



Creativity: I Need Help!

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

I love to cook. I love to bake. If I had my way, I would spend my days trying out new recipes for dinners. I am not really a lunch or breakfast fan when it comes to meal preparation. For breakfast, it should always be bagels ~ but only if they are from New York. So for me, breakfast and lunch are just snacks along the way. But, what I don't like is coming up with ideas. I will make anything my family will eat, as long as they give me the idea. Because by the end of my day, my creativity is a bit diminished. And so reason #362 why I believe I am blessed? My daughters. Now this is not a comment on sons as I am sure that they would be just as helpful. This is more about how my children rally around me and are there to assist and make my job easier.

The List

Ahh, the list. The grocery list. The one you know you should have started on Wednesday when the ads came out but ends up not being made until you are halfway out the door to the grocery store. And inevitably you receive text messages while you are shopping. Well, we have (with much work and organization) streamlined this a bit. Those amazing offspring of mine (well ours ~ my husband's and mine) begin the list and add until Sunday morning so that the shopping trip can be one and done!

The Internet

I have a dedicated shelf in my kitchen with many cookbooks. Each one serves a purpose and I would say that there is probably at least one



favorite recipe in each book. However, the Internet has completely changed the game. Everywhere you look there is a new idea for how to make something, And that is where my daughters shine. From Jamie Geller to Food Network to, I am a bit embarrassed by this, Tik Tok. they find simple, fun, ideas that can be made on a typical weeknight for dinner.

The Execution

And once those recipes have been shared and the shopping list taken care of, then it is my turn. Of course, they help when they can. But homework and swim practice and jobs always take precedence and I am good with that. I am then in my element. Someone gave me the roadmap and I am off and running.

How do I do that?

Now, for many of you, those amazing darlings in your home are still small; maybe even non verbal. So how can you make this nightly dance work for you?

Make it Simple

During the week, keep the meals simple. And ask the other person or people in your home for ideas and help. If you are doing it together, no matter the task, it really makes it fun and easier. It becomes an event where you can wear your pajamas while doing so. No need for a Tik Tok or Instagram post. Switch off on coming up with the ideas, use the social media app of your choice to exchange ideas with friends and family near and far. Really it is the ideas that often get people stuck.



Some Ideas to Try

Now what kind of help would I be if I didn't share some of our successes? This week, I bought egg roll wrappers and wonton wrappers, mushrooms, green onions, baby broccoli (on clearance!) and tofu. With some soy sauce and garlic, I made dumplings and spring rolls with rice. It was dinner and lunches for the next day! Tonight it is Beyond Beef spaghetti sauce, pasta and garlic bread with a big salad. Stir fries are easy - pick your favorite veggies, favorite protein, favorite sauce and grain and go to town!

Make your meal time a family and friends affair. And be sure to share your ideas for meals with me. I need the suggestions!

Shabbat Shalom!