Good afternoon and thanks for joining us I am Judy Simpson. When it comes to New Year’s resolutions we tend to make them and then break them. Weight loss is often the most popular resolution so today we're going to learn some truths about dieting and get some tips to help make 2012 a healthier year. And joining me a psychologist and registered dietitian Ellen Albertson who's also the spokesperson for the Vermont dietetic association. Great see you again.

Ellen.: Great to see you, well happy little bit belated New Year.

Judy.: Same to you. Where does the whole idea of New Year’s resolutions come from?

Ellen.: New Year’s resolutions actually date back two about 150 BC to the time of the Romans. There's actually a roman god name Janus and Janus is a very interesting. He has two heads. He is two faces so one faces looking backwards to the past one face is looking forwards. He's also the god of making changes the god of transitions so the Romans actually were making resolutions as far back as 150 BC. This whole idea of you can change. He's also where we get the word January. As a real history people have been making resolutions for quite a long time.

Judy.: From a psychological point of view why do we make New Year’s resolutions?

Ellen.: I think we make New Year’s resolutions because let’s face it were not perfect and there's a lot of things we want to change about ourselves. I think in our society particularly you see here this is from 1915 that this idea of making resolutions of trying to be perfect in every way is something that goes very very deep and I think it's not a great place to be coming from. We're really coming from a place of I've done this wrong so 2/3 us are overweight so we're thinking well I'm overweight need to get in shape I'm in debt. There so many things that we don't like about ourselves and instead of embracing ourselves and saying how can I be kinder to myself how can I show myself some self compassion coming from that kind place. Taking care ourselves. We come from this very punitive I've been bad I've been wrong I've gained weight and New Year’s is a typical time to joke because all throughout December we have over eaten we haven't exercised we've been stressed out so we let our health go. We start with pay fresh start we're going to make some changes which is not a bad idea people who make resolutions actually overall in terms of keeping the changes they do a better job than people who don't make resolutions but we go about the wrong way.
Judy.: Interesting. We mentioned dining that's probably the most popular New Year's resolution.

Ellen.: It is. Health resolutions are very popular and let's face it a lot of us need to lose weight want to lose weight so that is very popular. Eating right getting in shape quitting smoking cutting down on drinking. As lots and lots of places that were trying to change but the problem with the New Year's resolution is that we make way too many resolutions. You can see here from the list that instead of setting one clears a saint goal we set 10 12 different goals and what happens is our brains actually get overwhelmed. It actually takes a tremendous amount of energy to keep a resolution to have willpower. And when we make all these resolutions we overwhelm ourselves so we're not able to keep any of them the dying one is particularly problematic because when we die it we often cut way down on our calories. The cut down their calories we don't have as much glucose which is our bodies fuel our brains fuel. The brain runs on glucose so when we cut down on our calories our brain is not getting calories and were kind of pooped out and it's very very difficult to stick to those resolutions so you really need to have a plan and need to have just one specific goal you're going to follow.

Judy.: Why do so many people fail to keep the resolutions?

Ellen.: I think that part of it is that we don't have the one goal it's not explicit it's not synched we don't have what's called smart goals. We might say I'm going to lose weight but we don't have a goal which a specific measurable achievable realistic and time sensitive. We want a goal such as I'm going to lose 2 pounds a month and we want to have a plan on how to do that. I'll get to that in a minute and another problem the first one is not setting a clear goal not being specific but then there's something here isle of women's world magazine. You see get slim eating on $3.97 a day and lose 10 pounds a week.

Judy.: Is that even possible?

Ellen.: No it's not possible if you lost 10 pounds a week you'd be cutting your calories by 35,000 calories a week which is 5000 calories a day it's not possible that's not healthy but the problem with these magazines is that they set the bar very very high.

Judy.: You're setting yourself up for defeat.

