

Balance365 Episode 142 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, welcome back to another episode of Balance365 Life Radio, we have a really, really juicy and important topic for you today. Most people, maybe you included, most people believe that if you have a goal, any goal, the faster you can get to it the better, right? Well, that depends. In some cases, yes. In some cases, no, and weight loss falls in the no category. And in today's podcast, Jen and I are going to share exactly why weight loss should not be achieved as fast as humanly possible. And by the way, don't forget to register for our free workshop coming up this month, "Cut the Crap: How to Simplify Weight Loss and Get Out of Your Own Way." Jen and I are going to be discussing what works, what doesn't, and how to get out of the self sabotage cycle that a lot of you are in, and of course, what you can do to pursue your weight loss goals. Instead, as you're going to hear in this podcast episode, you need to learn to work with your body and your brain, not against them. That's what Balance365 specializes in. And you can find the link to register for this free workshop at Balance365life.com/free-workshop We cannot wait to see you at the workshop and I cannot wait for you to listen to this episode. If you enjoyed it as much as I enjoyed recording it with Jen, I would love for you to share it with your friends, your family, subscribe to the podcast, we cannot do this without you. Thank you so much my friends, enjoy.

ANNIE

Hi, Jen, how are you?

JEN CAMPBELL

Hi, Annie. Good. How are you?

ANNIE

Talk singing as usual. I'm great. I'm great. I'm super excited for this topic. Tell me, what are we talking about?

JEN

Today, we are going to talk about the body self defense system when it comes to weight loss and weight regain. And why you should care about this is because we know that a lot of people are going on diets every single day, starting a new diet, we know that people want to lose weight as quickly as possible. And that's understandable considering the society we live in. And we want to help people zoom out and look at the big picture and understand what's been happening in their life and with their bodies as they've done diet after diet after diet, and why these restrictive diets are not the answer. And I mean on a physiological, scientific level. And you can't get around this right? Like if you have a human body. This podcast applies to you.

ANNIE

Yeah, and dieting isn't just not helpful or not effective. It's actually harmful. It's extremely harmful, as we'll get into. Can you, before we dive into that, can you define a diet?

JEN

Yes. So first, let's get this clear. I mean, different people have different definitions for diets. So some people would consider dieting just being in a calorie deficit and losing weight. But there's obviously different extremes that people can go to with that calorie deficit. So when Balance365 talks about dieting, we are not talking about a small calorie deficit. We're talking about fad dieting, we're talking about when you join any kind of program that tries to control what you eat, how much you eat, or when you are eating. Today the purpose is to talk about, mostly about the how much right? I feel like we've spent lots of time talking about the psychological repercussions of dieting in that. Or maybe you're not even dieting, maybe you're, maybe you're not even in a calorie deficit at all, but knowing that just being very restrictive with certain food groups, like, for example, carbs can have psychological repercussions. Right?

ANNIE

I think that's an important distinction, because, so again, what you eat, -

JEN

Diet controls what how much you eat, when you eat, or how much you're eating.

ANNIE

Perfect.

JEN

Yeah. And it's not that people don't have guidelines, right? Like, I in general, have a self loving guideline to not snack at night. That's just kind of a goal of mine. But it's not a black and white rule. If I'm hungry, I will eat. I shared on my Insta stories the other night that I had a big handful of chocolate chips at night, I just had this craving and I went, you know, I went through all the things that we teach people in Balance365 of how to work through a craving. I came out at the end of that, and that craving was still there. So I eat the chocolate and I move on with my life. But in general, eating in the evenings isn't a goal of mine. But I'm talking, you know, well, we all know what I'm talking about. I'm talking about plans you join, and it's fasting. And you have to

fast for one day, a week or two days a week or two days a month, or you're only allowed to eat in these different windows of time. These are the only the foods you're allowed to eat.

ANNIE

Often externally driven, right?

JEN

Externally driven -

ANNIE

Or controlled, or -

JEN

There's something controlling how you're eating, where in Balance365, we want the way you eat to come, to be internally driven.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Yeah. Okay, so we got the diet definition cleared up. But we also need to talk about weight loss obsession, because that's ultimately, what's at the root of people pursuing these super restrictive quickfix plans. Right? You want to you want to dive into that, Jen?

