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Interview with Ginny Messina

By OUR HEN HOUSE

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*Following is a transcript of an interview with **GINNY MESSINA** conducted by **JASMIN SINGER** and **MARIANN SULLIVAN** of [Our Hen House](#), for the [Our Hen House podcast](#). The interview aired on Episode 216.*

JASMIN: Ginny Messina, MPH, RD, is a registered dietitian with a Master's degree in public health from the University of Michigan. She writes about vegan diets for the public and health professionals, and she speaks on the subject at scientific events for health professionals as well as events for the public. Ginny is the coauthor of two books on vegan nutrition, *Vegan for Life* with Jack Norris and the recently released *Vegan for Her* with JL Fields. She has also coauthored a vegetarian textbook for health professionals called *The Dietitian's Guide to Vegetarian Diets*. Her new book, *Never Too Late to Go Vegan: The Over-50 Guide to Adopting and Thriving on a Plant-Based Diet*, which is coauthored by Carol J. Adams and Patti Breitman, is coming out this week. Ginny lives in Port Townsend, Washington, with her husband and an ever-changing population of rescued cats. She blogs at [TheVeganRD.com](#) and is also [TheVeganRD](#) on Twitter and on Facebook.

Welcome back to Our Hen House, Ginny.

GINNY: Oh, thank you. It's wonderful to be here.

JASMIN: It's so great to have you back. Before we hit record, we were talking about the fact that -- I think it was the last time we interviewed you for the podcast -- we were in Portland where we had been visiting for six months, and our internet went down, and we were like, oh no, we have an interview! So we found a café that had internet and outdoor seating, and we sat outside with our headphones and our microphone. And people started just gathering around watching us interview you.

GINNY: And that was a fun interview because I was doing that with JL Fields at her apartment in Colorado Springs. So we were sitting there on the couch together while you were sitting outside, and it was a very nice gathering.

JASMIN: It was a good gathering! I wonder sometimes if people know how we do these interviews. You know, sometimes we're practically doing yoga positions trying to both reach the mic and have Rose there as well.

MARIANN: Actually that's totally untrue. I am the one who has to constantly keep grabbing the mic 'cause you control it.

JASMIN: All right! Okay. Ginny is not a relationship counselor. Let's just get that clear right now.

GINNY: That's right. I could try.

JASMIN: Yeah! Okay, we'll keep you on the line afterwards. We'll tell you our problems. I think it could all be cured personally with nutritional yeast. That's what I think.

GINNY: That's probably true.

MARIANN: Or with two mics.

JASMIN: Or with two mics, yeah. Anyway, okay, enough of that. Ginny is one of the three writers of the new book, *Never Too Late to Go Vegan*. And actually the subtitle is *The Over-50 Guide to Adopting and Thriving on a Plant-Based Diet*. And no other book exists like this, does it, Ginny?

GINNY: No, there is no other book that addresses the needs of people over 50 who are vegan or who want to go vegan. And I was actually invited to write this book with Patti Breitman and Carol Adams. They came up with this idea and asked me to contribute nutrition material. So I was really thrilled because I think there's a real need for this type of material and this book.

JASMIN: There is such a need for it. It also has recipes and stories. And it means a lot to me because the three people in my life who mean the most to me are featured in this book. Mariann is quoted in it, and my mother's story is in it. She was someone who went vegan later in life. And my grandmother who just passed away in November, her wonderful essay, "Never Too Late to Change the World," which she originally published on Our Hen House, is also in this book. So I feel like sleeping with this book under my pillow. It means so much to me.

GINNY: Yeah, I know, and I remember reading your grandmother's story on the Our Hen House website, I guess -- I don't know when that was published, maybe a year ago, a couple years ago.

JASMIN: Yeah. Mm-hmm.

GINNY: And oh, I've read it probably three times. I was just so affected by it. So, when we started writing this book and we knew we wanted to include some stories from people over 50 who had gone vegan, that was the first one that I thought of. I really wanted to include that in the book.

