



This is the *Health Matters* podcast.

### **Simple Healthy Living with Rachel Almstedt**

I'm your host Kimberley Payne and this is the show for women who want to improve their spiritual and physical health.

In this episode, you'll receive information and inspiration for women who want better health but don't know where to start. Rachel Almstedt shares her background story and then talks through some of the biggest roadblocks that women face. She gives simple solutions and shows the connection between faith and health. You'll walk away from the podcast with practical tips you can implement immediately and be full of positive energy to make it happen.



My guest this week is Rachel Almstedt. Sick, tired and overweight, Rachel became determined to overhaul her own physical, spiritual, and emotional habits. Using her strong faith, natural foods, and a relaxed lifestyle she went from rock bottom to Ultimate Health. From this experience, her background in education and training as an Integrative Nutrition Coach, Rachel founded Pray Live Eat in February of 2014 where she makes healthy living simple, fun and delicious through group classes and private coaching. You can find her on the web at [www.prayliveeat.com](http://www.prayliveeat.com). Welcome Rachel!

### **Rachel**

Thank you. It's great to be here.

### **Kimberley**

We're glad to have you. Right off the top let's talk about being a health coach. Why did you become a health coach?

### **Rachel**

This is something I'm very passionate about. I had always been one of those people that was considered a healthy person. Very active and telling my friends in the college cafeteria why are they taking ice-cream because it's nobody's birthday. Just always that health person and then somewhere along the line I got really thrown off course. I was working full-time and had two young kids and like many moms I found myself very sick and tired. Chronically sick and tired all the time. 40 pounds overweight and I just couldn't get it together. I had hit that rock bottom place. Through some very simple lifestyle changes I was blessed to come back to what I call "ultimate health". It's been a journey. It was a journey of a few years. It takes time and commitment but with very simple changes it does happen.

I just became very passionate about sharing that with other women because we hear women say this all the time, "Oh I'm just getting older. I'm at this time of life. I can't be as active as I used to be." It's just not true. Every year can keep getting better and better in new and exciting ways.

Just having been at that rock bottom place myself and seeing how we can live very healthy with very simple changes that is what I love to share and am passionate about. Coaching women through that is so exciting to see the changes that take place in their lives as they work their way on their journey towards ultimate health.

### **Kimberley**

Sometimes it takes just that, to hit rock bottom before we're ready to start to even consider making those changes for sure. What would you say are the biggest roadblocks keeping women from better health?

### **Rachel**

Well the biggest roadblock—and women tell me this all the time—is time. One of them is time. We are all busy in our modern world today, being pushed to go 24/7 and we have kids, and whatever we're doing in life we're busy and being pulled in so many different directions. That can be a big road block just thinking that we don't have the time to do.

And what that can do is lead to overwhelm where we are in that rock bottom place and just don't know where to start. There are so many things. I need to eat better, I need to exercise more, I need to do this, I need to get better in my spiritual life. There's too many things and that is a big roadblock, not knowing where to start. That's very overwhelming and frustrating and leads people on a continually downward cycle that's very hard to break out of without having someone there to support you.

### **Kimberley**

You've said a number of times "simple" and I like that. There are so many things that are very complicated. What would you say are 3 simple solutions that you can offer?

### **Rachel**

Three simple solutions when we're talking about our health, one of the first things that I always do with clients is ask them about water. It may even seem too simple but I have seen clients make huge gains in their energy level and even their food choices just by adding water. That is one of the first things that I always ask, "How much water do you drink?" And a lot of times people are not drinking water. So by

adding in water into the day—a very simple thing we all have access to it, it's not going to cost us anything and it's not going to take any time. A big bonus is to add in water right at the first of the day. When we first wake up if we can drink a glass of water that does wonders for our digestive system and it gets our day starting in a more energized way. So that's one very simple solution.

Another simple solution is to breathe. We are rushing and rushing through our days and our breaths are very shallow. It just leads to holding on to a lot of tension and anxiety. By stopping and breathing, it slows everything down, it relaxes everything and it gives a whole new perspective on what we're doing. In all my coaching sessions, we always start with three deep breaths together. It's amazing the energy that happens. Even for me leading three deep breaths it calms everything down. And when we can do that we have that calmer perspective to go forth and get done everything we need to get done in a day.

