

Comfort foods

I wrote yesterday about how the fall has a shadow over it for me. Today, I was feeling a bit down, and I wanted a specific type of food for dinner. Unfortunately for me, the restaurant I wanted to go to was closed for renovations. I didn't get the dinner I wanted, so the psychological release I would have associated with it was gone.

Now I will admit that I could lose a few pounds. I'm not extremely overweight, but I know losing around 15 lbs. would be good for me in the long run. I also realize I have to watch what I eat due for other reasons. But I was good today, so I knew I could have my comfort food tonight. Then I realized almost all of my comfort foods are not what would be considered a healthy diet.

So anyway here are my top 25 comfort foods in no particular order:

- 1- McDonalds McDouble cheeseburger (I didn't really notice the missing slice of cheese that makes this not the Double Cheeseburger). Or the Wendys Junior Bacon Cheeseburger... Neck and neck on these. Both hit the same spot.
- 2- Pancakes, Waffles or French Toast. At home is good, but for personal reasons I really like I-HOP.
- 3- Sausage Gravy and Biscuits with Scrambled eggs.
- 4- Oreo Cookies and milk. Usually the Double Stuff
- 5- Mashed Potatoes and Gravy
- 6- Meatloaf
- 7- Gingersnaps
- 8- Good Coffee and Cheesecake

- 9- Pumpkin Pie
- 10- Yellow Cake with Chocolate frosting
- 11- German Chocolate Cake – I like the frosting with nuts, but the coconut is good too
- 12- Good Chocolate (Usually this would be imported and expensive)
- 13- Lemon Meringue Pie
- 14- Key Lime Pie (not with a meringue)
- 15- Red and Black Raspberries (in anything or fresh)
- 16- Chili
- 17- 'Lil Smokies
- 18- Sloppy Joes
- 19- Kielbasa
- 20- Bill Knapp's Chocolate Cake (If you know where to find this let me know)
- 21- Chocolate Frosted Donuts (Fresh made are best)
- 22- My Mom's BBQ sauce on just about anything
- 23- Dried Apricots, Fresh Apricots and even Canned Apricots
- 24- Fried Onions and Potatoes with Sausage
- 25- Fried Baloney, Onion and Ketchup sandwich (Thanks Dad..)

Now with all of these there is a time and place. I won't usually want Chocolate Donuts at the same time I want Mom's BBQ sauce. Believe it or not, each of these foods brings back certain memories for me. Mom's BBQ are those weekends when family would all stop to visit. Same with the Sloppy Joes.

Chocolate Frosted Donuts and Bill Knapps' Chocolate cake will invoke memories of spending time with my aunt D. She never served the Bill Knapps' cake, but the one she did serve was very similar, but I never knew where she got it. CheeseBurgers – Backseat of the family car for a 'special' night out.

I just noticed a lot of this food are childhood memories, some others are memories from my life as a father and husband. Some are just plain good.

I do have to be careful of these, because I do know that most of the extra weight I'm carrying came from the years after my wife died. I can't tell you how many Oreos, gallons of milk, cheesecakes and coffee or Sausage Gravy and Biscuit meals I had, but it was way too many.

Ok, I shared. What are your favorite comfort foods. Do I need to add something to the list?

Looking for Meatloaf

I haven't made a meatloaf in sometime and since I'm the only one at home, I can't see myself making one in the near future. Small meatloafs just don't taste the same as one of at least 1 to 2 pounds.

Anyway when I get the urge for meatloaf, I've been trying it at different restaurants. So far, I haven't found one I really like. The taste or texture just doesn't match what I think meatloaf should be. The best I've had so far is from the Ten-Pin Tap in Ridgeville Corners, OH. A little bar, that was the major place to go for lunch before we switched buildings. Now, I'm not sure where to find it.

There are many reasons for this. #1– Most places don't serve meatloaf. It is too plain for most restaurants. #2– I don't think they drain the grease. Just shouldn't be swimming in it. #3 – I'm wondering if they use the worst kind of ground beef. Just doesn't cut it sometimes. #4– Do they ever add any spice? Bland, bland, bland or maybe swimming in Ketchup..

Anyone else on the lookout for good meatloaf? Have you found any? Where?

