



Week Four Participant Manual:
Fantastic Thanksgiving Foods

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JOURNALING

- Reflect upon how your last Thanksgiving meal went in relation to eating. Did you eat too much? Did you eat the right amount? Did you pick all day? What can you do this year to leave the table feeling just right?
- What are your thoughts on what the Thanksgiving Holiday has become? What is something you would like to do differently or reincorporate into your Thanksgiving celebration that has been lost?

5 Strategies to Simplify the Thanksgiving Meal

- 1. Make a list of the recipes you will prepare.**
 - ✓ On this list indicate where the recipes can be found.
 - What specific cookbook or magazine is it from? What page is the recipe on? Did you download it off the internet?
 - ✓ Try to keep all the recipe resources together and have them marked for easy access.
- 2. On the list, write the name of the recipes and the ingredients you'll need to buy to prepare them.**
 - ✓ Take note if you'll need the same ingredient for more than one recipe. This will assure you don't overbuy or under-buy. Your list is your friend!
 - ✓ Shop ahead. Pick a time you can make it to the store before it's dreadfully crowded.
 - Check the weekly fliers for items you may need that are on sale. This could help you determine the store that would be best for you to shop at.
- 3. Review the recipes you'll be making.**
 - ✓ Decide what dishes can be prepped ahead.
 - Create an order of how you would like to get things done.
 - ✓ Decide what portions of recipes could be prepped ahead.
 - For example the bread for the stuffing can be cubed well before you need to do anything else to it.
 - Vegetables can be chopped for a vegetable side dish and stored in the refrigerator.
 - Nuts can be chopped for toppings of specific dishes.
 - Pie crusts can be made ahead of time and kept in the fridge or freezer.
- 4. Think through the cooking process of the various dishes.**
 - ✓ What should go in the oven first?
 - ✓ What takes the longest to bake?
 - ✓ What needs to sit a bit after coming out of the oven before serving?
 - ✓ How much can fit in your oven at one time?
 - ✓ What dishes can be in the oven at the same temperature?
 - ✓ What can be cooked ahead of time and reheated before serving?
 - ✓ What does not need to be cooked?
 - ✓ Many dishes can be mixed the night before and baked the day of. Take advantage of doing that. It will save you much needed time the next day.
 - ✓ How many cooking dishes do you have? Do you need to borrow some extra cooking utensils from someone? Better to know this in advance than the day of.
- 5. Another idea is to plan a Thanksgiving Potluck.**
 - ✓ You decide to host and coordinate what everyone will need to bring.
 - ✓ This will decrease your stress load and everyone ends up doing their delicious little part.

Savoring Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. And what a yummy and special time it is. There is no problem with the Thanksgiving food. The dishes we enjoy are usually prepared from scratch with wholesome ingredients. The problem is the volume consumed.

This Thanksgiving practice enjoying the way the food tastes. Focus more on quality not quantity. Your goal for the Thanksgiving meal is to truly celebrate and enjoy the sacredness of eating. Think about how long it took the cooks to prepare the meal. Eat slow enough to savor all the love and hard work they put into creating such wonderful dishes.

Helpful Strategies

Start with Less

- Put less food on your plate than you think you want. Your mom was right your eyes are always bigger than your stomach.

Savor Every Bite

- It takes at least 15 to 20 minutes to allow your brain to tell your stomach that you have had enough to eat. Focus on slowing down your eating pace. Have a bite. Set your fork down, and talk with your loved ones. Enjoy the bite, and then pick your fork up and have another.
 - Slowing down your eating pace will allow you to listen to your body, and you will know when the next bite is going to be the over the edge bite. This bite effectively ruins the meal. So focus on not taking it. You can have leftovers the next day. And that is a better choice than feeling uncomfortably stuffed for the rest of the Thanksgiving Day.
- Try to be the last one done.

Challenges and Strategies

T-Minus... To T-Day

Let the Countdown Begin!

Last week we talked about HOW to eat. This week we'll get closer to home and cover WHAT to eat for Thanksgiving. But first we have to get over the notion **that good food is too hard to make at home.**

"Scratch" is such a harsh word.

Scratch is what happens when you are desperate, angry. You scratch your nails down the chalk board and "scratch" when you can't even show up to the contest.

This is why people turn to the stuffing a la cardboard box; chalky flakes of formerly-fluffy potatoes, aerosol whipped topping, and store pies with more ingredients than a chemistry textbook.

What is the Short Term Problem?

