



Dave Hall Photography

# WELCOME HOME: WELCOME WORDS

If you've ever been hospitalized, you know it can be a relief to return home. But for many people, returning home also brings challenges, especially if they are immobilized, without in-home care, or in need of reliable, healthy food. In these situations, the words "Welcome Home" can literally make a world of difference to a patient's at-home recovery.

Nina Redman (pictured above), Registered Dietitian and Food For Thought's Client Services Director, explains: "Welcome Home—Nutrition for Healing is Food For Thought's new program to provide healthy, healing food to qualified clients when they leave the hospital. Clients also can order freshly prepared soups and salads and participate in our cooking classes and congregate lunches."

**Food For Thought's health care partners love that Welcome Home fills an unmet need in Sonoma County: providing compassion and healing nutrition to discharged patients with serious illnesses who would otherwise go home without reliable food support.**

Welcome Home aims to ease patient suffering, decrease hospital readmissions, and reduce health care costs. To participate in the program, patients must be referred by a health care provider and meet simple nutrition risk criteria.

Upon discharge from a medical facility, eligible patients receive free nutritional counseling and three months of free groceries, which they can pick up or have delivered. The program provides frozen meals and supplemental nutrition drinks when medically necessary.

"We're really proud to offer this service to anyone in Sonoma County who is discharged and at risk for malnutrition," Nina says. "Our first client joined in November 2018, and by March 2019 we had already assisted 18 people. We have capacity to serve 200 people."

Nina emphasizes that Welcome Home helps people with various medical conditions, including diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart conditions, stroke, surgeries (e.g. back, knee, hip), and even traumatic injuries.

"Because we offer a wide variety of foods, we can medically tailor our offerings to each client" Nina says. "People can eat the food that meets their individual or cultural preferences, which ultimately helps them develop healthy, long-term eating habits."

# A MESSAGE FROM RON

Four years ago, Food For Thought made an important leap for our organization and our community: we expanded our mission to meet the nutritional needs of vulnerable people with illnesses in addition to HIV.



To learn more about this population, we conducted two studies in partnership with West County Health Centers, providing healthy food and nutritional education to 120 people being discharged from the hospital or living with chronic health conditions.

What we learned confirmed our experience that people really benefit from receiving our services—the healthy food, education about how to eat, and the love and compassion from our volunteers and staff. Those we served stayed healthier, and their health care costs were significantly lower because they were hospitalized less.

Working from what we learned, last November we created the **Welcome Home—Nutrition for Healing** program. Welcome Home will serve up to 200 of our neighbors

in need per year, after they are discharged from a hospital and are at risk of malnutrition. The referral process is simple, and clients have access to all of our comprehensive services for a three-month period.

With your help, this program will just be the beginning of what we can accomplish together in coming years. There are many more people in Sonoma County who need our services, and we are building our capacity so we can serve them. You can be a part of this essential work by volunteering, attending an event, or making a donation!

In service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron Karp".

Ron Karp, Executive Director

**“Those we served stayed healthier, and their health care costs were significantly lower because they were hospitalized less.”**

## WAYS TO GIVE

### MAKE A DONATION

A gift of \$100 provides healthy, chef-prepared soup to 37 clients. Make a contribution by cash, check, or credit card in the enclosed envelope and return to Food For Thought today.



### IRA CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION

**Do you own an IRA and are you age 70 ½ or older?** If so, you could make a tax-free charitable contribution to Food For Thought. By making a charitable contribution from your IRA, you can satisfy your required minimum distribution (RMD) amount without reporting additional income. **Please consult your tax professional or contact Food For Thought for more information.**



### LEAVE A LEGACY

What impact would you like to make on the world? By including Food For Thought in your will or trust, you can ensure that Sonoma County residents affected by HIV and other medical conditions will have plenty to eat well into the future. **For questions or suggested language, please contact your estate planning professional or contact Food For Thought.**



Contact Ron Karp, Executive Director, by email at [RonK@FFTfoodbank.org](mailto:RonK@FFTfoodbank.org) or phone at (707) 887-1647 x 105 to inquire about IRA charitable contributions or legacy gifts to Food For Thought.

*Food For Thought is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. Our Federal Tax ID is 68-0181095.*



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# NEW HEALTHY MENU

At the beginning of the year, we made improvements to our menu to ensure that all the food our clients receive from us has high nutritional value and contributes to their health and healing. Below is a list of all the new and healthier menu items available to our clients each week.

