Ben Franklin Dinner Toolkit

Everything You’ll Need for Your Ben Franklin Dinner (other than the food, that is!)
Ben Franklin Dinners are part of a bold initiative that bring us together to explore two simple goals:

1. To help us improve ourselves
2. To help us improve our world

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

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

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.
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.

**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.

**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.

**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
benfrankincircles@gmail.com.

IF YOU TOOK PICTURES
Share them on social. Use #benfrankincircles or tag us @benfrankincircles

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.**

*Lose no time.  
Be always employed in something useful.  
Cut off all unnecessary actions.*

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GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR BEN FRANKLIN DINNER!
TEMPERANCE
Eat not to dullness and drink not to elevation.

SILENCE
Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself. Avoid trifling conversation.

ORDER
Let all your things have their places. Let each part of your business have its time.

RESOLUTION
Resolve to perform what you ought. Perform without fail what you resolve.

FRUGALITY
Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself: i.e. Waste nothing.

INDUSTRY
Lose no time. Be always employed in something useful. Cut off all unnecessary actions.

SINCERITY
Use no hurtful deceit. Think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.

JUSTICE
Wrong none, by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.

MODERATION
Avoid extremes. Forebear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.

CLEANLINESS
Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes or habitation.

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.

TRANQUILITY
Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

HUMILITY
Imitate Jesus and Socrates.