



GETTING CREATIVE
WITH FOOD

MODULE 9

GETTING CREATIVE WITH FOOD



Welcome to Module 9. This module is all about food, and building practical foundations to make food, and making the preparation of food an enjoyable part of your life.

For many, especially those who are responsible for feeding others, preparing food can become a burden, a big “have-to-do” tension that rears its head everyday. It can be difficult to stay inspired when doing something repeatedly, often without much acknowledgement or appreciation. It can also be hard to juggle food preparation, the planning and shopping that goes along with it alongside work and home commitments. Let alone fussy eaters, varying food preferences, intolerances and for some budget restrictions. No wonder it can often feel like a chore, cooking under pressure is not fun!

That is why we designed this module, so we could help you create new rhythms, rituals, order and simplicity in your cooking life. Preparing food should not only be easy and enjoyable, it can also be an enriching part of your day. With space, flow and ease, we are naturally inspired in our cooking, bringing back the magic in creating meals. Food is there to nourish us and the rituals we create around food can bring us together; offering us deeper connection, enriching conversations and a sense of true support.

Enjoy!

MAKING FOOD ENJOYABLE & NOURISHING

When it comes to preparing nourishing food, we want to make it as simple and enjoyable as possible. Preparing food is something most of us will need to do on a regular basis, if not daily and several times a day for some. If you don't feel a flow with food now is your chance to change this: avoiding this life skill and mastery is not recommended.

We can very often get into the pattern of cooking on autopilot or in survival mode. When we get caught up in this pattern, we can easily overlook the extra depth we can bring to what we're making, why we're making it and whether it's still a food that feels good for us to eat. It's this depth that can bring a richness to food preparation and transform the way we think of it, moving from 'survival' or 'have-to' into enrichment and nourishment on all levels.

*One of my greatest tips is to **keep it simple**. Often much of the tension or stress comes from feeling like we need to be preparing gourmet, extravagant meals.*

Perhaps we've watched a bit too much masterchef, or feel everything we make needs to be instagram worthy. You have my permission for it to be basic. Real food, using simple building blocks, is just as nourishing as a fancily prepared version of a dish using the same ingredients.

When we have full permission to keep it simple it also frees up those who don't feel they're a good cook, or feel self-conscious about cooking for others. Everyone can cook. It's just a matter of how much practice you have had, whether you've been shown how, what support you've had. It's never beyond anyone. We all have the capacity to prepare something simple yet nourishing and delicious!



TOP TIPS FOR MAKING FOOD

Enjoyable & Nourishing

1

KEEP YOUR **WHY** IN MIND. **WHY** ARE YOU MAKING A MEAL?

2

BE DELIBERATE WITH THE SPACE YOU SET IN YOUR KITCHEN. START WITH A CLEAN KITCHEN OR AT LEAST CLEAR BENCH SPACE. ENJOY HOW IT FEELS WHEN YOU FLOW FROM ONE TASK TO THE NEXT. YOU CAN ALSO PUT ON SOME MUSIC, AN AUDIO OR ENJOY THE SILENCE.

3

KEEP IT SIMPLE- NUTRITIOUS AND DELICIOUS FOOD DOESN'T HAVE TO BE OVER COMPLICATED.

4

START WITH WHAT YOU (AND YOUR FAMILY) ENJOY EATING- BUILD ON EXPANDING TASTE BUDS AND DIVERSITY FROM THERE

5

IF YOU'RE BORED WITH WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN EATING, ADD SOME VARIETY, TRY NEW RECIPES (TRY NEW THINGS WHEN YOU HAVE THE TIME - NOT WHEN YOU'RE STRESSED OR TIME-POOR)

6

COOK FOR OTHERS- INVITE A FRIEND OR GROUP OF FRIENDS OVER. THIS CAN BE ESPECIALLY HELPFUL WHEN YOU LIVE ALONE OR IF YOU DON'T FEEL INSPIRED TO COOK FOR YOURSELF. ANOTHER GREAT TIP IS TO COOK MORE THAN YOU NEED AND POP SOME ASIDE TO BE FROZEN FOR ANOTHER DAY WHEN YOU NEED A PRECOOKED MEAL

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH FOOD & THE KITCHEN

Question 1: What creates a sense of space for you before cooking? What things do you like to do while you cook, or have in place before you cook?

Question 2: Have you identified any triggers in the kitchen for you? Is there anything that makes you feel heavy or sluggish or burdened in the kitchen?

Question 3: What do you enjoy about cooking and being in the kitchen? What would you like to be able to do more of in the kitchen? What do you feel would help you with this?

Question 4: Outside of fueling your body to stay alive, what does food, and preparing food for yourself or others offer you? Why are you in the kitchen and what is inspiring you to prepare a meal?

