

Ep 43: Breaking the rules and doing a 30 day meal plan YOUR way

MERYL: Hello everyone. And welcome back to the Rebel Nutritionist podcast today. I have Emily back on with me today. Welcome Emily.

EMILY: Hi guys. Thanks for having me.

MERYL: We are going to talk all things Rebel Nutritionist, 30 Day Your Way plan. We are really, really excited to be launching this Valentine's day. What better day to launch give the gift of health to someone you love. But we figured everybody by then **will be done with their new year's resolutions**. Those have been swept under the rug far, far away. And ready to finally stick to something that makes sense, and that is effective and delicious and not restricting and all that good stuff.

So without further ado Emily, you are an integral part of creating this program and what a bang up job you did. It was really a nice collaborative effort, but really kudos to you on it. So thank you for that.

EMILY: Thanks. Yeah, I'm really, really excited about this program. The fact that it's self-paced and something that someone can do, at their own pace and, and really figure it out as they go, I think it'll be, it'll be really a great, sustainable change that people can make in their life.

MERYL: right. And that's the goal. So it's funny because somebody said to me, well you're not a big fan of the fad diet yet you call it the Rebel Nutritionist 30 Day Your Way, **the reason we called it 30 Day Your Way is because we really provided people with the tools to be able to really incorporate this in a flexible way for the month**, right? Different recipes, different ways of mixing and matching different ways of putting a

plate together so that these habits really stick. So it's not a gimmicky here's a four week plan and then go back to something else.

It's this is the **jumping-off point of a four-week plan** that you are now going to use moving forward.

We can be flexible with what foods we eat - abundance mindset

EMILY: Yeah, absolutely. And like you said, it's, it is **customizable**. And I think that's what really sets it apart from these typical fad diets, because fad, diets and diets in general, they're just so restrictive. And this is the opposite of that.

It's, it's very not restrictive. It's customizable. It's just **giving you great recipes that we truly believe are anti-inflammatory. They're good for your health overall.** And they're kind of showing people like the proper way to make a plate and make sure that they can, The positive that they're getting **the right nutrition into their body and while not restricting themselves.**

So it's actually **sustainable** rather than something that you're going to do short-term and get really sick of, or trying to kind of make that change in your lifestyle and help you understand the why behind it too. I mean, that's why we have some resources in here that explain the reason why these are good recipes.

MERYL: Yeah, that, and that's so true. And going back to **it doesn't limit you.** I remember when we were creating it and you're like, well, what about these certain fruits? And my, explanation is always, well, nobody ever got fat, let's say from eating one too many bananas, that's just not the case.

Right. Right. **People are so afraid of food.** In general, they're afraid to eat because, oh, I'm afraid to eat a carb, but because the carbs are not good. Oh, I'm afraid to eat too much of this because this is not good. **I think the one thing that I'm so proud of about this program is that we teach people that all foods, as long as it's real whole food, food that's come out of the ground food that's not processed. All of them fit into your life.** And I think, yeah, that's the one thing I think people, when they are with me long enough and spend enough time with me, they're like, wow, you eat that food or you eat this food. They're always shocked that I'm eating these foods. And I'm like, yes, I'm not eating them.

You know, ad nauseum. I'm not eating them until like I'm not overindulging them and gorging myself with these foods. They all have a place. I think people are shocked when I tell them I have a banana in the morning. They're like, you need one, whole banana.

EMILY: I know I go through the same thing. They're like, you're an RD and you eat this. I'm like, yes, because I've trained my body over time to be able to accept all foods and train my mind to, I mean, I'll try to take the guilt away from food because what's the point, like, just enjoy it. Yeah. **Your body can adjust itself. It can have the ability to heal itself. And when you nourish it with all types of food, that's, that's when it's the most powerful.**

MERYL: Right.

EMILY: So I totally agree with you. And that's kind of the point of this program is **to take that guilt away from the food and, and show people that you can eat all food categories and they all have a place on your plate.**

MERYL: here's the, even the bigger kicker to this if you make the plate and **you really fill it the way we encourage you to fill it. I guarantee you, you will feel full.** So I'm going to tell a story. I'm totally calling Howie out on this, but I'm sure he won't care. So Howie is my boyfriend and he's been trying to lose weight and I keep encouraging him and guiding him and whatever.

