

# Done with Dieting Podcast #49: The Long Game



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Elizabeth Sherman

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You are listening to the Done with Dieting Podcast Episode number 49.

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Sherman, former corporate high tech executive turned life and weight loss coach. But it wasn't that long ago that I was searching for that perfect diet, the one that would finally be the golden ticket to lose the weight that I so desired.

Fast forward past tons of failed diet attempts, exercise fads and painful lessons learned, and although I still have not reached the state of Nirvana, body love, my relationship with food and exercise in my body is infinitely better than it was not only when I started this journey, but even as recently as three years ago.

The journey that has allowed me to ditch my scale, stop logging my food and exercise, eat food that I didn't prepare and easily maintain my weight - something that I never thought was possible for me.

I created the Done with Dieting podcast to give you simple, easy to do and sustainable strategies to help you do the same without all of the drama that I went through.

If you're a woman who's looking to create a better relationship with food and her body, get off the diet roller coaster and free up a bunch of headspace spent on calories, how you should look what you should eat and beating yourself up for not doing what you think you should be doing. You are in the right place.

Let's get started.

Hey everyone, welcome to today's episode. So, today we are talking about a year of health. As I'm recording this, it is just around Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving just passed, it's the weekend after. And this episode is scheduled to be released at the end of December. And I was thinking about last year.

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At about this time, I ran across this article in Facebook that said something about "Rebel Wilson rocks a lime green bikini as she continues her year of health journey". And the headline really struck me. And quite honestly, I didn't read the article. But what really was amazing to me was this idea of having a year of health. Like thinking about, okay, this year, I am going to dedicate this year to something for me. I'm really going to figure out this whole health thing. Right?

And for years past, I've always done something like a mantra or some other sort of word that captured the following year. But I had never thought about like dedicating a year to a purpose. Figuring out exactly what it was that I needed to figure out this year.

Last year, when I saw the article, I immediately wrote an email to the folks who are on my email list. And since then, it's just been on my mind and on my mind. And it's probably one of the reasons why I created the Feel Good Sisterhood, which is my six month group coaching program where we really dive in to getting over all of the issues that we have when it comes to improving our relationship with food.

And what's really interesting is that as I observe the health and fitness industry over the past year, I realized that we've been conditioned to believe that eight week weight loss programs are the way because it's super sexy, it's super alluring. Like, oh my God, if I only have to spend eight weeks on this thing and I'll be fixed at the end of that eight weeks, sign me up. Right?

So, first of all, the problem with short-term weight loss programs is that 97% of people who lose weight on a diet program. 97% regain it within three to five years and many regain even more. And the reason behind that is because in eight weeks, we just haven't learned enough. We have 40, 50 years of diet culture and conditioning of what the right foods are and what the wrong foods are. And this is the way that the body is supposed to work. That we're supposed to undo all of that within eight weeks, it just doesn't make any sense.

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I started thinking more about this year of health and what was really compelling to me about it is a few different things. First, it takes all of the pressure off getting the results. So, all of us, you and I, the next year is going to pass. Right? We get to decide what that next year is going to look like. We get to decide what we want to have a learned and accomplished within that next year.

And don't get me wrong, I totally understand the allure of wanting to lose weight quickly, and get it off, and just be done with it so that we can enjoy the next year. But clearly that's not working because those eight week and twelve week programs, people are regaining it.

The other thing that I love about thinking about a year of health is that it sets the expectation that learning how your body works, what foods are good for you, what foods aren't. All of that great stuff. It sets the expectation that it's going to take a while. And we need to strap in because we're going on a ride. Right?

But number three, the third thing that I really love about this idea of a year of health is it says, I'm going to figure this out, I'm dedicated to figuring this out, and I'm not messing around. Let's get serious about this. Thinking about that, like the commitment that it takes to say, okay, for the next year, I am all in on my health. Because we know that other things are going to come up in the upcoming year.

No one says like we do with eight week programs that; okay, the next eight weeks are perfect. I don't have any events coming up, or I don't have any vacations, or anything like that. I don't foresee any problems coming up in the next eight weeks. So, therefore, I can do this program. Right?

If we were going on a vacation during the eight weeks or the twelve weeks, we might be like, yeah, I don't want to do the program because I'm not going to be able to do it perfectly therefore, I don't want to mess it up. We know that in the next year we are

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going to have vacations, we're going to have parties, we are going to have birthdays, all of that stuff is going to come up. We never set the expectation that this next year is going to be perfect. Right? We know that stuff is going to come up.

Again, what I love about this year of health is all of those three things. So, let's go through a little bit about what we normally do when we decide that we're going to lose weight, or that we're going to start an exercise program, or whatever it is that we decide.

