

# Unlocking Joy: A Parents Guide to Finding Light in Everyday Life (a week of simple ideas)



Filling our time with joy and fun are something we often think that we will do later, on the weekend, or on vacation. There are too many things on the to do list, too many dishes and too much laundry to have fun now... As soon as we get caught up with the chores and everything is ready for tomorrow, we will have some fun....



But the time goes by and there is always something that needs to be done. But the memories and moments that shape what lives in our hearts are just the day to day moments...

Can you let go of your to do list for a few minutes? .....  
jot things down if you need to -it will all still be there!

This book is about the day to day moments. It's about unlocking joy—not as something we are going to do soon, but as a daily art form. Especially for us, the parents trying to remember who we are and what we love while the beautiful chaos of raising a family runs rampant around us.

The goal is to channel your inner clown- and sprinkle fun into as many boring, everyday, routine moments as you can. The more you flex your 'fun' muscle the stronger it gets. Following are a few simple ideas - one per day for seven days





Day 1- if you have  
littles... gentle tickles  
can turn frowns upside  
down pretty quickly



# Hugs keep you young

And also:

- they provide natural cortisol
- they can reduce stress
- they can dull chronic pain
- they promote bonding
- they increase oxytocin (contentment) , dopamine (pleasure) and serotonin (mood balance)
- they can communicate emotions
- they can diffuse fights
- they reduce fear
- they can lower blood pressure
- they can improve sleep



Day 2 - Who doesn't want to be in a band? Might as well grab a spatula for a mic. Many a delicious meal has been made during band practice



Day 3 - after dinner. The old classic- a sheet fort in the living room - maybe the bedtime story is in the fort tonight



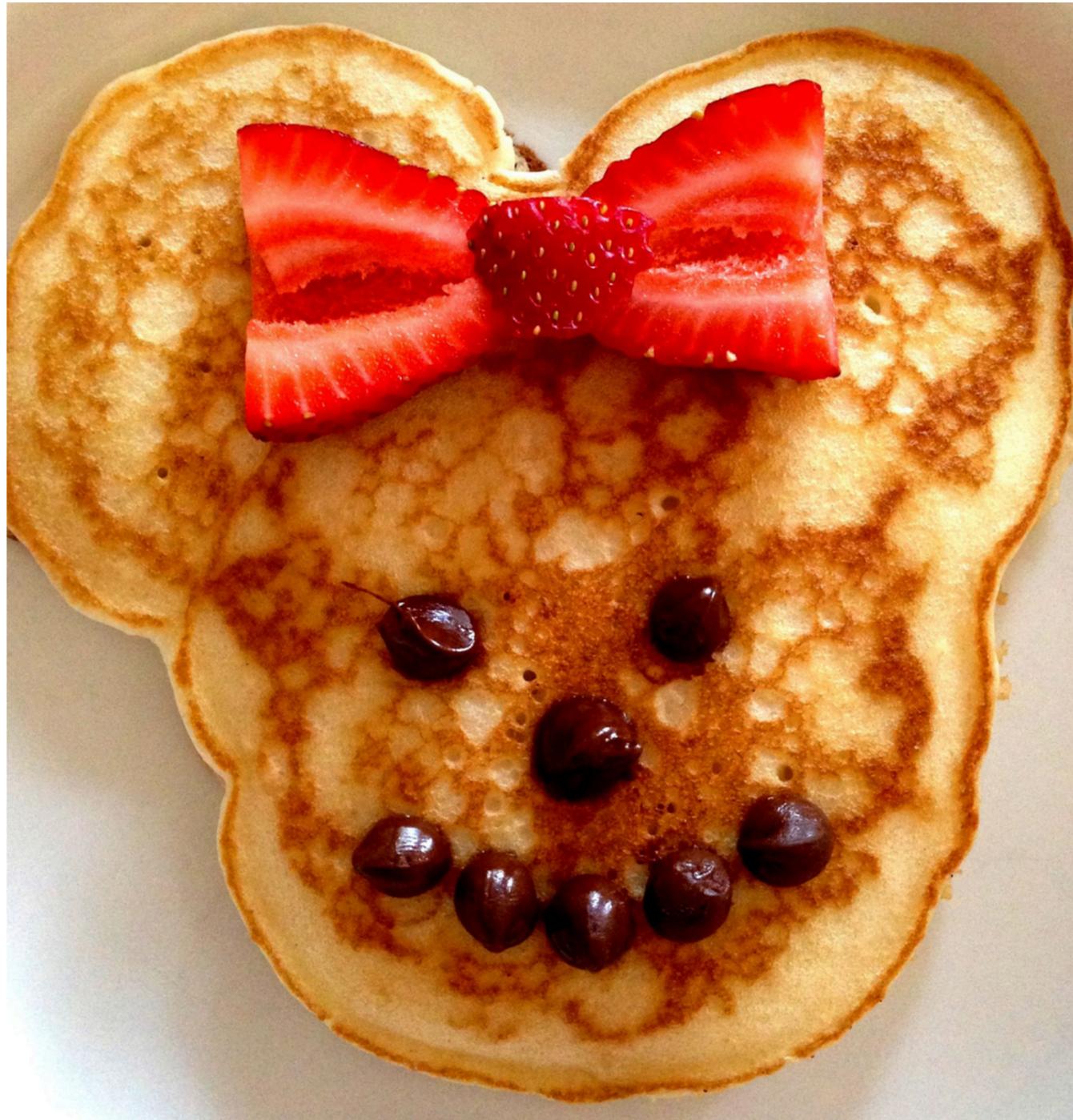


Day 4 : everyone makes a sock puppet (don't buy a kit)- use the unmatched socks in the laundry room, some googly eyes and some leftover yarn and hot glue



Day 5 : at dinner everyone uses their sock puppet to tell the family about the funnest thing that happened today (highs). Extra points for doing it in a silly accent. Dont be tempted to add lows - this way the brains get trained to just look for fun each day...

Day 6 - Some fun with breakfast





Day 7 - Turn a walk into an adventure -a simple treasure hunt for littles (give them a short list of things to find... pinecone, stick, leaf) ...

Speaking of walks - these are great times to connect with your teen- go without an agenda of things to talk about. Just let the conversation go wherever your teen directs it. Resist the urge for teachable moments



I know that these ideas are simple but sometimes we get so caught up in the endless details that we forgot to zoom out for a minute and just enjoy some sweet moments each day. I hope this guide brings your family some laughs