Kimberley

And do you have a third simple solution?

Rachel

Oh, thank you. Yeah, another simple solution is when we talk about food people want to know what to eat. A very simple thing is think green. Think green with our foods. That's the biggest thing that's missing from most of our diets today are the leafy greens. By adding those in, we can see great benefits. The leafy greens are like the leaves of a plant that exchange oxygen and carbon dioxide. When we eat those, we are supporting our lungs, we're supporting our immune system, we are boosting our energy.

Simple ways to do that are of course there's the salad, with a salad we need to go darker green. There's the green smoothies, adding those in. But another simple way is to puree greens. Take some greens and puree them and add them to whatever your family is already eating. You don't have to make big changes. If you have your favourite lasagna or your favourite casserole, puree some leafy greens. Or a soup. Just start small. Add in a fourth of a cup at first and just add that in. Really nobody will notice (if they don't see you doing it). They will not notice and that is a simple way to simply start adding green in. But those leafy greens. We need to go green to feel the benefits of our health.

**Kimberley**

Those are 3 super simple ways. As you're talking I'm looking at my water here and thinking yes that is definitely something that when I worked with clients and we talked about water, that was the number one thing that increased energy for people feeling tired, especially in the afternoon at that three o'clock slump. Water makes such a significant difference.

And the greens reminded me of my Dutch heritage. My mom makes stomp pot. She would make potatoes with onions and carrots. But also we would have potatoes with spinach. That's something that I did a lot with my children. Basically you just boil up potatoes and then add in the spinach at the end and you mash it all up and add a little bit of butter. It's delicious and a fun way to get the greens in. To this day—they're older teenagers, young adults—they are asking Oma for stomp pot.

**Rachel**

I love it. That's just a great example of one of your family favourites and just adding that in. We don't have to take away our favourite things. We can tweak them a little bit and get those healthy benefits.

### **Kimberley**

Exactly, and like you said it's super simple. They're not difficult. And they will make dramatic changes in your health.

A lot of times women tend to put our health on the back burner because we are tending to everybody else's concerns and needs. Why do you think it's important for women to put their own health needs on the front burner?

### **Rachel**

That is such an important topic and that's why so many do hit that rock bottom place. It's because we are pulled on in so many ways. If we have our families, if we have a job, if we have activities at church and in our community we are being pulled on in so many different ways. And we give, give, give. And when we do that we can't keep giving, giving, giving. It's like writing cheques and writing cheques and not depositing. We have to find that balance because that bank account, if we keep giving out of the back account without replenishing it, it's going to go overdraft. And that won't be of use to anybody.

That's a comparison. If we keep giving and giving and giving, we will not be able to continue that pattern. And it is so important to us to want to take care of people and to serve our communities. So to do that we have to take care of ourselves. That's not a selfish thing. We can do that in ways that it's not a self-indulgence. It's not something that should cause any guilt, or we should feel guilty about. We need to do that. We need to do that so we can continue. If we continue to stay up late every night for instance, cleaning the house or working on the kids' projects, or whatever we're doing, and deprive ourselves of that sleep we're not going to be able to function very well the next day. Or we start to put other things into our bodies like caffeine and sugar that only take us further away from our health.

So by putting our health first, being vigilant about our sleep, by making sure we get our exercise, by drinking our water, we become so much more energized and so much more focussed that we can actually serve more people and do more for our communities which makes us even happier. It's a very important thing and you can tell that I'm very passionate about that we have got to do that as women to keep it together.

This is what happened to me. I was not doing that and then I was getting sick all the time and then the things that I was supposed to be taking care of either weren't getting done or had to be done quickly and that causes so much stress. By putting our own self-care on the front line it will make the lives of everybody else around us even better.

### **Kimberley**

I like the example of the bank. You're right, if we're always writing cheques there's going to be nothing in the balance. But if we're putting a dollar in here and a dollar in there, by all these small little simple things, then we can make sure that there's money in the bank and there's energy in our bodies. That's a good analogy.

It also reminds me of when you are flying and they have the instructions to do in case the oxygen masks come down. They always say put it on you first before you help somebody else because you'll be no good to anyone else if you don't have the oxygen needed yourself.

