

# Balance365 Episode 75 Transcript

Annie :Welcome to Balance365 Life Radio, a podcast that delivers honest conversations about food, fitness, weight and wellness. I'm your host Annie Brees along with Jennifer Campbell and Lauren Koski. We are personal trainers, nutritionists and founders of Balance365. Together we coach thousands of women each day and are on a mission to help them feel healthy, happy, and confident in their bodies on their own terms. Join us here every week as we discuss hot topics pertaining to our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing with amazing guests. Enjoy.

Annie: If you're thinking about getting off the low carb train, then this episode is for you. On our previous episode of Balance365 Life Radio, we discuss the science behind low carb, high fat diets, like Keto and the many downfalls that can accompany them. Balance365 cofounder Jen has had her fair share of experience with low carb diets and after a decade of trying to make the low carb diet work for her, she realized there has to be a better alternative, but taking the morality out of carbs and introducing them back into our meal plan took some practice. On today's episode, Jen shares what the process of shifting her mindset and habits from "avoid carbs at all costs" to "carbs in moderation" looked like for her and offers her best advice to those looking to do the same. Enjoy.

Annie: Jen. It's me and you hanging out. We're kind of on the fly today

Jen: Yeah, we are.

Annie: I messaged you late last night and I was like, "Hey, I don't have an official outline, but this is what I want to talk about." And you were like, "I'm not officially prepared either. Let's just do it." And then now you're like, "Should we open with something fun?" What's fun? What did you have in mind?

Jen: I don't know. Sometimes I listen to other podcasts and I feel like they have more banter and we have no banter. Like ,we really get into it right away. And I wonder if people want to know more about us.

Annie: I don't know. Do they?

Jen: I don't know.

Annie: I mean, my ego would love to think that people want to know more about us.

Jen: So start when you were born.

Annie: May 6, 1983. What'd you do this weekend?

Jen: Soccer and birthday parties. That is my life the last couple of years. My kids are getting older. They're in sports. They're not older, my oldest is nine, but, so I'm just a soccer mom from April to June. I have just accepted it.

Annie: It's always fun to see your Instagram stories because, well, when I met you, you're in the prairie, you were living on the prairie in Saskatchewan. Saskatoon. But now you're in a mountain town and the scenery in the background of like, even the soccer fields is just gorgeous.

n: It is so beautiful where I live. So I live in Kamloops, BC and it's in the interior British Columbia and it's so beautiful. Some days I'm just like, and it's not densely populated here either, so you know, it's not like the hills are covered in homes or anything. It's just like mountains and it's so beautiful. We love it here. We've been here two years and yeah, it's gorgeous. I want you and Lauren to come here. I think our next photo shoot should be here

Annie: I would happily accept that invitation any day. Let's do it. Okay. You win. I went to an Andy Grammer concert on Saturday night. Do you know him, Andy Grammer?

Jen: No. I feel like when you posted that, I was like, "Oh, I feel like such a mom right now, I don't know who that is."

Annie: I don't know how I knew who he was before the concert, but a lot of the people that I went with were like, "I don't think I know any of his stuff." But I really like him but the irony of the concert was it was a pizza festival and I had a VIP ticket and I was like, I feel like this was meant to be.

Jen: Totally, music, pizza, concert.

Annie: Vip Pizza Concert.

Jen: Like you were rocking your American Eagle jeans. I also want to say I have those same jeans and they rock. But do you remember when I first introduced you to American Eagle jeans and you were like, "No.

Annie: I knew this was gonna come up eventually. But yeah. So, okay. First of all, I usually get all of my jeans tailored. Like it's just, even the American Eagle Jeans I wore two years ago when we met up, I remember I had a pair, I had to get them taken in at the waist cause I, they just, jeans just don't fit my thighs. So I buy them to fit my thighs and then I have them taken in at the waist. It's just always what I've always done. And then American Eagle came out with these really cute like destructed jeans that I wanted in on the trend and they had a fit that was called the ultra high rise, curvy. And I was like, "Ah, we'll just give them a try."

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: And they worked and they were great.

Jen: Yeah. I find American Eagle has jeans for almost everybody. A lot of women in our community where them now, because we've recommended them so many times. But what is amazing about them is they have these, it's called super stretch is the fit, which makes them like Jean leggings. They're like jeggings.

Annie: Yeah.

Jen: And they're in cute styles. And what I do find about them though is their sizing isn't like I have from size six to size 12. Yeah. It's not consistent and that's annoying. Cause you know you, I don't have an American Eagle where I live so, cause now I live in the boonies but I have to order them online and it's so annoying because it's like who returns online orders? Like, who even goes to post offices anymore?

Annie: I'm sitting right next to an online order that's from American Eagle? Probably three months old.

Jen: And you just end up, like, keeping it. I know. So I just sent some to my niece because my dad was here visiting so I just sent it home with them. I was like, here's some American Eagle stuff that was way too small on me. It'll fit my niece. So you want to hear something funny that I did a couple of months ago?

Annie: Yes.