So I finally said to him, look, I, and I actually gave him some of the recipes and whatever, and I made him dinner the other night. I said, look, this is how we are setting up your plate. And we made the salmon and I made two different kinds of vegetables. We did escarole. He had no idea what escarole was. So I showed him escarole. So we made escarole with leaks. I did broccoli with garlic. And then I did a roasted sweet potato and I filled his plate. According to the picture on the plate, I literally showed it to him. I said, now you tell me. After you eat all of this, he goes, cause I eat my vegetables, I eat vegetables. I'm like, you are not eating enough vegetables.

You're not eating enough fiber and the good fat. Right. So the fact that I cooked the escarole with some ghee clarified butter, he's like you're using butter. He was freaked out that I was using butter. Yes, I'm using butter. And so I said, but you eat this whole thing. And then tell me afterwards, if you're still hungry, because he's like, oh, I want something sweet after.

And sure enough he ate it. He was like, wow, this is delicious. I'm like, see what a little good butter. **So he was satisfied.** I said, part of the reason that we, we long for something, or we want something after we eat, right. People say, oh, **I want something sweet because we're not satisfied with what we've eaten already eaten it because we feel like we've, we've sort of checked the box.**

Oh, I had a protein, I had a carb I had a fat or whatever, but they haven't enjoyed it. When he finished the meal and he's like wow that was really good. And it was really filling and I was really satisfied, you know? So he's like, he goes, well, I still want a little chocolate. I said, go have our chocolates, the FX chocolate, the sleepy chocolate. And it went and it worked and he went to bed but, but some of it is just, like you said, training your body retraining ourselves to not feel guilty. , it's a huge one. You know, the fact that you said that was, spot on because why should we feel guilty when we eat food should be enjoyable, not guilty written.

And I feel like so many people feel guilty when they eat.

EMILY: I think you hit the nail on the head by saying like, **if you're not enjoying your meal, then you're not going to be satisfied.** Because satisfaction. It's all in the brain too. It's like you know, yes. Okay. You might not be physically hungry because there's food in your belly because you know, biologically, the hunger cues are maybe not there anymore, but **you're not satisfied with what the flavors and the taste** and everything that you think that you wanted, that you didn't give yourself.

I think it's just, it's worth it. It's worth it to give yourself a meal that you're going to enjoy rather than eating something you didn't even like,

MERYL: It is, it's so true. you know, I have people at the time, it say to me, I'm like, okay, do you eat fish? And they say, well, I know I'm supposed to like salmon and I

should try really to like salmon. I'm like, why should you try to like, salmon, if you hate salmon, don't eat salmon.

There's gotta be some other fish that you can eat that you enjoy.

EMILY: Exactly.

MERYL: And then they're like, really, like **once I take that pressure off of them**, They were like, oh, wow. That's okay.

EMILY: Exactly. It's so funny. To force themselves into these boxes and fit what they're told when sometimes what they're told is even accurate.

So you're doing it for no reason.

MERYL: Most of the time it's the same adage with, well, I eat egg whites instead of the whole egg. Why? Because I was told somewhere along the line that the whole egg was bad for you. And yet it doesn't matter how many times I say dietary cholesterol in the egg has nothing to do with blood cholesterol.

And I say until I'm blue in the face. So yeah, it is hard to change people's mindset sometimes, and sometimes they don't even know why they're doing it. Like you said they're getting information and it's not even accurate information.

So what other questions we've sort of been testing this out.

On some people.

No weighing or measuring - learn to look at your plate

EMILY: I guess let's, if you don't mind, let's dive into the plate first. Cause I think that's kinda sets the tone for the rest of the program and that's something that we give to a lot of clients already and people love to see that it's colorful. It's like **a great printout that they can put next to them when they're trying to make their own meal**.

So Yeah. Maybe just walk through the plate, whatever you want to say about that. And then we can dive into the different categories too.

