

Running Head: POSITIVE SHABBAT DINNER

Positive Shabbat Dinner: An Effective Positive Intervention to Increase Well-Being

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Advisor: Amy Holloway

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Abstract

Shabbat (Sabbath) is the most important holiday in Judaism. It is a time of joy, rest and reflection, separate from the other days of the week. Jews celebrate Shabbat in many different ways, depending on one's denomination within Judaism, family rituals and customs. Engaging in weekly Shabbat dinners is one way to celebrate Shabbat. From a positive psychology perspective, Shabbat dinners are a means to increase well-being. Looking at Shabbat dinner through a "Shabbat mindset" brings new meaning to the experience. By examining psychological theories and research, such as positive emotions and self-determination, it seems that Shabbat dinner is an ideal positive intervention. The rituals and structure of a Shabbat dinner foster positive emotions, engagement, relationship building, meaning, achievement, self-efficacy and much more.

Keywords: positive psychology, positive intervention, ritual, meaning, purpose, well-being, Shabbat.

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Introduction: Reframing Shabbat Dinners as a Positive Intervention

Shabbat (Sabbath) is a joyous weekly holiday! I have many fond memories of my family celebrating Shabbat by having weekly Friday night dinners. It was not easy growing up Jewish in the Seattle area. There were many social situations where I felt uncomfortable because of my faith. My twin brother Tad and I were two of the less than a dozen Jews in our high school class of 300 students in the late 1970's. When the Young Life Christian leaders sat at our school cafeteria lunch tables during lunch encouraging Christian engagement, I became anxious and distressed. I did not feel I belonged. Shabbat dinner on Friday nights was a reprieve from these stresses. It was a time I could unwind, relax, enjoy family togetherness and support. Saying prayers and sharing a meal on Friday nights united our family and felt joyous. It was a safe and supportive environment to practice our religion.

I recall my mother dressing our kitchen table with a white tablecloth on Fridays to separate Shabbat dinner from the other meals of the week. She cooked traditional foods from recipes that were passed down through her family, such as brisket and chicken soup. We brought in Shabbat by lighting a set of candlesticks on that was carried over on a ship from Russia by mother's great-aunt. The candlesticks were a wedding present for my maternal grandparents. My dad did not grow up in an observant Jewish family but recognized the value of having a weekly spiritually themed family meal together on Friday nights. Our family rituals included reciting traditional prayers over the Shabbat candles, wine and challah (traditional braided Jewish bread), followed by a meal and animated conversation. It was family time with a spiritual twist.

Today, Shabbat with our four daughters, extended family and friends carries on these same positive feelings for me. However, since studying Positive Psychology, Shabbat dinner has

taken on a whole new dimension of meaning and connection. I realized that Shabbat is a means to enhance well-being. I have developed what I will call a “Shabbat mindset,” whereby I have discovered how the many elements of preparing and having a Shabbat dinner contribute to a greater sense of well-being and meaning. For example, having increased awareness about the rituals I incorporate into my celebration of Shabbat has increased my feelings of joy and awe. This new mindset I experience each week has strengthened my understanding of myself and deepened the connection I feel with my Judaism. Now, with a greater understanding of the elements of well-being, I realize that Shabbat is actually a positive intervention.

Shabbat is the most important Jewish holiday (See Appendix 1). It has been a core part of Jewish life for centuries. It is a day of rest, spiritual rejuvenation, joy, meaningful conversation and prayer. It is a day to unplug. Shabbat dinner connects the present with the past through prescribed or established ceremonial acts or rituals that differentiates it from the other meals of the week. It is celebrated in a variety of ways by Jews, depending on one’s denomination, family customs and personal preference. The many rituals of a Shabbat dinner, such as eating challah and singing songs, make it an ideal positive weekly psychological intervention or activity designed to enhance well-being.

Cooking has been one of my passions for decades. I have included recipes for three Shabbat dinner meals with some of my favorite recipes with the intention of publishing a Positive Shabbat Cookbook in the near future (See Appendix 2). This paper will serve as the introduction to my cookbook.

Overview of Positive Psychology

Positive psychology is the scientific study of flourishing, including how individuals, organizations and communities can thrive. Positive psychology takes its foundational values from religion and ancient philosophers, such as Aristotle, who contemplated and expressed definitions of happiness and what a meaningful life entails (McMahon, 2018).

Aristotle believed that the highest form of happiness is eudaimonia, which is defined as living a virtuous and purposeful life through doing and intentionally choosing instead of focusing solely on feelings of positive emotions (Melchert, 2002). He believed that the more frequently one chooses to practice skills, such as cooking or showing kindness, the more one gains knowledge, meaning and purpose (Melchert, 2002). In ancient Judaism, happiness was viewed in the context of following G-d's laws (McMahon, 2018). Serving G-d was purposeful and virtuous and would lead to individual and community well-being.

Ancient theories of well-being sparked a new conversation in 1998 when Martin Seligman, in his role as President of the American Psychological Association (APA), declared positive psychology as the theme of his presidential term (Peterson, 2006). Through years of researching depression, Seligman (2006) realized that there was a lack of balance in the field of psychology. The field had been concentrating most of its research efforts on the causes of or relief from misery and pathology and paid little attention to studying what makes people and entities thrive. He had the foresight to imagine the benefits of a psychology that concentrates on understanding and building well-being.

Before 1998, there was little recognition of the studies about optimism and happiness, and what makes life worth living for all of humankind (Peterson, 2006). Seligman's leadership

during his tenure as APA President provided the impetus to unite the scientists who would become leaders in the field of positive psychology (Seligman, 2018).

Since Seligman's ground-breaking speech in 1998, research, theories and applications in the field of positive psychology have exploded (Azur, 2011). Seligman inspired the VIA (Values in Action) classification of 24 strengths and virtues in 2004, creating a new science of character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The VIA was his strength-based answer to developing a common language of personality traits that can be measured and are universally present in each person. Knowing and using one's character strengths, such as curiosity, perseverance or creativity, is a means to increase each element of Seligman's well-being model called PERMA (Niemic, 2018). Over five million people world-wide have taken the VIA Survey (<https://www.viacharacter.org>) to discover their unique hierarchy of strengths (Seligman, 2018).

In addition, research-based studies mushroomed on topics such as hope, self-efficacy and optimism (Magyar-Moe & Lopez, 2015; Locke, 1996; Seligman, 2002). Academic programs that focused on positive psychology emerged, including Seligman's MAPP (Master of Applied Positive Psychology) program at the University of Pennsylvania in 2005 (Seligman, 2011). Positive education programs and research has emerged around the globe. A number of influential positive psychology organizations have formed, including IPPA (International Positive Psychology Association, <https://www.ippanetwork.org>) and IPEN (International Positive Education Networks, <https://ipen-network.com>) to promote practice, applications, and collaborations across various disciplines of positive psychology.

The goal of positive psychology is to enable people and entities to flourish, through scientifically based research, theories and interventions that move people toward well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Early on, Seligman developed a model of well-being that

was primarily centered around measuring happiness or life-satisfaction, based on the constructs of positive emotions, engagement and meaning (Seligman, 2002). With subsequent research and reflection, Seligman realized his original well-being model did not account for the benefits of engagement or pride of achievement. His theory was too focused on positive affect (mood). Seligman's new model called PERMA, expanded and deepened his theory of well-being. PERMA has five elements: *Positive emotions, Engagement, positive Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishment* (Seligman, 2011). Each element can be measured and pursued in its own right. Everyone determines his or her own formula for thriving with PERMA, implementing elements that matter and are meaningful to them.

The elements of PERMA and other positive psychology constructs, including religious ritual, gratitude, self-efficacy, self-determination, savoring and mindfulness contribute to the idea that creating and participating in a Shabbat dinner is a positive intervention that can increase well-being.

Overview of Positive Interventions

A key tool that has been shown to advance well-being in positive psychology are positive interventions (Seligman, 2011). Positive interventions are intentional acts or activities that enhance well-being by alleviating the negative or strengthen the positive (Pawelski, 2009). They are mechanisms that target and improve a positive psychological construct, such as positive emotions. They are scientifically tested activities that help individuals experience deeper feelings of meaning, enhance positive relationships and advance the benefits of religious rituals.

One effective positive intervention is *The Three Blessings*. In an internet study, 411 individuals were randomly assigned to a placebo-controlled or experimental group. The control group was asked to journal daily about childhood memories. The experimental group was asked

to engage in writing in a journal daily about three good things that happened in their life and why. After one month, the experimental group's surveys reflected significant positive changes in happiness and decreases in negative emotions. These positive changes continued for the experimental group during the remaining five months of the study. The control group's happiness and negative emotions remained similar to their baseline levels throughout the study (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). In a subsequent meta-analysis of 51 positive interventions, individuals who intentionally engaged in positive activities, such as thinking optimistically, became happier (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). Both studies suggest that positive interventions can be effective.

The features of effective positive interventions include frequency, variety, fit, timing and social support (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). Notably, interventions that occur once a week have been shown to be most effective (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). The more a family and culture supports a positive intervention, the more likely the investment to maintain the activity is sustained (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). As such, an intervention that aligns with personal values and is enjoyable, such as a desire to deepen connections with others at a Shabbat dinner, is an ideal type of positive intervention (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013).

There are limitations to a positive intervention, such as having participants who are not willingly interested or open to engage in a Shabbat dinner experience. There must be a belief that the positive intervention will increase well-being (Lyubomirsky & Layous, 2013). A Shabbat dinner experience has all of the features of a positive intervention built into its structure and purpose. Being open to conversations and interactions with others, as well as experimenting with rituals allows space for the person who prepares the meal and the participants to experience well-being.

Preparing for Shabbat Dinner with a Positive Shabbat Mindset

Preparing for Shabbat dinner takes time and effort. It can increase well-being especially when assembling it with a Shabbat mindset to create a memorable and meaningful experience for oneself and others. Having a Shabbat mindset augments the possibilities of experiencing positive emotions, mindfulness and flow during the preparation process. Starting with the anticipation of a joyous Shabbat dinner, including the rituals and a meal, Shabbat dinner is an opportunity to show gratitude toward others, increase self-efficacy, savor and strengthen social bonds with family and friends, all of which increases well-being.

A first step to prepare for Shabbat dinner is to map out a preparation strategy. This includes forming a guest list, developing a menu, creating a shopping list, scheduling time for cooking and setting the table. Thinking through each action with a Shabbat mindset is an opportunity to show gratitude and love toward oneself and others, which makes the process more engaging, meaningful and fulfilling. The positive emotions of gratitude and love, along with awe, hope, serenity, pride, amusement, interest and inspiration each materialize while preparing and participating in a Shabbat dinner. Fredrickson (2009) argues that positive emotions allow individuals to build psychological capital, such as resiliency and optimism, and buffer against adversity. When I feel gratitude towards myself for my efforts, my heart opens with more kindness and a desire to help others. I feel the positive emotions of joy and pride that Fredrickson's (1998; 2001; 2009) broaden-and-build theory postulates grows an individual's mindset. Individual's minds "broaden" when they experience positive emotions, which opens them to new ideas and possibilities. Simultaneously, Fredrickson (1998; 2001; 2009) postulates that positive emotions "build" specific social and psychological resources that can be used in

later circumstances to maintain well-being and buffer against negative emotions, such as anxiety or anger.

Laying out a strategy to prepare for Shabbat dinner helps minimize the potential stress of each step of the process. Having goals that are attainable, specific and challenging motivates high effort and builds skills, such as self-efficacy (an individual's belief in their abilities to succeed), which Locke (1996) argues is important in building resilience and self-control. For some, spreading the preparation of the dinner across the week helps increase and prolong the enjoyment of the activities and elongates the meaningfulness of the experience. Savoring an experience can be a means to increase self-confidence and joy while decreasing stress and other negative emotions (Lyubomirsky, 2007). I often make a first (eg., soup) and one main course on Wednesdays, two side dishes on Thursday and the balance of the food, including a challah, on Friday. Others prefer preparing their entire Shabbat dinner on Fridays.

Ideally, the preparer has options to choose what preparation schedule suits them best. When individuals have the freedom to willingly determine their actions, such as choosing what days to prepare the food for a Shabbat meal, they feel more joy and satisfaction because have control (Ryan, Huta & Deci, 2006). Self-determination theory postulates that an individual's well-being is connected to their ability to control their own life. (Ryan, Huta & Deci, 2006). There are three universal psychological components that intrinsically motivate individuals toward growth, change and well-being-- The need of competence (feeling able), relatedness (connectedness) and autonomy (choice) (Deci & Ryan, 2006).

I suggest asking guests to contribute a food item to the Shabbat dinner. This lessens the burden on the preparer, and the guests feel a higher sense of belonging, recognition and meaning by contributing, as well as joy for showing gratitude toward the hosts. Feeling a sense of

belonging is an important aspect of mattering because it confirms one is valuable and deserving (Prilleltensky, 2016). Also, asking others to bring a food item to a Shabbat dinner promotes and encourages an environment of giving and generosity that adds value to the evening. Grant (2013) suggests that that act of “giving” promotes positive emotions and self-efficacy. Over the last thirty years, my guests have consistently reported feeling a deeper connection to our Shabbat dinner experience when they contribute to the dinner with a food item which is consistent with Adam Grant’s (2013) research findings.

Cooking is an opportunity to engage in flow, by immersing oneself in the challenge of a recipe. Flow is complete engagement and commitment to an activity to the point of being fully immersed and losing conscious sense of space and time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1990), flow has a number of psychological benefits, including growth and well-being. Flow produces a sense of achievement and profound association to an activity that is rewarding and motivating, increasing positive emotions and buffering against adversity (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Chopping vegetables into one-inch squares, or reducing a sauce to the perfect consistency, can be entries into flow. The positive emotions and meaning felt from flow lead to higher positive affect and personal growth that Fredrickson (2009) postulates opens and broadens awareness, allowing the taking in of more information and the building of resources, such as higher self-regulation. The effort put into an action and the achievement from that effort can stoke pride, inspiration and build knowledge and skills, sparking deeper engagement (Fredrickson, 2009). Cooking with my daughters is an opportunity to deepen relationships as we socialize and collaborate toward the same goal. Cooking with them gives me an opportunity to teach them skills (or them to teach me new skills) which is inspiring and invigorating for all of us. Learning new skills increases self-efficacy, spurs personal growth,

increases positive emotions and deepens social bonds (Fredrickson, 2009; Ryan et al., 2006; Seligman, 2011).

