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## IN SEARCH OF ETERNAL YOUTH



I'm a baby boomer. Eternal youth was promised to me as my birthright (along with a bunch of other things). I'm not sure by whom. It was just – well – understood. So it has come as somewhat of a shock to my belief system to realize that I am, indeed, ageing! Having begrudgingly accepted this new “normal” there was only one thing to do (once the screaming stopped, that is). Surf the internet for secret elixirs and pearls of wisdom.

The secret to eternal youth will take a little more surfing so it's a work in progress. But here is something interesting I did find along the way: A formula for longevity. At least I've found a way to live to 100. It's a good start. Now I just have to find a way to stop the appearance of ageing along the way. But that's for another day.

Dan Buettner is a National Geographic writer and explorer. He and a team of researchers studied communities in the world – coined “Blue Zones” – whose elders live to record-setting ages. Then they distilled their secrets into a single plan. Listen and watch Dan, like I did, at Ted Talks.

I've summarized the common themes he found in studying the world's longest-living people. These centenarians consistently:

**Move Naturally:** Take stairs, walk, garden, and participate in activities they enjoy everyday.

**Have the Right Outlook on Life:** They reduce stress, including slowing down for at least 15 minutes every day and have a sense of purpose in their lives.

**Eat Wisely:** No diets, instead they eat plant-based foods, beans, limited meats, occasional wine, and they only eat until 80 per cent satiated.

**Connect:** Family is first (grandparents are important in their respective cultures), they belong to faith-based or community groups, and proactively surround themselves with the right people who have healthy attitudes, physically active lifestyles, and are both trusting and trustworthy.

Not only can I now live to 100, but I've just eliminated additional stress in my life by realizing that the greatest wisdom in the world is often just plain, simple, common sense.

Now, if only I could find a way to look 25 forever...