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR *Success*

HERE ARE SOME OF THE KEY THINGS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR US AND MANY OF OUR CLIENTS OVER THE YEARS:

- **SUPPORT YOURSELF WITH ORGANISED AND CLEAN SPACES.**
 - *You can see easily at a glance what you have on hand/what needs to be eaten first, reducing food waste*
 - *Reduces the chances of you buying things you didn't need, or misplacing items*
 - *Creates a sense of space and calm before you begin cooking, often it is more inspiring if it's less overwhelming*
 - *You can easily find all the ingredients you need, speeding up the process*
- **CREATE A SYSTEM TO ROTATE THROUGH YOUR PANTRY AND FRIDGE SO YOU AUTOMATICALLY USE UP THE OLDER INGREDIENTS FIRST**
- **IF YOU HAVE THE SPACE AND FINANCES YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO KEEP A GOOD SUPPLY OF THE THINGS YOU GO THROUGH OFTEN**
- **DON'T BE AFRAID TO KEEP FROZEN VEGETABLES ON HAND - EVEN SINGLE SERVE STEAM FRESH BAGS, FROZEN SPINACH FOR ADDING TO MEALS, FROZEN BEANS AND BROCCOLI ETC**
- **FREEZE SOME ITEMS IN SINGLE PORTIONS - SMALL CONTAINERS OF LEFTOVER MEAT, SINGLE PORTIONS OF DIPS, FROZEN HOME-BAKED GOODS, SINGLE PORTIONS OF BROTH/ STOCK**
 - *You can always find something yummy to eat (and less likely to make unsupportive choices)*
 - *Lunch or a light meal may be a portion of frozen protein and a bag of steam fresh vegetables when you're caught short*
- **SET YOUR KITCHEN UP TO WORK FOR YOU.**
 - *Can you store your olive oil, herbs etc close to the stove for easy cooking?*
 - *Rearrange cupboards and drawers if there's a lack of flow in your current setup and placement of things.*
 - *Pack big appliances away if they're not used often to create more bench space for meal preparation*

SETTING YOURSELF UP FOR *Success*

So now that you have your purpose in mind, you've given yourself permission to keep things simple and have honoured the deeper meaning of why you are preparing food, we want to set you up for success in the kitchen.

What we mean by this is having a look at what things offer you the most support when it comes to your time spent in the kitchen, and doing what we can to remove any of the things that make the job a little harder.

Question 5: Is your kitchen set up in a way that creates a good flow for you, with the things you need often within easy access? Is there anything you feel needs to change around how your kitchen is set up or the use of drawers or placement of things to support you more? Have you got the tools you need or are there new things you need to invest in when possible?

Question 6: What is your relationship like with your pantry/fridge/freezer? Are you using them to your advantage, do you feel under or overwhelmed by them at times? Do you carry any tension with your pantry/fridge/freezer?

ARE YOU SETTING YOURSELF UP TO SUCCEED?

Question 7: Do you tend to over shop at times, or have little idea of what is and isn't in your house already? What reasons are behind this for you?

Question 8: What systems or supports do you already have in place to support you in the kitchen or in eating well? What can you appreciate about what you already do?

Question 9: What do you feel is next for you in the kitchen? Is there anywhere you can improve? Have you already learnt anything new from the webinar you are going to try yourself? Are there any new skills you would like to learn?

PLANNING Ahead

Planning ahead has got to be one of the most consistently beneficial ways to support healthy eating, as well as reducing food waste and costs. Now for some the thought of planning ahead makes them feel really restricted and robbed of inspiration and flow. However it doesn't have to be really regimented, or even set in stone as you can change what you have prepared at any time. The idea is that you are prepared with resources to make cooking easy and enjoyable as well as supportive for when your schedule is extra busy.

Plan your resources to support you and the way you like to live

- You might plan just your dinners, or perhaps all meals and snacks
- You may just do a few days at a time, or the whole week in advance
- You might have ideas for meals in place, but be flexible on the day to have it or exactly how it will come together.
- Concept vs recipe etc
- Plan for the most hectic days only, and freestyle the rest
- Plan meals around what comes in your weekly fruit and veggie box

For most people this is a combination of styles. You could have a plan for your busiest days, if you finish work later or the kids have afternoon/evening activities. On these types of days there is often no space for cooking complicated meals or being indecisive.

You might like to develop a vague plan around what you know you have on hand already, or what you know to be on special/in season/plentiful at the moment and of course what feels like it will be nourishing for your body (or anyone else you are cooking for) considering the type of day/week/month you are having . You can still be flexible, you might have planned a certain dish, but won't feel like that on the day. Simply swap it for something else you have on hand and eat the planned meal the next day. You can even change the planned meal to a different dish that utilises the same ingredients.

For those who do a big weekly shop, or have a veggie box delivered, you might also want to factor in what order to eat your fresh produce in when planning your meals.

Nutritionally, fresh fruit and vegetables are most nutritious when fresh, considering some produce stores better than others, affecting how long it will stay fresh in your fridge.