JASMIN: Well, thank you. And I mean, in addition to meaning a lot to me, this book is just gonna mean so much to so many people. Our listeners who are over 50 will get a lot out of this. But also, I'm 34 and I'm getting a lot out of this book too. And in addition to that, I want to basically buy this book for everyone who has ever said to me, "I want to go vegan but it's for the young kids!" You know?

GINNY: Yeah.

MARIANN: No one's actually ever said that to me, but the sentiment is there. And actually, Ginny, you suggest in your book that going vegan can be especially empowering for folks over 50. Can you talk about that?

GINNY: Yeah. I think as we get older -- and we three authors are all over 50, and so we have some experience of this -- our sense of empowerment can change in that we might feel like we have less influence on the world. And so going vegan is a way to feel empowered to make change, not just for our own health, although it does that for many people, but also for the world, for the animals and for the environment. And it kind of challenges some myths about aging, this idea that people over 50 are past their prime or incapable or irrelevant because going vegan, it's a choice that really infuses our lives with a new purpose and meaning. So, in that respect, I think that it's really empowering for people who are feeling like, ugh, maybe it's too late to make a difference. This is a way where, every time you sit down to eat, you're making a difference. And you don't have to go to school to do it, you don't have to learn anything new. You just need to change the way you eat, and so it's an easy way to feel empowered.

JASMIN: Yeah, I know that a lot of people who go vegan say, "What was I doing for those first 24 years of my life? I'm so mad at myself!" And the point is that you're vegan now.

GINNY: Right.

JASMIN: And you can make such a difference now. And you were just alluding to that. I wonder if that gets harder as people get older, this idea that if you go vegan, it's like you're bashing the rest of your life as you knew it, and you're kind of invalidating your viewpoint then. Am I making sense?

GINNY: Yeah. I do. And I think that we obviously just have to start where we are and realize that our past is our past. It's filled with good decisions and bad decisions, and there are things that we wish we had done, but you start going vegan today. You start taking steps towards it, or for people who want to go vegan overnight, you can do that. And you're making a difference starting right now, and I think that that's what we have to focus on. And every day that you're vegan you make such a huge difference for animals and for the environment and for your health. So, one of the things we said in our book is that if you go vegan today, a year from now, you're gonna be so happy that you did it. And that's where the title came from, *It's Never Too Late*.

JASMIN: As we're recording this, I received a tweet this morning from someone who was like, "Rosie O'Donnell needs our help!" And Rosie O'Donnell had embraced a largely plant-based diet. And she was interviewed by some local news station and in that interview, she said, "I had tried going vegetarian and vegan but I felt like I was being punished." And I was so sad to see her quoted as saying that. She's someone who is -- you know, I actually don't know exactly how old she is but I would imagine she's around 50. And I was like, I'd been so excited when she joined the vegan bandwagon. She has so much influence. And it really made me sad that she thought that she was being punished by doing this. Do you have any reaction to that kind of thought, like this is nothing but a punishment?

GINNY: Yeah. I think Rosie O'Donnell went vegan I think primarily to lose weight, is that correct? Am I remembering that correctly?

JASMIN: Yeah, and I think she had a heart attack.

GINNY: Oh, that's right. Yeah, that's right. She had had a heart attack and so she was going vegan to improve her health, and I think that it did. I think that she had some good benefits from that. But I think that we have to remember that veganism is so diverse, the food choices are so diverse in the kinds of meals that we can have. And I think if you're eating a very kind of stringent, kind of restricted, boring kind of vegan diet, you are going to feel like you're being punished. If you're paying attention to all of the wonderful recipes that are on the internet, all of the really healthy Mediterranean vegan kinds of recipes, you're gonna see that vegan food is really pretty wonderful. So, you can have your health and you can have a really exciting diet. And with all the resources that Rosie O'Donnell has, I'm really sorry that she didn't discover that.

