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Week 37: *Christmas Shoes and Smiles*

Randy Robison and Tammy Trent

Alisa Keeton #1

**In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Hello everybody. I'm Tammy Trent and this is Randy Robison. Welcome to *LIFE Today*. Randy, do you like to work out? Don't answer that! Don't answer that!

**RANDY:** No! The only time I run is when someone's chasing me.

**TAMMY:** That's fantastic. Well, today we have an incredible guest with us. I'm excited to talk to her. She is far more than a fitness professional. I wrote some things down because I wanted to get it right. She is a wholeness and healing expert with deep biblical thoughts and approaches to wellness. I think, to me, you can't have one without the other. But this woman runs deep with knowledge. And I am so happy that she wrote a book, *The Body Revelation*, "Physical and spiritual practices to metabolize pain, banish shame, and connect to God with your whole self." Alisa Keeton, it's great to have you here.

**ALISA:** Tammy and Randy, I'm so excited to be here. Thank you! That was fun. I'm like yes, let's go! Let's go!

**TAMMY:** We're all done. We're not done. There is so much more to talk about. You have so much depth. Truly! Not just on the physical body but spiritually, how it aligns and connects, and why it is so important.

I first want to ask you, how in the world did you get into fitness? And not just fitness but even bodybuilding? That's intense.

**ALISA:** The Bible says that God chooses the times and places for us to be born. That is true because I was born right in 1971. By 1985, we were in the throes of health and fitness. Jane Fonda, Richard Simmons, everything is happening. And everyone is shaking their stuff and doing things. We don't even know what we're doing, we just know it is a good time.

**TAMMY:** I'm still shaking my stuff. [Laughing]

**ALISA:** And we just know it is a good time. It was fun. Initially, it was fun and I loved the expression. When I moved my body, it felt like something was happening, I was connecting to a deeper part of me. But also, over the years, being now in the industry for over 30 years, I've seen some not-great sides of it. The toxic diet and fitness culture that has come with it.

What happened is I loved it, I loved helping people with their physicality, their bodies. I truly believe that nothing is stuck. Everything can change if we choose those choices and make those decisions. But I always saw two patterns emerge with my people that I would be trying to help. They would either become very obsessive about the goal and it became all about that and they got very myopic and narrow vision, which you can get the goal but at what cost? Or it was a neglect pattern. They would try to do it and something would always come up or something would happen and they'd fall back into a pattern of neglect. I really wanted to help people.

And then, my heart needed help. My body looked good on the outside, I had it all together on the outside. I could do the equations, I could control things but my soul was lacking. So when Jesus came and met me in my soul, oh, it was like water for a thirsty soul for sure.

Then I was no longer able to see my clients the same way anymore. It wasn't about their bodies, it was about the ache in their hearts and their souls. So that's where it married for me and I started asking the Lord for more understanding of it.

And now, where we are today, it is this—I guess I just want to say to everyone, I know when I come on and talk about the body, everyone thinks, oh, gosh! The fitness girl is here. Put away the cookies. I don't care about any of that. How is your soul and how does it connect to the choices you make?

Because our bodies are about ability, not vanity. Jesus came to show us the kingdom and he did that through his body. And he healed bodies to show the kingdom. So the body is really important. I just don't think we've addressed it well, even in the church. We haven't known what to do with it. And so it's just time for a more beautiful construct of the body.

**TAMMY:** Well, many people think also like I'm going to get my heavenly body later. I don't have to deal with it now. I can neglect it now. But there is a balance and there is a connect. Did you find that early on? Or was it when you found Jesus that you were like, wait a second, there's a balance here and they're both really important and they intertwine here?

**ALISA:** Yes. Well, for me it was the fact that okay, I could get my body in order but my soul was a wreck. Inside I was wanting and desiring but I was not satisfied. So when I started reading scripture and hearing the voice of God, oh, it was beautiful! I loved everything about reading the scriptures and knowing who God was and who he says I was.

But I couldn't get my body to do the thing. So I would read about a love that is patient and kind but then I wasn't being patient and kind with my children or my husband. Or I would read about that we have truth that should renew our minds but I was still thinking of old things. I knew I was living in fear.