PLANNING Ahead

Generally, the best approach is to eat any salad green and leafy green vegetables first, the same can be said for bunches of fresh herbs.

Hot-tip 1

You can also transform herbs into sauces or pesto etc while they're fresh to consume over the week if they're not being used.

Hot-tip 2

If greens like silverbeet or kale regularly go off in your fridge then try changing your approach- cook them when you get them home so you can freeze, or easily reheat to serve with a meal without all the fuss of cooking from scratch.

Hot-tip 3

If you are cooking carbohydrates, plan meals that utilise your root vegetables early in the week as your source of carbohydrate, then turn to pulses/grains later once the fresh veggies are finished.

When you are just starting out on a healthier way of eating, or beginning to cook more from scratch, it may be more supportive to have a plan in place to support you in the early weeks. Then with time, as you develop your own rhythm and more confidence with what you're doing in the kitchen you will likely find it easier to wing it more often, or just look at a pile of ingredients and know what you can do with them.

This eventually offers you the space to feel into what you need in that moment - what nutrients or nourishment you need but also what suits the climate or time frame you have to cook on that day etc.



PLANNING Ahead

Question 10: Have you or are you currently doing some sort of meal planning? What have you found works for you to date? What style does not suit you?

Question 11: What do you find supportive about planning meals (or how do you feel it might support you if you haven't tried meal planning before)?

Question 12: Do you have any resistance to meal planning and if so, where does it stem from?

BATCH *Cooking*

Batch cooking can be a life saver and can actually become a non negotiable part of your life. This does not have to be in a rigid way or at the expense of cooking from inspiration, instead it can be a very natural support and simplify a large part of your life. Having a supply of meals, basics and building blocks already cooked in the freezer can offer a sense of space and also help with inspiration when it comes to cooking food.

Something to consider is the amount of food you cook. For minimal extra time or effort you can usually double, triple or quadruple the amount of food you are cooking and save yourself extra meals for another night. It can be really settling to know you can simply grab a precooked nutritious meal on nights you get home later than usual or when life has thrown you a few challenging moments and you don't feel like cooking. It is also very nurturing to know you have meals prepared for when you are feeling more tired than usual and simply need to eat light and go to bed early.

Batch cooking can be everything from pre-making entire meals or having a range of staples ready to build meals from. When you are just starting out it's often helpful to double or quadruple at least one meal per week of something that suits cooking in big batches and freezing the rest. The next week you do the same thing but choose a different dish to make. Within a few weeks you'll have a good assortment of dinners to draw on and you can then mix up batch cooking a full meal with making some sauces, soups, stock, pulled meat or other staples to draw from. It does require plenty of freezer space, so this may be a long term plan if you need to invest in a freezer first. Another idea is to batch cook for family or friends. They cook for you one night and you cook the other night. With this set up, you can sit down to a meal together or you can simply pick up the meal on your way home from work.

HOW CAN I INTEGRATE BATCH COOKING INTO MY LIFE?

To start with it's actually as simple as making extra food for lunch the next day while you're cooking dinner, you can literally double the portions that you're preparing, eat one meal and freeze the second for another day's lunch.

The weekend is a great time to prepare for the week ahead and cook some **freezable meals**, you can do full meals for dinner, side dishes, or whip up sauces, pesto, curry bases, broth or stock for a head start.

An awesome time-saver is to **cook rice/grains** to use over the coming days or you can even freeze them for future use. You can also cook rice in a broth to add more flavour, doing this also increases nutrient density which is another bonus.

If you don't want to eat canned **Legumes**, like chickpeas, try soaking and cooking a whole packet of them and then you can transform them into things like hummus, a crunchy roasted chickpea snacks, or crackers. Another option is leaving them whole and freezing them so they're already prepared and on hand to add to a future meal.

If you know you have a sweet tooth or tend to snack, you can pre-prepare these too. Crackers, dips, muesli/granola, sweet treats or lunchbox fillers that are home made give you a much healthier option when you're feeling peckish and you can certainly batch cook these and freeze the rest.

OUR FREEZABLE *Favourites*

If you're feeling like you're stuck in a bit of a rut when it comes to changing up your weekly dinners and aren't sure where to start with batch cooking, we've popped together a few of our favourite freezable meals to provide some inspiration for you.