MARIANN: Yeah, it's really sad. And she also has -- one of the benefits of going vegan when you're over 50 or whenever is the influence you can have on your family, and I know she has a large family that she loves very much. And that's another benefit and another detriment to not going vegan when you're over 50, that it's really a legacy you can leave. And actually, speaking of the types of health benefits, and assuming we're asking people or suggesting to people they should adopt, not a stringently healthy diet, but a healthy diet, what types of health benefits will people over 50 reap when they go vegan?

GINNY: I think that most people are going to see their cholesterol levels drop, if their cholesterol levels are at all high, even if they're in the so-called "normal" range, which is not necessarily a healthy range. They're gonna see cholesterol levels drop. That's a real common effect of eating a more plant-based or a vegan diet. And a lot of people see their blood pressure drop as well. Some people lose weight, although that's something we've talked about before on the podcast -- I think this is an experience that varies among individuals. So, I don't like to see people having that as a standard expectation, but it will happen for some people who need to lose weight. And then there are other kinds of potential changes that are kind of less easy to measure. Certain aspects of eating a more plant-based diet might help to protect cognition and your brain as you get older. And we also see that vegans probably have a lower risk for certain cancers, like colon cancer.

JASMIN: Now, the current fad for people who are worried about their health is the paleo diet. It's been a fad for a while actually. *Wheat Belly* and *Grain Brain* are two very popular books right now, for example. What's wrong with this approach?

GINNY: Well, I think what's wrong with that -- well, for one thing, I don't have any problem with people avoiding any particular food that they don't like in their vegan diet. Some people don't like to eat soy foods. You don't have to eat soy in order to be a healthy vegan. You don't have to eat wheat in order to be a healthy vegan. But there's no reason to avoid these foods if you like them and if you don't have allergies to them. The problem with approaches like *Grain Brain* and *Wheat Belly* is they're not based on any scientific evidence. There is no evidence that, for normal healthy people who don't have Celiac disease or allergies to wheat gluten, there's no evidence that eating these foods will hurt you. There's good evidence that people who include whole grains in their diet actually have lower body weights, lower risk for heart disease, lower risk for colon cancer, so there are some reasons to include foods like whole grains in your diet.

MARIANN: I know that one of the things that people who are getting older worry about is osteoporosis. And of course, we're constantly told by the dairy industry that the only way to prevent osteoporosis is dairy. And actually people over 50, I think, do have higher calcium needs because of this. Can you suggest how people will be able to meet that on a vegan diet?

GINNY: Yeah. People over 50 do have higher calcium needs, and a lot of people in the United States in particular don't meet calcium requirements. Vegans often have diets that are low in calcium, but so do people who eat lacto-ovo vegetarian diets or omnivore diets. We vegans can get plenty of calcium from plant foods. We just need to learn what those foods are and be sure to include them in our diets. Foods like the cruciferous green vegetables like kale and collards and turnip greens and bok choy, those are loaded with calcium and it's very well-absorbed. And you can also get calcium from fortified vegan foods, like fortified orange juice or fortified plant milks, almond milk, soy milk, hempseed milk. Almost all of them are fortified with calcium. And again, it's really well-absorbed, so those are great choices. And the nice thing about getting calcium from these plant foods is that it comes packaged with other nutrients that are also good for your bones. Like, the leafy greens have vitamin K, which appears to be very important for bone health, and milk doesn't have vitamin K. The leafy greens also have vitamin C, which is associated with improved bone health. No vitamin C in dairy foods. So there are some real advantages to looking toward plant foods for getting calcium.

JASMIN: Mm-hm. Now, I know that among vegans, we kind of say how ridiculous it is that people ask us about protein. Like, it's this big joke when we're all sitting down for a meal. "Too bad we don't have any protein!" 'cause it's such a ludicrous claim that vegans just always make fun of the claim. But protein needs do increase with aging. Can you talk about that and explain a little bit about how vegans meet those needs?