JEN

Yes. So when, once we are finished this podcast, people will be saying, you know, "Why would anyone do this?" And the reason people do it is because they are preoccupied with the size and shape of their body. In fact, they're likely preoccupied with the size and shape of other people's bodies as well. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Yeah. Been there. Been there. [Laughs]

JEN

It's this society wide obsession with small bodies or certain body shapes. Knowing through the decades that the desirable body shape has changed.

ANNIE

And you're not just talking about just noticing, you're talking about like, overly attentive obsession.

JEN

Right. So of course, we notice people's physical appearance. And of course, I noticed my own physical appearance, I noticed when I've lost a little bit of weight, I've noticed when I've gained some weight, I'm talking about putting moral value behind what that physical appearance is, or that change in appearance is, and I'm talking about it consuming your thoughts. And I think if more people were honest, they would admit that the amount of time they spend thinking about

their body or their weight is irrational. Like, if they spent as much time thinking about germs, for example, as often as they do their weight, they would go to a doctor or a psychiatrist and have a clinical diagnosis. But in our society, it's been normalized to think about weight and shape that much. In fact, I would say the fitness or diet industry has said that's what it takes to be successful. So it's a slippery slope. Pretty soon, you are thinking about your body more, you're being told it's normal. And you're being told, well, this is what it takes to be successful.

ANNIE

Yeah, and that might, I mean, for me in the past, I think you've done some of this, as well, Jen, but that might mean weighing yourself multiple times a day, making all of your food and exercise choices based on how it will impact your weight or your body composition, finding yourself like white knuckling it, trying to resist food frequently, being kind or mean to yourself, depending on what your weight is. I did this all the time, walking into a room and thinking about how you compare, how you size up to everyone else in that room. Right? Like, you're in a lineup, like, who's thinner, who's heavier, who's lighter, worrying about vacations and how your body's gonna look in a bathing suit. Like all this stuff, right? We could, it's infinite, the ways in which -

JEN

Yeah, and you know, it's infiltrated social situations. It's a very common topic of conversation amongst women in their social groups. It can come up at the family dinner table, it can come up at, you're watching your kid play sports and the woman next to you brings it up and you get talking right? Like, it is literally everywhere.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Yeah. But to be clear, if you've been with us for a while, or if you're new here, I want to be very clear that we at Balance365 absolutely believe that you can have weight loss goals.

JEN

Absolutely. You can do them in a healthy way, too, as Annie and I both have.

ANNIE

Yes. But ultimately, and this is what we're going to get into, it's detrimental to that goal and your overall health, really, to be obsessed with it.

JEN

Absolutely.

ANNIE

Yeah. And we would say that your appearance is the least interesting thing about you, right?

JEN

It truly is.

ANNIE

[Laughs] Yeah. Which is, which might be tough to hear if you're currently listening to this, and one of those people that are obsessed with their weight. If you're like, "Oh, they're describing me, that's me. That's me right now." Keep listening. We're here.

JEN

Yeah, keep listening, I would encourage you to explore your identity outside of your appearance, and see that you are a very talented, amazing human being.

ANNIE

Yeah. So we do believe that you can have weight loss goals, but we wanted to spend just a few minutes talking about the obsession, because ultimately, it's the obsession that drives this quick fix diet culture.

JEN

Yes, and also understanding where, you know, everybody has to dig into this for themselves. But where did that obsession come from? Like, why? Why are you obsessed with your weight? I mean, it is social conditioning, right? But where does that come from? Your family of origin? Does it come from corporations selling to you? Does it come from the social group you're part of? Yeah. So, why are you obsessed with your weight? Right? It's not just a burden of being a woman that we have to think about our weight all the time. It should be, we don't have to accept that as part of our experience. [Laughs] So let's get in.

ANNIE

[Laughs] We're gonna rally in the streets after this, too. [Laughs]

JEN

I'm burning my bra right now.

BOTH

[Laugh]

ANNIE

Okay, so do you want to, re we ready to get into what happens when you diet?

JEN

Yeah, so we're talking here about very restrictive diets and the fast weight loss method, in particular.

ANNIE

Yeah, and I know you want to talk to me about this body self defense system.

