

Dinnertime

Your family's Dinnertime Culture

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It’s about taking from the old, incorporating the new and passing it on to the future

generations. A family's culture transcends all facets of life, but it's most easily experienced by taking a seat at the dinner table. We explore how families are creating their own sacred spaces of reconnection around the dinner table.

CREATE THE CULTURE YOU WANT

Many people have grown up in homes where sitting around the table for dinner wasn't the norm. For Buhle, family dinners as a child weren't possible:

"My mom worked night shifts often, so it was a case of dishing up from the pot on the stove, and eating when you want, where you want. When I started my own family, my husband and I wanted this to be one of our core values - family dinner every day. Even when the kids were in high chairs, they were sitting at the dinner table. It's something I hope that they will always cherish."

It's never too late to start the habit of sitting down as a family to eat dinner. Tonight is the night. Make a family favourite and give everyone a heads up that dinner will be around the table from now on - no devices, no excuses. In a matter of days, it will be part of your family's daily routine.

SAY GRACE, GIVE THANKS OR TOUCH BASE

A few words before tucking in to the dinner on the table can be a great way for everyone to feel present and reconnect. Some families say a prayer, others thank the cook. Is there a special way you would like to start dinnertime every day? Teresa from Cape Town tells us about her new family tradition:

"We recently started telling each other what we are thankful for before eating dinner. The answers can be anything from being thankful for the food on the table, to the beautiful sunny day, to the fact that we have each other. I feel like it's a minute of connecting with my family and taking stock of all I have to be grateful for."

FORM YOUR OWN FAMILY TRADITIONS

How does something turn into a tradition? You turn it into one! All you have to do is create consistency. That burger night that was a hit with your teenage kids, make it a Friday night tradition. Or that birthday dinner you'll never forget, well, why not make every family birthday a memorable moment? Get the birthday boy or girl to choose their favourite meal, prepare it together and take turns toasting the person of the moment. Ismail tells us about a tradition that his family have been honouring for three years now:

"Every Saturday, we decide on a dish we've never cooked before, and spend the evening cooking it together and enjoying it around the table. After three years of doing this, it's become quality time we all look forward to. Last week we made ravioli from scratch. I'm not sure what's on the menu this week."

Creating your family's dinnertime culture is all about creating moments of reconnection.

Whether that’s adapting traditions from your own childhood, or incorporating brand new ideas that you want your family to carry forward.

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The table is where our children learn from their elders, practice good eating habits, and feel a sense of belonging and security.

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Mealtime Roles For Everyone

Sitting around the dinner table is an important time to get together, relax and reconnect with your family.

Explore

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