First, it's like we have a race to the finish line. And I had this realization the other day that during these eight week programs, during these twelve week programs that we typically see. We do that because during these eight week programs, we really try to be perfect. We try to execute perfectly.

And we do that because we think that we're going to get the result faster. Which honestly may or may not be true. Right? Enough of us have been on the roller coaster of diets to know that I can do everything perfectly and still not get the result that I'm expecting.

And I'd also like to suggest that when we have asked our work, we can actually get pretty good results, but that's another topic. So, when we think we're going to be perfect, we do that because we think we're going to get the result faster. We strap in and decide that we can get really uncomfortable for a short period of time. Right?

We think that we can get uncomfortable for the eight weeks. And thinking that if we do it perfectly, if we execute perfectly for the next eight weeks or twelve weeks, that we're going to get to the results. But you know, even the idea that we're going to get to the end of that result is completely arbitrary. Like, we have this thought in the back of our heads that I can lose 20 pounds in 12 weeks. Can we? Have we done the math on that? Is that even possible?

At some point, if we can't keep up with the level of attention that we think we need in order to get to the goal, we give up or we white-knuckle it, right? We get really super

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stressed, and we get really controlling about our food and what we need to do because this end goal is so freaking important and we're stressing out about it. We drive everyone crazy around us and we white knuckle it all the way to the goal. And we don't allow ourselves to have any treats along the way. Right? Because we think that if I have treats along the way, then that's going to stole my progress.

And again, I want a question that like, is that really true? Like, maybe it's not. We're treating our body like a math equation that calories in versus calories out is the only way. But if that was true, then when we dropped calories, we would automatically drop weight too. And that doesn't always happen. All of us have been in that situation where we've done the math. We've gotten rid of 500 calories a day, based on our calculations my fitness pal or whatever. And it doesn't work. Right?

All of us have had that experience where we're like, well, if I cut out this many calories, or if I exercise every day and burn 600 calories a day, 500 calories, whatever. Then, I'm going to lose the weight. And when we do that, we don't, and then we get confused, and we get frustrated, and we give up.

Again, we white-knuckle it, not allowing ourselves to have treats along the way, and not really even learning how to co-exist in a world. Where there's hyper palatable food, where there's tasty food. Like, French fries, pizza, brownies, ice cream, and guacamole. And all of those things that we love to eat, that we treat ourselves with.

When we've gotten to our goal, not allowing those foods into our eating plan, we don't know what to do, when all of a sudden, we can eat those things again. Think about a year of health and being able to have cake, being able to have guacamole, being able to have pizza on occasion. And learning that it's totally okay, it's not going to thwart your goals, and you can actually make progress with it. Like, how amazing would that be?

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Again, as I'm recording this it's Thanksgiving weekend and this podcast episode is scheduled to be released in just a few weeks, right around the Christmas and new year holidays. And I really want you to think about the future version of yourself, who exists on new years of 2023, in a year. Right?

Who is she? What did she do during holiday season? How does she act around Christmas cookies? How does she act when she's attending a Christmas party? What does she think about? Like, how does the version of yourself who is successful in the future? How does she exist around foods that are tasty, foods that you love? Right?

Two questions for you, this version of yourself in the future, what does she eating? How is she eating that's different than what you've been eating? So, what's she doing in the future that you're not? That's the answer to your question. So, when we think about a year of health, how does she act? What does she eat? And how is that different than what you're doing today? Because we know that what we do, impacts our results. Right?

That's why diets don't work is because we go on the eight week plan, we go on the 12 week plan, and then we go off the plan. Right? And when we go off the plan, we default back to our normal eating patterns. And when we default back to our normal eating patterns, we just go back to our normal weight again because those are the actions that create the result of our weight.

If we want to weigh something different, what we need to do is we need to do something different. But here's the thing, when we want to do something different, the reason that we do or don't do anything. The reason that we exercise or don't exercise. The reason that we eat cookies or don't eat cookies. The reason that we overeat or don't overeat has everything to do with how we feel. Overeating does not feel good. But we do it because we think that the food is going to solve our problem. Right?

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How many of us eat when we're not hungry? The only problem that food solves is hunger. So, when we're eating when we're not hungry, why are we doing that? Like really, ask yourself that question. Why do we eat when we're not hungry? Sometimes it's just to taste something tasty. Right? No one's eating dessert because they're hungry, we'd like dessert, right? We like cookies, we like brownies, we like ice cream, it tastes good.

But there's a threshold there, where the ice cream doesn't taste as good anymore. And we start to feel bad, we start to overeats. And when we've crossed that threshold, some of us keep eating. I know I used to, some of us keep eating. Why are we doing that?