JEN

Yes. So our bodies have systems in place to keep us from starving. And our bodies have no way to differentiate between slowly starving to death or being put on a diet simply because we

desire to lose weight. The same self defense system is triggered. And it exists to keep you alive, right? So we evolved as human beings to the point we're at, because we have these very smart systems that exist to increase the odds of our survival. So your body is smart, thank your body. [Laughs] Generation generations ago, people were having to survive famines, right? But now, we're still dealing with this self defense system. And we are trying to willpower our way through it. And aside from having a clinical eating disorder, you are not going to win that war. And the more severe your calorie restriction, or the longer it goes on, or the the amount of times you've done this, the amount of cycles you've been through, the more strongly that self defensive system is activated. So for women who've been on multiple diets, they can probably think back to maybe their first diet and how much longer that diet lasted. And over time, you may find that the amount of time you're able to willpower your way through a diet becomes shorter and shorter. And that's because your body is like, "Hey, I know what you're trying to do here." And pretty soon there's a super strong signal kicking in and you can't.

ANNIE

Yeah, which is like, again, as Jen said, thank your body because your body is like, "No, girl, we're not doing this," [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Like, "Save us. Don't do it." Yeah. But some some things do happen to your hormones on a, on a science level. Which, I don't know that anyone comes to our podcast for the super like in depth science. So we're gonna keep it high level, right?

JEN

We'll keep it simple here. Keep it mediocre.

BOTH

[Laugh]

JEN

So, please understand that your body is a complex system, a system of systems is what your body is, and they all work together. And we, like, you know, I was gonna say I could write a thesis on it, but I would never.

ANNIE

[Laughs]

JEN

People have. So, we are keeping it simple. And you can for sure research this and find out more. But let's keep it simple for the podcast sake. So number one. So actually, before I start, I just want to say that, again, we're talking about these big calorie deficits. And you may not count

calories or macros or do any of that, you might just pursue different diets that have restrictions, rules and restrictions built into them that caused very rapid weight loss. But just so everybody knows that weight loss does not occur unless there's a calorie deficit. It's impossible. Every scientific study out there has shown that. So if you're losing weight very quickly, you are in an extreme calorie deficit. So this applies to large calorie deficits. Okay, so number one, these diets are a hormonal train wreck. So, hormones, they regulate processes in different parts of our bodies. These crash diets impact many of our hormones in a negative way. But the ones I want to talk about are ghrelin and leptin.

ANNIE

Mm hmm.

JEN

Hopefully I'm saying that right. [Laughs]

ANNIE

That's how I say it.

JEN

That's how scientific I am.

ANNIE

[Laughs] I have different names for them based off of what they do, but that's how I remember them.

JEN

So your hunger hormone is ghrelin, and your satiety hormone is leptin. So your hunger hormone is what tells you, "Hey, hungry, time to eat." And your satiety hormone is the one that tells you, "Okay, had enough, done eating." So, these diets mess up those hormones. So your hunger hormone is ramped way up. And your satiety hormone is ramped way down.

ANNIE

So you feel hungrier, and you're less likely to feel full.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

Which is not the outcome that people probably want that are dieting, right?

JEN

Right. That's why it's impossible to sustain. Because you're not going to outrun these hormones. And so we can link to the Minnesota Starvation Experiment in the show notes. But we've done a podcast on the Minnesota Starvation Experiment. And this experiment took people through a

process of extreme calorie deficit, there was a group of men, they were on 1600 calories a day. And we talked about how in the results of this study, these men still felt hungry even while eating, like, thousands of calories in excess a day, right? I think one of them was eating 11,000 calories a day, and was still feeling hungry. And that's because he was responding to his body's cues, for sure. He wasn't being gluttonous, you know, lazy, all of those things. He couldn't be satisfied because he had been in that extreme calorie deficit for so long.

ANNIE

Yes, it was his body's response.

JEN

Yes, and I have more bad news. But, some evidence shows that these hormones don't stabilize until after you return to your original weight. So it absolutely makes sense that people are yo-yo dieting. As you're on this crash diet, losing weight as fast as possible, your hunger hormone is ramped up, your satiety hormone is ramped down, you eventually run out of steam, you start bingeing, eating, you can't be satisfied, you're eating everything in sight, you're rapidly putting back, putting that weight back on, those hormones are not stabilized until you return to the weight you started at.