First John 4:18 says that there is no fear in love; perfect love casts out fear. So something is going on. I could not live out scripture the way that I was reading it in my quiet time and I felt like a hypocrite. And that's when I had a moment that was my real—we talked

earlier off-screen about there is this coming-to moment where I just said, God, there has to be more. It can't just be me diligently searching the scriptures looking for you. But I think I'm refusing to come to you with my body, come with my aches, come with my pain, come with my fear, come with the emotion that is inside this body. And that's what I started to do—that changed everything.

**RANDY:** I'm curious what prompted that. Was there something in your life leading up to that that made you say I need to read the scripture and figure this out?

**ALISA:** Well, I was reading scripture, I was doing all the practices, I was teaching Bible study, I was even leading the ministry of what is Revelation Wellness now. I was doing that but then off-screen when they weren't around, I could see myself still not being the person I wanted to be.

Then something happened in our family where my daughter went through a moment that was a traumatic moment. It was a moment that she was living, reliving that I had lived out what I thought the Lord would surely protect her from because I was doing all the right things. Well, I've been serving you, God, I've been working for you God, I love you, God. Why didn't you protect her? That disappointment gap with the Lord really exposed inside of me the deeper healing that I need so that I could be an integrated follower of Christ through the pain, through the joy, whatever it is. That my body and my feet could continue to follow him no matter what.

**TAMMY:** So that trauma, you think—I think all of us have gone through something. We're carrying something. Do you think it truly does affect our health?

**ALISA:** One hundred percent. And that's not just my thoughts, that is backed by psychology and neuroscience research. If you live with ongoing stress, which isn't diet and fitness culture, kind of stressful. If you feel like you should be doing something, that just creates more stress. And living in a state of ongoing stress, Harvard University and UCLA will say, that ongoing, living in an ongoing state of stress disrupts the organization

and structure of our brain making it difficult to think, feel, and choose what's best. And it sets us up to sickness and disease. Our immune system down-regulates.

So when Jesus says, "Do not worry," it is not because it's really impolite and it makes him look bad, and Christians should do better. It is because it is bad. It rips at the very fiber of your design all the way down to your molecular structure.

**RANDY:** Isn't it nice when science and psychology catch up with scripture?

**ALISA:** It is fantastic. Imagine God being God over all of it. Yes!

**RANDY:** There it is. So I think the term you use, and correct me if I'm wrong, is "wellness." So how would you sort of paint a picture of wellness if I wanted to step into that?

**ALISA:** That's great. Thank you for asking that. Because fitness has a word and sometimes, when people say, oh, that's the fitness girl. Again, we tend to think, the girl is going to make me do squats and push-ups. Fitness is again about ability. This cup is fit to hold the water. If there was a hole in the cup it would not be able to do that. So that's fitness.

But wellness is a bigger picture of the whole part of your life. Wellness, we know it says, "It is well with my soul." Scripture, our soul, there is a well. And even just living well, there is the deeper part of who we are. And that's not just our bodies. It is emotional, social, psychological, mental, relational—finance. So our whole life is interconnected and that's what the wellness wheel is. If you change one piece of it, if you address one—if you're going to change your finances, you are going to affect the other parts in some way. So you have to consider the whole person your whole life when you're making these decisions. And that can seem overwhelming but Jesus says bring me your whole self. I have loved you with an everlasting love. That's all of who you are. So your finances, your mental health, your physical health, your social well-being, God is in the center of it all.

**TAMMY:** Oh my goodness. Can I just thumb through here? I lost a page where I wanted to go to. There are so many great pieces in this book. So many great stories. One I loved, I've totally lost it but I know it said something about going on a—if I was on a desert island and I saw a box of donuts, then that would be good for me. I was like I really like her fitness. It was something about that story that was just talking about—

**ALISA:** Energy. I'm talking about energy. I'm talking about the fact that, again, back to our bodies are for ability, and not vanity. If we focus on ability I ask the question, how's your energy? How's your mood? And energy is really—the word *emotion* means to move out. And the reason we can move out into our life about our days is because I drink some water, eat some food, and have some energy to go do what I do. But that energy does break down for good or for bad.

