

BLUE ZONES

“Keep your vitality. A life without health is like a river without water.” – Maxime Lagacé



Step away from technology to give yourself a break from the digital world. GETTY IMAGES

10 tips on taking a tech break and improving your home environment for well-being

Sebastien Saitta Blue Zones Project-Southwest Florida

Technology, while instrumental in making our lives easier, can have its consequences, especially in regard to well-being at home. Whether it's spending hours on the couch binge watching your favorite streaming series or spending time scrolling through social media rather than having face-to-face, meaningful interaction with other family members in your household, the use of technology at home, if not kept in check can be a road block to living our best and healthiest lives. • Here are 10 tips to help you take a break from the digital world and reshape your home environment with healthy and easy in mind:

1. Make your meals tech-free. Keep your phone away from the table and turn your TV and computer off when you eat. Not only will you eat less with fewer distractions, but you will enjoy the flavor of your food more!

2. Plant and maintain a garden. Gardening can give you exposure to necessary vitamin D, help decrease risk of dementia, has mood boosting benefits, and helps you to move naturally. And don't forget enjoying the fruits of your labor with beautiful plants and fresh vegetables.

3. If you are working from home, set up visual reminders to take active breaks throughout the day. This can include getting up to stretch, walk around outside, or simply jog in place. Ok, you can cheat here a little bit by using a smart phone to schedule these alarm breaks. Better yet, you can simply set a designated time on the hour for your break.

4. Set up a designated quiet space for meditation or reading. Whether it's in your bedroom, den, or even a small closet, find a space where you will not be distracted by electronics or other people and use that for downshift time.

5. Declutter your space. Clutter can make you feel more stressed and overwhelmed. Take time to get rid of anything you don't use or need to help you feel more centered and calmer.

6. Set up plants around the house. Studies show that plants can boost mood, productivity,

and even improve air quality. You really don't need that many plants to gain this benefit. Even just a couple will help.

7. Take inventory of your food pantry or refrigerator. Is there anything in there that doesn't serve your health? Look at the ingredients. If there are words on there that sound like they come from a scientific experiment, chances are it is not good for you and time to get rid of it. Restock your refrigerator and pantry with whole, plant-based foods.

8. Consider having a pet. This may not be for everyone and certainly circumstances can prevent you from the possibility. Besides being cute to look at, the CDC suggests that benefits of pet ownership include decreased blood pressure, decreased cholesterol, decreased feelings of loneliness, and increased opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities.

9. Let there be natural light. Natural light is an often-underappreciated element that can have a huge impact on your mental and physical health. Studies show that natural light boosts vitamin D, wards off seasonal depression, and improves sleep. So open those windows and let the light shine in.

10. Change your perspective on household chores. Whether it's vacuuming, mopping, mowing the lawn, or doing laundry, these necessary chores are great opportunities to get up and moving.

For more tips and resources, visit our Healthier at Home Website at BlueZonesProject.com/HealthieratHome. You can also register for free virtual well-being activities to try at home at BlueZonesProjectSWFL.EventBrite.com.

Online Power Nine activity of the week

Blue Zones Project Southwest Florida wants to know how you are living the Power 9, a set of shared principles followed by the longest-lived people.

Each week, we will have a specific Power 9 activity for you to try and share with us.

This week's Power 9 activity is Plant Slant. Successful followers of Blue Zones® eat more fruits and vegetables during their meals. Doing this not only gives individuals a healthier diet, but also is proven to help you live longer!

This week, we are asking you to take a picture of a colorful meal that you prepare at home for you and your family, share your healthy recipe with us, what ingredients did you add and submit it to us. Please, let us know the changes you made in preparing this meal so that it was more concentrated with fruits and/or vegetables.

Share your picture/recipe with us on Facebook by tagging us at [@BlueZonesProject-SouthwestFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/BlueZonesProject-SouthwestFlorida). You can also send directly to bluezonesprojectswfl@sharecare.com.