



Week Six Participant Manual:  
**Happy Holiday Parties**

## **Week 6 Contents**

- Happiness and Health at the Holiday Parties: Tips to Enjoy Food in a Mindful Manner
- Challenges and Strategies
- Recipes
  - Egg Nog
  - Spiced Apple Cider
  - Stuffed Mushrooms

## **JOURNALING**

- Think about the holiday parties you attended last year. How do you feel you did keeping eating and enjoying the food as a mindful act?
- What are two things you can do at the holiday parties you attend this year in terms of practicing eating as a mindful act?

## Happiness and Health at the Holiday Parties

### Tips to Enjoy Food in a Mindful Manner

- Commit to only choosing real food items as much as possible.
- Share the delightful desserts you want to try with someone.
- Start with serving yourself less, knowing that you can have more.
- Sit down when eating as much as possible.
- Try small amounts of a variety of things. Take your time. Savor every bite.
- Remind yourself it is the quality not the quantity that counts.
- Really taste your food and think about what you can commend the cook on. Was the spicing absolutely perfect? Did you like the combinations of flavors in the dish?
- Remember to always take a moment before the first bite: give thanks, have a brief moment of reflection or take some deep breaths. Focus on making this moment a ritual that is part of your eating routine.

## Challenges and Strategies

### Here Comes the Holiday Party Parade

And all your work so far could be undone.

#### What is the Short Term Problem?

- Mindless eating is a real issue for our weight. The data on this are very clear: when you eat while doing something else, you tend to overeat. The scientific phrase for this is “**passive over-consumption**”.
- The problem at the party, though, is that you’re there to eat and mingle at the same time. So you have to be especially careful at these events.

#### What is the Long Term Problem?

- Passive over-consumption is a long term problem when it extends **beyond the party and into your daily life**.
- When this happens, food (and the meal itself) become a chore to “get over with” every day. How do you know if this is you?
  - You eat in the car to save time, in front of the TV, while playing some video game, or on your feet on the way to some other errand.

**You eat ... overeat ... and don’t even notice.**

## Want to Lose Weight?

Set up your strategy for the party environment.

### ***Handling the Party Process***

#### **Don't Starve Yourself**

- If you don't eat until the party, you will overeat. So have something small at your breakfast and lunch and then you will be set up to enjoy the holiday party meal.

#### **Eat in Courses**

- You are going to be at the holiday party for quite some time. So take a little food, move away from the buffet, take your time, and enjoy it. Then go back for the next course.

#### **Take Less than You Think you Want**

- Put your nibbles on a napkin instead of a plate. This will help you control the amount you are initially able to serve yourself at one time.

#### **Move Away from the Buffet Table**

- Plate your food and do not just pick from the buffet. Place food on a small plate or napkin and walk away.

#### **Alcohol Consumption**

- Be aware of the fact that alcohol lowers inhibitions so this could lead you to overeat.
- When you have an alcoholic drink, follow it with some water.

#### **It is OK to Say NO, Just say it in the Right Way**

- People prepare food out of love. Simply let a person know that you really enjoyed the food. You can also state that if there is extra, you would like to take some home.
- Also ask for a taste instead of a serving.

#### **When Possible Make Movement a Part of the Party Way**

- Walk to the party when possible or at least take a short walk before heading home.
- Dance, dance and dance some more!
- Take the stairs whenever possible.

## Recipes

### Egg Nog

#### You'll Need

- 4 ½ cups whipping cream
- 4 ½ cups half and half
- 18 large egg yolks
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 2 ¼ teaspoons ground nutmeg
- 1 cup (about) bourbon
- ½ cup (about) dark rum
- Additional ground nutmeg

#### Directions

- Bring cream and half and half to simmer in large pot.
- Whisk yolks and sugar in large bowl.
- Gradually whisk in half of hot cream mixture.
- Return mixture to pot. Stir over medium-low heat until custard thickens and leaves path on back of spoon when finger is drawn across, about 5 minutes (do not boil).
- Strain into bowl. Stir in 2 ¼ teaspoons nutmeg. Cool slightly. Chill. (*Can be made 1 day ahead. Keep chilled.*)
- Mix in bourbon and rum to taste.
- Divide eggnog among glasses or cups. Sprinkle with additional nutmeg.

#### Play With Your Food

- Serve this drink in a special glass.
- You may also want to place a cinnamon stick in the glass for additional flavor and presentation.

## Spiced Apple Cider

### You'll Need

- 1 gallon apple cider
- 12 whole cloves
- 3, 3-inch cinnamon sticks
- 2 whole nutmegs
- 2 chunks crystallized ginger

### Directions

#### Stovetop

- Heat all ingredients on low to medium- low heat on stove top for approximately 30 minutes or until spices flavor the cider.
- Keep on very low heat to keep warm while serving.

#### Crockpot

Dump all ingredients in a crockpot and heat on high for 2 hours, then switch to low to keep warm until ready to serve.

### Play with Your Food

You can play with the spices. A little less clove or a little more cinnamon may make it right for you. Also some orange slices also add unique flavor and make for fun food presentation. And if you do decide to add some alcohol, dark spiced rum is a nice way to go.

## Goat Cheese Stuffed Mushrooms

### You'll Need

- 6 tablespoons butter plus ¼ cup butter separated
- 2 pounds medium fresh mushrooms, stems removed (save stems)
- 1/2 cup mushroom stems, finely chopped
- 1 (8 ounce) package Neufchatel cheese
- 1 (4 ounce) package goat cheese crumbles
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped garlic
- Chopped chives for garnish

### Directions

- Heat two large skillets over medium-high heat, melt 3 tablespoons of butter in each of the skillets and divide the mushroom caps between the two. Cook and stir the mushroom caps until the edges are slightly soft, about 5 minutes.
- Place the mushrooms in a colander to drain and cool.
- Stir together the cream cheese and goat cheese until well blended. Mix in the onion, and mushroom stems. Use all of the filling to generously fill each mushroom cap and place, filling side up, in a baking pan.
- Preheat the oven broiler for high heat.
- Melt the remaining 1/4 cup of butter with the garlic in a small saucepan over medium heat and cook the garlic for 1 minute. Once the butter has completely melted drizzle the garlic butter over the filled mushroom caps.
- Place the pan of mushrooms in oven until golden brown, about 5 minutes.
- Remove from oven and garnish with fresh chives.

### Play with Your Food

- Add some herbs of choice just as rosemary or Italian seasoning
- Use green onion instead
- Top with a dash of paprika