Now I said in the book that if I'm stranded on an island and I need something to eat, I'm not going to poo-poo a box of donuts. That would just be Jesus loving me straight up from Heaven! If a donut showed up on—oh, look at Jesus! You're going to save me off this island.

**TAMMY:** Should I eat them? I'm eating them all!

**ALISA:** Right. But then again, we have a plethora of choices. We are inundated with convenience, food for pleasure, and it is harder and harder to make those choices. I think God is saying we're to look at the whole reason why we make those choices.

But again, the premise of this book is if you're someone who has struggled your whole life with your body, you have obsessed, you've neglected it and you just find yourself ping-ponging back and forth between those two, I just wrote this book to say, you're off the hook. That it is not your fault. These are the effects of sin and generational sin. And that ongoing stress, that feeling like something is wrong all the time so you do the next diet or you start the next program or you consider the surgery, whatever it is, that might

help for the moment but until we deal with the stress, the fear that that will just keep continuing to perpetuate you a disruption in your brain making it hard to think, feel, and choose what's best. And God didn't come just for our souls but our bodies, our biology, our brains, our heart, all parts of us he redeems.

**TAMMY:** And that's got to be balanced, although, probably, I don't know anybody that's all balanced. But you've got to fight for or work toward that kind of balance in your life.

**ALISA:** You know, Tammy, I don't really love the word *balanced* because I think it is impossible. It also makes me feel like I'm on a tightrope and it's like a lot to balance.

**TAMMY:** You're setting yourself up for failure.

**ALISA:** Yeah. I love the word *wholehearted*. Whatever you're doing, do it with all your heart. Be wholeheartedly there to that moment, to that thing in that time. That's hard to do because we're multitaskers. Like I can't fully be present. Like right now, I'm loving every minute of this with you guys. I'm fully here. I'm not thinking—well, now I'm thinking about my kids back home because I'm thinking about them.

But do you know what I'm saying? Just be wholly there. When you're about to eat your food, can you be wholeheartedly there and present to the God who lives in your bod? He is in here with us and wants to lead us. He is the best personal trainer, best nutritionist, best psychologist, but we tend to outsource it to other people and things.

**TAMMY:** I love that. Actually, it was a revelation for me to tell me I don't have to be balanced. There is hope for me, Randy.

**ALISA:** You're wholehearted—you're a wholehearted gal.

**TAMMY:** I'm wholehearted! Something else I love in your book, too, is at the end of every chapter you've got this thing called *metabolize*. Like the three M's: Mind, mouth,

and move. Can you tell me about that?

**ALISA:** Yes. So the book's premise again is that the pain, the trauma, the troubles we've lived through have disrupted your brain, have disrupted some biology. So it is not that you lack spiritual discipline or willpower. I think God knows your struggle, he sees your heart. But biology has been affected. And so our brains get negatively affected.

But we can heal our brains. Praise God! In the early '90s, we figured out neuroplasticity. That we can rewire the brain. We can rearchitect the brain. Such a mercy of God! But in order to do that three things need to happen. You have to think new things, say new things, and do new things. And we're really good in the church about thinking new things. I go to church on Sunday, I think something new. I hear something, great, yay! But then I've got to actually say some things. When I say things, I retain it more. If I say it out loud, if I repeat it. If you learn something, and teach it to someone else, you're more likely to remember it.

But then when I do new things, that's a game changer. When I do new things, that imprints something on me and says, oh, I can do that. And so every chapter—and by the way, the chapters are short and quick because I know a lot of people that maybe don't have time or feel stressed out, just need a short bite to bite into and then go and process and metabolize.

So at the end of each chapter, there is a link for people to put on their walking shoes and go for a walk with me. And we begin to process through what we read in the chapter, to then begin to see, what does the Holy Spirit have to say about this? So it is not just information I heard, it is information that became action.

**TAMMY:** How can people sit under your ministry? When I listened to Alisa talk, it's just, you're right, it is way more than fitness. It is so wellness and wholeness in Jesus' name with really practical, biblical principles to that to get to that place of wholeness in our life. I don't want to sit under all your fitness, although I will by sitting under your



ministry. You started this, I want to call it a ministry, but this nonprofit is Revelation Wellness.

