

# Done with Dieting Podcast #101: Meal Prep with Allison Schaaf



## Full Episode Transcript

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Elizabeth Sherman

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I learned how to get in and out as quickly as possible, but still have really healthy, tasty food. And I just kind of started writing it down all those processes and translating that then for the home cook so they could use it.

You are listening to the done with dieting podcast. The podcast for women in midlife, who are done with dieting, but still want to lose weight and feel good in your clothes.

You know that diets don't work long term. But you feel like there's this secret that everyone else knows that you just haven't figured it out yet.

I am your host, Elizabeth Sherman. And I've helped hundreds of women get off the diet roller coaster, change their relationship with food, exercise, and their bodies.

Through this podcast, my goal is to help you too.

Welcome. Let's get started.

Hey, what do you want to have for dinner? It's a question that elicits groans from all across the world. It's frustrating because when we ask for help in designing a menu, we get absolutely no input from those people that we live with. Yet when we're in the middle of making dinner, our peeps aren't shy with their opinions, are they?

And sometimes it doesn't even make sense. Like on one hand we are totally over food, and it seems like it would be so much simpler just to take a pill and give us all the nutrition that we need. But on the other hand, we really like to eat tasty, desirable food and also the ceremony and socialization that we get from eating with our loved ones.

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But the part that makes it super difficult if we're being honest is that we want the other people who we live with to be happy with what they're eating too, so it can make dinnertime a total challenge.

My guest on today's episode has got you covered. Allison Schaaf is the creator of an amazing meal prep service, and we're talking all things food prep so that you can get yourself organized for the new year. Let's get started.

**Elizabeth:** All right everyone, welcome Allison Schaaf to the show. Allison, thank you for being here first of all. First of all, tell us who you are, what you do, who you help, all that great stuff.

**Allison:** Yeah, so my name's Allison. I am the founder of Prep Dish and actually a second company called Miscarriage Hope Desk. And I have two little boys, Ivan and Seven, one is almost four, one is two. We live outside of Austin in the country with some chickens and goats and bees and cats. And I'm trying to think if there are any other highlights but yeah, that's kind of me.

**Elizabeth:** I had no idea you lived in Austin. I lived in Austin for 17 years.

**Allison:** Okay, great. Yeah, no, we lived downtown when we first met and then moved to the country, but we're still in and out of Austin.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Great area. Love it there. So, I brought you on to talk about Prep Dish, but tell me about Miscarriage Help Desk.

**Allison:** Yeah. Miscarriage Hope Desk. But it's kind of a hope desk plan. Hope desk. Yes.

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So, Prep Dish, I've had oh my goodness, for over 10 years now, which is just crazy to say. And then, Miscarriage Hope Desk is a little bit newer. I've had it for a few years and it's kind of more, I call it my passion project. I mean, passionate about both. But it was born out of personal experience in going through infertility, specifically recurrent miscarriage, and just seeing there no resources out there for women that were struggling with that.

You know, I had one miscarriage, and it was devastating but just figured, okay, that's the one time thing, this happens sometimes. I knew that that was a possibility, but then it kept happening over and over. It really blew my mind and was not something I even knew was really a possibility. And just didn't feel like there was a community or the resources I needed to kind of get through that. So, I went out and created it. What I wish I would've had as I was going through those struggles.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, is it a community or is it a service, or tell me more about it.

**Allison:** Kind of a few pieces. But one, really in depth, like articles on the website. Just like library articles that go deep into figuring out why it's happening. You know, a lot of doctors will just say, oh, it's bad luck, or we don't know. And so, there's a lot of it that goes into female factors, male factors, like what could be going on. And the science behind all of that, and the science behind different protocols, and supplements, and just information that I was wanting to know, but couldn't find more than just like, fluff pieces, you know? So, I really got into the science behind a lot of that.

And then we have a podcast that shares stories of hope and also expert interviews. We have an Instagram account, a Facebook page, and then just a few courses to help support the women going through that.

**Elizabeth:** Wow. Very cool. Yeah. So, we'll link to all that in the show notes. If listeners are looking for that information or if you have someone in your life who's looking for

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that information, we'll definitely link to that. Very cool. And so, is there a community aspect to it as well?