So, I'd like you to answer those questions, just think about it. And think also about historically, when we start out with new year's resolution, and call them new year's resolutions, call them goals, whatever it is that you want to call them.

What we typically do is we set out on this weight loss goal, or this exercise goal, or whatever it is. And we do math, right? We reduce what we eat by 500 calories every day and think, okay, so, if I reduce my calories by 500 per day, then I am going to lose one pound of fat per week. And I'm getting 500 calories just in case you are wondering about that.

When we create that gap of 500 calories per day, there's a metric that one pound of fat is equal to 3,500 calories. Okay. The idea is that if we reduce our calories by 3,500 calories, which if you divide that by seven days in a week, we get the number 500. Right? If I reduce my calories by 500 calories per day, then I am going to lose one pound of fat per week.

So, first, we don't really know that that number 3,500 is true for everybody. We don't know that everyone's body works exactly the same way. Especially, because most of the information that we have about weight loss and that we have about dieting has been done on college aged men.

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Women who are in menopause and in perimenopause, our bodies may act a lot differently. They're just starting to do some research on us now, thank God. But we really don't know. So, anyway, 3,500 calories is roughly the number of calories that we need to create a deficit in order to lose a pound. But we really don't have a lot of control over whether that pound is muscle or if it's fat. Okay.

What we do is we do this math stuff. And I remember when I was in the height of my dieting days, I created a spreadsheet. Of course, I did because I loved spreadsheets at the time and I wanted to figure out; if I reduced my calories by X number per day, when I would get to my goal weight?

I did the math and copied it out. And then, I was like, "huh, that's kind of interesting." I figured out that I would get to my goal weight in about let's say, two months. And then, I kept going. And of course, it's math. The body is not math. Our bodies are very good at self-preservation.

When I copied this formula out to additional weeks, months, years, at some point, I got to zero. Which meant, that my weight would be zero. Which of course is impossible, or it means that I would be dead. The body does not work like a math equation. The body is really good at preserving itself and living. That's its only goal, it doesn't care about the weight that we have on us.

When we look at our body as a math equation, if I just reduce calories by 500 calories a day, my body will lose a pound every week. Okay. When we focus on eating and the way that I'm going to reduce my calories by 500 every day is by eating these foods and exercising. And we focus on the eating and the exercising, thinking that if we solve our overeating problem by cutting out food, that food is the problem. Right?

How many of us think that food is the problem? And that the problem is exercise. I need to exercise more, right? And then, I'll be fit. And there's some truth to that, but we

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really don't want to look at exercise as a form of calorie reduction. We want to look at exercise as a form of stress management. What's really interesting is we don't have a lot of really good techniques about how to tangentially manage our stress. Right?

We tell people to do get manicures and massages, but that feels good in the moment, but it's not sustainable. Really The only way that we can manage our stress is to prevent our stress. And that's something that I actually teach my clients and I teach the women in the Feel Good Sisterhood is how to preventively manage our stress.

So, we think that food is the problem, we think that exercise is the problem. And thinking that if we just create a plan that we're going to follow it. And by setting the expectation that this is going to take a year. What it does is it really allows us the space to get curious about what works and what doesn't.

By allowing us to look at, okay, the next year, I am going to figure out, what exercises my body likes? What I like to do? What food I enjoy cooking? How my body tells me that I'm hungry? How my body tells me that I'm not hungry, that I'm satiated? What foods I need in my diet. What makes me feel alive?

When we're able to start looking at our health from a larger perspective, it allows us to play the long game. It allows us to understand which situations trigger us to overeat. Right? Like, why am I overeating? Is it because I'm alone, is it because I'm bored? Is it because I'm angry or upset? Why am I overeating? I'm still figuring this stuff out. And I've been doing this for a number of years. Every once in a while, I'll overeat and I'll be like, what? What just happened there?

Granted, the more I pay attention to my body and the more that I honor my hunger signals, the overeating isn't as severe as it used to be. It's about refining, and getting better at it, and really getting curious.

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But also, when we play the long game, we start to get curious and think about the programming that we got as children from our family and in our childhood that we've taken on about, what does food represent? And how do we show love to one another? How food is important? How food interacts? How do I think about exercise? How I respect my body or how I don't?

So, all of that programming comes bubbling up to the surface. The long game also allows us to get curious; why do I want to eat? And it's so interesting that I'm feeling that emotion right now. I know and I tell this story to my clients as well as the women in the Feel Good Sisterhood that when I started cutting back on my portion size, I started playing around with how much food do I really need in order to feel satisfied. I started cutting back and I remember having a lot of emotion come up for me. It was really curious to start to notice that, why was I feeling that way.