## MENU UPDATES

- ✓ Healthier cereals
- ✓ Exclusively whole grain breads
- ✓ More protein
- ✓ More fruits
- ✓ More vegetables
- ✓ Mrs. Dash seasoning mix
- ✓ Lower sodium soups
- ✓ Lower sodium turkey burgers
- ✓ Chopped and easy-to-prepare vegetables
- ✓ Loving Spoonful chili
- ✓ Loving Spoonful soup

**“I’m grateful that Food For Thought is offering new healthier items. I’ve always paid attention to things like sodium and am glad to see food with more fiber and less additives.”**  
**— Joseph, FFT client**

# VOLUNTEER WITH US

Food For Thought volunteers ensure that our clients receive the food they need to heal. Read about our volunteer openings below, then sign up online at [FFTfoodbank.org](http://FFTfoodbank.org) and join us!



## LOVING SPOONFUL

Volunteers in the Loving Spoonful Program assist our chef to prepare and package healthy and delicious soups, salads, and other easy-to-prepare food items for our clients. **Individuals with all levels of cooking experience are welcome to join our kitchen crew!** Volunteer shifts take place every Monday from 10am–12:30pm and 1–4pm.

## GARDEN

Under the direction of our Garden Manager, volunteers work to maintain and harvest our organic vegetable, fruit, and herb gardens. **This is a great opportunity to learn more about organic gardening and connect with nature.** Volunteer shifts are available on Wednesdays and Saturdays.



## FOOD DRIVES

Old or young, anyone can become a food drive volunteer! We hold food drives at local markets across Sonoma County almost every weekend of the year. In just 2-3 hours, you can help collect vital food donations for our neighbors in need. **Find a list of upcoming food drives at [FFTfoodbank.org/events-list](http://FFTfoodbank.org/events-list) and email [LivC@FFTfoodbank.org](mailto:LivC@FFTfoodbank.org) to sign up.**

# 20 YEARS of food + love

I've been a client and a volunteer at Food For Thought for 20 years. In the beginning, I really needed FFT's services. It was very hard to learn that I was HIV-positive, and I wasn't taking care of myself. I desperately needed food. But I also needed a community, and that's what I found at Food For Thought. I did every volunteer task there was—at the counter, stocking shelves, delivery driver, food drives, and helped at Calabash, a fundraising event.

Over the years, I've developed relationships with staff and volunteers. I was the only assistant when Nina (FFT's staff nutritionist) started her cooking class. I've also just come to FFT when I was depressed and needed to be around people who cared.



About five months ago, I was in the hospital. I was very dehydrated, had cramps in my legs, and my whole body was stiff. I felt like I was working on 40 percent. Nina came to

see me in the hospital, and after I got out she met with me to talk about my diet and making a meal plan to help me stay healthy.

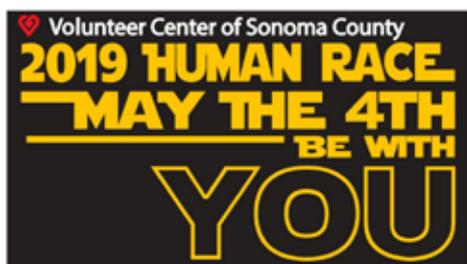
I'm almost 60 now, and I depend on FFT's nutrition services. I come here every Saturday to get my food for the week and to see all the staff and volunteers. I'm so appreciative and honestly feel that if there was anything based on goodness, Food For Thought is it.



**"I desperately needed food. But I also needed a community, and that's what I found at Food For Thought."**

**— Noah,  
FFT client**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR



**SATURDAY,  
MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>**

Use the force and walk or run with Food For Thought in the easy 3K Human Race! Join our lively team and help us raise \$20,000 for our clients at this year's event.

**For more information, please email [DominiqueF@FFTfoodbank.org](mailto:DominiqueF@FFTfoodbank.org).**



**SATURDAY,  
JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>**

Join us for Sonoma County Pride in downtown Santa Rosa. Food For Thought will be walking in the parade at noon and have an exhibitor booth in Old Courthouse Square from noon to 6pm. **If you would like to walk with us or volunteer for a shift at our booth, please email [HelenM@FFTfoodbank.org](mailto:HelenM@FFTfoodbank.org).**



**SUNDAY,  
AUGUST 11<sup>TH</sup>**

From the founder's kitchen table to Our Long Table. Our new signature event will include refreshing summer wines, a multi-course sit-down dinner, and a live auction.

Who will you bring to the table? Tickets coming soon. **Please contact [DominiqueF@FFTfoodbank.org](mailto:DominiqueF@FFTfoodbank.org) with any questions or to become a sponsor.**



**CONNECT WITH US:**



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