



Podcast Script
Season 1 / Episode 10 -
[Mac & Cheese / Mother Sauces / Failure as a fuel]
Record Date: 12/9/24

Opening

What's up my chefs, today we talk mac & cheese, mother sauces and using failure as a fuel. I am Mark Grigsby, your chef and guide through this experience and this... is the incrEDIBLE Discourse.

Introduction

Hello and welcome! I am Mark Grigsby and this episode is a very special episode of the IncrEDIBLE Discourse. It's our 10th episode! And you may ask.. What makes that so special? Well because statistically speaking, only about 20% of all podcasts make it to episode 10. So we're onto something here I think... anyway, it's a big deal to me because I started this project not knowing where it would end up and even though we're only 10 episodes deep, we've already beaten the odds that 80% haven't. I've never hosted a podcast or even created one so I wasn't sure what to expect, or if I would be good at it or if I would even stay motivated to keep going, but here we are talking on a 10th episode. That's pretty incredible... then again, this IS the incrEDIBLE Discourse we're talking about right?

I enjoy doing the show... I really do. It gives me a chance to highlight some really good recipes that I hope inspire cooks from all walks of life and I get to teach a little bit about food and techniques. Putting the shows together isn't always a walk in the park, but I get just as excited after I get an episode planned out and recorded as I did when I first started.

Since I started this show, it's given me a chance to reflect on myself as a chef and turn that into lessons and stories that I hope all of you can relate to... or at least enjoy. Every episode's script is designed to educate, motivate and influence you into being a better chef or cook than you were before you found my ass in your radio.

Anyhow, let's get into this week's session because I have a really good episode cooked up for today. We're going to talk about a relatively easy, simple and well known dish: Mac & Cheese. We're going to talk about the mother sauces.. What they are.. Why they're important and explore how they're made, the derivatives of those sauces and how we can apply them in the kitchen. Then we're going to talk about using failure as a fuel and the silver lining behind fucking up.

Just like in all of our episodes, we do a little culinary journey to the origins of the dish we're recreating today, so get your shit, we're taking that familiar trip back to Europe!

The idea of pasta and cheese can be traced all the back to medieval Europe where it was a simple baked dish. An Italian dish called "macaroni *with* cheese" was described in a manuscript where fresh pasta was combined with melted cheese and butter. Pasta al forno was a widely adopted dish, made with various types of cheeses and sometimes enriched with a bechamel, which is a mother sauce... see where I'm going here right? We're going to tie all of this shit together by the time we reach the end, I promise.. Italy's contribution of pasta and cheese, especially varieties like parmesan and ricotta laid the foundation of the mac & cheese that we all know and love today.

The evolution of the dish continued in Renaissance Europe, particularly in France and England, where the wealthy enjoyed creamy pasta and cheese. In the 18th century, bechamel became a key component of the dish, contributing to its creaminess and richness. We're going to dive deeper into this in our second segment, but just for context here... bechamel is 1 of the 5 mother sauces and is made basically by combining a roux with milk to make a creamy sauce. If you're not sure what a roux is.. You're gonna have to wait until we're done in the kitchen and get into the classroom and we're going to expand on what it is, what it does and why it does.

The dish became popular in the US in the 18th and 19th centuries. During his time as the ambassador to France, Thomas Jefferson discovered the dish and brought it back to America. Thomas Jefferson.. You know... the dude on the 2 dollar bill... our 3rd president... He is often credited with introducing macaroni to the country and his mansion at Monticello featured a version of mac and cheese served with parmesan or gruyere and pasta.

In the 19th century recipes began appearing in cookbooks. The Virginia Housewife by Mary Randolph was one of the first American cookbooks and it featured a recipe for cheese and pasta to be combined in a baked casserole.

By the mid 20th century, mac & cheese was firmly established as an American comfort food, especially with the rise of processed cheese. Kraft.. The one we all know in the blue box for \$.75 at the grocery store, who is also a major American food company, introduced the box mac & cheese that we are all familiar with in 1937. The goal was to make the dish more affordable and accessible during the great depression. Kraft revolutionized the dish, making it a household staple particularly in the post WWII era.

Today, mac and cheese is enjoyed worldwide in various forms. The dish has expanded to include a variety of cheeses and add-ins and remains a symbol of comfort and indulgence in American cuisines.

