

## Tasha Lee - Overcoming Setbacks on a Raw Vegan Diet

You could easily be led to believe that when you go raw that your health will dramatically improve, you'll be able to run marathons, the heavens will open up and rain stardust all over you, right?

But, though lots of people experience great success straight away, this is not always the case. It certainly wasn't the case for my raw buddy, author and health coach, Tasha Lee, who came up against all sorts of roadblocks in her quest for health.

And today, I get to interview Tasha, about her experiences, being a diabetic, feeling at times more exhausted and despairing on a raw vegan diet, and what she did to overcome these setbacks.

Hello Tasha!

**Tasha:**

Hi Anthea, thanks for having me.

**Anthea:**

Thank you so much for being my partner in crime for the whole event. It has just been really amazing having you on board and today I get to find out a lot more detail about your whole experience with it. I'm really excited.

Why don't you share with us, what brought you to raw foods in the first place? Tell us your story leading up to finding this diet

**Tasha:**

The main thing that brought me was that I had a pretty serious eating disorder for 15 years and part of my recovery process when I finally found a way out was to ask God how to nourish my body unselfishly. I'd been living a very selfish existence and my way to freedom was living unselfishly. Being selfish with food was a huge part of what was killing me. I didn't really know what to do but I just kept my eyes and my heart and my ears open and just prayed for an answer. What came my way was a newsletter from the Patenko family about healing diabetes on a raw food diet. I was like 'are you serious? I don't believe that'. But, I had this experience that ten years before I felt like that I was going to get healed. I don't know of what - so when I read that, it was weird. I thought 'I think I'm supposed to try it'. I just felt like I owed it a shot, even if I didn't believe it.

I didn't know anything about how to do raw foods. I didn't know anything about it at all - so I just went to the library and got all of the books on raw foods that were

available and started reading them and trying different methods - seeing what worked for my body and what didn't. That's what got me into raw foods.

**Anthea:**

Some people go raw and have this golden transformation story - they lose weight, experience unlimited energy etc - but that wasn't your experience was it? Tell us about the trials and tribulations you've been through in seeking health.

**Tasha:**

No, it wasn't my experience at all. I had a really rough transition and I think a lot of it was because I was coming from stuffing huge amounts of crap down my throat for 15 years and I didn't actually want to go raw. I didn't want to eat healthy. I still wanted to eat my crap foods. I was kicking and screaming throughout the whole process, which didn't make it very easy. It was two steps forward and one step back but it was a very rough transition and when I finally found that the fruit based raw food diet was what worked best for my body, it was really hard to give up the fatty foods - that's what I had been trying a lot of and became okay with raw foods as long as I could eat all these nuts - maybe it's okay. But then, when I had to give up those too, I was really mad about it.

It was really rough getting started and when I finally did find the support in order to be able to stick to the fruit based diet, I only did about a month before my body totally crashed and it was really scary. I taught an aerobics class and I came home and was just so exhausted and I went and lay down and it was 3 days of being in bed. Every time I tried to stand up, I would be trembling and just felt really weird and I was so scared.

I had gone to see an alternative doctor before to see what was wrong with me. During my transition process, I would have episodes of just feeling really tired and he had prescribed a lot of blood tests but we didn't want to fork out the money to do the blood tests but when the crash happened, we went ahead and did the blood tests. I also asked so many people online - did consults - tried to figure out what was wrong and it ended up that I had vitamin D deficiency. I was low in B12 and the B12 was easy enough to fix but D took forever. It just set me back in everything. My fitness went down to zero because I was sedentary - I was too exhausted to lift my finger or carry on a conversation or use the computer.

It was just exhausting for a long time - for many months. I think that that also played into me getting other deficiencies because I had got every deficiency that a raw vegan could have. A deficiency doesn't get corrected overnight - it takes time and has a lot of effects on the body. So it was rough ever since I started. Probably 3 years worth of exhaustion and it's getting better and better as I address the different deficiencies but it's definitely been a rough road.

**Anthea:**

It doesn't always happen this way but people out there do experience these kind of setups and I think another caller was saying that people out there do experience these set backs and often people who are doing well on the path, just want to ignore them and hope they go away but they don't and it's really important to address these things head on. I really appreciate your honesty and your willingness to share the whole picture. That has generated lots of questions for me.

So you're a diabetic and you eat copious amounts of fruit. I'm imagining many people listening in will be open-mouthed right now, amazed that you're still alive, let alone thriving. Because diabetics are regularly told to limit their fruit, and overall sugar, intake. What have you come to understand about diabetes and fruit?

**Tasha:**

I have Type 1 Diabetes and it has been quite the learning process. I guess a big thing is that people don't get diabetes because they're eating fruit - it's not the cause of diabetes. Most people haven't even heard of a fruitarian diet - now they're starting to hear about it. So they're not eating it and so that's not what is causing the diabetes. I think that so many people are just so afraid of fruit and I wear my continuous glucose monitor and my insulin pump, very visibly on my body - so I get a lot of questions about those and inevitably, we talk about diet and I just interact with so many people who say 'my doctor said I've got to count my carbs and limit them - I can't eat fruit. What are you doing eating so much fruit?' I've seen that my body does respond really well to eating this fruit based diet.

