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Make Slow-Cook Applesauce for a Tasty Fall Treat

It wasn't exactly a pretty picture when an unexpected snow-fall blanketed the Twin Cities on a weekend a few years back. We simply weren't ready for the cold temps and a whiteout of fall colors at the very same time that our World Series hopes were dashed when the Yankees triumphed

over the Twins with a three-game sweep.

Since we were feeling and acting noticeably glum in our household, it was a moment to step up to the plate with the familiar adage that I had repeated to the kids when they were young and the lemon of life had just turned sour on their hopes and dreams: "OK, you guys, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade."

But we don't grow lemons in Minnesota, so we proceeded to do the next best thing. We rooted through the closet for mismatched mittens and hats, went out in the backyard to our spindly apple tree, picked our last 10 apples from snow-laden branches, and collectively mused, "So, when life gives you 10 juicy apples, turn them into applesauce!" And this is exactly what we did.

For a change of pace, we put aside our traditional stovetop recipe and instead sliced and diced all 10 apples and tossed them in the slow cooker with some water, sugar, and a dash of cinnamon. It was a success!

As the apples sputtered and gurgled to their own rhythm, the sweet and fragrant apple-cinnamon aroma permeated every room of our house. As for life lessons,

once we put a positive spin on the situation, we enjoyed cozy indoor time together, and we were no doubt the better for it.

You don't need a "when life gives you lemons" moment to reap the benefits of this yummy and aromatic recipe. Just count up 10 apples, and you're on your way to a special fall treat. Here's what you'll need to turn the apples into 5-6 cups of tasty homemade applesauce:

- ◆ 10 large apples, peeled, cored and sliced, or cut into chunks
 - ◆ 1/2 cup water
 - ◆ 1/4 to 1/2 cup sugar
 - ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon w Pinch of nutmeg (optional)
- Stir ingredients together in a slow cooker. It should be about 3/4 full. Set on the low setting and cook for about 8 hours. Mash with a potato masher before serving for a smoother mixture, if you wish.

Enjoy on hot breakfast cereal, granola, pancakes and waffles in the morning, as a snack in the afternoon, or over vanilla ice cream for dessert after the evening meal.

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