Very Dangerous Cake

Ok, I've known of this cake recipe for a few months, but I never tried making it until tonight. The reason I say it is dangerous is that you can have a decent hot chocolate desert in under five minutes. Any time of the day, your diet can be blown out of the water. So for sharing the guilt. ☐ Don't skip the chocolate chips....

MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

4 tablespoons cake flour(that's plain flour, not self-rising)
4 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons baking cocoa
1 egg
3 tablespoons milk
3 tablespoons oil
3 tablespoons chocolate chips(optional)
a small splash of vanilla essence
1 coffee mug

Add dry ingredients to mug, and mix well

Add the egg and mix thoroughly.

Pour in the milk and oil and mix well.

Add the chocolate chips (if using) and vanilla essence, and mix again.

Put your mug in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts. The cake will rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!

Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired. EAT! (this can serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous).

Winter Weather Ahead

I'm all cozy at home waiting for a winter storm. We already have about 3.5 to 4 inches of snow on the ground with up to another 12 inches still coming. I realize that for some parts of this country, that is just flurries, but for my part of Ohio, that is a major storm. We just aren't equiped to handle that much snow. My guess is that if we get that much, there will be some level of snow emergency here. Oh well, I have plenty of food and firewood.

The house is very comfortable, I finished a wonderful bowl of stew, some fruit and a cup of tea. The creature comforts are here. I wish I could say everything was going well, but I'm missing an evening with friends tonight and my youngest is a bit under the weather. That, of course, is the way of life.

As I've said this part of Ohio is not used to this much snow. There are many High School basketball games being canceled. Dance classes canceled. Bingo Canceled. And the biggest thing that indicates bad weather, the outlet mall nearby will be opening later in the day than normal... Shock of all shocks!!!

Planned events for the weekend – canceled or postponed, but I'm home safe and fairly sound. That my friends makes a good evening for me. Now off to study my lines...

Traditional Christmas Dinner??

We had none of the normal trappings of a Christmas dinner. No ham or turkey. No yams or potatoes. No green beans or corn. Not even a goose or pudding.

We did have family close and dear. Cousins and siblings, parents and grandparents. Good food, good conversation, good times. We met early and stayed all day. Presents were exchanged. More conversation, some more food, and a cup of coffee or two. More conversation, more laughs.

What did we have?

Homemade pita, Greek salad, homemade hummos, Kafta, Gyro meat, sliced vegetables, Grilled Kabob chicken. Yes, a Greek dinner. It was wonderful. And for our family it was completely normal. We've had everything from pizza to Chinese food for Christmas and other family gatherings. Eating new foods is a way to celebrate life and love.

Merry Christmas.

Not quite who I'm thinking of...

Hey, I recognize him. Hmm, a bit younger, wearing pink, and in a wheelchair- I guess I didn't recognize her after all. No, I'm not on any sort of drug, illegal, prescription, or otherwise. The class I was in today, a mentally impaired class, had a dead ringer for a boy who was in my cabin last summer and comes to church from time to time. No, he didn't look like a girl, but rather with the short haircut and the familiar face I thought the girl was a boy. Then I saw the pink jacket and shoes, so I actually asked if the student was a boy or girl. I didn't realize at first why the face, not just the haircut but the face, cried "boy" to me, but once I looked closer at her I was like, "Wait a minute, I know that face..." Well, if not the boy I know, then was she his sister? Nope. Completely different last name, and a foreign first name to boot, Preet, unlike *his* very English name of Danny.

To get on with things, this day was extremely easy for me. It seemed like whatever I tried to do I felt like I was just getting in the way more often than not, so the usual best thing to do was in fact nothing at all and let the teaching assistants (there were three of them for the six students, usually eight though two were absent) do their thing. These were primary kids (K-2), so that coupled with their impairments meant they needed the consistency anyway. Their schedule for the day looked something like this: calendar time, which included singing; writing, which was either cutting and pasting words and pictures or inconsistent script for the higher-level students; an assembly which was a band concert by the area junior high; language lab where they put toppings on cookies (one refused to eat his too, saying the icing on it tasted "yucky"); making ziti for the party in the afternoon; lunch; self-selected reading; party with another

class- they had made the dessert to go with the ziti-delicious!; more writing.