It's simple and has allowed a lot of things to heal in my body. I did have deficiencies and lot of health problems but I've also had really good benefits. A lot of healing in my body from doing raw, from eating simply and stopping putting all of the garbage in my body so it has a chance to clean things out and pay attention to the things that are broken in my body and fix it. It may not be as simple to eat a lot of carbs as it is for someone who chooses to avoid carbs, maybe that's simpler for blood sugar control because you don't have to mess with carbs at all, but I feel like this is what is going to benefit my body long term and it may take some work. It does take a lot of work - but I believe it's worth it. I also believe that anything new in our life takes work and effort.

If we've got habits from 30 years, it's not going to change overnight and every time we do make a change, it takes work, attention and focus to succeed at that new change. With diabetes, it takes 100 times as much work because everything affects diabetes so it is a major full time job that you can't take a vacation from. On the whole, it has helped me get in so much better control and I'm more sensitive to insulin and I think it has been really beneficial to me. The people who have type 2 diabetes, heal by doing the things that I do - so, they can get rid of their diabetes and be on their merry way and they heal a lot of other things in their body.

That's encouraging for me, that even though I still have diabetes and I still rely on insulin to stay alive, I'm giving my body great fuel and a great chance for success down the line and avoiding all those diabetic complications like blindness that I really don't want to get.

**Anthea:**

So it is possibly to cure type 1 diabetes?

**Tasha:**

Yes it is.

**Anthea:**

Wow, that's pretty interesting.

You're type 1, so your body doesn't produce insulin, right? But have you been able to reduce the amount of insulin you have to take by being on this diet? I have heard this is possible.

**Tasha:**

You've got it right! I do have type 1 diabetes and I do rely on insulin to stay alive - what happened to me when I cleared the fat out of my system - the animal products, the processed foods - my body became much more sensitive to the insulin that I was taking. I watched it happen. At first when I would eat the fruit, everything still clogged up. The fat clogging, the insulin receptors, all that science stuff - it was still clogged up - I would eat fruit and I would sustain high blood sugars because the fat would keep the sugar in my blood stream instead of going into the cells to be used for energy. Of course, I would get to see this every time I would go back to my other things that I wanted to eat instead of raw foods.

So I've watched this and I wear a continuous glucose monitor - so I can see exactly what is happening all the time and I can see how fat affects my blood sugars. I can see how fruit affects it. I've been able to be able to become a lot more sensitive to the insulin that I take and I've been able to get a lot better control because the fruit, even though there is a lot of variations in fruit, in general, once you find a pattern for how to deal with it, it's pretty predictable. Whereas the other foods that I used to eat before, I was so frustrated because I would be eating complicated meals or mixing these different amounts of fat and protein and I just felt like I couldn't get good control of my blood sugar.

That was actually a reason why I was looking at other meal plans and the one I was eating at the time of my recovery because it was very frustrating as a diabetic so I was looking for something that would work better that I could get the control. I have

definitely become more sensitive to insulin. The endocrinologist - that's my diabetes doctor, says that I do about the same amount of insulin as his other type 1 patients but I eat three times as many carbohydrates as they do. I guess I'm a lot more sensitive to insulin than a lot of people.

I've seen the numbers on my insulin pump. I've had to do a lot of adjustments - adjusting down - doing less insulin for what I'm eating.

**Anthea:**

What does your endocrinologist say about your diet?

**Tasha:**

Some endocrinologists are probably really supportive. Mine thinks I'm crazy. Every time I'm there, he wonders why I'm making it so hard for myself. 'You're doing the exact opposite'. I've explained to him again 'my body is healing - I'm off my epilepsy medication, I'm not having the low blood sugar seizures that I used to have - there are a lot of things healing and he really just can't accept it. My last visit, it was actually very good, I think he finally is accepting that my readings are really good - he's really happy with my A1C's - that's the measure of how your blood sugars have been for the last 3 months - mine are generally between 5.5 and 6.0 which is really good. He's happy with those. He's happy with my continuous glucose monitor readouts - they're obviously not perfect because everything affects diabetes. You're going to have technology failures where you are not getting the insulin from your pump or stress affects it. Different kinds of exercise affects it. Getting sick affects it. So it's not going to be perfect, but it's really actually very good.

He's very happy with my numbers, he just thinks I'm going about it in a crazy way.

**Anthea:**

I can understand where he is coming from but it's just interesting, it seems like a specialist particularly, they're interested in their area of health and so what if you don't have epilepsy fits anymore or who cares about that other stuff? That's not in my domain right?

It confirms to me how the medical profession works. They're great for many things but understanding the full picture - I'm not quite sure that they are there on that yet.

I would love to hear what you eat in a day at the moment - can you give us a rundown?

**Tasha:**

Since the beginning, I've just tried to keep it really simple and that was mostly at first for energy because eating food takes nerve energy and my body was exhausted so I just found that the simpler I ate, the better I felt, the more energy I had also it was easier for blood sugar control.

I mostly eat mono-meals. The same kind of fruit. It depends on the season. It depends what's available - what's ripe - what needs to be eaten. During mango season, I would eat 4 of the large Florida mangoes for a meal - or up to 8. Whatever I feel I'm hungry for and I eat until I am satisfied and then I eat again when I'm hungry. I don't have any schedule at all. If I eat a very high calorie meal, sometimes I'm not hungry for the rest of the day.