**Allison:** Mainly through a private Facebook group and the Instagram account both are completely free. And it's interesting, the Instagram account really kind of took off more than I thought it would. I think people, you're not always anonymous on Instagram, but I think they feel a little more kind of able to connect on there and especially like in private messages. The thing that surprised me is we'll have people messaging us that have gone through miscarriage or miscarriages like many years in the past, but they never felt like they had a chance to really work through it or they never shared it with anyone.

And so, that was actually a piece that was surprising to me. It's not all women currently going through it. Some of it are people that they've gone through in the past that never really quite processed it in the way they needed to.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. That's fascinating. I had another guest on the show who works with women who are healing from abortion. And she's experiencing the same thing where women are coming to her who are 65, who had abortions when they were in their twenties. And yeah, it's the shame that goes along with women and women's bodies is just incredible. And so, thank you for providing that service.

**Allison:** Yeah. It's been very rewarding.

**Elizabeth:** Very cool. Okay. So, tell me then, Prep Dish. So Prep Dish is a meal prep service.

**Allison:** Yeah. Meal planning. We kind of provide the plans, but we've provided the plans for meal prep.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So how did you get into that? Tell me like, 10 years ago you said you started it. What were the struggles that you were having back then?

**Allison:** Actually, it was more from a professional standpoint. So, I went to culinary school and then went to grad school, became a dietician, and studied nutrition. And started out as a personal chef cooking for private families that were struggling to get healthy meals on the table. I was helping them do that, I was helping five to eight families a week. You know, there's only so many people you can cook for in a week.

I did get faster over time, which actually relates to Prep Dish, but I was helping them with their meals. And as I was doing that, I was trying to figure out like, okay, long-term, what do I want to do with this business? Right? I didn't see myself continuing to cook for families for the rest of my career. I knew I wanted a family someday, but I also saw that I was providing this much needed solution, but it wasn't accessible to everyone.

And I thought, well, gosh, as I went through it over the years, I was really coming up with systems and processes to speed up the meal prep process and it really set people up for success at dinner time. So, how could I translate all these skills I've built into something I can package up and deliver to the masses?

And so, that's what I did. As I was cooking for these people, I was jotting down my recipes and the shopping list I got very organized of putting it organized by grocery store department. And just like little things like that and especially prep day, essentially that's what I was doing for families, was going to their house one day a week, and prepping all of their meals. I just got super-efficient at it, right?

And it's really been fascinating because now, when I started I wasn't married, I didn't have a family. I just saw the need for it through my clients.

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But now having small children, I use Prep Dish in a way I never did before. Like I created a system and these plans that now like I have come to rely on very heavily. And in the past, they always made the meals and used them at home, but it wasn't as necessary as it is these days. So, it's been pretty cool to see it come full circle like that and see my kids really enjoying the meals.

**Elizabeth:** That's fascinating. Yeah. I think about when we're younger women, we have all of this time on our hands, and we think that we're always going to have all this time on our hands. And we see mothers, and it's not that we're judging them, but we're like, I don't understand. Like you just don't understand. Right? And then, when you're in the motherhood phase, you're like, oh my gosh, I don't have any time to even think about this anymore.

**Allison:** I know. I was just talking to my sister today because my first kid was did the normal, like eventually 12 hours, time period that I feel like most toddlers usually sleep. But my second, he just really only sleeps 10 hours at night and I'm like, well if I need eight and a half hours, that really doesn't gimme much wiggle room on either side of that at night or in the mornings to like have that 'me' time. And so, I've really had to kind of troubleshoot that of like, okay, where do I find time for myself if it's not like first thing in the morning and being more flexible with that. But yes, definitely have understood that on a whole other level.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, absolutely. It's actually really funny to me. So, I started out in body building. And when I was doing the body building stuff back in, I guess it was the nineties. They would teach the whole preparation of Tupperware's. And that was great for me back then. But then at some point I was like, I don't want to do that anymore. I don't want to eat the same thing over and over and over again. And I think that that's one of the things that people struggle with, women struggle with is I don't want to prep all of my food on Sunday. And then, eat the same thing for the rest of the week.

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So, I know that you have really great strategies for doing things like partial prep on the weekends. And then, setting yourself up for success so that during the week, it's easier to cook fresh, but you're cooking fresh. Right?

