

Balance

Self-care can be a tricky thing. It can be a tricky thing but I believe in it so much. As a new mom, a wife, a full-time school counselor and taking on cooking 3 meals a week for someone, I can leave “me” behind from time to time. Even this blog, which I love so much, can become just one more thing I “HAVE” to do. People continuously say, “You have to learn to find a balance.” I get that, I do, but ummmm, how does one do that and how does one know when you’ve reach ‘balance’ because, and I don’t know, this might be a new idea for ya, but life changes—constantly. As a result of this awesome constant change, it seems like once you find a balance something new comes along and you gotta start looking for that balance again. So the balance and the change? That stuff I can’t really control but boundaries. Oh man, I loooove me some boundaries. I still get excited when I pass into a new state and you see the, “You’re Now Leaving . . . ” and then immediately afterwards, “Welcome to . . . ! We’re happy to have you!” so of course I’m gonna love personal boundaries! I like making them and I certainly like keeping them. Thank Gd because I think my personal boundaries are the only reason I can function in society, much less function as a wife, mother, friend, school counselor, daughter, etc.

I’m very strict when it comes to boundaries and do a pretty good job of keeping work at work but of course, there are those nights when I’m on my iPhone checking email and dang it, I reply! NO!! Oy. I actually pride myself on not saying , ‘how high?’ when my supervisor or a parent says, ‘jump’ and I kinda feel like it’s part of my job to set up those boundaries because if you’ve ever worked at a private school, you know that pushing boundaries ~~is a constant, every second occurrence~~ happens sometimes. I say all of this because last week I was feeling like my cup runneth over with well, everything. I got sick for the third time in 6 weeks and I NEVER get sick that

much. Yes, we have day care germs running rampant in this apartment and it's possible that that's why I keep getting sick. But I've also decided that I keep getting sick for another reason; actually 2 reasons. Now, I'm no medical doctor but I'm thinking I keep getting sick because a) my gossiping is out of control and I need to keep that in check more and b) stress. It's ridiculous how the body holds onto stress in ways we aren't cognizant of and how that stress can manifest itself in the body in pretty negative ways. So last Monday I made two decisions; 1) to cut out the gossiping or at least keep it to a very respectable minimum and 2) make an appointment with your therapist. I did both and saw my therapist 2 days later (I also got on antibiotics, but whatever) and I've felt a lot better this past week. I feel less pissed off and feel like I'm able to connect to my husband and daughter on a much more loving basis. I mean things aren't perfect but they're getting there. It's a balance ☐



So this happened this past Purim—she's either a pirate, hippie or Johnny Depp. We're still not sure



And then this – Carrie Bradshaw, circa 2003/2004, Season 2. I’m a really really good mom.

OK, since we’re on the topic of balance there really is no other way to showcase balance in cooking besides soup (in my humble opinion). Soup used to be incredibly intimidating to me and then one day, when my husband and I were first falling in love in Jerusalem, he made me chicken soup. He used the freshest ingredients available at the shuk, added a dash of love and the result was the greatest chicken soup I’ve ever tasted. Now, I’m not gonna post that recipe but I am gonna post a roasted eggplant and tomato soup that made my heart sing when we ate it. I hope you find it delicious as well.



Delicious food porn



Pre-roasting

Roasted Tomato and Eggplant Soup

What!?

2 eggplants cut in half 4 tomatoes – varied is your option but plums could be nice

4 large garlic cloves
1 medium onion , chopped
Coconut oil
4 cups vegetable broth
Sea salt
Pepper
Sour cream
Parmesan
Italian parsley, chopped

How's That Now!?

Pre-heat oven to 425. Cut the eggplants length-wise. Spread coconut oil over eggplants and place face down on a baking pan. Cut tomatoes length-wise as well and put to the side. Put eggplant in oven for about 20 minutes. After 20 minutes, put tomatoes and garlic on the same baking pan and place back in the oven for another 25 – 30 minutes keeping an eye on the garlic that it doesn't burn. After a total of about 45 minutes, pull the baking pan out of the oven and let cool. Using a pair of tongues, flip the eggplants over and scoop the meat out of the middle until on the skin is left. Pour about 3 tbsp of coconut oil in a large stock pot and heat for a minute. Once hot enough, sautee the onions in the coconut oil until translucent. Add the eggplant meat, tomatoes and garlic to the pot and sautee for another few minutes. Add the vegetable broth and let simmer for about 10 to 15 minutes. Take pot off the heat. Using our favorite immersion hand blender, blend all the ingredients together until smoother. Top with a dollop of sour cream, parmesan and the parsley. Enjoy!

(This was one of those cooking experiences where the soup finished right before shabbat so there is no picture of the final outcome but trust when I say, 'twas delicious).