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Week 14: Mission: Rescue Life

Randy Robison and Sheila Walsh

Danna Demetre and Robyn Thomson #1

Sheila: Welcome to *LIFE Today*. I'm Sheila Walsh here with Randy Robison.

I don't know what comes to your mind when you hear the word *diet*? Like new diet? My pastor used to say to me if I just carried all my diet books up and down the stairs a couple of times I would lose any weight I had to lose.

[Laughter]

But when I got hold of this book I was thrilled and you're going to love it too. It's called *Eat, Live, Thrive Diet* and we have the authors with us.

Please would you welcome Dana Demetre and Robyn Thomson?

[Applause]

So glad you're here. I just called you Dana, didn't I?

Danna: That's all right, Sheila.

Sheila: Her name is Danna and I should know. Because how long was it? I mean I was with you for a conference.

Danna: Probably about five or six years ago.

Sheila: Yeah. And you left a huge impression on me at that point. I remember saying to my husband, "There is just something about her." Obviously, she is beautiful but there is something internal that's beautiful; and the way you care for the women at the conference was really obvious to me. So we're just glad you're here.

Danna: We're thrilled! We are excited to be here.

Randy: We're going to talk about health. We're going to talk about taking control of your health and feeling better, not just looking better but that is a part of it. I'm just curious, what made the two of you get so involved and interested in taking control of your health?

Danna: Well, we each had our own unique journeys. I'm a few years ahead of Robyn, I'm 66 and she is 52 so I started a little earlier. But at about 15, 16 I started my little journey of dieting. I looked at all my girlfriends and I looked at myself and I was like, "I'm fat!" I think it is still going on today. But the sad thing was I wasn't fat but I also just thought it was so important to lose weight that I got in this cycle by the time I was in probably my first year in nursing school, ironically, I was starting to binge and purge because I was so out of control.

So I actually had this unhealthy emotional relationship with food. I loved health and wellness, obviously I was becoming a nurse. But I was in bondage. I was obsessed with getting thinner but all I was doing was getting fatter. So then I would do the whole purging thing. And then because that wasn't working, I started taking diet pills. So I come from this history of just feeling so out of control, so helpless and not having the answers that the good news for me is even though it went from bad to worse because I started having a debilitating panic attacks, it was that fear of dying or losing my mind that led me to the Lord.

So I came to this saving faith and it wasn't like as we all know, we want to be saved in an instant. We want God to -- well, of course he saves us in an instant but he doesn't

necessarily transform us immediately. He took me on a journey. So for the next ten years or so I was on this journey of being transformed by the renewing of my mind and part of that was also my health.

So I know what it is feels like to be in bondage to food, to feel like what's wrong with me? The thing I want to do I need to do, I can't seem to keep doing it. So that's kind of the beginning of my journey. And Robyn's is very different than mine.

Robyn: My journey is more the physical side of things. It wasn't as much emotional, although I was a chubby child, and I guess you would call it a preteen. And I got teased. And so that always stuck with me. But then I just naturally dropped the weight.

In my adult years I was lean and healthy and fit and I became a weight loss coach, lifestyle coach. I was doing that for gosh, 25 years. All of the sudden, in my early 40s I started gaining weight like a lot of women that hit that perimenopausal years. And what I had been doing all my life and what I was teaching my clients to do wasn't working for me anymore.

Sheila: I think that's so frustrating! So many women experience that. It used to be like when I was 20 I could skip lunch and lose weight. Now I have to skip like January.

[Laughter]

Randy: Guys too. It happens to us.

Robyn: So I was really just trying to figure out what am I going to do? Because I felt very out of integrity. Here I'm coaching people and I'm gaining weight and it's not stopping. So I really had to go back to researching and seeing what's happening to my body? There's changes taking place and I had to make that decision, I need to change what I'm doing because what was working for me before is not working for me now. And I found, actually with the principles in our book, it was kind of a pilot program that I

did and I learned what was going to help me get lean and healthy again.