We're dealing with a mould situation right now so we don't want to go shopping and so I've been eating frozen stuff so today I had 20 medjool dates blended up with supplements. I do the supplements to deal with my deficiencies. My supplements that I put in there were a couple of barley grass powder, and a couple of scoops of hemp protein powder and a couple of tablespoons of chia and that's what I ate today.

I really don't have any pattern. I used to eat a couple of big fruit meals and then in the evening, I would eat non-sweet fruits like spiralized zucchini and make a sauce out of tomatoes and orange juice and herbs and I was doing that pretty regularly but, as I started to incorporate the juice barley grass powder, I feel like my mineral needs got met and so I stopped really enjoying the non-sweet fruits. I used to crave them and crave salads and I would do a lot of green smoothies - like 5 bananas with a pound of greens and I would do 1-3 pounds of greens per day trying to meet this craving for greens and for salads and tomatoes. It was pretty hard to digest all those greens.

As I started using the juice barley grass powder, I stopped really caring about salads or non-sweet fruits like the tomatoes and red bell peppers and the cucumbers, zucchini. I still eat them here and there if I start to feel like eating them but mostly I just eat fruit and my supplements. It's the date season - so I'll just sit down and eat about 30 or so and 5-10 bananas or 5-6 pomegranates - just whatever we have.

**Anthea:**

Just imagining you sitting down to all those dates and thinking 'wow, it's just amazing'. You obviously are so clued into your blood sugar fluctuations and I'm thinking 'ooh, doesn't that spike her blood sugar?' Obviously it doesn't - there is something to this low fat approach.

**Tasha:**

There are some things that I had to learn to avoid blood sugar spikes. When I first started out, I was doing the green smoothies to avoid blood sugar spikes because the extra greens eaten with the fruit slow down the blood sugar absorption. Just eating lettuce before and after fruit. As a type 1 diabetic, there are other things - I do my

insulin in advance of my meals but another thing that happened to me as I did the supplementation for my deficiencies was when I started including the chia for essential fatty acids, that also slowed down my blood sugar rise and fall and then when I added in the hemp protein powder, it slowed down my blood sugar rise and fall even more.

Now I don't really spike - it's flat line blood sugars and then if I my blood sugar does go up from the fruit in the meal, it's very slow so that I can see that it is rising, do some insulin to bring it down. Every time you change your diet, it requires a lot of analysis and experimentation and learning how to do blood sugar management. I've learned how to do blood sugar management for no overt fats which was how I started and then with some overt fats and then with hemp protein powder - so it's all been quite the learning experience.

**Anthea:**

When you use the protein powder, does it affect your digestion at all? Have you noticed any differences from just eating the fruit on its own? When you add chia, do you notice any difference at all?

**Tasha:**

Yes, I'm still playing around with that actually. Where I could do it, time of the day, as far as blood sugar is concerned but also, you don't want to be eating a lot of the fat and protein mixed with the fruit. But I have found that blended into a smoothie, it's not the same as eating the fruit and nuts, or eating the fruit and the seeds separately because it kind of becomes a new food. It's a fatty fruit like durian - it becomes a fatty banana. So it's not horrible with my digestion. I haven't found the perfect mix yet. I'm still learning.

**Anthea:**

I would love to hear more about your eating disorder, how that was a setback for you in your journey and how you overcame it?

**Tasha:**

One of the huge things was that I had such terrible eating habits in place that it was a real struggle to start eating healthy stuff instead of all my packaged, processed binge foods and so just changing those habits was a real struggle. I would eat my healthy stuff and then I would be like 'I don't want to do this' and do a 2 week binge of driving through all the fast food places shouting 'I miss this - let me eat it one more time before I have to go back to raw foods again'.

That was definitely a struggle to give up my emotional attachments to those foods. I think another one was that when you have an addiction - my eating disorder was an



addiction - I was driven to do that - driven to binge and the only way that I knew how to cope with life, and it wasn't really coping. What happens when you get an addiction, you stop maturing because you are not dealing with life. I started my eating disorder when I was in my late teens - that was when I started hiding food and bingeing and then when I went to college, it was all out bingeing and at that point that I started bingeing instead of dealing with stuff, I stopped growing up.

I feel like I functioned as a teenager and still with the whole teenage mindset for the next 15 years until I actually did the recovery process and worked through all that stuff that I hadn't worked through in the previous 15-20 years. One of the things was that you don't deal with anger about this situation or fears about this or that. All these different things that I didn't deal with, I had to then deal with it once I recovered. It didn't happen all at once. I did the recovery process and I was able to get free of the compulsion to binge through the 12 step program that helped me recover, but then it still will come up. You don't work through everything at once.

Things would continue to come up at different situations and I would see somebody and it would bring up this whole bad relationship stuff that I hadn't even thought about until I ran into them so then I'd have to deal with it. So this was happening at the same time that I was transitioning into raw and the fruit based diet. I was dealing with a lot of stuff coming up that I needed to do an analysis of and just work through the whole recovery process on each of those things. And now I feel like that stuff doesn't really come up. Here and there is something but I've dealt with all the old wreckage of my past. It's just new things that come up here and there that I have to deal with.