**Allison:** Exactly. Yeah. We've gotten very creative in that way of like, okay, let's make your marinade and let's chop all your vegetables. But then at dinnertime, you're still throwing the vegetables in the oven and putting the sauce on the fish and cooking it all fresh. So, it's kind of the best of both worlds where you're eating at this fresh home cooked meal. But it doesn't take a lot of time because you used all those time saving hacks of batching things and doing all of the chopping and mixing and all of that at once. So, you're just really setting yourself up for a much easier mealtime.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. Yeah. And so, what you said that you got really efficient at it. Talk more about that. Like how can women get more efficient in the kitchen or with their meal prep. What is your frame of mind, like what are you thinking about when you're doing all of that stuff?

**Allison:** So, I mean, a lot of things. One is like looking at the week. If I'm making a salad dressing, can I double that salad dressing and also use it as a marinade, right? Because it's not going to taste like the same thing if you have it in your salad. And also, marinate your pork chops in it or something. So, when you're doing the work is there something you can kind of double up on but not notice that. We'll even have meals where we make a large portion of the protein and use part of it for two different meals.

And things like just doing all your chopping at once, like it doesn't sound like a big deal maybe. But if you think about it, pulling out your cutting board, chopping some onions and carrots every night. That takes 15 minutes by the time you pull it out and do the chopping and then wash your cutting board. But if you do it all at once, maybe it takes

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half an hour. Over the course of a week and especially a year, you're going to see a lot of time savings just by pulling out your cutting board and doing all your chopping at once.

So, just lots of little things like that of how can I prepare myself so then when it comes to meal time, I'm not having to think about anything. Right? Like I feel like that's the biggest thing is having that like mental capacity at whatever time you're eating dinner at six o'clock at night. Having to make a decision is hard. You've made a lot of decisions for the day; decision fatigue is a real thing. So, being able to just pull up to dinner and already know like most of the heavy lifting is done just makes it so much more doable to get a healthy meal on the table.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. I used to watch Rachael Ray, right back in the day. And one thing that she kept saying over and over and over again was need it twice, chop it once. So, if you need onions in two different parts of your recipe, cut it all at once and reserve it. And I've really applied that same principle to other areas. Like you said, with the chicken. If I'm making rice, I will make more rice and freeze it. So that I don't have to use it again. I love that idea.

**Allison:** Oh yeah, a soup. Anytime I make a soup or a stew, I try, and I've gotten like the big pots and then I try and just make even triple the recipes so that way I can have it for some lunches, but then also stick one or two in the freezer. So, I always have some emergency meals in the freezer for when I need to pull those out.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, I love that. Okay. So, one of the complaints that I get from some of my clients is that they don't have enough freezer space. Like we're talking about freezing stuff right now and I know that you have a really amazing, you do a month where you're like doing sauces and you're really prepping things for freezer meals. Yeah?

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**Allison:** Yeah. So, we call them challenges, but a few times a year we'll do different challenges, and we have different themes. But the freezer challenges have definitely been one of the more popular. So, we try and have at least one if not two of those, every year. And then, in addition to that, we just have a lot of different resources for our subscribers. And we have a lot of different freezer meal, handouts, and meal guides, and stuff. So, you can do that like spend a few hours on Saturday afternoon stocking your freezer for the fall. You know, with a lot of crock pot meals or something. Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** So, what equipment? I know that you're big on nice equipment. So, when we moved from Austin, Texas, to Mexico, I had the same Tupperware that I had from like when I was in my early twenties, which was it should have been thrown away because it was cheap in the first place. And yeah, the lids didn't fit right, and you just want to throw it away. But I never did. I don't know why.

Now that I have nice stuff, it is so pretty to look in my refrigerator and freezer and see it all lined up. What are your recommendations for Tupperware and things like that?

**Allison:** So, I am a big fan of well, yes. I'll say it in the past, I'm a big fan of Glass Tupperware. Mainly plastic. I have a few issues with plastic. One being from a health standpoint, and even if they may get BPA there's still chemicals in there that are questionable. But even from just to like tasty food aspect, like food that's been sitting in a plastic Tupperware for all week versus food that's been sitting in a glass container for all week. I do feel like there's a big difference in kind of the freshness and kind of the quality of what the food tastes like after a certain amount of time.

So, I am a fan of using glass containers. I mean, that being said, I know sometimes there's a case for using other things and also sometimes it's a process of overtime doing the replacement just of if there's a cost aspect or something like that. So, any of them work.