Jen: I did an online order of these denim capris from the Gap that were wide leg and I used to wear these like 10 years ago. I had a pair just like this and it's like they've come back in style and so all my friends remember I used to wear

these all the time and they sent me like, "Look, you've got to get another pair."

Jen: So an ad comes across my feed for these wide leg denim capris and I'm like "Gonna get them." Picked them up, grabbed them, they're 45 bucks, ordered them. I ordered a size eight, I thought it'd be about safe there. They come in the mail and I put them on, throw one leg in and I was like, oh these sizing is off again. Then I'm like, "No, this is really tight."

New Speaker: I have a feeling I know where this is going.

Jen: A girls size eight so like one leg could fit one leg like there was, I couldn't get the waist past my thigh. So I was mortified that I had done this and then I had clicked on a little girls and then I went back to the ad because I'm like, "How could I do this?" And it was, it didn't show her face. It showed her from the waist down and I don't think it's super obvious, but anyways, I didn't send them back. I took them to my local Gap and they said they don't accept returns from online orders, which was super annoying. So I just gave them to my neighbor, my neighbor girl.

Annie: Maybe it was like an error in the shipping distribution.

Jen: No, because I went back and looked at my order and I was hoping it was and I'm like, "Oh, good job." Anyways.

Annie: Oh well, you know.

Jen: How's that for some podcast banter?

Annie: You win some, you lose some, I guess. I think it was perfect. We'll have to get some feedback from our audience if they-

Annie: Just email us, keep that to yourself. Only good comments, please. Okay. But what we really did want to talk about was in particular your experience. We just got done recording a podcast with Amanda Howell about Keto and low carb, high fat diets. You have a fair amount of experience, personal experience, low carb dieting. Correct?

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: And we want, and we just wanted to talk to you about what that transition from living a low carb lifestyle for so long and now eating a more balanced, moderate, maybe even high carb at various points diet looked like and how you kind of worked around some of the mental, physical blocks. You

know, "Carbs are bad. I should avoid carbs" to now like "Carbs are my friend and they actually benefit my body and my performance and my wellbeing."

Jen: Mental health, etc.

Annie: So, yeah. Can you tell us like, when did you start low carb dieting and why?

Jen: Well, when did I start? I was quite, it was in my early twenties. My parents were in on the Atkins thing back in the day. A lot of people's parents probably were, if not, I think it's made a comeback because the Kardashians are promoting it. And that's a very low carb. I don't know if it's Keto, but the next one that I did was called the South Beach Diet. Have you heard of that, Annie.

Annie: Yeah, I have, I remember getting their, like, frozen meals at the grocery store.

Jen: Oh my goodness. They have like a phase one and a phase two, which are Keto as in, it's like under 40 grams of carbs a day is phase one. And then I think it is under 50 grams of carbs a day in phase two. If I'm wrong, I'm sure our audience will let us know. But this is what I remember.

Jen: And even back in the day, over 10 years ago, they didn't talk about ketosis and they didn't even talk about grams of carbs. I don't think necessarily they just gave you a meal plan to follow. I ended up that just kind of triggered like a decade of low carb to Keto dieting for me. I'm sure there's times I was in Ketosis. I'm sure there's times I wasn't. And I thought it was, as we covered in the podcast with Amanda, so if anybody's listening to this, we did this podcast with Amanda. She has her masters in public health and now does nutrition counseling professionally and she goes over the science of Ketosis. So, yeah, listen to that one. If you want to understand the difference between Keto, low carb and there's extra super low carb and there's slow carb. So that was basically my, I basically went like a decade with a fear of carbs and I'm talking, like, through my pregnancies and everything. So yeah.

Annie: So what happened? Like, how did you get to the point where finally you were like, "I can't do this low carb thing anymore?"

Jen: I started following, so it all kind of came in my, just in my entering of the fitness industry. It was sort of my awakening of I had to quit dieting. I was just so deep in it. I mean, yeah, I mean, I think we've all been there, right? Like, you know, I was on every train, Annie, like every train, like the gluten free train, the clean eating train, the, you know, whatever. Right? And so I reached a

point where I, we have a Youtube, I did a youtube video about it years ago on our youtube page there. I just thought, "I can't do this anymore." And it was a very emotional thing for me, but it was like, "I'm not doing this anymore because I'm not doing this to my kids." And a lot of us have grown up with parents who are dieters. And so we know how it may not feel harmful in the moment, but we know as we grow older that it can really start to become problematic, just those feelings that you develop around food and the importance you place on fitness over balanced nutrition. And so yeah, I just thought, I'm not doing this to my kids. I have to stop. But I transitioned actually from Keto slash low carb to, if it fits your macros, which is basically another diet based around macro counting. And that was great at first, but then it brought a whole new level of anxiety around counting, which is then I was like, I would consider if it fits your macros, sorta like my last diet officially.

