

Apples add to these cookies' fall harvest feel

By Susie Iventosch



Apple Oatmeal Harvest Cookies

Photo Susie Iventosch

On several of my bike rides lately, I've been tempted by apples ... orchards loaded with apples. Ripe apples of every color adorn the trees from yellow to red to green. We don't have apple trees in our yard, and I must say, it was really difficult not to reach out and grab a few to eat along the

way. Alas, these were not my trees, so I refrained. Still, it got my fall cooking brain going and made me think of how tasty it would be to add some chopped apples to oatmeal cookies. Once this plan was set in motion, I could hardly wait to get back to the kitchen to start baking. This oatmeal cookie recipe

is one I've used for years, but have never added apples to it before. The cookies are soft and delicious with the warm flavors of cardamom and cinnamon spice, and the apple chunks only add to that fall harvest feeling.



Susie can be reached at suziventosch@gmail.com. This recipe can be found on our website: www.lamorindaweekly.com. If you would like to share your favorite recipe with Susie please contact her by email or call our office at (925) 377-0977.

Apple Oatmeal Harvest Cookies

(Makes about 3 dozen)

INGREDIENTS

2 cubes butter (1 cup), softened to room temperature
1 ½ cups light brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 large eggs
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cardamom
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt
2 cups instant oats
1 apple, peeled and finely chopped (I used Honeycrisp)
½ cup currants
½ cup coarsely chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 F. Generously spray or grease two baking sheets.

In a large bowl, cream together butter and brown sugar. Add vanilla and eggs and beat until well integrated. In a separate bowl, mix together flour, baking soda, spices and salt. Stir into butter mixture until blended. Add oatmeal, apples, currants and nuts and stir well.

Drop by large spoonful onto very well-greased baking sheets. Bake for approximately 10 minutes, or until golden brown. Remove from oven and allow to cool just a few minutes. Before cookies are completely cool, carefully separate cookies from tray with a metal spatula. Allow to cool completely before removing from tray because these cookies are very soft and can easily fall apart if not completely cooled and set before moving.

Family Focus

Five things to avoid saying to your child

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

Parents start out in a vaulted position in the eyes of our children. It is up to us to preserve this position. Even if it seems that your child doesn't care what you say, think or feel, he is paying attention and caring.

Parental words and actions can hurt even many years later. Often, grown women and men become tearful in my office while remembering a parent's hurtful comment or seeming disregard. Sometimes a parent will think saying something hurtful isn't a big problem as long as there's an eventual apology. But the initial hurt a child experiences can linger for a long time.

Here are some comments to avoid saying to your child. Some are highly critical, while others can be a set-up for ongoing conflict.

1) **"You're stupid/lazy/mean/selfish/a brat/inconsiderate."**

When you label your child, usually in anger and frustration, that term can resonate with him or her for years. Even if you have complimented your child 20 times more often than you have criticized her or him, your negative comment will carry much more weight.

When you're angry, take a few breaths and think first what you want to say. Remember to formulate "I" messages and to describe the behavior you don't like. This

usually takes some forethought. There are more benign ways to get your message across, such as: "I know it's hard sometimes to share, but Cassie would like a turn on the scooter. Can you please give her a turn in a few minutes? That would be really nice."

2) **"Never" or "always"**

Sweeping generalizations are usually not accurate and can be quite inflammatory. They are also not fair since most behavior isn't so extreme. Parental statements using "always" or "never" tend to alienate children and cause resistance and rebellion. Instead of saying, "You never put away your laundry," it would be better to say, "I wish you would put away your laundry without my having to remind you."

No one wants to drop everything immediately to do someone else's bidding. Instead of saying, "I want you to set the table/clean your room/empty the garbage/do the dishes right now," give your child some latitude. It's much better to give some notice, such as, "You have five minutes before it's time to put away your LEGOs." Or, "Please do the dishes as soon as possible after dinner." And be sure to obtain an agreement. If you have an agreement it is much easier to remind your child to do something

he or she promised and avoid being accused of nagging your child.

3) **"Because I say so" or "Because I'm the parent/adult"**

This kind of power play doesn't go over well, and usually generates resentment if your child is over the age of 3. It's better to say that you have reasons for your decision and you'll share some of them with your child when he or she calms down or after they cooperate.

It's a delicate balance because you don't want to be in the position of having to explain yourself to your child before he or she acts upon your request. This would be placing yourself in a weak position with your child; he or she would then be the judge of whether or not your request is fair or appropriate.

If you wait until your child has complied, then you still maintain control but you show you are willing to share your reasoning so he or she can be more a part of the process.

4) **"If you don't do what I've asked, you're grounded/you have no cell phone for a month/ you've lost all your privileges."**

Parental threats tend to elicit anger and resistance, not cooperation. Often they are made impulsively and contain unrealistic or extreme measures. If you don't follow through with them, you are exposed as a parent who doesn't

mean what you say and you risk losing your future credibility.

It's better to have an agreement about consequences ahead of time for misbehavior, disrespectful comments, or failure to perform chores.

Then you can say, "Unfortunately, I'll need to apply the consequence we discussed if you don't apologize/clean up your room by the deadline."