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But yes, I do think there's something to having all matching glass containers and you want to make your meal prep fun and something you enjoy and look forward to. You're trying to build this habit and the way to do it is making sure that it's an enjoyable process, right? Put on some music, maybe do it with someone like your spouse or don't do it, have it when there's no one in the house.

But just figure out ways that you can really have it be an enjoyable process and something that you like look forward to and like you get to do versus this drudgery thing. And it may sound silly, but I think having nice containers makes it a more fun process.

**Elizabeth:** Well, yeah, absolutely. You know, one of my clients, well I have a group. And one of the women in the group was really struggling with this. She was not into cooking by herself. And what one of the other women suggested had one of her kids or her partner come into the kitchen and just talk to her while she was cooking. And it really just changed the whole dynamic there. So, I love what you're saying about make it fun.

**Allison:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** But what other equipment do you suggest that women have.

**Allison:** For the most part, I actually am a proponent of not a lot of equipment because I just feel like for the most nice cutting board, good quality knife. Those are the two things that I think if you're going to be cooking meals from scratch are really important to have. And there's a few other things from there, but I don't like having one piece of equipment that you use for one random thing and then it gets shoved away. Then your cabinets start to overflow, and you forget what's in there and you never use anything. So, those are kind of the two basics. That and then the containers.

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And then from there, I do think a high quality blender can be and or food processor. I think over time, having both. They both serve different purposes. But if you just start with one, you can get by with that for a while. And then from there, I don't think that there's a whole lot of fancy things you need.

You know what? This is crazy, but you know those big standup mixers that everyone has for like, baking and everything. I actually don't even have one of those. Isn't that I just have always gotten by without one. And sometimes this time of year on the holidays when we're doing some baking, I'm like, why don't I have one of those? But I don't know. It just has never been a need.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. Well, but what about crock pots or the instant pot or anything like that?

**Allison:** Yeah, and I do think crock pot, instant pot. I think it's good to have both. Like I definitely use both. I think the Instant Pot's great. If you're more of a person that always puts something in the morning and has it in the evening than I think most instant pot recipes can be done in a crock pot.

But there's other things that can be done in an instant pot. I find them helpful because working from home. The instant pot's good for like, Hey, it's afternoon. I have like later in the day call, but I could get right after lunch. I could get dinner going. So, that's easier for me to do the afternoon dinner prep if I have to in a pinch versus like the morning, which I think is more crock pot.

So, I think sometimes it depends on your schedule on which one of those is better. If you have an instant pot though, that has the crock pot feature. So, you actually wouldn't need the crock pot. And then from there, I'm trying to think if there's other things. Gosh, I mean, I think also just upgrading things as they break and getting nice like the spatulas and stuff. Even with my husband like you said, you forget to upgrade your

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kitchen equipment, right? you looked at your containers like, wait, how long have I had these and why have I not replaced it.

So, I think doing just an inventory every now and then of like, okay, a new spatula not that expensive. This one's been bothering me. Let's just replace it this year. So, little things like that. Oh, another one is a good meat thermometer. Especially, things like fish and chicken. I know people get really understandably get a little nervous about it. And to avoid overcooking, actually I think it's good to have a thermometer. I think nowadays, like having a good digital thermometer is really helpful. Just so it's very crystal clear like, okay, this is cooked through, I can pull it out. It's safe to eat. I don't need to overcook it.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. Yeah. You know what? That's a really good reminder because I think that when we moved from the states, we didn't keep our meat thermometer and I think I need one. Yeah.

**Allison:** Yeah. It's very helpful. I still use mine too because my husband gets very annoyed. I am not great about setting a timer. I usually just have that inner clock. But then, I'll pull it out and I won't remember exactly what time I put it in. And it's just good to have that extra little you know, okay, it's done.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. It's so interesting that you bring up a set of knives because one of the biggest helps that I had was my husband bought a knife skills class for me. We went together. And it was so freaking helpful because it allowed me to be more efficient in the kitchen.

**Allison:** I've actually said that for years. I always think like finding a local a lot of times, like grocery stores will offer those. But going and getting a basic knife skills class is a great way to speed up like your meal prep and do all that because having those basic skills, you can just really help a lot. And in the beginning though, one thing I have started

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telling people, this actually came from subscriber, cause I wouldn't have thought of it. But having a good food processor, you can put all your vegetables in a food processor, doesn't cut them as nicely, but it gets the job done.