Now before we get into the actual recipe, I wanna talk about a sort of "secret ingredient" that we're going to use here. *Sodium Citrate*. Sodium Citrate is a food additive and preservative that is used for flavoring, acidity control, melting and spherification. Sodium citrate is the sodium salt

of citric acid also known as sour salt. This is used to enhance texture and prevent curdling which in turn allows you to use virtually any cheese you want. Cheeses that don't melt well or turn gritty when melted are now velvety and have a creamy consistency due to this ingredient. If you've ever tried to melt cheddar into milk and noticed that it's very gritty or kinda breaks, this is why. Sodium citrate is an emulsifying salt that helps bind the cheese's fats and proteins, preventing it from separating or becoming grainy when melted. It's like a cheat sheet to making cheese sauce with any cheese and getting that smooth and silky texture that you're aiming for. This product can be purchased on Amazon, but you can also make it at home if you're feeling froggy enough. I'll leave links in the show notes for the actual sodium citrate and also the shit you need to make this.

Full disclosure... I just recently became an Amazon affiliate.. so all of the links I post for equipment to these recipes now help support the show directly. So... if you wanna support the show, click the links and get you something nice. As always we appreciate your support, it helps keep the show going!

Ok here's my Bill Nye moment...

Use 74g of citric acid, 97g of baking soda or sodium bicarbonate and a ½ cup of water. In a small pot, add the water, then the bicarbonate and whisk until completely dissolved. Then add the citric acid and whisk the shit out of it. Now here's a little tip.. Use a taller pot.. No, not a stock pot.. Let's be fucking reasonable here.. But a pot that is somewhat taller than the mixture because the chemical reaction you will be dealing with here fizzes and foams and could rise over the top lip of your pot and make a mess. This reaction is caused by the release of carbon dioxide. Whisk until the liquid is completely clear. Now you could use this at this point in its liquid form, or you could turn the heat on extremely low and reduce it until all of the water has evaporated and turned into a paste. Mash the paste to cover the entire base of the pot evenly and cut the heat off. The residual heat will turn this paste into a powder allowing an easier storage and shelf life.

Now let's talk about this recipe...

I like this recipe because it's creamy, versatile and goes with a lot of proteins as a great accompaniment. It can be made with just about any cheese or any pasta and can be made on the stove top or the oven. You can add proteins into it and it pairs well with red wines, white wines, and even champagne. You can literally be as creative as you want with it. This can be made with a variety of cheeses. I chose cheddar and gruyere because I like the sharpness and saltiness of this particular combination. They also melt really well and give that creamy texture that you look for when you eat mac & cheese.

This recipe contains the sodium citrate and also a roux. A roux is a thickening agent that is made with equal parts fat and flour; when combined with milk makes the mother sauce bechamel which is the base of this entire dish.

Now with the addition of sodium citrate to the recipe, a roux is not necessarily a must, but instead optional depending on the application you need. If you are making a baked mac and cheese, which we are doing here today, I would opt for the roux + sodium citrate method. This method is thicker, more hearty and substantial, extremely stable and stays thick and creamy when reheated... but the cheese flavor is slightly muted because of the roux.. But we're going to fix this by adding more cheese on top.

On a side note, The sodium citrate method without the roux is lighter and more fluid, but not as thick or heavy and more velvety and smooth. It also remains creamy and smooth when reheated because it is equally as stable. I would recommend this method for a stove top application.

Let's talk pasta...

The choice of pasta affects texture, sauce retention and the overall experience of the mac and cheese. Obviously, elbow mac macaroni is best for both sauce options as it traps the sauce in its curved shape... That's why macaroni has been the favorite since the dish's inception. Cavatappi is my personal favorite because the sauce clings to it due to its shape and the ridges in the pasta. Penne and campanelle are also really good options. Today we will be using cavatappi... I like the corkscrew look of it; I think it elevates the presentation of the entire dish.

Topic 1 - Baked Cavatappi in Cheddar Gruyere Mornay Sauce with Savory Bread Crumbs

Yield: 4 Hearty Portions

Time to chef it up guys.. Let's go!

So this may be one of the easiest recipes to knock down.. It's super filling and a definite crowd pleaser in any setting. It's one of the ultimate comfort dishes any time of year. And because we're going to present this dish family style it will yield 4 nice size portions or 4-6 side portions. Eat this shit with a crowd and let them shower your ass with compliments and love.