I think those are the main things with my eating disorder. When you are in a relationship - I'm married - and during my addiction, we formed some really dysfunctional patterns where I am the addict and he is the same person and I'm the bad child and he's the parent. You can't really have a relationship like that. We didn't deal with those right away because we didn't really know they were there. I recovered from my eating disorder but then I was starting the raw food journey, dealing with the things that were coming up emotionally and just trying to get on this raw food thing and then we had the complication of our dysfunctional patterns and I grew up with this resentment against anyone who was trying to control me and my husband wasn't trying to control me, he was concerned - I am a diabetic and I could kill myself pretty easily by these crazy binges, but I just had this anger 'quit trying to control me'.

We have gone to counselling and worked through that and so it's so much better now but those were some things that we had to deal with around the eating disorder and how that played into what I was eating.

**Anthea:**



I know people around me thought, and probably still do think, that I'm completely nuts eating the quantity of fruits and vegetables that I do every day but they've come to accept it now since they can see that I'm healthy and actually thriving compared to what I was feeling before. I can imagine for your husband, there would have been a lot of concern and worry there that maybe this was just another manifestation of your eating disorder. I'm sure lots of people would think that - clearly it's not because you've been on this path for nearly 6 years now and you're doing better than you ever were.

So you've been at this 6 years now? What other setbacks have you experienced in following this lifestyle? And how did you /or how are you overcoming them?

**Tasha:**

As far as the big ones which were the eating disorder stuff and the deficiencies that I talked about and the diabetes - those were a lot to deal with but then there were the other little things like, for me in our home were my husband was thinking that I was doing another crazy diet, he was still eating the way he had always eaten, which was fairly healthy. It wasn't really the standard American diet, it was healthier than that but it was still things that we didn't know weren't healthy at that time. He had these around and I would be like 'this is hard enough to eat this way - I can't handle the temptation of your food always there'.

What we did for that was he had a cabinet to himself and I had a cabinet to myself and he had an area of the refrigerator that was his and I had an area of the refrigerator with mine and I had to train my mind to just look at my cabinet and just look at my shelves of the refrigerator and that was the physical thing but the way that I got through really was finding support and getting online.

I would spend a couple of hours online on message boards, reading stuff to inspire me and encourage and motivate me to stay the course today. So that's how I got through and really another thing that really changed that so that I didn't have to deal with always looking at his food was I had to just quit nagging him about getting rid of that and changing how he's eating. Just do what I needed to do and let him take the path that he was going to take and not pressure him.

As I stopped that nagging, then he slowly was watching things improve with me and saw that it was working. We went to a talk together on the fruit based diet and he was able to get a lot of his questions answered and see that it was really a sound way to eat and he's an engineer, so he's a very critical thinker and he really likes to analyse things so I think that was really helpful for him to be able to see really clearly what was going on with this whole diet thing. I'm not good at explaining it - I'm a fluffy talker. That really helped and over time, he slowly started eating more and more like me and that really changed things around. It's so much easier with him eating a lot more the way that I eat.

Another set back that I had to work through was that I'm a caregiver for people with disabilities and it was really hard for me to be providing care for people and feeding them and I couldn't believe I was having to feed them this crap. On the one hand I was thinking 'this is terrible, why are they eating this?' and I'm judging them when I did the same thing. I didn't know either. Also I was really jealous because I wanted to eat it too so the same way that I recovered from my eating disorder, I used that same process to work through things like this that would come up. Just finding ways to succeed in that care-giving situation. Also, as a caregiver, one of my jobs was going out to eat with the person, taking them to social outings and they wanted to go out to eat. We would go to different restaurants and they were paying for my food so I could eat anything on the menu but that was really frustrating to me, because I wanted to take advantage of it and eat the yummy menu items that I used to love.

I did eat those menu items sometimes and then I my body would pay for it - eventually I realised it wasn't worth it and I found a way to enjoy what I'm eating. I took a sweet food and a savory food that I really liked and then when we were at the restaurant, whatever I felt like eating, if it was a salty thing or a sweet thing, then I could eat my stuff and I always felt really good as opposed to usually when I would go to restaurants in the past, I would get so sleepy and tired after eating and that's not really a good way to be when you are a caregiver - it's really good to have energy and be alert. It ended up really well to take my own stuff and none of the restaurants ever gave me a problem about it because we went to normal restaurants.

The vegan restaurants seemed to have a problem with it, but the normal restaurants don't so that worked out just fine.

Travel has been tough for me. That was a set back definitely because during my eating disorder, I had patterns that whenever I would travel on the caregiver trips, that was means of travelling, you go for free because you are providing care for somebody you are working for but on these trips, I would reward myself with food, for working so hard. It was always about putting the other person first which was really good but then I would do my little reward thing that once everybody was in bed, then I was going to binge or when I was driving to get to the place that we were travelling from, I would binge all the way there - stopping at all of these restaurants.

My car time was my time when I'm going to turn off my phone. Nobody is going to know what I am doing, I am going to use this for me - whatever I want. Once I got established on the fruit based diet and I was succeeding at home, found a way to source my food, found a way to be very happy with this diet at home, that was one thing but these trips would come up and it was like I had forgotten about dealing with it. So I would get in the car and be driving up the road and wanted to stop at these places and get something to reward myself for doing this really long drive by myself. It was a real struggle at first to work through that but it definitely became easier with time.