Sheila: So what led the two of you to writing *Eat, Live, Thrive*?

Danna: Well, we were involved in ministry many years ago and hadn't connected for some time but I was starting to do some videos and wanted to do some healthy cooking. And Robyn came on a show to start doing some healthy recipes and we had so much fun together; always really respected each other, enjoyed each other. And it was like just the chemistry, and there was a synergy, and you know we need each other in this journey.

So we started collaborating and I realized my battle with food, even though I had victory was different than hers. She had food sensitivities and issues I didn't have. I also started to gain some weight in perimenopause; the typical five, 10, oop! It went up to 15 pounds, thinking are my principles still working?

So we started to talk about we're not alone here. We're noticing most women over 45 are starting to kind of give in to the reality of oh, this is the way it's going to be.

We're like, no! We're going to prove it's not the way it's going to be. So we just started doing more and more videos and the women were responding.

We started doing pilot diet programs with women because we believe in lifestyle change. We don't want to just put somebody on a diet, okay, lose the weight, okay now you're on your own. So we were getting amazing success, not just with our own bodies and goals but with the women we were coaching. And it got more and more exciting and we had to share it.

Sheila: I watched your videos, they're great!

Danna: We're kind of goofy.

Sheila: I love that! I love that you're goofy and I love that, like I would never watch and think, oh look at them. They're amazing. I'm a complete failure. You always make room for humanity in your videos which I think is really beautiful.

Danna: Well, we tell our readers, our clients, we're on the journey too. We definitely have found victory, we have found the solution. It is working for us so we can say with integrity this is working. But we're still on the journey. Like every woman we want to be our healthiest. At 66, I'm not as resilient as I used to be. I know that even if I can stay lean there is a lot more to my body than just looking lean. I want to be healthy. I want to be running around at 75, 85 and living out God's purpose for my life.

Robyn: I want to say also that I have in the book I write about my hunger games. They're really not games because they're not fun at all but I have had a severe hunger issue for like eight years. So am I perfect all the time at my plan? Absolutely not because sometimes I give in to that. I could eat a whole meal, a big plate of food and in a half hour still feel like I want to eat again. So that's been a really struggle for me.

Yet, at the same time -- sometimes I give in. Usually I give in with healthy food but not always. But I know that I can get back on a regular lifestyle plan that is going to be the best suited for my body.

Randy: There is something in your book that caught my eye. I'm a bit of a word nerd, I confess. You look at the Greek of the word *diet* and you say it means a way of living. And then you say that can include not just how we eat but also the types of habits we regularly practice.

Like you said, you come from different backgrounds, you from an eating disorder, you just from age and all of the sudden the body's changing but both of you had to change the way you thought about food and diet, your living and your habits. What shifted there?

Danna: I've always said knowing what to do is not enough. Knowing how to get

yourself to do it is the biggest part of the battle. You want to know a good healthy way to approach health and diet but we do believe that it should become a lifestyle. So a shift in thinking is not I'm on a diet, I'm off a diet -- all or nothing, black or white. Oh that's not on the program. Can't eat that! But more, how can I develop an eating system for myself that I can eat most days for the rest of my life and still actually enjoy my life? Because if we can't embrace our whole life because God gave us sweet taste buds and he gave us taste to bless us. So we have to find that balance. And part of it is mental, emotional and spiritual, and part of it is physical. We just have this passion for marrying all those parts together because it matters to God and it matters to us to have a quality life.

Sheila: The book, we're going to tell you at the end how you can get hold of this book.

But the thing that I loved is that like I'll buy a new book that's the latest thing that's doing great and two days into it I want to throw it out the window. But there is something about your program. Maybe you can break it down a little, tell us a little bit and then we're going to have another show when we're going to get into a lot more detail. But break down the basics of what your program is.