When we have a year to look at this stuff, it really allows us the time and space to figure this stuff out. We also know that there are going to be times that things just don't work out as planned. It may be uncomfortable right now, knowing that I'm trying to stop eating after dinner, or I'm trying to stop that 3:00 PM chocolate craving. Right?

But understanding, and knowing, and having certainty around the fact that in a month, it's going to be a heck of a lot easier. Even next week, it's going to be that easier. But then also, thinking about that future version of me in a year, in new years of next year, she doesn't have that craving anymore. What advice would she give me? Okay.

Now, playing a long game allows us to figure out that eating ice cream, or stuffing, or having dessert occasionally, isn't going to really make a ton of difference in the long game. Therefore, not making a big deal out of it. Right? Because right now, when we're in a diet mentality, when we're in an eight week program, and someone hands us ice cream, and we eat it, we immediately think that we blew it! we're like, "oh my God, I just EFT up." Right?

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But thinking about the future version of yourself; what does she think about when she has ice cream? She's not giving it any thought. She knows that ice cream is tasty and that it adds to the quality of her relationships to a certain degree. But that she also can control herself around it.

Thinking about the long game here. I'm going to invite you to think about this. Okay, when you think about doing an eight week or twelve week program, I think the one of the objections that a lot of people have about spending a year thinking about their health is that they just want to be done with it.

And here's what I want to invite you to think about that after the eight weeks is over, what happens? What does happen? Do you go back to your old way of eating? Or do you suddenly feel like, you're going to be perfect? But what happens the rest of the weeks out of the year? I'm really curious, like people who do eight week programs. Do they just look at that as a jumpstart? And they think that they're automatically going to do something different on the other side of that.

We know that what we do, creates our results. Why would we go back and do the thing that we were doing before the eight weeks? I specifically remember when I was in my process and having that light bulb moment of oh, what I'm doing, what I'm eating, how I'm exercising is actually making me lose the weights.

So, if I go back to the things that I was doing before, I'm going to gain the weight back. Think about that. When we do an eight week program, we don't give ourselves the time and space to figure things out. Someone's just telling us what we need to eat, and how we need to exercise, and we're doing it.

But what happens on the other side of that? Quick weight loss doesn't teach us anything. We can white knuckle, eight weeks, six weeks, even three months. But learning about your body and brain is where success actually is. I'm really going to invite you to think

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about creating this goal for 2022 of really dedicating yourself to a year of health. Like, what would that look like?

Now, in addition, it's a slower process at first. But once you learn it, you will never have to go on another diet again. I have two offers for you right now. The first is on January 3rd, 2022, at 11:00 AM eastern, 10:00 AM central, and 8:00 AM Pacific, I am hosting a webinar. And if you're interested in attending the webinar, I am going to lay out the three most common mistakes that I see people making when it comes to goals for the new year.

I'm going to help you set yourself up for the new year and success so that you can conquer your goals in 2022. So, I'm going to give you some techniques, I'm going to give you some pitfalls, and I'm also going to give you some tools.

If you want to join the webinar, just go to [elizabethsherman.com/nyr](http://elizabethsherman.com/nyr), or you can go into the show notes and click the link there, and just put your details in, and you will get signed up. And I will send you the information on how to join there. So, that's January 3rd at 11:00 AM eastern, 10:00 AM central, at 8:00 AM Pacific, January 3rd, 2022, that's a Monday.

And the other thing that I wanted to invite you into was the Feel Good Sisterhood waitlist. Later on in January, I'm going to be creating the next cohort of the Feel Good Sisterhood. The waitlist for that is currently open. And if you join the waitlist, you will be one of the first to know that it's open. I also give a really amazing bonus to folks who are on the waitlist.

So, if you're thinking that the year of health might be something that you're interested in, the Feel Good Sisterhood is a really great way of easing you into that. Because it's a six-month program and we go through all of the things that you need to do in order to be successful and never go on a diet ever again. All right?

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So, that's all I have for you right now. Again, webinar on January 3rd and then for the Feel Good Sisterhood waitlist, you can go to [elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching](http://elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching). I would love for you to join me on the webinar. And I would also love for you to think about a year of health and what it would take in 2022. Just dedicate yourself to that because you're worth it.

All right, that's all I have for you right now. I'll see you next week.

Hey, if you enjoy listening to this podcast, you have to come check out the Feel Good Sisterhood. It's my small group coaching program where we take all this material, and we apply it. We figure out what works for us, and we don't ever look at another diet ever again.

Join me over at [elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching](http://elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching). I'd love to have you join me in the Feel Good Sisterhood.

See you there.