- **VEGGIE LOADED SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE** – Re-heat and serve with pasta, zucchini noodles or on top of steamed greens (You may even want to add some Liver or other organ meat.)
- **LASAGNE** - made on pasta sheets or eggplant/zucchini slices, or you could easily do a **moussaka** or **eggplant parmigiana**
- **SAVOURY MINCE** – You can serve this with roast potatoes, as a Cottage pie or Shepard's pie, mix it with steamed vegetables or on top of toast. A great hack is to add extra spices and turn it into another dish like **Chilli con carne** and serve with lettuce cups or tacos.
- **SOUPS** – The best thing about soup is that there are so many different types to make. **Chicken soup, green soup, pumpkin, cauliflower, roast vegetable, minestrone etc.**
- **CURRIES** – any you like! We love **Palak bases** (green, spinach-based), healthy **butter chicken, Thai** and **Indian** style bases. You can have the whole curry made up, just the sauce or base, or even just the paste if you like to make it from scratch, it's up to you. Another simple trick is to add fresh greens to serve vs having them precooked, as by the time you defrost and reheat again the greens can become a little tired.
- **HOMEMADE PASTA SAUCES/NAPOLI STYLE SAUCES** – You can easily toss through roast vegetables, protein and/or pasta, or serve with meatballs, diced chicken or poached fish.
- **STEW & CASSEROLES**- Again, there are so many different types that that this never gets boring. **Osso bucco, lamb neck stew, slow cooked lamb shanks, beef stew, ragu** etc.
- **LEFTOVER PULLED MEATS**- Like **pulled pork, pulled lamb** etc. Serve these with salad or veggies, you could also put the meat into tacos/lettuce wraps, nachos, or use as the protein in nourish bowls, make a wrap or even a burger.
- **BATCH-MAKE RISSOLES, MEATBALLS, CHICKEN/TURKEY BALLS/FISH CAKES ETC** - These can be then cooked and frozen, or frozen raw to cook fresh on another night, but without having to do all the prep work. You can also do a combination, cook some for dinner, cook a bit more to have as leftovers the next day, freeze cooked portions, and also . . . freeze some raw to cook fresh another night.

USING POCKETS OF *Time*



It's a real 'loving yourself back moment' to do a job (like preparing dinner) and realising you've already done that!!! You could even say it is a little bit like time travelling.

Using pockets of time is all about doing what you can when you have the space, to take some pressure off later. This can be a game changer when it comes to flowing in the kitchen. Things like cooking pasta one day when you have time, then using it at a later stage throughout the week can be revolutionary. It's funny how the simplest of things can have such a huge impact on the flow of your day. Cooking in pockets of time means you don't have to make the entire meal at that moment, but can prepare a component of it. It can feel significantly less overwhelming later on when it comes time to cook dinner if you're not starting from scratch.

This concept also helps with breaking up batch cooking - it doesn't have to be dedicating a full day or weekend to filling your freezer. Just prepare one thing while you have the space.

Waiting for the kettle to boil?

Pop some chickpeas on to soak overnight, ready to be cooked tomorrow.

Got 10 minutes spare in the morning?

Prep some of the veg you know you need to chop up for dinner later and set aside. Or marinate the meat.

Time on the weekend but your weekdays are full?

Cook dinner on Sunday for Monday or Tuesday if you know they are jam-packed days, late finishes or full nights with other commitments.

LITTLE JOBS THAT MAKE A *Massive* DIFFERENCE

- Grate/chop veggies ahead to add to salads/stir-fries/dishes
- While making a salad for dinner- prep some extra vegetable sticks (carrot, celery, capsicum, cucumber) for snacking on over the next couple of days
- Cook a batch of plain pasta or rice to quickly transform into a meal later in the week
- Pop in a tray of vegetables to roast – use as side dishes to dinners, add into salads, bulk out left over protein for lunches, toss through pasta and a sauce for an entirely new meal, add into frittatas etc
- Prep a lot of vegetables when you get home from the shops and you are feeling inspired by their freshness! This also increases the chance it will be used if easy to add to meals
- Wash and strip leaves of silver beet/kale etc and leafy greens- they're ready to add straight to cooking (perhaps with a quick chop first)
- Wash lettuce/greens if not pre-washed
- Beetroot- cook as soon as you get it home, or it's often found wilted in the bottom of the fridge
- Cooked and mashed veggies- for easy inclusion
 - eg. mashed pumpkin into scones, pikelets, tomato sauce (non-tomato sauce), snuck into food for more nourishment
 - topper for shepherds pie/cottage pie, side to a meal
 - added to curries/sauces to thicken and add nutrients

ADDITIONAL TIME-SAVERS

ONE POT DISHES

One pot dishes saves a heap of washing up. Cast iron/Dutch oven types of pots that can be used on the stove top and placed in the oven are the best for this, so if you don't already have a cast iron/Dutch oven pot, keep it in mind next time you're looking to update your kitchen essentials.

WHEN BUSY - COOK WHAT YOU KNOW

Cook what you know when you're busy – not needing to constantly read or refer back to a recipe saves lots of time. It's much easier to get in a flow when time is already limited by saving the new recipes for when you have adequate space in the day.

SHARP KNIVES

Sounds basic right? But keeping your knives sharp will save you a tonne of time during prep.

Also, did you know that sharp knives are much safer than blunt knives? The sharper the knife, the cleaner the cut. So, in the event of an accident, you're even saving time on how long it takes to heal!