Ellen.: Absolutely. We set very very high goals again this is feeling like I'm not good enough I need to not lose. You know 1 to 2 pounds a month is fine if you do that over the course of the year you'll be losing a lot a weight. If you lose a pound a week you'll lose 52 pounds over the course of the year but we set up this I'm going to lose 10 pounds and these types of magazines that diet books of course they're trying to sell a product so they're not going to tell us the truth. We think that we should be losing 10 pounds Bowie only lose ½ lb. which is fine we feel bad about ourselves so we just go off the diet completely.

Judy.: What are some of the strategies for success?

Ellen.: If a list your strategies the first strategy is set a clear goal for yourself. Again we're talking about weight loss were talking about getting in shape so you're going to set of goals such as I'm going to lose 1 to 2 pounds or ½ lb. and 2 pounds a week instead of saying I'm going to lose 50 pounds. If your goal is to E Wright you might say I am going to have five servings of fruits and vegetables a day or I'm going to take my whole milk and switch it up to 2% or switch
to 1%. You need to have little baby steps and if you put that together at the end of the year you'll be doing very very well. You have to set a clear goal. Then you need a plan and pre commit and I love the story of Odysseus. It goes back to Greek times where he knew he was going by the sirens who would these creatures that men would throw themselves to the sea. He knew that he'd be in trouble so we strapped himself to the mast he planned ahead of time so you have to plan you have to say I'm not going to bring the Oreo cookies and the house I'm going to keep the PAC gym bag in the trunk or I'm going to call my friend and make a plan to go to the gym with them. You really need a pre commit you need to think about what am I going to do I'm going to plan my meals and snacks I am going to take lunch with me to work you have to set some groundwork. You can to say and would lose some way I'm going to eat healthier and not actually do some pre committing.

Judy.: So next is get support.

Ellen.: Right. Support is really really key you want to tell your friends your coworkers your loved ones how they can support you and the interesting thing is that there's actually some very very cool online supports it's called stick K and it's a website you go to stick K.com so it's STICKK.com you can actually make your commitment to your resolution online. You can put money upfront the day if you don't make your goal or to go to a charity. You're actually going to be getting support there in getting some kind of accountability. You really do need to get support. Keeping track is really important as well. I always show people pedometers, these are very inexpensive you can strap them on it shows you how many steps are going to get every single day and there are tons and tons of tools that do this now. There's everything from inexpensive $10.00 or less predominates to I think is called body bo. that you strap on. There's also some very cool apps one that I love is called track in share. What this allows you to do is set your goal and then be able to track your behaviors throughout the day to see how your behavior is impacting medical. So really get some help use some of these great apps or online tools.

Judy.: And don't overreact two a relapse.

Ellen.: Absolutely that's the worst thing you can do. Let's say you had a good week of the eating right and all the sudden where your coworkers has a birthday and you have a piece a cake. No big deal it's just a small laps. What happens with a lot of people is if this all or nothing I have to be perfect attitude and then they get this what the heck kind of behavior where once they make one laps they throw the whole Diane out. Instead of being yourself up give yourself permission two occasionally have a piece of cake or if you had a lapse Co. you can learn from situation figure out how I move forward.

Judy.: That's talk a little bit about some of the most popular diets that there are because there are a diet for almost everything?

Ellen.: There are there are actually dieting is a $57,000,000,000 business it's huge. Unfortunately the diet industry reports on our failures they want us to fail because what happens?

Judy.: You try another diet.

Ellen.: Right you're in this perpetual cycle. Yes there's some very interesting ones out this year. I think the first one we have is the dukan diet. When you're talking about diets there's really nothing new under the sun these diets all want you to think that this is the greatest
thing it's a secret that's going to make use successful. Dukan is just the low CARB high protein diet. There are tons of rules and the thing about this diet is that you're cutting out major food groups were not allowed to have any fruits or grains.

Judy.: That's crazy.

Ellen.: Yup. You're cutting up two major food groups these high protein are genes are very hard and the kidneys so it's not a diet that you can stick to. Are you going to lose some weight initially yes when you go on the low protein diets what often happens is you lose a lot of water weight as your body gets rid of as you are having and the carbohydrates but again there's this issue with the brain and we're talking about willpower. When you don't have carbohydrates your brain is not going to be working and it's going to be very very hard to stick to the regime. I've seen people on this you get grouchy you get bad breath and you feel, gas. Low carbohydrates higher protein is definitely not the way to go.