ANNIE

But what happens Jen, and I know you know this, is people go through that bingeing stage where they're like, "I just can't keep my hand out of the chip bag or the cookie jar or the breadbasket" or whatever it is. And they blame themselves, right?

JEN

They absolutely are blaming themselves, but this is a physiological process that you cannot mindset or shame your way out of. So I remember, you know, I used to do this all the time, this was my life, doing stuff like this, and I would find myself in the pantry eating and like, I didn't even know how I got there. And t's just that my self defense system was so activated. I was just trying to survive at that point.

ANNIE

Yeah, so I want to be really clear, if you are a yo-yo dieter or if you are someone that is dieting and either are experiencing or have experienced weight regain either as much or more than you initially lost, that's what we would expect as a result from dieting. Yeah, you're not you're not to blame. You're not a failure. It's the diet.

JEN

Yeah. And there's a man I follow named Bill Campbell. He does studies on this stuff all the time. He's got a PhD. And he shared a study not too long ago that showed that leptin levels decreased by 50% in men on a low calorie diet. And so again, leptin is your satiety hormone. So it decreased by 50%.

ANNIE

So they weren't feeling full.

JEN

Yes, hello overeating.

ANNIE

Yeah. Okay, well. [Laughs] Wha wha.

JEN

Second, our metabolic adaptations, and a down regulation of your metabolism. So the word metabolism is thrown around everywhere. And again, that's just another complex topic that someone could, there are different things written about it if you want to do a deep dive. But your metabolism refers to how efficiently your body can extract energy from food. And so, we don't want to lose your attention here. And Annie and I aren't even qualified to do that deep dive, but go ahead and Google it if you want to learn more. Just be careful not to get lost on any diet sites, because there's actually a lot of just different woo-y, misinformed places that you can buy a new diet to fix your metabolism.

ANNIE

Ramp up your metabolism, speed up your metabolism.

JEN

Stay away. [Laughs] So, for this podcast's purposes, we're going to talk about metabolism in a very simple way. And dieting suppresses your metabolic rate. And what I mean by that, an example is that if you imagine yourself as a vehicle engine burning through a tank of gas, so, some cars are very, very efficient, and some are not efficient. And they need more gas to travel the same amount of distance. So when we think of somebody with a fast metabolism, most people picture a thin person in their mind, right? And what they actually mean is that that person's body is an inefficient engine. So it burns through more gas to go the same distance, they can eat more than somebody with what we call a slow metabolism, right? And when we think slow metabolism, what comes to mind usually is someone in a larger body. And so what that would mean, actually, is that that person has a very efficient engine. So it needs less fuel to travel the same distance. Does that make sense to you?

ANNIE

Yes, yes.

JEN

So it's actually the opposite of what people think.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Yeah, I'm with you. Yep.

JEN

Yeah. So, if I haven't lost you, there can be two people with different metabolic rates that eat the exact same amount of food, but because their bodies process it differently, leads to how much energy from the food is actually used. So what we think of slow metabolism... [Laughs] What we think of slow metabolism is that these crash diets will slow your metabolism. And it really makes sense, again, from a survival mechanism. So if your body thinks you're starving, it is going to get very, very smart and very, very efficient at using the fuel it's given. It's going to hold on, it's going to use every piece of energy that it can find, it will become very, very efficient.

ANNIE

Yes.

JEN

So extreme dieting will change your metabolism. There has been studies done on the "Biggest Loser" contestants that show this really well. "The Biggest Loser" is a horrific television show that went on for decades. I remember speaking out about it on social media probably seven years ago, and just getting roasted in the comments, because people just couldn't understand why this was so bad. Which actually just shows that we have, as a society, we have horrible tunnel vision on fast weight loss. So if you look up the studies of "The Biggest Loser" contestants, there were researchers following those contestants to see what happened after the show ended. Of course, the vast majority of people on that show regained their weight, but also it showed the changes in their metabolic rate.

ANNIE

Mm hmm.

JEN

Yeah. But the other fine print I should add to this one is that there is a lot of misinformation out there about metabolism. So as mentioned at the beginning, if you're going to do a deep dive and learn more about it, there's a lot of people out there trying to sell people products, supplements, etc.

ANNIE

Well, it is, it's, the idea is very appealing, right? That you can speed up your metabolism and therefore eat more food and not lose weight.