One thing that I really noticed was that when I was mineral deficient, when I was craving the salads and tomatoes, it made it really hard to drive down the road because all the salty stuff looked good to me. All of the fast food restaurants - I used to crave cheese burgers and then I would transfer that to craving tomatoes and salads. When I was mineral deficient and on these trips, it was really tough because everything looked good.

I found that on my last trip, nothing looked good. I just feel so satisfied and so I think the really important part of being successful is making sure we've got the nutrients that we need. Eating enough carbohydrates was also important for driving on the road - making sure I ate more than enough to make me happy, very satisfied where I did not want to eat at all. That really helped me to travel well. Finding other ways to be happy travelling like I enjoy shopping and going into the travel stores and talking to people now or enjoy listening to an audio book - so just finding different ways to enjoy the drive and reward myself other than the food like I used to do.

There are so many different little things that you have to work on that it's a different routine than being at home.

**Anthea:**

The deficiency part of it is so true. When I was experiencing deficiency, I was craving particular kinds of dense, salty cooked foods and once I sorted that out, they just disappeared.

**Question from Helena:**

Have you ever eaten frozen fruit in the same amount as you would fresh fruit and have never felt as satisfied just because it was frozen?

**Tasha:**

I think what happens when I eat frozen fruit is I notice that it's typically fruit that is a lot lower in calories. If I eat mixed frozen fruit as a smoothie it's only around 100 grams of carbs when I fill up the whole blender full. It makes me very full but it's not the amount of carbs that I would normally eat for me. I usually do 250-300 grams of carbs in a meal. So 100 is not really that much and so it fills me up but it doesn't satisfy me. I've also noticed that eating frozen fruit, it freezes up my stomach muscles - it's really slow to digest. It takes a long time to digest and for my blood sugars to rise from it. I just feel it's a lot better for me to eat room temperature food for a lot of reasons.

It also interferes with the gut and the B12 production. I try to eat room temperature.

**Question from Maura:**

I'm really negligent with regards to my self care and nutrients - I don't even like going to my doctor because she doesn't understand why I do drop the ball and I don't either. B12 is one that she has me on, I'm thinking that the B12 is what you are getting from your juice barley greens powder or the nutrients that stop your craving for that salty food. What are you taking for vitamin D and I don't think you have mentioned iodine and just wondered if you could tell us what that looks like into your daily consumption?

**Tasha:**

The supplements that I take: for the B12, I take a sublingual - it's a chewable tablet that I take but I don't chew it, I let it go under my tongue and let it get absorbed sublingually. I take vitamin D3 because it's more effective than D2. I did the tanning bed for a while for my D when I lived up north and it did raise my levels but I stopped having access to it and then I couldn't find a tanning bed that UVB bulbs. I now live in Florida and I do a lot of sunshine but I find that in order to keep my levels in the correct range for vitamin D, I do need a supplement. I test every 3 months because things change - the amount of time I spend outdoors - just to make sure that I am taking the amount that I need to be taking.

I do take iodine - I don't give specifics on that because it is supposed to be supervised - you can cause a lot of problems by trying to do it yourself. I'm supervised by Don Bennett at [health101.org](http://health101.org) - so if you are interested in iodine supplementation, definitely would send you to Don Bennett, and actually the iodine, D and B12 are the ones that Don mentioned that are most problematic for people so it's really important to get those tested. There are specific tests for them and Don has some great articles on his website. Go to [health101.org/B12](http://health101.org/B12) - /D - /iodine - he has got some great articles for the lay person.

I take chia for essential fatty acids - it has a good omega 3 to 6 ratio and that's an important thing. I was using hemp for essential amino acids - it helps to have the hedge against getting an amino acid deficiency. The juiced barley grass powder - that's good for minerals like chromium and sodium etc. that tend to be lacking in the soils that our produce is grown in.

**Question from Isabel:**

I'm not diabetic but all of my family are and I'm always cautious of what eat so that I can avoid that disease. My nutritionist says I must be cautious about fruit and that I must not eat more than 4 pieces per day and only with something else in order to lower my sugar level that naturally increases when I eat fruit. My nutritionist is vegetarian and I'm vegan - I eat a vegan meal per day - the rest of the time I eat a raw vegan diet but still very simple. I just eat fruits and vegetables without preparing them within a recipe - the reason for that is it seems very difficult. Could you enlighten me on the diabetes problem?

**Tasha:**

I think we have covered this today but if you have further questions, feel free to ask.

**Anthea:**

It's hard when you are working with a practitioner who is advising you to only eat a certain amount of fruit per day and you want to try something different. I would say, just try the fruit based approach, even for a week and see how you feel. How you feel will help you in determining what is going to work for you long term and you can choose who to take advice from. If it's not working for you, listen to your nutritionist's advice but it's definitely worth a try.

**Tasha:**

That is something that I hear a lot that fruit raises their blood sugar and even that at first they try it and it doesn't work for them but I think that there is definitely a period of adjustment. A lot of us do have fat clogging in our insulin receptors and so the body just isn't sensitive to the insulin. It does take time for stuff to clear out and I would encourage people to read my book. It is the stories of the people who healed their type 2 diabetes and what they did and the processes that they went through. It's very detailed, very in depth and it's all the questions that people ask and the objections that come up. Just sharing how they stuck in there and worked through the process. It's not an overnight thing and it does take work but I fully believe that it's worth it.

