



RENALDIET HEADQUARTERS PODCAST

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE
& DIETARY INFORMATION

RENALDIETHQ.COM

Welcome to the Renal Diet Headquarters podcast with your host Mathea Ford, CEO of Renal Diet Headquarters. This is our weekly talk about how you can succeed with a kidney diet, brought to you by <http://www.renaldietHQ.com> a website whose mission is to be the most valued resource on kidney disease that people can use to improve their health.

This week we're going to talk about habits versus goals and I know last week we talked about goal setting and creating the right kind of goals, but you can use those goal setting techniques and turn them into habits. So you need to have some goals, you need to have some ideas of where you want to go, but a habit is a little bit different take on something of a goal. I want to

talk about that today. This episode is being published on January 8, 2014. You can find information and links that I talk about in this episode @ <http://www.renaldietHQ.com/003> that on our website, www.RenalDietHQ.com/003. You Can Also Find Us in iTunes, I will put the link in the show notes for you to find and subscribe to. Any comments would be appreciated and can be sent to podcast@RenalDietHQ.com again that's Podcast PODCAST@renaldietHQ.com.

Okay on to our subject matter. So last week I talked about goal setting and this week I want to talk about habits. I want to talk about whether you should use habits or goals to make a change. When I talked about goals last week I was thinking about goals as far as long term goals and what you really can do with a goal over the long term to make your life go well. So I talked about how healthy eating for life is a change in habits and you have to pay attention to calories in your beverages as well as food, and how to make smart goals.

A Smart goal, remember is something that is specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time based. So instead of saying something like I want to lose 5 pounds this year, you would say I want to lose 5 pounds by the end of January and exercise 30 minutes

every day. So when I said I wanted to lose weight by the 31st of January, and then I said, to do this, I WILL, and I had a set of habits I wanted to change.

Walk 30 minutes a day, about 150 minutes a week. Write down your food. Plan your meals for a week at a time. Those are habits. So in order to achieve a goal, I'm trying to change some habits, so that over the long term, they are finding way to stick to me.

Goals can be short-lived, if you have a goal and your goal is to lose 5 pounds, and all you do is stop eating for a week. That is not going to be a long term change; a habit is more of a long term change. Goals require you to use willpower; willpower is not just an unlimited resource. You don't just have as much well of strength that you want from willpower.

Willpower is more like a muscle. Think about it as every time you have to resist the cookie when you walk by the cookie jar, as like your flexing your bicep. Over time that is going to get tired and fatigued and you are going to have a hard time resisting that cookie. That muscle can wear out over the day and using it throughout the day, by the end of the day, you are pretty tired of having to resist that cookie and you are more susceptible to eating it.

When you look at something as changing a habit, what you are doing is a skill that is developed through repetition. So instead of saying, I'm resisting the cookie, I'm not eating cookies anymore; you are doing things like the exercise. You are doing it more like one or two things at a time; you are not radically changing everything.

So a habit might be that you track the food that you eat. Maybe you have a little app on your phone and you track what food items you eat, or maybe you just track in this case your protein that you eat so you know that you are getting the right amount, whether it is high amount for when you are on dialysis, or lower amount for predialysis. You are tracking food, or you are saying, I'm going to exercise every day. That is not a short term thing, you are like I am going to change my habit, and my habit is going to be that I exercise, I'm an exerciser. It is a skill, it is developed through repetition. You repeatedly doing something over and over and over again, until you get better at it. It becomes part of who you are. You are a person who exercises, when you exercise every day, and you tell yourself, the words you use to talk about yourself and to describe what you do.

You are going to say things like, I can't, originally you might say I can't do this, I can't walk for 5 minutes, I can't walk for two minutes. Well then walk for one minute, but when you say, I can't, every time you say I can't, that is taking away your power. So you are releasing your power from your ability to do things. Instead, you should think about using the words, I don't or I choose not to. So if you say, I don't eat cookies, that is, I choose to not eat cookies. That is not, I can't eat cookies, like somebody else has control over me and is telling me what to do. It is choose to not eat the cookies.

So when you move away from that I can't talk, to, talking to yourself, I choose not to eat the cookies, or I don't eat cookies.

Have you ever had a friend that says, I don't eat candy? They just never want to eat candy and I don't know if the originally every ate candy, but they just tell themselves that they are not a person who eats candy, and guess what, they don't eat candy.

Let me tell you a little story that is a little bit off the subject of dietary stuff, but will make sense of the whole "how you talk to yourself a little differently". It was an opportunity that I had, I was an Army officer and when I was going through my dietetic internship in San Antonio, I had long hair. If you know anything about being in the military or you don't, you can only have hair down to a certain length, it can't touch your collar of your shirt. So in women, the allowed you to braid your hair, and put it up, instead of having to cut it off like men do. So, I was in my internship and I was still dealing with whole idea of authority and learning how to be an officer in the Army and learning how to be a dietitian and we read the *Steven Covey, Seven Habits*, book and in the *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, it talks about this concept of moving from, I can't, to saying I choose to. I am going to tell you the silly example because it was very eye-opening for me. I would braid my hair every morning and I was terrible at braiding my hair because I had to try to do a French braid, and I was just insistent that I had to do a French braid because I apparently didn't want to do a ponytail. I read this and I said I can't wear my hair down, I have to put my hair up, and what you do in the exercise, is you go through and you change the I can't and I have to, to I choose to, or I choose to do this, or I choose not to do something else. So when I went from saying, I can't wear my hair down, and I had to say, I choose to have long hair. I know what it was, I can't have my hair down, and I had to turn and say, I choose to have long hair.