Jen: But what the amazing thing about Keto and low carb, particularly Keto, because it's such high fat, is it can feel like a relief at first. Because prior to that I was all about clean eating. Like I had the clean eating books, you know, like the trademark clean eating, not just the term, but the clean eating books, the clean eating diet, like clean eating recipe books. I was all about that. And that diet is essentially low fat, low calorie, low everything. So, initially Keto can feel like a relief because all of a sudden you can eat a plate of cheese and Salami or bacon or butter or bacon, all these things, yeah, that have been off limits and sort of made your food tastes like crap. Right? Like fat makes food taste great. Right. Oil on salad, butter on veggies. Yeah, so it was a relief at first until it wasn't until I was like, but "What about carbs?"

Jen: And then If It Fits Your Macros felt like a relief to me at first because it was like "Now I can have carbs again" until it wasn't, because suddenly I had all this anxiety around counting macros and you realize you can't leave the house because you can't eat outside the house because you can't measure your food, you don't know what macros are in it and anyways. And then part of being part of the If It Fits Your Macros community and you are surrounded by all these other women with the same anxieties and it just meant it just compounds until I just walked away from all of it.

Annie: It sounds like you had this kind of like evolution of shifting your focus, your obsession, maybe is even a better word from clean eating and then to low carb to macros. And it was like the kind of stepping stones from one to one to one.

Jen: Yeah. Like I was clearly looking for balance. Do you know what I mean? Like, I was clearly going like "This way isn't working for me like this," you know, I was sort of going from, yeah, I got less and less extreme over time. But until I

finally just walked away from all of it, which was amazing. But yeah, what we were gonna talk about in this podcast I think was

Annie: What that after looked like.

Jen: Yeah. So I wanted, what I talk about with women in our community quite often is what coming off Keto can feel like and look like and what you can expect. Because even if somebody who's listening right now is doing Keto and they know that they don't want to do it for life, I want to be there for them. Whether I agree with what they're doing or not, I want them to know that there's a way out and they don't have to do that forever. And I also don't want them to feel shame if they're having trouble sticking to it. Because what I will say is I did not live for a decade on Keto. I actually lived for a decade Yo Yo dieting, swinging back and forth between low carb to lower carb to maybe Keto to basically bingeing on sugar. Like it was just, so yeah, when I tell people I did it for a decade, I wasn't like this rigid diet or for a decade I was actually just-

Annie: You maybe tried-

Jen: I tried for 10 years.

Annie: That entire time could be as trying to be low carb or Keto. And that's how, that's how I feel about my dating history is like, I actually didn't stick with a diet for longer than maybe a week, but I tried dieting for decades, but Monday morning start out strong, come Friday. It's like "Ah, screw it!" Jen: Yeah. Yeah, totally.

Annie: Yeah. So, so okay, let's start maybe just psychologically, do you want to start there

Jen: Yeah!

Annie: Mentally? Like what, what did that look like when you were like, "Okay, I'm walking away from it at all? What changes did you notice? What was that? What was that like?"

Jen: So psychologically where I got to with low carb, Keto dining was a massive fear of carbs and a very skewed perception of what a serving of carbs is, right? Because you have to be, so as we talked about in the last podcast, if you're on Keto, like you can barely have an apple in a day and you're knocked out of ketosis. So when you see a plate of pasta, say, you are just like, that just triggers so much anxiety or a couple of pieces of bread. Like you are just like, "Oh my God."

Annie: Yeah, people don't see pasta. They see fat. Weight gain.

Jen: Yeah, yeah. Ruined my diet. But the interesting thing about that is what we know and research shows this and my experience wasn't any different, is that food restrictions lead to food preoccupations. So when I came off low carb dieting, well even, you know, even during my dieting days, I was preoccupied, actually became preoccupied with carbohydrates in that when they became available to me, I couldn't stop eating them.

Jen: But then you have the whole sugar addiction community that you can turn to and they'll tell you you're addicted to it and that's why you can't stop etc, etc. We also have a podcast on that side note, episode 44 sugar addiction. So you know, there's always somebody there that's in the diet industry telling you that what's happening with you isn't natural and normal. It's, there's just something else wrong with you. But actually what we know and research has shown, and we have, it's episode four of our podcasts we talk about this is just period, psychologically food restrictions equal food preoccupations. They go hand in hand. So, you know, that's when I was probably during my, like I just, I had developed a really bad bingeing behaviors. Basically if I wasn't on my diet, I was off it and I was bingeing. And so, yeah, the other thing is that you are becoming dependent on those quick results.

Jen: So you do get quick results with low carb and Keto dieting. But as studies have shown they're not fat loss, they're just weight loss. And a lot of people don't know the difference between that, but we covered it in the last podcast where it's actually, you just become like glycogen depleted. So that first week on any diet that's low carb or even Keto, you're going to see a huge drop in weight, but it's not fat. And studies have shown that Keto is not, the Keto Diet is not superior for fat loss. Right? And we don't want to lose all those other things, right? We want our, we don't want to lose all of our glycogen. We don't want to lose our muscle mass. That's not, we don't want to lose our bone density. That's not something that women should be striving to lose.

Annie: Right, but for the average Jane who's, you know, just kind of doing these experiments, so to speak, in her home, steps on a scale, she doesn't have a barometer for what that weight loss actually is made up of. You know, she can't differentiate, this is water, this is muscle mass, this is fat loss. It just kind of, so people just assume or can assume that it's one in the same and we're telling you it's not.