Judy.: The next one is the Paleo diet?

Ellen.: The paleo diet this one is terrific. The idea behind the paleo diet is that we're supposed to go back to 12,000 BC and we're supposed to eat like caveman. Again cutting out entire food groups no grains no dairy products very hard to follow your pre much on fruits vegetables and meats. Not a healthy diet you're not going to get all the nutrients that you need not a lot of science to back it up. Big promises but this was not going to work in the long term and you are probably going to drive your family crazy.

Judy.: And the fat flush plan.

Ellen.: The fat flush plan that we talked about the low carbohydrate high protein. Fat flush is really low calorie this is a diet that yes will you lose weight initially absolutely the first two weeks of plan are 1100 to 1200 calories. Personally I would eat my children if I were to have that few calories. She also has eating a lot of funky things. Lots of flaxseed which is held the home really you're going to be going to the store of spending a ton of money on flaxseed have on unsweetened cranberry juice is one of those diets that are going to try driver family crazy nobody else in your family is going to be able to follow it. Do yourself a favor and think about long-term changing or your overall eating habits.

Judy.: We only have a few minutes left so let's talk about what the best ideas out there and what you suggest for eating right and losing weight.

Ellen.: Sure. Actually U.S. News and world report said the best diet out there is the dash diet. Dash for dietary approach to stop hypertension. Here's a diet that has so much science behind it is really the right way to diet and the idea behind diet is that you're eating 6 to 8 servings of grains a day and you're going to make those whole wheat. When I say serving it's about a piece of bread or about ½ C of grains. 4 to 5 servings of vegetables and 4 to 5 of fruit that's a key part you're talking about 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day which may seem like a lot but if you really spread out throughout the day start gradually it certainly doable. 2 to 3 servings of low fat dairy products goes easy on the meat we're only talking about lean animal products small servings 4 ounces are so. About six times a week so you may be having one of those a day and the thing that's nice about this they really encourage eating legroom so beans and heating knots. It's a great diet for weight loss diabetes hypertension heart disease and this is really the gold standard.
Judy.: Because as you said their science behind it.

Ellen.: There is there's tons of science behind it. Nutrition is not rocket science we really all know we should be eating less processed foods more whole building our diet around fruits and vegetables and whole grain and limited amounts of lean meat.

Judy.: And you brought some plates to illustrate that.

Ellen.: Wright and leaf we have a picture of my plate to explain this is well because this is new it came out the beginning of the year. The gov't are rid of the black peer made and instead of their showing my plate. This makes it very very easy have basically divide your plate in quarters and you fill up after playing with fruits and vegetables he fill ¼ with grains. You want to make those grains whole grains as much as possible and then you fill 1/4 your plate with protein so you want to have about 4 ounces of protein about the size of the deck of playing cards or your palm. Then you want to have 2 to 3 servings of lean dairy products. This is a very easy way that illustrates for you how you can eat right. The reason I brought the plates is because when you're choosing my plate part of it is choosing the right plate we have to play sizes and studies really show this play here you're going to need substantially less than this play here so you want to have a stir fry you could have a soup that you want to make it a little bit more like a condiment. You want to base your meal more around the fruits and vegetables. Something I like to do is get those Tupperware Containers and when I come home from a grocery store I cut up all my fruits and vegetables and I pack about 4-5 those. I can eat that myself I can give those to my family for snacks so it's all done for you. It goes back again to the planning to the willpower it's more about skill power. Really have to think more about how can I set myself up for success? Would you go into a long-term without checking your car and filling up with gas? You have to set yourself up for success.

Judy.: For more information and good nutrition and weight loss you can go to the web site the Vermont dietetic association which we've listed on the screen. The web address is eat right VT.org. Thanks so much for being here.

Ellen.: My pleasure.

Judy.: Great information. That's our program for today I'm Judy Simpson we'll see you again next time on Across the Fence.

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