Making challah is another ritual that is an opportunity to deepen personal meaning both culturally and religiously. With my Shabbat mindset, each time I make challah I feel a sense of connection to my ancestry. I feel purposeful when thinking about the biblical significance of the bread. Feeling a sense of belonging and purpose cultivates psychological health benefits, such as lowering levels of stress and serving as a protective factor against adversity (Weber & Pargament, 2014). The emotional bonds that are created when repeating rituals, both religious and non-religious, contribute to an individual's sense of meaning and feelings of mattering (Dein & Loewenthal, 2013; Fiese, Foley, & Spagnola, 2006; Fiese, Winter, Wamboldt, Anbar, & Wamboldt, 2009).

When making challah, I reflect on my family and friends expressing gratitude for my efforts which increases my self-efficacy and motivates me to try new techniques to improve the bread's taste and appearance. Gratitude is a positive emotion which has many benefits, including increasing positive emotions, hope and optimism (Lyubomirsky, 2007). Further, when I make challah with our daughters, I feel joy, pride and hope because I view it as an expression of their desire to carry forward a tradition that is a meaningful legacy to our family's Jewish heritage. Connecting or resonance opportunities are important to create meaningful experiences (Huta, 2017). Deep meaning is what one wants to feel in order to feel purposeful (Frankl, 1963).

Preparation activities, such as cooking a recipe, can spark frustration too. Spending time and energy on a failed dish can spur negative emotions that can cause stress and anxiety, especially if cooking time is limited. Feeling positivity from an experience can buffer negativity, turning feelings of frustration into feelings of challenge that nurtures learning (Fredrickson,

2009). Overcoming negativity with positivity can increase resiliency and boost self-efficacy (Fredrickson, 2009). Resiliency is being able to adapt in positive ways when encountering adversity. Increasing resilience in individuals of all ages can have many positive outcomes including increasing life satisfaction, improving overall affect, increasing psychological energy and spurring thoughtful decision making (Matsten, Cutuli, Herbers, & Reed, 2009).

Preparing for Shabbat dinner for those who keep kosher adds additional tasks to the Shabbat dinner process that can be meaningful. Kashrut (Following Jewish dietary laws – “keeping kosher”) involves separating milk from meat and abstaining from eating certain foods, such as pork and shellfish. This Jewish tradition dates back to the bible (Held, 2017). Keeping kosher for me is a way to connect with my heritage on a daily basis. Baumeister and Vohs (2002) theorize that meaningful experiences which are derived from cognitive connections, aligned with personal values and are purposeful, promote fulfillment, stability and higher levels of happiness.

Keeping kosher requires being intentional when preparing and enjoying a meal. Making a dish often requires creativity, because of the need to substitute food items to keep within boundaries of the Jewish dietary laws. Substituting butter with olive oil is one example. Using vegetable stock instead of meat stock is another example. Creativity develops confidence, critical thinking skills and innovation that spur personal growth (Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2016). I find that my creativity in cooking often improves the taste of a dish.

For those who do not enjoy or have the time to cook for a Shabbat meal, the preparation process can still be meaningful. The effort involved to order and pick-up food, such as being cognizant of the dietary needs or food allergies of each guest, can boost positive emotions, including gratitude, joy, and high-quality connections (HQCs) with others through food and respect for difference. HQCs nurture trust, higher engagement, mutual positive regard, a sense of

matter and personal growth, which are important ingredients for boosting well-being (Dutton, 2003). Purchasing a gluten-free dessert for a guest or a particular pasta dish for a child are examples. Expressing creativity by formulating a themed Shabbat dinner, such as purchasing Chinese or Mediterranean food, generates variety that is important in a positive intervention (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). Whether making or purchasing a Shabbat dinner, the experience should be an intentional feast separate from other meals of the week, bringing more meaning and purpose to the meal.

Setting the table for Shabbat, including planning where everyone is to sit takes effort and mindful attention that is important to cultivate positive social interactions. Feeling mattered and recognized increases positive emotions and feelings of being understood, which increases well-being (Prilleltensky, 2016). Haidt (2012) theorizes that humans are like bees in a hive, as they naturally evolved to cooperate with others, losing their sense of self over something larger. Having positive relationships has many benefits, including higher self-esteem, increased life-satisfaction and longevity and decreased stress and anxiety (Seligman, 2011). Hand-crafting place-cards, decorated with Jewish themes can help set the mood for the evening. Using dishes or a tablecloth reserved for Shabbat dinner, as well as using special Kiddush cups on the table can be meaningful rituals. Cohen and Johnson (2016) argue that rituals kindle reflection and hope, which builds self-efficacy. Using the Kiddush cup young adults received at their Bar or Bat Mitzvah is one idea. Having younger members of the family or guests decorate a Kiddush cup can help them feel a sense of belonging at the Shabbat dinner table. Mimicking Jewish ancestors' preparations of a Shabbat dinner or creating new preparation customs with intention and reflection nurtures positive emotions and feelings of belonging that correspond to purpose and meaning. Reframing the experience of a Shabbat dinner with a Shabbat mindset transforms

the holiday into an ideal positive intervention that has many benefits to both the preparer and the participants.

Reframing Shabbat Rituals to the Positive

The rituals each family incorporates in a Shabbat dinner varies, though the order of the religious rituals is prescribed (Held, 2017). Having family traditions and customs, both religious and non-religious, makes the Shabbat dinner experience deeper and more meaningful. By intentionally repeating rituals each week, habits are formed that philosopher and psychologist William James (1892/1984) theorized shape one's character, including moral values and personality. One non-religious ritual in our family was allowing our young children to drink soda on Friday nights. Our children looked forward to the special treat of drinking soda at Shabbat dinners which also led them to not drink sodas on other occasions. Another ritual was that they lead the prayers at Shabbat dinner, which cultivated leadership skills and self-confidence. Purposely practicing good moral habits staves off negativity and opens one's mind to greater levels of thinking and new skills that motivates personal growth (James, 1892/1984).

Our Shabbat dinners start with the arrival of our family and guests. Socializing before a Shabbat dinner helps everyone wind down from the busy week and prepares them for the Shabbat meal. Reflecting with my Shabbat mindset is a way to recognize the beginning of the evening as a time for everyone to unplug and connect with others through conversation. Our TVs are turned off, phones are put away and everyone is wearing appropriate clothes for a sacred experience. We have a no-jeans and tee shirt rule that has led to a ritual of dressing up for Shabbat that sets the evening apart from others.

The mood is joyful, delightful and serene. It is an ideal opportunity to practice mindfulness. Mindfulness is defined as the act of pausing and focusing attention on something in

particular. Mindfulness is also noticing when one's thoughts are wandering, then bringing attention back to that something in particular with no judgement (Kabat-Zinn, 2013).

Mindfulness is helpful because it provides awareness of thoughts and emotions that create greater self-understanding (Waters, 2017). Other benefits of practicing mindfulness include increased self-regulation and self-control, as well as being a means to clear the mind and decrease negative emotions (Wheeler, Arnkoff, & Glass, 2017). Noticing the smell of chicken soup cooking in the kitchen or the details of the ornate candlesticks on the Shabbat table helps set the ambiance for everyone, but more importantly fosters feelings of gratitude for past joyous Shabbat dinner occasions and an appreciation for the maker of the beautiful candlesticks. In addition, mindfulness helps one pay attention and stay focused on what others are saying, which deepens connections (Waters, 2017).

Eventually, everyone is called to sit together around the dinner table. If we have guests (Jewish and non-Jewish), we welcome them and explain our religious rituals, inviting them to participate with the intention of them feeling a sense of belonging and mattering. Individuals are social beings that thrive when interacting with reciprocity because feeling worthy and acknowledged cultivates thriving (Prilleltensky, 2016). Notably, the religious artifacts we use at our Shabbat dinners are meaningful. One set of Shabbat candlesticks were a wedding present, our primary Kiddush cup is from Israel and our Tzedakah ("Justice") charity box was given to us by an organization that honored my husband and me for our philanthropy. Each time I use these items with a Shabbat mindset, I am filled with joy, pride for our heritage and a sense of belonging and mattering. The actual economic value of these items is irrelevant, but their meaning for us, when reflected upon, is psychologically priceless. Giving to others increases positive emotions, while giving up items feels like a loss (Schwartz, 2004).

We have a family tradition of putting money in a Tzedakah box before officially bringing in the Shabbat holiday with prayers. Once a year we donate these funds from our Tzedakah box to a non-profit organization that we choose collectively after taking input from each family member. In Judaism, the ritual of giving of Tzedakah is an ethical responsibility and a religious duty no matter what one's financial situation is (Diamant & Kushner, 2000). It is a mitzvah (doing good) and a ritual that models and teaches Jewish ethics within families. It is an example of valuing the idea of making the world a better place (Diamant & Kushner, 2000). A ritual of contributing to others promotes altruism and stokes positive feelings of elevation that motivate compassion and kindness (Haidt, 2003). The giving of Tzedakah at a Shabbat dinner motivates discussions about issues in the world, a means to nurture deeper connections, empathy and compassion. Giving to others fosters hope that fuels purpose and personal growth that move one toward flourishing (Grant, 2013).

Another idea to engage individuals in a meaningful activity at Shabbat dinner, especially families with younger children, is having a gratitude Shabbat box where each family member writes something down for which they are grateful and puts it in the box each week. Then, once a month during a Shabbat dinner, the gratitude notes are shared with everyone. This activity is an effective way to practice savoring. Savoring builds appreciation for self and others, which trains attention and builds positivity while buffering against adversity (Waters, 2017).

Finally, we officially bring in Shabbat by lighting candles and reciting a blessing while making three circles with our hands. We have a ritual of covering our eyes during the prayer to focus on the moment of transitioning into Shabbat. I often pause at the end of the prayer to soak in and notice the gratitude I feel for that moment, the evening and for the sacred holiday. This moment of mindfulness increases my sense of serenity and encourages me to experience

transcendence. Transcendence is a character strength that opens thoughts and helps build resources (Fredrickson, 2009; Niemiec, 2018). For many, circling the flames of the lit candles with one's hands three times symbolizes G-d's presence (Held, 2017).

Our next ritual is the prayer over the wine. This is called the Kiddush. The Kiddush is a verbal declaration that Shabbat is holy and that the meal about to be eaten will be a joyful and festive experience (Diamant & Kushner, 2000). In Jewish tradition, certain foods are associated with certain emotions; wine is associated with positive emotions and is to be part of every celebratory occasion (Possick, 2008). After the Kiddush, we recite the HaMotzi, the prayer over the challah, in which we verbalize our gratitude for the food we are about to eat. Noticing and intentionally showing gratitude creates positivity that is contagious, giving everyone in the environment a boost (Fredrickson, 2009). Then, we recite a family prayer that describes the key elements of a meaningful Shabbat and includes the importance of respecting others. Often, we bless our children with a traditional prayer. Additional Shabbat religious rituals include the washing of hands before eating challah. Observant Jews include a prayer in which the husband recites a poem in admiration of his wife (Telushkin, 1991).

Religious rituals and spirituality are associated with psychological health benefits, such as lower levels of stress and depression, and are protective factors against adversity (Weber & Pargament, 2014). Sacredness helps bring order and meaning to individuals, as well as fostering community support and compassion (Cohen & Johnson, 2016). Belief in a higher spiritual order can provide comfort, a sense of continuity and an ethical road mat for living a meaningful life. Religion and spirituality for many is pathway of hope that strengthens self-efficacy, gratitude and decreases anxiety (Cohen & Johnson, 2016). Given a chance to make choices, individuals that

embrace choice and are intrinsically motivated (inherently satisfied), are more likely to thrive (Brown & Ryan, 2015).

Many Jews incorporate singing into their Shabbat dinner. We sing a number of the traditional prayers before the meal. Many Jews give thanks to G-d for their meals after eating by singing an anthology of prayers called the *Birkat Hamazon* (blessing for food). For thousands of years and across cultures singing has been associated with enhanced well-being (MacDonald, Kreutz, & Mitchell, 2012). Not only is singing associated with enhanced emotional and physical states, but is also a tool to decrease negative emotions, such as stress and anxiety (Vastfjall, Julsin, & Hartig, 2012). Singing is joyful and fun, and is a way to connect with others and feel an enhanced sense of belonging.

Prayers that families weave into their Shabbat dinners can foster a psychological mindset that brings a deeper sense of meaning, engagement and joy to the experience (Cohen & Johnson, 2016). Noticing the meaning of each word of a prayer and the emotions that arise in oneself during its recitation helps deepen the meaning of the prayer and of the overall experience, which increases well-being (Wheeler et al., 2017). A Shabbat mindset can foster feelings of gratitude for all that G-d has created, as well as hopes for peace. An intentional mindset can motivate practicing mindfulness, improving self-regulation, increase the desire to help others, and deepen connections with others (Allan, Bott, & Suh, 2015; Fredrickson, 2009; Seligman, 2018). (See Appendix 3).

The many rituals at a Shabbat dinner cultivate an atmosphere of unity, support, meaning, and joy. Each of these elements on their own open up the possibility to enhance an individual's well-being (Dien & Lowenthal, 2013; Fiese et al., 2006). Engaging in Shabbat rituals, such as

lighting candles, singing songs and eating challah, can be effective elements of a weekly positive intervention or activity that enhances well-being even within various levels of observance.

Having a Shabbat dinner at home or at a friend's home is ideal. However, if that is not possible, it is possible to create a meaningful experience by lighting the Shabbat candles and saying the Shabbat prayers. A Shabbat dinner can take place at a restaurant, in nature or in an airport. No matter the environment, an experience can be an intentional time to pause, appreciate sacred moments, be nostalgic, and build meaning and social bonds with others which can increase well-being. (Seligman, 2011; Weber & Pargament, 2014).

The rituals of a Shabbat dinner for many add spirituality and religiosity to one's life and creates a connection to past generations. Participating in rituals around a Shabbat dinner, whether individuals are observant or secular Jews or are of another religion, can be a transcendent experience that produces elevation. Algoe and Haidt (2009) suggest that the positive emotion of elevation increases openness and warmth toward others, allowing individuals to see and experience new heights of happiness and meaning. I have found that my new Shabbat mindset has deepened my sense of meaning when engaging in Shabbat rituals, strengthening my faith and desire to create additional sacred moments for myself, my family and others during and outside of a Shabbat dinner. Each week, I feel a deep sense of gratitude, pride and purpose reflecting about my ancestry when engaging in Shabbat dinner rituals. This has fostered in me more positive emotions and a deeper understanding of myself, which has moved me closer to flourishing and has made engaging in each Shabbat dinner experience an ideal positive intervention for me.