MERYL: so when Emily's talking about the plate, unfortunately, we are not visual, right? We're not on a YouTube thing. We're not, we're not doing video and it's all on you. But part of the program, the first on, in the beginning, **you get a visual of what your plate should look like**, right? The breakdown of where our let's call it, the macronutrient, **your vegetables, your protein, your let's say grains or carbo or starchy vegetables. And they're sectioned out on the plate.**

And so what we make in order to make it a little more realistic for people is we show pictures of a plate with real food on it so that you can see, oh, this is how I put this together, because the **goal of this is to really be able to eyeball** and say, oh, okay, here's what I should be eating and how much I should be eating.

No, **we're not about weighing and measuring**. That is again, not realistic nor sustainable in the long run for people. So to weigh and measure your food is not something that we ask or that I even suggest. You know, there's been a lot of conversation now, which I'm happy to hear about **intuitive eating and starting to pay attention to what does your body want?**

Very much. Like I just said what do you feel like eating rather than the should? What should I be eating? The plate is very similar, right? There is no perfect vegetable. Try a variety of vegetables. And I think one of the things we're going to start to do is bring back some of these videos of showing people how to do, let's say escarole, right?

Why a variety of foods is essential

Because people don't even know what escarole is. Like, we all know what spinaches and you know, but we need to make sure that we're changing around. What we're eating **variety is hugely important**. And I, and I talk to people all the time who say, well, I just want to eat the same thing every day, because I know that I know the calories that I'm getting.

I know there's consistency and it's easy. Well, I don't know about you, but after a week or two of eating the same thing every day, you're just like, I never want to see that food again in my life.

EMILY: Yeah. And also **the variety gives you the nutrients**. So like, If you're eating the same thing every single day, and, and that meal happens to be lacking in something, then you might actually end up giving yourself a deficiency because that's all you're eating.

You definitely need to mix it up. And I think it makes it more fun. Once you start to learn about different foods. Cause you're proud of yourself for trying something new, you're proud that you found something else that you like. And so you don't even, you probably don't even know that certain things are out there that you'd love.

And so getting out there and really trying new things is going to be exciting for a lot of people.

MERYL: Yes. Yes. So I think what I'm going to do is I am going to do a video of doing the escarole and the leaks because not enough people probably use leaks or escarole for that matter, they just think escarole should be a lettuce.

But another example would be even bok choy. I cook bok Choi all the time. I had a friend last week say to me, I don't even know that I would go into a supermarket and know what bok choy look like? Right. Whether it was a baby bok choy or regular bok choy. So I feel like what happens is that **people go into the supermarket, they get what they know is familiar and safe and they don't try anything else**.

So the goal of what this program is, I'm part of showing the plate in part of that is showing you that there's a lot of variety here, right? People think that a starchy vegetable is sweet potato or white potato, and that. Right. Right. And, and our lists of starchy vegetables. You've got your beets and you've got your other squashes.

As a matter of fact, another thing that I made the other night, I made it last night and I made a different version of it the night before all of the root vegetables now are in season. So like I got a rutabaga for those of you that don't know what a rutabaga sorta looks like a cross between a turnip, which is the purple thing. And most people think rutabagas or turnips actually. Maybe a cross between a tournament, a potato. Right.

I would agree with that.

And it's got a really, really yummy flavor and celery root and celery root looks like something that came from Mars.

I mean, it's ugly. It's, it's not a pretty looking vegetable, but it's delicious. It's got obviously a little bit of a celery flavor and it's a little bit peppery, right? So it's got a little kick to it. So the night before last, I got celery root and rutabaga and I cubed them and I put them in my air fryer we had a little Curry powder on them, whatever.

And my friend who was over for dinner was like, what am I eating delicious, but what am I eating? You know? And when I said it was a celery root and a rutabaga said, what? So I had to pull out my picture book of what a celery, or it looked like and a rutabaga. And she said, I have no idea what that is take me shopping kind of thing.