JEN

It's just looking for another quick fix, is what it is. Like, where now I need a quick fix for my metabolism. So. [Laughs] You know.

ANNIE

Yes.

JEN

So, it's just that we're, as a society, we're so obsessed with quick fixes.

ANNIE

Only the diet industry would affect your metabolism, then turn around and sell you a program -

JEN

Sell you something -

ANNIE

[Laughs] To fix your metabolism!

JEN

We ruined your metabolism -

ANNIE

We screwed it up! [Laughs]

JEN

Now we're gonna fix it. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Oh, we magically have a program for that, too. Like, go figure.

JEN

The metabolism diet? Yes.

ANNIE

[Laughs] It probably exists.

JEN

Yeah. So, number three, your body doesn't just break down fat when you're losing weight, you will not just lose fat off your body. And that's why there actually is a difference between fat loss and weight loss. Annie and I often use the term weight loss. And that's actually because we've done different surveys over the years to see what language our community is using, and they prefer weight loss. But what we all actually mean is fat loss because a change in weight doesn't necessarily mean a change in body fat percentage, because people can lose water, people can lose muscle, people can lose bone density. So if you are in one of these extreme calorie deficits, or if you are losing weight very fast, you are definitely losing muscle. And there is no way around this. If you are in a 20% calorie deficit, for example, you are experiencing 20% muscle protein breakdown or your muscle protein breakdown is up by 20%, I should say. And also your muscle protein synthesis becomes lower, which is what builds your muscles up.

ANNIE

So you're losing muscle and you're also becoming less capable to build any.

JEN

Oh, yes, absolutely. And your body doesn't consider your muscle essential when you're starving.

ANNIE

That's a bummer. [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah. [Laughs] So another study that Bill Campbell, shared recently was that he had subjects on a severe diet for three days, and they lost three times more muscle than they did fat. So it's preferring breaking down muscle. And how do you feel like that, as a woman who has quite a bit of muscle mass that you worked hard to get?

ANNIE

Well, yeah, I think that's what's really, I like lifting weights. And I've been lifting weights for over a decade, and I know how long it takes to build muscle. The hours in the gym combined with mindful nutrition, support, you know, getting enough protein and sleep and all that stuff. And to just think that you can lose it so quickly is like, just heartbreaking.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Don't touch my muscle. [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah, I feel the same way. I feel like muscle is very hard for me to build. I think I have, I think I have a deficiency. [Laughs] Genetic deficiency. But yeah, so, when I have muscle, it's heartbreaking to lose it. And just as a woman, a woman who wants to be healthy, strong, mobile into my old age, I know having muscle mass, and just a base level of muscle mass is very important for those things for my quality of life. So no, I don't want to lose it through extreme restriction and losing weight fast.

ANNIE

Yeah, even if you're not into muscles like I am, muscle mass is still very important for quality of health and longevity.

JEN

Yeah, absolutely. And the fourth thing I want to talk about is how your body will become more efficient at storing fat in your rebound phase. So, your body actually starts to prioritize fat gain in the post diet period. And that fat is preferentially stored in the trunk, not in your extremities, like, your arms or legs. So most people don't like hearing that because most people are trying to lose fat from their abdomen, not pile it up.

ANNIE

Then the diet industry comes in with the belly fat diet. [Laughs]

JEN

Yes. [Laughs]

ANNIE

You see, I hope people are connecting the dots here. right? [Laughs]

JEN

Keep getting sold the same product, repackaged and called something else.

ANNIE

Yes, yes, selling you the solution to the problem that they created for you that actually isn't a solution.

JEN

And if you've been around the world, as long as Annie and I in our old ages, you've seen diets come in and out of fashion, right? So it's very, very trendy. Or, I think keto is going out of fashion. It was very trendy last year. Been there done that in my early 20s. They didn't call it keto. It was called Atkins, or South Beach, phase one of the South Beach Diet. [Laughs]

ANNIE

I've never made it past that. [Laughs]

JEN

But what it is, is keto. And also fasting was very big when I was in my early 20s, too. It was positioned as a health thing. I think it's still positioned as a health thing. But so, when I see all these people jumping aboard this fasting train, I can say, been there, done that, learned my lessons. Have fun.

