**Navy Bean Soup**

Ingredients:

* 2 Tbsp of canola or olive oil
* 1.5 cups of chopped onions
* 1 cup of chopped celery
* 1 cup of chopped carrots
* 1 pound of dried navy beans (pre-soaked and drained) or 2 cans of rinsed and drained navy beans
  + 1 or 2 chicken boullion cubes OR 2 tsp. of salt, if using dried beans
  + 1 boullion cube if using canned beans
* 6 cups of water (enough to cover the beans).
* 2 bay leaves
* 8 oz of diced ham (optional)
* Pepper to taste

Directions:

* Heat a large soup pot for 2-3 minutes then add oil and chopped vegetables. Saute for about 10 minutes until softer and fragrant.
* Add beans and 6 cups of water, boullion or salt, pepper and bay leaves to pot.
* Bring to a gentle simmer, add diced ham and cook for approximately 1.5 hours until beans are soft (if using dried beans) or until flavors are well blended (about 45 minutes). Alternatively, after adding ham, cook in a slow cooker for 4-6 hours.
* To complete this meal, serve with cornbread, a leafy green salad, and a source of calcium (“milk”, yogurt, or kefir)