Speaker 3: Yeah. So women have been conditioned to believe that that number on the scale is the most important thing. And seeing it go down is the

most important thing. So that's why you see things. If a woman gets sick and gets the flu and loses 10 pounds, you see her celebrating. You know what I mean? Like as long as that number's going down. Women, like I remember some days knowing I had a good day or a good three days, I couldn't wait to go to bed so I could wake up in the morning and see how low that number was in the morning because I knew, I knew it would be super low, maybe the lowest.

Annie: Right.

Jen: And so now I know it was just because I had gone through days of depleting myself of carbohydrates, which just made, made me basically dehydrated in the morning. And like I see this and even still in Facebook groups all the time where women, they think they're bloated when they're not bloated. They're actually, it's just like a normal regular looking stomach that's not depleted.

Annie: Right.

Jen: Do you know what I mean? Like they're just so fixated on that depleted look that they have in the mornings. Yeah, it's painful but I was one of them so I get it. Or maybe you are bloated because you've just binge on a bunch of ice cream. Cause that also happens. Right? So and that's kind of what I swung between psychologically for a decade was that basically being like overeating to the point of being extremely uncomfortable and then also bloated because I've just gone from low carb to high carb, from low carb to high carb rather than being just having a regular normal carb intake.

Annie: Right. And that's something we talk about in Diet Deprogramming. Even that, you know, you said a little bit ago that restriction leads to bingeing and we have, we make the analogy about someone holding their breath. And I think this is just so like when you hear this analogy, you're like, of course, that's the expected response. So if you're doing low carb and you find yourself bingeing, like Jen was, on carbs or unable to feel like this sense of control around carbs that, you know, if we said, hold your breath, you know, however long you can, that first breath after you let go, it would be this-

Jen: Big gasp.

Annie: Yeah. This big gasp of air. And that's what happens when people binge and restrict, you know, so it's like you said, this isn't about you needing more willpower or wasn't for you about you needing more willpower and dedication to the diet or discipline. It was like, this is what happens when we restrict food

groups.

Jen: This is just a normal and natural result. It's a physiological reaction.

Annie: Yeah.

Jen: And psychological reaction. So there's nothing wrong with people.

Annie: What about physically, Jen, what?

Jen: So physically I, Amanda covered a lot of the hormonal issues and I don't have any data on myself. But what I will say is that, carbohydrates are very important for mental wellness as well as physical wellness. And I had postpartum depression and I don't know, I likely would have had it anyways, however, I'm sure it was compounded with low carb dieting or Keto dieting, right? So you're already not mentally well and then you cut your brain off from its main source of energy. So and low carb dieting is, and Keto is linked with mental health issues in women, increase in depression and anxiety.

Annie: And dieting in general, regardless of how many carbs is a stress on the body.

Jen: Right, increasing cortisol, yeah, it is very stressful to the body. So you're already, you know, you think of your average postpartum mom, she is, has a baby. It's supposed to be the best time of her life. However, she is immediately feeling ashamed about her body. All of those decades of conditioning that women must be small at all times, come rushing at her and she's trying to lose that weight as quickly as possible. But it's also one of the most physically and psychologically demanding times of your life. But then you cut off your energy supply when it's at its highest and it's just a recipe for women driving themselves into the ground. And we see that all the time. They do, postpartum women, women in general do it, but postpartum women, they just drive themselves into the ground with how they treat their bodies after they have a baby.

Jen: So, what I will say is that that was sort of like, I don't know if that belongs under psychological, but as my mental wellbeing, my physical wellbeing was that I personally had very low energy when I was low carb dieting. And that's the other thing we do right? When we're trying to lose weight, we match low fuel intake with an output that's not sustainable. Right? Because then you're exercising all the time.

Annie: Low intake, high output.

Jen: And it's not sustainable. Yeah. So I, fitness has always been a part of my life. And so, but honestly my baseline had become low energy that I didn't even know how low my energy was until I wasn't doing it anymore. And then all of a sudden I had all this energy and I actually started making gains in the gym after feeling like I had been plateaued for years and years and years, like never really getting anywhere in the gym. And then all of a sudden I was lifting more, running further and it's just crazy to me now what I know about nutrition and human physiology, it's insane to me that I was a runner and doing low carb dieting. Like of course my performance was always awful.

Annie: Yeah. But sometimes these changes are so slow over time that you don't even notice like, huh-

Jen: That was my normal was low energy. Right. And yeah. And that's, I think really, I never, I just never excelled at weightlifting, I think because I just never had the sort of like lifestyle, nutrition, restorative stuff going on to support being good at weightlifting, where since I've quit dieting and started having just regular carb intake, now I see the gains and it's exciting and then I want to lift, you know, I want to lift more because I'm getting better at it, right. I have that feedback. So yeah. So I would say low energy was my main physical side effect.

Annie: Which, and the other thing too about some of the physical side effects of dieting or low carb even is like the headaches and the low energy and fogginess, irritability. Those are all symptoms that we see of dieters, quote unquote. But there's, they're also kind of so vague that you could link them to something else pretty easily

Jen: Yeah, I was tired.