PASSIVE COOKING TECHNIQUES

Bust out the rice cooker, slow cooker, pressure cooker, air fryer etc. These appliances are brilliant for when you're on the go because you're able to set and forget!

OVEN COOKING

Try baking fish like salmon rather than pan frying. And the same goes with sausages & rissoles.

This frees up your hands and gives you the ability to walk away and do something else. It often creates less mess as well because you don't have to clean the back splash and stove top. One tray bakes are the best, all you have to do is pop your protein and veg onto one big tray, season, sprinkle with spices/herbs and bake.

CLEAN AS YOU GO

Pretty self explanatory, but if you continue to clean as you go, wiping down benches between jobs and washing up things as you use them, it saves a lot of energy and time after your meal.

UTILISE HOME DELIVERY

There are so many options available for delivery in our post-covid world. Look into your options for home delivery with groceries, vegetable boxes, meat, bulk dry goods etc.

And if you live in a rural area, chat to your local butcher or grocer about pre-ordering a box to pick up.

PRE-CUT VEGETABLES

When it's the difference between consuming enough vegetables at all, buy pre-cut vegetables. Most supermarkets sell pre-cut and ready to cook vegetables, salad bases, carrot sticks for snacking, roasted beetroot etc. Some even sell boiled eggs as a quick protein snack or breakfast on the go!

Frozen vegetables are included here as well, they're also cut and ready to go.

PRE-PREP YOUR SALADS

Make a big salad every few days with ingredients that keep well (roasted vegetables, chopped herbs, salad leaves etc). Dress each portion to serve, add extras that don't keep so well (like avocado) fresh to serve

MONEY SAVING *Tips*

One of the biggest things that chews up a family budget is food waste. Household food waste is estimated to be \$1000 a person, per year. We spend a lot of money on food as a society that then ends up in the bin because we didn't plan well, bought more than we needed, didn't get through the leftovers or get around to making something before the veggies went off etc. Something else to consider . . . do you eat too much? Most people do and reducing your portion sizes can also save you a lot of money.

Tackling food waste is one of the quickest ways we can cut down our food budget. Here are a few tips on reducing

Basing a meal around what you have, not a recipe (unless you have all the ingredients or need to go grocery shopping already) - You might see a recipe that looks good but you don't have five of those ingredients. If you didn't need to shop yet but choose to stick to your recipe it's likely you then won't get through the other produce that needs eating first.

Follow our tips for produce prep when you first bring it home - having things washed and ready to go makes it quick to add to meals and much more likely to be used up

Consider the order you eat your fresh produce - Eat your greens and soft produce first & bunches of fresh herbs can be transformed into sauces/pesto etc if renowned for having them wilt in the fridge

Use every bit of what you have - Eat Beetroot leaves, you can bake them into chips, sauté down, or use in salads. You can also chop the broccoli stalks up and cook them, use the green leaves off carrot tops in pesto and use the inner leaves of celery in salads or cooking.

Save your scraps for stock - tops and peels of carrots, bottoms of celery stalks, ends of spring onions/leeks etc. A great way to do this is to pop a zip lock bag into the freezer and add to it whenever you have scraps: the next time you make stock, take from there first

Choose cheaper cuts where tolerated- lamb neck for stews, chuck steak for slow cooked meals etc

Save all your bones for broth - from roast chicken or drumsticks, from lamb roasts

Buy "Odd bunch" fruit and veg, or try sourcing bulk fruit and veg at greengrocers - There are often options for ordering boxes of fruit and veg rejected by supermarkets online too at a much cheaper rate.

Eat seasonally and locally - it's often cheaper than food that's travelled. Also try and buy what's in season and batch cook vs paying all year round prices- tomato sauce, pesto

Stock up when your regular pantry or freezer items are on sale when you can afford to, or utilise bulk shopping options (Costco, bulk dry wholefoods online etc)

Pear-SHAPED DAYS

You know the ones! When nothing goes according to plan. You might have a really late finish at work, have something urgent that comes up at the last minute, start feeling unwell during the day or any of the other countless spanners that can end up in the works. It can be a huge comfort and weight off your shoulders to know that you have options for taking care of your nutrition and your health.

These options don't take up a lot of time or effort, and are often much cheaper, tastier and more nourishing than buying takeaway or eating out when life throws a curveball.

By incorporating some of the tips we've covered throughout this module, you'll probably find that on a pear-shaped day you could have enough leftovers in the fridge or freezer for dinner.

Eggs are always a great staple, because they're so fast, easy, and versatile. It doesn't take much to put together a quick omelette, or scramble some eggs with vegetables like spinach, onion, capsicum, mushrooms etc or you could pop some some steamed vegetables on the side.

Hard boiled eggs are always great in a salad, or soft boiled ones with some sautéed or steamed veggies.

