

## ~ GROWING IN SERVING ONE ANOTHER ~

*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace. ~ 1 Peter 4:10*

*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ~ Galatians 5:13*

*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ~ Galatians 6:2*

### Suggestions for cleaning someone else's home

As wonderful as it would be to serve someone with a thorough cleaning of her home, the fact of the matter is that you'll most likely be working under some time constraints. In order to make the time that you have as profitable as possible, here are two approaches you can take, depending on the particular needs of the woman you are serving.

#### **Clean the Surface**

Focus on the most heavily trafficked areas and public areas of the house

- Kitchen, living areas, main bathrooms
- Don't worry if you can't get to the bedrooms or other bathrooms

Put things away, if possible

- Dishes, laundry, toys, etc.
- A neat house seems cleaner than a messy house
- If you can't put things away, at least straighten what's out

Clean the surfaces

- Sweep/vacuum floors, wipe counters + sinks, clean toilets
- Focus on the everyday dirt buildup

#### **Clean the Extras**

Undertake extra tasks that are hard to fit into a regular cleaning schedule

- Wash windows, scrub baseboards, clean mini-blinds, clean out the refrigerator, wipe down kitchen cabinets, remove dust bunnies and cobwebs, wash out trash cans, etc.
- Ask what would be most helpful to her – what tasks she may have been putting off or wishing that she could attend to

Clean the 'private' rooms that often get neglected

- Children's bedrooms
- Master bedroom/bathroom
- Study/schoolroom

### Suggestions for having someone clean your home

**Be humble.**

It can be difficult to expose your dirty home to another woman, but ask the Holy Spirit to help you humble yourself and accept her gift of service.

**Be honest.**

Tell her what will truly be the most helpful thing for you and your family.

**Be flexible.**

She may not be able to make it at the time that's most convenient for you, and she may not do things just the way that you would, but her gift should be received with gratitude and grace.

### Suggestions for organizing a cleaning schedule

**Communicate with the Family in Need.**

Ask how often, and for how long, cleaning is needed. Ask about any preferences or special needs.

Once the schedule is set up, send a master list to the recipient, so she knows when to expect people to come.

**Communicate with Those Serving**

Send an email to home group ladies, family members, and anyone else who has communicated a desire to serve. List the days that cleaning is needed and ask the ladies to "reply to all" with the date they would like to serve.

Call or email 1-2 days in advance to remind the ladies who are scheduled to clean.

*Thank you to Lisa Moonen and Elaine Ruhl for contributing your wonderful input and advice on this subject.*

## Suggestions for Providing a Meal

**If you don't have a lot of time** to cook, make one simple entrée, and add a bagged salad and bakery bread from the grocery store.

**If your finances are tight**, double the meal you are making for your family that night. You won't spend as much on extra ingredients.

**Develop two to three complete meals** that you know work well. Keep those items you need on hand. This will allow you to bless someone when a need arises unexpectedly.

**Keep it simple.** Try not to be too elaborate with a meal. Everyone appreciates being served, but it may backfire when we try to make it "over the top."

**Use what you do best**, whether it's homemade bread, Italian food, a special salad, etc.

**Ask others for ideas** of meals that are easy to make and transport.

**Remember when you are scheduled to take a meal.** People are counting on this meal, so do your best not to forget.

**Call ahead** so they know when to expect you. If you signed up through your home group, call that day or a day before, to let them know you are coming and to ask what time would be convenient. "Dinner time" for different people can range anywhere from 5-7pm. Don't assume that others eat at the same time you do.

**Ask about any dietary restrictions.** For nursing women, try to avoid foods that might be a problem in the milk (some foods such as peppers, sausage, caffeine, broccoli, onions, and spicy foods can give the baby painful gas).

**Use disposable containers** when possible, and specify that you do not need the containers returned to you. Use large Ziploc bags for salads or breads. If you do need dishes returned, offer to drop by and pick them up in a few days.

**Include any instructions** needed for serving the meal. For example, "Reheat at 350 degrees for 20 minutes."

**Include the recipe** used, if possible, so they know what ingredients are in the dish, and so they can make it again later if they like it.

**Leave promptly** when you deliver a meal, unless you are invited to stay and visit, or have arranged to do so ahead of time.

**Be gracious and generous!**

## Suggestions for Receiving a Meal

**Make it easy** for someone to serve you. Be specific about your needs. Many people want to help, but are often unsure of the best way to do so.

**Be specific** about what your family doesn't care for or cannot eat.

**Be very gracious and grateful**, regardless of what is brought! If you are unsure if someone remembers, call the person who organized the meals, and they can give a friendly reminder.

## Suggestions for Organizing a Meal Schedule

### Help the Family in Need

Ask when, and for how long, meals are needed (usually every other day for two weeks).

Ask about any preferences or special dietary needs.

Once the schedule is set up, send a master list to the family, so they know when they can expect meals to be brought.

### Help Those Serving

Send an email to home group ladies, family members, and others who have a desire to serve. List the days meals are needed and ask ladies to "reply to all" with the date they would like to serve, and the meal they plan to provide.

Call or email 1-2 days in advance to remind the ladies that are scheduled to serve.

*Thank you to Colleen Martin, Carla Monroe, Cassie Sasser, and Kate Sasser for contributing your wonderful input and advice on this subject.*