So of course we have to do that. But last night I did celery root and rutabaga and I boiled them and I made them like mash potato. And so, yeah, they were mashed did a little bit of garlic actually, Howie was over for dinner last night. So I said to him, I'm like, I'll give you \$20 if you know what this is. He had no idea But again, those kinds of vegetables and they have a completely different flavor. And, and nutrient profile then does a potato. So yeah, it was like a flavor explosion in your mouth and it was satisfying and it was delicious. So I think part of what I want people to know is **I want them to experiment.**

The bonus of familiar and new choices

I want them to take the plate and not just make these foods that they're familiar with. But things, like you said, that they're a little bit unfamiliar with and look this meal planner. I don't want you to think that there's going to be it's chock-full of all of these vegetables. It's not **most of the samples and most of the recipes are very familiar and very easy.**

And I think that's the beauty of this is people are going to feel comfortable because the recipes are super duper easy. They're super duper familiar and they're amazingly delicious.

Yeah, I would agree with everything you just said. And I think one of the cool things about this program is that so originally we had the recipes, right?

There's **80 recipes in here** just for our listeners to know that you're getting a lot of different things that you can try, but there's none of those wild foods in there really I've combed through them. I made sure they were pretty easy for everyone and that they were familiar. However, we do have lists, **so we show the plate and then we have lists of each category and types of foods that you can fit into that category.**

And on that list are **some unique foods that you could try.** So I think that's where we, we got into the program a little bit that if someone was really feeling adventurous they could set out a food for something else, or they could just try the bok choy because they saw it on the list. And so.

Moving forward we're going to do, like you said, recipe videos that we might post on our social media. And also I think we're going to do some things in the grocery store. So we could show like where to find these foods, because like you said, a lot of people go into the grocery store. And they have like blinders on.

They're like, all right, I'm going to go right to the potato. Cause that's what I need. That's on my list. I'm going to go right to the pasta because that's what I need. That's on my list and they know where all their usual foods are, but they, they don't even realize they're walking right by a bok choy or the walking.

So just when you have the time, I would say to our listeners, like **go into the grocery store and just walk around and read the signs. . And maybe bring these lists with you and you can be like, oh, there's that?** I didn't even know what that looked like.

MERYL: Or better yet when you go to the grocery store and pick something up, **send us an email or message us and say, look, I took a picture of this.**

What is this? How do I make it, put it on your next recipe?

ask us if we have a recipe for it? Because I guarantee you, we do, we have loads and loads of recipes.

you know, It's kind of like. I remember when kale before it got popular. And I talk about town. People are like, oh wait, that's the stuff that's decoration on my tray.

Right? Like, because right, you'd go to the deli counter. And kale was the ornamental vegetable that, that lined the deli counter right now. Everybody's eating kale. people are a little more familiar with going and getting kale chips and all that kind of stuff. But right next to the kale is usually like Swiss chard or mustard greens, or some other kind of green pick up those greens.

You make them the same way you can saute. I always say my go-to is saute onions or so taste shallots and put in a little bit of a cooking wine, like Mirin, or any kind of cooking wine, deglaze, the pan, throwing your greens, salt, pepper, and it's a delicious way to have them.

So sometimes it's just the initial sort of, what is this, what do I do with it? And then **once you've done it once or twice, like, oh, okay, I can put this into my repertoire.**

EMILY: Yeah, exactly. Like I said earlier, like when you try something new and it's successful, you're proud of yourself and you want to do it again.

So it is that initial, like comfort thing, just breaking through that and being like, I can try this and if you don't like it, like, okay, you don't like it and move on to the next item and try that. But it, to me it's worth it. Try new things. Right?

Why you should eat the rainbow

MERYL: Well, listen, that's how you expand your palate. That's how, that's how you nourish your body.

Remember our body, like you said, in the beginning, you can't just use the same vegetables and fruits all the time. Thinking you're going to get all of the nutrients. Right. It's **there's a reason we say, eat the rainbow because different color foods have different nutrients and different amounts of these nutrients.**

And we know now **these phytochemicals, the chemicals that are in foods that make them the color, they are. Are very, very potent antioxidants that support the**

immune system. So that support inflammation, that's support ourselves. And that's the blueprint of our body. this is how our body functions.

This is our operating system. If we don't feed it and nourish it, it won't be healthy. So yeah, so that's a little bit about the plate on the plate, like I said, so you've got your categories of your vegetables. That is, the largest section.

