Assisting Hands® Home Care

Hand in Hand

eNewsletter

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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022



Strengthen your family bonds and make memories on *Thanksgiving*

"Over the river and through the woods, to Grandmother's house we go…" Many of us remember singing this as children and envisioning grandmother's warm and loving home filled with all the festive foods and pumpkin pies of our dreams. Thanksgiving is a special time to spend with our loved ones – especially grandparents or elderly friends and relatives that we don't often get to see. It is another opportunity to strengthen those bonds and make more memories together.

With the rush of everyday life, it's hard to find the time to just sit and talk, and truly enjoy visiting with someone. That's why these gatherings are so important in our lives. We should strive to make the most of the time we spend together. There are many ways you can make your senior loved ones, including those who may not be able to provide the homemade delights we remember, feel more involve. It's important to show that you appreciate the time you spend with them. Below is a list of ideas to get the ball rolling!

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Create a Tree of Gratitude

We all know the importance of feeling grateful. Gratitude can enhance positive emotions in people. It can increase the feeling of empathy, along with boosting self-esteem. Gratitude is downright good for the mind, body, and soul. It is long-lasting. All these benefits of gratitude make us happy in the moment, and even after the event is over.



At your Thanksgiving celebration, a "Tree of Gratitude" is an activity in which everyone can participate. To start your tree, place a large branch in a vase (or make several!). Make a leaf template and use this to cut leaves from construction paper, or any other colorful paper. Pass the leaves out to your loved ones and have them write something that they're grateful for on the leaf. It can be big or small - whatever you're feeling in that moment. Place a ribbon or string through each leaf and hang it on the tree. You can have each person read their message aloud as they hang the leaf on a branch. This can serve as the centerpiece for your Thanksgiving Day dinner. You can even send the tree, or trees, home with your senior loved ones as a happy reminder of the day.

Have your loved one help decorate

If your loved one is no longer able to host or bake, get them involved with other preparations, such as choosing the color or theme and decorations for the day. Whether it's a candle, wreath or Tree of Gratitude as the centerpiece, have your loved one help decorate and set the rest of the table. It may seem like a small thing, but this strengthens your connections, and gives your loved one a feeling of being helpful and involved in the day.

Share family stories and photos

Researching Genealogy has become a popular activity. Learning and making discoveries about your family's background can be a fun activity. Do a little advanced planning and tell your guests to bring an old photo or document to share with everyone. Your senior relatives can be a treasure trove of information when it comes to passing down information and stories about your ancestors.

Decorate pumpkins together

Carving isn't necessary, instead set out art supplies and paper so children and adults alike can use their imagination and create a holiday pumpkin. Seniors will enjoy working with children on this activity as well. Afterwards, hold a contest and award small prizes for the most creative, silliest, most colorful, etc.

Host a virtual gathering

Sometimes, for various reasons, it's not possible for everyone to be together in person for Thanksgiving. Many seniors these days are tech savvy, and if that's the case for those you know, host a gathering via an online video platform. This is great not only for holidays, but for any day of the year when you want to connect. Seeing a smiling and familiar face while talking will surely brighten the day of your loved ones.

Just be together

Nothing compares to just being together. Sharing old memories in itself helps create new ones as you laugh, and sometimes cry, together. Don't rush holidays. Relax around the dinner table once the meal is cleared. Cherish every moment together.

