



**BEN
FRANKLIN
CIRCLES**

Ben Franklin Dinner Toolkit

**Everything You'll Need for Your Ben Franklin Dinner
(other than the food, that is!)**



What is a Ben Franklin Dinner?

Ben Franklin Dinners are part of a bold initiative that bring us together to explore two simple goals:

TO HELP US IMPROVE OURSELVES

1

TO HELP US IMPROVE OUR WORLD

2

The Ben Franklin Dinners are a unique opportunity for anyone, anywhere to recreate Franklin's *junto* over a meal. Choose one of Franklin's virtues to discuss and invite a small group to join you.

It's simple!

Order pizza, organize a potluck or prepare a homecooked meal. Regardless of what you're serving, The Ben Franklin Dinners are a fun and simple way to gather people for the meaningful conversations we all want to have but might not always have the space for.

WHAT ARE THE 13 VIRTUES?

temperance / silence / order / resolution / frugality / industry / sincerity
justice / moderation / cleanliness / tranquility / chastity / humility.

Some fun ideas for your dinner

1

NOT UP TO HOSTING ALONE?

Invite someone to co-host with you!

DO YOU ALREADY KNOW EVERYONE PLANNING TO ATTEND?

- Think of inviting a couple of people you don't know well
- Ask friends to bring a guest who will be new to the group

2

3

SHARE THE FACILITATING DUTIES

Make place cards with questions about the virtue and ask each person to ask one.

BEN FRANKLIN'S CHART

Print out copies of Ben Franklin's chart where he tracked his progress with each virtue. Give one to each guest to take home.

4

Your sample dinner conversation "menu"

Feel free to follow our steps closely, or make your dinner your own. No matter what, it should be fun, comfortable, and informative. It's all about good conversation around one of Franklin's virtues.

1

WHEN YOUR GUESTS ARRIVE, CONSIDER KICKING OFF WITH AN ICEBREAKER:

- If you could do one thing to improve your community, what would it be?
- If you could improve one thing about yourself, what would it be?
- What's your favorite quality in others?
- What's one thing you think gives your life meaning?

INTRODUCE THE VIRTUE YOU CHOSE

You can read Franklin's short definition aloud to your guests to get started.

2

3

ASK SOME THOUGHTFUL QUESTIONS TO GET PEOPLE TALKING

- What does this virtue mean to them?
- Is it relevant in our world today?
- If so, how?
- Check out our sample questions.

ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO THINK OF ONE TANGIBLE WAY THEY CAN PRACTICE THIS VIRTUE FOR THE NEXT WEEK OR MONTH

For frugality, could you make a monthly budget? For tranquility, could you take 20-30 minutes of quiet time (device - free!) each day? Suggest people write down their "commitment" so they can refer back to it.

4

5

CONCLUDE WITH SOME BIG PICTURE QUESTIONS TO HELP YOUR GUESTS THINK OF HOW THEY CAN SUPPORT ONE ANOTHER

- Is there something that this group can help you with in your own life?
- Is there a problem in our community that we could address together?
- How can we use our networks to help each other? Or someone outside the group that needs help?
- How can we contribute individually or as a group to the larger community?

Dinner's over, but here is a post dinner checklist

DON'T FORGET

Report back and let us know how it went! Share your thoughts and feedback.

CONTACT US

benfranklincircles@gmail.com.

IF YOU TOOK PICTURES

Share them on social. Use #benfranklincircles or tag us @benfranklincircles

AND FINALLY

Consider making the dinner a regular event! There are 13 virtues. Your dinner can be a one-night event or a monthly happening. Start with one and repeat!

Ben Franklin's chart sample

Industry.							
<i>Lose no time. Be always employed in something useful. Cut off all unnecessary actions.</i>							
	<i>S</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>S</i>
<i>T</i>							
<i>S</i>							
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<i>T</i>							
<i>Ch</i>							
<i>H</i>							

GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR BEN FRANKLIN DINNER!

13 virtues - as defined by Ben Franklin

Here's how Franklin defined his virtues in the 18th century. Your circle can update them for life today.

- 1 TEMPERANCE**
Eat not to dullness and drink not to elevation.
- 2 SILENCE**
Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself. Avoid trifling conversation.
- 3 ORDER**
Let all your things have their places. Let each part of your business have its time.
- 4 RESOLUTION**
Resolve to perform what you ought. Perform without fail what you resolve.
- 5 FRUGALITY**
Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself: i.e. Waste nothing.
- 6 INDUSTRY**
Lose no time. Be always employed in something useful. Cut off all unnecessary actions.
- 7 SINCERITY**
Use no hurtful deceit. Think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
- 8 JUSTICE**
Wrong none, by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
- 9 MODERATION**
Avoid extremes. Forebear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
- 10 CLEANLINESS**
Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes or habitation.
- 11 CHASTITY**
Rarely use venery but for health or offspring; Never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
- 12 TRANQUILITY**
Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
- 13 HUMILITY**
Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

