

Food and Meals in My Home

In this assessment, answer these questions based on the family you grew up in or the family you currently live in (whichever is the most influential).

1. There are typically 21 meals in any given week. On the average, how many of those meals are restaurant meals? ___/21.
2. On the average, how many meals per week are precooked, microwave, or oven heat? ___/21
3. On the average, how many meals per week are made from basic ingredients (scratch)? ___/21
4. Is there a daily or weekly meal that everyone typically attends? If so, describe where, when, who, what, & how it occurs:
5. During one of these meals mentioned in question #4, what is the typical series of events which transpire? (How many courses, do people talk in multiple or singular conversations, does mother, father siblings serve, who cleans up, & how much socializing occurs throughout the prep, eating, & cleanup stages of the meal?) Write a short descriptive paragraph:
6. If there were one word to describe the family meal (questions 4 & 5) experience in your home, then what would it be?
7. What would you like to see more of at this meal?
8. What would you like to see less of at this meal?
9. Describe the other meals throughout the week in a brief sentence.
10. What family of origin meal traits and patterns do you feel strongly about in terms of repeating them in your own family?
11. What family of origin meal traits and patterns do you want to avoid in your own family?
12. Discuss these questions and your answers with a family member, partner, or friend. What are their observations?
13. In reference to questions 1-3 above, the U.S. pattern for meal consumption and preparation is about 1/3 eating out, 1/3 precooked heat and serve, and 1/3 made from scratch. How does your family compare?

Family Foods & Meal Traditions

In this assessment, you will consider family traditional meals and dishes. This is an assessment designed to help you identify the origin of the foods you typically eat with your family. Reflect upon current and past meal patterns when answering. This assessment might be best filled out while talking to parents, grandparents, and other extended family members.

1. List your 10 favorite family traditional dishes, desserts, or meals below:

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | 5. | 9. |
| 2. | 6. | 10 |
| 3. | 7. | |
| 4. | 8. | |

2. What is the earliest know origin of these dishes in your family?

- | | | |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | 5. | 9. |
| 2. | 6. | 10 |
| 3. | 7. | |
| 4. | 8. | |

3. Which of the 10 items listed above is the single most favorite in your family?

4. Who among your family members made the same dish?

Parents ___ Yes ___ No

Grand Parents ___ Yes ___ No

Uncles/Aunts and/or Great Uncles/Aunts ___ Yes ___ No

Great Grand parents ___ Yes ___ No

Great, Great Grand Parents ___ Yes ___ No

Great, Great, Great Grand Parents ___ Yes ___ No

Others? ___ Yes ___ No Who?

5. Are there deep rituals, traditions, or meanings placed upon any of the dishes listed above?

Briefly describe it here:

6. Describe a emotionally meaningful experience you personally have had involving one or more of these foods, which contributes to its continued use in your family meals:

7. Is there a dish, dessert, or meal that you no longer prepare or eat?

8. If so why did it fall from tradition? What would happen if you began to eat it again?

Attitudes about Food in Your Family of Origin

In this assessment think about the meaning of food in your family of origin and the context in which it was prepared and eaten. Wait until the assessment is completed before looking at the key.

- 1 T/F. Food came with fun in our home
- 2 T/F. Almost every time we got together, we ate something
- 3 T/F. We were made to feel guilty when eating food
- 4 T/F. We had to clean our plates at every meal
- 5 T/F. We always over did it when it came to food
- 6 T/F. Food was a necessary evil
- 7 T/F. There was really never enough food in our home
- 8 T/F. We loved to eat when company came over
- 9 T/F. Somehow, food made the feelings more positive in our home
- 10 T/F. When things got stressful, we would eat more food
- 11 T/F. I feel ashamed for what I eat
- 12 T/F. We typically ate balanced meals
- 13 T/F. Drinks are an important part of the eating experience
- 14 T/F. We all enjoyed certain favorite family foods
- 15 T/F. At funerals and other sobering family gatherings, there was food
- 16 T/F. Family members had to be skinny to fit in
- 17 T/F. Everybody helped to plan the weekly menus
- 18 T/F. We often celebrated birthdays with food and drink
- 19 T/F. Holidays meant lots of food
- 20 T/F. We never ate while watching the TV
- 21 T/F. The same family members typically prepared and cleaned up the food
- 22 T/F. I use the same recipes my parents and grandparents used
- 23 T/F. Food helps to get through the tough times
- 24 T/F. Whenever we ate, we talked and interacted
- 25 T/F. Food was eaten in religious contexts
- 26 T/F. We were a calorie counting family
- 27 T/F. We eat some of the same foods we ate decades ago
- 28 T/F. Food budgets get top priority in our house
- 29 T/F. Food kinda says "I love you"
- 30 T/F. Food brings all of us together

Key:1=T,2=T,3=F,4=F,5=F,6=F,7=F,8=T,9=T,10=F,11=F,12=T,13=T,14=T,15=T,16=F,17=T,18=T,19=T,20=F,21=T,22=T,23=F,24=T,25=T,26=T,27=T,28=T,29=T,30=T.

Your Score____. This assessment is biased with the assumption that food is useful and meaningful in facilitating positive social interaction among family and friends. A score of **30** indicates healthy attitudes about food in the family context. A score of **0** indicates very unhealthy ones. Do any of the items above stand out as significant concerns for you about food in your family of origin? If so what impact does it have on your current food experience? What can you do to address this and any other concern?