



CHRIS'S STORY: The Road to Resilience

As a Licensed Vocational Nurse, Chris spent most of her adult life helping others who were sick. But in 2010, she suffered a stroke and nearly lost her ability to speak. After years of speech therapy, Chris has regained her speech, but still has a difficult time translating her thoughts into words.

Having already suffered a stroke, Chris was at risk of having another, and was referred to Food For Thought. Our services were a constant source of support for Chris as she faced eviction, depression, and malnutrition.

"In January, I received a notice of eviction and was told I had to leave my home of 30 years. I couldn't believe it and just started to spiral out of control. I became very depressed and hardly ate."

A few months later, Chris found housing and made the

emotionally difficult move to a new home. But not long after, Chris fell and was in the hospital for four days.

"I didn't suffer any major injuries from my fall, but the doctors diagnosed me with failure to thrive, which at the time, described the state I was in. I weighed 85 pounds, was eating mostly sweets and not much real food, and just stayed inside all day."

After Chris was discharged from the hospital, she met Food For Thought's Registered Dietitian, Nina, who immediately contacted her doctor about putting Chris on Ensure and connecting her to other supportive services.

"Thanks to Food For Thought, I was put on Ensure to help me gain some weight back. They also brought me oatmeal, eggs, soup, bread and other easy to eat food."

Over the next few months, Food For Thought staff regularly checked in on Chris and connected her to a behavioral health nurse who helped Chris with her depression.

"I'm doing much better now. I'm at a much healthier weight of 104 pounds and I've started taking Pilates classes."

Looking back on this year, Chris smiles and feels grateful for all those who helped her along the way. She attributes her resilience to Food For Thought.

"Food For Thought saved my life. They helped me get Ensure and the healthy food I needed to change my diet and lifestyle. They also checked up on me to see how I was doing and supported me when I needed it most."

Data from our recent client survey showed that **31% of our clients struggle with depression or anxiety**, which is one of the top five diagnoses of Food For Thought clients. Having access to and eating healthy food can greatly improve our clients' overall health, emotionally as well as physically.

A MESSAGE FROM RON

While the holiday season is a festive time for most of us, it can be difficult for our clients. Those with diabetes, heart conditions, and other diseases that require restricted diets have to deal with many temptations. The holidays are also difficult for people with anxiety and depression, which is common for many people with chronic and life-threatening illnesses.



sponsors the holiday café, where we have lots of finger food and a hearty lunch for the entire week before Christmas.

We continue to need your help to make all of this happen. You can volunteer at an upcoming food drive, help in the food bank, or be an ambassador at Dining Out For Life. You can also make a donation or support us financially in the many ways available this season.

I am very thankful for your support—as volunteers and donors—providing healthy meals and groceries for those in need, not just during the holidays, but all year long.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Karp".

Ron Karp, Executive Director

Fortunately, the Food For Thought family, which includes all of you, responds in a big way to help our clients have the best possible holiday season. With your support, we provide a choice of turkey, whole chicken, or Tofurkey (with all of the fixings) for both Thanksgiving and Christmas. In December, we also provide grocery store gift cards for clients, and with the help of the giving tree, presents for our clients' children.

One of our clients and his partner decorate a Christmas tree in our lobby that would be the envy of Macy's. We have an annual appearance by Santa for the children and the grown up kids. And, every year our board of directors

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WARM HEARTS Holiday Checklist

What can you do to warm hearts this holiday season? Here are three simple things you and your family can do to make a difference for your neighbors in need:



MAKE A GENEROUS GIFT

Every \$150 gift to Food For Thought provides an entire month's worth of healthy food including fresh produce, meat and eggs, cheese, healthy grains and more to someone living with HIV or another serious illness.



VOLUNTEER AT A HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Volunteering at a Food For Thought food drive is fun and easy! In just 2-3 hours you can help collect vital food donations for our sick neighbors in need. Please look at our list of food drive dates and locations at FFTfoodbank.org/events-list/ and email LivC@FFTfoodbank.org to sign up.



HOLIDAY FACEBOOK FUNDRAISER

In the spirit of the holidays, invite your friends and family to make a donation to Food For Thought through a Facebook Fundraiser. Visit [Facebook.com/fftfoodbank/](https://www.facebook.com/fftfoodbank/) and click on the Fundraisers tab. Then follow the three simple steps to set up your holiday fundraiser. Questions? Contact Dominique at (707) 887-1647 x 126.