And in those beginning stages, anything you can do to make it easy and more sustainable. For some people, that's an option especially in the beginning. But yeah, I think long term, cooking is just such an important life skill, but like so many of us, I mean, myself included. When I was growing up, that's not something I was taught. If that's you and you're listening to this, that doesn't have to be your story. You can change that, right? There's plenty of basic cooking classes out there.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, one of the things that I think many women dread is the question of what should we have for dinner. And that's one of the reasons why I really love Prep Dish. Like when we did make the move to Mexico, I tried some of the meal delivery kits. And I was shocked at how much I actually liked them because I didn't have to think about what was for dinner.

But some of the drawbacks are the waste that is involved with it and the shipping that goes along with it, they're not very environmentally friendly. So, that's one of the reasons why I think Prep Dish is such a great idea. Let's talk a little bit about what the process is that a user would go through when they join Prep Dish.

**Allison:** Yeah. Sign up, they get the meal plan. So, the meal plan is a PDF of three parts. And it really is similar to the meal kits. Really, the only difference is we don't send the food and you're in charge of buying your own groceries, which has some advantages. You can make really simple swaps.

So, like, oh, I see it says, broccoli. Especially, as you get into it. Oh, I'd rather have green beans, or we really would prefer chicken thighs instead of chicken breast. So, you can

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make all those kind of swaps. And also based on budget you can decide, oh, instead of steaks, let me do hamburgers, or something like that.

So, that first piece is the grocery list. Go out buy your groceries or as many of us do these days, put it into your grocery delivery or curbside pickup. So that's changed a little bit over the past few years but get your groceries.

The second part of the P D F is that prep day. So, to me, that's the key piece because that's the part that's setting you up for the rest of the week. That's where you chop your vegetables, mix the marinades, just do a few little things really like an hour or two is what we try and keep it at. But spending some time in advance so that your week just goes a lot easier.

And then, the third piece is just those instructions for what to do at dinnertime. Putting the vegetables in the oven and putting the sauce on the fish like we talked about earlier, and just kind of that easy, okay, here's what you do for this night. But like you said, I mean, just having the list of like, oh, here's what we're having, and I know like the hard work is done and mealtime is not going to be that difficult. I know what I have to do tonight to get dinner going and it's not a lot, so it just helps to avoid that overwhelm.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah, and it's really fascinating that you say that you only spend like an hour and a half doing the prep on Sunday, because that actually seems really manageable. And I think that the impression is that I need to spend the entire day in like three, five hours in the kitchen on Sunday, when I would rather be out with my family and friends and doing something fun.

**Allison:** Yeah, and we actually do have new-e. I mean, it's probably a few years old now, but we have one of the meal plans is actually called our Super Fast Plans. And those are the ones that we try and always keep to under an hour. And we just take a lot of shortcuts

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things like buying, pre chopped broccoli or whatever it is trying to keep things even quicker than in our other plans.

But yeah, all of them are always very aware of like, okay, if this dish is a little more time intensive, like these are the things we're looking at is like spreading out the time intensive dishes, so there's never a week that takes a ton of time. Kind of like they balance out. So, yeah, we think a lot about these things. So, no one else has to.

**Elizabeth:** Well, clearly. Yeah. And so, the other thing that I really love is that you also have different meal plans for different diet types. Is that true?

**Allison:** Yes. So, the super-fast is just a general healthy family, friendly meals. And then, we have gluten-free plan. We have paleo plan, which is gluten-free but also grain-free, no legumes, kind of paleo. And then, we have a low carb slash keto, I don't know. Anyway, it's kind of more a low carb. It depends on the definition of keto.

But yeah, those are the four different plans that we have. And then, you mentioned we have challenges, and a lot of bonus menus, and all sorts of plans that our subscribers have access to a login and a lot of different resources that we've created over the past kind of 10 years.

**Elizabeth:** And so, then I would imagine that so what? It's a six month commitment. Yeah?

**Allison:** So, you can either do month to month or yearly.

**Elizabeth:** Okay. Okay. After a period of time, they have the PDFs already stored up that they can go back to and use. Yeah?

**Allison:** Yeah.

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**Elizabeth:** Okay.

**Allison:** Some people I know there, that's a hot topic in the Facebook group. People create binders. There's always topics on like what people are doing to organize and you know? Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** Well, but I would have to imagine, there's no shortage of recipes out there, right? Like you can create your own binder, but I think for so many people, we kind of want it fed to us.