Just like in every episode, we're going to go through the equipment and ingredients you're going to need to make this amazing dish.

Equipment:

Let's start with today's amazon shopping cart... ol jeff is gonna hook you up on the 2 day..

You're going to need two 4qt pots for this one. 1 for boiling your pasta and the other for making your mornay sauce. We're also going to need a colander to strain the pasta, a whisk, a wooden spoon and your measuring equipment.. Spoons and cups.

Now we're going to need a cheese grater and here's why. You know when you buy already shredded cheese in the packs at the grocery store or when you order it in the bags from your purveyors and it comes with that powder substance on the outside? Well that substance is either cellulose or corn starch and for the application that we will be using it for, this is not good. It affects how the cheese melts and as you can see from the aforementioned conversation about needing the sodium citrate, you can see that we don't need anything else working against us when trying to achieve that creamy velvety texture in our cheese sauce. So.. how do we remedy this? We grate the fucking cheese off the block. And you'll notice that when you do this the cheese is already creamy to the touch. A pinch of the sodium citrate and you've performed a near miracle. Chef is over here teaching you how to be a wizard. You're welcome.

Anyway, back to the shopping cart...

I'm going to need a 2qt casserole dish to bake and present this in, an 8 oz ladle, red handled spatula and a small skillet to make those savory bread crumbs that will provide a good texture and flavor to the dish. Now let's talk ingredients.

Ingredients:

In your shopping cart today, you don't need too many things to pull this off. Most of these things are items that most people keep in their house in their pantries and refrigerators.

Let's start with what you will need to make the mac and mornay.

12oz dried cavatappi pasta or whatever pasta you choose
2T whole butter
2T ap flour
2½C milk at room temperature
2C sharp cheddar cheese grated
1½C gruyere cheese grated
½t salt
½t ground mustard
½t smoked paprika
1.5t sodium citrate

Not too many things to make this right?

Now to kick it up a little bit we're going to add the bread crumbs to it. You don't have to do this if you don't want to but I mean it does elevate this dish by a mile and all the shit to make it is cheap.

For the bread crumbs I'm gonna need:

1C panko bread crumbs
2T whole butter, melted

¼C parmesan, grated
1t fresh thyme, leaves only chopped finely
1ea garlic clove, microplaned
zest of half a lemon
Salt & fresh cracked pepper
Drizzle of white truffle oil

And that's it.. Now we're ready to cook so let's get in it.

Method:

Alright.. Before I get started here, I'm going to preheat my oven to 350 degrees.

While that's going I'm going to make the bread crumbs first because it can be put to the side until I'm ready to use it. So.. to do this I'm going to heat the small skillet over medium heat and toast the panko until golden brown. I'm going to constantly shake the pan to keep them moving. This is kinda a crucial step.. Why? Because 1, you don't want to burn your panko and they toast and burn super quick; second, I don't want an uneven toast either. Everything has to be even. After probably 4-5 minutes you'll see them start to turn golden and the smell of toast will fill the air.

Next I'm going to add in everything else EXCEPT the truffle oil and stir with the wooden spoon to incorporate. This could clump up after adding, so in the same motion as I am stirring it and I'm going to continue to shake the pan and break up any clumps that come up. Once everything has come together, drizzle the truffle oil and toss or shake to incorporate. Continue to stir a shake the pan to toast out any remaining moisture. I'm going to remove this from the heat and cool on my counter top until I'm ready to use it.

Now we make the sauce.. Now you could do all of these things at once if you're confident in the recipe and technique necessary to pull it off. If you're not, then go one by one. I'll explain it that way so that there is an explanation of each step without confusing you by jumping back and forth.

In the first 4qt pot on medium heat, I'm going to add my butter and melt it slowly. I don't want it to break, just melt. Once melted I'll add in the flour and whisk it well to incorporate. I'm going to keep whisking it for about 1 to 2 minutes to cook the flour out. This is an important step because you don't want your sauce to taste starchy and the only way to do that is by continuously stirring it and cooking it. It will start to turn golden brown and smell nutty, we're at the blonde roux stage which is where I want to be. Now I gradually add my room temperature milk in while whisking ensuring that there are no clumps of roux floating in it. We add milk at room temperature to help keep the roux from clumping up.. That's your pro tip for today. Room temperature milk. Now we're keeping this on medium heat and it's going to start to warm up, we don't want to boil this, we want just a bare simmer or right under and cook it this way for about 3-4 minutes. During this time you will notice that it begins to seize and thicken up, this is a good thing. We just made 1 of

the mother sauces.. The bechamel. We're going to get into this a little later, but this is the base of how you make it. It's really that simple.