GINNY: Yeah, protein needs increase with aging. We're not really sure why, but it seems like protein might be used a little bit less efficiently as people get older. And getting enough protein is really important because the other thing that happens with aging is that muscle fibers actually start to shrink and so you become weaker and less muscular as you get older. And that is bad in general for a lot of things. We want to be strong, that's an important part of health. And also, not having strong muscles can impact your bone health in a negative way. So, having strong muscles is important. The big, most important way to do that is to exercise of course. But getting enough protein is a part of that picture as well. And vegans can easily get enough protein. We have lots of protein-rich foods in our diet. But the most important ones for people who are eating plant-based diet are legumes. And this is the family of foods that includes dry beans like pinto beans and black beans, soy foods like tofu and tempeh, and also peanuts and peanut butter, those are legumes as well.

And I recommended in our book that vegans over the age of 50 consume at least four servings per day of those foods in order to make sure that they're meeting protein needs, that they're eating lots of protein-rich foods. So, it's not difficult to do when you consider that this isn't just eating beans, although I love beans and I think they're really good for you and I eat a lot of them. But it's also things like veggie burgers. A peanut butter and jelly sandwich is a serving of legumes; a hummus wrap is a serving of legumes. So, there are lots of foods that are familiar and that are easy to eat that fit into this category, so it really is easy to meet protein needs. We just need to pay a little bit of attention to those legumes.

MARIANN: Yeah, I absolutely love legumes. But as regular listeners to the podcast know, I have problems digesting them, and they do give me gas, I can't deny it.

JASMIN: They do.

MARIANN: Nobody can deny it. And I don't think our digestive processes tend to get even better as we get older. Like everything else, they tend to need a little bit more care. So, can you suggest ways to avoid flatulence while eating your daily amount of legumes? Other than peanut butter, which I probably shouldn't be getting all of my legume needs from peanut butter, though I wouldn't mind if I had to do that.

GINNY: Yeah, I know. Actually that would be my first choice too, would be four servings of peanut butter a day. It's my desert island food, it's my favorite food. But yeah, not a good idea. It's a good idea to include some actual beans in those servings of legumes. And there really is good scientific evidence that soaking beans and discarding the water and then cooking them in fresh water will make them less gas-producing. It gets rid of the compounds that produce gas in your intestines, so that's the most important thing that you can do. You can also add a little pinch of baking soda to the water, and that will make them more digestible. And then you can also choose the more digestible beans to include in your diet, like split peas and lentils. They tend to produce a lot less gas.

JASMIN: And is it true that mung beans also produce less gas?

GINNY: And mung beans. Yeah, tiny beans tend to be the easiest to digest for some reason, so yeah, mung beans would be a good choice too.

JASMIN: Very good. And I know you mentioned soy briefly before, and I think we also talked about it the last time we interviewed you, but this is still the -- I'm sure you get it much more than we do, but whenever we give a talk -- and mind you, Ginny, our talks are on animal rights -- the first question is about soy. We could be talking about confinement systems for animals for 45 minutes, and the first question is about soy. Can you talk about it a bit, and specifically regarding older people, is it safe for them to eat soy foods?

GINNY: Yeah, it is. It's safe for anyone who doesn't have an allergy to soy to eat soy foods. And all we really have to do is look at how soy is consumed in Asian countries. It's been a common part of Asian diets for hundreds of years, and it's a central part of those diets. Asian people in general eat between one and two servings of soy foods per day. Things like tofu and tempeh and soy milk are typical choices. They eat between one and two servings per day. But we do see that, in Japan in particular, that older people, who eat more traditional diets, tend to eat more than that. They might eat as many as three servings per day. And these are also the people -- when we look at these populations, it's the older people who tend to have lower risk for chronic disease, the people who are eating more traditional types of diets. So, I think that that tells us that we can feel pretty comfortable eating soy foods, up to three servings per day. You always want variety in your diet; you don't want to emphasize any one particular food too much. But I feel comfortable eating soy. I eat at least two servings of it every day just because I like it and because it's really easy. And I just think it's a great food for vegans to include in their diets if they like soy foods.