The Positive Shabbat Meal and Conversation

My Shabbat meals often starts with a soup, such as a twist on the traditional Jewish chicken soup passed down from my ancestors. With my Shabbat mindset, the aroma of my soup that permeates our home fills me with nostalgic memories of previous Shabbats which boosts my mood and feelings of comfort and belonging. After the first course, my custom is to offer a buffet feast. My Shabbat meal is intentionally a more embellished meal compared to other meals of the week, which makes it special and meaningful. I make two main courses and a number of side dishes, including vegetables and complex carbohydrates. The meal ends with a buffet of fruits and deserts, and coffee and tea. My intention for the meal is to elongate the time spent together at the table. Also, I intentionally make foods that cater to the dietary needs and desires of my guests. I prefer serving buffet style to separate it from the other meals of the week and to allow guests to pick and choose what they want to eat and how much. Giving individuals choice promotes positive emotions, including joy and savoring. (Brown & Ryan, 2015; Seligman, 2011).

The Shabbat dinner table is an ideal place for stimulating valuable conversation. Often Jews at Shabbat dinner discuss the meaning and significance of the weekly *parsha* (Torah portion). Discussing the moral values that are imbedded in a story in the Torah can help one uncover insights that lead to change, such as increased empathy or understanding about a difficult situation. Analyzing the weekly *parsha* through the lens of a positive psychology construct, such as gratitude is different way to discuss a *parsha*. Educating individuals in novel and interesting ways can spark deeper engagement and connection, which helps develop critical thinking and listening skills. (Seligman, 2011; Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2016). For example, discussing the story of Adam and Eve -- G-d's first two humans on earth -- by asking each member at the table to express how they would verbalize to G-d their gratitude for the

opportunity of living in the Garden of Eden. Discussing this topic could uncover new thoughts about gratitude that could inspire a positive mindset change or deeper understanding of oneself.

Shabbat dinner can be family time to deepen relationships, work through problems with each other and provide support and input, such as practicing active constructive responding (ACR). ACR is a technique that uses intentional, caring and supportive language, and good listening skills when conversing, with the goal of improving social bonds and resiliency (Gable, Reis, Impett, & Asher, 2004). When someone shares good news, the idea is to respond actively by using genuine verbal and nonverbal signs to show interest in what the person is saying. Shabbat dinner is a natural environment to practice ACR, as it is aligned with values of Judaism, which promotes dignity, humility and gratitude (Held, 2017).

Family meals is an ideal time for families to discuss how to help those in need, dissect social issues, mourn, and work out differences, which may help build protective factors for adversity for children (Skeer, Sonnevile, Deshpande, Goodridge, & Folta, 2017). Discussing family issues and current events are customary at our Shabbat dinners. Shabbat's sacredness and weekly occurrence help set a stage for respectful interactions. The Shabbat dinner experience can be viewed as a sacred space to help individuals feel useful, impactful and worthy. Children who grow up in an environment in which they feel mattered and supported during discussions at family meals, feel more appreciated and valued in adulthood (Skeer et al., 2017). Feeling mattered develops self-efficacy and confidence (Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2016; Maddux, 2009; Prilleltensky, 2016).

An activity to help deepen connections and build mattering at Shabbat is asking each person at a Shabbat dinner table share one positive thing that happened to them during the past week. Sharing good things with family and others is a technique called *capitalization*.

Capitalization is associated with enhanced positive affect, life satisfaction and feelings of belonging. Relationships are heightened when a person shares positive events that are supported with positive responding (compared to sharing negative events) (Gable, Gonzaga, & Strachman, 2006)). Practicing capitalization helps individuals identify their strengths and strengths in others, deepening compassion and resiliency, which are important factors in well-being (Waters, 2017).

Another idea is to purchase or compose a set of conversation starters on a variety of topics that spur critical thinking, humor, conversation or creativity – all opportunities for HQC's. HQCs and can spur trust and higher engagement among participants (Dutton, 2003). Participants at Shabbat dinners add additional dimensions to conversations, adding opportunities for personal growth in addition to expanding social connections. Adding conversation starters to a dinner with rituals and sacredness, such as a Shabbat dinner, inspires respectful and positive conversations among participants. Positivity broadens perspectives and deepens social connections, which can move individuals toward thriving (Fredrickson, 2009). Creating deeper social bonds boosts feeling of being tied to a community that Prilleltensky (2016) theorizes increases well-being.

Benefits of Continuing a Shabbat Mindset into the Evening After the Shabbat Meal

After a Shabbat dinner we often linger in conversation or engage in play. There is no rush for the evening to end. Ideally, the holiday has allowed everyone to experience and savor a positive psychological state of well-being. We often play board games that are fun and interactive. Playing games and engaging in downtime with others can increase social bonds and positive emotions, and improve attentional and cognitive functioning (Jaeggi, Buschkeuhl, Jonides, & Perrig, 2008; Waters, 2017). Choosing games that multiple people and ages can play,

such as Rummikub or Bingo is optimal. Games can not only be enjoyable and relaxing, but as such can foster alertness and the processing of information that was learned previously (Waters, 2017).

When choosing to engage in a game such as Rummikub, one has an opportunity to have fun, be competitive and bond with others who are playing. Ideally, one does not think about their “to do” list or relive stressful moments from the past week. Brains process information more effectively when they have this type of down time (Waters, 2017). Simultaneously, during this type of downtime one is cognitively building fluid intelligence (the ability to think abstractly and solve problems) and building self-esteem (Jaeggi et al., 2008). Individuals deepen relationships when conversing and playing games with others, as well build as empathy and cooperation which are important values of Judaism and components of well-being (Diamant & Kushner, 2000; Seligman, 2011). The after-dinner atmosphere is an opportunity to savor the enjoyment and sacredness of the Shabbat dinner experience. Ideally, when the evening is over, the preparer will feel a sense of accomplishment, calmness, elevation, and gratitude for having created the meaningful evening. The participants and preparer should feel transcendent, a higher sense of belonging and purpose. Both preparer and participants will have experienced increased well-being.

Conclusion

More positive interventions that move individuals toward flourishing are needed. Taking existing habitual activities, such as Shabbat dinners, and reframing them through a positive psychology lens is one idea for how to do this.

Preparing and experiencing a weekly Shabbat dinner or a similar ritual with family and friends is an ideal example of a positive intervention because of its built-in elements that can

increase well-being. There are a number of ways one can reframe a Shabbat dinner or a similar family ritual through a Shabbat or intentional mindset that can lead to an increase in well-being, both for the preparer and the participants. Ways to do this include making it a means to increase positive emotions, deepen relationships and building a sense of mattering and belonging for the preparer and among participants. Scientific studies postulate that these positive psychology constructs contribute to greater well-being, as have many others constructs discussed in this paper including mindfulness, self-efficacy and gratitude (Fredrickson, 2009; Golinkoff & Hirsh-Pasek, 2016; Maddux, 2009; Prilleltensky, 2016; Seligman, 2011; Waters, 2017). In addition, a Shabbat dinner or similar weekly family meal incorporates all of the features of a positive intervention - namely, frequency, variety, fit, timing and social support.

Rituals, such as those at a Shabbat dinner, both religious and non-religious, boosts well-being, as do the conversations and downtime after dinner which promote high quality connections and learning opportunities, both of which increase well-being, decrease negativity and build resilience for all in attendance (Dutton, 2003; Seligman, 2011; Waters, 2017).

Developing a Shabbat mindset, by discovering and experiencing how the many elements of a Shabbat dinner can contribute to a greater sense of meaning, in turn, kindles well-being. Noticing elevated positive emotions when reciting prayers, practicing ACR with others to deepen social bonds, practicing mindfulness by noticing the color, shapes and sizes of the food served are examples of engaging in a Shabbat mindset that leads to greater well-being.

A Shabbat dinner or a habitual weekly meal with rituals should be considered by more families as a way to make meals more relevant and engaging, but also to enhance lives by increased well-being. Further, studies should be conducted by researchers to test the effectiveness of my theory that Shabbat dinner is a positive intervention. The results of such a

study may encourage and motivate more Jews to engage in a Shabbat dinner on a weekly basis and motivate non-Jews to create a similar weekly dinner ritual.

Appendix 1: A Brief Overview of Shabbat

Shabbat is the most important Jewish holiday in the Jewish calendar (Diamant & Kushner, 2000). The concept of Shabbat originates from the bible, when G-d ceased from work on the Seventh Day of Creation, declaring it holy (Genesis 2:1-3). The mandate to celebrate Shabbat is the centerpiece of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20: 1-7) and serves as a reminder of the freedom obtained when G-d brought the Israelites out of Egypt with a “mighty hand and outstretched arms (Deuteronomy 5.14).” The word “Shabbat” is mentioned in the Torah many times, including Exodus (31:17) and Numbers (15:32) to further illustrate and prescribe its practice and importance.

Shabbat is referred to as a holy day of rest (Telushkin, 1991). Rabbinic scholars postulate that the G-d specified thirty-nine categories of labor that are forbidden on Shabbat, including field work, baking and activities involving making garments and buildings (Telushkin, 1991). The Torah characterizes the activities prohibited on Shabbat as those that *create* or *may lead to the transformation of an object, including the lighting of fires* (Telushkin, 1991). Today, this may translate for observant Jews into prohibitions against driving a car, turning on lights or using any form of technology on Shabbat.

Following the interpretation of the Torah, many Jews in the ancient world as far back at the 5th century BCE celebrated Shabbat as a day of universal peace and freedom, when no one labored, including slaves and animals (Diamant & Kushner, 2000). Shabbat was a day of curtailment, study and reflection for all. Held (2017) theorizes that the prohibited acts on the Sabbath written in the Bible correspond to those that were involved the building of the Tabernacle, the earthly dwelling place of G-d and the portable sanctuary the Jews used as they wandered in the desert for forty years after their exodus from Egypt. G-d commanded inactivity

on the Sabbath in order for Jews to have one day of the week to experience the joy and meaning of living with freedom and harmony similar to the feelings inside the Tabernacle, in contrast to a busy and unsettled world filled with work and labors (Held, 2017).

Jews who that celebrate Shabbat today have different customs and rituals. There is no “right way” to celebrate the holiday. For most Orthodox Jews, Shabbat is a spiritual nightfall to nightfall commitment one day each week where they experience the world as if it were in perfect harmony, as prescribed in the Hebrew Bible. Many Orthodox Jews do not drive, work, or cook on Shabbat in deference to Jewish law that prescribes that no manner of work or creation is allowed on Shabbat. They spend time praying and reflecting with family and friends. For many non-Orthodox Jews, Shabbat is not as much about following prescribed Jewish law from the Torah on the holiday, as it is about taking a break from the week by attending synagogue and spending time with family and friends. Many feel Shabbat is about taking an intentional break from the busy week and unplugging or participating in whatever feels personally meaningful.

Appendix 2: Cookbook Recipes, 3 Sample Shabbat Dinners**Tracey's Challah**

Making challah each Friday for Shabbat is a labor of love for me. I am engaging in an activity that my ancestors have been doing for thousands of years. Reflecting on this fact brings me joy and fulfillment that increases my well-being. I also tap into the spirituality of challah making, tying the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and their wandering in the desert for 40 years, surviving because of the manna or bread G-d provided, dropping double the portion on Shabbat. This adds additional meaning to the challah-making process for me. It is also fun to make the traditional bread with our daughters and is a legacy I hope they will pass onto their children. My challah is not too sweet or too plain. I often top it with poppy and sesame seeds for flavor and for its beautiful presentation.

Makes 2 Challah

Mix in Kitchen Aid bowl or stand mixer with dough hook:

2 cups of white bread flour
2 cups of whole wheat bread flour
2 packages of rapid rise yeast (total of ½ oz)
½ cup of honey
2 heaping teaspoons of salt

Add

¼ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup orange juice
1 ½ cups boiling water
2 eggs

Add approximately 3 more cups of flour, one cup at a time and then knead with dough hook until the dough is no longer very sticky -- can be a drop tacky.

Lightly grease a deep bowl and place challah inside. Spray a piece of wax paper with grease and put on top. Roll the dough in a ball and put in a warm spot. Inside an oven or in a sun exposed window. Let rise for a minimum of one hour, until the it doubles in bulk.

The Challah dough can be braided and wrapped and frozen at this point – wrap tightly in Saran Wrap and freeze. (Raisins can be added here if you want, whether you continue on to bake them or freeze the dough). When you are ready to bake. place the dough on a greased pan and cover for several hours until doubled. Beat an egg and using a pastry or fingers lightly and evenly coat challah. I make either two braided loaves or one large.

Season As you like...sesame seeds, poppy seeds, minced onions or cinnamon and sugar.

Bake at 350 degrees until lightly browned, 20-40 mins, depends on the size of the loaf and oven. Loaf is done when bread is golden and sounds hollow when tapped.

Shabbat Dinner #1

Tracey's Chicken Soup

Adapted from my mom, Carole Pearl's recipe

Chicken soup is a traditional Jewish food. My chicken soup recipe was inspired by my mom, Carole Pearl, who learned to make it from her mother Ethel Blumenthal, and grandmother Sarah Levitt. I imagine my ancestors going back centuries used a similar recipe. In our household I make chicken soup most Shabbats during the cold months. I also make it if anyone in our household is feeling sick, as it is an effective natural healer. Chicken soup for me connotes feelings of belonging and mattering which connects me not only with my ancestry, but also to my faith and spirituality. The aroma of chicken soup brings back positive memories of my childhood and past Shabbat dinners.

4 – 6 lbs whole kosher chicken
One Idaho potato
One onion
6 carrots
One small bunch of flat parsley
2 dried bay leaves
2 tablespoons of salt
2 teaspoons of pepper
6 sprigs of fresh flat parsley for serving

Put all ingredients into a large pot and cover all with water (24 – 36 cups). Bring to a boil. Simmer with the top ¾ of the way on the pot for four hours, skimming off fat from the top occasionally.

Can be made 4 days in advance. Reheat when ready to serve. Serve HOT with a piece of carrot, a piece of meat of the chicken and topped with a few leaves of fresh parsley.