Annie: I didn't sleep well, or I'm pmsing, or, you know, someone said something to me and it set me off and now I'm cranky or whatever. But I think it's worth a look at like how you're caring for your body through food. Like, I mean, could that be related and in your experience it was.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Annie: Yeah. Okay. What else? What other changes?

Jen: Well, the third thing, so those were the positives, right? And I really had to be focused on the positives when I quit dieting. And so when I switched from If It Fits Your Macros, the other benefit of it was that it showed me what a normal

portion of carbs actually is like. And I was shocked. But on the other side I was shocked at how much fat I was eating. And that was really hard. So to explain this in a different sense, I have a good friend who's a registered Dietitian and she works in community health and one of a, part of her job is to go into low s e neighborhoods and do cooking classes. And the reason they do cooking classes is because a lot of people have grown up in these neighborhoods have grown up with a diet that's high in processed and refined foods.

Jen: So, and maybe because they relied on the food bank or that's what their corner store carried or that's what was cheapest, you know, all those different reasons. So she's trying to bridge these communities from eating these highly refined processed foods to more homemade meals. So what she does is she tries to cook homemade versions of the things they're buying at the store, getting from the food bank. So, one thing I remember her talking about trying to do homemade macaroni and cheese because a lot of the people she's working with were eating quite a bit of Kraft dinner. And so they do this cooking class. They make some homemade macaroni and cheese and it tastes like crap to everybody there and they're like, pass the salt. But she said this was, this is quite common for her because, there's a lot of sodium in that population's diet and just regular whole foods cooked the way you are I might taste awful to them.

Jen: So that's just another challenge of bridging this divide from low SE communities, which is a whole, it could be a whole other podcast topic. So what I found was when she told me that story, this light bulb went off for me. I had met her after I was doing the Keto thing. Thank goodness. I don't know if she would have been my friend. So, uh, I struggled to reduce my fat intake because my palate had basically changed to what was normal for me was being on a high fat diet. So having to, it's kind of like coming off sugar and a lot of, not coming off sugar, but you know, when people are trying to reduce their sugar intake, they're like, I'm trying to go from four tablespoons of sugar in my coffee to two to three. There are, you know, from three to two to one, they're trying to wean themselves down and it just tastes like crap and because it can take time for your palate to adjust.

Jen: Right. And that's what I found with my going from low carb Keto dieting to a regular balanced diet was I really struggled with the flavor of my food and not having everything drowning in fat. So, and that was probably the most immediate and most difficult thing for me.

Annie: Which makes total sense now that you kind of lay it out like that. But that's often, I would assume that that might be one of the challenges that people don't anticipate. Like right, if I add more here, I might have to adjust

here and like almost kind of creates a domino effect of like when you start doing this thing then-

Jen: You can adapt to anything. Right? Like you can, like obviously people do, they do have, some people do have high sodium diets, some people do have high sugar diets, some people do and then the whole Keto crowd, they have extremely high, 80% of their food intake is fat and fat is very, very palatable and it's very, you know, it makes food tastes really, really good.

Jen: And so that was probably my biggest initial struggle was just because everybody deserves for their food to taste good. Right? We're not here to say people should be eating in a way that's awful for them. And that's not sustainable either. So I wish I would've had that information because I would have been, I could have gone, "Oh, that's what's happening. Right." So, and you know what it's possible and you can do the transition. I think today I still, I still see as a natural tendency that I like fat, who doesn't? Like, I just tend to be, and everybody's diets are different. And I'm not promoting, I'm not on a low carb diet by any means, but I've noticed that I eat less carbs and more fat than you and Lauren do, which just comes down to personal preference I think. But sometimes I wonder if I'd never done Keto at all if I would still be that way. But-

Annie: Well, and what's, what's funny about that is when I was in college, I think I was a sophomore in college, I went and I had my physical done for softball. And I was a college athlete and I was not light. I don't think. I wouldn't have known of classified myself as light or slim or slender, but I was a very active, physically active. I thought I was healthy and my blood work showed that my triglycerides were high. So this doctor who didn't know me recommended 30 minute walks three times a week and I was like, "Okay, like, I'm already, I'm already in the weight room five or six times a day with softball practice." But she also recommended a low fat diet or lower fat diet and yes. So I remember like cutting out cheese and a lot of dairy products that I was using just because those seem to be like a large source of fat. And so now I wonder if maybe like when you're talking and I'm like kind of like, "Oh, maybe that's why. Maybe that is why I eat lower fat." Like it's just habits ingrained from past diets.

Jen: Right, right. Every and yeah, like I find when I'm with you, you know, I'm not micromanaging what you're eating or anything, but it's just something I've noticed. But this is something that we say often. Everybody's going to eat a little different from each other, right? Often it just comes down to personal preference and there is a degree of flexibility. There is actually, there's probably a lot of flexibility in there, right, in finding the way you like to eat. There was a study done, actually Layne Norton posted it. He talks about Keto quite a bit,

which is so fun and awesome. The comments are just hilarious. And there was a study done recently that compared the Keto diet to a non-Keto diet and it showed that the Keto diet actually increased total cholesterol, LDL and markers of inflammation, compared to the non Keto Diet. So, that would, you know, make sense? There are, I'm not saying everybody will experience that, but as Amanda touched on her podcast, sometimes people going on the Keto diet feel better because their diet was just, they did not have a very good diet before. And I think a lot of dieters experience that. They think this feels amazing. Well, that's because they have increased how much protein they're eating increased their fruits and vegetables. You know what I mean?

