

Balance365 Episode 139 Transcript

ANNIE BREES (INTRO)

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 co-founder Jennifer Campbell. Together we have a team of personal trainers and nutritionists who coach thousands of women daily and are on a mission to help women feel happy, healthy, 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 well being with amazing guests. Enjoy.

ANNIE

Hello, my friends, Halloween is fast approaching, which typically means an influx of sweets and treats in almost every home. In today's podcast, Jen and I discuss four tips for moderating your Halloween candy consumption. But in addition to that, we also have a free guide available to you today, which is how to help your children navigate sweets and treats at Halloween. The goal for both adults and children of course, is to enjoy Halloween without feeling like you're being restrictive on one hand, or chaotic and out of control on the other. You can grab that guide at the link in our show notes or on any of our social media pages for the next week. Enjoy.

ANNIE

Hi, Jen, how are you?

JEN CAMPBELL

Good. How are you, Annie?

ANNIE

I am golden. We're talking about Halloween today.

JEN

We are, yes.

ANNIE

Who knows what Halloween is going to look like, right? Whether your trick or treating or not trick or treating? Like, it maybe depends on where you're at and what part of the world you're listening from.

JEN

What your personal philosophy is. Yes, but we're going to talk about it anyways.

ANNIE

Yeah, well, because regardless if you're like out trick or treating and socializing in small or large groups, I would be willing to bet the candy is still going to be a part of Halloween.

JEN

Absolutely.

ANNIE

So, we are going to discuss how and why people struggle with moderating candy consumption around Halloween, and then give you four tips to moderate that.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Actually, like, give you some actionable steps on what to do to address it.

JEN

Yes, four. We've got four tips. To moderate your Halloween candy

ANNIE

Should we just dive right in?

JEN

Let's do it.

ANNIE

Just cut through it? Okay, so first one is, you actually need to think differently about Halloween candy. Like, how are people currently thinking about Halloween candy?

JEN

Well, depends who they are. Depends if they're working with us or not.

BOTH

[Laugh]

JEN

So, acknowledging that the vast majority of people out there are yo-yo dieters. They think "Resist, resist, resist," then they dive in, then they eat all the things. Because they can't have this ever again. Or they're taking it away from themselves tomorrow morning. So dieters operate from a massive scarcity mindset. And this creates a lot of stress and anxiety around food. And so that means that they treat food, a scarcity mindset would have you treating food like it's a precious resource.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Like, you're gonna run out.

JEN

Yeah, you're gonna run out of - yep. And we've done this to ourselves, usually by multiple diets, right? And when we aren't allowed a certain food or we cut ourselves off from calories at a certain time of day, you know, all the different ways we restrict. And then that over time means that we start treating food like a precious resource that's going to run out, and that more often than not leads us to bingeing on that food when we do have access to it. So, all actions are driven by thoughts. And if you are bingeing at Halloween, on all the Halloween candy, you are likely have scarcity thoughts about the candy.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Like, these are candies that I can only get during Halloween time, or these I only have a limited number of quantities.

JEN

I'm only gonna have two and then I'm going to quit, or...

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Like, they're just like, the idea definitely is that you cannot have as much as you want. Like, it's very limited. Yeah. So you have, you have an analogy here about a gallon of water, it's like, of course, like, it makes so much sense to me, when you say it like that.

JEN

If you were a thirsty man, or woman, I should say. [Laughs] A thirsty woman in the desert, stumbling around. So, so thirsty, and someone offered you a gallon of water, you are going to chug that until it's gone. Especially if you think somebody is going to take that bottle of water away from you.

ANNIE

Yes, exactly. And all of this really doesn't apply to just Halloween, we're entering - Halloween kind of marks the season of, like holiday, you know, spread here, where we're constantly being exposed to sweets, treats, alcoholic beverages.

JEN

Yeah, it starts in Canada, early October with Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving goes into Halloween. And I know in America, you have Halloween, then you go into Thanksgiving, end of November for you?

ANNIE

Yup.