Roasted Asparagus with Hazelnut Picada

Adapted from Vedge Cookbook (Landau & Jacoby, 2013)

Asparagus is delicious all-year around, and goes with any Shabbat meal. It is easy and quick to make. This recipe below is a favorite of my guests. The hazelnuts add a unique and scrumptious flavor to this vegetable dish. Often when I cook, I am mindful of the taste and flavor of each

ingredient, and feel grateful for the farmers who grow and cultivate each of the fresh ingredients I use in my recipes.

Serves 4 to 6

¼ cup stale bread cubes

¼ cup shelled, skinned unsalted hazelnuts

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 teaspoons minced garlic

1teaspoon kosher salt

1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

2 bunches asparagus, bottom one-third trimmed with a peeler to achieve uniform thickness (about 2 pounds)

Preheat the oven to 400°F

Toss the bread cubes and hazelnuts in a small bowl with 1tablespoon olive oil, garlic, ½ teaspoon of the salt and ½ teaspoon of the pepper. Transfer the mixture to a sheet pan and roast until browned, about 8 minutes. Remove from the oven and toss with the thyme. Cool slightly before transferring to a food processor. Pulse into a crumble.

Meanwhile toss the asparagus in a large bowl with the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper. Transfer to a sheet pan and roast until bright green and lightly crinkled, about 4 minutes for pencil-thin asparagus or up to 10 minutes for jumbo spears.

Serve the asparagus warm with the picada sprinkled on top.

Carmel Spa Pomegranate Almond Salad

Adapted from the *Kosher by Design: Brings it Home Cookbook* (Fishbein, 2016)

Our family loves salad. This salad, however, I reserve for Shabbat dinners. Its sweetness reminds me of the sweetness and joy of Shabbat. The pomegranate has special meaning in Judaism, as it is believed to be the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden and its 613 seeds corresponds to the 613 commandants in the Torah. I experience awe, a powerful emotion that feels like being in the presence of something larger than the self, when I think about the substance of the pomegranate. Eating this salad connects me with my faith and nature.

6 Servings

Dressing

1 tablespoon pomegranate molasses

1 tablespoon honey
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon dried basil leaves
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon ground dried ginger
¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

Salad

3 ounces romaine lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
3 ounces red leaf lettuce, torn into bit-size pieces
2 ounces arugula leaves
½ cup whole raw almonds, not roasted or salted
1/8 cup pomegranate seeds
4 fresh mint leaves, roughly torn
Leaves from 3 stems fresh cilantro or basil
Crumbled feta cheese, taste (optional)

Prepare the dressing:

In a small bowl, whisk together pomegranate molasses, honey, lemon juice, basil, mustard, garlic powder, ginger, and red pepper flakes. Whisk quickly as you slowly drizzle in the oil. It is best to make the dressing a day in advance to allow the flavors to mellow and meld. If the dressing becomes too thick, whisk in one more tablespoon of olive oil. Place the lettuce and arugula into a large bowl. Top with almonds, pomegranate seeds, mint, cilantro, and feta cheese.

Drizzle dressing over salad to taste.

Kasha Varnishkes with Wild Mushrooms

Adapted from *Cooking for Jeffery: A Barefoot Contessa Cookbook* (Garten, 2016)

Kasha Varnishkes is a traditional Jewish dish that often accompanies brisket. Each time I eat this dish I am reminded of my relatives, especially my grandmother Sylvia and grandfather Louis who would have loved this updated version. Connecting food with my ancestry not only deepens my sense of meaning and belonging, but also motivates me to savor each bite of food, which helps increase my positive emotions and overall well-being.

Serves 6

4 tablespoon of olive oil
2 cups minced shallots (3-8 large shallots)
6 ounces cremini mushrooms, trimmed and sliced
1 extra-large egg, lightly beaten

¾ cup kasha (roasted buckwheat groats)
1 ½ cups of vegetable stock
1 teaspoon of kosher salt
½ teaspoon of freshly ground black pepper
½ pound bow-tie pasta
1 tablespoon olive oil
½ cup minced fresh dill

Heat 3 tablespoons of the olive in a large saucepan set over medium heat. Add the shallots and sauté for 6 to 8 minutes, until tender and beginning to brown. Add the mushrooms and sauté over medium-low heat for 5 minutes, until tender. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.

Meanwhile, combine the egg and kasha in a bowl, making sure all the grains are coated with egg. Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in the same saucepan, add the kasha, and cook, stirring almost constantly for 3 to 4 minutes, until the grains are separated and dry. Add the shallot and mushroom mixture, the stock, 1 teaspoon salt, and ½ teaspoon pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover, simmer for 8 to 10 minutes, until most of the liquid is absorbed and the kasha is cooked through.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil, add the pasta and 2 tablespoons salt, and cook according to the directions on the package. Reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain the pasta. Stir the pasta, 1 tablespoons of olive oil and dill into the kasha. Sprinkle with salt and add a splash of pasta water if the kasha is dry.

Easy Brisket in Sweet-and-Sour Sauce

Adapted from Levana's Table: Kosher Cooking for Everyone (Kirschenbaum, 2002)

This is my favorite brisket recipe and it takes 10 minutes to make! It is influenced by the brisket my mom made when I was a child. When the aroma of brisket fills our home on Friday afternoons, I feel positive emotions reflecting on my parents and childhood, as well as joy, knowing that I will soon be celebrating Shabbat dinner with loved ones.

My mom and dad request that I make them this recipe when they visit for the holidays!

Serves 12

1 medium onion, quartered
1 (2-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled
4 Large cloves garlic
¼ cup Dijon mustard (omit on Passover)
½ cup dry red wine
½ cup Pepsi or ginger ale
1 cup ketchup
¼ cup honey

¼ cup cider vinegar
¼ soy sauce
½ cup olive oil
½ teaspoon ground cloves
1 tablespoon coarsely ground pepper
1 first-cut brisket, 6-7 pounds, rinsed and patted thoroughly dry

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees

For the sauce:

Process all the ingredients except the meat in a food processor until smooth

For the Brisket:

Place the brisket in a pan just big enough to fit it and pour the sauce over it. Cover tightly with two layers of foil and bake for 2 hours.

Turn the brisket over and bake with one sheet of foil lightly covering pan for 1 more hour or until very tender. A knife inserted in its center should go in without any resistance. Transfer the brisket to a cutting board and let it cool somewhat. cut the brisket into thin slices against the grain (if the slices look long, cut the brisket in half across its whole length before slicing). Cover with sauce. Add up to one cup of water to thin the sauce and cover the meat. Make sure there is sauce in between each slice of meat, making sure each piece is saturated.

Ideally let sit in the refrigerator for 2- 3 days prior to serving

Reheat at 300 degrees for 20 mins before serving

Mustard-Crusted Salmon with Lentils

Adapted from The Balthazar Cookbook (McNally, Nasr, & Hanson, 2003)

Serves 6

Growing up in the Northwest, salmon was a staple in my diet. Salmon is also a favorite of our daughter Lilli. Whenever I eat salmon, I am reminded of my youth and family. I have many fond memories of eating salmon (even after catching them when fishing). These memories motivate me to savor each bite of the fish both for the taste and memories. This is a fabulous dish, with lots of flavor and depth. The lentils compliment the salmon but can also be a great side dish on their own.

6 Salmon fillets, about 6 ounces each
1 /12 teaspoons salt

1 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup Dijon mustard
6 teaspoons Panko bread crumbs
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 500F

Season the salmon on both sides with the salt and pepper. On the rounded side of each fillet, spread 2 teaspoons of Dijon mustard, followed by a sprinkling of 1 teaspoon of breadcrumbs. Use your fingers to press the crumbs into the mustard.

Heat a large ovenproof, nonstick sauté pan over high flame and add the vegetable oil. When the oil begins to smoke, add the salmon, mustard-coated side of the fish down. Lower the flames to medium. Sear the fish for 2 minutes, until the mustard and breadcrumbs form a crust, then turn to sear the second side for 1 minute more. Transfer the pan to the oven and finish cooking for 3 minutes for medium-rare, or 4 minutes for medium. Plate the salmon alongside the warm lentils.

Lentils

Adapted from The Balthazar Cookbook (McNally, Nasr, & Hanson, 2003)

Serves 6

1 cup green lentils, preferably du Puy
4 sprigs of thyme
1/2 medium onion, diced small
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 medium carrot, diced small
1 celery stalk, diced small
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground white pepper

Rinse the lentils in cold water and place in a medium saucepan. Cover with 4 cups of cold water, bring to a gentle simmer, and cook for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, place the thyme in a small saucepan over a medium flame. About 2 minutes, add the onion, garlic, and salt and cook for about 5 minutes, until the onion is translucent. Add the olive oil, carrot, celery, white pepper, and 2 cups of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for 5 minutes.

Drain the lentils and return them to their saucepan. Add the vegetable mixture and simmer lightly for 7 to 10 minutes, until the lentils are very tender.

Gail's Chocolate Cake

Adapted from my friend, Gail Norry's recipe

This is a guaranteed hit for chocolate lovers at a Shabbat dinner. My friend Gail Norry brought this cake to our home for a Shabbat dinner years ago, and I have been making the recipe ever since. I often make the cake weeks in advance, freeze it, then pull it out of the freezer on a Friday morning to defrost. Then, I ice the cake with the frosting recipe below. The cake is also good without icing. I have shared this recipe with many friends. When I make this cake I often enter into flow, losing track of time and getting fully engaged in the tasks of each step. I feel joy and pride when our Shabbat dinner guests compliment me on this desert.

Serves 10

2 cups sugar
1 ¾ cup flour
¾ cup cocoa
1½ teaspoons baking soda
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 eggs
2 teaspoons instant coffee
1 cup milk (non-dairy creamer for pareve)
½ cup vegetable oil
2 teaspoons vanilla

Preheat oven to 350F. Dissolve coffee into boiling water (may want to set aside 4 tablespoons to use in frosting). While coffee is cooling, grease and flour large bundt pan.

Combine sugar, flour, cocoa, baking soda, baking powder, salt, eggs, milk or creamer, oil and vanilla. Add the coffee and beat for 2 minutes. Pour into pan and bake 35-40 minutes. Cool completely before frosting

Frosting

6 tablespoons butter or margarine (pareve)
2 2/3 c powdered sugar
½ cup cocoa
4-6 tablespoons milk or strong coffee
1 teaspoon vanilla

Heat butter and vanilla. Add cocoa to sugar, and add alternately with the milk to butter mixture. Always begin and end with the dry ingredients. Frost cake when cooled.

Shabbat Dinner #2

Butternut Squash and Leek Soup

Adapted from *The Best of Food and Wine Cookbook: 1989 Collection* (Ujlaki, 1989)

This is the perfect soup for a fall or winter day. It is our daughter Hatti's favorite soup. It is best served hot. In the fall I am often inspired to make this soup because I can pick up the butternut squash from a local farm stand. When I make this recipe, I reflect on the effort of the farmers that cultivate the squash, and I practice mindfulness by noticing the unique shape and vibrant orange colors of each legume. This practice elevates my appreciation of nature and farmers.

Serves 8

4 ½ pounds butternut squash, halved lengthwise
5 tablespoons olive oil
4 large leeks (white and tender green), chopped
7 sprigs of fresh thyme or 1 teaspoon dried
5 cups chicken stock or unsalted vegetable broth
1 ¼ teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
½ cup sour cream (pareve) (optional)
3 tablespoons chopped chives

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Place the squash, cut-side down, on a baking sheet and bake until tender, about 40 minutes. Let cool slightly. Using a spoon, scoop out and discard the seeds. Scrape the squash from the skin.

Meanwhile, in a large/heavy saucepan or a flameproof casserole, heat olive oil over low heat. Add the leek and thyme and cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and lightly browned, about 40 minutes. Discard the thyme sprigs.

Stir in the stock and the squash. Simmer the soup over moderate heat for 20 minutes.

In a blender or food processor, puree the soup in batches until smooth. Pour the soup back into the pan and season with the salt and pepper. (The recipe can be prepared to this point up to 2 days ahead. Reheat before proceeding.)

Serve hot, topped with a dap of sour cream (pareve) and a few chopped chives.

Baby Spinach Salad with Dates & Almonds

Adapted from *Jerusalem: A Cookbook* (Ottolenghi & Tamimi, 2012)

I love this middle-eastern salad. The sumac is the secret ingredient. Sumac has a tangy lemon-like flavor and has been shown to have health benefits, including helping to lower blood sugar

levels. When I cook, I love to try new combinations of spices and foods. It is a way to express creativity and feel innovative.

Serves 8

2 tablespoon wine vinegar
1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
7 ounces dates (100 grams), preferably Medjool, pitted and sliced into thin pieces
Salt
8 tablespoons olive oil
4 small pitas (about 3 1/2 ounces), roughly torn into 1 1/2 -inch pieces
1 cup whole unsalted almonds, coarsely chopped
4 teaspoons sumac
1 teaspoon chili flakes
12 ounces baby spinach leaves
3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Put vinegar, onion and dates in a small bowl. Add a pinch of salt and mix well with your hands. Leave to marinate for 20 minutes, then drain any residual vinegar and discard. Meanwhile, heat 6 tablespoons of olive oil in a medium frying pan over medium heat. Add pita and cook for 4 to 6 minutes, stirring all the time, until pita is golden. Add almonds and continue cooking until pita is crunchy and browned and almonds are toasted and fragrant, about 2 minutes more. Remove from heat and mix in sumac, chile flakes and 1/2 teaspoon salt. Set aside to cool.

When ready to serve, toss spinach leaves with pita mix in a large mixing bowl. Add dates and red onion, remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil, the lemon juice and another pinch of salt. Taste for seasoning and serve.

Shaved Brussels Sprouts with Whole-grain Mustard Sauce

Adapted from the Vedge Cookbook (Landau & Jacoby, 2013)

This is one of our oldest daughter Silvi's favorite recipes. She often asks me to make it when she comes for Shabbat dinner (At this writing, she lives in Israel). Making recipes that my daughters request are means for me to exhibit gratitude and love, which in turn increases my joy and positivity.

Serves 6 - 8

2 cups vegan mayo
1/2 cup of whole-grain mustard
3 teaspoons salt
3 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

4 pounds brussels sprouts, 2 or 3 layers of outer leaves removed, and bottom cores cut off
½ cup of olive oil
2 tablespoons minced garlic

To make the sauce, whisk together the vegan mayo, mustard, 4 tablespoons water, 2 teaspoons of the salt, and 2 teaspoons of the pepper in a small bowl. Set aside.