**Anthea:**

I know you copped a lot of flack (as we Aussie's like to say) or were given a really hard time by other diabetics who did not want to hear about the success you were having. Could you share about that?

**Tasha:**

I was really excited when I found out about people healing diabetes, because it's a pain in the butt. I don't want anyone to have to live with diabetes if they don't have to and if type 2 can heal, I want to share this news. I did share on diabetes message boards and I didn't share about me as a type 1 because I still have type 1 and so I went to the type 2 boards and I told them about people healing and I told them about Dr Neale Bernard's book because I had read it to have a thorough understanding - his program for reversing diabetes which I highly recommend - it explains all the science stuff that I can't explain.

I shared about that and the people were like 'Neal Barnard is a quack'. They told me that I was giving people false hope and I was a troll and get out of here. They would be like 'you can't heal diabetes' and so I would walk away from these conversations

feeling really crazy and confused and I would second guess - 'what's going on?'. I would try and be really positive and share these stories and then people would attack me. I would try to come back in a positive way and answer their questions and not attack anyone back - just be very positive and then more people would attack me. It was really draining.

They were not open to it. I would post videos of people who had healed and then they are like 'you can't post this because it links to a website at the end'. I was like 'are you serious?' - the website is going to help you get started on this. There was nothing I could offer them because all of the videos of people healing were from somebody who had their website at the end of the video - it was very frustrating and it sucked my energy away. It would go on for days because they weren't convinced.

I'm sure that there are people who are looking for answers and this is not productive so I'm going to go out and share information on the internet and people who are looking for it can find it. So I've just tried to spread my message as far and wide as possible on various YouTube channels and websites and just trying to get the message out there for people who are looking so that they can find it. The message boards are not very open.

**Anthea:**

The cynical part of me is wondering if those message boards are actually run by pharmaceutical companies who have a vested interest in diabetics continuing to use their products.

**Tasha:**

Yeah, or people who just very much like their meat. I sure was defensive. I don't want people telling me what to do and telling me that I have to give up this thing that I love and I'm going to defend it with all I've got. I figure that every body there is human and they're not looking for answers so that's okay.

**Anthea:**

It sounds like you did the right thing by taking that message and putting it out there for people who really do want the message because there are so many people who are really crying out for a natural answer to their health problems.

**Question from Judith:**

I am so desperate and I've heard opportunities and successes and miracles in the past ten days - it's just phenomenal. I've been a compulsive eater - it does not mean that I can put down sugar and then I'm free or put down something and its over. I've been this way since I was a baby and I've been doing it for 40 years and I've done everything in the world and I'm still struggling and when I go raw, my body is just a mess. It's a

mess when I'm not raw and it's like I'm in the middle of a banquet and I don't have any hands to pick it up. I just don't know where to start. Would you be able to say anything to that?

**Tasha:**

I'm sorry to hear what you are going through. For people who are still struggling with eating disorders, I have a page on my website called eating disorders - [TashaLee.org/eating-disorders](http://TashaLee.org/eating-disorders) and I share some tips there - some things that I've learned in this process and also resources and the way that I got free from my eating disorder - please check that out or you can contact me personally and I'll help you get connected with resources that helped me and hopefully they can help you.

I would definitely recommend getting a coach who can help you work through all this stuff. I send people who have got health problems to Don Bennett because he's the one who helped me sort out my health problems. The body is pretty complicated and he's done a lot of research and worked with a lot of people and there are a lot of coaches - Don is the one that helped me. I do coaching by donation - it's not really the main thing that I focus on but you're definitely welcome to contact me through my website on the contact page. If I can't help you, I'll do my best to help you get connected with resources and people who can help you.

Because I've come through an eating disorder and just all the struggles that I've been through, I definitely do have a heart for people who are still struggling with it and that is why I live to help and serve others and so if I can help you with that, I'd definitely be honored to.

**Anthea:**

Sometimes when the problem is so vast as it probably seems to you, we need to chunk it down and it seems like there's the nutritional picture but also the emotional, and spiritual and the eating disorder picture as well. Maybe you need two different coaches for those two different areas and start walking on the path and being open to the right kind of support can open doors for you. I have that eating disorder history too and I help people recover as well and I also put that out there - I do that. It's not something I charge for because helping people recover, helps me stay recovered. There's help out there for you if you want it and have open arms if you need it.

What would you recommend to someone struggling on this diet? They don't have an eating disorder per se, what would your recommendation be?

**Tasha:**

I will share the things that helped me to stay raw. It was a long process to even get on a fruit based diet and get more consistent with that - the things that helped me to stay raw were getting educated. I've read all of Don Bennett's books. I've read other



things too but for some reason, Don's were the ones that convinced me that I don't want to eat cooked any more - I don't want to put that in my body any more. That doesn't mean that it's not tempting at times.