Robyn: Well I should say that we wrote it specifically for women, say 45 plus although it works for any age. In fact, we have some client that are younger that have had some amazing results. And it works for men too. Because of the changing in our bodies, our bodies are changing constantly, it is a three phase plan, so to speak. And it's meant to be used cyclically; that you can go through these phases throughout the year. Any time you find yourself, maybe you're at a weight that you are happy with but maybe you have a lot of engagements and weddings and all that, you find yourself falling off track, you can constantly move back to the first phase and start through them again.

But the first phase is really about eliminating foods. We call them food culprits. It is certain foods that you're eliminating to jump start your weight loss, improve vitality and you begin to learn what foods your body might be sensitive to because there is no cookie cutter one-size-fits-all to our plan.

Sheila: Which I actually think is really encouraging. And you give people different levels. Like if they want to gradually sneak in but for others who are like, no, I want to do this. You can dive in a deeper level.

Danna: And on phase one we ask everybody to go on some form of elimination. Robyn is super disciplined. She has had to deal with this hunger thing and she is like, oh I'm going to do a phase three. I said, "But Robyn, reality is some people aren't ready for that."

So we started this Level 1, which we asked them to give up grains and sugar for 14 days. Not forever! It's like don't panic! And so they can go from that very simple Level 1 grains and sugar for 14 days or they can add some other food culprits. Because as Robyn said women don't realize and men as well, Randy, we're not going to leave the guys out of this. Most people have food sensitivities that are causing inflammation in their body, causing disease. Food can be both the cause and the cure for so many of our health issues. So we're really helping women figure out what are some of those causes.

We know that grains can be a number one culprit, as well as of course, everybody knows we don't *need* sugar. So they can do these different levels on the diet and decide what's working. They can notch up. So it's like you can do a combination of Level 1 and 2. You can do a combination of 2 and 3. We were talking earlier about coffee. You can do a Level 3 and you can still, if you really -- if you can't do a diet even for two weeks and not let go of coffee then keep your coffee in.

We're all about helping women find victory, discover things that help them feel great and shed the pounds. And because these women, we women as we age, we have carbohydrate sensitivity issues, and slim resistance, hormonal imbalance. You guys have some hormone imbalance too, Randy but it doesn't always hit you the same way as us. And so all this elimination phase really helps address all those things.

Randy: One thing about that I notice when I was reading about that because when I

heard "elimination" I thought, oh great, here goes the good stuff. But what you do find out, and I'm experiencing this, I've lived it the last several years. Some foods that I had eaten my whole life affect me differently now than they ever have before. You don't know that until you cut it out and you go, wow, I don't have that pain or I don't have that tiredness or whatever it is that's getting you. It is that food. It didn't used to do that to me.

Robyn: And that's where phase two of our program comes in because if you're eliminating a whole bunch of foods how do you know which food is the one? And there may be multiple that is either making you more tired or whatever the things are that you're noticing. Usually by the end of the elimination phase or phase one people are feeling amazing. So then...

Randy: Because have you gotten rid of everything by then? Is there anything left?

Robyn: Not everything.

Sheila: You get to keep lettuce.

[Laughter]

Randy: Lettuce and coffee.

Robyn: There's tons of food!

Danna: There are so many great foods the whole time.

Robyn: But in the second phase we call it "discovery" because that's when you are discovering which foods that you're going to add back into your regular lifestyle or that you're going to discover, hey, this food is not working for me. I'm going to make a choice. I call it a true choice because it is not someone telling you, like Danna was saying, we all know that sugar is bad. But for example, corn, we'll say. If I said, "Sheila

you shouldn't eat corn." You would say, "Robyn, don't should on me."

Sheila: [Mouthing: I wouldn't say that.]

[Laughter]

Robyn: So nobody likes to be told what to do. When you discover for yourself this food is making me break out, I'm having a headache, I'm bloated, my weight is going up. It is much easier for you to say, "I don't want to have this in my lifestyle any longer." It is not like you may never have it again but you're going to choose to maybe eliminate it for the most part.

Danna: By the way, we have so many amazing recipes that people aren't feeling deprived like you think because we have grain free, even some sweet things that totally satisfy. Our readers and the women that have gone through the diet are like, "Oh, my gosh! This makes all the difference."