Breakfast for dinner is also a simple way to create a meal, scrambled eggs, healthy pancakes, congee, porridge with fruit and nuts are all something to consider when you don't have the time or resources for what you would "normally" do for dinner.

If you have rice or quinoa from your freezer stash, steamed vegetables (even frozen), tin of tuna or some frozen meat from your frozen leftovers stash is a great option. Another option is to pop a heap of veggies in a pan and turn it into a veggie packed fried rice or quinoa.

Another really easy and nutritious meal is to grab some pre-made broth out of the freezer and defrost/reheat it in a saucepan. Season to taste with garlic, lemongrass, lemon or lime juice, chilli, cumin and sesame oil etc. Add some leftover meat (or from your freezer) and some greens (fresh or frozen). Serve with rice noodles or konjac noodles if desired.

If you can't find anything to eat at home, you could always go to the local supermarket and grab a BBQ chicken (sometimes they have free-range, gluten free options or you can simply remove the skin and stuffing) and serve it with a ready-made salad kit or steamed vegetables. A quick wrap (or lettuce wraps) with a bit of protein and salad also never fails.

TAKEAWAY & EATING OUT

Most of us enjoy going out for a meal occasionally. Having the night off from cooking, catching up with friends or family, a chance to try new things perhaps, there are many reasons we're drawn to it. However for those with food allergies, sensitivities or intolerances, eating out can sometimes pose some challenges.

You'll often get to know places around you that have plenty of options that work for you, or who can cater to your needs. Often if you ask around family and friends, they'll know of great places to eat that serve delicious healthy food, or have the capacity and willingness to adjust a dish for intolerances. If all else fails, hit up Google. There's so many options now with cafes that are fully gluten free offering peace of mind for coeliacs to Paleo cafes and more.

Finally, don't be afraid to ask for what you need. Most restaurants are used to catering to dietary restrictions and allergies and are only too happy to cater to a customer's needs. Just ask politely - it's normally well received.

RESTAURANTS

When they cook from scratch, it's much easier for them to cater to your needs. You can order your meal with extra greens/side salad, no chips, no added salt, whatever you need it to be for you.

Most restaurants have options on the menu for a quality protein with vegetables or salad. It might be fish, chicken, steak etc, but there's usually an option to choose a good base protein with salad or vegetables. Or choose a good base and add sides yourself.

If it looks like there are no meals that will work for you on the menu, try building your own from the entrée and sides.

To regulate the amount of sauce or dressing, ask for it on the side. And if you're not confident that their sauces meet your dietary requirements, you can opt for olive oil and lemon on the side. This is especially great for those with food sensitivities.

BETTER TAKEAWAY OPTIONS

Guzman y Gomez (Mexican) burrito bowls and salads are great for gluten/dairy free - choose a protein and add the rest. They also give you different options for brown rice etc.

Grill'd - GF rolls, low carb rolls, no bun at all.

Vietnamese - rice paper rolls (esp at Roll'd with low carb ones), salads, Pho, stir-fries.

Thai - fresh salads, stir-fries, curries. Depending on how your local restaurant prepares their dishes you might want to ask for extra vegetables or choose an extra stir-fry dish to ensure you get enough veggies in.

Sushi - especially if you choose sashimi and seaweed salad.

Fish and chips - ask for grilled fish, lemon and salad. Occasionally some takeaway places have an option for GF calamari, salt and pepper squid for those who eat gluten-free, otherwise choose grilled.