Now we add our secret weapon.. The sodium citrate. We're going to whisk that in until fully dissolved and distributed evenly. Now I'm going to lower the heat to low and start gradually adding in the shredded cheeses, one handful at a time, whisking until melted and smooth. Now to finish it, I add the seasonings and whisk again to incorporate. We should have a nice and smooth cheese sauce. Set this to the side until we're ready to use it.

Alright.. Time to make the pasta. I'm going to fill the second 4qt pot with salted water and put on the range and put it on high. This pot will be to boil my pasta. Now how much salt do you ask? Salt like the ocean. Pasta is bland as shit so it needs a lot of help in the salt department. I never measure how much but if I had to put a number on it, I'm going to say about 2T of kosher salt. I don't know about iodized table salt.. I don't use it, kosher salt has a better flavor and is what I've used forever now.

Once the water in your pot is rolling add the cavatappi in and stir it with the wooden spoon. Set a timer for 10 minutes and let it go. Once the timer goes off, strain it in the colander, reserving about 1C of this pasta water just in case your sauce is too thick.

Now add the pasta to the the sauce and mix with the wooden spoon to incorporate. If the sauce is too thick add a splash of the pasta water a little at a time until you get to the thickness you want. Remember you have to bake this and cook it again, so it's going to get thick again.

Now I'm going to grease the casserole dish and pour the mac and cheese into it. I use the red handled spatula to make sure I get every little bit of the sauce I just busted my ass for and to spread the pasta evenly coast to coast to coast. Almost done guys.. Last step...

I top it with my bread crumbs and bake uncovered for about 15-20 minutes until the mixture is bubbly and the panko is golden brown.

I remove it from the oven and let stand for a good 10 minutes before I dig in. It's going to be hot.. Don't rush in. Only fools rush in. We know that song.

I plated mine family style in the casserole dish, but you could elevate this dish by serving it in individual ramekins or even those expensive little skillets. You could also upgrade this dish by elevating your ingredients. Changing the cheese is probably the most obvious method; use aged comte, beaufort, aged white cheddar, fontina or taleggio. All of them have a different flavor that is distinct. Shit, you could probably even mix and match some of these cheeses. You could also infuse your bechamel with bay leaves, garlic or even nutmeg before adding in your cheese to boost the flavor. Try folding in other ingredients like lobster, mushrooms, short rib, chicken or even truffle to make an impression. And don't forget the wine! This recipe pairs really well with a creamy chardonnay, and aromatic viognier, a light bodied pinot noir or beaujolais or even champagne. It's really that versatile. It's really just a vessel that can be transformed into

something really special.. And if you're in a restaurant.. The higher the transformation the more you can charge.. And making money is the name of the game.

I hope you are able to pull this recipe off; it's pretty easy and an impressive dish when you're entertaining. Send me photos of your work or variations or whatever you added in to beef it up on theincrediblediscourse.com. All of the recipes we've made so far are there for your reference and if you need help or have a question or just wanna show off your work.. You can find us there as well..

Now that our bellies are full... it's time to fill our minds.. And you know what that means.. It's time for "Food for Thought".. Or what I like to call Pro Tips from a Chef's Lips.

And that brings us to the first topic of the show... mother sauces.

By the way.. Like my new sound bites? Trying to give a little more flair to the show. lol.

Topic 2 - Mother Sauces

But before we get into the actual sauce work here.. It's important to dissect the roux.... The various types of them and what we use them. And only 3 of the 5 mother sauces actually use a roux in case you we're wondering.

Let's begin with defining what a roux is first...

A roux is a thickening agent made by cooking equal parts of fat and flour together until it reaches a desired color and has a smooth, paste-like consistency. It's a culinary essential that's used as a base for sauces, soups and stews.