**ALISA:** It is a ministry. It is!

**TAMMY:** It feels like it to me.

**ALISA:** Yes. It is 100 percent a ministry. Thirteen years ago, we started it. The Lord told me to do it. Initially, I said that's weird. I don't know what that means. But I knew he kept saying, I'm going to do this. I'm going to do this move of wellness on my body of Christ so come with me.

So we spread the love of Jesus with physical and mental health practices for a wholehearted faith. And back to physical and mental health practices, you can't address the body without addressing the mind. And you can't address the mind without addressing the body. The two are connected. The brain and the body are connected via the nervous system.

So in Revelation Wellness, we have lots of different programs, lots of different offerings that ask you to come and think and feel and embody the love of God in a tangible way through all the different programs we have.

**RANDY:** You also have a podcast called Revelation Wellness by the same name. Okay. I've got a lot—I'm watching the clock and I can't get to all these.

**ALISA:** Oh, my gosh! Look at how fast that went!

**RANDY:** So in working out, I know a few things, because I have worked out. I actually do a little bit. But pain is a real part of working out and a lot of times we don't know what to do with the pain in our lives. You have an interesting take on that.

Failure is another thing that you address. See I need to hear that. Truth and self-talk, what we say to ourselves. This is important. And then we've got these whole stages of healing. And one quote that I wrote down when I was going through it, is: "Where our attention goes the power flows."

So you're bringing up a lot of great things to consider, and I think we should pay more attention to them. I'd like to get into these other things which would require you to stick around for another program. Because you've laid a good foundation but I think a lot of people are going okay but—I've got this, I've got this. So it would be great if you could stick around and we could hit these in depth in another program. Are you good with that?

**ALISA:** Yes! I'm happy to.

**RANDY:** Okay. Well, great! You put a smile on my face. And speaking of smiles, really quick, I want you to take a look at something where you could put a smile on someone's face, literally change their life. It is part of our *Shoes and Smiles* outreach this Christmas. Would you take a look at this? And then we'll tell you how you can be a very special part of someone's life this Christmas season.

## **On the mission field**

### **OPEN CAPTIONS**

>> My name is Dr. Joseph Theuri. I'm a surgeon who does many operations that include the repair of cleft lip and palate deformities. Okay, let's pray. We pray that You're going to guide us through this procedure to enable us to get a good correction.

Cleft lip and palate deformities are very common in Kenya. For the cleft lip, the child has a split lip, usually the upper lip. For the cleft palate, usually there is a hole in the palate. Once they are born, there are quite a lot of effects. Usually, when someone sees a person with a deformity of the face, it is very conspicuous. And that kind of brings a lot of shame to the family. And a lot of children tend to be hidden as a result of that.

A cleft palate has a more challenging, functional problem because children with a cleft palate have problems; difficulties feeding when they are young. Because of that, children usually have malnutrition when they are young. Repair of both of these deformities is able to forestall all these types of problems. So a child that has a cleft lip that is repaired is able to lead a normal life. When someone has a cleft palate, the function of that child and the social interaction, and also opportunities are better when all these are repaired at a young age.

We'd like to thank James and Betty and their friends of *LIFE Outreach International*. We believe that their support will help us to reach more children and be able to treat children with cleft lip and cleft palate. But we know that there are very many children that are not treated and they are out there in our country. This type of intervention is going to help treating these children. And these children will be able to grow normal lives and be able to access opportunities of life just like any other child in our country.

Thank you. May God bless you!

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**TAMMY:** Thank you, Dr. Joseph, for all that you do. What a gift you are to so many children and families, and a gift you are to us at *Life Today*. May God continue to bless you, sir, with the gifts that you have. And I think about those children when I watch that piece and it makes me emotional. Because I just think, I hate seeing it. The struggle that they must face, it breaks my heart. But I think to be able to see those pictures where they show the before and then the after. I see the after and I think, oh, my goodness! They've been given a chance! They've been given a chance at a new life, a normal life for them.

And it is possible. You don't have to just look at that before picture and think, whoa.

