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A DIET-FREE, HEALTHY LIFE THROUGH FAITH

HEAL Program Breaks Strongholds for Young Women including Diet, Body Image and Beauty

(Los Angeles, Calif) Author **Allie Marie Smith** defines the current crisis regarding women and diets, “We’re a generation of girls and young women obsessed with what we are eating and the number on the scale.” Smith knows first-hand of the struggle, failure, promises and guilt that women deal with regarding food, dieting and self-image. Smith, along with **Judy Halliday** author of the best-selling book *Thin Within*, has created a diet-free, healthy lifestyle guide titled ***HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living*** (Group Publishing, December 2008).



HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living is a freedom-filled, faith-based guide designed for a group of four to ten women who are needing to rise above the strongholds of food and body image. It's a diet-free guide that encourages them to choose to walk towards a fulfilling life of health, love, joy and authentic beauty. “The *HEAL* journey is about progress not perfection. Restricting certain foods and setting unrealistic goals for ourselves is a set-up for failure. We must first learn to love and appreciate our bodies before we expect someone else to find them beautiful,” says Smith.

HEAL includes 5 unique principles:

- 1) *HEAL* is a shared journey; stepping out from the darkness into the light, walking in a community of likeminded women toward a lifestyle of freedom from food and body image issues.
- 2) *HEAL* is centered on God, not ourselves; bring God into your daily interactions with food while allowing Him to heal the deepest hungers of your heart.
- 3) *HEAL* offers a freedom-filled approach to food; challenging women to give up calorie counting, restrictive eating and other dieting practices. The key to reaching or maintaining your natural God-given size is to become aware of and obey your natural signals of hunger and fullness.
- 4) *HEAL* is a lifestyle, not a diet. A journey of inward transformation and lasting change.
- 5) *HEAL* is about living an abundant life. Perfect body means a perfect life is a lie. Eyes focused off food, bodies and one's self and onto a life to love, serve and give.

Teen girls and women of all shapes and sizes will find comfort and encouragement in *HEAL* as a resource for living a renewed life, where women see their bodies and their relationships with food as blessings. As women explore Psalm 139, they'll embrace new freedom to become the amazing woman God designed them to be. *HEAL* includes personal stories from women dealing with various stages of the journey, discussion questions, challenges and memory verses. *HEAL* is suitable for women's groups or personal use.

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Allie Marie Smith is the founder of *Wonderfully Made* and creator of the HEAL Journey, and author of the new book *HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living*. Allie is open and honest about her encounters with depression and is passionate about helping young women discover, strengthen and reclaim their value and worth as daughters of God. She is married and lives in Santa Barbara.

Judy Halliday, R.N., is a registered nurse who specialized in Psychiatry. She has co-authored the books *Thin Within*, *Raising Fit Kids in a Fat World* and *Thin Again*. She and her husband live in Los Altos, California near their three children and four grandchildren.

HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living: Paperback: 128 pages.
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\$19.99

Statistics

- 42% of 1st –3rd graders wish they looked thinner
- 80% of American women are dissatisfied with their appearance
- Over one-half of teenage girls use unhealthy weight control behaviors such as skipping meals, fasting, smoking cigarettes, vomiting, and taking laxatives
- Over 10 million women in the U.S. are facing a life-or-death battle with an eating disorder
- 62% of American females are considered overweight
- 3 out of 4 American women exhibit disordered eating
- 91% of women recently surveyed on a college campus had attempted to control their weight through dieting, 22% dieted “often” or “always”
- 17% of girls have taken diet supplements to lose weight without a doctor’s advice

6 Unique Lessons in *HEAL: Healthy Eating for Abundant Living*:

Lesson 1: You are Wonderfully Made: God didn't intend for His children to struggle with weight and body issues. As we rely on God for guidance on how to eat and live, we can be liberated from diet restrictions, emotional eating and compulsive exercise.

Lesson 2: The HEAL Basics: Healthy eating has less to do with the type of foods we eat and more about our relationship with food and God. *HEAL* encourages an emotionally healthy approach to food. Diets attempt to fix a person’s appearance but not the heart, the source of the deeper issue.

Lesson 3: Healing Your Hunger. Hunger is a reminder of our dependency on God to meet our every need and is an opportunity to draw near to God for comfort and as the source of our life.

Lesson 4: Body Beautiful: Body vision statements detail the peace and reconciliation you want to have and understanding the true purpose of your body – to serve, encourage and love others.

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Lesson 5: Aisle of Grace: Resting in God's grace empowers us to choose what is constructive and beneficial in our lives. Diets are rooted in rules that don't change us from within or heal our hearts.

Lesson 6: Abundant Living: Friendships that remind us of our true value and worth that include prayer warriors who see your beauty from within. Live in a way that cultivates your true value and worth as a daughter of God.

Mainstream Media Topic:
Faith-Based Book/Movement Encourages Young Women with Food/Body Image Issues to Join in the fight against World Hunger

Americans spend over \$40 billion a year on diet-related products. New book *HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living* encourages young women struggling with disordered eating and body image issues to take part in the fight against world hunger by sponsoring a child with basic needs such as food and clean water. "We're blessed with an abundance of food we don't know what to do with," writes Smith. "Just imagine how different our world might be if each of us took the money we spent on diet-pills and weight-loss plans...on the pursuit of being thin and put that towards giving the poor the necessities they need to survive" says Smith. In her book *HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living*, Smith encourages groups of readers to sponsor a child through World Vision. "If you have 8 girls doing the book together, \$30 a month comes out to about \$3.75 a month for each girl - the cost of a vanilla latte! It's only a drop in the bucket, but it's a start. I want to encourage today's modern young women to look beyond themselves and remind them that they have a role to play and that this world needs them.