To give food products **the shelf life of steel-belted radials**, food companies must spike them with enough preservatives to make them outlast a nuclear winter.

Hence, hydrogenated oils. Of course, the problem with plastic, **baby diapers**, and foods that last forever is that they are just plain unhealthy for you to eat.

Think about it, if bacteria won't even eat hydrogenated oil, should you?

What is the Long Term Problem?

If you don't make your own food, you will eat more nastiness more often.

Plus, the joy of filling your home with the sights, sounds, and smells of food is important for you and your family. The memories of my childhood revolve around my dad's Sunday inspirations at the stove, turkey from the oven, and the piping hot sage stuffing with gravy.

Replace these with standardized, sterilized, cardboard products, and you will train your family to go through life **thinking cheddar goldfish are a dairy product and fruit roll ups are a fruit.**

In the end, you create long-term health problems for yourself, and then you pass those on (through a simple lack of education) to your children.

Want to Lose Weight?

Make and Eat Food at Thanksgiving

It sounds hard. But that's not true. People who make processed food products want us to believe that.

Here's the Process

First of all: Plan ahead, divide the chores, and a Thanksgiving meal from scratch will only seem awesome to those without your organizational prowess!!

You don't have to construct everything on T-Day. Make the apple and pumpkin pies ahead of time.

Divide the labor so you're all working on some aspect of the meal. Someone can boil the potatoes, someone can whip the cream, and someone else can sauté the green beans.

Schedule leading into T-Day:

2-3 Days Ahead:

Thaw the turkey days ahead of time. It takes about 24 hours per 5 pounds of turkey – 30 minutes per pound if you submerge it in cold water.

One day ahead:

Chop any veggies and store in the refrigerator in zip-lock baggies.

Make wet and dry ingredients for stuffing and store separately.

Pies can be made the day before, if you set explicit instructions to keep the "taste testers" away!

Deviled eggs can be made a couple of days beforehand.

On the day of:

You'll start the turkey 3-5 hours ahead of time, depending on its size.

A little more than an hour before meal time, prepare the stuffing and put it in about one hour before you're ready to serve (it takes about 45 minutes).

30 minutes before meal time, put the potatoes in boiling water.

10-15 minutes before meal time, start the fresh veggies.

Recipes

Golden Roasted Turkey

This recipe will serve at least 18 people.

NOTE: Approximate baking time with turkey is 18 minutes per pound.

You'll Need

- 16 pound turkey
- 1 cup butter
- Salt
- Pepper

Directions

- Remove giblets and neck from turkey; wash and set aside
- Wash turkey thoroughly inside and out. Pat dry with towels.
- Prepare your choice of dressing.
- Preheat oven to 325 F
- Spoon some of dressing into neck cavity of turkey. Bring skin of neck over back; fasten with poultry pin.
- Spoon remaining dressing into body cavity; do not pack. Insert 4 or 5 poultry pins at regular intervals. Lace cavity closed with twine, bootlace fashion and then tie.
- Bend wing tips under body, or fasten to body with poultry pins. Tie end of legs together. Insert meat thermometer in inside of thigh at thickest part.
- Place turkey on rack in shallow roasting pan. Brush with some butter; sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- Roast uncovered and brushing occasionally with remaining butter and pan drippings: about 4 hours or until meat thermometer registers to 185 F. Leg joint should move freely.
- When turkey begins to turn golden, cover with a loose tent of foil, to prevent burning.
- While turkey roasts, cook giblets and neck.
- Place turkey on heated serving platter. Remove foil, twine and poultry pins.
- Let stand 20 to 30 minute before carving.

Play with Your Food

- It is your choice whether you choose to stuff the turkey or not.
- Make sure to save the bones for soup broth later on.

Best Mashed Potatoes on the Planet

You'll Need

- 1 medium sized potato for every person
- 1 tablespoon butter per potato
- ~1/2 onion per potato
- 1 tablespoon per potato of sour cream
- Salt & Pepper to taste

Directions

- Use red potatoes or brown ones, it doesn't matter. Wash them first. Don't take the skins off. Slice the washed potatoes lengthwise into halves, then quarters, then eighths.
- Boil potatoes in salty water. When you can easily stick a fork through one of the larger pieces and it falls apart, strain them.
- While the potatoes are boiling away, slice your onion and put it into a pan with a little butter or olive oil. If the pan goes a bit dry, add a bit of oil. They are done when they have shrunk down and caramelized. You'll then slice these into small pieces.
- Put drained potatoes back into the large pan they were cooked in. Add the butter. Then dump in all of your onions.
- Next, you need sour cream and a large spoon. Add sour cream and mix potatoes until the consistency is to your liking, or until you start tasting the tanginess of the sour cream.
- Finally, take a potato masher and mash everything up.
- Add salt and pepper.