JEN

Which, then that just rolls into Christmas and New Year celebrations. And a lot of people struggle this time of year. So, what we want you to do is start thinking differently, just start thinking differently about all this food. And notice your thoughts, like, your scarcity thoughts about this food.

ANNIE

Specifically, we want you to think like a Balance365er. [Laughs]

JEN

Yes. And here's what a Balance365er would think: "I'm going to eat the Halloween snacks I enjoy and move on with my life."

ANNIE

Full stop,

JEN

Full stop, because we teach women to have an abundance mindset around food. And instead of creating a bunch of stress and anxiety, the way the scarcity mindset does, it actually creates a calm and more objective feelings around food, or even a neutral feeling around food. So that means when you're faced with food decisions, your brain doesn't go into overdrive. Thinking, "Should I have this tonight? This is bad, how many can I have?" And you know, just it's just a spiral from there. So when you pause and you remind yourself, this is actually available all year round. To be honest, most of the Halloween that we're exposed to, this is available all year round. There is plenty of this. I don't need to binge on it. You can start having some and moving on with your life.

ANNIE

And, "I can have that if I want it. Do I actually want it?"

JEN

Totally. And maybe I do.

ANNIE

Yeah, maybe, I'm certain there's been times when I've asked myself the question. And I'm like, "Yeah, actually, I do. I do really want that right now." And then there's also been plenty of times where I'm like, "Nah. I don't want it."

JEN

Absolutely. So here's just a real practical way of shifting these thoughts. When you're thinking, "Resist," try thinking, "Let's eat a satisfying amount." Instead of thinking, "I'll eat a whole bunch now and start fresh tomorrow," try thinking, "Candy is available 365 days per year. I'm a grown ass woman who can have Snickers for breakfast tomorrow if I want." Instead of, "I'm going to eat this as fast as I can, and then put it behind me. Like, put the experience behind me." Try, "I'm going to chew this slowly. And I'm going to savor it."

ANNIE

Mm hmm. And I also think it's worth noting, too, we've talked about this on other podcast episodes too, that if you are someone that has been restricting not even just candy, but following a restrictive diet in general for a while, we would expect you to want to bench like that's the normal response. So, it's not a reflection of your willpower, or your motivation or your discipline. And it's really an absolutely natural response to restrictive thoughts around food. And when you start to shift those thoughts, your behavior shifts with it.

JEN

Absolutely. I think people start resenting the holidays to a degree once they're going through them, when they're experiencing all this stress and anxiety about the food. They start complaining about the holiday. But actually the problem isn't the holiday. It's your mindset about food and all the restrictive behaviors you've been doing leading up to the holiday that are causing you to become preoccupied with those foods.

ANNIE

Yeah, and the anxiety around, like, constantly being exposed to foods that you would normally label as bad or off limit, which walks us right into tip number two, and that's to curate your environment to support your goals. This is probably the biggest, my favorite tip. My best tip for myself.

JEN

Yeah, in all things, right? So often we have more control of our environments than we do our own behaviors. So in all things, it's not just Halloween, but in all things, curate your environment. So when you look around you, do you have an environment that is supporting who you want to become? So specific to Halloween, one tip we have is to not buy the Halloween candy until you're ready to have it in the house. So Halloween candy here starts going on sale like late August, early September, long before Halloween is coming. But the longer it's in your house, the more you're going to find yourself picking at it. And guess what, you can still buy it the week of Halloween or even the day before. Which you know, if you're a procrastinator like me, and you're doing that every single year it's still there. It's still on the shelves. So I typically buy Halloween candy the week of Halloween.

ANNIE

Yeah. I also really like buying candies, if I am inclined to be prepared for the holiday and buy it early, to buy candies I don't really love.

JEN

Right. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Like, and you know, this has come up for, women feel a sense of like the ultimate control, in some women's minds, is to be able to be constantly exposed throughout the day to foods they really, really love and enjoy and still say no. And I'm like, is that really like putting yourself in a situation to win?

JEN

So I mean, there's two aspects of this relationship with food, right? Like, we want you to have a healthy relationship with food. But we also can't deny that our environments seriously impact our choices. And we've had Dr. Traci Mann on this podcast, she's a food psychologist, she's been studying this her whole life. And in her book, she talks about how human beings are just not wired to say no to food. So eventually, if you are in an environment that is just food, food, food, eventually your willpower kind of wanes, and you are going to be eating that food.