JASMIN: Why does it have such a bad rap, do you think?

GINNY: Well, it has a -- there's a lot of misunderstanding about soy foods. It has a bad rap in part because soybeans contain compounds called isoflavones, which are phytoestrogens, they're plant estrogens. And there's a lot of concern about this idea that they might do the same thing in the body that the hormone estrogen does. But they don't. They're not the same as the hormone estrogen and depending on the tissue where the isoflavones land in your body, they have all kinds of different effects. Some of them are very positive effects. For example, they can help to reduce hot flashes in women who are going through menopause. And in a lot of the parts of the body, like breast tissue, they don't seem to have any effect at all. They don't have any impact. So, they're very different from estrogen, but I think that just the fact that they're called phytoestrogens raises a lot of concerns among people who aren't really familiar with the science behind them.

MARIANN: Yeah, it's really sad how such a healthy food has really been harmed in so many people's minds. Can you just suggest to us also what supplements over-50 vegans need to take that might differ or might be the same as supplements that would be good for other people?

GINNY: Yeah. Actually the supplements that over-50 vegans need to take are exactly the same ones as what over-50 omnivores need to take. One is vitamin B12, and we know that all vegans need to take a vitamin B12 supplement or use foods that are fortified with vitamin B12. But what a lot of people don't know is that the Institute of Medicine, the government organization that establishes nutrient recommendations for Americans, recommends that all people over the age of 50, regardless of the type of diet they're eating, should be using vitamin B12 supplements because as we get older changes in the digestive tract make it more difficult to absorb vitamin B12 from animal foods. So, even a person who's eating meat and dairy foods might have trouble absorbing the vitamin B12 from those foods, but B12 from supplements is very easily absorbed by everyone. So, for people over 50, no matter what kind of diet you're eating, B12 is important. And then the other nutrient that's important for many people is vitamin D. If you're not getting adequate sun exposure, then everyone needs a vitamin D supplement or foods that are fortified with vitamin D.

JASMIN: Is it enough to take a very high-quality multivitamin that has B12 in it?

GINNY: It might be, but because of digestion and absorption issues, I really like to see vitamin B12 supplements that are very easily absorbed and therefore I recommend a vitamin B12 supplement that's chewable. And almost all of them are. Even if they don't say it on the bottle, they usually are chewable. So, for that reason, I really like to see people take an individual vitamin B12 supplement and take one that they can chew.

JASMIN: Now, do people who go vegan after 50, do you think that they face different kinds of challenges regarding relationships as compared to younger people who go vegan? Is this a different type of issue?

GINNY: Yeah. I think that the challenges might be a little bit different for some people. And people might find, for example, that their veganism creates a little tension with longtime friends with whom they've shared meals in the past. All of a sudden those eating experiences have changed. And while many young people, college-age people and people in their 20s, may have experience with veganism even if they're not vegan, for older people, longtime friends might not have that kind of experience. And if you're the person who's been responsible for preparing holiday meals, for example, all the traditional meals in your family,

you might experience pushback from family members, and that could include adult children. That's something very different that people over the age of 50 are gonna need to deal with. So we need to, as with any kind of relationship of course, we need to communicate about the changes we're making in a compassionate way and help family members and friends see that nothing else about our relationships have changed, even if traditions around food are being tweaked a little bit.

JASMIN: You just made me think of something. It's a slight tangent, but my mother and stepfather, they live in New Jersey, and they have these two friends in the city that they get together with. They go to the show or they'll go to the movies, and they'll always get together for a meal. And so I think they were going to a museum on the Upper East Side. My mother suggested that they eat at Candle 79, and the friends said that they wouldn't because it was vegan, and that they would if it was vegetarian.

GINNY: Oh no.

JASMIN: It's just sort of neither here nor there, but it's like, oh you need to have the cheese so much that you can't have *one* meal at a world-renowned vegan restaurant. Anyway, I digress.