Now there are 4 different types of roux and they are all used for different purposes. All rouxs are made using the 1:1 ratio of fat and flour. A white roux is cooked for the shortest amount of time, but has the most thickening power. Cooking the white roux a little longer changes the color to a tan color.. We call this blonde in the culinary world. After cooking the roux to this point, you begin the stages of nuttiness in flavor and smell. The blonde roux would have a nutty smell and a slight nutty flavor. The next roux is called a brown roux. We cook this for even longer than the blonde roux which results in an even nuttier flavor, but has less thickening power because cooking flour and fat begins to break down the starch molecules in the flour, which is essential to thickening. The final stage is the dark brown roux. This roux is used in a lot of creole cooking, in dishes like gumbo, etouffee and jambalaya. It has the most intense nutty flavor of all the roux, but also the very least in thickening power. This roux is used more for the flavor than for the thickening power, which is why when you make gumbo or etouffee you usually use okra, sassafras or gumbo file powder to get that thick consistency.

Now that we had a little lesson on what a roux is.. Let's dive into how this pertains to the mother sauces..

First let's define a mother sauce and then we'll blend it all together.

The term mother sauce is used because these sauces act as the foundational "parent" sauces from which a variety of other sauces known as derivative sauces or "daughter sauces" are created. They provide a structured approach to sauce-making, allowing chefs to follow a system of creating sauces with a consistent starting point. From the 5 mother sauces, almost all classic sauces in western cuisine can be developed showcasing their parental influence in the culinary world. Auguste Escoffier, who formalized the concept of mother sauces, named them to emphasize their importance and foundational nature in classical French cuisine.

Knowing the five mother sauces is essential for chefs because they form the cornerstone of classic culinary training and technique. The foundational knowledge of mother sauces provides a strong base for understanding sauce-making techniques. By mastering them, chefs can build a repertoire of flavors and skills that apply to many dishes. They serve as a starting point for at least 50 different sauces, helping chefs create diverse dishes by modifying the base sauce. Mastering these sauces helps chefs produce consistent and high quality results, which is a crucial skill in professional kitchens where precision matters... and in the home kitchen it gives you options to switch it up and make something different without having to learn an entirely new recipe with entirely new ingredients.. You have a base and with a slight modification in most cases, you have an entirely different sauce for your dish. With a solid understanding of the mother sauces, chefs can experiment and innovate, creating unique variations and adapting traditional recipes to suit modern tastes. The mother sauces are a chef's toolkit for creating flavors, elevating dishes and mastering the art of cuisine.

Now let me break down the mother sauces so that it's a little easier to remember the basics. From there, you can explore the daughter sauces on your own. There are too many to go over in one show, but providing you the base of each mother sauce is a great starting part.

Let's start with bechamel because that is what we used in the mac and cheese recipe we made earlier. Bechamel is really easy.. It's white roux and milk. Literally that's it.. 3 ingredients. Now of course you need to make it taste good and it will most definitely need salt. But the base of the sauce is just that: white roux + milk. Just like we did in the mac and cheese in the first segment of the show.. We built the roux first and then slowly whisked in our milk and then reduced... and that's it. So remember... white roux + milk = bechamel. And from bechamel you get a ton of daughter sauces like mornay, which is what we ended up making as the sauce for the mac and cheese. And we made this daughter sauce simply with the addition of cheese. You get Sauce soubise from adding pureed onions to bechamel, sauce nantua by adding crayfish butter and cream or sauce aurora by adding tomato puree. But all of these sauces all start with the same exact thing.. The bechamel. Know how to make bechamel and you indirectly know how to make about 30 mother sauces.

Now let's move on to veloute.. If you can remember bechamel.. Veloute is just as easy. Veloute is light or white stock + white roux. If you don't know what a light stock is it's simply a stock in

which nothing is roasted or cooked beforehand. You add all of the ingredients to a pot, add water and reduce. I dive deeper into that in one of the episodes before.. If you haven't listened to that one yet, shame on you for skipping through lol. Every episode is somewhat of a building block to the next.. So make sure you check out all of our episodes so you can be a culinary pirate ready to take over the world. So.. veloute is white stock + white roux.. A good example of this simple sauce would be your Thanksgiving day gravy. You would use turkey or chicken stock with a white or blonde roux. It's that simple. From veloute you get sauce allemande or parisienne by adding egg yolk and cream to it. Sauce normande, which is used for fish and seafood, is made with a fish stock veloute + egg yolk + cream and mushrooms. You see.. The base sauce takes you to many other variations that can really make your dishes delicious. Let's say you have chicken at home and you need to make dinner or you have a lot of chicken left in the restaurant and you need a special.. You could make sauce poulette by making a veloute and adding mushroom, parsley, lemon and butter. In most restaurants, you already have mushroom, parsley, lemon and butter on hand and if you're at home, these ingredients you either have or are super cheap to pick up. There are so many ways to make a quick, tasty sauce without having to spend loads of time or buy it out of a can or jar.. You know how I feel about cans and jars.. Yuck... gross.