Sheila: What are the muffins you have? You mentioned some muffins?

Danna: Snickerdoodle muffins. Lemon poppy seed muffins. We have a chocolate. Because all through the diet they can have at least one tablespoon of either raw organic honey or pure maple syrup within some recipes. Like a teaspoon per recipe every day without throwing everything off balance. They really realize oh, my gosh! If I can substitute some of these healthy things that are realize easy to make and I have them available, I can do this.

Randy: Those recipes are in the book?

Danna: They are.

Robyn: They are in the book and they really are good. We have a lot of our clients of

that have said, I think of Tracy. She made them and her husband ate the whole batch. Now we don't encourage doing that.

Danna: They're that good!

Robyn: They're that good.

Sheila: That's hilarious! Tell us maybe like one other person who you have seen a huge difference in.

Danna: Well, I'm thinking of Sandy. Sandy came to us and she had been struggling for like nine years; just feeling so defeated, a failure. She was in her mid-50s but feeling like she was 60. And she just started the elimination and she started to feel so good and shed the pounds because it is amazing how quickly the body wants to really reward you for treating it well. But she just, through the holidays in fact, this was over a year ago, she was just gradually losing, I think she lost about 25 pounds and 18 inches. But more importantly than all that, she said, "I feel so much younger. I feel hope again." She felt like she was in bondage. She felt kind of that unhealthy, spiritual, mental, emotional connection with food. And now she just feels victory and she has a plan that works for her. And she cycles through the different phases.

Sheila: That's fantastic! We're going to let you know how you can get a hold this book because it really has everything in it. That's the thing I love. It's very doable. It's very doable and it really works for men and women which I think --

Randy: No, I can tell. You just read through it. It's common sense. A lot of it.

Sheila: The thing I love too is it's godly common sense. You spend quite a bit of time talking about, you know Romans 12, transformed by the change in the way you think.

Danna: We spend two whole chapters on changing your habits from the inside out,

taking that biblical approach to renewing your mind, to identifying the lies you're believing and really telling yourself the truth using both biblical, spiritual truth as well as just impactful statements.

Randy: Well, we want you to get this book and we want you to help yourself. At the same time, we want you to help us as we help other people around the world. We really can lift each other up, not just by discussing how to be fitter and healthier but by reaching out and reaching into places where people can't necessarily help themselves.

I want you to watch this and prayerfully consider how you can be a part of what we love to call Rescue Life. Watch this.

On the mission field

Open caption: Anju, 16 years old.

>> My family never had enough machine. I wanted to go to school but I had to find work.

Announcer: Anju's story is all too familiar to many other young girls across Southeast Asia. She is one of countless children that face similar challenges.

Open Captions:

>> At one of my jobs I met a young man. He seemed to care about me and offered me a better job. I was desperate for money so I went with him to the border.

Announcer: Human traffickers deceive their victims to accompany them to an open border like this one in Nepal in India. Luckily, *LIFE's* mission partners are stationed along the border and they are trained to spot girls like Anju.

Open Captions:

>> When they stopped us at the border to talk I was very scared because I didn't know

why they stopped us.

Announcer: If the border missionaries determined that a child is being trafficked, they will turn the trafficker over to the local police and will make sure that the victim is safe.

Open Captions:

>> They explained how girls are sold after they cross the border and the things that girls like me are forced to do. The people at the border saved my life. I realized how close I was to becoming a victim of trafficking. It is very important that they stay working at the border. They can save many more girls like me.

End of clip

In the studio

Randy: Sheila, you and I have been to a lot of these places where girls are trapped in sex trafficking. And we have seen just how awful it is and sometimes how hard it can be to get them out of it. How does that make you feel when you see that we're able to intercept them before they ever get into it?