The education was definitely important but I also had to get some things in place to set me up for success. The hugest one for me was accountability. It definitely was helpful to me to share my journey publicly. So when I started my raw food and fruit based journey, I started blogging about it and making video logs about it, just because I knew that if people were watching me, then I would be more likely to stick to my guns because I'd be embarrassed if I had to tell them that I messed up and that actually really help me get consistent on fruit based pretty quickly because I found that people did watch my videos. People started to say that I was helping them and I was just doing it to help myself stay on the path - so I was happy that it helped others.

It also turned into being a way of helping other people and that was something that I learned in my eating disorder process was that getting out of my self and being of service - looking for a way to be of service to other people around me is a way to be where I need to be emotionally/spiritually because when I'm all wrapped up in myself and my resentments and stuff I'm dealing with that I'm more likely to be eating things that I don't actually need to be eating - those comfort foods that aren't very comfortable any more.

Dealing with my emotions - finding a way to work through emotions - that was really important for me so that I wasn't doing emotional eating. Ellen just talked about her way of working through that. I have worked through my emotions using the same tools and techniques that I learned in my recovery process. Really looking at my fears and resentments and asking God to remove those and show me where I need to be which is usually get out of my self - be of service. Being on YouTube is a way for me to be of service and getting questions from people responding.

I have lots of opportunities to help people so that really helps me to stay out of myself and getting too wrapped up in self pity or anything like that. It has really helped me during the long rough years to have an opportunity to be of service so I don't have to feel sorry for myself. That's not going to help me achieve my goals of staying raw - I will just end up watching a movie and eating emotionally, stuffing my feelings down.

That was good enough for me to stay on the fruit based diet but in order for me to stay raw, I needed something even more hard core and what has helped me to do it successfully is to log my food every day in a Facebook group. I report what I ate during the day and then I plan what I'm going to eat for the next day so I'm thinking through it. Something I learned a long time ago was that if I failed to plan, I planned to fail - basically.

If I don't think through what is going to happen and then I show up in a situation - I'm like 'oh, I don't have anything to eat', then I'm much more likely to go off track. There are obviously times that come up that you can't plan for, but for the most part, that has been something that has really helped me and there are a lot of Facebook groups for this purpose. I tried different ones but they didn't really suit what I needed so I started my own. We just have a small one - but it keeps me on track but I know that somebody is reading it because people tell me that they read it and they miss me when I'm not posting. So even if there is not much interaction there, I at least know that somebody sometime might see it and it has helped me to stay raw.

Anthea has got the Facebook support group with this summit, so there's lots of options but I think that's been really crucial for me - having major accountability and it's not like counting calories because that's like prison to me - I've done it a couple of times to get an idea of how much I'm eating but for the most part, I just like to report in and be totally honest. If I'm not totally honest, I can then hide something and a little bit of dishonesty seems to grow to where I'm doing more and more things that aren't really on track with my goals so it's just best for me to be rigorously honest and it helps me stay clear. I like to be clear with others and clear with God so God can flow through me and I can have good relationships with people and if I feel like there is something blocking me, I know I need to deal with the emotional stuff.

Being honest helps me to keep everything clear.

**Anthea:**

I think accountability is a wonderful way to go. When you put yourself out there, people have an expectation of you and you feel like a call of duty to honor that expectation. I love your videos. I love your parody.

**Tasha:**

The original number was 'call me maybe' so I just do that with fruit.

**Anthea:**

It was so good.

**Question from Diana:**

I'm still struggling with staying on the raw diet. What have you done to really stop the binging and to stay on raw?

**Tasha:**

During the back and forth binging - really my body was the best help in stopping it because I'd feel crap after eating that stuff and my blood sugars were horrible and I

could just see all the negative effects that it had on me and could contrast that with how good I felt when I ate the fruit. That was the big thing. Working through the emotional stuff was big - a lot of it was emotional attachments to those foods or situations/restaurants - so finding a way to work through the emotional stuff was really important.

Eating enough calories made a huge difference. When I first started eating the raw fruit based, I ended up eating a lot of dates and my mentor at the time didn't know about this diet and she was helping me work through spiritual stuff and she was like 'it seems like you have got kind of a problem with dates - maybe that's something you shouldn't eat'. But I was 'I don't know - that wasn't what the people in the raw food world are telling me'. So I kept on with eating them and I think what it was was I just wasn't eating enough calories and my body recognised that dates were a good source of calories and so I would eat dates until I was satisfied.

It was a lot at first and I didn't understand how many calories that I needed to eat at first. I actually played around with this a lot. At one time I was following the advice to eat a certain amount of calories per day - 3000 calories per day - and I gained weight doing that. It did not benefit me to do that but I realised during that time that it really wasn't pleasurable for me to eat that many calories. I was shoving it in and I didn't enjoy my food but I got an idea of how different amounts of calories affect me. Nowadays I just eat, when hungry until satisfied but I'm very okay with if I feel like eating a lot of dates, I'll eat a lot of dates.

Normally I don't feel my best when I eat dates because they are not as high water content and I feel better when I eat the high water content fruits but if it's date season and we've got some really nice juicy dates, then I'll just eat until I'm satisfied. I'm totally okay with it. What I've seen is that at first I was scared about gaining weight by overdoing it on dates because they are so good but as good as they were, when I got to a certain point, I just didn't desire them any more. That never would happen when I binged on ice-cream - I could never get enough and so this was really amazing that dates do have nutrition in them and my body can get the nutrition from them and when it's had enough, it will let me know.