ANNIE

Yeah. Okay, so we're gonna offer what to do instead. But can we do a quick recap?

JEN

Sure, yeah. So these crash diets are driven by your weight loss obsession. And what they are actually creating is a body that is primed to gain weight and store fat. So your body's self defense system is there to protect you from starving to death. And there is an intricate web of systems that happen, that are inside there. But what happens is, you have hormonal adaptations that ramp up your hunger and ramp down your satiety hormones, so you will be very hungry after a diet and you will eat in excess of what your body needs. Number two, are changes to your metabolism. So in plain language, your metabolism will slow. Number three is that you aren't just losing fat, you are losing water, muscle, and likely bone density as well. So very unhealthy. And I should have mentioned when I was talking before, that low carb diets are a real difficult habit for people to break because low carb diets actually lead to a very quick

release of water from the body. So you can be on a low carb diet for four days and think you've lost five pounds. But you've just lost water. So I think a lot of people can be in a cycle with low carb dieting that almost feels addicting, like, and I certainly was. Number four is all of this means that your body becomes more efficient at storing fat. And your trunk is the preferred place for that fat to be stored post diet and your body is getting ready for the next famine. So the more times you do these crash diets, the stronger that self defense system becomes.

ANNIE

Yeah, and unfortunately, no one really walks away from extreme dieting without repercussions. Right?

JEN

Right. I mean, you would be defying the human biology, if you did. So. It is not your fault. And don't let anyone blame this on you, and don't do the self shaming thing. Understand your body. Understand this is very unhealthy. Understand that. Repeatedly dieting is what leads to weight gain. [Laughs] Over time.

ANNIE

Yeah. And we've talked about this before in various podcasts. But it's not uncommon for women to understand this sort of information and the implications of decades of dieting or even just a few diets and get kind of pissed. [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah, they should be.

ANNIE

Yeah. But when you know better, you can do better. And as we said at the beginning of the podcast, we do believe that you can have weight loss goals. I mean, that is on the table if you're interested. But we just need a different system.

JEN

A different, you need a different way of going about it that doesn't impact your physiology in this way. That primes you for a rebound and fat storage. So what to do instead? Well, we say join Balance365. [Laughs]

ANNIE

This is the way.

JEN

Yes, I'm actually serious about that because you need support. And studies just show people with support do better. So I will gently suggest you join Balance365, but that aside, what you need to lose weight in a healthy and sustainable way and avoid this rebounding weight or avoid this rebound with your physiology is number one, you need to have rational thoughts about your

body and weight loss. And that ties back to kind of the root of this quick fix dieting is weight loss obsession.

ANNIE

And panic.

JEN

And panic. Urgency and tunnel vision on the end goal, not caring what happens in the process. I would compare it to somebody who was obsessed with getting wealthy and didn't care how they became wealthy. What means, if they were robbing a bank, robbing a little old lady, the process matters, right?

ANNIE

Mm hmm. That's a good analogy.

JEN

Thank you. So, obsession about your body or obsession about weight loss is irrational, and accompanied with a lot of irrational thoughts. And as we touched on earlier, we understand that this is driven by shame. In fact, Brene Brown, she's a shame researcher, she says that body image is the number one shame trigger for women. So I would sit back and ask why. Why are you ashamed of your body? At what point were you taught that your body is not okay?

ANNIE

Who told you that?

JEN

Who told you that? And why? Why does that have to be true? I would really start challenging, you have to challenge those beliefs if you want to have a more positive body image and more rational thoughts about your body. And to really think about what you've put yourself through in the past. And when did that become okay? Like, would you recommend that to anyone you loved? Would you do that to your child, to a teenager? Is it okay, if someone in their early 20s does that? Like, what age is it okay, to do some of the extreme things that we do to our bodies?

ANNIE

You know, I had a conversation with a girlfriend last night who was struggling with a lot of what we just talked about, feeling like she fell off the wagon, couldn't keep her hand out of the chip bag, and was really beating herself up. And the last thing she said to me was, "I will never ever let my daughters know that I did this."

JEN

Yeah. So, if you have to hide your behaviors from your family or your children, you know, what are they?

ANNIE

Okay, so you need to have rational thoughts about your body. And weight loss.

