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Family Dinners Essential To Communication

By Kadence Buchanan

You've heard the research. You know that establishing the habit of sitting down together for dinner as a family is critical to building and maintaining healthy communication with your children. But then you look at your calendar and wonder how in the world you can make time to squeeze in a family dinner every night.

First of all, as long as your family sits down together for dinner a majority of the time, it's not necessary to do it every single night. However, if you find yourself unable to make time for a family dinner once or twice a week, you may need to take a hard look at your family's schedule and see what activities can be eliminated or cut back. Once your calendar is clear and you're ready to establish the habit of dining together, you need some survival strategies in order to plan, prepare and clean up after family dinners.

The easiest way to gather your family around the dinner table is to involve them in meal planning and preparation. Children as young as three years old can assist with menu planning. Young children can also help tear lettuce for salads, set the table and other non-dangerous tasks. Older children can help with cutting up vegetables and cooking the meal. Children are far more likely to eat food they have helped to plan and prepare.

You'll also need to develop a file of quick and easy meal ideas. Busy work nights are not the time to try out that new gourmet recipe. Browse the internet for quick and easy recipes or subscribe to one of the many quick cooking magazines that are available on newsstands. There are also hundreds of books with thousands of quick cooking recipes. Studies have shown that most families eat the same 10 to 20 recipes on a cyclical basis. So, once you've established 10 good, quick recipes that your family enjoys don't worry too much about needing to serve something new every night.

Occasionally, long hours at work or traffic tie ups might mean that you simply can't cook a meal. Planning ahead for those events can help you avoid the drive-thru trap. For example, keep a few high quality frozen pizzas and bagged salad greens for a quick meal. Or stop at the grocery store and pick up a rotisserie chicken and some side dishes. Regardless of what you serve, be sure you eat your meal on real plates with real silverware. If you call ahead, your children can have the table set by the time you arrive home.

Kadence Buchanan writes articles for

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Constructive Tips About Retrenchment

By Colin Ong TS

This article provides constructive tips about facing retrenchment and moving on with new career opportunities.

1) Don't take it personally.

Your retrenchment should not lower your self-esteem. You have to pick up your confidence as your family needs your financial contribution. A job does not define the true worth of a person.

2) Find out more about the industry.

Do some research and learn about new developments within the industry of your competencies.

3) Improve your skills.

After researching, you should find out more the available courses to upgrade yourself. It is never too late to improve.

4) Pick up new skills.

If you want to switch to a different industry, you can use the retrenchment exercise as an opportunity to make the switch.

5) Taking a part-time job.

In the midst of searching for a full-time job, you can take on a part-time job. It will help in your current cash-flow.

6) Manage your finances.

The time-lag to your new job may pose a strain for your expenses. Get your family together and have an open communication about the situation. It is advisable to plan a family budget and eliminate non-essential items.

7) Call up your friends.

Your friends may provide fresh information about new job openings.

8) Join online communities.

There are a number of HR online communities that advertise job-openings.

9) Exercise regularly.

Job-seeking in this current climate needs a lot of stamina. Don't neglect regular exercise and healthy eating.

10) Volunteer.

Helping other people who may be more needy than yourself will help you put things in perspective and dispel constant self-pitying. You will be more confident when you approach the job-market.

11) Improve your communication skills.

Use your spare time to improve your communication skills. This will help in your next job interview.

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