

# BLUE ZONES POWER 9

## RIGHT TRIBE

### BUILD A HEALTHY MOAI

Did you know that having a social support network of loyal friends is good for your well-being and may add more healthy years to your life? Okinawans maintain strong social connections by regularly spending time with their moais – groups of lifelong friends. A moai offers the support and security of knowing someone will always be there for you, especially in times of need.

Residents living in the original Blue Zones areas share common principles called Power 9<sup>®</sup>—these are healthy lifestyle habits that help them live longer, healthier, happier lives. Social connectedness is a common thread for people living in the world's Blue Zones<sup>®</sup> areas.



### GROW A GARDEN OF FRIENDS

Good friends can pick you up when you are feeling blue, and vice versa. Sometimes just a simple phone call, e-mail, or text message from a friend can brighten your day.

#### Nurture Healthy Friendships

Friends provide more than good times, memories, and companionship – they also share habits. Did you know that if your friends have healthy habits, you are more likely to adopt these same traits? Nourish friendships with people who will support your healthy habits, challenge you mentally, and be there for you when you're in need.

Friends don't just grow on trees. They have to be carefully cultivated to bloom and grow. Studies indicate women tend to have more intimate relationships than men. When they need to meet new people or engage in conversation, women are more likely to approach someone than men. But this doesn't mean that men don't know how to make friends. Men and women just have different ways of building their relationships with others. Women tend to get together to share their feelings, while men, on the other hand, tend to "do" things together to generate friendships. No matter how you build your relationships, healthy friendships have a profound, positive impact on everyone involved.

Maintain and nurture your friendships by showing sincere care and interest in them. Establish a time every day to meet with members of your inner circle, whether it's just to talk, share a meal, or take a daily walk. It's good for your well-being!

Be willing to try different activities that will put you in contact with new people – they may develop into good friends. Look for people who are positive and upbeat, and who make you feel good about yourself and will accept you for who you are.

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## Test Your Body Language Smarts

When making friends, body language can be just as important as what you say. Which non-verbal cue shows you are open to striking up a conversation?

- a. A smile
- b. Eye contact
- c. Open posture (legs and arms uncrossed)
- d. Leaning forward (instead of away)
- e. All of the above

The correct answer is: e. All of these behaviors will make you appear more open and inviting in a social situation.

## Q & A: Ask the Expert

**Q: What is the best way to resolve a conflict with a co-worker so you can stay on good terms with one another?**

**A:** Conflicts arise in any relationship from time to time. Rather than placing the blame on the other person, try taking a less aggressive and non-threatening approach by using “I” statements to simply and politely express how you feel. Instead of saying, “You never turn in your reports on time,” you could say, “I feel frustrated that I don’t receive your reports on time.” You may still be met with a defensive attitude, but you are giving the other party a chance to take responsibility for his own feelings and actions, and to listen and understand your position.

## TOP 5 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR LIKEABILITY

Want to make more friends? Be likable. Here are some tips to hone your likeability skills and build your healthy social network:

- 1 Show sincere interest.** Ask simple questions about the other person. After all, being likable isn’t really about you at all, it’s about the other person.
- 2 Shhh... just listen.** Listen with all your senses, not only to what others are saying, but also to how they say it and what their body language is telling you. Listening with your heart brings a level of acceptance to the interaction and minimizes judgment.
- 3 Just be yourself.** Don’t be afraid to let the real you show! You will almost never get a negative response from someone when you have a genuine smile and are sincere and open.
- 4 Be positive.** People like being around others who are upbeat and exude positive energy.
- 5 Share a good laugh.** Humor is a terrific way to trigger a connection with others. The simple act of a good laugh together can transcend language barriers and gives people common ground on which to relate.



Learn more about Power 9® Principles at  
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