Next we start a little more complex sauce. And complex doesn't necessarily mean difficult.. More like time consuming. Espagnole is a very rich mother sauce that takes time because you have to start with a dark stock.. Which if you listened to that episode that I mentioned before, you know that a dark stock takes considerably more time to make because you have to roast the bones and vegetables and then simmer the stock for hours at a time. But.. because you roasted the bones and vegetables you created more flavor.. A deeper flavor. An espagnole sauce has 3 components: brown stock + tomato paste + brown roux. Espagnole is usually used as a sauce for beef, poultry, pork and game meats as it's hearty and rich. From the base espagnole you get some of the classic derivatives. Bordelaise, which is amazing with beef, is made by reducing red wine and espagnole into a sauce. Sauce chasseur which is good for game meats and poultry is made by adding mushrooms to your bordelaise sauce. Notice how the base sauce creates the foundation for the daughter sauce that creates the foundation for the "granddaughter sauce" I guess you could call it. But if you didn't know how to make espagnole.. It would be a mission to make sauce chasseur. Knowing the mother sauces creates a world of creativity for all sorts of proteins.

The next 2 sauces contain no roux at all. The first of these 2 is sauce tomate or tomato sauce. This is probably the favorite mother sauce of all of them.. I mean who doesn't like spaghetti and meatballs or a really good chicken parmesan??? This sauce is made with tomatoes + mirepoix + stock and is reduced into a thick tomatoey goodness. We all remember what mirepoix is don't we? Ok excellent. From sauce tomate we get marinara, which is super popular in Italian cuisine, by adding garlic, onions and herbs. Need a good sauce for fish? Try sauce provençal by adding tomato sauce + garlic + herbs + olives and capers. It's a rich and tangy tomato sauce that is really good for white fish. Or how about enchiladas anyone? Salsa Roja is made with tomato sauce + chilies + onions + cilantro. Again the base sauce is what matters here. You gotta know how to make tomato sauce before you can even think about enchiladas..

The last mother sauce is considered the ultimate emulsification. And is regarded as such due to its delicate balance of egg yolks (which act as the emulsifier) and clarified butter, requiring precise temperature control and consistent whisking to achieve a smooth, stable sauce; making it a challenging but rewarding technique to master. Ever had eggs benedict? The traditional sauce that goes with it is hollandaise. Hollandaise is egg yolks + acid + clarified butter. One of my favorite sauces for beef is bearnaise and it's made by adding white vinegar, shallots, tarragon and chervil to hollandaise. It's thick and creamy and adds a nice touch to beef dishes. And hollandaise is one of those that can be difficult to master. If your clarified butter is too hot you end up making scrambled eggs... you have to keep it moving or it doesn't emulsify and it breaks easily. I guess that makes it the ultimate emulsification.

The mother sauces are super important for cooks at home and chefs professionally. It provides versatility and shows your skill in technique. Look up the daughter sauces and try to make the 5 base sauces. This will take your cooking to a whole other level. Trust me. Expand your toolkit. It's definitely worth it.

Boy this episode has really been a discourse huh?... Mark Grigsby's school of culinary. Maybe I should change the name... I don't know. Kidding.

Topic 3 - Failure as a Fuel

My last segment today focuses on learning. This topic can be for my home cooks but even more so for my professional cooks. Using failure as a fuel. Look.. failure is inevitable. We all fail.. Some more than others, but the reality is we all do.

Michael Jordan.. Which I'm going to assume everyone who is listening is familiar with has a quote that really rings in my mind when I fail. He says:

"I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life.. That is why I succeed."

And Michael Jordan is the greatest ever in the NBA... if he's failed that many times and is successful your ass can be too.

