



# HEALTHY TODAY

## BRINGING LOVE TO THE NEXT FAMILY GATHERING

You can bring light to any occasion and take care of yourself at the same time.

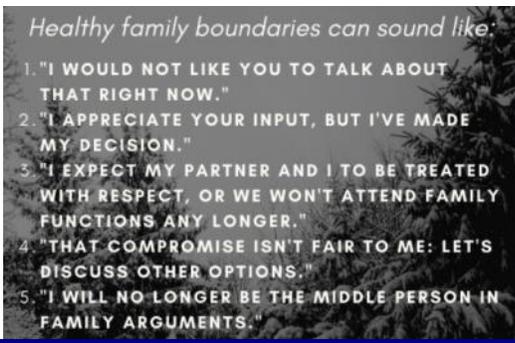
Family gatherings can be a challenge at the best of times. Even loving families that communicate well might struggle to deal with any number of difficulties: illness or death, lost jobs or financial insecurities, disappointments, petty arguments, or misunderstandings. Families that grapple with healthy communication may have an even harder go. How then can we bring love and comfort to our family during gatherings that may have the potential to be difficult to navigate? Here are some tips.

**Don't take anything personally.** Even when vitriol, anger, and hurt feelings are hurled at you, they have nothing to do with you. There's an old saying that hurting people hurt others. Do your best to de-escalate the situation, even if that means walking away. Getting pulled into someone else's drama isn't worth being "right." Choose happiness over right-fighting.

**Be of service.** Nothing diffuses a challenging situation more than volunteering to do some sort of task. Take out the trash. Help with the dishes. Watch the kids. Teach your nephew to tie his shoes or help your aunt in the kitchen. Being of service takes the pressure off others and helps us feel good about ourselves.

**Set boundaries.** If your family is abusive, don't attend the gathering. There are other options for a wonderful holiday with people who appreciate you. We can't choose our relatives, but we can choose our "family." Better yet, help someone else, deliver meals to people who need them, have dinner at the local senior center, or cook a holiday meal at the homeless shelter.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/ending-addiction-good/201912/tips-bringing-love-the-next-difficult-family-gathering>



Healthy Today is Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton's informational newsletter on healthy living, created with the goal of helping you and your family stay healthy and thriving every day!

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## WILD RICE STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

Stuffed acorn squash is one of those recipes that can easily take center stage as a plant-based holiday entree or be served as a colorful side dish.

1 cup wild rice blend  
4 small acorn squash  
4 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided  
¾ teaspoon salt, divided  
3 medium shallots, thinly sliced  
½ cup dried cherries  
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
½ teaspoon ground pepper  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
Pomegranate arils (seeds) for garnish



- ⇒ Step 1: Preheat oven to 400°F.
- ⇒ Step 2: Cook wild rice blend according to package directions. Drain excess liquid, if necessary.
- ⇒ Step 3: Meanwhile, cut squash in half horizontally. Scoop out and discard seeds. Brush 2 tablespoons oil over the squash cavities and season with 1/4 teaspoon salt. Place, cut-side down, on a baking sheet. Roast until tender and lightly browned, 35 to 40 minutes.
- ⇒ Step 4: Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a medium skillet over medium-low heat. Add shallots and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, about 8 minutes. Stir in dried cherries, thyme, garlic and pepper and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the cooked rice and season with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt. Remove from heat and keep warm.
- ⇒ Step 5: Divide the rice mixture among the squash halves and sprinkle with chives and pomegranate arils, if desired.

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 1/2 squash & 1/2 cup filling Per Serving: 266 calories; fat 8g; sodium 228mg; carbohydrates 47g; dietary fiber 5g; protein 6g; sugars 10g; niacin equivalents 3mg; saturated fat 1g; vitamin a iu 1229IU; vitamin b6 1mg; potassium 864mg.

## SELF-ACCEPTANCE

Thanksgiving is about getting together and enjoying the company of those you love, reflecting on the year (almost) in the rear view mirror.

However, we get that during the holidays, it can get stressful. No matter who you are, try to remember to be kind to yourself this holiday season. Your authentic self is worthy of a place at the table.

Not into the turkey on Turkey Day? Be bold with vegetarian or vegan Thanksgiving choices that hold the meat but spare no flavor. You may even make a few carnivores jealous. Does Friendsgiving feel like the right choice for you? Embrace the opportunity to enjoy the night with your chosen family.

Celebrate even your smallest achievements. It will help you feel more confident about how you can accomplish anything. You will realize that you are already living up to most of your expectations.

<https://uprisehigh.com/build-yourself/lets-end-your-struggle-with-self-acceptance-right-now/>

SELF Acceptance	SELF Esteem
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How you accept yourself</li><li>• Should be high</li><li>• "You are enough for yourself. be yourself. love yourself"</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How you see yourself</li><li>• Should be balanced neither too low nor too high</li><li>• "You are worthy and capable of doing anything"</li></ul>

## MAKE-AHEAD CRANBERRY SAUCE WITH CHILE & PONZU

This make-ahead cranberry sauce features ponzu, a Japanese soy sauce blend that gets its complexity from the addition of vinegar and citrus juice. For a more nuanced flavor, seek out one made with yuzu—the bumpy citrus fruit is prized for its slightly floral juice.