Well, I'm about to fall asleep so I will let the post end here. If you see any errors, it's because I couldn't be bothered to fix them. Tomorrow. Until then. Maybe I'll add a picture to the top then too... ☐

My Thanksgiving Curse :)

I think I was somehow cursed last Thanksgiving. I fell ill the day after Thanksgiving, and just as I was starting to feel better a few days later, I felt another virus coming on. This cycle continued until just before Christmas, and because I was pregnant and exhausted, I tried to rest a lot and get well during that time, but it was stressful because I had a 1½-year-old to chase after. And while I was sick, I was unable to eat any Thanksgiving leftovers. So then all during the year, foods like turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, and even creamed onions (which I used to love) just haven't seemed very appealing to me. I think I subconsciously associate the Thanksgiving fare with being sick, but I thought I'd be over it by now – wrong. Thanksgiving dinner was great and everything, but I'm just not as enthused about those leftovers as I want to be. On Thanksgiving day, the turkey was delicious. That leftover sandwich I had on Friday was pretty good. The cold turkey snack on Friday night was ok. I didn't finish the turkey snack on Saturday night, and today for dinner, I will have *anything* but turkey or Thanksgiving leftovers. And I am blue in the face from reassuring my husband that it was **absolutely nothing** he did wrong with the cooking or the fault of any of the guests who brought delicious side dishes. It's just my Thanksgiving curse, and I

hope it's gone by next year. But even if it's not, no biggie because my Thanksgiving will be made more special than food by the wonderful people in my life. Maybe I should "train" my body to accept the Thanksgiving food by making turkey and creamed onions more often...

At any rate, the helpers in the kitchen on Thanksgiving day were adorable – check them out:



And below are my two oldest daughters waving to Santa at the Welcome Santa Parade from the day after Thanksgiving:



And if their names were numbers that ordered them by birth, below is a cute picture of #2 and #4:



The Scary Clown Successfully Sold Burgers

On another tangents.org blog, justj has been talking about cheeseburgers, namely White Castles and Burger Buddies (aka Burger Bundles), an '80's Burger King product. I found an old Burger Bundles commercial on youtube and posted the link on his blog in the comments section of the [cheeseburger post](#). While I was looking around on youtube, I found this old vintage McDonald's commercial where Ronald looks like something out of a horror movie. Regardless of what his early incarnation looked like, the clown worked for them in helping to create one of the most successful companies of all time.

Saturday Night in Toledo Ohio...

The song would continue "is like being nowhere at all." Today I spent the evening in Toledo, actually the Suburb of Maumee and I had a wonderful time. Spent the evening with a large group of my daughter's friends. Went out to eat a great Restaurant, when to her house and played some group games. All around fun for the evening.

This was a bit of a change from my reflective evening yesterday. We had such a large group at the restaurant that we were asked what the occasion was. Welll the occasion was that it was Saturday. Fellowship, food, drink were all enjoyed.

Just getting into my relaxing phase. I do tend to psych myself up for long drives in the evening, and it takes me a bit to unwind to fall asleep.

Night folks

An interesting weekend.

Saturday started out with a quick trip to [Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Fremont, IN](#). My youngest and I didn't take the truck trip into the preserve, but we were able to visit the 1850's Rendezvous and talk with a few of the 'trappers'. The main goal of the trip was to pick up some bison burgers for a gaming night at my oldest's house. Good food, good fun and a

wonderful afternoon and late-late evening. More Dungeons and Dragons was played.

Today, I made a recipe that I submitted to our Theater's cookbook to serve at the final production of "Kitchen Witches". Fun little show and the audience/guests seemed to like my samples. The recipe is on page 6 of our cook book. (Just wondering if we could sell that on line? – E-Book???)

I'm going to try a recipe or more from the book, they all look pretty good to me. My oldest daughter got to be the on stage "guest judge" for the show today. She seemed to really enjoy the small bit of stage work. Another day of good fun.

And finally I see that some dear friends are all back from their Florida vacations. Someday, when I can get more than a day or two off, I will need to do something like that.

That's all folks...