Sheila: Amazing! Honestly, just a few weeks ago I was back in Southeast Asia. And when I see that girl's story, when I see the joy in her face, when I see the innocence still in her eyes because she is just a young girl, and then I think of some of the girls I met just a few weeks ago who were trapped. There was nobody there at that particular time at the border.

We have some of the most amazing teams on the ground. I love what James and Betty do. Their thing is we're not going to go into a country and just decide to do our own thing. They always ask who is God using in this country and how can we get underneath and support them and hold them up? So I had the awesome privilege of meeting with the SWAT team. You know those who will go in and literally kick the doors down and

rescue girls and make sure that the traffickers are sent to prison.

We don't want any other girls to have to end up in a place where they wake up one morning and discover that they've been drugged and they're lying beside some man -- and this innocence has been lost. But we can do something. I've seen with my own eyes. That's why it is three pronged. It's reach -- we go into the villages and we teach these little girls, when a man comes up to you and says, "Hey! I've got something to show you. I've got a puppy in the car. I've got candy. You scream as loudly as you can, 'No!' And you run. And you always go hand in hand with another girl."

But then we also do rescue. We go in and we kick the doors down in Jesus' name and we pull these young girls out.

And then it is restoring, bringing them to a place where they can be told there is a God in heaven who heard every cry and we come in his name. And to watch those girls restored is one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen in my life.

Randy: I really like, and I think the guy part of me rises up when I see these guys literally knocking down doors to rescue these girls because I have daughters of my own. And I don't know -- you'd have to forcibly stop me to prevent me from rescuing my daughter in that situation.

These girls don't necessarily have someone that will kick the door down for them. That's what we need you to do. The way we do it is we stand up together and we say we're going to do something about it. We've got the systems in place, we've got the people in place. We just need your support to kick those doors down.

What we found is we spend about an average of \$128 to rescue one child. We've got some friends that have offered a matching gift right now. Meaning that if you give \$64 today it will be combined with the matching gift; it will be doubled in impact and it will help to save one child. \$128 will save two.

Some of you could give \$1280 and that will save not just ten children but because of the doubling of the gift, 20 children! If you can do more than that, I encourage you to just do as much as you can because we are knocking down those walls. We are reaching, we are rescuing, and we are restoring.

We want to help you. If you ask for this book today, whatever gift you give towards Rescue Life we'll send you *Eat, Live, Thrive* just to help you so you can live longer and healthier and stronger so that you can join us in rescuing even more. Won't you go to the phone or go online right now? You can help save a child today.

Begin video clip

Announcer: Behind the bright lights there is a darkness where a world of innocence is lost and abuse runs rampant scarring the souls of children with no one and nowhere to turn for help. With bodies broken and hopes crushed, these young victims are trapped in a never-ending nightmare.

Today, you can shine the light of God's love in this dark world to reach, rescue, and restore these young ones to the life God designed for them to live. With a generous \$320,000 matching gift, now your gift of \$128 to help rescue a child can be doubled to help two children. Your \$64 gift will be matched to help rescue one child from the horrors of human trafficking. And a \$32 mission rescue gift will be doubled to \$64.

And with your donation of any amount, we'll send you *The Promises of Christ* gift book filled with beautiful photographs, scriptures, stories, and commentary from James Robison.

With your gift of \$128 or more you'll receive "The Names of Jesus" throw. This beautifully woven blanket features the names of Jesus in many languages. It will make a

lovely addition to your home and serve as a beautiful reminder and spiritual comfort to the Lordship of our savior.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1280 which will now help rescue 20 children. And you may request our beautiful new bronze sculpture, "Safe in the Shepherd's Arms."

Please call, write, or make your gift online.

End of clip

In the studio

Sheila: Thank you so, so much! If the phones are busy, keep calling. We really need your help and we have this awesome \$320,000 matching gift. So everything you send will now be doubled. And you get this amazing book! For any gift at all we will send you this book, *Eat, Live, Thrive Diet*.

Will you please help me thank our amazing guests who are going to come back for another show! Awesome! So for Randy, this is Sheila saying we'll see you next time on *LIFE Today*!