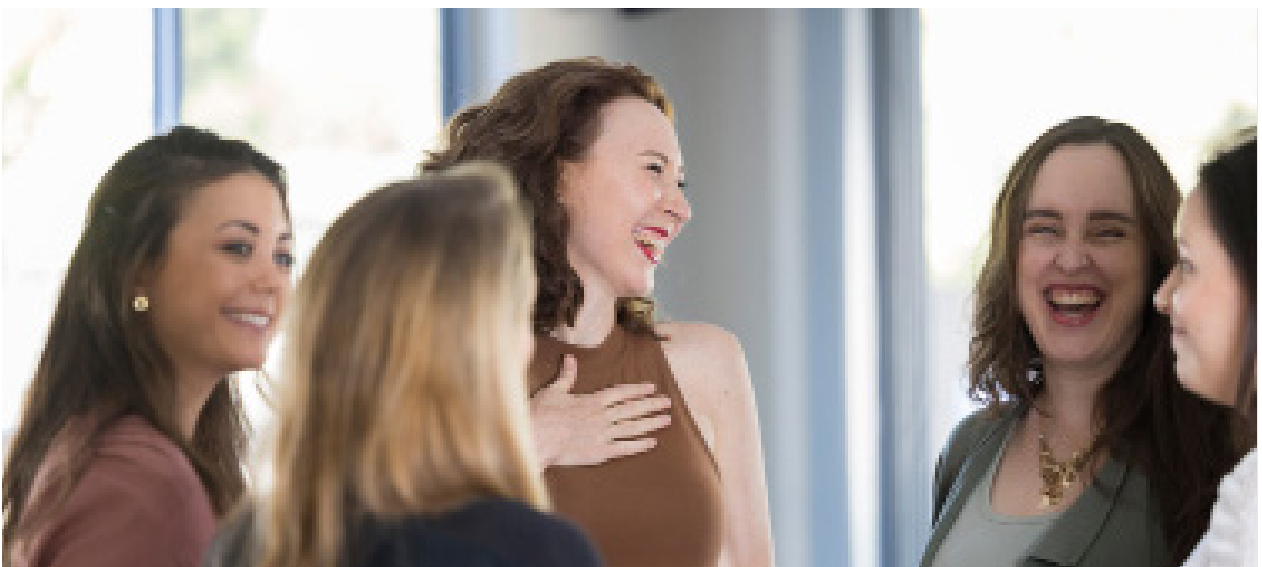
Socializing & EATING WITH OTHERS

Sometimes eating with others is one of the greatest challenges our clients face. If we are choosing to eat in a way that differs from others, or we have certain allergies or food intolerances we need to adjust for, we can feel like we are a burden or a pain to cater for. So how do we claim how we know we need to eat for ourselves, and work with those around us.

For the most part, your family and friends will usually be more than happy to cater for you, they just might need a bit of support in how to do this. I know myself I am happy to cater to someone's needs as I want everyone to feel welcome, cared for and nourished around my table. I don't want anyone to suffer from foggy thinking, fatigue, headaches, bloating, rashes or more after sharing food with us simply because they didn't want to be a burden! The burden is the reaction they have to suffer through, not some simple adjustments in our meals.

Sometimes when we begin making changes, it can be a little confronting to others in our family or close circles. Either because they then need to shake up the way they've always done things or because you're offering a reflection to them of a level of self care they may not be comfortable with. One of the things that will be supportive here, is claiming what you need to do fully for yourself. If you work on being OK with not eating certain things, and claiming that it is really important to you, then others have to fall in line and they won't be able to sway you. You don't have to force anyone else to eat the same as you, but you can be solid and unwavering in what you choose to do for yourself, as you know that's what your body works best on.

Usually, when someone really starts to take care of themselves and what they eat, it is a great inspiration to those around them. While this reflection can be triggering for some (showing them some things they may have to look at) for many others it is inspiring, showing them there's another way, or another level of care they can bring to themselves.



Socializing & EATING WITH OTHERS

Question 13: Have you ever experienced a negative reaction from someone regarding a food choice you make? It may have been a verbal comment, a facial expression or sense you got. Can you explore what you felt or noticed, and what you think that was?

Question 14: Do you have any concerns with how others will react or feel if you start to honour more the way you need to eat? Jot them down here

Question 15: Do you have trouble standing by what feels true for you when you are with others? If so why and does this differ depending who you are with?

Navigating WEAK SPOTS

When we are looking to make long term, lasting changes, one of the things that is super supportive is knowing our weak spots. Weak spots are those little personal stumbling blocks that we can have, the areas that repeatedly catch us out. They can vary hugely between us all, and can change over time. Being aware of weak spots means you can put some extra support systems in place.

When approaching our weak spots, we are not doing so in judgment or criticism of what we're doing "wrong". We're looking for an honest reflection of what you do well, and which areas tend to trip you up. What are the choices you make that are not in alignment with what your body needs?

For some this might be breakfast, for others it might be those busy weeknights when you get home late or are running around, or it might be socializing. Perhaps it's always needing something sweet after dinner that tends to be your downfall? It can be stress or boredom triggered, it can be emotional or from lack of preparation. It can be any number of things. The more we know what trips us up, and ideally why, the more scaffolding you can begin to put around to help.

Be reassured, you don't have to do this alone. Filling in this workbook may be all the support you need, but for many people, seeking the help of a practitioner will be the most supportive thing they can do for themselves.

PERSONAL Strengths & WEAKNESSES

Question 16: What areas do you find you are already doing well or feel fairly consistent in when it comes to your diet?

PERSONAL *Strengths* & WEAKNESSES

Question 17: Which areas do you find are harder for you to make lasting change or consistently supportive choices?

Question 18: When you're making a choice that you know is not truly supportive - what do you feel is behind it? There may be many different reasons depending on the situation, but list as many as you have been aware of before and allow for some new realisations as you write.

Question 19: What steps or tools can you put in place to help navigate any weak spots you have identified?

Question 20: Are there any areas you feel you need more support with?

When YOU NEED A HELPING HAND

Sometimes we all need a bit of a helping hand. We don't want to be eating takeaway regularly, but are struggling to get it all done ourselves. There is nothing wrong with outsourcing some cooking when needed. Post birth, after illness or surgery, hectic lifestyles, zero interest in cooking but a desire to eat well, whatever your reasoning, go ahead if it helps you out!