1 pound cranberries, fresh or frozen

Zest of 2 oranges

1 cup orange juice

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup granulated sugar

1 teaspoon crushed red pepper

1 tablespoon ponzu, preferably yuzu ponzu

- Combine cranberries, orange zest, orange juice, sugar & crushed red pepper in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat to a simmer & cook, stirring occasionally, until all the cranberries burst open and release their juices, about 10 minutes. Mash the cranberries, if desired. Stir in ponzu. Let cool to room temperature before serving. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks or freeze for up to 2 months.

## THANKSGIVING WITH JOY

Holiday gatherings can be difficult. Emotional baggage & hurt feelings of the past can simmer beneath the surface. If allowed, these feelings can erupt in ugly ways. Here are a few tips to keep calm & help everyone enjoy their Thanksgiving dinner.

- ◆ **Do not discuss politics:** No one's mind is going to be changed over dinner, but families can be permanently broken apart. Even if your politically-polarizing relative chides you, politely change the subject. Do not take the bait. There is nothing to be gained by discussing divisive topics.
- ◆ **Create a tradition of sharing gratitude:** It might sound hokey, but having everyone share something for which they are grateful can sometimes put difficult family relations in perspective. It can also be an ice-breaker for those who are not accustomed to talking about their feelings. Reflecting on your blessings will improve your outlook and your patience.
- ◆ **Consider making your event alcohol free:** Some people can't imagine Thanksgiving dinner without alcohol. Others don't really care one way or another. What is certain is that the more alcohol is involved in holiday gatherings, the more likely there are to be harsh words and broken relationships. Also, if you have someone in your family struggling with addiction or in early recovery, having an alcohol-free event can show your support for their recovery.
- ◆ **Lock up all medications:** Millions of families are dealing with substance abuse and addiction. Unfortunately, Thanksgiving is a time when lots of people are in one place, which gives addicts an opportunity to steal medications. If someone at your Thanksgiving dinner has a problem with substance abuse, make sure all medications are locked away and are not accessible.
- ◆ **Don't judge:** OK, so your great uncle is a loudmouth. Your niece's boyfriend behaves in a way that is entitled, rude, and disrespectful. Your daughter is on some crazy diet and won't eat anything you slaved over the stove for three days to make. Take a deep breath and remember why you are gathered. Focus on what is good instead of the irritations.
- ◆ **Keep the visit brief:** You are not required to spend the entire day with your family. If Thanksgiving is difficult, join the family for the meal and perhaps a short chat after and move on. Most people can be pleasant for an hour or two. Spend your time with those you rarely get to see, especially the elderly or the ill – and ask them how they are, instead of focusing on you.

# Delicious & Nutritious

## CREAMY GREEN BEANS & MUSHROOMS

This take on a green bean casserole from features perfectly cooked green beans in a mushroom sauce made with real cream. (Serves 10)

- 2 cups sliced shallots, divided
- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup sliced cremini mushrooms
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 4 cups mushroom broth
- 2 pounds green beans, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh chives



- ⇒ Separate shallot slices into rings. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. (To test if your oil is hot enough, add a shallot ring: if it starts sizzling on contact, the oil is ready.) Add 1 1/2 cups shallots and cook, stirring frequently, until browned, 4 to 8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the shallots to a paper-towel-lined plate and set aside.
- ⇒ Add mushrooms to the pan (careful, they might spatter) and cook, stirring, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Add garlic and the remaining 1/2 cup shallots. Cook, stirring, until the shallots are softened and fragrant but not brown, about 1 minute. Add cream and cook, stirring, until reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Add broth and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened and reduced to about 2 cups, 25 to 30 minutes.
- ⇒ Meanwhile, put a large pot of water on to boil. Set a large bowl of ice water by the stove. Cook green beans in the boiling water until tender-crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the beans to the ice bath to cool. Drain well and pat dry with a clean kitchen towel. Drain the cooking water and return the beans to the pot.
- ⇒ Transfer the mushroom mixture to a blender. Add salt and puree until smooth. (Use caution when pureeing hot liquids.) Pour the mixture over the beans and stir to coat. Cook over medium heat until heated through, 1 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a serving dish and serve topped with the fried shallots and chives.

### Nutrition Facts

**Serving Size:** 3/4 cup **Per Serving:** 214 calories; protein 3.4g; carbohydrates 13.1g; dietary fiber 3.6g; sugars 6.3g; fat 17.3g; saturated fat 6.8g; cholesterol 27.1mg; vitamin a iu 1006.3IU; vitamin c 14.5mg; folate 44.2mcg; calcium 65.3mg; iron 1.5mg; magnesium 32.3mg; potassium 360mg; sodium 316.7mg. **Exchanges:** 3 1/2 fat, 2 1/2 vegetable

<https://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/268749/creamy-green-beans-mushrooms/>

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