

Live to 101 years old

Think about it: if not for Queen Victoria's steadfast (and record-breaking) sixty-three years and seven months on the throne, all of us would be schlepping to work Monday morning. Of course, during Victoria's reign in the heady 1800s, there was no one to guide her toward healthy lifestyle choices. (In those grey days before Oprah, why would anyone pen a self-help book?) But a lot of the decisions Queen Victoria implicitly made factor heavily in Dan Buettner's spirited new best-seller *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who've Lived the Longest*. According to Buettner, each of us are capable of living long healthy lives well into our centenarian years - if we're willing to make some concessions.

"Living longer and feeling better is the sum of a few small easy choices you can incorporate into everyday life," says Buettner, who travelled the world investigating places like Okinawa, Japan and Nicoya, Costa Rica, where residents lived longer than average lifespans. What Buettner discovered was a few steadfast rules. "Want to live longer? Spend time with family, watch what you eat, do the physical activities which bring you the most joy and connect to your faith," Buettner says.

According to scientists, 25% of our lifespan is determined by genes. Which means the other 75%, fortunately or not as we embark on the long weekend, is determined by lifestyle choices. What are some other tips Buettner gleaned from interviewing dozens of people who've lived well into their 90s, and even into their 100s? We consulted his book and then asked him - and a few of his 100-year-old friends - to help us come up with *The Queen Victoria Tributary: 101 Ways to Live to be 100 years old*.

97. Still, even the worst gym work-out is better than an afternoon in front of your computer. Everyday, try and do something active.

96. Eat a light meal for supper.

95. And, dear God, forgo fast food. (Even a Wendy's salad can't compare with something grown in your own backyard).

94. "Start a garden!" implores Dan Buettner, who says that was the first thing he told his bacon-addicted 73-year-old dad.

93. A garden not only provides fresh, organic vegetables, but it also gives us a purpose. Through weeding, watering and watching something develop, we have something healthy to look forward to.

92. Having a purpose in life is a proven link to living longer. What's the most likely demographic to live past 100? Women who've had children after 40.

91. Not that we're particularly suggesting all women over 40 should go out and have kids.

90. That said, sexual intercourse is a terrific exercise.

89. A lean, plant-based diet accented with meat is much healthier than the typical North American diet. Eat your veggies.

88. Okinawa, Japan has the greatest concentration of healthy centenarians. What is 104-year-old Ushi Okushima's tips for a long, happy life? "Stop worrying about getting something in your future and worrying about what you missed in your past," she says in *The Blue Zones*. "Living in the present, more than anything, keeps you young."

87. Okushima also says to celebrate your elders. Remember, Father's Day is coming up!

86. Choose fish over red meat. Most of the healthiest diets eschew meat altogether, but we'll just recommend upping your fish protein intake and lowering your beef and pork.

85. Especially salmon.

84. We know it isn't easy. Buettner says bacon is the one thing his father won't quit.

83. Associate with like-minded people. If you hang out all day at buffets with alcoholic chain-smoking food addicts, odds are you won't be walking thirty minutes a day.

82. Get your flavonoids. Found in red wine, brightly coloured fruits and vegetables and dark chocolate, this secondary plant metabolite reduces rates of cancer and heart disease.

81. Eat soy. It's found in edamame and tofu, and it's painless.

80. "I grew up on a farm in Alberta and never much cared to drink the secretions of cow," says Dr. Ellsworth Wareham. We always thought a glass of milk was healthy, but Dr. Wareham is 94 years old and, when we spoke to him, he'd just completed eight hours of cardiac surgery. As the surgeon.

79. Take in a healthy dose of vitamin D from the sun.

78. And what of Canadians, people in Saskatchewan and Manitoba who have just come through one of the coldest winters in years? Think SAD lamps. Available at orientationsnova.com, a Canadian company doing innovative work with seasonal affective disorder and light therapy for the past eight years.

75. "None of us know how to live a long life, it wouldn't be fair if we did," says Marge Jenner, 105, from her home in Loma Linda, Calif. "My granddaughter goes out of her way to make me happy. Sometimes I feel guilty for taking up her time.

74. Marge Jenner has been a vegetarian for the past 60 years and when you get her on the phone, it's hard to ask her too many questions because she spends most of the conversation asking about you. "All I can say is thanks God for all he's given me," Jenner says. "I just got over hip surgery and look forward to taking

About the Author

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