLNESS CAMPAIGN

MARGIN
THE
Space
BETWEEN

**WELLNESS
COORDINATOR AWARDS**

OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE
Amanda Loerke & Shaun Rose
Mountain Institute CTED

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR
Elizabeth Allen
Palominas ESD

Angelica Rochin & Elizabeth Ibarra
Santa Cruz Valley UHSD

Monthly Challenge Winners

August
Anna Simon
Catalina Foothills USD

September
Bonnie McCord
Sahuarita USD

October
Sherri James
Ash Fork Joint USD