GIFTS That Give Back

30TH ANNIVERSARY HOLIDAY WINE BOXES

Food For Thought is celebrating its 30th Anniversary with an incredible Holiday Wine Box collection! Each wine box contains one bottle of red and one white from renowned local wineries including Ron Rubin, Hafner, Iron Horse, Dry Creek, and more. **Wine boxes are available December 4–15 for a donation of \$45, or \$40 if you reserve 10 or more boxes. Reserve yours today by calling (707) 887-1647.**



HOLIDAY CARDS

Send more than a card to your family and friends this holiday season! Food For Thought will send personalized holiday cards to all the important people on your holiday list for a donation of \$10 per card. Inside each card, we'll explain that you have made a donation to Food For Thought in their honor. **Please call (707) 887-1647 to place an order for holiday cards today.**



SHOP AT FOOD FOR THOUGHT ANTIQUES

Find the perfect gift at Food For Thought Antiques! Plus, enjoy 20% off storewide November 23–25. All proceeds from the store support Food For Thought's life-saving nutritional services. **Shop daily between 11am–5pm at 2701 Gravenstein Hwy. S. in Sebastopol.**



FOOD for the Holidays

For Thanksgiving and Christmas (or another winter holiday) our clients receive everything they need to make a full holiday meal for their family and friends. Plus, each client receives a gift certificate to a local grocery store. **Below is a list of all the items we provide to our clients during the holidays.**

“I’m so grateful for the extra food I receive at the holidays. It means I can have a good holiday meal.”
–Diane, FFT client

HOLIDAY MEAL LIST

- ✓ Holiday Meat: Turkey, Beef, Pork Butt, Whole Chicken, or Turkey
- ✓ Gravy
- ✓ Stuffing
- ✓ Red Potatoes
- ✓ Yams/Sweet Potatoes
- ✓ Onion Soup Mix
- ✓ Celery
- ✓ Onions
- ✓ Green Beans
- ✓ Cream of Mushroom Soup
- ✓ Fried Onions
- ✓ Cranberry Sauce
- ✓ Broth
- ✓ Rice
- ✓ Diced Tomatoes
- ✓ Dried Chiles
- ✓ Pumpkin Pie Mix
- ✓ Canned Pumpkin
- ✓ Evaporated Milk
- ✓ Pie Crust
- ✓ Apple Cider



VOLUNTEERS Make an Impact

On a daily basis, our dedicated volunteers are delivering healthy food to our homebound neighbors across Sonoma County, harvesting produce from our organic garden, collecting nonperishable items at food drives, and so much more! We appreciate each one of you and the huge impact that your service makes in the lives of people living with HIV and other serious illnesses, right here in Sonoma County. Each year Food For Thought chooses two individuals whose contributions of time and heart rise above the ordinary.

BARBARA WISHARD

Volunteer of the Year

Over the last year, Barbara has gone above and beyond to help our clients. She volunteers in the food bank on Mondays and Wednesdays and helps our Registered Dietitian with cooking and nutrition education classes twice a month. Barbara also volunteers at

special events, writes thank you notes to our generous donors, and helps fill in wherever she can. Thank you for helping to feed our neighbors in need, Barbara!



“Food For Thought is my new family. To be one of the dedicated, hardworking and eclectic mix of fantastic volunteers is tremendously important and rewarding. I was humbled and honored to be recognized this year. I promise there is more to come. Thank you all for your graciousness and inspiration.” — Barbara

ERIC KELLER

Dennison Award

Eric has been a Food For Thought volunteer since 2002 and has provided more than 2,000 hours of service to our organization. Eric started volunteering in the food bank, and today he delivers food to our homebound clients in Cloverdale and volunteers at Food For Thought Antiques twice a week. Eric is the recipient of the 2018 Dennison Award, from Kathy and John Dennison, honoring his 16 years of service to Food For Thought. Thank you for helping so many in our community, Eric!



“Volunteering at Food For Thought has been one way for me to cope with my diagnosis, while still helping our local HIV/AIDS community in combatting the effects of this disease. Volunteering at FFT and the antique store has given me an incredible opportunity to contribute to a great cause, to feel part of this wonderful, caring community, and, in the process, to make some lifelong friendships. My most sincere and heartfelt thanks for such an incredible honor.” — Eric

DINING OUT FOR LIFE

SONOMA COUNTY

Thursday, November 29, 2018

Dine out at 65+ local restaurants on Thursday, November 29th and 25 to 50% of your purchase will go directly to Food For Thought.

for the list of participating restaurants please visit
WWW.FFTFOODBANK.ORG/DINING-OUT-FOR-LIFE

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Gold Fork Sponsors

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