

# Blue Zones

“The food you eat can be either the safest and most powerful form of medicine or the slowest form of poison.” – Ann Wigmore

## Practicing the Power 9 while social distancing



GETTY IMAGES

**David Longfield-Smith** Special to Naples Daily News | USA TODAY NETWORK

Consciously practicing healthy habits is more important today than ever before. As many of us adapt to our new circumstances with social distancing, we must also look for creative ways to continue working on our well-being. The good news is, Blue Zones Power 9 practices are easily adaptable during these unusual times.

**David Longfield-Smith**, Organization Lead at Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida, shares the following tips:

**Move Naturally** – Get out in the yard, work in your garden, and get your hands dirty in a healthy way. Fresh air, sunshine, and connection with living things and Mother Earth will do you good. Rather than going to the gym, many yoga classes and workouts are available online as well as via Netflix and YouTube. Walk the dog, go for a run, enjoy the sunshine, and smell the spring flowers while practicing safe social distancing.

**Downshift** – Stay informed, but don't stay glued to the TV. Take care of yourself and relax. Read a good book. Meditate. Keep a journal. Breathe!

**Purpose** – Now is a great time to take stock of your strengths, skills, and talents. If you're taking some time off or are stuck at home, why not reimagine your future and start planning how you can live a better life doing the things that you are meant to do?

**80% Rule** – Eat mindfully, enjoy your food, and stop eating when 80% full—the point when you pause to consider how you will handle the remaining food on your plate. One great way to eat only what you need is to not watch TV, news, or a movie while eating. Focus on your food and really savor it.

**Plant Slant** – Put more veggies and fruits

on your plate than other foods. Your body needs nutrition, perhaps now more than ever. Grocery stores currently remain open, and produce sections are decently stocked. If some of your staples aren't available, consider trying a new recipe with a fruit or vegetable you've either never had or rarely use.

**Wine @ Five** – If you can't get together with friends in person to celebrate your day, try calling or video chatting with them. Many smartphones allow multiple callers on the same call, so connect with a few of your friends and say cheers.

**Family First** – Take care of yourself first; then look after your family. You will all feel better knowing that you're doing the right thing by taking care of one another as best as you can.

**Belong** – Perhaps you don't want to attend a crowded worship service. Many faith-based organizations offer live-streaming or podcast services. Connect with congregants, share your concerns, and help one another. How can you help neighbors in need—possibly grocery shopping for the elderly who may be fearful of going to the store?

**Right Tribe** – Remain connected with friends who are optimistic and help you to stay healthy and positive. The last thing anyone needs right now is more bad news, so focus on what you can and will do to help one another. Share good news and encour-

age one another to be resilient.

Please connect with us on social at <https://www.facebook.com/BlueZones-ProjectSouthwestFlorida/> and tell us what you are doing to boost your well-being so we can share with others.

You can also learn more ways to incorporate the Power 9 in your own life, worksite, church, HOA, school, restaurant, or grocery store by visiting [SouthWestFlorida.BlueZonesProject.com](http://SouthWestFlorida.BlueZonesProject.com)

**Update on our National Walking Day Event**

Our National Walking Day event at North Collier Regional Park on April 4 is canceled. **Now the good news!** Just because we can't be together in person doesn't mean we can't still celebrate moving naturally together. Join us **virtually** on Facebook Live, **Saturday, April 4 at 10:30 a.m.** with Blue Zones Champion and Fitness & Wellness Consultant at Max Flex Fitness, **Nino Maggadino**. He will guide us through a warmup and walk in place fitness activity that we can do right from our own homes. Be sure to tune in to our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectSouthwestFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProjectSouthwestFlorida) **Saturday, April 4 at 10:30 a.m.** for this live walking celebration and join the fun!

*David Longfield-Smit is the Organization Lead at Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida*