A Longer Life



Can you really add extra years to your life? Would you want to? And under what conditions? With current life expectancy in the USA for men at 76 and for women at 81, would you like to add an extra 12 years?

Author Dan Buettner assumes that you would. He did world-wide research, and found that **the keys to adding years to your life centers on lifestyle and environment.** A few years ago he lead a scientific expedition to the Greek island of Ikarian to investigate what had become common knowledge - **one in three residents there reached the age of 90.** This lead to Buettner's idea that the earth has a few "Blue Zones" - places where an extraordinary high proportion of natives live past 90.

Buettner also found that Ikarians suffered 20 percent fewer cases of cancer than American and have about half our rate of heart disease and one-ninth our rate of diabetes.

And as Buettner said in an AARP magazine article in 2009, "Most astonishing of all: among the Ikarians over 90 whom the team studied . . . **there was virtually no Alzheimer's disease or other dementia." (In the USA more than 40% of people over 90 suffer some form of these ailments).**

While Buettner cannot guarantee that living like an Ikarian will help you live significantly longer, he did come up with **likely contributors to Ikarian longevity** (which he published in *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who've Lived the Longest*, National Geographic, 2008) - ideas that you may want to consider:

- Eat a diet rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, olive oil, and fish.
- Drizzle olive oil on food after cooking, before eating.
- Eat sourdough bread.
- Try Greek honey: studies show antibacterial, anticancer and anti-inflammatory properties - local honey doesn't.
- Graze on greens.
- Sip herbal teas.
- Nap 30-minutes daily.
- Walk where you are going and add hills.
- Grow your own garden (or use local farmer's markets).
- Phone a friend.
- Get religion: services are linked to longer life spans.
- Throw out your watch: reduce stress.



In the years since publishing this research, Buettner has found the same habits in **four other Blue Zones:** Sardinia, Italy; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; Loma Linda, California; and Okinawa, Japan. In his new updated: *The Blue Zones: 9 Lessons for Living Longer*, **Buettner synthesizes the lessons that people in these Blue Zones have in common and follow. Improved and elongated lives occurred in all:**

1. ***Move naturally:*** don't do marathons or pump iron, walking is good.
2. ***Know your purpose:*** have a reason for waking up in the morning.
3. ***Kick back:*** find ways to shed stress - praying, napping or going to happy hour - relax.
4. ***Eat less:*** stop eating when you are 80% full.
5. ***Eat less meat:*** Beans are the key.
6. ***Drink in moderation:*** one to two glasses a day are normal in these places.
7. ***Have faith:*** it doesn't matter what, but attendance does.
8. ***Power of Love:*** put families first.
9. ***Stay social:*** build a social network that supports healthy behaviors.

You'll want to read more details on what Buettner now calls his Power9® or "Reverse Engineering Longevity" to learn more concerning what these Blue Zones have in common. **If you do want to live longer and healthier, add in a Personal Safety Nets' bias toward getting friends, family or colleagues to implement changes with you. Your success rate will soar, and your friends will be likely to live longer too.**

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