Here are some ideas at the time of writing for our Aussie program participants. Those overseas may like to take this as inspiration and find equivalents available to them. Please remember, brands change, companies close down or new management takes over, so at any stage these recommendations may no longer be relevant. Please be sure to continue to recheck ingredient lists etc to make sure each option is suitable for you.

PRE-MADE MEAL SERVICES

- *Nourish'd* - All Gluten and preservative free. Generally clean ingredients. Most capital cities and most major towns and cities on the east coast of Australia.
- *Brisbane* - Wilde Kitchen, Healthy meals to your door, We feed you
- *Sydney* - Central coast and Newcastle - Activate foods
- *Melbourne* - My Goodness Organics
- *Perth* - Holistically healthy, Feed Me Australia

“FITNESS OUTCOMES” FROZEN MEALS (AT WOOLWORTHS)

Most of these meals, except the Chicken & Mushroom Stroganoff, are clean, meaning they aren't full of additives and junk

YOU FOODS AND MY MUSCLE CHEF

These options aren't Gluten Free. Most have a lot of additives, including MSG/preservatives. As always, check each option and decide for yourself if suitable.

RECIPES AND PORTIONED INGREDIENTS

Hello fresh, Marley spoon etc. These can be a huge help for those who are not confident cooks too, as it's all there for you to follow step by step. Brilliant for kids or teens learning to cook and as an opportunity to try new things without having to buy big quantities of it.

OTHER GREAT IDEAS

Maybe you have a local café or restaurant that offer meal prep services or pre-made meals that you can take home? Or, a local butcher that sells ready to go meals that you just need to cook or heat and eat? Can you ask a friend or family member to prepare you some healthy meals or swap a service with a friend who loves to cook?

And also, remember that you can utilise the pre-cut vegetables at major supermarkets too. Trays of roast veggies can be purchased and popped into the oven with a simple protein, tin of tuna or even BBQ chook. Minimal hands on time but still a viable meal option.

COOKING FOR DIFFERENT *Requirements*

Often within households we might be cooking for various dietary requirements. This doesn't mean you should be a short order cook and tailor to everyone's whims but that at times we might have multiple people in a house with different needs. For example, a teenager has vastly different needs to a 40 year old woman. You might have some allergies or intolerances in your household to factor in and work around. There can be a number of genuine reasons that we don't have everyone in the household eating the same thing.

So when you're cooking for different needs, or are beginning to make some changes to your diet while still feeding others, you might need a little practical support. Here are a few things we suggest:

Try making meals that can be enjoyed together so nobody feels left out. Having one dish that works for all also reduces work in preparing and cleaning up. This way if one person in a family is gluten free, all of the family meals are gluten free.

Start with a common base, then add extras or simple swaps on the side. So you could start with a protein and add different vegetables and salads depending on requirements, maybe with some extra carbs or other sides for kids. If someone has an allergy, for example a capsicum allergy, pop it in a separate bowl for others to add to their salads, instead of not having it at all.

Don't be afraid to cook certain things just for yourself, even when cooking for a family/household. You're worth it! Roast the vegetables only you eat or add other sides to your meals and use leftovers for salads etc. Make freezable soups or meals for your lunches, it's irrelevant if no one else will eat them.

If particular things are required by someone in your house or a visitor, see if you can cook up a batch instead of a one off. This works for everything from particular main meals to lunchbox fillers for kids.

Share the load and enlist help if others in your home are capable. Even if it's just peeling vegetables or washing lettuce with your kids. The responsibilities are good for them and as their age and experience increases, so will their competence within the kitchen. Asking your partner or flat mate to prep one aspect while you work on another is a great excuse to use that time to catch up on your day. Or you can take turns cooking or arrange to swap batch-cooked meals with a friend or family member, you can each cook a dish or two in larger portions and swap half a batch each. BOOM! All of a sudden you have 4 different meals for the work of 2!

Recipe Inspiration

Sometimes we need a bit of fresh inspiration when it comes to getting creative with food. A new twist on a favorite, a special dressing or sauce, or a few new ideas can be all it takes to really reinvigorate our creativity.

Some of our favourite blogs & websites for when you're looking for a bit of inspiration:

- *Our blog - Health Healing Life Clinic*
- *The Health Healing Life Recipe Ebook*
- *Live Love Nourish*
- *Alexx Stuart - Low Tox Life*
- *Well Nourished - Georgia Harding*
- *My Darling Lemon Thyme*
- *Nom Nom Paleo*

WHERE TO NEXT?

Write down your top 5 things that you are most looking forward to implementing into your daily rhythms. and trying out in your kitchen.

MODULE 9- CHECKLIST

- Watch Module 9 Video
- Complete Module 9 in the workbook