**Allison:** Yeah. Oh yeah.

**Elizabeth:** Why this is successful is because every week you're just telling me what I need to make Right?

**Allison:** Oh yeah. And I mean, if people are listening to this and they're not quite ready, they don't know if they want to do this. I mean, at least doing like coming up with a plan on your own, at least make that list on Friday afternoon or Saturday morning, making the list of what you're going to have that's still going to help you have an easier week. When you get home from the grocery store, just pulling out the vegetables and chopping those is going to help you have an easier week.

So, there's definitely things you can take from what we're doing. And we've had people too, even like, they'll sign up, they'll be with us for a while. And then, their life changes. Maybe they do a meal kit for a while and then they're like, oh, and now we came back. So, some of it depends on your season of life and what that looks like. So, we definitely have people come and go and I think that's great. It's really recognizing where you're at in your life right now and what's the best solution for you and your meals.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, within my coaching, I guide my clients through a series of meal prep, really. And like some of the things that I realized that I was doing when I was meal prepping is like one going through the refrigerator on Friday or Saturday or whenever it is that you're like putting your list together and figuring out, okay, what do I need to use up from last week?

And then, also looking at the weather and deciding, are we going to get a cold front? Because if we're getting a cold front, I don't want to eat salad. Right? Or the opposite. I don't want to have stews scheduled when it's going to be 90 degrees. Looking at calendars and the one thing that I really love about what you do is you only provide meals for three meals per week, right? Because things are going to come up for people and there's no use in planning five meals if you're consistently only eating or preparing three or four.

**Allison:** Yep. Yep. So, our super-fast is five but the others are all four.

**Elizabeth:** Okay.

**Allison:** I think that's right. I'm like, I hope that, but yes.

**Elizabeth:** We should look at that.

**Allison:** Yeah. No, we definitely don't do, and I remember that when I was cooking for people in their homes, like private chef. Everyone would always turn out like, oh yeah, like we need, sometimes they'd start out saying seven days a week, and I would never sell someone on that because I'm like, you aren't going to do that. Like you don't need that. And even for them, it was a lot of times, three or four meals from the chef was like plenty because you forget about times whether you're out or you have leftovers or whatever it is. So yeah, I agree. Like it doesn't need to be seven days a week for sure.

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**Elizabeth:** Yeah. So, the first thing that I think listeners want to do is track how many days a week am I actually preparing, and how many days are we ordering in, or going out to eat and do we want to continue with that?

**Allison:** No, and it's great to have that awareness and I think that's something that a lot of people don't even have until maybe they start something like this or changing up how they're doing their meals that they become aware of like, oh wow, I didn't realize we were doing that. Were just almost on autopilot, you know?

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. And so, I think that a lot of times because we're approaching the beginning of the year, and this is going to come out on December 20th. So, just before the beginning of the year. So, for those of you who are listening in real time if you have designs to improve your diet for 2023. Prep Dish is something that you may want to do. You may want to start with how many meals per week, we actually cooking at home. So that you have that idea, and it doesn't have to be an all or nothing thing. We always think about that, right.

**Allison:** Yeah.

**Elizabeth:** What else do we need to know about Prep Dish?

**Allison:** Oh, my goodness, I know it's a big question. I think I did touch on this a little bit, but the part that I really like about it is that yes, initially maybe kind of follow it through like the first week. Do it all like we have planned out for you. I think it's good to just get a feel of the rhythm and how it's set up because it is a little different than having individual recipes.

But after that I really love for people to make it their own, like I was saying earlier. We know that our family prefers this vegetable, or this protein, or we want to maybe add a different side. We know that we want to have rice with this meal or whatever it is. But

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making them your own is something that I really like to see people do. Because to me then it's like, okay, I'm actually using this, it's helping me. But then I'm figuring out how I can maximize my enjoyment from it, by making it my own.

**Elizabeth:** I love that because what you're doing is you're creating a framework and they're then just taking that framework and applying it to their lives. Which actually reminded me of a question that I had for you, which is picky eaters. We all have them in our lives whether it's our partner or our kids.

**Allison:** It's not always the kids.

**Elizabeth:** Right. So, how do you manage that? Like how do you come up with great ideas that the whole family is going to like because that cannot be easy.