That's a life they'll live forever, which is such struggle, and probably just shame that's been brought on them. I know that in those different countries, it is like a curse and it is embarrassing. To think that I could look at that picture after and go, look at what they've been given. Because of you—because of your gift maybe through the years. Maybe today's going to be a brand-new day for you to go I want to give to this. I want to change the life of a little child with a cleft palate or a cleft lip, that will change their entire life forever—build a different future for them.

If that's you on the other side and you've never had this chance, I'm telling you, it will impact your life probably even more than you think it will. So for \$500 today you could change the life of a little child forever. Help them build a better future, Randy. I think that's what we're all about here. Truly, in everything we do, everything we're a part of is helping to save lives and build lives as well.

**RANDY:** It is. And the interesting thing about the cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries is, you know, in all of our outreaches, whether we're talking food, water, rescue, when we reach someone with the love of God, they smile. They have the ability to. But these children, so many of them, literally don't have the ability to smile until we reach them with the surgery.

And so this is such a beautiful outreach. If you can provide a surgery or two or three or four, whatever God puts on your heart, do it. At the same time, I know some of you are like, man, I wish I could provide a whole surgery. Everything—everything helps.

We're also giving out shoes—*Shoes and Smiles*. A \$36 gift today will provide shoes for ten children! A \$72 gift will provide shoes for 20 children. So whatever you can do, perhaps you can go big. And maybe it doesn't seem so big to you but it is big to God. Whatever we do to bless others, both in their physical need and with the spiritual blessing of doing it in the name of Jesus, it's big.

So let's make Christmas special for some children this year. Let's give them *Shoes and*

*Smiles*. Go to the phone, go online, and make the best gift you can. And do it today because Christmas is coming quick. I know it seems like we're way out but it is coming quick. So let us know what we can do as you give some *Shoes and Smiles* to some children this Christmas.

**Begin video clip**

**ANNOUNCER:** Poverty is a killer, and because of it, children needlessly suffer, not only from a lack of food and clean water but also from a lack of things we often take for granted, like a simple pair of shoes. Far too many children living in extreme poverty have never owned a new pair of shoes. And while that may seem minor in light of all their needs, walking with bare feet puts them at risk of life-threatening infections and diseases that could lead to crippling consequences—and even death.

By responding today, you will help secure and make ready 150,000 pairs of Christmas shoes to be shipped and delivered to children around the world just in time for the holidays. Your gift of \$36 will help provide ten pairs of shoes. A gift of \$72 will help provide 20 pairs. And a gift of \$180 will help provide 50 pairs of Christmas shoes for children in need.

As a thank you for your gift of support, be sure to request the beautifully crafted, green crystal shoes ornament, a treasure to display at each Christmas. With your gift of \$100 or more, you may request this keepsake boxed set featuring three of *LIFE's* crystal Christmas shoe ornaments.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help provide over 275 pairs of shoes or two children with corrective cleft lip or palate surgeries. With this gift, you may request the beautiful bronze sculpture, "Consider the Birds."

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

**End of video**

**On the mission field**

**BETTY:** I'm standing here with these children and they're just a small example of children all over the world that they deserve to be considered and loved and cared for. We have an opportunity to do that right now among these children and those around the world to put some shoes on their feet, to give them a chance in life.

I ask you to help us do that. It is just a simple request but a very urgent and important one. Please join with us! You'll get such great joy out of it. I know you will! God bless you and thank you!

**End of video**

**In the studio**

**RANDY:** Please do go online right now or give us a call and tell us what you're going to do. Because we need to get everything in motion so that this Christmas is special for these children. I know you're going to bless them.

Now, we've got a book that we would love to send you, by the way, if you'll make a gift. You can request *The Body Revelation*. Yes?

**TAMMY:** Yes! I have it and I love it.

**RANDY:** And I think it will help people. So we want to do that. And then Alisa is going to come back for another program.

**TAMMY:** Good! Yay!

**RANDY:** So yes, it is going to be good. And by the way, I want to mention this. If you

miss any of the programs, you can always go to [LifeToday.org](http://LifeToday.org). All the programs are there. So I'm looking forward to the next one.

**TAMMY:** Yes! It's going to be great. She's got so much to share. Stick around. We'll see you next time on *Life Today*.