GINNY: It's funny because one of the things we say in the book -- and this is actually, this came from Carol Adams and I think it's a quote from one of her earlier books. And it's that people are perfectly happy eating vegan meals as long as they don't know that that's what they're eating.

MARIANN: Yeah, exactly.

GINNY: And once they sit down and taste this wonderful meal at Candle 79, if they didn't know it was a vegan restaurant they would just be blown away by how great the food was, I'm sure.

MARIANN: You're absolutely right, though it does bring up the fact that I think that people who are older, they can get a little bit more set in their ways. So the entire milieu can be a little more difficult for people who are making sudden changes or major changes in their diet. I think they might be getting a little bit more pushback from people and they should be prepared for that. But I think the rewards are so great they shouldn't be worrying about it. And another thing is cooking. You know, we like to say that being vegan isn't hard, and it's not. But to be healthy generally does take some work and at least some attention to what you're eating. And sometimes when people are getting older, they might be in a place where they're trying to get out of the kitchen, not spend more time in it. How do you address that?

GINNY: Yeah. I think one of the things we need to remember is when we talk about the importance of getting into the kitchen and cooking, we're not really talking about a vegan diet specifically. We're talking about eating more healthfully. And no matter whether you're an omnivore or a lacto-ovo vegetarian or a vegan, if you're going to make your meals more healthy, it does require a little bit more attention, and it might require a little bit of time in the kitchen. But vegans don't need to spend any more time cooking than anybody else. We have lots of wonderful convenience foods that are healthy. I buy, at Trader Joes for example, they have in their frozen foods section a rice and wild rice mix. I don't know, it's

three kinds of rice I think mixed together, and it's frozen and you just pop out a package and put it in the microwave and it's ready in three minutes. And it's a whole grain. It's really good for you and it's really easy.

And once you start poking around a little bit, there are lots of foods like that that are available. Canned beans are fine, frozen veggies are fine. These are all foods that are good for you. So I think that people can spend as much time in the kitchen as they want, and if they really, really don't like to cook, and lots of people don't and that's absolutely fine, I think that you might find that you need to spend a little bit more money on food or that you're not gonna have all of these elaborate vegan meals perhaps. But you don't have to be a great cook and you don't have to spend a lot of time in the kitchen to prepare healthy vegan meals.

MARIANN: Yeah, absolutely, I think we can attest to that. And smoothies! The greatest invention of this century: the smoothie. You can just eat incredibly healthy and all you have to do is blend.

JASMIN: And actually, one --

GINNY: Yeah, that's right, and oh my gosh, all you have to do is plug smoothie into Google.

JASMIN: Yeah.

GINNY: And you come up with about a million and a half recipes.

JASMIN: Mm-hmm, and one thing that we did last night actually -- we just moved to Brooklyn from lower Manhattan, and when we were in lower Manhattan, we lived around the corner from Souen, which is a macrobiotic restaurant. And we used to go there all the time for the macro plate. And so last night we were crying, kind of, in our hearts anyway, because we missed the macro plate. And so we decided to make it, and the way that we made it because we had no time was we half made it and half bought it at the Chinese place on the corner. We just bought like steamed tofu and broccoli and brown rice and then we made the rest of it, the root vegetable, the tahini dill dressing. So there are ways of getting creative while still being healthy and not having to slave over a hot stove all day.

GINNY: Right.

JASMIN: So, one of the pieces that you talk about in the book with your coauthors is the difficulty of finding an assisted living facility that caters to vegans. And this is something that recently touched my life with my grandmother who we just talked about. When she went to an assisted living facility and she had been -- she was vegetarian, mostly vegan, and it was a very, very big issue. And my mother, being local to where she was, and who's also vegan, was the one who mainly had to deal with that problem but I definitely dealt with it as well. And it was an issue. I'm not sure if you actually wrote that part of the book, but I would love your take on it.