Mistakes teach techniques; every failure reveals a gap in technique or knowledge, providing a chance to learn and refine skills. Trial and error builds mastery. Culinary excellence often requires experimentation, and failure is part of the process of discovering what works and what doesn't.

Failure builds resilience and determination... It toughens the mindset. The high-pressure environment of the kitchen is challenging, and failure teaches chefs how to adapt, stay calm

under pressure and persevere. Recovering from failure fosters a “never give up” attitude, inspiring chefs to tackle challenges with confidence.

Mistakes also spark creativity and reinforce flexibility. A failed recipe could lead to a breakthrough idea or unexpected flavor combination. Did you know that many iconic dishes like tarte tatin or chocolate chip cookies resulted from failure that chefs turned into signature creations? Failure forces chefs to think on their feet, adapt quickly and sometimes even pivot to completely new methods or approaches.

Experiencing failure reminds chefs that mastery is a journey, not a destination and that there is always room to improve. It provides a sense of humility and perspective which is something that chefs lose sight of as they grow larger and larger in this industry. It fosters camaraderie, trust and collective improvement among your team.. I always tell my brigades.. We win together.. And we lose together. It's not a 1 man show, it's definitely a team effort from ticket to ticket and station to station.

And at the very least mistakes reinforce passion and commitment. True passion shines through in how someone reacts to failure. Overcoming that failure and achieving success reinforces the joy of what we do.. Creating.. The satisfaction of perfecting a technique and love for the craft.

We can take a lesson from children here as well.. Something I have learned to do from time to time. A few weeks ago my middle son came home with a not so great grade on a test he took the week before. When he approached me about it, he had every excuse in the world why he got it. He said that he thought he did well and that he thought that he got all of them right and he doesn't understand why he got the grade he did. All the usual dialog that goes with it when children do not perform to your expectations.. But as the conversation grew deeper and we talked about the importance of scoring high and achieving the results that we both wanted, I began to understand a larger picture of what was going on. He was upset that he failed this test.. He wasn't upset that I could potentially be upset with him.. I mean, I'm sure he was slightly scared of the consequences, but as we explored past achievements and celebrated him on all the things that he has done, he began to feel disappointed in himself because he knew he could do it. The longer the conversation carried out I could see that inside his head he was retracing his steps and trying to figure out where he went wrong. He promised me that the next test he would do better. And so I waited.. And 2 weeks later he came home with an “B” on the test. But the lesson here is he took the time to figure out where he went wrong.. He thought of it in a different perspective.. Drew up a new plan and went out and got a better result. Sure there is room for improvement.. But guess what? There is in everything that we do guys. That's the point of this entire segment. And by the way.. The kid is 10 years old.. If he can reset, retool, attack and be successful.. Surely your ass can too. My oldest daughter is the same exact way.. She would call me literally crying her eyes out because she didn't do well on a test.. And this disappointment didn't go away overnight. She would literally mull over this shit until it was time to get her revenge. She would study and write for days.. She wouldn't even answer my calls or texts.. She would literally lock herself away until she knew she had her shit together. Needless to say, she graduated high school at the top of her class.. Signed up in the army reserves and

has a job that you can get if you test high enough to get it. Perseverance. Dedication. It's setting your mind to something and not stopping until you get there. Cooking and kitchen work is the same way.

Use setbacks, mistakes, or shortcomings as opportunities to grow.. To improve and to achieve success. Failure is indeed an inevitable part of learning and mastering the craft, but it can also be a powerful motivator and teacher.

Failure shouldn't leave you feeling empty and lost, but rather hopeful and interested; you should want to retrace those steps and figure out where you fucked up.. You should want to chase perfection regardless of how many times you fail.. Remember what mike said.. 9000 shots missed.. Greatest of all time.. Something's gotta give. 1% better than today, tomorrow guys.

Don't stop chasing.

Don't stop grinding.

Keep cooking.

Keep creating.

Keep innovating.

Try to be the best version of yourself every time you step into the kitchen because while you're there.. You could change the world.

Outro

Now.. go make yourself some mac and cheese and while you're stuffing your face look up the mother sauces and familiarize yourself with how to make them. Let your mind explore. Ask yourself questions and be creative. And should you ask yourself a question you can't answer.. You can ask us at theincrediblediscourse.com and we 100% will have an answer for you.

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