**Rachel**

Right, I love that example.

**Kimberley**

How does the connection between faith and health affect every area of a woman's life?

**Rachel**

Well, our faith life is, of course, the most important aspect of our health and our lives. It is all connected. Every area of our life affects every other area. If we're eating all the right things but we're not grounded spiritually—the overall big picture is keeping our life focussed on God and that has to come first. When we do that, when we keep our focus on God and we have our faith we realize we have to take care of our bodies so that we can continue to do the service and the work that we were created to do.

A lot of my clients end up being more grounded in the spiritual side and need to see that connection. Again, it goes back to the self-care, to be able to continue in the faith life that we have, we have to care for this body while we're here. We can't have one without the other.

**Kimberley**

I so agree. That's my tagline really, how exercise and healthy eating is to the body what prayer and Bible study is to the spirit. That's a good lead into the BEEP round. Rachel will give quick tips on the four disciplines of Bible study, eating healthy, exercise, and prayer or BEEP. So what do you have for us for a quick tip for Bible study?

**Rachel**

For Bible study, the quick tip is to do it daily. To be in the Word daily. With technology we have apps that give us access to it all the time. We can have a Bible on our phone and we can get devotions emailed right to us. So we have that access to do that daily. To be in the Word daily and studying God's Word daily is my tip on Bible study.

**Kimberley**

What about your quick tip on eating healthy?

**Rachel**

My quick tip on eating healthy is to go green. Look for ways to add in the green foods, whether it's going darker in your salads, adding greens into a smoothie or making some purees and adding them into your family favourite dishes that you're already eating.

**Kimberley**

Your quick tip for exercise?

**Rachel**

My quick tip for exercise is to listen to your body. We have so many crazy exercise programs out there. They're great for a lot of people but they can cause a lot of injuries. When we're starting our journey towards health keep it simple and really listen to our bodies. If something hurts our bodies, it's not good for us. Even if everyone else on the block is training for a marathon if running hurts your knees, don't do it. Really listen to your body and find a kind of exercise that is going to help your body get stronger and not injure it.

**Kimberley**

Love it. And finally, your quick tip on prayer?

**Rachel**

This comes right from a sermon I recently heard that when we go into prayer is to pray boldly and to ask God boldly with our petitions. In this sermon, it's just like when a child asks their father to fix the toy boldly. They know their dad can do it and they boldly don't have any doubts. And that is how we should come before our Heavenly Father in prayer.

**Kimberley**

Beautiful. Now I understand that you have a gift for our listeners. Can you talk a little bit about that?

**Rachel**

Yes, I would invite all the listeners here to a free complimentary coaching session. This is what I do with my private clients. This is a full coaching session where we will identify your top roadblocks and give you some specific strategies that you can implement into your life. I offer that to any of our listeners today.

**Kimberley**

That's fantastic! What I will do is have a link in the Show Notes at my website [www.kimberleypayne.com](http://www.kimberleypayne.com) where you can email Rachel and if you put in the subject line "Health Matters" then you can receive this complimentary coaching session. That's great.

**Kimberley**

I want to say thanks again to Rachel Almstedt for her expert advice and thank you for joining us today.

This interview has been brought to you by the [Fit for Prayer e-course. Learn simple exercise strategies to get you in shape and prayer strategies to connect deeper with God.](#) You can discover more about this online course and other health programs at [www.kimberleypayne.com](http://www.kimberleypayne.com).

If you liked this episode please help spread the word by leaving a rating and review on iTunes.

This has been the Health Matters Podcast, believing that prayer & Bible study are to the spirit what exercise and healthy eating are to the body.

Blessings on your journey to health.

### About Kimberley Payne

Kimberley Payne is the host of the *Health Matters – Healthy Spirit Healthy Body* podcast. She is author of *Fit for Faith – a 7-week program to improve spiritual and physical health* and is a motivational speaker offering workshops and online courses based on her book. She hopes to inspire women to live happier, healthier lives that glorify God. She is happily married and lives with her husband in a village east of Toronto, Canada where she hikes and bikes. Visit her website at [www.kimberleypayne.com](http://www.kimberleypayne.com)

