

Cookie Dough

Assignment Five: Personal Narrative/Memoir Assignment

Marilyn Schmid

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Professor Virginia Daniels

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“I can’t wait to get home and bake a batch of butter cookies,” was what ran through my mind nearing the end of a two week summer European vacation with my parents. I was twelve years old. I loved to bake. I loved cookies. Still do.

Growing up, baking cookies with my mom was tradition, especially at Christmastime. During the holidays, my mom baked at least a dozen different kinds of delightful cookies to ship off to our Milwaukee relatives. My favorite treat to make was the butter, or roll-out, cookies. After mixing the butter, sugar, eggs, vanilla, baking soda, flour and milk to make the dough, the fun began! We pushed up our sleeves, sprinkled flour over the island countertop, took a chunk of the soft dough and started rolling away. The Mitasik family had a tattered plastic bag filled to the brim with different shaped cookie cutters to choose from. We selected gingerbread men, hearts, horses, Christmas trees, bells, and santas. We baked the cut-outs until golden brown; afterwards adorning each one with buttery frosting and sprinkles, colored sugar or silver balls. Each cookie was a delicious work of art.

As my husband and I started our own family, the cookie baking tradition continued on. Baking with my three children as they grew up was a top priority of mine. When Michelle (our first child and only daughter) was two years old, our baking adventures were launched. Of course, making the traditional sugar cookie roll-outs was where it all began. We learned a new way to decorate the plain cookies by painting on a colored mixture of food coloring and egg yolks before baking. Michelle enjoyed using her artistic painting skills on each cookie. When they came out of the oven, they were vibrant and yummy—no frosting needed! Our two sons, Craig and Brent, were next in line to join in on the forming of our sweet family traditions. As

the children grew older, we added more baking activities into our repertoire. At holiday time, gingerbread house making was now in our family tradition line-up. Rectangular and square graham crackers, fluffy snow-like royal icing, and rainbow-colored candies like red licorice, Skittles, and chocolate chips, were engineered into creative structures. More cookies now made it to our baking list. Peanut-butter balls, Spritz, and gingerbread men soon became favorites. My daughter got married last summer and her husband, also, enjoys the kitchen. The two of them concoct some wonderful tasty treats—keylime cheesecake, lemon meringue pie, pecan pie, and macaroons are a few of their creations. They like to explore and try new tastes and new recipes. The tradition of a warm oven carries on! Both of my sons are still in college. Although they are not baking too much on their own yet, they look forward to me sending homemade cookies (or cookie dough) for them to enjoy.

I like cookies so much that coming up with new tasty, recipes has become a passionate hobby of mine. In June 2006, my recipe for Malted-Milk-Ball cookies won a \$200 prize and was published in Better Homes and Gardens. I was delighted as this was my first recipe contest that I had ever entered. Developing the perfect chocolate chip cookie has been a long-time goal of mine—chocolate chip are my favorite cookies. I think I have come pretty close and will not share the recipe with anyone. I am still experimenting as I would like to find a way to reduce the amount of butter and sugar and still produce a gooey in the middle, crunchy on the edges, delicious cookie. About five years ago, I ventured trying to run a cookie business out of my home. The cookies were packaged in brown boxes and “Brown Box Cookies” evolved. I created five recipes and the customer could mix and match. I was naïve to think that the business would just take off. I soon realized how much time and energy would have to be put

in to market Brown Box Cookies. It was a hard way to make a living and, at the time, using a commercial kitchen was an issue. I have put Brown Box Cookies on the side for now, but will never stop baking for my family and friends.

“Thank you mom,” for instilling in me, the love of the art of cooking baking.