

MICHAEL JOSEPHSON'S MASHED POTATO RECIPE

POTATOES

- Start with large to medium Idaho potatoes (I never do less than ten pounds of potatoes).
- Soak for at least 20 minutes to loosen dirt.
- Set newspapers on the floor of the kitchen with one empty bowl and one bowl of clean water.
- While you're working on the onions (see below), have your children scrub the potatoes with a bristle brush until clean (they're ready for this job by age 4). DO NOT PEEL. You want to keep the skin for color and flavor.
- Each child should have a brush with his or her name on it.
- Encourage scrubbers to show you frequently how they're doing (not because you need to know but because they enjoy asking, "Is this clean enough, Daddy?").
- Don't be compulsive about how clean they are (the boiling water will take care of the rest).
- Rinse potatoes and cut in thirds.
- Boil them in salted water in a large pot until soft enough to put a fork through -- but NOT mushy.

ONIONS

- Cut brown onions by hand (DO NOT USE A PROCESSOR) in thin slices (DO NOT DICE).
- Cut the round slices in half or quarters (depending on the size of the onion). Ultimately you want thin strings of onion.
- Sautee onions in lots of butter on high heat.
- Add pepper (not too much).
- Add more butter as needed.
- Cook until about half of the onions are crisp/black and the rest are brown (have your children taste test).
- Cook plenty of onions (ratio of onions to potatoes about 1 to 4). You can never have too many onions.

MASHING

- Pour cooked potatoes into a colander and rinse lightly.
- Pour potatoes back in the original hot pot.
- Cut with a large knife to break into smaller pieces to make mashing easier (remember, potatoes are a bit firm, not mushy). If you have ten pounds of potatoes, the mashing could take some serious mashing to push them to the bottom of the pot.
- Using your mother's potato masher (this may be hard to come by), mash potatoes by hand with lots of butter that you've cut into chunks of about one inch. **DO NOT ADD MILK OR CREAM OR MELT BUTTER FIRST.**
- Add onions and continue to mash.
- Be sure you and your children taste test frequently (not because you have to but because it's really good and it's part of the fun).
- Add butter if needed (use lots of butter) until lumps in potatoes are removed but potatoes are still firm (**NOT CREAMY OR SMOOTH**). Think chunky peanut butter rather than creamy.
- The end product should be light to medium brown.
- If necessary (and it always is), reheat in oven or microwave before serving.
- Cook more than you need, and let people you care about take some home.
- Store the rest in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. Reheat in microwave until they're all gone.

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Since this is a time of giving (and we're in the midst of our annual fundraising drive), please write a check or use your credit card to send a gratitude donation to Josephson Institute. (If the potatoes become a new family tradition, send the Institute a donation every year to express your continuing gratitude!)

And let me know how you like them!