Annie: Cut out maybe

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: Sweets or alcohol. Increase water. Jen: Yeah. Annie: But then the diet gets all the credit and it's-

Jen: Right. Rather than just going, "Look like, can we just look at the basics of a well rounded balanced diet?" And the thing that... Go ahead.

Annie: I was just gonna say, two Christmases ago I had some family members that were doing a pretty restrictive 30 day diet. I think you probably know what I'm talking about.

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: And they were, they did, they were ranting. They're raving about how great they fell and they were giving all the credit to this like challenge that they just completed after 30 days. And I'm like, it sounds like you increased your fruits and vegetables and lean meats and you cut out, you had more moderate, you know, sugary sweets and limited your alcohol intake. Like, I'm not surprised at all.

Jen: But the problem is that just that psychology around it is that when they finish the diet, they swing back. Right? Or diets actually don't help us change our habits. They don't come at it from a psychological behavior change way, understanding that it's a process to change your habits. So you come off your diet and you swing back into oblivion and your habits might, your habits on that pendulum swing coming out of a diet might even be worse than they were before. So then you think you have to go back on this diet when actually you just shouldn't-

Annie: I want to circle back real quick to what you were saying about how when you came off low carb you were still had a period of maybe eating higher fat. And I just wonder if a challenge that people would face when they're coming off low carb is they add in more carbohydrates. They don't decrease their fat, therefore their overall calorie intake might be the same or higher. And then as a result, they gain weight and they're like, "Oh no, it's the carbs, you know."

Jen: So that, yeah, that happened to me quite a bit. Like, being stuck in that cycle. Totally. But I was kind of ready for it. When I stopped dieting, I thought I had realized fat is not the worst thing a person can be. That's a societal conditioning that we all have and I just thought, no, it is not the worst thing we can be. Living like this, that is the worst thing that could happen to me for my life, to spend my life that way. Dieting and binging and swinging and being fat phobic and teaching my kids to eat that way and hate their bodies, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. We know what that's all about. That is the worst. So I expected some weight gain pretty much. I knew my pendulum would swing. And I put on about 15 pounds in four months and I was just not doing anything anymore.

Jen: Not tracking calories, not just, you know, just eating whatever. And that included ice cream every single day. Ice cream had been the thing that I just couldn't manage. I couldn't control, I couldn't moderate. It was the thing that caused fights between me and my husband cause he would bring some home on Friday after work, he'd bring home a carton of ice cream for us to have over the weekend. I feel, like, mad at him. Right. So basically when you're just in that space, you start resenting other people who have a normal relationship with food and that can handle that kind of stuff and you feel like they're trying to ruin your diet and they're not supporting you in your goals, but really it's just that they're not supporting you with your eating disorder. And so, yeah, it caused a lot of problems. So, you can't function socially.

Jen: You avoid social events, or you just have a lot of anxiety leading into them. Anyway, so yeah, I put on about 15 pounds in four months. But it just, things calmed down. Like you just, you've got to let yourself, I think you, I think most people that have very restrictive dieting histories have to give themselves some of that time. It's sort of like if you grew up in a household where your parents were extremely strict that first year of college is wild. Right. So yeah, like any, you know, humans really do a rebound against restrictions in every way. So yeah, it took about four months, but I was doing the work right when somebody quits dieting and then struggles for years afterwards. It's like you have to do the work, you have to do that emotional, psychological work, getting through all those beliefs, all that program you have, all those body image

issues. And I did the work.

Annie: And fight the impulse. I'm sure you had an impulse to pull that pendulum back to dieting.

Jen: All the time. And I just knew, I just knew that wasn't the answer. And there's probably times I did, right? Like, you know, the pendulums don't just stop in the center. They kind of swaying and then they swing lower until they settle in the center. So, yeah. But then after four months, all of a sudden ice cream just, it didn't have the allure that it once did because I had let myself have it every single day and all of a sudden it wasn't this precious resource that I was going to not have ever again. It was, I just realized one day I could wake up tomorrow and have this for breakfast if I wanted. Like is that really what I wanted? So after about four months I just really started feeling in control and I really started feeling like I could listen to my body.