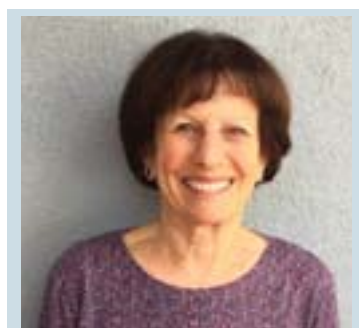
If you don't already have an agreement, you can take time to think about what you want a consequence to be. You don't have to specify immediately what action you will take. You can say, "If you don't do what I ask, I'm going to have to think of a consequence for you."

Reluctant discipline is best, while threats are alienating.

5) **Comparing him to his siblings or to anyone else**

Whether or not your intentions are good, comparing your child to someone else, even favorably, places you in a position of being judgmental. Just about everyone dislikes feeling judged by others, and knowing we're being judged makes us self-conscious around those who are doing the judging. After all, the same person who complimented us at the expense of someone else can turn around at any point and compare us unfavorably.

If parents want to promote



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harmonious sibling relationships, making comparisons sabotages this effort. If they are compared unfavorably, children grow to resent the person they're being compared to, while a favorable comparison can set up unhealthy rivalry among siblings.

As I've written before in this column, comparing ourselves to others too much can lead to discouragement and lowered self-esteem. You will probably need to help your child avoid doing this to him or herself as it's such a natural tendency. Consequently, it's even more important not to add external comparisons to those he or she may already struggle with internally.

'black odyssey' back at Cal Shakes

By Sophie Braccini



"black odyssey" 2018 poster

Photo provided

Last year Cal Shakes created a premier of Marcus Gardley's play, "black odyssey," re-set in Oakland. The epic story of Ulysses Lincoln, on his long journey home from the war in Afghanistan, was an all-time success both with the public and critics, winning the company numerous awards. Cal Shakes opens the adventure again, with a limited edition this year, from Sept. 25 through Oct. 7 with several inno-

vative initiatives such as a "Pay What You Can" performance on Tuesday, Sept. 25.

Contemporary playwright Gardley wrote "black odyssey," a tale seeking the roots of the black ethos in America, transcending the race issue, reaching all of us, independently of background, wondering about redemption, about our roots and about what it means to be human.

The public did not miss the significance of this story of wanderings and longing built on Homer's ancient Greek myth. The success of "black odyssey" was record-breaking at the Bruns Theater and the production won a collective 16 Theatre Bay Area Award nominations, including nominations for Outstanding Ensemble, Production, and Direction.

Cal Shakes Artistic Director and "black odyssey" director Eric Ting said that he was thrilled to bring Gardley's enthralling journey back to the Bruns. "We're celebrating this homecoming in a few special ways," added Ting. "Marcus was the recipient of our annual Guiding Star award earlier this year, and the city of Oakland surprised him at the awards ceremony with the proclamation of Marcus Gardley Day on the reopening of the production, Sept. 26, 2018."

The "Pay What You Can" performance is a deliberate effort to make theater performances available to all, independent of economic situation. Tickets for the performance will be available starting at 10 a.m. on the day of the show through TodayTix and the Cal Shakes Box Office at (510) 548-9666.

Then on Sunday, Sept. 30, Cal Shakes will host a Second Line lesson and parade with "black odyssey" co-choreographer Latanya D. Tigner for community partners and audience members in conjunction with the 4 p.m. performance (lesson starts at 3:15 p.m.). Second Line is one of the cornerstones of the New Orleans parade tradition, and is featured in "black odyssey." The afternoon will feature a live New Orleans-style band playing before and after the show. The event is included in that day's ticket price.

This year's cast incorporates returning and new actors, such as JD Mollison as Ulysses Lincoln, and Tony Award winner Cleavant Derrick as Great Grand Daddy Deus.

Details and tickets are available at calshakes.org. Performances are held at the Bruns Amphitheater, 100 California Shakespeare Theater Way, Orinda.

Cadets with a cause

Submitted by Charisse Stratford



Troop leader Charisse with Thea, Jordan, Natalie, Olivia, Maya, Sarah, Caroline (Cassie not present) at the May 10 Bronze Project award ceremony.

Photo Richard Lang

Girl Scout Troop 33134 began their first year at Stanley Middle School on the heels of completing their Bronze Project and graduating to Cadets.

Troop 33134 showcased their yearlong Bronze Project, "Save the Oceans, Save the Earth," at the 2018 Lafayette Earth Day Fair. Their goal was to bring attention to one of the leading causes of damage to our earth – water pollution. Oxybenzone, a common ingredient in many sunscreens, was highlight-

ed as one major pollutant causing deformity and death to coral reefs. Scientists say it only takes one drop of oxybenzone in six-and-a-half Olympic-size swimming pools' worth of water to do serious harm, according to outdoorindustry.org. The recipe for DIY reef-friendly sunscreen and samples were handed out to over 100 attendees. Coincidentally, the state of Hawaii banned sunscreens containing Oxybenzone the same week this troop received their Bronze Award.

In the article, "Local author's debut novel 'A River of Stars'" published in the Sept. 5 issue of Lamorinda Weekly, the information about Vanessa Hua's parents' move from China was incomplete. Her parents were born in China, but met in Chicago in the 1960s, and then moved to Orinda in 1975, the year Hua was born.