Run the Brussels sprouts through the slicer blade of a food processor or carefully shave on a mandolin.

Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. Just as the oil starts to ripple, add the garlic and the shaved Brussels sprouts. Sear for 30 seconds, then stir to prevent the garlic from burning.

Add the remaining 1 teaspoon of salt and pepper, then allow the Brussels sprouts to sear for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring occasionally so they brown evenly.

Transfer the Brussels sprouts to a serving dish, drizzle the mustard sauce on top, and serve.

Mimi's Easy Delicious Chicken

Adapted from my mom, Carole Pearl's recipe

This was one of my favorite chicken dishes that my mom made for us growing up. Now, it is a favorite dish of our girls (except for Perri who is a vegetarian), especially Lilli. When Lilli comes home from college for a visit, she will ask me to make this dish. Making food for people I care about is a way to express love and gratitude. Further, each time I make this dish, the aroma and flavors foster joyful memories of my childhood. I have noticed that when I make this dish, I habitually reach out to my family members, most of whom reside on the West Coast. Staying close with my family is important to me and brings me much joy and well-being.

Serves 4 – 6

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

One whole kosher chicken

¼ white wine

¼ honey

¼ soy sauce

¼ cup of water

One cut up green pepper (optional)

Mix ingredients until dissolved, then pour ½ of liquid mixture over chicken and green pepper that have been placed in an oven-proof pan that is just large enough to fit both.

Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ liquid mixture over the chicken and bake 25 minutes. Spoon remaining liquid over chicken and bake for 20 additional minutes.

Serve with basmati rice.

Roasted Halibut with Crushed Potatoes, Almonds, and Tomatoes

Adapted from the Balthazar Cookbook (McNally, Nasr & Hanson, 2003)

This is one of my favorite fish dishes. I generally make the Sweet and Sour Shallots and the Tomato Confit a few days in advance to break up the amount of work for this dish. This dish is challenging to make, but is also a confidence builder. Once I succeeded and received positive feedback from my guests about this dish, my fears of tackling future challenging recipes subsided, and I gained a higher sense of self-efficacy.

Serves 6

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup blanched almonds

6 halibut fillets, about 6 ounces each

1 teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon freshly ground white pepper

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Crushed Potatoes (recipe to follow)

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

3 tablespoons Sweet-and-Sour Shallots (recipe to follow)

3 large tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced (recipe to follow)

18 sprigs of flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped

Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees

Spread the blanched almonds in a single layer on a cookie sheet and toast in the oven for 3 minutes, or just until fragrant. Set aside.

Pat the halibut fillets dry with paper towels. Season both sides of the fish with salt and pepper. Heat a 12-inch nonstick sauté pan over high flame. Add the vegetable oil and heat until it begins to smoke. Add 3 of the fillets and sear for 2 minutes on each side. Remove and set aside while you repeat with the remaining 3 fillets. When those have been seared, return the first group to the pan and transfer all the fish to the oven for 3 minutes to finish. The cooking process will continue outside of the oven while the rest of the dish is assembled.

Heat the Crushed Potatoes in a microwave or in a double boiler. In a small saucepan, combine the olive oil, Sweet-and-Sour Shallots, and tomatoes. Set over a low flame and heat until warm, then swirl in the parsley.

To serve, lay the halibut fillets over a bed of Crushed Potatoes, and spoon the warm shallot-tomato sauce over and around. Garnish with the almonds.

Crushed Potatoes

Adapted from the Balthazar Cookbook (McNally et al., 2003)

8 Yukon gold potatoes
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
½ tablespoon salt
freshly ground white pepper

Preheat the oven to 450F

Wrap each potato in aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes or until tender on the fork. Remove from the oven and let cool from hot to warm.

Discard the foil and remove the skins with a paring knife. In a large bowl lightly crush the potatoes with a fork. Mix in the olive oil, salt, and pepper to taste.

Sweet-and-Sour Shallots

Adapted from the Balthazar Cookbook (McNally et al., 2003)

7 shallots peeled and diced very small
3 tablespoons granulated sugar
3 tablespoons light brown sugar
¾ cup sherry vinegar
¾ cup white wine vinegar

Combine all the ingredients in a small saucepan and simmer for 45 minutes, or until the vinegars have been reduced almost entirely and all that remains is dark and slightly syrupy. Can be stored covered in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Tomato Confit

Adapted from the Balthazar Cookbook (McNally et al., 2003)

3 Tablespoons olive oil
1 garlic clove, peeled and thinly sliced
4 plum tomatoes, peeled and seeded (See note), halved
½ teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 250F

Line a small baking sheet with aluminum foil. Spread the olive oil and garlic slices on the foil and add the halved tomatoes in the oil to coat and then arrange the tomatoes, flesh side up, in 2 tightly formed rows. Sprinkle with the salt and the pepper, place in the oven, and roast for 2 hours turning and rotating the pan every half hour. When finished, the tomatoes will be soft, dry, and shrunken. Those tomatoes on the edge of the baking pan may finish cooking sooner than those in the center, so remove them to a plate to cool. Store the tomatoes in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days or submerge them in olive oil to refrigerate for a few weeks.

***Peeling, seeding, and dicing tomatoes**

Cut a small X at the bottom of each tomato with a paring knife. Bring a pot of water to a boil and set a large bowl of ice water near the stove. Drop the tomatoes in, a few at a time, for 20 seconds, then transfer to the ice water with a slotted spoon. When the tomatoes are cool enough to handle, pull the peels off starting at the X. (if there's resistance, slip them back into the boiling water for another few seconds) Cut them half through the stem and squeeze the seeds from each half. Remove the stem with a small V-shaped cut and dice the flesh.

Roman Cake

Adapted from recipe of my friend, Melissa Eisenstat

My friend Melissa is a wonderful cook. She and I love sharing recipes and talking about food. This is a fabulous cake that is always hit for all ages at a Shabbat dinner. It is perfect for a Passover Seder too. Melissa and her husband Jonathan have come to our home for Shabbat dinner many times and are close family friends. Having positive relationships with others has many benefits including increased health, life-satisfaction and decreased stress. Shabbat dinner is an ideal occasion to deepen connections and build high quality connections.

Pareve Butter for greasing the pan

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt

6 large eggs, separated and at room temperature
1 1/2 cups sugar
Finely grated zest of 2 lemons
1/2 cup neutral oil, like canola
Juice of 1 lemon (2 to 3 tablespoons)
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon pure lemon extract or oil (optional)
About 1 1/2 cups blueberries, raspberries and/or blackberries (optional)

Center a rack in the oven, and heat it to 350. Generously butter a 10-inch tube pan (or use a Bundt pan with minimal crannies), dust the interior with flour and tap out the excess. Be assiduous — this cake is a sticker. Alternatively, use baker’s spray.

Whisk together the flour, baking powder and 1/4 teaspoon of the salt; set aside.

Using a mixer with a whisk attachment, beat the egg whites and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt on medium-high speed until they form firm, glossy peaks. (If you’re using a stand mixer, scrape the whites into another bowl. No need to rinse the mixer bowl.)

Fit the mixer with the paddle attachment. Put the sugar and lemon zest in the mixer/mixing bowl, and rub them together until the mixture is fragrant. Add the yolks, and beat on medium speed for 3 minutes, scraping the bowl as needed — the batter will be thick, pale and shiny. With the mixer on medium, pour in the oil and continue to beat for another 3 minutes. Mix in the lemon juice, vanilla and lemon oil, if using, then scrape the bowl well. Turn off the mixer, add the dry ingredients and pulse the mixer a few times to start incorporating them. Work on low until the flour is blended into the batter, which will be smooth and thick.

Beat the whites briskly with a whisk (to restiffen them and incorporate any liquid in the bowl), and scrape a few spoonful’s over the batter. Use a flexible spatula to stir them in and lighten the batter. Turn the rest of the whites into the bowl, and fold them in gingerly. If you’re using the berries, gently fold them in just before the whites are fully incorporated. Scrape the batter into the pan, and level the top.

Bake the cake for 45 to 50 minutes, until lightly browned; a tester inserted deep into the cake should come out clean. Transfer to a rack, and wait 5 minutes. Run a blunt knife around the edges of the pan to loosen the cake (if possible — it’s not easy with a Bundt), invert onto the rack and unmold. Cool to room temperature. Dust with confectioners’ sugar, if you like.

Shabbat Dinner #3

Vietnamese-Style Chicken Soup with Noodles (PHO)

Adapted from *What’s for Dinner: Delicious Recipes for a Busy Life Cookbook* (Stone, 2013)

Hatti requests this soup for Shabbat on cold nights, but it is great for any Shabbat dinner. The saffron is the secret ingredient. When made this soup for first time for our Shabbat dinner group, everyone requested the recipe! When I receive positive feedback from others, I feel a sense of achievement that increases my positive emotions and motivates me to want to do good things for others.

Serves 8

6 whole star anise
1 cinnamon stick
1 tablespoon coriander seeds
½ teaspoon whole cloves
1 tablespoon canola oil
2 yellow onions, thinly sliced
one 3-ounce piece of fresh ginger (about 5 inches long), peeled and thinly sliced
One 4 ½ pound chicken
4 ounces Rice vermicelli (mai fun noodles) or angel hair pasta
½ cup Thai or Vietnamese fish sauce (nam pla or nuoc mam), or to taste
2 Tablespoons sugar
kosher salt

Accompaniments

6 scallions (white and green parts), thinly sliced
2 limes, cut into wedges
1 ½ cup fresh bean sprouts
1 cup fresh cilantro
1 cup fresh Thai or Italian basil
2 fresh red chilies, thinly sliced into rounds
Hoisin sauce
Sriracha sauce

To make the broth: Heat a 12-quart stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the star anise, cinnamon, coriander, and cloves and stir for about 4 minutes, or until the spices are fragrant and the coriander seeds are a shade darker. Pour the spices onto a plate and let cool, then wrap in cheesecloth and tie with kitchen twine to make a sachet.

Return the stockpot to medium heat. Add the canola oil, then add the onions and ginger and cook, stirring often, for about 10 minutes, or the onions are golden brown. Place the Chicken, breast side up, in the pot. Add enough cold water to cover the chicken (about 5 quarts), then add the spice sachet and bring to a gentle simmer over high-heat, being sure the water does not boil. Reduce the heat to a medium-low and simmer gently, uncovered, for 2 hours, skimming off any foam that rises to the top.

Remove the pot from the heat and discard the sachet. Carefully transfer the chicken to a large plate and let stand until cool enough to handle. Remove the chicken meat, discarding the skin, bones and cartilage, then coarsely shred the meat.

Skim off and discard the fat from the top of the broth, then bring the broth to a boil. Add the noodles and cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes, or until just tender. Stir in the fish sauce, adding it to taste, followed by the sugar, and season with salt. Return the meat to the simmering broth.

Using kitchen tongs, transfer the chicken and noodles to deep soup bowls. Ladle in the soup. Serve hot, with the accompaniments passed on the side to add to the soup as desired.

Asparagus with Citrus, Parsley and Garlic

Adapted from Molto Italiano Cookbook (Batali, 2005)

Asparagus is one vegetable that is good all year around. I find if guests (including kids) are not vegetable lovers, there is still a good chance they will try an asparagus dish. Asparagus is the one vegetable that everyone in our family likes. This recipe is refreshing and full of flavor. Asparagus is a beautiful. I like to take time to notice each unique stalk, its texture and deep green color. Mindfully noticing details of what I am cooking helps me appreciate each ingredient and is a means to practice self-regulation.

Serves 8

**3 pounds jumbo asparagus
Zest and juice of 4 large lemons
Zest of 2 large orange
4 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
4 tablespoons finely chopped Italian parsley
4 tablespoons fresh mint cut into thin strips
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoon coarse sea salt**

Snap off the fibrous bottom part of each stalk of asparagus (it will break off naturally where it becomes tough, provided that you grasp the very bottom of the woody stalk with your fingertips).

Bring 8 quarts of water to a boil in a large pot, and add 3 tablespoons salt. Set up an ice bath next to the stovetop. Drop the asparagus into the boiling water and cook until crisp-tender, about 1½ minutes. Remove and immediately submerge in the ice bath to cool for 5 minutes, moving the stalks frequently to be sure no hot spots remain; add more ice if it all melts.

Remove the asparagus and drain on a kitchen towel, then transfer to a large bowl. Add the lemon zest and juice, orange zest, the garlic, parsley, mint, and olive oil and toss gently to mix well. Arrange the spears on a platter and pour the mixture remaining in the bowl over them. Sprinkle with the sea salt, and serve with a flourish.

Maple-Roasted Carrot Salad

Adapted from Cooking for Jeffery Cookbook: A Barefoot Contessa Cookbook (Garten, 2016)

This is a beautiful and tasty salad that works all year around. The flavor of the maple syrup is the secret ingredient. This is an easy recipe which is ideal to ask children to help make, allowing them to build cooking skills through a fun activity. Downtime is important because it helps one process previously learned information and relieve stress. Cooking can be an engaging activity for kids while deepening connections with others in the process.

Serves 8

4 pounds carrots, preferably with leafy tops
Good olive oil
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup pure Grade A maple syrup
1 1/3 cup dried cranberries
1 1/3 cup freshly squeezed orange juice (2 oranges)
6 tablespoons sherry wine vinegar
4 garlic cloves, grated on a Microplane
12 ounces baby arugula
1 1/3 cup roasted, salted Marcona almonds

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Trim and scrub the carrots. If the carrots are more than 1 inch in diameter, cut them in half lengthwise. Cut the carrots in large diagonal slices 1 inch wide × 2 inches long (they will shrink when they roast) and place in a medium bowl with 1/2 cup of olive oil, 2 teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper. Toss well and transfer to two sheet pans. (If you use just one, they'll steam instead of roasting.) Roast for 20 minutes, tossing once, until the carrots are tender. Transfer all the carrots to one of the sheet pans, add the maple syrup, toss, and roast for 10 to 15 minutes, until the edges are caramelized. Watch them carefully! Toss with a metal spatula and set aside for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, combine the cranberries and orange juice in a small saucepan, bring to a simmer, and then set aside for 10 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine the vinegar, garlic, and 1 teaspoon salt. Whisk in 6 tablespoons of olive oil. Place the arugula in a large bowl and add the carrots, cranberries (with their

liquid), almonds, and the vinaigrette. Toss with large spoons, sprinkle with salt, and serve at room temperature.

