

Suburban Life

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Weekend Chef

It's a growing American phenomenon in 2-career households

By Janice Brunson
staff writer

IF YOU enjoy food, take this quiz and perhaps you'll learn something new about yourself.

• Is Monday through Friday a blur of meetings, appointments, car pools, telephone conversations and coffee breaks on the run?

• Can you recite every frozen food entree available in the grocery store?

• Is your kitchen a wasteland of half-eaten snacks, quick-fix entrees and fresh ingredients that have seen better days?

• Do weekday meals consist of relay races from package to plate with only a vague identification of content?

• Do you know all the local restaurants by name?

• Do you live for the weekend?

• Does the thought of a quiet, relaxing weekend with family and friends send you into seventh heaven?

• Would you like to express yourself creatively, but don't have time for ballet lessons?

IF YOU answered yes to one or more of these questions, chef Howard Solganik says you are quite likely a "weekend chef," a growing

American phenomenon caused by active lifestyles and two-career households.

Solganik, a food consultant from Ohio, author of a weekly newspaper column on cooking and TV cooking show host, is also busy promoting the weekend chef concept and cookbook for Gold Medal Flour.

In this capacity, Solganik was in Michigan recently, part of a 10-city, five-week promotional tour.

"I was chosen for the job because I am a typical weekend chef," he said. "I'm a very busy person, I enjoy good food, and I've made cooking on weekends a fun activity."

The Gold Medal concept is, in Solganik's mind, a very realistic program that is filling a need for a good many people who are very busy during the week yet who enjoy good cuisine but do not always want to eat out to get it.

AND SOLGANIK is "thrilled" with the recipes in "The Weekend Chef" recipe booklet. Each has been developed and tested in Betty Crocker kitchens in Ohio. Solganik insists if directions in the cookbook are carefully followed, it is impossible to produce anything other than excellent fare.

The book contains more than 60 recipes, as well as time-saving tips, equipment suggestions and do-ahead tips.

Solganik also has hints of his own to obtain the best results in cooking. He recommends purchasing only the best of ingredients. Substitutions are fine, so long as the substitution is also of good quality. It is not necessary to make everything from scratch.

THE WEEKEND chef, Solganik said, makes cooking fun by setting aside a certain amount of time on weekends and devoting it to creating an interesting meal to share with

others. It becomes a social occasion, both the preparation and the partaking of it with friends and family.

He said this is true in his home. Oftentimes his 2-year-old daughter assists him, standing on a small stool and rolling her "own little ball of dough."

Friends, aware of the unique cuisine offered on weekends at the Solganik home, drop by unannounced or are invited. Whatever, they are whisked off into the kitchen, where

they help in the preparations.

People rarely sit down in his home, Solganik said, without a smudge of flour on their shirt.

Cooking is not only Solganik's means of making a living, it also serves as his favorite pastime, the thing he does to relax. "It makes me feel good about myself."

This, Solganik said, is the core of the weekend chef — taking pleasure in cooking as a source of weekend

entertainment, relaxation and personal expression.

THE WEEKEND chef promotion tour has received, in Solganik's words, "A fabulous reception" thus far. "I especially like radio shows where people call in."

Their most frequent comment to him, he said, is, "Hey, that's me."

To purchase a copy of the Weekend Chef Cookbook, send \$1 to P.O. Box 5402, Dept. 867, Minneapolis, Minn. 55400.

Weekend Chef shares a recipe

The following recipe is from "The Weekend Chef" recipe booklet.

HAM-SPINACH SANDWICH RING

1 pkg. active dry yeast
¼ cup warm water (105 to 115 degrees)
1 cup warm milk (105 to 115 degrees)
2 tsp. sugar
¼ cup margarine or butter, softened
1½ tsp. salt
2 eggs
4½ cups flour

Dissolve yeast in warm water in large bowl; stir in milk, sugar, margarine, salt, eggs and 2 cups of flour. Beat on medium speed 10 minutes, scraping bowl frequently. Stir in remaining flour, continue stirring until soft, sticky dough forms. Cover and let rise in warm place until double, about 1 hour.

Prepare ham-spinach filling.

HAM-SPINACH Filling

½ cup chopped onion
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tsp. vegetable oil
2 cups chopped fresh spinach (about 4 oz.)
1 cup chopped fully cooked smoked ham

1 cup shredded Swiss cheese (4 oz.)

Cook and stir onion and garlic in oil until tender; add spinach. Cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted; cool. Stir in ham and cheese.

Stir down sandwich dough by beating about 25 strokes. Turn out well-floured surface, roll or pat into rectangle, 20 by 12 inches.

Cut dough into 2 strips, 20 by 6 inches. Spread half of the filling down center of each strip. Bring long edges of dough up over filling; pinch edge and ends to seal. Stretch rope to 22 inches and make even. Place ropes side by side; twist gently and loosely. Shape into ring on cookie sheet; pinch ends together. Cover and let rise 1½ times original size, about 30 minutes.

Place oven rack below center of oven. Heat oven to 360 degrees. Brush ring lightly with margarine. Bake until ring is golden brown and sounds hollow when tapped, 25 to 30 minutes. Cool slightly.