You've got your proteins. We do break down the proteins pretty nicely in terms of even. some of them were plant-based proteins or, dairy proteins as alternatives for people if that's what they want. We break down the fish very important to take a look at the fish list as far as not only the omega threes, which are really good in their anti-inflammatory but also the ones that are high in mercury, we've got to really watch our heavy metals because fish, especially now our oceans are just not so clean and the mercury levels and, and all of those toxins build up in the very big fish.

So tuna, for example, I hate to ruin everybody's day, but you know, tuna has got way, way, way too much mercury. And so tuna should probably just be eaten once a month, twice a month. Tops.

EMILY: Yeah. And that's super unfortunate. And I know that disappoints a lot of our listeners, but it's, it's just the reality of it. I get the question all the time.

I was literally just talking to someone the other day. I'm like, yeah, tuna has way too much mercury and it's not good for your brain, your body. Well, what about like raw tuna? Like the same thing they're like, well, what about a can tuna? I'm like, same thing. They just want it so badly to not be true. And it's so unfortunate.

I love tuna, and I used to eat it when I was younger and it's just a bummer that I can't have it anymore.

MERYL: I know. Listen, you're talking to someone. I think every day in high school, I'm not even joking. , I would do cream, cheese and jelly or tuna fish.

That was my stable. God only knows where I know what my mercury is now I've detoxed it out. But I even ate tuna when I was pregnant with all three kids. That explains

a lot. No, I'm just kidding. But I had a conversation yesterday with a client and her mercury level was triple what it should be when we did the testing, you know?

So my first mention to them is, okay, your mercury level is triple what it should be. And you'll probably be getting a call from the department of health and oh, by the way where's this coming from? And are you eating tuna? So she looks at me. He says, well, no, I really don't eat tuna maybe I eat it once a month.

And I'm like, okay, great. But then what else are you eating that you're getting one of the fish and she goes, well, I have sushi. Wait, are you having tuna sushi? She said, yeah. I said, that's tuna she goes, I didn't think it was the same tuna.

EMILY: So funny. Yeah. That's, that's exactly what I'm saying

MERYL: So to your point tuna is tuna.

Whether it's canned, whether it's sushi, whether it's in I don't care what form it is. Tuna is tuna by any other name. It's still tuna.

EMILY: Especially in Florida, like people fish all the time, they'll be like, can I get fresh from the ocean? That's what we mean?

Like it's fresh or not frozen or not. It's got, it's got mercury in it.

MERYL: Right, right. But it came out of a freezer now. No, sorry. At one point it was fresh out of the ocean. It's still tuna.

It's unfortunate for those of us that really love it.

EMILY: There's and a lot of great fish on the list that you can have.
That's the positive.

Learn to build your own plate

MERYL: Yes. Yes. What else do we want to tell the listeners about the program?

Well after the plate and the breakdown of the lists and all the different options you have to choose from there. We go into a section where you can actually, it's like has a, kind of an exercise where you can build your own plate.

The have photos, like you had said earlier of real plates with real food. So it's kind of like **taking that general guideline and turning it into real food**. And then On the right-hand side, there's pictures of food. And then on the left-hand side, it's build your own breakfast, build your own lunch, build your own snack and your dinner.

There's little like check boxes. So if you wanted, you could go for a protein and carb and a healthy fat check them off make your meal and see how it turns out. Those are not recipes. That's kind of like, here's some suggestions that you could, you could put on your plate and give it a shot.

And I think that could **be fun for people, especially if you're not ready to follow a recipe** exactly yet. But then we go down and we have a whole planner that's blank that you can fill out with all the recipes that we do offer you. And it's just, I think it **helps to plan out your meals** for a lot of people.

So that way, you know what you need to get at the grocery store you know, what's in store for the rest of the week. You can actually show your kids, your husband, your wife, whoever's doing it with you and kind of get excited about the meals you're having for the month. And then **the last section is probably the most important section is all the recipes**.

Huge selection of recipes so you can customize your plan

So we have **four weeks of recipes**. They break down breakfast, lunch, snack, and dinner. There's **five recipes per category for each week**. So you have one for every five weekdays, but you can mix it up however you want to do it. And like we said, the planner's there so that you can kind of take these recipes.

