



April

happyhome habits

easter/spring & the value of generosity

Once Upon a Family has developed the happyhome habits to make it easy and fun to build loving connections, instill strong family values and create a legacy for future generations. These habits are based on the “protective” factors” that decades of research have shown will strengthen families against the negative influences in today’s world.

Using the power of rituals and traditions, the happyhome habits are things we can do with our families once-a-day, once-a-week, once-a-month, once-a-year and once-in-a-while. They are simple, fun and they give us peace of mind. We know we have accomplished the most important things for our loved ones.

happyhome habit 1
once-a-day: dinner conversations

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once-a-week: family fun night

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happyhome habit **1**

once-a-day: dinner conversations

Spend time together talking about what matters most. Transform the dinner table into the place where you have fun and memorable conversations that give everyone a sense of belonging. Dinner is our best opportunity to connect as a family - to celebrate victories, talk about problems, instill values and pass on cherished family stories. It's where we teach our children about life. We need to insist that teenagers come to the table and we need to limit the activities that cut into this valuable family time.

the value of Generosity

What are ways to show generosity to someone?

the value of Generosity

What are things that keep you from being generous?

the value of Generosity

Describe the most generous act a friend or family member has ever done for you.

the value of Generosity

What does it feel like when someone shows generosity towards you?

happyhome habit **2**

once-a-week: family fun night

Stop all the hustle and bustle and do something fun together. Put family first by setting aside a day and time to just have fun: monopoly, bowling, hiking, a craft or cooking project. It's especially important in today's dizzybusy world to show our children that it's ok to slow down, turn our phones off and do something that's not on our to-do-list. Society has convinced us that more sports, music lessons and chess clubs are going to prepare our kids for a better life. Some of that is great, but all the extra-curricular activities in the world will not make up for the lost opportunity we have to build strong family ties.



Generosity Baskets

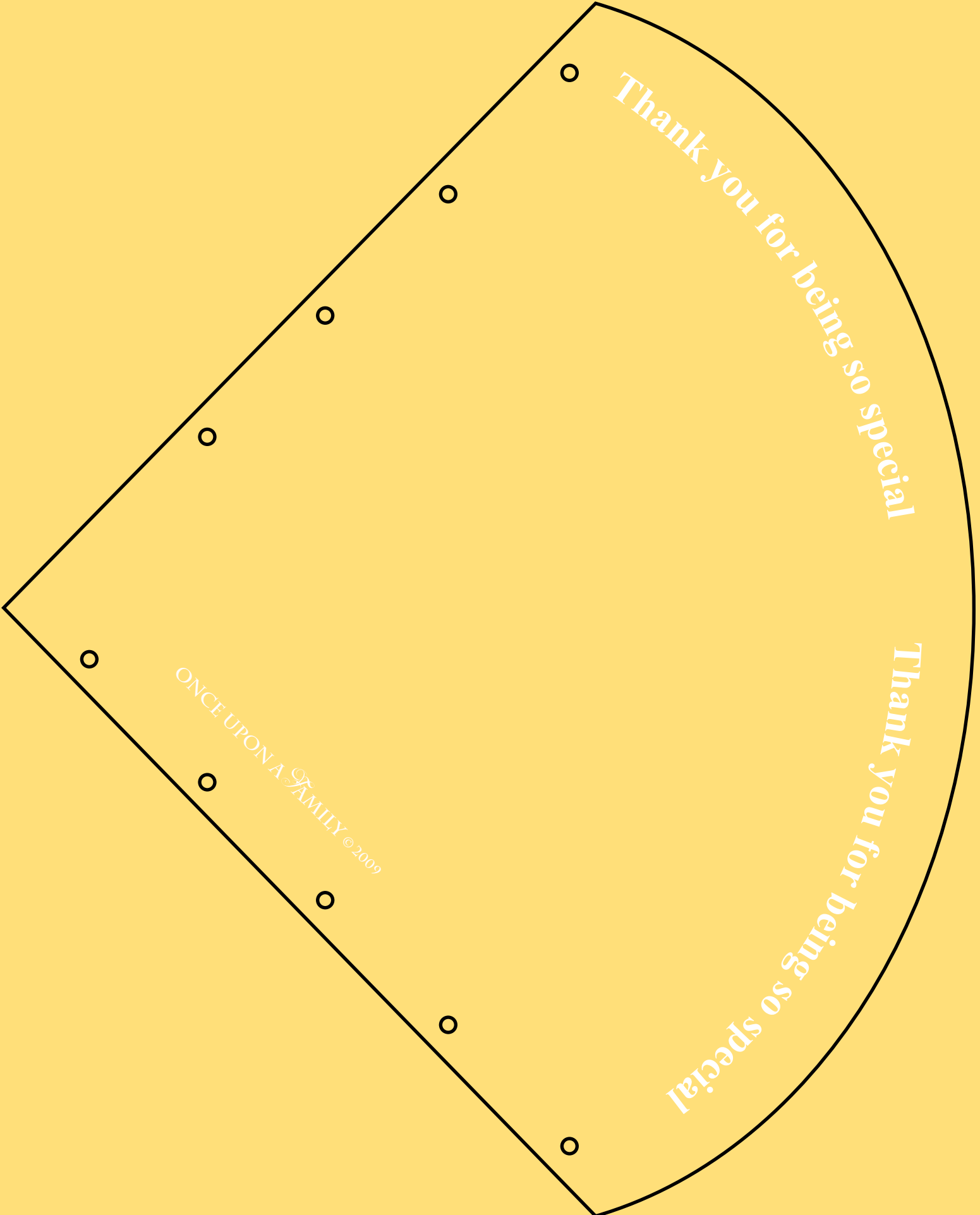
Family Fun night is the perfect night to make some generosity baskets and deliver them anonymously to your friends and neighbors. Cut out the cone-shaped gift basket on the next page and punch holes where indicated along the two sides. Cut a 45" piece of ribbon. Bring those two edges of the cone together. Fold the ribbon in half and, starting at the bottom, weave one side and then the other through the holes so that you end up with