Serve with mustard sauce if desired, 12 to 16 servings.

MUSTARD SAUCE

Stir 1 tsp. prepared mustard and ¼ tsp. horseradish into 1 cup dairy sour cream.



STEVE FECHT/staff photographer

Howard Solganik says he is a typical Weekend Chef, a busy man one who enjoys food and enjoys finding creative ways to prepare it.

Should you love your neighbor or yourself first?

By Carol Azizian
staff writer

THE HIGH priest of the "me" generation dons his vestments — Reeboks and Adidas jogging suit — slips his communion glass of Perrier and follows his commandments religiously:

Thou shalt run five miles a day. Thou shalt not eat red meat. Thou shalt own a compact disc player for the car. Thou shalt wear whole-grain sweaters. Thou shalt date exclusively. Thou shalt be a management consultant for a large multinational corporation by the age of 25.

Such media images of the "beautiful, successful" people have fostered a type of idol worship in American society, claims Donald A. Tubesing, a Lutheran minister, author and psychologist from Duluth, Minn.

"There's simply no staying power in total absorption with self-care — no depth in the shallow self-centered focus that often results in self-worship," he notes in his book, "The Carling Question." (Augsburg Publishing House, \$3.95).

"Zealots who participate in the wellness revolution to this extreme may inhabit a world of their own, but they will not be well people."

Achieving "true" health, Tubesing contends, requires striking a delicate balance between caring for yourself and caring for others.

"You don't have to be perfect. If you can't jog or walk, you can learn how to be well within limitations," he said.

To illustrate his point, Tubesing describes a 78-year-old symphony musician who suffers from chronic pain and can no longer play the violin as well as she did when she was younger. "But she's one of the most loving, kind and joyful people I know."

He contrasts this woman with an intelligent, successful businessman who keeps his body fit and trim but seems to fail in interpersonal relationships. "He's competitive to the point of being competitive and he ramrods his way through life. He just doesn't have time for people."

TUBESING, president of Whole

Persn Associates, a consulting and publishing firm, draws his concepts from a wide variety of experiences. Early in his career, he held a campus ministry position at Ohio State University, where he earned a doctorate in psychology. From 1971 to '73, he was dean of student affairs at Concordia College in Milwaukee, Wis.

For the next five years, he served as pastoral consultant and psychologist for experimental holistic health centers housed in church basements in the Chicago area. Combining spiritual, psychological and physical approaches, Tubesing and other experts from the University of Illinois Medical Center helped patients deal with stress and lifestyle changes.

The project provided the basis for his numerous professional treatises and popular books such as "Kicking Your Stress Habits."

"The key issue is not to give people the right answers," Tubesing said. "We're trying to get them to ask the right questions."

Some sample questions he asks in his book are:

• If your aging parent requires extensive daily care, how long do you continue to turn your life upside down and when must you stop and say, "No, I need to care for myself before I fall apart?"

• When a friend falls apart and needs emotional support night after night, how much can and should you give? And for how long?

• When you've volunteered on the church stewardship drive, how many times should you work before you take one off to be with yourself and your family?

• When your boss needs you to work late, should you cancel your plans for the evening or do what you want for yourself?

• How do you carve out a lifestyle that takes responsibility to others seriously without being a self-styled martyr? How do you, on the other hand, achieve personal freedom for self-development without being seduced into the trap of self-worship?

"When reaching out to your family

and neighbors, attitude is the key," Tubesing notes in his book. "If you've focused primarily on grabbing for yourself as much of this world's goods as you can, as fast as you can, you'll never reach out."

Whether one is single or married, there are plenty of opportunities for lending a helping hand, a sympathetic ear and a willing heart, Tubesing said.

Commitment to people involves both self-denial and self-sacrifice. "We need to encourage one another to pay the price even if we're not getting our equal share back," he explained.

Sometimes, building friendships can lead to getting involved in broader causes. For example, Andy, a friend of the author's, struck up a conversation with a wheelchair-bound classmate. Concern about the obstacles the classmate faced turned to activism. Andy soon organized a student-interest group that lobbied effectively with the school board to allocate funds for changes that made life easier for handicapped students.

Tubesing's advice for self-care

may sound like a grab-bag of popular nutrition, fitness, psychology and spiritual techniques. But, by covering all of the subjects "lightly," he's providing an easy-to-read, "reflective" tool for the uninitiated. Here are some highlights.

• **EXERCISE** — Design an aerobic program, use one method of relaxation for 20 minutes each day for a month; periodically relax your favorite tension spots; take at least three "yawn and belly-breathing breaks" every hour; clear your mind and prepare for sleep.

• **NUTRITION** — Keep your weight normal, eat more fruits, vegetables and starches, cut down on sugar and sweets, consume less fat, cholesterol and salt. Regulate alcohol, caffeine and tobacco consumption.

• **MIND** — Read books, accept and meet new challenges, control your energy output by saying no to some possibilities.

Stretch your imagination. "Take a new route to church. Make up a sto-

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