This is a start to the myriad of activities you can plan for your Thanksgiving celebration. Everyone can participate, have a fun time, and most importantly create new holiday memories together. *Happy Thanksgiving!*

E	L	V	E	S	T	L	J	O	L	L	Y	R
Q	H	W	P	D	S	T	O	C	K	I	N	G
I	E	G	G	N	O	G	C	M	U	X	A	I
L	J	D	R	E	I	D	E	L	S	P	A	N
M	I	S	T	L	E	T	O	E	H	L	O	G
D	G	H	A	N	U	K	K	A	H	W	M	E
M	Y	F	A	D	E	A	A	H	H	G	K	R
C	O	O	R	J	C	P	D	J	J	T	I	B
H	I	I	H	T	U	Q	X	U	U	I	I	R
E	R	E	I	N	D	E	E	R	N	T	Z	E
I	Z	U	M	E	N	O	R	A	H	V	O	A
M	R	K	C	A	R	O	L	I	N	G	C	D
F	G	W	K	W	A	N	Z	A	A	K	V	S
W	Y	Z	U	O	Z	P	P	V	D	R	I	A
E	V	X	S	F	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	N
Z	C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	T	W	T
A	R	C	C	S	O	Y	X	A	X	U	G	A

"Wear gratitude like a cloak, and it will feed every corner of your life."

– Rumi

"It's not how much we give but how much love we put into giving."

– Mother Theresa

"Some Christmas tree ornaments do more than glitter and glow, they represent a gift of love given a long time ago."

–Tom Baker

Just for FUN

Find these holiday words hidden within the puzzle above. Have fun!

Caroling
Chimney
Christmas
Dreidel
Eggnog
Elves
Fruitcake
Gingerbread
Hanukkah
Jolly
Kwanzaa
Menorah
Mistletoe
Reindeer
Santa
Stocking



Simply Delicious

Ham and Cheese Puffs

This breakfast, lunch, or dinner treat is a delicious buttery and flaky puff pastry enveloping a mixture of hot ham, melty Swiss cheese, and fresh spinach.
Prep Time: 15 mins; ***Cook Time:*** 20 mins; ***Serves:*** 8

Ingredients

- 2 sheets frozen puff pastry, thawed according to package directions
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup whole milk, room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups cooked ham, diced
- 2 cups fresh spinach
- 1½ cup Swiss cheese, grated and divided
- 1 large egg white, lightly beaten

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Set aside.
- Cut the puff pastry sheets into 5-inch (13cm) squares. Set aside in the refrigerator.
- Melt butter over medium heat in a saucepan. Add flour and salt. Cook for 1 minute, stirring frequently.
- Slowly pour in the milk, while whisking constantly, until smooth and boiling.
- Reduce heat to low and allow the mixture to simmer, stirring occasionally, until it begins to thicken.
- Add in spinach and cook for 1 minute, or until wilted.
- Add ham and 1 cup of Swiss cheese and stir to combine. Remove from heat and set the mixture aside.
- Arrange the puff pastry squares evenly on the prepared baking sheet.
- Top with a heaping spoonful of ham and cheese mixture, and sprinkle with grated cheese.
- Fold the corners up onto the top, forming a smaller square.
- Brush the pastry with the egg wash, making sure to coat all sides.
- Bake for 18-20 minutes, or until puffed and golden.

– courtesy of iambaker.net



Gingerbread Cookies

Everyone raves about these soft gingerbread cookies!
Prep Time: 15 mins; ***Cook Time:*** 20 mins; ***Serves:*** 24

Ingredients

- ¾ cup unsalted butter softened
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup molasses
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon if you like a strong cinnamon flavor, increase to 2 tsp total
- ½ tsp ginger if you like a strong ginger flavor, increase to 1-2 tsp total
- Optional: granulated sugar to roll cookie dough balls in

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- First, mix together butter and sugar until light and fluffy, approximately 2-3 minutes with an electric mixer.
- Next, add egg and molasses and mix well.
- In a separate bowl combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger, stirring to combine.
- Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and mix until well combined.
- Form or scoop balls of dough that are slightly smaller than a golf ball. If desired, roll dough balls in granulated sugar after forming. Place them on a baking sheet approximately 2" to 3" apart to allow room for cookies to spread.
- Finally, bake for 10-12 minutes, remove from oven and allow cookies to cool on baking for approximately ten minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to finish cooling.

– courtesy of lovefromtheoven.com

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