



ST. ANDREW'S WEEKLY REPORT

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Simplyfying the Blue Zones Lifestyle Part I

Most people would like to live long, happy, healthy lives. Did you know, there are five places in the world where longevity is more prevalent than in other areas of the world? These places include: Sardinia, Italy, Icaria, Greece, Okinawa, Japan, Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica, and Loma Linda, California. These locations are all known as "Blue Zones". These places are hot spots for the healthiest and longest-living people in the world.

It's not necessarily the specific places that make these individuals unique, rather it's about what they're doing in their daily lives. People living in Blue Zones make physical activity an important part of their lives. They stay active through everyday activities such as cooking, gardening and walking to the store. With this increased activity, there is a lower tendency to smoke cigarettes, which leads to a healthier life. There also tends to be a strong sense of purpose. These individuals feel wanted and needed and therefore contribute to the greater good. Studies have shown that having a purpose is worth up to 7 years of added life expectancy.

Even though these individuals are driven, they know when to downshift as well. Whether it's taking time out of their day for an afternoon nap or happy hour, they typically find time during the day for periods of calm; letting go of any stressors, or at least taking a break from them. One of the final attributes of Blue Zone individuals is a faith-based sense of belonging and putting their families first. They are part of communities, often religious ones, and they're committed to their families. This usually means keeping aging parents or grandparents nearby or in the household. Research shows that attending faith based services four times a month can add 4-14 years of life expectancy. There are certainly a number of things that we can do to enjoy a longer and more fulfilling life. We may not live in one of these Blue Zones, but we have the power to follow the ways of these individuals and create our own Blue Zone! Stay tuned for next week, when we'll dive deeper into how individuals living in Blue Zones eat and drink.

By Mary Gioannetti, SAFFP Head FIT Coach and Personal Trainer



6 Habits to Boost your Longevity

You don't have to change your whole life in order to live more vibrantly for longer. Just put a few of these habits into practice and feel the changes for yourself! Which habits will you choose?

Habit 1: Make yourself one wellness promise every day. This promise could be to drink an 8 oz. glass of water when you wake up or do 20 squats. Whatever it is, make it small and fail-proof. Keeping daily wellness promises to yourself not only boosts your confidence, but also adds up to an increased lifespan.

Habit 2: Take 5 minutes for yourself daily. First thing in the morning, before you go to bed, taking a break at work- however you can fit in 5 minutes to journal, listen to music, meditate, read, or exercise can greatly increase your overall mood and health over time.

Habit 3: Make one meal daily a "super meal": Instead of trying to overhaul your entire diet, start by committing to one healthy meal or "super" meal every day.

Habit 4: Walk more, sit less. You've heard how sitting is the new smoking, right? But if you have a desk job, you commute for long periods of time, or you're just stuck at home right now- sitting can be a difficult habit to break. Set a timer to get up at the end or beginning of every hour during your day to stretch and move around. Regular movement breaks reduce the negative



side effects of sitting.

Habit 5: Set boundaries with your electronics. Make a habit to set aside at least 30 minutes daily to turn off (or put on silent) all electronics. Learning how to let the distractions go, and focusing on what really needs to get done can be extremely useful in all aspects of your life.

Habit 6: Get more sleep! Easier said than done, but getting even just a little more shut-eye (if you're below the recommended 7-8 hours of sleep) can make a huge difference in your quality of life- physically, mentally and emotionally.





Nutrition Corner: Healthy Comfort Food Swaps

Chocolate, chips, cookies, cake, mac and cheese, pizza ... we get it ... food cravings are part of being human! Here are a few swaps that you can make when those cravings hit hard and you don't want to derail your nutrition progress.

Craving chocolate? Try chocolate covered almonds. Simply dip some almonds into melted dark chocolate, refrigerate until set, and enjoy! The healthy fat and protein content of the almonds will also make you feel full- squashing that chocolate craving fast!



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Craving a sweet breakfast? Try coconut or almond pancakes. Just swap out regular flour with coconut or almond flour. [Here's an easy recipe for some breakfast inspiration.](#)

Craving pizza? Try cauliflower pizza! Now available at most grocery stores (and at comparable prices), cauliflower pizza tastes pretty close to it's original version. Swapping out the crust allows you to indulge knowing that you're getting all that cheesy goodness with extra veggies and quite a few less carbs and fat.



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St. Andrew's Parks & Playground St. Andrew's Family Fitness Plus Updates

There's still time to register for the St. Andrew's Fall Sports season! For more information on signing up for volleyball, cross country, instructional softball, and baseball [please visit our website by clicking here.](#)

