# Conclusion to this Highly Original OER Textbook

The cooking journey is unique to each individual. In my own journey, I started with very little basic knowledge. There were a few things I knew how to cook well, namely:

* Sauteed Brussels sprouts
* Taco shells
* Chocolate chip cookies

Otherwise, my meals were mostly box- or can-driven or just not very good. I seemed to have no natural ability to “wing it” in the kitchen or to understand how to use spices or how to use a knife without ending up in the emergency room.

When I was living alone, I ate a lot of eggs and toast for breakfast…and dinner.

Interestingly, I had always enjoyed watching cooking shows. I just never imagined that I could actually replicate the recipes at home with any success.

It wasn’t until I had kids that I thought more seriously about cooking healthier, tastier meals, but I knew that I couldn’t just experiment and hope for the best. In the end, I had to approach cooking in a more methodical, researched way. I subscribed to a cooking magazine and began identifying recipes that seemed basic and relatively simple to start. And I slowly learned to make my way in the kitchen.

Yes, there were some disasters. I recall accidentally using hot paprika instead of sweet paprika in a recipe that called for quite a lot of paprika, and in the end, it was simply inedible. But there have been some great successes as well, including a delicious cod and corn chowder that I’ve made multiple times over the last few years. My knife skills have improved as have my instincts for when to turn off the heat and when to let it go just another minute or so. And I can read a recipe – I think I will always need a recipe – and pretty accurately imagine how it will taste.

I’m not a gourmet chef, but I’m more proficient in the kitchen that I was ten years ago, and most days, I actually look forward to cooking dinner.