JEN

Yes, rational thoughts. Number two is, nobody wants to hear this. But the best way to lose weight and keep it off is slowly.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

And honestly, the slower the better. So understanding that we have to maximize the amount we can eat while still losing weight.

ANNIE

Yeah, but everyone wants two pounds a week, Jen, it's two pounds a week, if I lose two, and then you start doing the diet math, like, if I start, if I have a vacation on this day, and I start on this week, then two pounds a week, I can -

JEN

You can lose 20 pounds by the time I leave for my holidays. Our bodies don't work like that, like, calories in and calories out is a mathematical equation that works. But it's actually far more complicated than that. And your body does, just, it never follows these mathematical equations. And so obviously, we coach women on weight loss. And you and I see so many different trends, right? So I have seen women whose weight loss comes in spurts and stalls. So they're kind of, nothing's happening for a couple months, and then they have more of a dramatic drop over a month.

ANNIE

That's me.

JEN

Is that you? Then nothing happens, then a more dramatic drop.

ANNIE

Yep, in the past when I have had periods of weight loss as a goal, I'll take like a five pound drop, and then nothing for weeks, and then another five pound drop, and then nothing for weeks. But you just, I know my body now, just, if that's on my goal list, just stay with it and stay consistent with it.

JEN

Yeah, we had another woman share in Balance365 the other day that she loses weight, and then she puts on a little bit, and then she loses some weight. And then she puts on a little bit, so her trend is like down and up, down and up. But it's trending downwards, it's trending the way she wants to go. And I would say my weight loss was pretty steady, but not there was, nothing

dramatic that ever happened with mine. Mine was pretty steady, but a lot a lot slower than what most people want to accept.

ANNIE

Yeah. And another, I don't know if phenomenon is the right word, but there's an element to Balance365 that we call tipping points. And it's this combination of habits, right? And you might implement a habit or two habits, and not see an effect on the scale. But eventually with enough layer and consistency and time, you get to that, it's like the top of the rollercoaster. And then -

JEN

Yeah, you have the tipping point.

ANNIE

yeah, the response from women is kind of like, "Oh my god, oh my god, I didn't change anything," like -

JEN

They feel like they didn't change anything because they just slowly, they slowly started changing their behaviors. And that just added up, and then they start losing. We had a woman post in Balance365, she's described the other day that she, it's fall here in North America. So she pulled out her winter stuff and she couldn't zip up her winter jacket last year. And she pulled it out of storage and zipped right up. And she didn't even know, she doesn't even know what happened. She doesn't feel like she was intentionally trying to do anything. She's been building habits since last winter.

ANNIE

And there's also the idea when it comes to weight loss slowly about, like, scaling your habits, and the, we call mental flexibility to work through tough spots and tough times.

JEN

Yeah. So what we have to understand is that, so your mindset is very, very important, as you're, as you're approaching a weight loss journey. So what Annie and I have talked about here is having rational thoughts about your body and food, then the next thing I would put on top of that is the way you go about it is sustainable. So it doesn't matter how you go about it, really everybody's way could look a little bit different. But it needs to be sustainable for you and for your life. So it's one thing to choose, you know, say, a certain exercise program that you want to do. And it's six days a week, and you have time for it right now. Now, what happens in two months, if the world shuts down, everybody is confined to their homes. And you're dealing, you have to homeschool kids, like, what happens then, right? And that's a skill, you can still be successful. If you know how to scale that habit, that new behavior. If you don't, we've got a problem.

ANNIE

Yeah, if you don't, that's when you just throw in the towel, like, screw it -

JEN

That's when you throw in the towel.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

So scalability of your habits is important.

ANNIE

We talked about this earlier this week, Jen, there might be times in your life when you can be pedal to the metal, all in, and speed through some habits and behaviors. And there might be times when you need to slow down and just chill out and hold the line for a little bit. And like, both are okay.

JEN

Both are okay, you might need to gear down in life. And I've had to. So, six years has gone by. And I have roughly maintained my weight in about a five to 10 pound range after losing 30 pounds. And I have had some very trying seasons of life in the last six years as Annie knows. But because I'm not doing these insane diets anymore, I can meet myself where I'm at in each season of my life.

ANNIE

And I also think on the note of sustainability, recognizing that what's sustainable for you, isn't necessarily sustainable for your friend, and what's sustainable for your yoga teacher might not be sustainable for you. And like, it's just, it's so person specific. So don't compare what you're doing to anyone else.