Thai Red Curry with Butternut Squash and Chickpeas

Adapted from What's for Dinner: Delicious Recipes for a Busy Life Cookbook (Stone, 2013)

This is a favorite dish of our daughter Hatti, especially during the winter. The Thai curry gives it a kick and wonderful flavor that is very satisfying. I love making this for her because she always expresses her gratitude towards me and my strength of cooking, which feels good and increases my joy as well as inspires me to do good things for her and others.

Serves 8

1 small butternut squash (about 4 pounds)
4 tablespoons canola oil
½ cup Thai red curry paste
Two 15-ounce can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), drained and rinsed
Kosher salt
Two 13-ounce cans unsweetened coconut milk
2/3 cup fresh cilantro (or flat parsley), plus more for garnish

Peel the squash, cut it lengthwise in half, and scoop out the seeds. Cut off the top where it meets the bulbous bottom. Cut the bulb end ¾ -inch-wide wedges. Cut the neck end into ½-inch thick half-moons.

Heat a large heavy pot over medium-high heat. Add the canola oil, then add the curry paste and stir for about 1 minute, or until fragrant. Add the squash and stir to coat with the curry paste. Stir in the chickpeas and season with salt. Add the coconut milk and 1 1/2 cups water and bring to a simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer gently for about 10 minutes, or until the squash just begins to soften. Do not overcook or this dish will turn into a soup.

Stir in the cilantro and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes, or until the squash is tender but not falling apart and the sauce has reduced slightly. Season to taste with salt.

Divide the curry among soup bowls then top with cilantro, and serve.

Mustard Roasted Potatoes

Adapted from Barefoot Contessa at Home Cookbook: Everyday Recipes You'll Make Over and Over Again (Garten, 2006)

This is a winner recipe! When I serve these potatoes, there are scarfed up by everyone. The mustard gives the dish a kick and depth. They are a yummy accompaniment to fish, meat and poultry. If I do not have a lot of time to make a Shabbat dinner, this is one of my go-to dishes that can be made quickly. It is very satisfying and comforting to put together a delicious Shabbat meal for family and friends in a reasonable amount of time. If I have an extremely busy week, I still find time to carve out a few hours to make Shabbat dinner. Having a set of recipes that are easy and quick allows me space to enjoy the preparation process, as opposed to feeling stressed. Also, I often ask guests to bring a dish to contribute to our Shabbat dinner, which lessens my efforts and kindles a sense of belonging for our guests.

Serves 6

3 1/2 pounds small red potatoes
2 yellow onions
3 tablespoons good olive oil
2 tablespoons whole-grain mustard
Kosher salt
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Cut the potatoes in halves or quarters, depending on their size, and place them on a sheet pan. Remove the ends of the onions, peel them, and cut them in half. Slice them crosswise in 1/4-inch-thick slices to make half-rounds. Toss the onions and potatoes together on the sheet pan. Add the olive oil, mustard, 2 teaspoons salt, and the pepper and toss them together. Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour, until the potatoes are lightly browned on the outside and tender on the inside. Toss the potatoes from time to time with a metal spatula so they brown evenly.

Serve hot sprinkled with chopped parsley and a little extra salt.

Soba Noodles with Eggplant and Mango

Adapted from Plenty: Vibrant Vegetable Recipes from London's Ottolenghi Cookbook
(Ottolenghi, 2010)

This is my babysitter Lindsay's favorite recipe. It feels good to make recipes that I know people like because it is a way to express gratitude and experience positive emotions because others are enjoying something I created. I find myself entering flow easily when I cook a recipe that I know others have enjoyed in the past. Flow is a means to clear the mind and decrease stress. By losing track of time and challenging myself in cooking, I feel uplifted after the experience and motivated to make other dishes for a Shabbat dinner.

Serves 6

½ cup rice vinegar
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1/2 fresh red chile, finely chopped
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
Grated zest and juice of 1 lime
1 cup sunflower oil
2 eggplants, cut into 3/4-inch dice
8 to 9 ounces soba noodles
1 large ripe mango, cut into 3/8-inch dice or into 1/4-inch-thick strips
1 2/3 cups basil leaves (if you can get some Thai basil, but much less of it)
5 cups cilantro or flat parsley, chopped
½ red onion, very thinly sliced

In a small saucepan gently warm the vinegar, sugar and salt for up to 1 minute, just until the sugar dissolves. Remove from the heat and add the garlic, chile, and sesame oil. Allow to cool, then add the lime zest and juice.

Heat up the sunflower oil in a large pan and shallow-fry the eggplant in three or four batches. Once golden brown remove to a colander, sprinkle liberally with salt and leave there to drain.

Cook the noodles in plenty of boiling salted water, stirring occasionally. They should take 5 to 8 minutes to become tender but still al dente. Drain and rinse well under running cold water. Shake off as much of the excess water as possible, then leave to dry on a dish towel.

In a mixing bowl toss the noodles with the dressing, mango, eggplant, half of the herbs and the onion. You can now leave this aside for 1 to 2 hours. When ready to serve add the rest of the herbs and mix well, then pile on a plate or in a bowl.

Roasted Garlic & Apricot Chicken

Adapted from Modern Israeli Cooking: 100 New Recipes for Traditional Classics Cookbook
(Oron, 2015)

This recipe turned my husband back into a fan of chicken. He ate chicken every day during law school to economize. By the time he started receiving a pay-check he had enough of eating chicken. A few years back (and decades since he had enjoyed chicken), he tried this dish and declared it was delicious. It was a memorable moment. It helped that he loves apricots. He encouraged me to learn how to cook when we were dating by offering to pay for cooking classes. I have felt gratitude toward his kindness ever since, especially after reflecting on the benefits I have felt from cooking Shabbat dinners for our family and others.

Serves 8

4 heads of garlic
1/2 cup chopped cilantro or basil
1/2 cup chopped parsley
7 tablespoons of olive oil
4 tablespoons lemon juice
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon fresh black pepper
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon Ancho Chili Harissa, optional
16 pieces skin-on, bone-in chicken (use your favorite cuts)
1 1/2 cup dried apricots 1 tablespoon olive oil
Salt and fresh black pepper
Paprika, to garnish

Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Place the heads of garlic in a baking dish and roast for 40 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool.

Cut the tops off of the heads of garlic and squeeze out the soft, sticky garlic cloves into a food processor. Add the cilantro, parsley, butter, lemon juice, salt, pepper, paprika, cumin and harissa. Pulse a few times until a thick paste has formed.

Place the chicken in a baking dish and smother with the roasted garlic paste, making sure to push some of the paste under the skin of the chicken. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge to marinate overnight (or a minimum of 6 hours).

Preheat the oven to 400°F (205°C). Remove the chicken from the fridge and allow it to rest on the countertop for 15 minutes while the oven preheats. Scatter the apricots around the chicken. Drizzle with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Cover the top of the dish with tinfoil.

Roast for 30 minutes. Remove the tinfoil and continue roasting for an additional 15 to 20 minutes. The internal temperature of the chicken should reach 165°F (75°C).

Turn the broiler to high. Sprinkle the chicken with a bit of paprika and leave under the broiler to crisp for about 5 minutes or until the skin is golden brown.

Let the chicken rest for at least 5 minutes before serving.

Branzino with Tarragon-Chive oil

Adapted from Epicurious.com (Tracht, 2010)

I have this dish in the recipe book our girls created for me years ago for Mother's Day. They took two school notebooks and decorated the covers. On the front of each notebook in their childhood handwriting it reads "Thank you Mom for the Wonderful Dinner." Inside are dividers with tabs naming different categories of food. I often add recipes to this notebook. Every time I pull out the notebook, I smile as I reflect about the effort that our girls made to make this gift for me. I feel gratitude for my family.

Serves 6

Tarragon-chive oil:

¼ cup chopped fresh tarragon

½ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley

2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

9 tablespoons olive oil (not extra-virgin), divided

Coarse kosher salt

6 Branzino or striped bass fillets with skin (each 6 ounces)

2 tablespoons olive oil

For tarragon-chive oil:

Puree herbs and 4 tablespoons oil in blender until smooth. Transfer to small bowl; whisk in remaining 5 tablespoons oil. Season herb oil to taste with coarse salt and pepper.

For the Branzino:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Pat fillets dry. Sprinkle on both sides with salt and pepper. Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add 3 fillets, skin side down. Sauté until brown, about 3 minutes. Transfer fillets, skin side down, to baking sheet. Repeat with remaining fillets. Drizzle each with 1/2 tablespoon of the herb oil.

Roast fillets until just opaque in center, about 10 minutes. Transfer fillets to platter. Surround with vegetables. Drizzle some herb oil over vegetables. Serve, passing remaining herb oil.

Macerated Fruit

Adapted from my friend, Melissa Eisenstat's recipe

I find many of my guests do not want to eat a caloric dessert. Everyone seems to be watching their waist-line. I always offer my guests at a Shabbat dinner fresh fruit as an alternative to whatever dessert I serve. This recipe is a low-calorie dessert that is a big hit for adults. It has enough sweetness to satisfy a sweet-tooth. The multitude of flavors come together beautifully with each bite, making it easy to savor.

Serves 8

8 – 10 cups of fruit cut into bite sized pieces (Berries, stone fruit and citrus work best.)

6 tablespoons of orange-infused liqueur

4 - 6 teaspoons of sugar

1 cup of chiffonade of mint leaves

Combine first three ingredients and toss gently. If using blueberries, cut them in half. Adjust the amount of sugar based on sweetness of fruit.

Cover and leave in fridge to macerate for 2-3 hours. Toss occasionally. The liquid will turn the color of the fruit.

Toss mint into fruit just before serving. 6 - 8 tablespoons of lemon juice can be substituted for the liqueur. Serve on its own or over pound cake.

Appendix 3: Shabbat Dinner Prayers and Songs

Blessing the Candle Lighting (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

The ritual of lighting the candles involves lighting the candles, then circling hands around the candles from one to seven times (three is most common). After the circling it is customary to cover the eyes with the hands while reciting the blessing.

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו להדליק נר של שבת.

Barukh atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us with commandments, and commanded us to light Shabbat candles.

Welcoming the Angels of Shabbat (Shalom Aleichem) (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.)

שְׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם, מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
 בּוֹאֲכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
 בְּרַכּוֹנֵי לְשָׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
 צְאֲתֶכֶם לְשָׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁלוֹם, מַלְאָכֵי עֲלִיּוֹן, מִמְּלַךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.

Shalom aleichem malachei hasharet malachei Elyon,
 mimelech malachei hamelachim hakadosh Baruch Hu.
 Bo'achem le'shalom malachei hashalom malachei Elyon,
 mimelech malachei hamelachim hakadosh Baruch Hu.
 Barchoni le-shalom malachei hash-shalom malachei Elyon,
 mimelech malachei hamelachim hakadosh Baruch Hu.
 Tzeitechem le-shalom malachei hash-shalom malachei Elyon,
 mimelech malachei hamelachim hakadosh Baruch Hu.

Peace upon you, ministering angels, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Come in peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Bless me with peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

May your departure be in peace, messengers of peace, messengers of the Most High, of the Supreme King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

Blessing over the Children (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

Many families have a custom of parents putting their hands on their children's heads then reciting the following blessing:

For boys, the introductory line is:

יְשׁוּעָה אֱלֹהִים בְּאֶפְרַיִם וְכַמְנָשָׁה.

Y'simcha Elohim k'Efrayim v'chi-Menasheh.

May you be like Ephraim and Menashe.

For **girls**, the introductory line is:

Y'simeich Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, v'Leah.

May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Then, for both boys and girls, the rest of the blessing is:

יְשִׁמְךָ אֱלֹהִים כְּשָׂרָה רַבְקָה רָחֵל וְלֵאָה.

יְבָרְכֶךָ ה' וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ.
יָאֵר ה' פְּנֵי אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנֶּנֶךָ.
יִשָּׂא ה' פְּנֵי אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם.

Y'varechecha Adonai V'yish'm'recha.

Ya'er Adonai panav eilecha vichuneka.

Yisa Adonai panav eilecha v'yasem l'cha shalom.

May G-d bless you and guard you.

May G-d show you favor and be gracious to you.

May G-d show kindness and peace.

Many parents have a tradition of whispering kind words into their children's ear after the prayer followed by a hug and kiss.

Blessing over Wine or Grape Juice (Kiddush) (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

The blessing over wine is recited after the candle blessing.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, boreh p'ri hagafen

Blessed are You, God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the vine.

Alternatively, below is the traditional full-length Sabbath evening Kiddush is as follows:

וַיְהִי עֶרֶב וַיְהִי בֹקֶר

יּוֹם הַשִּׁשִּׁי. וַיְכַלּוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צְבָאָם. וַיְכַל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה, וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה. וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ, כִּי בּו שָׁבַת מִכָּל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת.

סְבִירֵי מְרִנּוֹ וּרְבִיבֵי-
בְרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

בְרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בְּנוֹ, וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשׁוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָנוּ זְכוּר לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית, כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה לְמִקְרָאֵי קִדְּשׁ, זְכוּר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, כִּי בְנוּ בְּחֶרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים, וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשָׁךְ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָתָנוּ. בְרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

(Quietly: Va-y'hee erev, va-y'hee boker.)

Yom ha-shishi. Vay'chulu hashamayim v'ha-aretz v'chol tz'va'am. Vay'chal Elohim bayom hash'vi'i milachto asher asa. Vayishbot bayom hash'vi'i mikol milachto asher asa. Vay'varech Elohim et yom hash'vi'i vay'kadesh oto. Kee vo shabbat mi-kol m'lachto asher bara Elohim la'asot.

Savri maranan v'rabanen v'rabotai. Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, borei p'ri hagafen.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'ratza vanu, v'shabbat kod'sho b'ahava uv'ratzon hinchilanu, zikaron l'ma'aseh b'reishit. Ki hu yom t'chila l'mikra-ay kodesh, zaycher l'tziat mitzrayim. Ki vanu vacharta v'otanu kidashta mikol ha'amim. V'shabbat kod-shi-cha b'ahava uv'ratzon hinchal tanu. Baruch ata Adonai, mi'kadesh haShabbat.

