

SHOP TALK



THANKSGIVING EDITION

November 15, 2023

Thanksgiving Day is a good day to recommit our energies to giving thanks and just giving.

Amy Grant

If you wish to make an apple pie truly from scratch, you must first invent the universe.

Carl Sagan

If you think about a Thanksgiving dinner, it's really like making a large chicken.

Ina Garten

I suppose I will die never knowing what pumpkin pie tastes like when you have room for it.

Robert Brault

Some people are always grumbling because roses have thorns; I am thankful that thorns have roses.

Alphonse Karr



Four hundred years ago, in 1621, the first Thanksgiving Day was observed. The Plymouth colony and the Wampanoag shared their autumn harvest. This act of sharing became the tradition we now celebrate centuries later as Thanksgiving.

Although the past few years have been difficult in ways we could never have imagined, times were vastly more challenging back then. And yet they were able to find reasons to give thanks for the blessings in their lives.

Let us, then, look at our own lives with a positive attitude and focus not on the difficulty, but on the many things for which we can each give thanks. We wish you a Happy and Blessed Thanksgiving.

We know not everyone celebrates Thanksgiving but giving thanks – holiday or not – is something that anyone can enjoy, as we plan, prepare and serve a bountiful holiday meal to our guests offshore. And maybe watch some football too!

Happy Thanksgiving!



Pecan Pie ●

- 3 each eggs, beaten
- 1 cup corn syrup (dark or light)
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 Tbsp oleo, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla flavoring
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, chopped
- 1 each pie crust, unbaked (from scratch)

- Set the oven to 350° F
- Blend all the ingredients together
- Pour into the prepared pie crust
- Bake for 60-75 minutes BUT check at about 45 minutes. The crust may start to brown well before the filling is set; if the crust is getting too dark, wrap the edges in foil to prevent it from overcooking.
- The pie is done if it barely jiggles when shaken a bit.
- Remove and set on a cooling rack (or a steamtable grate).
- Allow to cool completely before cutting. If you don't, the filling will run and pool on the plate. Not a great way to present a nice slice of pecan pie. 😊

Variation: Chocolate Pecan Pie

Add about 1 cup of chocolate chips, reduce the pecans to 1 cup.

Chicken Cornbread Dressing ●

A true southern classic, this is a must-have for your holiday spread. Remember: more sage is not better.

- 1 pound cornbread, broken up in chunks
- 1 loaf white bread, cubed - stale is better
- 4 Tbsp. oleo or butter, melted
- ½ cup each diced onion and celery
- 3 cups chicken, cooked, chopped, or what you have on hand

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- 1 quart chicken stock (or broth)
 - 1/8 tsp garlic powder
 - 2 tsp poultry seasoning
 - 1 ½ tsp ground sage

Before we begin, the best stock comes from that turkey you roasted or the fresh stock you always make. 😊

In a large bowl combine the bread, cornbread, vegetables, and chicken. Toss together and set aside.

In a separate bowl, combine everything else, blend and pour onto the bread mixture.

Pan, cover and bake at 350F until it is at about 160F temperature.

Uncover, bake until brown on top, remove and serve.



Turkey Carving 101



1 Remove thigh and drumstick by pulling away from the body. Cut the joint that holds the thigh to the



4 Hold drumstick on end and slice parallel to the bone. Remove the hard tendons and pick the remaining meat from bone.



2 Place on a cutting board and cut between the drumstick and thigh to separate them.



5 Hold the breast from top. Slice into breast as close to wing as possible and all the way to the ribs, parallel to the cutting board.



3 Hold the thigh firmly with a fork and cut parallel to the bone in even slices.



6 Slice downward into the breast toward the base cut. Slice



Cheesy Mushroom Broccoli Casserole ●

Makes a half pan, about 20 servings

- 3/4 cup margarine, melted
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 can mushrooms, drained
- 1 cup onions, finely chopped
- 2 tsp garlic powder (not garlic salt)
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 4 cups heavy cream
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 lbs frozen broccoli, thawed, drained
- 5 cups shredded Cheddar
- 8 cups cooked rice

- In a large pot, make a roux the color of peanut butter with the flour and margarine.
- Add onions and sauté until tender, then garlic, powder, cayenne, cream, and chicken stock.
- Cook until heated, then stir in half of the cheese until it melts.
- Add broccoli, mushrooms, and the rice. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
- Pour into buttered half pan and top with remaining shredded Cheddar.
- Bake until cheese is melted and golden, about 25 to 30 minutes. Remove and put on serving line.