Jen: What I see happening is that, you know how we'll always serve the most, the biggest pain in our life? So say if you stubbed your toe and broke your leg at the same time you would, you would tend to that leg, right? The pain of that leg would be so great that you can't even feel that stubbed toe, really. I think women are in such psychological pain about their bodies that that is, that is the pain they are attending to. And so they don't even notice the physical pain of diets at first. They know that that diet is temporarily relieving their psychological pain. It's like taking an Advil, but that Advil does eventually wear off. And so when people are telling you to listen to your body, you don't even know what that means because you're so cut off from listening to your body that you, because you have just denied it, denied, denied it. Like my heart, the most difficult part for me and my journey was getting in touch with my hunger cues again because I had denied hunger for so long, denied, denied, denied my hunger cues were like nothing to everything to give me all the food right now because I would deny my hunger cues until they took over my body and I had no control at all. So learning what early hunger feels like was so hard for me. But I was always serving the psychological pain that I was in and I was always just reaching for, basically reaching for an Advil, reaching for an Advil, not doing that hard work to actually get myself out of psychological pain.

Annie: Yeah, I had this, I have a couple of thoughts. The first thing is the Mel Bosna Podcast, this is coming to mind. You know, she talks about how women try to meet their needs unknowingly trying to meet their needs and it kind of comes out sideways and she sees a lot of women dieting as a way of feeling better, you know, internally feeling better and it's like trying to put, um, some pretty shutters and some landscaping on a shack. It's like you got to dig in and do that deeper work. And I had a moment a couple of weeks ago, I was really

stressed out about a couple things and I was just feeling like, my friend hates this term, but I always say I was just feeling like a turd, you know, just like, like just like, "Oh, I can't get out of this funk." And my impulse was to lose weight. And I was like, "Where did that come from? Like what is that? Like, what is that?" And we say this to our members all the time like you can, you can acknowledge those impulses, you can hear them, you can feel them, but you don't have to act on them. But I just thought my gosh, it's just so deeply ingrained in women to meet our needs and to try to soothe that pain, to soothe, like, whatever discomfort we're feeling for whatever reason by trying to fix our bodies.

Jen: The other thing is people would clap for me when I was losing weight and they would clap for me if I lost weight really fast, like after I had a baby, if I was back in my jeans at you know, six weeks postpartum people, you know, the way we treat people who are successful at weight loss in our society is insane. Like we put them on this pedestal and I had all that going on and you have to sit back once you are kind of done with all that, you have to sit back and go, who am I when people aren't clapping for me? Like, do I like this person when I don't have constant attention and validation over and women of every size kind of can share in this and that I know larger bodied women talk about how even if they were fat, if they were trying to lose weight, people would be clapping for them. Right? Do you know what I mean? Even just trying gets you that affirmation and validation, that-

Annie: Attention.

Jen: Attention that we're all seeking. Right? So, anyways, I was thinking this weekend about how like just how insane it's gotten. We should do a whole podcast about the insanity around clapping for people that are losing weight is like, you know, and then the excuse, "Well, of course I'm going to compliment a woman on her weight loss. That was her goal. She's reaching her goal. I'm just trying to be nice." Okay. Well, what if someone came to you and told you their goal was to make \$1 million and once they made that million, are you going to clap for them no matter how they got there, are you going to clap for them if they went out and robbed a bunch of old ladies, like, you know what I mean? Like it's like it's the methods that people are using to lose weight that are so insane, yet we're still sitting back clapping for them.

Annie: Yeah. I met a woman this weekend who had lost a hundred pounds. She openly shared that she had lost a hundred pounds. And I said, "Intentionally?" I think my response was just so baffling. She was like, "Yeah, of course. Like of course I was trying to do that." And I'm like, "Look, lady, I don't know. I know that my mom, when she was in the hospital dying of cancer was

at her thinnest and people often told her, Marge, you look great." You know? And it's like, "She's not healthy. Like she's losing this weight because she's not healthy, you know?" And I have no context for why this woman lost 100 pounds. If that was intentional. If it was stress, if she was sick, if like, you just don't know. But yet we do.

Jen: And the other thing is that research shows that up to two thirds of people are gaining back the weight they lost if they're using restrictive diets often more so in what my sister shared when we did the two sisters podcast and we talked to my sister, she talked about the radio silence you get when you're gaining weight back. It's so awkward. It's so painful. It's just, you know, all those people that were clapping for you are just now, like, avoiding eye contact because like, nobody knows what to say. So I'm not, I personally am not willing to clap for anybody's weight loss in that, especially if I don't know them. A Balance365 member asked me the other day if it's ever okay to say good job on weight loss. And I said, I don't know. Like if I knew someone intimately like my partner or my sister. Jen: And then I knew exactly the method they were using. For example, like the habit based approach, the lifestyle change, and I could see that it was sustainable and if they were healthy, I think if I knew someone intimately, I might be more comfortable saying, "Look, I'm going to acknowledge that I see what you've done here. You've turned your health around. I'm happy you're happy." I just have a really hard time with complimenting somebody on weight loss, but then take that so that's someone you know intimately because there's a whole scale. Stranger in a Facebook group tells you they've lost 30 pounds in 30 days and they're going to get 10,000 comments of good job underneath. It's like that making \$1 million example. You don't know how they, someone comes in says, I made \$1 million last week. You don't know how they made that money.

Annie: Right, we had that this weekend.

Jen: They could have robbed a bank.

Annie: Yeah, we talked about it on Instagram. You did.

Jen: Oh yeah, I did. Yeah. Yeah.