GINNY: Yeah. And writing that part of the book -- and we actually all shared some experiences in putting that section of the book together, and it was very frustrating because it was actually very difficult to come up with good recommendations. This is a real problem in assisted living, and all kinds of care facilities where it's hard to access vegan food. And it's really only hard because the people working in the kitchen don't know about vegan food.

They don't know what to prepare. So, it's important to gently educate them by coming up with really simple recipes using foods that are available to them, and helping them, helping the dietitian, helping the staff to see how easy it can be to put together vegan meals, things like lentil soup and burritos, and pasta with marinara sauce. These are all ingredients that are readily available to institutional kitchens and that can easily be put together into meals. So, I think that anyone who has a family member who's going into assisted living or into any kind of care facility needs to be prepared to provide that kind of information.

JASMIN: And this is also probably a new problem that we're being faced with because my grandmother passed away at 89, and certainly when she was being raised, the word "vegan" wasn't even a word yet. It wasn't even an idea. Well, I guess it was an idea, but it was extremely, extremely fringe at that point, so this is only a new evolution, the idea that people going into assisted livings will have this requirement.

GINNY: Right, it's a new problem and a great problem obviously. And we can only hope that it's going to go away in a fairly short period of time, as more and more people become vegan and so that we see these assisted living places starting to fill up with vegans.

MARIANN: Yeah, absolutely. And a lot of the work that's been done and so many of the advocacy in this area has been focused on school cafeterias should be the same. It's cooking for large groups of people. And as the need arises, of course the vegans and vegetarians may be going into the assisted living a little later than other populations, but we're definitely gonna end up there. We're not gonna live forever, guys, no matter what you think.

GINNY: Right, that's right.

MARIANN: So, it's gonna happen. And I do have a dread of the idea of getting old and being fed meat. I think so many of us share that fear that you will actually -- or maybe it's because my mother had Alzheimer's in her later years, so you realize you can be very helpless.

GINNY: Right.

MARIANN: And it's just a horrible thought to think that that could happen, so I really hope this evolution continues to occur. So, Ginny, just to sum up, I'm sure you get this all the time when you bring up this issue. What do you say to people who say they're too old to change?

GINNY: I know. And I don't understand how anybody would really think that they're too old to change. I mean, we all change in so many ways all of the time. You retire and you take up a new hobby. We're all learning new things as we get older, hopefully, because that's a part of healthful, happy aging, is learning new things and exploring new experiences. And I think that going vegan is just exactly like that. It's a matter of exploring new foods, becoming familiar with new recipes, a new way of eating. And you don't have to do it overnight. I certainly went vegan -- it was a transition for me. I took it kind of one step at a time. And I think if people look at it that way, that each meal they're going to kind of explore something a little bit different, it becomes less scary and it doesn't feel like such a huge change. The change just happens gradually.

JASMIN: Well, I feel that's very, very good advice. And there's so much incredible advice, and a lot more than that too, in this book, *Never Too Late to Go Vegan*, which is coming out this week. And I'm just thrilled about it. It's really filling a void, that we have so many vegan books on the shelves these days, and that's so exciting. And you can find a book about just about anything, but this is the first one of its kind. And I hope people get it and get extra copies of it because it is definitely going to be a game changer. And Ginny, you're a game changer as well, as are your coauthors Carol Adams and Patti Breitman. So, thank you for joining us today and thank you and your coauthors for writing this wonderful book. And I'm sure we'll stay on top of what you're doing, and you just are always busting out with incredible information. How can people find you online?

GINNY: Well, thank you for that, and they can find me at my blog, TheVeganRD.com, and I'm also [TheVeganRD](#) on Facebook and on Twitter. And we also have a website for the new book, NeverTooLateToGoVegan.com, and the Facebook page as well.

JASMIN: Wonderful. Well, thanks again, Ginny. We'll talk to you very soon.

GINNY: Okay, thank you.

JASMIN: That was Ginny Messina.