Blessing over Hand Washing (N'tilat Yadayim) (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

Following Kiddush, it is customary to wash one's hands prior to continuing the meal. After

washing the hands with water from a cup — often twice on the right hand and twice on the left, though precise practices vary — the following blessing is recited:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוֵּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al n'tilat yadayim.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with Your commandments, and commands us concerning the washing of the hands.

Blessing over the Bread (HaMotzi) (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

After the washing of hands, some people have the custom of remaining silent until bread is eaten. Prior to eating the bread, the following blessing is recited.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha'aretz.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.

Specter Family Prayer:

Our family has recited this prayer before we eat since our girls were in Pre-school.

We have come here as a family to sing together, to pray together, and to be together. It is a good time and we feel warm and this room is filled with love. Shabbat is special. It is a good time to be quiet and find rest and peace. May our prayers keep us together, strong as a family and make us respect and help other people.

Shabbat Table Songs

Gesher Tzar Me'od (The World is a Narrow Bridge, n.d.)

כָּל הָעוֹלָם כְּלוֹ גֶשֶׁר צָר מְאֹד — וְהַעֲיָקָר לֹא לִפְחָד כָּלֵל.

Kol Ha'Olam Kulo, gesher tsar me-od, gesher tsar me-od, gesher tsar me-od
(x2)

V'ha-ikar, v'ha-ikar - lo lefached, lo lefached klal
(x2)

The whole wide world is a very narrow bridge.
And the main thing is to have no fear, to have no fear at all.

Blessing After Eating (Birkat HaMazon) (“Shabbat Blessings for Friday night,” n.d.):

לשבת ויום טוב. שיר המעלות בשוב ה' את שכיבת ציון היינו כחלמים. אז ימלא שחוק פינו וילשוננו רנה אז יאמרו בגוים הגדיל ה' לעשות עם אלה. הגדיל ה' לעשות עמנו היינו שומחים. שובה ה' את שכיבתנו פאפיקים בנגב. הזרעים בדמעה ברנה יקצרו. הלוח ילך וככה נשא משך הזרע בא יבא ברנה נשא אלמתי.

המזמן. רבותי נברך.
המסובין. יהי שם ה' מברך מעתה ועד עולם.
המזמן. יהי שם ה' מברך מעתה ועד עולם. ברשות מרנן ורפנן ורבותי, נברך (א'להינו) שאכלנו משלו.
המסובין. ברוך (א'להינו) שאכלנו משלו ובטובו חיינו.
המזמן. ברוך (א'להינו) שאכלנו משלו ובטובו חיינו.
ברוך הוא וברוך שמו.

ברוך אתה ה', אלהינו מלך העולם, הן את העולם פלו בטובו בהן בתקוה וברחמים הוא נותן לתם לכל בשר פי לעולם חסדו. ובטובו הגדול תמיד לא חסר לנו, ואל יחסר לנו מזון לעולם ועד. בעבור שמו הגדול, פי הוא אל זן ומפרנס לכל ומטיב לכל, ומכין מזון לכל בריותיו אשר ברא. ברוך אתה ה' הן את הכל.

נודה לך ה' אלהינו על שהנחתם לאבותינו, ארץ חמדה טובה ורחבה, ועל שהוצאתנו ה' אלהינו מארץ מצרים, ופדתנו, מבית עבדים, ועל בריתך שחתמתם בכשרנו, ועל תורתך שלמדנו, ועל חקוקי שהודעתנו ועל חיים חן ותקוה שחוננתנו, ועל אכילת מזון שאתה זן ומפרנס אותנו תמיד, בכל יום ובכל עת ובכל שעה.

לחנוכה ופורים.

על הנסים ועל הפרקן ועל הגבורות ועל התשועות ועל המלחמות שעשית לאבותינו בימים ההם בזמן הזה. בחנוכה בימי מתתיהו בן יוחנן כהן גדול ששמונאי ובניו, כשעמדה מלכות יון הרשעה על עמך ישראל, להשפיתם תורתך, ולהעבירם מחקי רצונך. ואתה ברחמיך הרבים, עמדת להם בעת צרתם, רבת את ריבם, דנת את דינם, נקמת את נקמתם. מסרת גבורים ביד חלשים, ורבים ביד מעטים, וטמאים ביד טהורים, ורשעים ביד צדיקים, וזדים ביד עוסקי תורתך, וליך עשית שם גדול וקדוש בעולמך, ולעמך ישראל עשית תשועה גדולה ופרקן כהיום הזה. ואחר כן באו בניך לדביר ביתך, ופנו את היכלך, וטהרו את מקדשך, והדליקו נרות בתצרות קדשך, וקבעו שמונת ימי חגכה אלו, להודות ולהלל לשמך הגדול.

בפורים בימי מרדכי ואסתר בשושן הבירה, כשעמד עליהם המן הרשע, בקש להשמיד להרג ולאבד את כל היהודים, מנער ועד זקן, טף ונשים ביום אחד, בשלושה עשר לחודש שבט, הוא חודש אדר, ושילם לבו. ואתה ברחמיך הרבים הפרת את עצתו, וקלקלת את מחשבתו, והשבחת לו גמולו בראשו, ותלו אותו ואת בניו על העץ.

ועל הפל ה' אלהינו אנחנו מודים לך, ומברכים אותך, ותברך שמך בפי כל חי תמיד לעולם ועד. פכתוב, ואכלת ושבעת, וברכת את ה' אלהיך על הארץ הטבה אשר נתן לך. ברוך אתה ה', על הארץ ועל המזון.

רחם נא ה' אלהינו, על ישראל עמך, ועל ירושלים עירך, ועל ציון משכן כבודך, ועל מלכות בית דוד משיחך, ועל הבית הגדול והקדוש שנקרא שמך עליו. אלהינו, אבינו, רענו, זוננו, פרנסנו, וכלכלנו, והרויחנו, והרוח לנו ה' אלהינו מהרה מכל צרותינו, ונא, אל תצרכנו ה' אלהינו, לא לידי מתנת בשר ודם, ולא לידי הלואתם. כי אם לידך המלאה, הפתוחה, הקדושה והרחבה, שלא נבוש ולא נפלם לעולם ועד.

לשבת רצה והתליצנו ה' אלהינו במצותיה ובמצנות יום השביעי השבת הגדול והקדוש הזה. כי יום זה גדול וקדוש הוא לפניה, לשבת בו ולנוח בו באהבה כמצנות רצונך וברצונך הניח לנו ה' אלהינו, שלא תהא צרה ונגון ואנחה ביום מנוחתנו. והראנו ה' אלהינו בנחמת ציון עירך, ובבגנו ירושלים עיר קדשך, כי אתה הוא בעל הישועות ובעל הנחמות.

בר"ח ו"ט וחול המועד וראש השנה אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, יצלה ונבא ונגיע, ונראה, ונראה, וישמע, ויפקד, ויזכר זכרוננו ופקדוננו, וזכרון אבותינו, וזכרון משיח בן דוד עבדך, וזכרון ירושלים עיר קדשך, וזכרון כל עמך בית ישראל לפניה, לפליטה לטובה לחן ולחסד ולרחמים, לחיים ולשלום ביום -- ראש החדש | סג המצות | סג השבעות | סג הסכות | השמיני סג העצרת | -- הנה. זכרנו ה' אלהינו בו לטובה. ופקדנו בו לברכה. והושיענו בו לחיים, ובכר ישועה ורחמים, חוס וחסנו, ורחם עלינו והושיענו, כי אליך עינינו, כי אל מלך חנון ורחום אתה. ובנה ירושלים עיר הקדש במהרה בימינו. ברוך אתה ה', בונה ברחמי ירושלים. אמן

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם, האל אבינו, מלכנו, אדירנו בוראנו, גואלנו, יוצרנו, קדושנו קדוש יעקב, רוענו רועה ישראל. המלך הטוב, והמטיב לכל, שבכל יום ניום הוא הטיב, הוא מטיב, הוא יטיב לנו. הוא גמלנו, הוא גומלנו, הוא יגמלנו לעד לחן ולחסד ולרחמים ולרוח הצלה והצלחה ברכה וישועה, נחמה, פרנסה וכלכלה, ורחמים, וחסים ושלום, וכל טוב, ומכל טוב לעולם אל יחסרנו.

הרחמן, הוא ימלוך עלינו לעולם ועד.

הרחמן, הוא יתברך בשמים ובארץ.

הרחמן, הוא ישפח לדור דורים, ויתפאר בנו לעד ולנצח נצחים, ויתהדר בנו לעד ולעולמי עולמים.

הרחמן, הוא יפרנסנו בכבוד.

הרחמן, הוא ישבור עלנו מעל צנארנו והוא יוליכנו קוממיות לארצנו.

הרחמן, הוא ישלח לנו ברכה מרבה בבית הזה, ועל שלחן זה שאכלנו עליו.

הרחמן, הוא ישלח לנו את אליהו הנביא זכור לטוב, ויבשר לנו בשורות טובות ישועות ונחמות.

הרחמן, הוא יברך את כל המסובין פאן, אותנו ואת כל אשר לנו, כמו שנתברכו אבותינו, אברהם יצחק ויעקב. בכל, מכל, כל. פו יברך אותנו כלנו יחד. בברכה שלמה, ונאמר אמן.

במרום ולמדו עליהם ועלינו זכות, שתהא למשמרת שלום, ונשא ברכה מאת ה' וצדקה מאליה ישענו, ונמצא חן ושכל טוב בעיני אלהים ואדם.

לשבת הרחמן, הוא ינחילנו יום שפלו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים.

לר"ח הרחמן, הוא יחדש עלינו את החדש הזה לטובה ולברכה.

ליום טוב הרחמן, הוא ינחילנו יום שפלו טוב.

לר"ה הרחמן, הוא יחדש עלינו את השנה הזאת לטובה ולברכה.

לסוכות הרחמן, הוא יקים לנו את סכת דוד הנופלת.

הרחמן, הוא יזכנו לימות המשיח ולחיי העולם הבא.

בחול מגדיל (בשבת ור"ח וי"ט וחול המועד וראש השנה מגדול) ישועות מלכו, ועשה חסד למשיחו לך וליורעו עד עולם. עשה שלום במרומי, הוא יעשה שלום, עלינו ועל כל ישראל, ואמרו אמן.

ראו את ה' קדושי, פי אין מהסור ליראיו. כפירים רשו ורעבו, ודורשי ה' לא יתקרו כל טוב. הודו לה' פי טוב, פי לעולם חסדו. פותח את ידו, ומשביע לכל חי רצון. ברוך הגבר אשר יבטח בה', וקהה ה' מבטחו. נער הייתי גם זקנתי ולא ראיתי צדיק נעזב, ונרעו מבקש לחם. ה' עז לעמו יתן, ה' יברך את עמו בשלום.

On Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh, and Festivals:

Shir hama'alot, b'shuv Adonai et shivat Tziyon hayinu k'chol'mim. Az yimalei s'chok pinu, ul'shoneinu rina. Az yom'ru vagoyim. Higdil Adonai la'asot im eileh. Higdil Adonai la'asot imanu, hayinu s'meichim. Shuva Adonai et sh'viteinu ka'afikim banegev. Hazor'im b'dima b'rina yiktzoru. Haloch yeilech u'vacho, nosei meshech hazara, bo yavo v'rina, nosei alumotav.

Leader: Rabotai n'varech.

Others: Y'hi shem Adonai m'vora mei'ahta v'ad olam.

Leader: Y'hi shem Adonai m'vorach mei'ata v'ad olam. Bir'shut maranan v'rabanen v'rabotai, n'varech [if 10 or more, add: Eloheinu] she'achalnu mishelo.

Others: Baruch [if 10 or more, add: Eloheinu] she'achalnu mishelo uv'tuvo chayinu.

Leader: Baruch [if 10 or more, add: Eloheinu] she'achalnu mishelo uv'tuvo chayinu.

All: Baruch hu u'varuch sh'mo.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam hazan et ha'olam kulo b'tuvo b'chen b'chesed uv'rachameem. Hu notein lechem l'chol vasar, kee l'olam chasdo. Uvtuvo ha'gadol, tamid lo chasar lanu, v'al yechar lanu, mazon l'olam va'ed. Ba'avur sh'mo hagadol, kee hu el zan um'farnes lakol, u'meitiv lakol, u'meichin mazon l'chol b'riyotav asher bara. Baruch ata Adonai, hazan et hakol.

Nodeh l'cha Adonai Eloheinu al she'hinchalta lavoteinu eretz chemda tova ur'hava v'al she'hotzeitanu Adonai Elohaeinu mei'erezt Mitzrayim, uf'ditanu m'beit avadim, v'al britcha she'chatamta biv'sareinu, v'al Torat'cha she'limadtanu, v'al chukecha she'hodatanu, v'al chayim chen vachessed she'chonantanu, v'al achilat mazon, she'ahta zan um'farnes otanu tamid, b'chol yom uv'chol et u'v'chol sha'ah.

On Chanuka and Purim: Al hanisim v'al hapurkan v'al hag'vurot v'al hat'shu'ot, v'al hamil'chamot she'asita lavoteinu bayamim haheim bazman hazeh.

For Chanuka: Bimei Matityahu ben Yochanan kohein gadol Chashmonai u'vanav, k'she'amda malchut yavan har'sha'a al amcha Yisrael l'hashkicbam Toratecha ul'ha'aviram may'chukei r'tzonecha. V'ata b'rachamecha harabim amad'ta lahem b'eit tzaratam, ravta et rivam, danta et dinam, nakamta et nikmatam, masarta giborim b'yad chalashim, v'rabim b'yad m'atim,

ut'mayeem b'yad t'horim, u'r'sha'im b'yad tzadikim, v'zeidim b'yad os'kei Toratecha. Ul'cha asita t'shu'a g'dola u'furkan k'hayom hazeh. V'achar kein ba'u vanecha l'dvir beitecha, ufinu et heichalecha, v'tiharu et mikdashecha, v'hidliku neirot b'chatzrot kodshecha v'kav'u sh'monat y'mei Chanuka eilu l'hodot ul'halel l'shimcha hagadol.