ANNIE

Yeah, that's because you're human.

JEN

Because you're human.

ANNIE

Because you're human.

JEN

So I'm not advocating, because I know in my clean eating days, there was a lot of talk about just not having any of that in the house type of thing. So of course, we're about balance. So I'm advocating an environment of balance.

ANNIE

Right, and balance to you might look like acknowledging, owning the behavior and then the outcome, that I'm going to keep Halloween candy in my house, I'm going to indulge for this week and a few extra sweet treats here and there, and then move on. Like, that might be your balance, because then when you zoom out over the course of the month or the year, it's like really not that big of a deal.

JEN

Yeah. And one thing I want to note is that if kids' candy isn't your thing, which you may find after you do kind of explore having this healthier relationship with food, a lot of people do find that candy doesn't taste as good as they thought it did or certain candies. Dieters, yes, dieters will eat anything. They'll binge on dried up Tootsie Rolls on the bottom of their kids' Halloween packs. [Laughs] But when you actually allow your yourself exposure to these foods on a more regular basis, and you start learning moderation with them and you're not obsessed with them, you can actually find they just don't taste as good as you thought they did. And so, one thing I do at Halloween is I go buy some Lindt balls. Do you know what those are? Do you have them in the States?

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

I think they are so delicious. And I'll get myself a pack of those. And when my kids are eating their Halloween candy, I'll just have some of my Lindt balls, like to me that's indulging. Like, that's an indulging situation that is worth it for me.

ANNIE

Yeah, so this is tip, our tip number three, and that's plan what you want to eat and then leave the what we call "meh" candy alone. Like, you don't, everyone listening to this is a

queen of a woman and queens don't have time to mess with meh candy. Like, we want the best.

JEN

It's not worth your time.

ANNIE

No. You deserve better candy.

JEN

[Laughs] Why are you doing that? So, and I actually had a moment of this last night, so you can apply this to all the things, but last night, we were having dinner and we were just kind of having a meh dinner, you know, they can't all be winners. And I had a moment, and I wasn't even hungry getting to the table. But I thought I should eat because my kids were eating, which, that's a whole other conversation, but I started eating and I thought, "This is so meh, like, I'm not hungry. This doesn't taste good. I'm just, I need to stop." And so that is a philosophy that can be applied to all things. If you're hungry, eat. That's like another situation.

ANNIE

Jobs. Men. Candy. [Laughs]

JEN

Yes. Meh.

ANNIE

We are leaving meh anything behind.

JEN

Yes, go get some, go get yourself some Lindt chocolate.

ANNIE

Something that really lights you up and excites you and you enjoy. Yeah, I dig it.

JEN

Yeah, and so eat the candy you really like, ditch the rest. And some other just quick strategies that can help you feel more in control of your consumption of that candy is to just create some self loving guidelines around it right? Not rules, just some guidelines to help you out, some guardrails. You can decide you're going to eat that candy with a meal, you could decide you're going to have that candy next time you feel hungry. Or

you could decide, just consciously take out the number that you want, put it in a little bowl, put away the bag, and just sit mindfully eating it. And also, we said this earlier, we're talking about savoring food. And that would be the difference between, you know, when you're just mindlessly eating, or -

ANNIE

At the kitchen island with a bag out in front of you.

JEN

Yeah, and it's just not mindful. It's sort of like...You're just trying to get food in. Often people are trying to stuff down different feelings. But mindful eating, where you savor the food, will lead to you having a more enjoyable, fulfilling experience with the food you're eating. And ultimately, you will eat less. Right? I feel like when we're like mindlessly eating, especially the meh candy, it's like we're trying to capture a taste that's never gonna be there. Like, take more bites, it'll start tasting better. And it like never really does.

ANNIE

Yeah, I know that exact feeling. And kind of what you talked about there, Jen, to circle back to having it with a meal or having it tomorrow or having it when you're hungry, again, walks us right into our fourth point, which is that your options aren't yes or no, it can also be later.