TURKEY ROASTING CHART

PRODUCT	WEIGHT	UNSTUFFED TIMING	STUFFED TIMING
Breast, Half	2 to 3 pounds	50 to 60 minutes	Not applicable
Breast, Whole	4 to 6 pounds	1½ to 2¼ hours	Not applicable
Breast, Whole	6 to 8 pounds	2¼ to 3¼ hours	3 to 3½ hours
Whole turkey	8 to 12 pounds	2¾ to 3 hours	3 to 3½ hours
	12 to 14 pounds	3 to 3¾ hours	3½ to 4 hours
	14 to 18 pounds	3¾ to 4¼ hours	4 to 4¼ hours
	18 to 20 pounds	4¼ to 4½ hours	4¼ to 4¾ hours
	20 to 24 pounds	4½ to 5 hours	4¾ to 5¼ hours

As with many things in life, when cooking a turkey you can do it the easy way, or you can do it the hard way.

Traditional Roasting

The easy way? Pop that turkey into a roasting pan, set the oven to 325°F, and check back in a couple hours. When your food thermometer registers 165°F in the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing and the thickest part of the breast, the turkey is ready. Let it stand for 15-20 minutes so the juices can settle, then it's ready to carve.

Traditional Stuffed Roasting

This method it still easy, but requires a little more work. Shortly before you plan to put the turkey in the oven, prepare your stuffing, and stuff the turkey. When your food thermometer registers 165°F in the innermost part of the thigh, the innermost part of the wing, the thickest part of the breast and the center of the stuffing, the turkey is ready. Remove the stuffing immediately and cover. Let the turkey stand for 15-20 minutes so the juices can settle, then it's ready to carve.

After Cooking

When dinner is over, carve the rest of the turkey from the bone and refrigerate it immediately. For safety, make sure the turkey is refrigerated within 2 hours of coming out of the oven. Use leftovers within 4 days or freeze them. If there is gravy left over, you can freeze that too. Although this future dinner will be safe indefinitely, it will taste best if you eat it within 4 months.

Corn Casserole ●

Part cornbread, part corn pudding, moist and decadent. 20 servings

- 2 cans kernel corn, drained
- 2 cans cream style corn
- 2 boxes Jiffy cornbread mix
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 cup melted margarine
- 4 each eggs

- Butter or spray a 2" half pan
- In a bowl, blend margarine, sour cream, and eggs.
- Add all the corn and mix well.
- Add the Jiffy mix and stir in until it is just combined.
- Transfer to the half pan.
- Bake at 350 F until the center is firm and set: about 50 minutes
- Optionally, top with shredded Cheddar and brown lightly.
- Remove and place on the serving line.



Sweet Potato Pound Cake ●

Use those leftover sweet potatoes for something other than pie. Makes 2 loaf pans

- 1/2 lb cream cheese (1 small package)
- 1/2 cup oleo, softened
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 each eggs
- 3 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
- 3 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla flavoring

- In mixer, blend cream cheese and oleo.
- Add sugar, beating until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs, one at a time and blend in well.
- Add vanilla, sweet potatoes and beat well.
- Combine remaining dry ingredients; add to the mixer in 3 additions.
- Portion into prepared loaf pans (parchment paper lined, or well-greased and floured).
- Bake at 350 F about 70 minutes but begin checking at 60 for doneness.
- Remove, let cool before turning out of pan. When completely cool, slice and serve.



How to Manage Stress with Mindfulness and Meditation

Mindfulness meditation can help interrupt the stress cycle to allow space to respond instead of reacting.

What Is Stress?

According to the [National Institute of Mental Health](#), stress is the brain and body's response to change, challenge, or demand. It is the body's natural defense against danger brought on by an event or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. When a stressful event occurs, the body is flooded with hormones to avoid or confront danger. This is commonly referred to as the fight or flight response.

Stress can become a chronic condition. Chronic stress can cause chemical changes in the body that may raise blood pressure, heart rate, and blood sugar levels. Long-term stress or high levels of stress may also lead to mental and physical health problems.

How Do You Respond to Stress?

Strategies like ignoring or denying stress (what experts call avoidance coping), or distracting ourselves, which may be effective short-term, can also undermine our health and happiness in the long run. Research shows that present-moment awareness, a key feature of [mindfulness](#), increases resilience and effective coping.

Present-moment awareness involves monitoring and attending to current experience rather than predicting future events or dwelling on the past. Studies show that an individual's disposition toward remaining in the present moment is linked to numerous health benefits including lower levels of perceived stress, anxiety and

depression, improved mood, and a sense of improved well-being.

4 Ways to Calm Your Mind in Stressful Times

The stress response is supposed to be short-lived because it wears down your body, your health, and your energy. Stress makes us narrowly focused, preventing us from seeing the bigger picture. When we're calmer, our attention becomes broader. The question becomes, then, how do you wind down? Research suggests several practices that not only feel good but also put us into a calmer, more relaxed state—a state from which we can cope better with whatever life throws at us.