JEN

Yeah. So to recap, that is, please start working on having rational thoughts about your body and weight loss, which means you might have to unpack some very painful stuff, but that's okay, it's part of the process. And the second is to start working towards weight loss slowly and sustainably. And that's what will last and that's what will not destroy your body. And prime your whole physiology for weight regain and fat storage. And that means that you have to let time pass, right? You might have some bigger weight loss goals. But you need to learn to let time pass and be patient. And we know that's one of the number one things that women don't want to do, and why they abandon new changes because they don't see fast results.

ANNIE

Yeah, but like, just tough love.

BOTH

[Laugh]

ANNIE

This is what I needed to hear. This is what I needed to hear, how many years had I wasted on dieting? Trying this quick fix, and I was no further ahead than when I started. And if I had just committed that time, even half of that time to slow sustainable changes, I would have been lightyears ahead.

JEN

Right, absolutely. And also, when you, if you understand now that you have to let more time past to see results, it means you have to find purpose in the process. And if you are hyper focused on a result, which means, maybe you are a little obsessed with weight loss then you're probably still pursuing all of these quick fix things. Understanding that, enjoying the process, means implementing habit changes that you can see in your life a year from now. Right? I used to do all these crazy cleanses, detoxes, fasting, I'd eat in a certain way that had no joy. And if anyone had ever said that to me, "Hey, are you going to be okay doing this in a year from now?" That would have caused me to pause. But that really is the question that we need to ask ourselves.

ANNIE

Yeah, how long can you do this?

JEN

How long? It needs to be forever. Because weight loss is not a destination, it's not a finish line. It's just a byproduct of how you're living your life.

ANNIE

Yeah, you're gonna have whatever you're doing to achieve the weight loss for the 1,000,000th time, you have to do that the rest of your life. To some pretty high degree. So you better be okay with the process.

JEN

Yeah. So I was, I was really nervous to do this podcast today. Because I think some of this information is very painful to hear. I also know that there will be people resisting this, and they're on Google now. But guess what, I've been there. I have been there, when somebody was telling me the truth, resisting it, wanting to call them a liar, wanting to seek out all the diet information I had learned in my life, "But this book was written about this. And this book was written," and show people that they were wrong. So I've been there. It's almost like the bargaining stage of grief. But I read a quote the other day, and I thought it was very relevant to this podcast. And it was that the truth can hurt but not knowing the truth can hurt even more. And the truth is, for anybody listening that's on any polarizing end of the weight conversation going on in our culture right now is, the truth is that fad diets don't work. They just don't work. And fast weight loss hurts you, it doesn't help you. But also, I want everybody to know that the truth is, you can lose weight in a healthy and sustainable way. And you can keep it off. Because there's a lot of people in that camp as well talking about how weight loss is impossible. And you'll just regain it all. So why bother? But if you're willing to commit to the habits and behaviors and going about this in a slow,

sustainable manner, it's absolutely possible to lose weight and keep it off. I've done it. My husband's done it, you've done it. We know many people.

ANNIE

Oh just, you know, a few thousand in Balance365. [Laughs] A small group of them.

JEN

There's a great quote, she actually said it on our podcast. It's a Balance365er we interviewed who's lost 50 pounds. And she said, the slow way is the fast way.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Let that one sink in.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

The slow way is the fast way.

JEN

And if you take anything from this podcast episode, I hope it's that you can forgive yourself for any past diet failures. And know that you deserve a kinder, gentler, sustainable weight pursue fat loss.

ANNIE

Mm hmm. Just take a deep breath. We can do it. We can, we can like hunker down. We can do this. Like, we can take this little route, we can be the tortoise, right?

JEN

It can even be enjoyable.

ANNIE

Yeah, you can be looking around your life a year from now saying like, I mean, we just interviewed someone on the podcast that was like, mind blown that it was possible. This method was possible without consuming, without obsession, without meticulous counting.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Okay, good podcast. Heavy on the information, but I think it's really valuable information.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Yeah. Okay. Good chat, Jen. Good chat. Great podcast episode. All right, thanks. We'll talk soon.

JEN

Bye.

ANNIE

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.co to enroll in next month's coaching round. See you on the inside.