Christian Media Angles

- Has the church been silent on the subject of eating disorders?
- Christian or non-Christian: 75% of women struggle with disordered eating. What are we doing about it?
- New program teaches young women how to bring God into their daily struggle with food and their bodies
- Disordered Eating & Poor Body Image - God's Plan for rising above it!
- How HEAL can help young women of all shapes and sizes make peace with their bodies and reach or maintain their natural God-given size.

Discussion Topics Include (Christian Media)

- The importance of learning how to apply our faith to our relationship with food and our body image
- The rising epidemic of eating disorders among young women
- The three types of hunger we face and how to respond to each
- What it means to have an emotionally healthy relationship with food
- The 5 HEAL principles and how they'll help you develop an emotionally healthy relationship with food
- The importance of redefining "healthy eating" for young women struggling with disordered eating
- The path to developing a positive body image

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Discussion Topics (Secular)

- The role faith can play in helping young women overcome disordered eating & poor body image
- The rising epidemic of eating disorders among young women
- The importance of redefining “healthy eating” for women struggling with disordered eating
- How HEAL can help young women of all shapes and sizes make peace with their body and reach or maintain their natural size.

Suggested Interview Questions (Christian Media)

1. What is the meaning of the title of your book *HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living*? Why do you refer to it as a journey?
2. Psalm 139 delivers a profound message. Share what it means to be wonderfully made by God?
3. What do you mean by a “freedom-filled” approach to food?
4. Why is it important to redefine “healthy eating” for young women struggling with disordered eating?
5. Why do young women need to hear the message of this book and learn the principles it teaches?
6. Why do you say HEAL is a shared journey?
7. What do you mean when you refer to eating God's way?
8. What is the *HEAL* pyramid.
9. How can *HEAL* help women of different shapes and sizes make peace with their body and reach or maintain their natural, healthy God-given size?
10. Describe Hunger/Fullness eating.
11. What's the difference between Head Hunger, Stomach Hunger and Heart Hunger?
12. What does it mean that the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?
13. What does it mean to live the abundant life?

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Talking Points

Book: *HEAL: Healthy Eating & Abundant Living*

Talking Point #1 - HEAL offers a freedom-filled approach to food and a solution to the growing epidemic of poor body image and disordered eating

Question: At first when you hear about this book, it might sound like another diet program. But that's very much not the case. What is HEAL and what does it offer that's different than anything out there?

HEAL encourages girls and young women to switch their focus off food and their bodies and on to living an abundant life. It is an anti-diet approach to food. On your *HEAL* journey you will be challenged to give up restrictive eating, calorie counting, weighing and measuring and other diet-like practices as you learn how to approach food with freedom and confidence. Dieting only intensifies your focus on food, your body and yourself. We understand that the key to both reaching and maintaining your God-mandated (not media-mandated) size, whether overweight or underweight, is to become aware of and obey your stomach's hunger and fullness cues. Listening to and giving our body just what it needs sets us on the path towards reaching our natural, healthy and God-given size.

Talking Point # 2: HEAL is a shared journey

Question: You say that HEAL is a shared journey. What does that mean and why is it important?

Often times our struggles with food and our body are at their worst when we're isolated or surrounded by a negative community. Authentic healing requires that you consciously step out of the darkness and into the light, which awaits you in a community of like-minded women who are also walking towards freedom in this area of their lives. You're not alone. You have a God who loves you and will walk with you as He sends "encouragers" who will help you cultivate a positive approach to food, your body and life. The book facilitates this as it is divided into six sessions which contain both an individual study and a group study. It's a great resource for women to do together a small group/Bible study.

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Talking Point #3: *HEAL* is about living an abundant life

Question: HEAL is not just about rising above struggles with food and your body. The second part of the title is Abundant Living - how is this related to your mission of helping young women develop an emotionally healthy and positive approach, to food and their bodies.

HEAL is dedicated to inspiring you to live a more meaningful and abundant life. It's also about knowing who you are as a daughter of God and learning to walk in a true understanding of your value and worth. It touches upon the "heart issues." Many diet programs promise that once you have your ideal body, you will have the perfect life, but this is a lie! We have been created for so much more and HEAL inspires you on this journey towards truth and transformation. It is time to abandon the words of the world and embrace the words of the Father. It's time to take your eyes, heart and thoughts off of food and on to a deeper relationship with God as you trust in the powerful plans He has in store for you - plans to prosper you and not to harm you – to give you a hope and a future. He has created you with unique beauty, gifts, talents and experiences that He longs to see you use to love and serve the world around you. This is the abundant life He has for you.

Talking Point #4: *HEAL* is centered on God, not ourselves or worldly-wisdom

Question: Most health/wellness programs are built upon the latest research or diet fads. How is HEAL different? And why is it important for young women to bring God into this area of their lives?

HEAL is a Christ-centered program – one that is grounded in Scripture and built on a foundation of Biblical wisdom, *HEAL* encourages you to bring God into to your daily interactions with food while also allowing Him to heal the deepest hungers of your heart. Because God made us, HE understands how our bodies are designed to work and function and so we can turn to Him for wisdom in this area of our life. You'll learn how to take your eyes and hearts off of food and fix them upon the Lord. Experience has taught us that we need something bigger than ourselves to heal and restore us - because we can't do it on our own. You will be given practical steps to help you approach food with a spiritually and emotionally healthy attitude as you surrender your food and body struggles to God.

Talking Point #5: *HEAL* is a lifestyle

Question: How does this program promote your spiritual growth and why is this crucial for those to rise above food and eating issues?

HEAL is not a diet – it is a program of inward transformation and lasting change. We are continually changed from within as we surrender our lives to Jesus and allow Him to continue the good work he has begun in each of us. *HEAL* is a Christ-centered approach to eating and a life you can live now to eternity.