For Purim: Bimei Mordechai v'Ester b'Shushan habira, k'she'amad aleihem Haman harasha, bikeish l'hashmid laharog ul'abeid et kol ha'y'hudim, mina'ar v'ad zakein, taf v'nashim b'yom echad, bishlosa asar l'chodesh shneim asar, hu chodesh Adar, ush'lalam lavoz. V'ata b'rachamecha harabim heifarta et atzato, v'kilkalta et machashavto, vahashevota g'mulo b'rosho, v'talu oto v'et banav al ha'eitz.

V'al hakol, Adonai Eloheinu, anachnu modim lach, um'varchim otach, yitbarach shim'cha b'fee chol chai tamid l'olam va'ed. Kakatuv v'achalta v'savata, u'veirachta et Adonai Elohecha al ha'aretz hatova asher natan lach. Baruch ata Adonai, al ha'aretz v'al hamazon.

Rachem na Adonai Eloheinu al Yisrael amecha, v'al Yerushalayim irecha, v'al Tziyon mishkan k'vodecha, v'al malchut beit David m'shihecha, v'al habayit hagadol v'hakadosh she'nikra shim'cha alav. Eloheinu, avinu, r'einu, zuneinu, parn'seinu, v'chalk'leinu, v'harvicheinu, v'harvah lanu, Adonai Eloheinu m'hera mi'kol tzaroteinu, v'na al tatzricheinu Adonai Eloheinu, lo liday matnat basar vadam, v'lo liday halva'atam. Kee im l'yad'cha ha'm'lei'a, hap'tucha, hak'doshav'har'chava, shelo nevosh v'lo nikalem l'olam va'ed.

On Shabbat: R'tzei v'hachalitzeinu Adonai Eloheinu b'mitzvotcha, u'v'mitzvat yom hash'vi'i haShabbat hagadol v'hakadosh hazeh. Kee yom zeh gadol v'kadosh hu l'fanecha, lishbot bo v'lanu'ach bo b'ahava k'mitzvat r'tzonecha, u'virtzoncha haniyach lanu, Adonai Eloheinu, shelo t'hay tzara v'yagon va'anacha b'yom m'nuchateinu. V'hareinu Adonai Eloheinu b'nehamat Tziyon irecha, u'v'vinyan Yerushalayim ir kodshecha, ki ata hu ba'al ha'y'shu'ot u'va'al hanechamot.

On Festivals & Rosh Chodesh: Eloheinu veilohei avoteinu, ya'aleh, v'yavo, v'yagia, v'yeira'eh, v'yeiratzech, v'yishama, v'yipakeid, v'yizacheir zichroneinu ufikdoneinu, v'zichron avoteinu, v'zichron mashiah ben David avdecha, v'zichron Yerushalayim ir kodshecha, v'zichron kol amcha beit Yisrael l'fanecha, lifleita l'tova l'chein ul'chesed ul'rachamim, l'chayim ul'shalom b'yom -- Rosh ha'Chodesh | Chag ha'Matzot | Chag ha'Shavu'ot | Chag ha'Sukkot | Ha'shmini Chag ha'Atzeret ha'zeh. Zochreinu Adonai Eloheinu bo l'tova, ufokedeinu vo livracha v'hoshi'einu vo l'chayim, u'vid'var y'shu'a v'rachamim, chus v'cho'neinu, v'racheim aleinu v'hoshi'einu kee eilecha eineinu, kee El melech chanun v'rachum ata.

U'v'nei Yerushalayim ir hakodesh bim'heira v'yameinu. Baruch ata Adonai, boneh v'rachamav Yerushalayim. Amen.

Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu melech ha'olam, ha'El, avinu, malkeinu, adireinu, bor'einu, go'aleinu, yotzreinu, k'dosheinu, k'dosh Ya'akov, ro'einu, ro'eh Yisrael, hamelech hatov v'hameitiv lakol, sheb'chol yom vayom hu heitiv, hu meitiv, hu yeitiv lanu. Hu g'malanu, hu gomleinu, hu yig'm'leinu la'ad, l'chen u'l'chesed ul'rachamim, ul'revach, hatzala v'hatzlacha,

b'racha vishu'a, nechama parnasa v'chalkala, v'rachamim v'chayim v'shalom v'chol tov, u'mikol tuv l'olam al y'chasreinu.

Harachaman, hu yimloch aleinu l'olam va'ed.

Harachaman, hu yitbarach bashamayim uva'aretz.

Harachaman, hu yishtabah l'dor dorim v'yitpa'ar banu la'ad ul'netzach n'tzachim v'yit'hadar banu la'ad ul'olmei olamim.

Harachaman, hu y'farn'seinu b'chavod.

Harachaman, hu yishbor uleinu me'al tzavareinu v'hu yolicheinu kom'miyut l'artzeinu.

Harachaman, hu yishlach b'racha m'ruba babayit hazeh, v'al shulchan zeh she'achalnu alav.

Harachaman, hu yishlach lanu et Eliyahu hanavi zachur latov, vivaser lanu b'sorot tovot, y'shu'ot v'nechamot.

Harachaman, hu y'varech et kol hamisubim kahn, otanu v'et kol asher lanu, k'mo she'nitbarchu avoteinu, Avraham, Yitzchak, v'Ya'akov. bakol, mikol, kol. Ken y'varech otanu kulanu yachad bivracha shlayma, v'nomar. Amen.

Bamarom y'lamdu aleihem v'aleinu z'chut she't'hay l'mishmeret shalom, v'nisa v'racha mei'et Adonai, utz'daka m'Aylohei yisheinu, v'nimtza chen v'sechel tov b'einei Elohim v'adam.

(On Shabbat:) Harachaman, hu yanchileinu yom shekulo Shabbat u'menucha, l'chayei ha'olamim.

(On Rosh Chodesh:) Harachaman, hu yichadesh aleinu et haChodesh hazeh l'tova v'livracha.

(On Festivals:) Harachaman, hu yanchileinu yom she'kulo tov.

(On Sukkot:) Harachaman, hu yakim lahnu et sukkat David hanofalet.

Harachaman, hu yizakeinu limot hamashiach ul'chayei ha'olam haba.

Magdil [On Shabbat/Rosh Chodesh/Festivals: Migdol] y'shu'ot malko v'oseh hesed lim'shicho, l'David u'lizar'o ad olam. Oseh shalom bim'romav, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru. Amen.

Yir'u et Adonai k'doshav, kee ein machsor l'rei'av. K'firim rashu v'ra'eivu, v'dorshei Adonai lo yachs'ru chol tov. Hodu l'Adonai ki tov, ki l'olam chasdo. Potei'ach et yadecha, u'masbiya l'chol chai ratzon. Baruch hagever asher yivtach b'Adonai, v'haya Adonai mivtacho. Na'ar hayiti gam zakanti, v'lo ra'iti tzadik ne'ezav, v'zaro m'vakesh lachem. Adonai oz l'amo yitein, Adonai y'varech et amo vashalom.

A Song of Ascents. When the Lord brought Zion out of captivity, we were like people in a dream. At the time, our mouth was filled with laughter and our tongue with cries of joy; at the time it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord had done great things for us; we were happy. Let our captivity, Lord, be a thing of the past, like dried-up streams in the Negev. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. The man who weeps as he trails the seed along will return with cries of joy, carrying his sheaves.

Leader (starts with an invitation to bless): My friends, let us say the blessing.

Others answer: May the name of the Lord be blessed from now and forever more.

Leader continues: May the name of the Lord be blessed from now and forever more. With permission of the distinguished people present, Let us bless Him (If there are 10 adults add: our God) whose food we have eaten.

Others say: Blessed is He (our God) whose food we have eaten and through whose goodness we live.

All: Blessed is He and blessed is His name.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who feeds the whole world with your goodness, with grace, with lovingkindness and tender mercy; you gives food to all flesh, for your lovingkindness endures for ever. Through your great goodness food has never failed us: O may it not fail us for ever and ever for your great name's sake, since you nourish and sustain all beings and do good unto all, and provide food for all your creatures whom you have created. Blessed are you, O Lord, who gives food unto all.

We thank you, O Lord our God, because you did give as an heritage unto our fathers a desirable, good and ample land, and because you did bring us forth, O Lord our God, from the land of Egypt, and did deliver us from the house of bondage; as well as for your covenant which you have sealed in our flesh, your Law which you have taught us, your statutes which you have made known unto us, the life, grace and lovingkindness which you have vouchsafed unto us, and for the food wherewith you do constantly feed and sustain us on every day, in every season, at every hour.

On Chanukah and Purim add:

We thank you also for the miracles, for the redemption, for the mighty deeds and saving acts, wrought by you, as well as for the wars which you did wage for our fathers in days of old, at this season.

On Chanukah—In the days of the Hasmonean, Mattathias son of Johanan, the High Priest, and his sons, when the iniquitous power of Greece rose up against your people Israel to make them forgetful of your Law, and to force them to transgress the statutes of your will, then did you in your abundant mercy rise up for them in the time of their trouble; you did plead their cause, you did judge their suit, you did avenge their wrong; you deliveredst the strong into the hands of the

weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the arrogant into the hands of them that occupied themselves with your Law: for yourself you did make a great and holy name in your world, and for your people Israel you did work a great deliverance and redemption as at this day. And thereupon your children came into the oracle of your house, cleansed your temple, purified your sanctuary, kindled lights in your holy courts, and appointed these eight days of Chanukah in order to give thanks and praises unto your great name. For all these things your name, O our King, shall be continually blessed and exalted for ever and ever.

On Purim—In the days of Mordecai and Esther, in Shushan the capital, when the wicked Haman rose up against them, and sought to destroy, to slay and make to perish all the Jews, both young and old, little children and women, on one day, on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey,—then did you in your abundant mercy bring his counsel to nought, did frustrate his design, and return his recompense upon his own head; and they hanged him and his sons upon the gallows. For all these things your name, O our King, shall be continually blessed and exalted for ever and ever.

For all this, O Lord our God, we thank and bless you, blessed be your name by the mouth of all living continually and for ever, even as it is written, And you shalt eat and be satisfied, and you shalt bless the Lord your God for the good land which he hath given thee. Blessed are you, O Lord, for the land and for the food.

Have mercy, O Lord our God, upon Israel your people, upon Jerusalem your city, upon Zion the abiding place of your glory, upon the kingdom of the house of David your anointed, and upon the great and holy house that was called by your name. O our God, our Father, feed us, nourish us, sustain, support and relieve us, and speedily O Lord our God, grant us relief from all our troubles. We beseech you, O Lord our God, let us not be in need either of the gifts of flesh and blood or of their loans, but only of your helping hand, which is full, open, holy and ample, so that we may not be ashamed nor confounded for ever and ever.

On the Sabbath say:

Be pleased, O Lord our God, to fortify us by your commandments, and especially by the commandment of the seventh day, this great and holy Sabbath, since this day is great and holy before you, that we may rest and repose thereon in love in accordance with the precept of your will. In your favor, O Lord our God, grant us such repose that there be no trouble, grief or lamenting on the day of our rest. Let us, O Lord our God, behold the consolation of Zion your city, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem your holy city, for you are the Lord of salvation and of consolation.

On New Moons and Festivals add:

Our God and God of our fathers! May our remembrance rise and come and be accepted before you, with the remembrance of our fathers, of Messiah the son of David your servant, of Jerusalem your holy city, and of all your people the house of Israel, bringing deliverance and well-being, grace, lovingkindness and mercy, life and peace on this day of

On new Moon say—The New Moon.

On Passover—The Feast of Unleavened Bread.

On Tabernacles—The Feast of Tabernacles.

On the Eighth Day of Solemn Assembly and on the Rejoicing of the Law—The Eighth Day Feast of Solemn Assembly.

On Pentecost—The Feast of Weeks.

Remember us, O Lord our God, thereon for our wellbeing; be mindful of us for blessing, and save us unto life: by your promise of salvation and mercy, spare us and be gracious unto us; have mercy upon us and save us; for our eyes are bent upon you, because you are a gracious and merciful God and King.

And rebuild Jerusalem the holy city speedily in our days. Blessed are you, O Lord, who in your compassion rebuildest Jerusalem. Amen.

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, King of the universe, O God, our Father, our King, our Mighty One, our Creator, our Redeemer, our Maker, our Holy One, the Holy One of Jacob, our Shepherd, the Shepherd of Israel, O King, who are kind and dealest kindly with all, day by day you have dealt kindly, does deal kindly, and will deal kindly with us: you have bestowed, you do bestow, you will ever bestow benefits upon us, yielding us grace, lovingkindness, mercy and relief, deliverance and prosperity, blessing and salvation, consolation, sustenance and supports mercy, life, peace and all good: of no manner of good let us be in want.

The All-merciful shall reign over us for ever and ever. The All-merciful shall be blessed in heaven and on earth. The All-merciful shall be praised throughout all generations, glorified among us to all eternity, and honored among us for everlasting.

May the All-merciful grant us an honorable livelihood. May the All-merciful break the yoke from off our neck, and lead us upright to our land. May the All-merciful send a plentiful blessing upon this house, and upon this table at which we have eaten. May the All-merciful send us Elijah the prophet (let him be remembered for good), who shall give us good tidings, salvation and consolation.

May the All-merciful bless all those dining here, us, our households and all that we have, us also and all that is ours, as our fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were blessed each with his own comprehensive blessing; even thus may he bless all of us together with a perfect blessing, and let us say Amen.

Both on their and on our behalf may there be such advocacy on high as shall lead to enduring peace; and may we receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of our salvation; and may we find grace and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

On Sabbath—May the All-merciful let us inherit the day which shall be wholly a Sabbath and rest in the life everlasting.

On Festivals—May the All-merciful let us inherit the day which is altogether good.

On New Moon—May the All-merciful renew unto us this month for good and for blessing.

On the Intermediate Days of Tabernacles—May the All-merciful raise up for us the fallen Tabernacle of David.

May the All-merciful make us worthy of the days of the Messiah, and of the life of the world to come. On Sabbaths, Festivals, and New Moons—He is a tower of salvation to his king; On Week-days—Great salvation gives he to his king. And shows lovingkindness to his anointed, to David and to his seed, for evermore. He who makes peace in his high places, may he make peace for us and for all Israel, and say ye, Amen.

O fear the Lord, you his holy ones; for there is no want to them that fear him. Young lions do lack and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his lovingkindness endureth forever. Thou opens your hand, and satisfies every living thing with favor. Blessed is the man that trusts in the Lord, and whose trust the Lord is. I have been young and now I am old; yet have I not seen. the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging for bread. The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace.

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