Play with Your Food

- Try Greek style yogurt instead of sour cream
- Add an herb of choice such as rosemary or parsley.

Herbed Stuffing

You'll Need

- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1/3 cup onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons parsley flakes, dried
- 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 2 teaspoons sage, dried
- 1 ½ teaspoons seasoned salt
- 12 cups dry bread cubes
- 13 ounces chicken broth

Directions

- Melt butter in large skillet, saute celery and onion until onion is transparent.
- Stir in next four ingredients.
- Place bread cubes in large bowl; stir in onion and celery mixture.
- Add chicken broth; toss to combine.
- Stuff loosely into neck and breast cavities or place stuffing in casserole dish.
- If placing in casserole dish, bake covered in a 325 F oven for 45 minutes.

Play with Your Food

- You can switch up the seasonings to your liking. Try rosemary or tarragon instead, or in combination with the parsley.
- If you need a vegetarian version of the stuffing use vegetable broth instead of the chicken broth.

Garlic Green Beans

You'll Need

- 1 pound green beans, ends trimmed
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon red-wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Directions

- Steam beans for 5 to 7 minutes or until tender but crisp.
- Rinse briefly under cold water to preserve color, but do not chill.
- In a large bowl, combine remaining ingredients.
- Add green beans and toss until well coated.

Play with Your Food

- Top with some toasted slivered almonds.
- Roast the garlic.

Beets and Carrots

You'll Need

- 1 pound carrots cut into 1 inch pieces (peeling carrots is optional)
- 4 medium sized beets, peeled and quartered
- 1 medium red onion, cut in wedges
- 1 ½ tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

For the Dressing You'll Need

- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400°F.
- Toss the vegetables with olive oil, salt and pepper and place them on the baking sheet in one layer. Bake until tender start checking around 25 minutes when you toss them.
- In the meantime, combine all the dressing ingredients in a small bowl and reserve.
- Just before serving, toss the carrots and beets with the dressing.

Play with Your Food

- Use white onion instead of red.
- Cut down on amount of brown sugar used.

Amazing Apple Pie

You'll Need

- 1 five pound bag Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and sliced into ½ inch wedges
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 piecrusts

Directions

- In a large mixing bowl, add apples (play with the thickness, depending on how chunky you like your pieces) with the cinnamon, nutmeg, and sugar. Thoroughly mix them around until all apple chunks are coated.
- In to the pie dish, lay the first piecrust and then pour in the apple filling. Press apples down, smooth it out, lick your fingers, and then dot with a few small pats of butter.
- Set the second crust over the top and pinch the edges down or mash them with a fork. Go crazy here, and make whatever decorations you like. Put small vertical slits into the main part of the crust to allow some ventilation.
- Before baking, tear off two four-inch long strips of aluminum foil. Place them around the edges to prevent them from burning. You will need to pinch the two ends of the aluminum sheets together. Then put your creation into the oven at 350°F for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and return the pie for 15 minutes more too brown.

Play with your Food

- For Dutch apple pie, add ¼ cup of cream to the apples prior to baking.
- Add cranberries and walnuts, about 2 tablespoons each.

Turkey Gravy

Yields approximately 4 cups

You'll Need

- 4 tablespoons of fat reserved from cooked turkey, or butter or use a mixture of both to total 4 tablespoons
- 3 tablespoons flour
- At least ½ teaspoon pepper
- Pinch of salt
- 4 cups pan drippings and/or chicken broth to total 4 cups

Directions

- Pour the drippings from the turkey into a container and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes and then remove any fat from the top of the drippings and reserve.
- If necessary, add broth to drippings to make 4 cups.
- In a medium saucepan, heat turkey fat and/or butter.
- Add in pepper and a pinch of salt.
- Add in all the flour and constantly whisk for about 3 minutes over low heat.
- Slowly add in the 4 cups turkey drippings and/or broth; whisk constantly over medium-low heat until bubbly and thickened (about 3 minutes).
- Use right away or keep warm over lowest heat setting, whisk again before serving.

Play with Your Food

- Add more black pepper
- Use white pepper instead of black pepper

This is a great web-link with ways to make many types of different gravies with step by step instructions on how to do so:

<http://www.epicurious.com/articlesguides/howtocook/primers/gravy>