You can try them, you can repeat them, but **we don't want you to do the same thing every day**. So say you really like the smoothie recipe that you had for breakfast and you kind of liked a frittata recipe. Well, you can have the smoothie, maybe Monday,

Tuesday, you have the frittata, Wednesday, you try something else and then maybe you have the smoothie again.

That's okay. But you don't want to have the smoothie every single day of the week. But we just wanted to keep it flexible so that you, again, weren't, **we're taking that guilt out of it. We don't want you to think you need to follow this exactly to a T because that doesn't make it fun for anyone.** And that's really unnecessary to be honest. That's why this is so customizable for you. It takes the pressure away.

MERYL: Right and you know, and the nice thing is, is like you said, right? So you have that **first section where you can pick and choose and just sort of organize it in your head.** Like, all right, let me wrap my head around what the food category is and then what I can be doing.

And, and you're not tied into a recipe. So for people who need a little bit more organization, but maybe less specific structure. That's great. Right. Then I loved where they were able to fill in their meal planner because there's a lot of people that say to me, well, I need more structure. I need to know exactly what I should be eating.

Well, rather than me telling you exactly what you should be eating, because then I'll say to someone, well eat this and this I even had a conversation with my daughter's like, well, I need to eat something for breakfast. So I said, eat this and this. She goes, well, I don't like that. I'm like, okay, well then why are you asking me?

So here are your options, like you said, there's five choices for each meal. I don't know if you guys out there and the listeners realize how huge that is. **There aren't many programs that are giving you that kind of variety with the ease of use** and, and how to make this stuff, it's just not out there.

But we felt that it was important to do this because **it does give you the flexibility and it shows you that wow, I can change up things and still be within the context of I can lose weight. I can feel good. I can have energy.** Oh. And by the way, this is going to taste good. Yeah. The fact that you have those choices and then you can use them

and mix and match them into the planner, the way you want to do it is just really another, a huge bonus.

I don't know that you and I could be any more excited than, than we're expressing it now. I mean, I'm really pumped about launching this and I think it's just going to be so well received. I know that the testing that we've done on a few of the people that I've given it to the response has been in the feedback has been great.

I know I've used a few of these recipes, those berry bars, those breakfast bars. So and even the dinners, so excited to launch it, excited to have this conversation with you. I think everybody should check it out you know, and the other thing is, is this, this program is just the first of many that we have in our arsenal.

If you guys love this, or even you feel like. I need to learn how to cook this now or how to cook better in the kitchen, our **Rebel Kitchen, which are the videos that have the recipes and all of that, that video series is also amazing.** So it's a great segue. And it's all self-paced, you can find it on our website.

How coaching can boost your 30 day plan

And the beauty is, is that **we have coaching available.** So for those of you that **love the self pacing that got this, and you want to do it on your own and run with it. Excellent.** But if there's anybody out there who really feels like they need a little more support and a little more guidance and a little more accountability.

You could just add on some coaching, you don't have to see us for a full consultation. You don't have to commit to a certain number of sessions. You can just say, you know what, I need one coaching session around this, or I need two coaching sessions and we are available. So I think that's the other part of this. Is that again, the flexibility to even work with us is there.

EMILY: Yeah. And just to add to that, **we are available virtually.** So if anyone is far away or even if they're close and they're like, I want to keep doing this from the comfort

of my own home. Like virtual sessions is definitely the way to go. So, we also offer **in-person sessions as well.**

So whatever floats your boat, we're here for you.

MERYL: Exactly. Exactly. Whatever suits your style. So yeah, did I miss anything? Have we, have we not covered anything? Emily?

EMILY: No, I think you covered it all, like you had said the Rebel Kitchen program, which has an additional program to this, they really do complement each other nicely. So I'm getting those videos and the demos is helpful in addition to the printed recipes and everything.

I agree with that point for sure.

MERYL: Great. Awesome. All right. Well, everybody be encouraging you to go over to our Rebel Nutritionist 30 day Your Way plan, sign up, take advantage of it. We're actually pricing it special now through I believe the month of February.

So grab your copy, give us some feedback. Send us your pictures. As always stay in touch and we look forward to hearing from you. This is your Rebel Nutritionist, everybody signing off, make it a great day.