

Setting the Table: Healthy and Sustainable Cooking for Expectant Jewish Families

Session One – Meals for Community & Family

The Radish Eater

At the third meal on the Sabbath, an intimate and holy gathering, the hasidim at Rabbi Wolf's table carried on their conversation in a low voice and with subdued gestures so as not to disturb the zaddik [holy man] who was deep in thought. Now, it was Rabbi Wolf's wish and the rule in his house that anyone could come in at any time, and seat himself at his table. On this occasion too, a man entered and sat down with the rest, who made room for him although they knew that he was an ill-bred person.

After a time, he pulled a large radish out of his pocket, cut it into a number of pieces of convenient size, and began to eat with a great smacking of lips. His neighbors were unable to restrain their annoyance any longer. "You glutton," they said to him. "How dare you offend this festive board with your tap-room manners?"

Although they had tried to keep down their voices, the zaddik soon noticed what was going on. "I just feel like eating a really good radish," he said. "I wonder whether anyone here could get me one?" In a sudden flood of happiness which swept away his embarrassment, the radish eater offered Rabbi Wolf a handful of the pieces he had cut.

Setting the Table: Healthy and Sustainable Cooking for Expectant Jewish Families

Session Two – Food Relationships

Ellyn Satter's Division of Responsibility in Feeding

Toddlers to Teens

Your Responsibilities as a Parent	Your Child's Responsibilities
<p>What food is provided</p> <p>When food is available</p> <p>Where the food is consumed</p>	<p>How much food she/he eats</p> <p>Whether they eat or not</p>

Parents' Feeding Jobs

- Choose and prepare the food
- Provide regular meals and snacks
- Make eating times pleasant
- Show children what they have to learn about food and mealtime behavior
- Not let children graze for food or beverages between meal and snack times
- Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them

Fundamental to parents' jobs is to trust children to decide how much and whether to eat. If parents do their jobs with feeding, children will do their jobs with eating:

- Children will eat
- They will eat the amount they need
- They will learn to eat the food their parents eat
- They will grow predictably
- They will learn to behave well at the table

The Division of Responsibility for Infants:

- The parent is responsible for what
- The child is responsible for how much (and everything else – when, where)

The parent helps the infant to be calm and organized and feeds smoothly, paying attention to information coming from the baby about timing, tempo, frequency and amounts

Copyright © 2010 by Ellyn Satter. Published at www.EllynSatter.com.

Setting the Table: Healthy and Sustainable Cooking for Expectant Jewish Families

Lesson 3 - Shabbat as Ritual

Around the table, in the presence of family, the Sabbath meals overflow with conversation and catching up on family matters. As the joy unfolds, song wells up naturally. A whole tradition of special Shabbat table songs (zemirot) developed to express the delight of the day. Since no one need rush off to business, the meal is extended with talk and words of Torah. The pressures of the week dissolve, and parents find time to relate to their children, exploring issues between them at leisure. Parents become the source of wisdom, the indispensable keepers of memory...

- Rabbi Irving Greenberg, *The Jewish Way*

Blessing the Children

Jewish tradition brings us many beautiful rituals that help to create a special family atmosphere around the Shabbat table. From the special blessings that we say over the food, to singing together around the table, to just spending time together as a whole family, ritual helps us to separate Shabbat from the rest of the week.

In many homes, parents will ritually bless their children each week before Shabbat dinner. Some families say the blessing to all of their children at once, and some families say it to their children separately. Some touch their child's head while they say the blessings, and some stand in a circle holding hands. Some families recite the traditional brachot, and some families use their own special blessings.

To sons, say: May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe.

To daughters, say: May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

May the Lord bless you and protect you.

May the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

May the Lord turn His face toward you and grant you peace

Setting the Table: Healthy and Sustainable Cooking for Expectant Jewish Families

Lesson 4 – Bringing It Home

Tonight, as a way to bring together our experiences, we are going to take a few minutes to think about how we want to bring our experiences home, individually and as partners. You are going to get two sheets, one that gives you space to reflect and make individual commitments, and one that allows you to make commitments as a couple. We hope that these worksheets help to guide you in the coming months and years.

Personal:

What is one aspect of our discussions that was personally meaningful to you?

What is one cooking technique or recipe that you found useful?

When you envision the perfect family table, what do you see?

I _____ commit to _____

_____ each week.

Family:

Why is it important to eat family meals together?

What is one way that we can create a family ritual around the table?

We, the _____ family commit to _____

_____ each week.