Annie: Anyway, let's circle back. We got a little off topic, I want to, we're approaching the hour here and I want to offer, ask you, do you have any advice to offer, words of wisdom, how women get over this, like, fear of carbs, morality of carbs are bad.

Jen: I think it's going to look a little different for every person. There's the,

there's like doing the research and actually digging into like scientific nutrition research where very clearly carbs are not bad for you, but then there's the psychological let go, right? Because you've held onto that for so long as a weight loss quick fix mechanism that you, you're just very attached to it.

Jen: And you just got to start letting go of some of those habits. And that's why kind of the big deep work is so important. But I just want everyone to know that it is an evolution and you have to be patient during that transition and understand that you're not going to be perfect. And like you said, you're going to have those thoughts. You know, like there's that a very common thought when people quit dieting is, "but what if I just did one more, like if I just, if I have all the knowledge I need now about behaviors and habits and lifestyle change, but just like if I just did one more diet and got myself down to that weight, then I can come back and do all the habits stuff." But it honestly never works. Like it just doesn't work because once you're done, you're done. It's like your tolerance for it goes down where before, you know, Annie, you could hold onto a diet for a week, but once you realize it really doesn't work and you even like try to dip your toe back, you'd hold on for a day because you're just, you're just kind of done, your body's done, your brain's done. Who are you trying to fool?

Annie: I have. Since letting, since stop dieting, I have freed up mental space for other thoughts and activities and projects. And now I just can't even imagine being consumed by my food. And people ask me, you know, what do you, what do you eat? And I'm like, honestly, I don't think about it that much. It wasn't always like that for me, but that's the place where I am now, where I just naturally build a balance plate most of the time. And I don't, it doesn't consume me. But that would definitely was, like you said, an evolution. It was a process. It was a journey. You know, that you're constantly like tweaking misstepping and we talk about this and we've said this before, that you will make mistakes. You will fail quote unquote, you know, like when you're trying new stuff out.

Jen: You will fail at quitting dieting after you fail at dieting. And it's all but the freedom's there, right? So many women have that freedom now and in our community, that's what everybody is working towards. And it's like, it's totally there. And we have past podcasts now, you know, talking to different women, that have been in our community that have come on to share their experience and still managed to be achieving the goals that they have for themselves in this healthy balanced way that's not causing this psychological and physical push back against them. So, it's totally there, but you've got to do the work and this food scarcity stuff, what I was talking about with the ice cream and the food preoccupations, that can also take some time, but you can't just stop restricting and not do the psychological work behind it and expect your pendulum is

preoccupations, that can also take some time, but you can't just stop restricting and not do the psychological work behind it and expect your pendulum is going to come back at center. Like there's the act of physically "I'm not dieting anymore." And then there's the act of working through the psychological stuff of not dieting anymore, which is honestly, that's the heaviest baggage you've got.

Annie: Yeah. That's what I tell people all the time is losing 10 pounds as a walk in the park compared to doing the emotional work that it's taken me to detach from dieting and rebuild myself worth without, you know, looking a certain way or a way in a certain weight and that's heavy, heavy work and it's emotionally exhausting at times. And I even saw this Instagram meme that was like, I'm learning to love myself and it's exhausting.

Jen: It is exhausting. It's also like, it's so ingrained in our culture, like we live in a culture still where the vast majority of women diet and say awful things about their bodies. And so when you aren't in that world anymore and you're like quote unquote woke and you have to navigate that socially, it is, like, just grueling. It's like saying the sky is green and everybody else was like, "It's blue, it's blue. Are you serious?" And you're like, "It is green."

Annie: Yeah. Or to be the woman that goes out to eat. And it's like, "No, I want the bread on the table" when everyone else is like, "No, I'm not doing bread. No bread is the devil."

Jen: Yes, don't even order it.

Annie: You can sit there and really like question like, "Oh, like are they right? Am I right? Like who is?" You know, and it's really just boils down to what's best for you and your health and they can do whatever they want, but that-

Jen: You also can, you can feel left out, right? Like you actually, I realized what a point of connection it was for me with other women after I was done with it and didn't want to connect that way with other women because I saw how problematic it was and how we kept perpetuating these beliefs about our bodies, these nutrition myths that aren't even true. Like, you know, all that that goes on socially. And then I just felt disconnected from a lot of different women in my life. Like, what are we, what do we talk about now? And you realize, "Wow, that was a lot of what we talked about."

Annie: Yeah. That's how we, it's often times how we bond, which is heartbreaking, but you can come up with new things to talk about like

Jen: Yes!

Annie: Netflix,

Jen: I don't know.

Annie: Yeah, and soccer and birthday parties, building businesses. Yeah. Alright. Anything else to wrap up before we log off?

Jen: No, I think that's all good. Thanks for having me on the podcast.

Annie: Thanks for being a guest and sharing your experience, Jennifer. Alright, we'll talk soon. Okay? Bye. Bye. This episode is brought to you by the Balance365 program. If you're ready to say goodbye to quick fixes and false promises and yes to building healthy habits and a life you're 100% in love with, then checkout [Balance365.co](https://Balance365.co) to learn more.