That immediately made me realize, oh, the fact that I have long hair is the reason I have to put my hair up. It is a choice I make to not have short hair. I immediately, that weekend, went and cut my hair off because I was sick and tired of putting it up. It changed the way I saw things, and had that frustration because I though, I'm bringing this frustration on myself.

Now, in this way it is a lot of simple things, like hair, but in a lot of ways it is just like everyday things that we do in our life. If you feel about your kidney diet that you have to eat a low-protein, or you can't have the things that you like. You are always going to see it as a thing that is being imposed on you. Whereas if you saw it as, I choose to be healthy, I choose to exercise every day and strengthen my body; I want to have a healthy life. Those are going to inform you decisions and you are going to act differently about those decisions when they come along.

So when they choice is, do I walk for a few steps today, do I try to get some exercise even if it is only a couple minutes? You are going to keep building on that because you are saying to yourself mentally, I choose to be healthier; I choose to move more often. So over time habits are a more stable thing, and they are harder to change. You may have a habit, obviously, of watching a T.V. show for example. That requires you to sit

down. Now you can add to that T.V. show, you can stand up and you can exercise during that T.V. show. You could get one of those exercise balls and sit there and do some leg lifts on it, one of those big round balls, you could walk on a treadmill or you could walk in your living room or in your kitchen while you are watching the show.

Those things, you need to find some triggers for yourself to help you get those habits into place. The good news about them being harder to change is that they are harder for you to kind of get out of. So once you have gotten into the habit of exercising, it is harder to stop, because you don't feel as good, but it is bad because it is hard to change. Habits are hard to change.

When you make those goals and you know what you want to do and you are looking at what habits to I want to install in my life, start with the smaller things that are going to be easier to accomplish.

Lastly I want to talk to you about creating a challenge for yourself. When you challenge yourself to do things, like you say, I am going to exercise for 30 days in a row, whether that is for five minutes of walking intentionally at a little bit stronger pace than you are used to, being able to walk for 30 minutes or do jumping jacks or do sit-ups or whatever you want to do, whatever is healthy for you. Challenge yourself to something, it does not have to be fitness related, and it can be related to your diet. So if you are going to challenge yourself to sticking to a meal pattern for a week, or even challenge yourself to just write out your meal pattern every Sunday, and go to the grocery store with a list. Then that might be a big challenge for you, because you are used to kind of going willy-nilly and not having a plan, and just kind of going as is. Create a challenge for yourself and then post it publicly, you can post it on our website at <http://www.renaldietHQ.com/003> post it in the comments and say I am challenging myself to do this and then you have posted it publicly and that makes you accountable for it. It makes you push through even when they are hard.

So a challenge is one of those things that if you are committed to doing it, and you are committed to what you want to have as an outcome, you are going to push through. Believe me, there is going to be times when you don't feel like it, there is going to be times when you are not sure that you feel like doing it today. I'll give you an example; I have challenged myself to do 52 podcasts this year, that is one per week, and there are some weeks where we are going to take a vacation as a family, where it is a holiday that week, so several times I'm going to have to make a point of recording a little bit ahead, or trying to get a guest on the podcast, and those are going to be challenges for me because I don't want every podcast to be just me talking, but it's going to have to become where I can get other people on here, and also where it adds value to you, the listener. I have challenged myself to do 52 podcast this year, and that one per week, and I'm going to make sure that those happen.

The other thing I have challenged myself to is to start an exercise program, and that probably why I am talking about exercise so much and kind of working through it verbally because I've challenged myself to do some exercise and I'm going to talk to

you about the exercise program at another time in the future, and what it is, and that is going to be one of my special guests in the near future, is someone to talk about some exercise programs that are very appropriate for people with chronic illnesses and people who have some challenges, even just having the limitation of mobility.

So to wrap up, this month is about habits, not about resolutions, it's the healthy habits month, and that is because habits last longer. Healthy Habits month, you know today I am recording this on Monday, the 6th of January and today is called blue Monday because most people break their resolutions, which is very sad that they break their resolutions by today. That's why I want you to make it a habit, what is your habit going to be?

Stick little things around your house or in your car to remind you of things that you do. Have a little piece of paper that you read every morning that says something along the lines of "I am a healthy person, I write down my foods, I don't eat chocolate" something like that and just read those to yourself every day, it puts that in your mind for the day and it keeps it kind of on top of your mind, thoughts, and you will find yourself saying to yourself, when that chocolate presents itself "Okay, I don't eat chocolate, I'm not a person that eats chocolate." That should be helpful to you.

This month is not about resolutions, it is about habits. Habits last longer and I want to encourage you to develop some healthy habits and to work towards what those habits are for you individually.

So let us know in the comments on the podcast about what are the healthy habits that you are developing and I will talk to you next week, we are going to talk a little bit more about some recipes and some great plans for breakfast.

Thank you for listening.