

Volume 11, Issue 14: Magic At The Dinner Table

In our fast paced lives, it's easy to slip into a pattern where your family members have their meals individually rather than collectively at the dinner table. It's true that with older school going kids and busy parents, it's impossible to have breakfast, lunch and dinner together as a family every single day of the week. However, it's certainly possible to have one meal a day together, and maybe two over the weekend.

In most households, dinner is ready at around the same time each evening. But when family dinner time isn't set, and eating together as a family isn't a requirement, it's easy for family members to grab their home dinner at whatever time they please, and partake of it at whatever part of the house that best suits their immediate need.

If dinner is ready at your house by early evening, it's easy for your hungry teenagers and/or pre-teens arriving home at different points of the evening to serve themselves dinner, rather than take a snack before collective family dinner time. They may eat it at the kitchen counter while scrolling through a phone, in the balcony, in their rooms, or in the living room in front of the TV, but rarely on the dining table.

If you are anything like me, like your kids, you may also be guilty of killing family dinners if you are hell bent on having your last meal of the day before sunset, which in most cases is earlier than your family can gather at the dining table. Or you could be the type who prefers to have late dinners, therefore don't feel motivated to have early dinners with your family.

Whatever your orientation, I want to bring to your attention that something special happens when a family gathers at the dining table over a meal. I kid you not, as I am experiencing it now after an extended period of neglect. Conversations flow freely - stories, laughter, information, updates, jokes, the works! You get to catch up with your loved ones richly, get to know what's going on in their lives at an extravagant level.

If you are in the category of those of us who are guilty of neglecting family dinners for convenience, I implore you to go back to having collective family dinners every evening, and

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collective family breakfast at least one of the two days of every weekend. You will be glad you did.

Bring back to life your daily family dinners and weekend breakfasts. Other than your family getting to relax together after a long day of work and studies and breathe easy for a moment before everyone retreats to the rest of their evening routines, this one habit will serve to bring you closer as a family than most, if not all of your other attempts to spend quality time with your family.

For His Glory,

Lillian Chebosi