That's not to say that I couldn't gain weight eating dates because if I'm not dealing with my emotional stuff, then definitely dates are one of the easier ones to get too many calories from - so I need to make sure that I'm dealing with all the emotional stuff as it comes up and I'm not dealing with emotions when I'm eating.

#### **Anthea:**

It took me 18 months to get solid with the diet and needed to sort out that emotional eating aspect. I reached the point where I was eating enough calories but I was still going off and binging on other things and I knew that it wasn't the diet. The diet was doing a great job, and certainly I was binging a lot less but I was still doing it and so there was more to the picture than just the diet and I needed to sort out that

particular part of the picture. Since I've sorted that out, I just don't have those issues any more so perhaps that's something that you need to consider.

Perhaps the diet itself isn't going to fix that particular issue.

**Tasha:**

Someone asked me recently to make a video about how I deal with my emotions so I'm going to make one of those soon. I've been reminded of that today. I need to make that video.

**Question from Cynthia:**

Do your mom and dad accept your way of eating? A recipe book soon maybe?

**Tasha:**

My mom and dad do accept my way of eating now. At first they were definitely very scared especially since I'm a diabetic and especially since I was getting really bad health problems, that was obviously not giving them a whole load of confidence about what I'm doing with this diet but as I started to get better and they've seen a lot of things improve with me - they've always been very supportive in general - but definitely there were a lot of fears that they had about me being on this diet. Both my parents and my in-laws, my family in general have been through a lot of turmoil of me doing my eating disorder - crazy behavior trying to tell them how to treat me.

As I started to recover and work on things, we had to do a lot of work on relationships and I ended up bringing my own food every time I would go to my in-laws and just make sure that I'm not placing demands on any body else. I just need to bring what I need to take care of myself and if I need to get out and sometimes I would have to go to meetings for support to just get a breath of fresh air (mentally) or maybe make a phone call or text for support when I was struggling in those family situations where they didn't get what I was doing.

Some situations were really hard because I was struggling with a lot of temptation and I'd like be at these family gatherings and church gatherings where people would have all this food that's really tempting to me and I'm trying so hard to eat right. I would bring my food and then I would go home and struggle with self pity and then I would binge afterwards. I had to work though those self pity things too.

I had to just do it, take care of myself, be happy, not complain and not preach and keep my mouth shut and if someone asked me a question - give a short answer and don't take the opportunity to talk their ear off about what I'm doing and why they need to do it. Be a happy example. That's helped them to be happy and supportive of what I'm doing as well.

A recipe book is a project I'm working on but I'm not really a recipe person - I don't make recipes so it will be very simple stuff. A book for meal ideas for diabetics is on it's way.

**Anthea:**

You've written a book, a one-of-a-kind, called "Healing Diabetes with Fruit." Could you tell us about that and how you brought it to "Fruition" so to speak?!

**Tasha:**

It was a book that I wanted to be there so that I could tell people - read this book and it wasn't out there. When I was frustrated with the diabetes boards and I need to find these people so I can tell them, 'here is this person that I know'. I didn't know any type 2 diabetics that had healed on a fruit based diet. I knew that it happened but I didn't know any of the people and so I was searching and posting on different forums and asking 'has anybody healed? can you please contact me?'

It was really hard to find people but then they started popping up and then as time passed, they popped up more frequently in various places. The book is in depth interviews asking these people who healed all the questions that people would throw at me on the diabetes message boards. All the objections, all the questions that people asked me when they meet me as a diabetic and start asking me about my diet. I just wanted to have these type 2s who healed, answer them so that's what the book is. They talk about their whole process and the interactions with the doctors and their medications.

One of the guys tracked his blood sugars after all of his meals at 15 minute intervals and it was very scientific. It was good to hear their stories and now I know the people who healed! When you read the book, you will get to know them too. They share what they ate during the transition process and it's almost 400 pages - it's a pretty big book so there is a lot of valuable stuff in there.

**Anthea:**

I've read your book and have recommended it other diabetics. There's nothing else like it out there. Neal Barnard's book is also fantastic if people aren't ready to here a totally raw message. I think your book is wonderful.

You have a gift for people on the call today. Would you like to share what it is? And how they can receive their free gift?

**Tasha:**

It's a much shorter book than the other one but I still really like it - *Don't Fear The Fruit*. In the raw food world, there's a lot of people that will say that fruit is not good

for certain conditions such as diabetes, candida and cancer. I wanted to interview people who had those conditions and eat the fruit based diet and how the fruit did not harm them, it helped them and helped their conditions go away.

It's not the in depth interviews of the other book but it's got testimonials from two type 1, two type 2, two people who don't have candida any more and someone who healed their cancer and some links to some other resources to other people that have healed and then just a couple of simple recipes to get started. Nothing elaborate but things that I eat a lot or have eaten a lot in my journey. It was really exciting to put it together and really happy to share it with you all.

**Anthea:**

Tasha, I feel like you are my little angel on my whole journey here with this summit, and I'm so glad to have been able to interview you as well so that everyone can get to know you and see how fabulous you are. Thank you from all of us.

**Tasha:**

It's been an honor to help you - I feel very privileged.

**Anthea:**

So, Thanks for being on the call everyone. Goodbye.