1. Practice Breathing Exercises

Our breathing is a powerful way for us to regulate our emotions, and it is something we take for granted. Through your breath, you can activate your parasympathetic nervous system (PNS)—the calming response in your body.

One of the most calming breathing exercises you can do is to breathe in (e.g., to a count of four), hold, and then breathe out for up to twice as long. You can gently constrict your throat, making a sound like the ocean, which is used in deep relaxation breathing. As you're doing this, especially thanks to those long exhales, you're activating the parasympathetic nervous system, reducing your heart rate and blood pressure.

2. Adopt an Attitude of Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is the ability to be mindful of your emotions—aware of the emotions that are going on inside. It doesn't mean you identify with them; you just observe and notice them, without feeding the fire. Self-compassion also involves understanding that everyone makes mistakes and that it's part of being human. And it is the ability to speak to yourself the way you would speak to a friend who just failed, warmly and kindly.

3. Foster Genuine Connection

Our greatest human need, after food and shelter, is to connect with other people in a positive way. The good news is that by [taking care of yourself](#) and your own well-being with practices like breathing and self-compassion, you are able to turn more attention outward to feel more connected, as well.

4. Practice Having Compassion for Others

Imagine a day when things aren't going well for you—you spilled your coffee on yourself, and it's raining. And then

a friend calls who's having a true emergency in their life, and you jump up and go help them immediately. What happens to your state of mind in that moment?

All of a sudden you have high energy; you're completely at their service. That is what practicing altruism, service, and compassion does to your life. It increases your well-being tremendously, as many of us have experienced when we perform little acts of kindness.

How Intentional Breathing Eases Stress

Certain kinds of mindful breathing can activate your parasympathetic nervous system which initiates the relaxation response and allows your body to engage in repair. While not everyone experiences relaxation right away, most report feeling a sense of calm and a reduction in the feeling of stress after this exercise. Give it a try:

A Breath Practice: Relieve the Symptoms of Stress

This simple yet effective form of deep breathing defuses the stress feedback loop and teaches you to relax.

We can get in touch with our breath with a simple, yet effective form of deep breathing called intentional breathing.

How to Practice Intentional Breathing

1. Sit comfortably and observe your natural breath. Start by finding a comfortable position like sitting upright in a chair or lying on your back. Begin to observe your breath just as it is. Notice where the breath flows. As you do, try to avoid placing judgment on how you are breathing or attaching a story to it. Just as if you were a scientist studying a cell under a microscope, see if you can examine all of the details of your breath one at a time and make mental notes of them. Observe how you are breathing just as you are. You may notice that the act of observing your breath slows down your respiration rate.

2. Place your hands on your chest and belly. Place your right hand on your breastbone (sternum) in the center of your chest. Place your left hand so that your thumb is below your navel. Continue to breathe normally and observe whether you are breathing more into your right hand or left hand. See if you can resist the urge to change your breath or make it deeper. Breathe as normally as you can. Observe how it is to be in your body, breathing normally. How does it feel? Continue for 10 breaths.

3. Breathe into your chest. Try breathing just into your right hand that is resting in the middle of your upper

chest. Without forcing the breath, see how it feels to breathe into the space below your right hand. What do you notice? Can you slow your inhalation or is that difficult or uncomfortable? After 10–20 breaths, take a few deep inhalations and exhalations and resume breathing normally for a minute or so.

4. Breathe into your lower lungs. Next, try breathing just into your left hand that is resting on your abdomen. Without forcing the breath, see how it feels to breathe into the space below your left hand. Can you slow your inhalation or is it difficult or uncomfortable? Just see what happens. Keep observing for 10–20 breaths. After 10–20 breaths, take a few deep inhalations and exhalations and resume breathing normally for a minute or so.

5. Take half breaths into your chest and then your lower lungs. Now, try breathing half of your inhalation into your right hand, pause for a second or two, and then breathe the remainder into the space below your left hand and pause. Then exhale from the bottom up, first releasing the air below your left hand, then allowing the exhalation to continue from below your left hand to below your right hand, traveling up and out either through your nose or mouth. Continue to your next inhalation, first into the area beneath your right hand and then into the area beneath your left hand, then exhale from the bottom up. Can you slow your inhalation or is that difficult or uncomfortable? How does it feel? What do you notice? Keep observing for 10–20 breaths. After 10–20 breaths, take a few deep inhalations and exhalations and resume breathing normally for a minute or so.

6. Take full breaths. Finally, try breathing deeply and fully from top to bottom as you inhale and bottom to top as you exhale, without pausing. If possible, see if you can slow the exhalation so that it is longer than the inhalation. After 10–20 breaths, take a few big deep inhalations and exhalations and resume breathing normally for a minute or so.

7. Notice how you feel. Was the exercise simple or difficult? Did breathing slowly and fully seem usual to you? How do you feel physically? Emotionally? Energetically? If you like, write down your experience.