two ends of the extra ribbon, of about equal length, at the top of the cone. Tie a knot and then a bow. The loops of the bow should be long enough to hang on a doorknob. Cut off any excess ribbon. Fill the baskets with treats and sweet notes and even a little flower! Now the fun begins: in a quiet, secret way, deliver the baskets to the neighbors without getting caught. It is fun to ring the doorbell and run, run, run. Take binoculars, use walkie-talkies, and plan to have EXTRA fun on family fun night throughout all of April.

Thank you for being so special

Thank you for being so special

ONCE UPON A FAMILY © 2009



happyhome habit

once-a-month: treasured traditions

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Share a simple family tradition. Many of our favorite childhood memories revolve around family holidays and vacations that we have repeated over and over again. Good smells, good feelings, good times. Family traditions are the building blocks of strong, caring, happy families because they create the memories that connect us forever.



Early Bird Pick-Up Picnic

Start a new tradition this April by celebrating the return of Spring and all that is glorious about warm spring weather, buds returning to the trees and birds chirping. What could be better than an Early Bird Picnic that you do in a nearby neighborhood park. Keep it simple, but get everyone involved in planning this annual event. Even if you have to wear a light jacket, it will be fun to roast hotdogs and marshmallows over a fire that you start together. And while you are at the park, consider engaging in a little ‘generosity’ service by helping to pick up any leftover litter in and around the park. As a family, you will feel great knowing that you left your picnic area better than the way you found it. Even the grounds of a park deserve a little generosity from time to time.

happyhome habit 4

once-a-year: your family story

Create a legacy of love to pass onto future generations. Dedicate one day a year to developing your own family's story. Write letters to your children. Ask older members of the family to share (write or record) their favorite life stories. Collect precious handprints or fill in a family recipe album. Make a family tree or a family album together as you reminisce over good times. Cut out the cover below along with one or more pieces of plain paper of the same size. Form a booklet by folding the card with the blank pages inside and then stapling them together along the center fold.

Use the Activities Booklet to record a personal story or lesson you've learned about generosity. Perhaps there was someone in your life who gave to you unexpectedly and touched your life in a memorable way. Share your story with your loved ones and describe the experience. You might want to praise a family member, in your booklet, who has recently demonstrated generosity.

Cut out the cover below along with one or more pieces of plain paper of the same size. Form a booklet by folding the card with the blank pages inside and then stapling them together along the center fold

A booklet cover design featuring a yellow square with a white border, set against a larger orange square background. The text on the cover is written in a cursive font.

*Life
Lessons...*
the Value of Generosity

the *Value* of Generosity

happyhome habit 5

once-in-a-while: gifts of love

Surprise someone you care about with a gesture of love. It doesn't take much to touch someone's heart, especially when it is unexpected. Leave love notes under a pillow, in a lunch box or taped to the steering wheel. Do a chore without being asked. Take the time to really listen and understand. Or send a card of appreciation to someone you care about.

As a family, send a thoughtful note to someone who demonstrated generosity towards your family. Maybe it's a friend or relative who provided assistance when you needed it. Or maybe you are simply proud of an act of generosity they made that was good for them or someone you know. A little appreciation goes a long way.



"We cannot do great things on this Earth, only small things with great love."

~Mother Teresa