



## Q & A with KRISTINE LIES

Author and Cooking Expert - [www.allaboutmykitchen.com](http://www.allaboutmykitchen.com)

**You have your fingers on the pulse of families and food. How is the average family doing in this area? Do meals represent a point of connection for families anymore? If not, what has replaced mealtime as the time when families share and communicate what's going on in their lives?**

The desire to be together and eat well is important to most all families, but there are some stumbling blocks ( busy schedules, full time working parents, skills in the kitchen, etc). I really do believe most families are doing their best to be together and connect but it is not necessarily over meals made at home around the dinner table. I see the importance of regular dinners together at home with real foods as the focus, but I cannot discount the reality of families today that have to make it work. Many times that means dinner at a restaurant, or maybe it is take-out around the table. The difference from generations past is frequency. Now we have "family nights" maybe once a week. In the past it was nightly dinners together.

**I'm sure there are many who would say they "hate cooking" and "are a terrible cook" (perhaps it's a spouse who actually says this!). Are there some people who should just not cook? Have you seen people who are challenged by cooking learn to succeed?**

It's about expectations. I think our society gives an image that in order to do something well it must be a passion in our lives, which is just not true. Everyone can cook. It's just a matter of starting simple, meeting them where they are at and beginning to learn the basics. Some people will stay at basic cooking, but for many it creates confidence in the kitchen. With confidence, one can begin the process of learning more in the kitchen. Honestly, I have several people I work with that still are not in love with cooking - they tolerate it. What they begin to love is creating healthy meals and feeding themselves and their families well. That can be a big motivator. I like to compare it to exercise. Many people with never fall in love with exercising. But they learn to see the value it gives to their lives. I feel cooking can be the same.

---

***"I think our society gives an image that in order to do something well it must be a passion in our lives, which is just not true. Everyone can cook. It's just a matter of starting simple, meeting them where they are at and beginning to learn the basics."***

---



**In a day when we have 24/7 cooking shows available for viewing, along with cooking blogs, websites and magazines, is it true that families are preparing fewer meals at home than ever before?**

I believe my generation is especially disconnected from the kitchen. There are many reasons for this, but the BIGGEST is the disease of busyness. Our society is always on the go and that also includes our meals. So the answer is yes, families are cooking less. But I am beginning to see a trend of that changing.

---

***“I believe my generation is especially disconnected from the kitchen. There are many reasons for this, but the BIGGEST is the disease of busyness.”***

---



**What are a couple of the biggest reasons why some families view creating meals at home as unrealistic?**

Time, planning, and, for many, picky eaters. Picky eaters are a big issue, not just with kids but with adults as well.

**Is there something vicarious or cathartic about these shows that causes them to become substitutes for actually cooking at home?**

I think the genre can create unrealistic expectations about cooking and what home cooking looks like. That said, I personally jump-started my journey of home cooking with a show called “30 Minutes Meals” with Rachel Ray. It helped me see that I didn’t have to make everything out of the box. It opened my eyes to the fact that real food cooking is truly simple. I really did not know any other way to “cook” than putting together things from bags, boxes and cans. So for me, cooking shows can be inspirational and can create excitement around food.

**Do you see menu planning or the actual meal preparation as being the biggest obstacle to consistent home cooking?**

This is a great question. It really is a combination, but my gut tells me it is the meal prep. It takes time to research and prepare, and to get out of the rut of cooking the same things.

**Before embarking on this mission of helping families eat more healthy, home-cooked meals, you were a nurse. How has that career experience influenced your approach to meal creation?**

Being a nurse has made me a curious person, one who asks questions and tries to understand the why and how of situations. It certainly helped lead me to learn and grow as a health coach. As well as be creative in my cooking.

**What was the inspiration behind your book Mom, can I take THAT for lunch?: 50 Family Favorites from our real food kitchen?**

To be honest it was actually a project from my business coach to teach me how to create a cookbook to market and sell. But as I began to put together my recipes it became a cookbook of my family’s favorite recipes that they ask for over and over again. My goal was to give people simple but delicious recipes that even kiddos will love. Helping people ditch processed foods and embrace the world of real foods.

---

***“My goal was to give people simple but delicious recipes that even kiddos will love. Helping people ditch processed foods and embrace the world of real foods.”***

---



**In your cooking demonstration breakouts at INSPIRE2020, what do you hope will be the biggest actionable take away for attendees?**

Let go of any obsession with having to “get it right” in eating and cooking. I hope attendees can find the fun of playing with food and flavors.

**What do you plan to prepare for those attending your breakouts?**

Savory Southwest soup. I will demonstrate techniques to make soups richer without tons of cream. Plus how to layer flavors in cooking

Make ahead meals breakfast (overnight oats)



**INSPIRE**

**SATURDAY**  
**01.25.2020**  
**THE MISSION CHURCH**  
12001 Ridgemont Dr. Urbandale

2020