

Globe Walk March 2024

March Blue Zone: Nicoya, Costa Rica

March 5, 2024

Nicoya, Costa Rica: The Nicoya Peninsula is known for elders with a positive outlook on life. Their diet is abundant in tropical fruits packed with antioxidants, and their water is rich in calcium and magnesium that helps to prevent heart disease and builds strong bones. The people here eat primarily what they grow themselves, including beans, whole grains, vegetables, and fruit, and their diet contains very little meat.³ Faith and family play a strong role in Nicoyan culture. So does *plan de vida*, or reason to live, which helps Nicoyan elders maintain a positive outlook and active lifestyle. Nicoyans eat little to no processed foods but plenty of antioxidant-rich tropical fruit. But they also have 1 unique secret: calcium- and magnesium-rich water, which wards off heart disease and promotes strong bones.⁴

Nicoya Peninsula (Costa Rica):

The Nicoyan diet is based around beans and corn tortillas. The people of this area regularly perform physical jobs into old age and have a sense of life purpose known as “plan de vida.”

- Upcoming reminders
- Month 3 Tracking List

March 12, 2024

Month Three Goals:

1. Month 3 – Right Tribe

Getting in touch with old friends is part of your fun homework this week! And making new connections in a social group is a key, so you’ll be looking for a new activity or interest group to connect with.

Activities

1. No more than 1 hour of additional screen time daily (including Netflix, TV, news).

People who watch too much TV are more likely to be overweight. TV-watching actually lowers metabolism, makes us less active, and encourages us to eat junk food via commercials. Kids with a TV in their bedroom are 18 percent more likely to be (or become) obese and have lower grades. The happiest people watch only 30-60 minutes of TV per day.

2. Eat at least 5 Blue Zones meals / recipes this week.

Keep it simple and easy. You can try new recipes or eat the same ones you used last week. As you keep adding more healthy foods and meals to your daily routine, you will crowd out the

calorie-rich and nutrient poor foods that are the basis of the Western diet. Focus on the four Always foods: whole grains, beans, nuts, and fruits / veggies.

3. Join a new social group (church, school club, local group).

This can be a new group at your temple, church, or other faith-based community, a new club at your school, or a local group like Meetup. Our friends and social groups shape our lives (and our waistlines).

4. Walk at least once this week with your walking buddy or group.

Activities

1. Volunteer to be an organ donor (on your license).

“If you want to do a random act of kindness, there isn’t a more powerful few minutes than signing to be an organ donor. You never have to lift a finger. It is the laziest, most excellent good deed that you can do that will give you a happiness boost.”—Gretchen Rubin

2. Volunteer for a new organization.

“Altruism stimulates the same neural pathways as sugar and cocaine. But unlike drugs, volunteering is a healthy addiction. People who volunteer tend to lose weight, have lower rates of heart disease, and report higher levels of happiness. Decide what you do best and volunteer your time.”—Dan Buettner

3. Call, text, or email one friend or family member you have not connected with recently.

Try to get into this habit every day. Even if it is just a simple text or a funny photo, do not forget to keep in touch.

4. Host a healthy potluck.

In the longevity hotspots around the world, socializing with friends is an important part of life. Okinawans have moais, groups of people who travel through life together. Sardinians finish their days at a local bar; chatting with friends they have known all their lives. And Adventists potluck.

5. Plan a vacation or some time off work.

Never leave vacation days on the table. Even if you do not have the money to splurge on an exotic trip, a “staycation” can provide a much-needed respite. No matter how much time off your company provides, you can increase the pleasure you get from vacation days by dividing them among several shorter trips, as opposed to one big one. That is because the happiness

bump we get from a vacation may come from the planning and anticipation, not the trip itself, according to a 2010 study from the Netherlands.

6. Schedule a weekly get together with friends (happy hour, workout session, book club, coffee klatch).

This week you should already be signing up for a new group that meets regularly (see required activity #3), but do not forget to nourish the friendships you already have. Engage your existing circle and pick a day and time to get together regularly: Happy hour at 5pm so you're all getting off work on time at least once a week; book club (or even article club) for some interesting discussions; workout session or walk; or coffee meet-up once a week.

7. Put a fruit-filled bowl on your countertop.

If you want to re-make your eating habits, clean up your kitchen environment. Try to always keep fresh fruit and nuts on the counter. Start making it a habit to never keep the FOUR TO AVOID foods in your house. If you must (because of family or roommates), keep them out of sight on a high shelf or in the back of the fridge.

8. Write a thank you note to a coworker or friend.

Research published in Psychological Science says when people express their gratitude; it improves both their own happiness and the well-being and happiness of the person they are thanking.

9. Take time to rediscover a hobby you once loved.

Researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health noted that the type of activity did not seem to matter when it came to cognitive benefits. Find something that you enjoy doing and let it enhance your life and boost your brainpower.

10. Put a lavender plant next to your bed.

Research performed by Dr. Brian Raudenbush, the Department Chair of psychology at Wheeling Jesuit University, shows the smell of lavender is particularly effective at reducing human stress

March 19, 2024

Is Canada a Blue Zone?

In Canada, people are living longer than ever. The centenarian population grew 41.3 per cent between 2011 and 2016, according to the last census. It was the fastest-growing segment of the population during those years.

According to StatsCan, there are no Blue Zones here. But four of the 10 Canadian municipalities with people over the age of 80 live on Vancouver Island. This region of Canada has higher-than average incomes. Residents tend to be more active. And there are low smoking rates, according to experts from the area. Meanwhile, the Conference Board of Canada gives both B.C. and Ontario an “A” grade on life expectancy. People in some parts of these provinces are among the healthiest in Canada.

Lessons from the Blue Zones

Airdrie, Alberta, population 70,000, aims to become Canada’s healthiest community. This thanks to a three-year partnership with the Blue Zone Project, which began in September 2019. They are working together to; for instance, increase the accessibility of inexpensive fresh produce. And improve awareness about healthy lifestyles and building community.

The organization has been able to reverse engineer the factors that make a municipality healthier. This is happening in places across the U.S., but it will be its first attempt in Canada.

- Upcoming reminders
- Event poster