JEN

Yeah, so this is somewhat related to mindset. But, and again, this can apply to any food. But when you are being offered a candy, or you see a dish of candy, and you have an urge to eat some, I think the decision starts to become more urgent in our brains when we're telling ourselves yes or no. It just leads to this rise of stress or anxiety, I have to decide when actually a third choice is, not right now, I can have some later.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. And I know I'm not the only one. And I think even there's some research to back this up. But food tastes better when you're hungry. So yeah, if I do decide to enjoy a sweet treat, waiting until I'm actually hungry increases the enjoyment, like, so much. Exponentially.

JEN

Yeah, another one for me is where I'm eating it or like the environment I'm eating it in. So I just don't particularly find eating with my kids an enjoyable experience. So, a really great experience for me to indulge in, I guess, would be to get the candy I really like, get

my Lindt chocolate, put it in a bowl, get my kids to bed, so that I can just sit down and enjoy that. And not have the distraction of kids around. So really, this is about going, "How can you make the experience fulfilling?" You're going to eat the candy. Let's accept it. It's Halloween. You're going to eat it. You're going to try this moderation thing Annie and Jen keep talking about, what's a fulfilling experience for you with this candy?

ANNIE

Yeah. And ultimately, if you do overdo it, like, just don't beat yourself up. No shame. No making up for it. No trying to negate it with exercise. Just move on.

JEN

Move on. And that's probably a great way to round this all up, is that if you overdo it, that's fine. You haven't failed. Remember at the end of the day, it's still just food. Annie and I overdo things sometimes. You know, even if you're a Balance365er listening and you have all the skills and tools that we've taught you. The goal is not to be perfect. That's not our goal for anybody, and Annie and I aren't perfect. I still overdo it sometimes.

ANNIE

Same, but what I think what happens, the cycle we see is women overdo it, they beat themselves up, then they start restricting again, because they're trying to get in control or back on the wagon, or they have to make up for the calories that they over consumed or whatever. And then that perpetuates the cycle of, "Oh -"

JEN

That just keeps you in this cycle, that just puts you back in this environment and mindset of ready to binge again, when Thanksgiving rolls around or Christmas or...

ANNIE

So, just keep it moving, honey, just keep it moving.

JEN

Yeah, so should we recap our tips?

ANNIE

Yes, let's do. So, the first one was you need to think differently about Halloween candies. You need to ditch the diet mindset, the scarcity mindset, and start thinking like a Balance365er.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

Number two was to curate your environment to support your goals. Maybe that means keeping candy in a less convenient place where it's not like front and center in your house or waiting to buy candy.

JEN

Yes, I keep the candy - [Laughs] - I keep it in the box in the storage area under my stairs. If you want to talk about getting things out of your environment. Yeah, I don't keep it in a bowl in the kitchen, right? Or I'm going to be picking at it. So curate your environment.

ANNIE

Yes.

JEN

Even behind a cupboard door is just one visual barrier so that you're not reminded of it all day.

ANNIE

Yeah, you want to make the best choice or a good choice, the most obvious choice, and choices that you'd like to reduce a little bit harder to do. Tip number three was to plan what you want to eat and leave the meh candy alone. We're raising our standards in 2020 and moving on, like -

JEN

Yes, girl.

ANNIE

We're not messing with meh candy. And then remember, your options aren't yes or no, that you can choose later.

JEN

Totally.

ANNIE

And if you do overdo it, move on.

JEN

Move along.

ANNIE

Yes. Like, look back, "That was fun." Or, "Maybe I don't feel as good as I wanted to. Noted." Keep it moving.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

All right. Good podcast. Quick and easy. Great tips. Thanks for joining me, Jen.

JEN

Thank you.

ANNIE

Bye-bye.

ANNIE BREES (OUTRO)

Hey, everyone, if your mind has been blown while listening to this podcast, just wait until you work with us. Let us help you level up your health and wellness habits and your life inside Balance365 coaching. Head over to balance365.com to enroll in next month's coaching round. See you on the inside.