**Allison:** It is a little tricky, and we did do a challenge slash course on picky eating earlier this year, but it's a little tricky cause it's like what one picky eater, one likes is not the same as what another pick. One picky eater may think of asparagus as great and have it every night. And the other one might love green beans, you know? So, it's not like all picky eaters hate vegetables. They just have their own things.

I think part of it that's cool with prep dish is it opens you up to try new things. You put it on the menu once you kind of see how it goes. And you would be amazed how many times we get emails or posts in the Facebook group of I can't believe my kid just ate salmon and like cleaned his plate. I can't believe my whole family just ate Brussels sprouts. So, I think part of it too is like over time people get discouraged to like, ugh, I've tried this. They're not going to eat it.

But if you maybe, do it in a fun new way, it's like, Hey, it's only going to be here this once. I'm not adding this every week. It kind of changes the mindset I think a little bit too. And maybe just try it and some foods you've tried in ways that you haven't. But

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another thing that I do is, if you have something you know is going to be a little hesitant, have some familiar foods. If you know your kids like rice and you have a rice cooker, just have rice on the table. Have some baked potatoes. Have familiar food. Don't have it all, be all new foods.

If you see it's a meal that's like, this is a little different for my family, then put something familiar out and then that way they have the familiar food. And then, if they try the new food, it's like there's nothing to lose cause they still have something there. So, I think you kind of have to gauge your situation and make it comfortable if you don't want to make people uncomfortable or that sort of thing.

**Elizabeth:** Right. Yeah, I like that because I think that far too often, I don't want to say judge, but we have this preconceived idea of what other people will and won't do because they're in our family and they're familiar. But sometimes they'll surprise you and do something that you didn't expect.

**Allison:** Yeah. Especially, if you go to a restaurant or someone else's house and it's like all of a sudden, they're like, oh yeah, I love this. You're like, what?

**Elizabeth:** Totally. Totally. You're like, wait a minute. You didn't like it when I cooked it.

**Allison:** Yeah. It's like the advice you could ever give to your husband because it always sounds different coming out of someone else's mouth.

**Elizabeth:** Exactly. Yes. Hey, did you know? Yes, I did. I've been telling you that for the past however long. I love that. Okay, so Allison, we have together a gift for the listeners. Yeah?

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**Allison:** Yeah. So, two week free trial. I always like to give it a free trial cause I just think it's good to try it out. See what it looks like, get your hands on it. Go to the grocery store, give it a try before you have to fully commit. I always think I'm always a fan of doing that, so I like to let people give it to a shop.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. And so, for all the listeners, if you go to [elizabethsherman.com/prepdish](http://elizabethsherman.com/prepdish), you will get two weeks free. So, if you're interested in it, there's clearly no obligation to continue with them.

**Allison:** Yep.

**Elizabeth:** Awesome. And you have a podcast for Prep Dish, is that correct?

**Allison:** I do. Yes. It's called Prep Monday and it's short quick episodes every Monday.

**Elizabeth:** Fantastic.

**Allison:** And it's usually meal plan related, sometimes meal plan adjacent. Sometimes I go off on little tangents, but usually kind of prep ahead habits, but whatever's on my mind.

**Elizabeth:** I love it. I love it. Anything else that you want to share with the listeners today?

**Allison:** Oh gosh, I don't think so. I think just, happy 2023 if this is going to be airing in 2023. And I don't know, I'm excited for 2023. So, I think it's going to be a good year.

**Elizabeth:** Yeah. I can't believe how fast this year has gone by. Yeah, hopefully 2023 will increase our health and happiness. I love it.

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**Allison:** Oh, the other thing I should add is if people do try it and they heard it from this podcast, reach out on Instagram or if you join our Facebook group is really great. So, if you join there, put a little post out. Let me know that you heard this episode. I love hearing from people that use Prep Dish, so that would be great too.

**Elizabeth:** Fantastic. I'll tell them. Perfect. Thanks for coming.

**Allison:** Thank you.

I love all the tips and techniques that Allison suggested for getting yourself organized and being able to handle meal prep for yourself and for your family.

Now, again, if you're interested in learning more about Prep Dish and getting the promotion that they're offering to listeners of this podcast, go to [elizabethsherman.com/prepdish](http://elizabethsherman.com/prepdish) to get your two week free trial at no obligation.

All right, that's all I have for you, everyone. Have a great week. I will see you next week, and for the last podcast of the New Year. Talk to you soon. Bye.

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.