

Monday Round-up: Cookies and Question

This month's Kosher Connection challenge asked us to make 'something that you'd put in a mishloach manot bag. I mean, what popped in my head was cookiecookie, cookie COOKIE! Now look, e'rybody has a hamentaschen recipe so I wasn't going to attempt to reinvent the wheel plus, this past week was super stressful and there are no signs of stopping. After parent/teacher conferences, a larger amount than usual of 6th grade girls coming to my office to ~~sob-like-a-babies~~ talk things out, and a few heart-breaking conversations with parents dealing with divorce, I wasn't really in a creative frame of mind. I couldn't tap into that part of me that gets jazzed for some cooking/baking and it was getting frustrating but more on that later.



Siona will eventually get Uncle Dave's nose

The biggest thing on my mind over this shabbat was connection. As you know if you've read this blog before, I'm a school counselor for a Jewish day school. I love my job and I take it seriously. The biggest part of my job that I wish I had more time to cultivate is my work with connecting girls with Judaism. I'm getting really frustrated (oy, apparently I need a vacay. I'm getting frustrated a lot this week) with the lack of opportunities for connection for our girls. If I

hear one more girls program on tzniut I might scream. It's nice that there are programs for Jewish girls to connect via challah-baking and mikveh-visiting but this can't be the only way we offer our girls connection, right? But what is that within the Orthodox community? What does that connection and the subsequent programming look like? I feel very strongly that the message we're sending our girls is that their place within our community lies solely in home-making and child-rearing and sometimes educating but even that education is within a box. We don't invest the time and energy in educating our girls about how to daven and why we daven like we do with our boys. I want to inspire girls to love their culture, community, and religion but I'm not sure how to do that. When I think back about what inspired me so much of it was self-directed but of course, came from the home. My mom was very involved within our Reform synagogue and I was involved with our area youth group but what brought me to being more observant and more appreciative and knowledgeable about Judaism as an adult was education, inspiring female educators and a partner who loves his religion. So what does that inspiration look like for middle and high school girls? What inspires/d you? I'm truly looking for help and guidance and would love your opinion.



I had to bake with Siona attached to me, which meant that sneaky little foot kept getting into the pictures.

Anyway, ok, so back to cookies. COOKIES! We had a dear friend of my husband come and visit this weekend. He lives in LA and is doing the struggling actor thing. I'm convinced that he will be famous one day but in the meantime he's doing whatever he can to make a paycheck. One thing he's doing to make ends meet is a 'before and after' muscle-building program complete

with protein shake powder that smells like hot chocolate powder. The bag of it sat on our counter all weekend, which meant all weekend I was craving anything with cocoa powder thus, the double chocolate chip oatmeal cookies. So when someone asked me to make something I'd want in my mishloach manot bag that answer will always be cookies . . . cookies and cash but you know, I can't really 'make' cash.



Cocoa and flour in harmony

How! ?

1. 1/2 c unsalted butter, softened
2. 3/4 c granulated sugar
3. 1/2 c packed dark brown sugar
4. 1 large egg
5. 1 tsp vanilla extract
6. 3/4 c all-purpose flour
7. 1/4 c unsweetened cocoa powder
8. 1/2 tsp baking soda
9. 1/4 tsp salt
10. 2 c old-fashioned oats
11. 1/2 c semi-sweet chocolate chips

How's That Now!?

1. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk together dry ingredients (flour, cocoa powder, soda and salt). Set aside.
2. Place butter and both sugars in a large mixing bowl of a stand mixer or hand-mixer and cream until light and fluffy.
3. Add egg and vanilla and mix just until combined.
4. With mixer on low speed, add dry ingredients and mix just until combined. Fold in chocolate chips.
5. When ready to bake, preheat your oven to 350 degrees F. Line your cookies sheet with parchment paper. Scoop out the dough into a tablespoon size balls and place on prepared sheet, leaving at least 2 inches of space between cookie balls. They will spread!
6. Bake 9 to 11 minutes. Cool on a sheet for 3 minutes, then transfer onto a cooling rack.



A li'l something special for your mishloach manot this year



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