

Kitchen Diva by Angela Shelf Medearis

Spend Less While Still Eating Well

During these uncertain times when so many are ill, have lost their jobs and are frightened about what the future may hold, it's easy to feel hopeless or become depressed. Remember, even though things may look bleak, have faith that this too shall pass, that you're not alone, and that help is available to you... just ask!

Learning how to spend less but still eat well takes skill, determination and know-how, but it can be done! There are simple ways to stretch your resources when you must cut expenses.

Here's a list of ideas designed to help you and your family eat well even after your income has been reduced. Most of the ideas are practical, everyday things you can do to cut food costs.

* Plan your meals one week at a time. Take advantage of specials and seasonal foods. Plan meals around featured sale items to cut food costs.

* Make a shopping list. When you get to the store, stick to your list to cut down on impulse buying.

* Find out when supermarkets discount meat, produce and bakery goods as day-old goods, and check items in the "discount" bins for additional savings.

* Buy generic store brands and products on the lower shelves of the grocery store. The price difference can be considerable.

* Shop for food once each week to save gas, time and money.

* Make a pound of hamburger go further by adding breadcrumbs, oatmeal or tomato sauce. You are stretching a high-cost food item with low-cost products.

* Look for coupons before you go, but only for what you would buy anyway. Some stores double coupon amounts for additional savings.

* Use economy cuts of meat, like chicken thighs and chuck roast. They provide good-quality protein at a lower cost.

* Use your oven efficiently and bake more than one dish at a time. The energy savings can be used to supplement other parts of your budget.

* Mix one part of reconstituted instant milk with one part of skim milk, 1% or 2% milk. Again, you are stretching a high-cost product with a low-cost one in a way that likely will not be noticed by your family.

* Compare prices per unit: pound, ounce, dozen or package. Most stores provide the information on the shelf label.

* Wrap, store and plan how to use leftovers. Millions of dollars' worth of food goes to waste each year.

* Make your own convenience foods. The more convenience built into a food product, the higher its price.

* Plan a meatless day each week. Meat is one of the more expensive foods in our diet. Use recipes that feature beans, cheese or vegetables instead of meat.

Here's an easy recipe for veggie-stuffed pasta shells that makes a great one-pot, meatless meal that saves time and money!



Photo Credit: DepositPhotos

Slow-Cooked Veggie-Stuffed Pasta Shells

- 1 cup small-curd cottage cheese
- 1/4 cup grated Romano cheese or Parmesan

- cheese or a combination of both
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest or 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 4 ounce package (about 1 1/4 cup) pepper jack cheese, coarsely grated
- 2 tablespoons Italian seasoning or poultry seasoning
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes or cayenne pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg or ground cloves
- 1 (10-ounce) package chopped, frozen broccoli, thawed, squeezed of excess moisture
- 1 cup baby spinach, roughly chopped
- 16 large pasta shells, uncooked
- 3 cups marinara sauce, preferably one containing garlic and onions or mushrooms
- 1/2 cup water

1. In a large bowl, combine the cottage cheese, Romano or Parmesan cheese, lemon zest or juice, and 1/2 cup of the pepper jack cheese, the Italian seasoning or poultry seasoning, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes or cayenne, and the ground nutmeg or ground cloves until well-combined. Fold in the broccoli and spinach.

2. Gently fill the shells with the cottage cheese mixture (about 3 tablespoons per shell), using the side of the spoon to push and pack in the filling.

3. In a 5- to 6-quart slow cooker, combine 2 cups marinara and the water. Place the filled shells in the slow cooker, then spoon the remaining cup of sauce on top. Sprinkle with another 1/2 cup of the pepper jack cheese and cook, covered, on low until the shells are tender when tested with a fork, about 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

4. Spoon the stuffed shells and sauce onto serving plates and sprinkle with the remaining 1/4 cup pepper jack cheese. Serve with garlic bread, toast or rolls, if desired. Makes 4 servings.

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**Are you happy and know it?
Are you sure about that?**

Sunday, April 26, 2020 Morning Message
Bro. Warren Rogers, Ivory Hill Baptist Church

Let us begin this morning by singing a little song. Now don't feel foolish, go ahead and sing this before you read the rest of the sermon. You know it from Sunday school.

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands
(clap clap)*

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands
(clap clap)*

*If you're happy and you know it,
then your face will surely show it*

*If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands.
(clap clap)*

Now see there. Don't you feel better? Or are you too relaxed and dignified to sing a child's song?

Did you ever watch a puppy when he is happy. He wags his tail about 90 miles per hour. There is a little story about a puppy that noticed that when he was happy, he wagged his tail. He thought he had found the secret to happiness. One day he shared his secret of happiness with an old dog. He told him that he had found the secret and that it was in his tail. He said, "I am going to chase my tail and when I catch it I shall have happiness."

The old dog replied, "I, too, believe that happiness is a marvelous thing for a dog and that happiness is in my tail. But I have noticed that when I chase it, my tail keeps running away from me; but when I go about my business, it follows me wherever I go."

There is a lot of wisdom in that story and, sad to say, many of us are like that little puppy chasing his tail -- trying to find true happiness that is always out of reach.

What we need to learn is that Jesus has a wonderful plan and if we learn to trust Him and make His plans our plans, happiness will follow wherever we go.

Now read **Matthew 5:2-12**, "And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, ³Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. ⁵Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. ⁷Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. ¹⁰Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. ¹²Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

When we first read these statements of Jesus they seem simple but look at some of them; poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, the merciful, or peacemakers. There is more there than meets the eye. In this short message by Jesus, we are told what we must do to enjoy the richest, fullest life possible.

You want a better relationship with your spouse? Your children? Or your parents? Does it seem that your pursuit of happiness is always out of reach? Are you really committed to being a close follower of Jesus? Do you feel the Holy Spirit stirring your heart to be more spiritual? If so, there are some things you need to do.

First: We have to change our focus; Some people are like the puppy, always chasing their dream. We spend our lives reaching for the next thing but the next thing is always out of reach.

Remember how it was when you were growing up; I can't wait until I'm 13 - then I will be a teenager. I can't wait until I get to high school; and probably the most desired thing - I can't wait until I'm 16 and get my drivers license; then can't wait until I get out of school, out of college, get a job, marry that girl or boy. When we were kids we just knew that being an adult would bring us happiness; and as adults we

know that our childhood was the happiest days of our lives.

Then we get to be senior citizens, we realize that none of the things we reached for brought true happiness. If you are still searching for true happiness, you are a prime candidate for what God has to offer.

Now read **2 Peter 1:8**, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Second thing we must do: Come to grips with who you are. Think seriously about this question, because regardless of how you answer, there are going to be consequences. The real question is, "Are you a Christian?" because this concerns spiritual matters. No man or woman can be like this unless they belong to Jesus Christ. I can't do it for you, and there is no one else that can. You have to answer this question by yourself. You and you alone, on this earth, know the answer. Unless you have submitted to His divine nature you cannot be like Him. Go ahead and try without Him, you will fail every time -- you cannot measure up and never will outside God's redeeming grace.

If you have given this some serious thought and you claim to be a Christian and now you realize that you are not where you ought to be in your relationship with the Lord, would you rededicate your life to Jesus and let Him show you the happiness you have missed?

If you have read this and realize that you are lost, on the road to hell, won't you accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour today? You will find happiness you never knew existed. You will have that peace of mind you never thought possible. Best of all -- you will go to Heaven to be with our Lord someday!

Like the old dog, we need to learn that when we chase after happiness it is always out of reach, but when we get serious with the Lord and let Him take control, happiness will follow you wherever you go.

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