

Episode 165 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 1000s 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

Hey, quick question. Do you emotionally eat? Yeah of course you do, we all do, and we aren't here to shame you for that today. Everybody emotionally eats from time to time but when you're doing it often or when it becomes a habit, it can start causing you some problems and that's what we're here to talk to you about today. And if you haven't heard we are just under a week away from our super popular workshop "Cut the Crap: How to Simplify Weight Loss and Get Out of Your Own Way." We'll be going live with you all to deliver a little real talk, a little tough love, but best of all, help you clear out all the clutter you have about weight loss, nutrition, exercise, and simplify it all. You can find the link to register for this workshop at balance365life.com/free-workshop We can't wait to see you there. Enjoy this episode.

ANNIE

Hi, Jen, how are you?

JEN CAMPBELL

Good. How are you, Annie?

ANNIE

I am so good. And I'm so excited to find out what this one question is.

JEN

Yeah, this is, we're talking emotional eating today. And I would say emotional eating is something we deal with frequently in our members.

ANNIE

Absolutely. We've done market research in our communities. And this comes up a lot in our community and coaching, we are getting quite well versed in coaching emotional eating.

JEN

Yes. And just so everybody knows they haven't arrived at a podcast episode that's going to shame them for emotional eating. Or tell them that food is just fuel, because it isn't. Food is

actually very comforting. And human beings have a very primitive connection with food, right? So when you were born, whether you were formula fed or breastfed, food was your very first nourishment, right? It wasn't just nutrition. It was nourishment. It was comfort, it was love. So it's okay, food is comforting. The issue is not that you emotionally eat, the issue is likely the frequency at which you emotionally eat. Right? It's just like, the issue is not that you watch Netflix, the issue is that you have Netflix on for eight hours straight. Right? So it's, we all have bad habits in life. We all have numbing habits, where we need to check out. It's the frequency that we're engaging in these habits that can keep us from our goals, right?

ANNIE

And before you poopoo this episode and say "I don't emotionally eat," just know that I at one time thought that too. And I was so wrong. [Laughs] So yeah, let's talk about what it is and why we do it. Jen?

JEN

Yeah, for sure. So at Balance365 we put eating in absence of hunger in the emotional eating bucket. And a lot of people would probably be surprised at how often they are doing this. So most people think of emotional eating as stress eating right? I just had a coaching member the other day tell me that she does not emotionally eat, but then listed to me all the time she is eating in absence of hunger. And I said to her, "Okay, so you're not like reactively emotionally eating, but you're eating to avoid a feeling." And she was like, "Oh my gosh, light bulb. You're right. I'm eating to avoid feeling something."

ANNIE

Yeah, I had a similar conversation with a girlfriend who was expressing that she could not keep her hand out of the Goldfish box. And I said, "Do you think you're emotionally eating?" And she said, "I'm not emotionally eating. I'm just bored." And I was like, "Yeah, okay. All right, that falls under the umbrella." [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah, for sure. So maybe you are eating to cope with stress or hard feelings like shame. But maybe you're also using it to cope with boredom or overwhelm. And sometimes some people even have a strong connection with joy eating. Right? So they're with their friends, they're with family members, and there's a strong trigger there to eat.

ANNIE

Yeah, and the reason I didn't think I was emotionally eating is because I was eating to suppress feelings. So I actually wasn't even allowing them to come up. I was trying to eat them, shut them down before they could even bubble to the surface.

JEN

Right, for sure. And we find that it's most common to be emotionally eating from like two to 3pm onwards. Sometimes that means from 3pm onwards, you're just off the rails eating until you go to bed. And sometimes you have a sporadic eating session mid afternoon, or another one in the

evenings. And so I used to think evening eating was the most common time to emotionally eat but actually we just did a survey with our members and we found that mid afternoon is the most common time that people are struggling with emotional eating

ANNIE

Yeah, and it doesn't really surprise me because I think that can be a very chaotic time, especially for parents with kids coming home from school, or picking up, or like a shift in the closing of the work day to evening time or whatnot, and just the feeling of like that mid afternoon slump.

JEN

Yeah, or also if you have terrible sleep habits or not just terrible sleep habits, if you have things restricting you from sleeping, like a baby or kids or menopause symptoms, insomnia, exhaustion might hit you really hard around two o'clock so then you're just searching for energy right?

ANNIE

Yep, yep, a sugary coffee and a cookie sounds great. [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah, for sure, so it's happening. A lot of people are doing it, no judgment here, we're here to help, but here is the one question that -

ANNIE

Drumroll.

JEN

- we want you to ask yourself, yes. [Laughs]

ANNIE

The big reveal.

JEN

What comes up for you when you tell yourself no to eating?

ANNIE

Yeah, and if you're listening, just ask yourself, picture yourself in one of those situations and think, "Okay, I tell myself no. What's my next thought, what's my reaction?"

JEN

Yeah, or your takeaway homework from this podcast is to tell yourself no the next time you have an urge to eat. And so emotional eating is extremely individual, why you do it, when you're doing it, the strategies you use to stop or decrease the frequency. Very individual. But this one question I think everybody needs to ask themselves and this one question can be your path to freedom from emotional eating and it will expose what your individual issue is, and I would say

some of the more common answers that we get from our coaching members are number one: I deserve this.

ANNIE

I've had a hard day, I need to unwind, I just need a moment to like enjoy this thing.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

It could also be, "Well all I've had to eat today is a coffee and a small salad and I'm starving, so that's why I want this."

JEN

And that's a valid reason to eat. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Absolutely, but again, this question exposes maybe the opportunity to, it might not be addressing an emotional need, it might be addressing physical hunger right? And building your day to better support control or emotional eating habits throughout the evening.

JEN

Yeah, or just a nutritionally unbalanced day, so you can be eating enough but you can be eating like croissants and coffee all day and by 3pm you are just crashing right? Which is why we talk about the importance of balanced eating, just to keep you feeling physically satisfied throughout the day, and so letting what comes up come up allows you to start looking at what strategies you need to implement in order to break free of emotional eating, and so we can't pair a nutritional strategy with a mindset issue, right? But we also can't pair a mindset strategy with a nutritional issue, we've gotta, what would be a good saying for this? I'm trying to pull from my dad hat here, my dad sayings. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Tell me what Greg would say.

BOTH

[Laugh]

JEN

I don't know, we always have my dad's little dad sayings in here. Yeah, so let come up what needs to come up, and what I also want to say is that you can eat or not eat right? Just say no to yourself and let what needs to come up come up, and look, if saying no to yourself worked, like, "Hey, period. Just say no to yourself," and that's the end of your emotional eating, if that worked, we wouldn't be sitting here having this conversation. It doesn't work. Often what happens is it just intensifies the craving or the urge to eat, so I'm not saying go away and say

no, and everything's gonna fall into place. I want you to let the feelings and thoughts come out so you're actually aware of what they are because so many people are running on autopilot and they're emotionally eating with no awareness of what they're feeling or trying to avoid feeling and what thoughts are behind that.

JEN

Yeah, and it can help you get clear on, what need am I trying to fulfill through food? And are there opportunities to meet that need elsewhere?

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

I know for example something that we've talked about a lot Jen is when I was emotional eating, and I didn't identify it as emotional eating because I wasn't actually feeling these feelings, I was eating to suppress these feelings. But it was often an avoidance or a distraction to feeling lonely, sad, unworthy, disappointed, hopeless, and by telling myself no, I would imagine that my response, had I asked myself that question, would have been like, a really unsettled response to "I don't want to actually feel those things though. Like, please don't make me do it."

JEN

"I can't sit with this." Yeah.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

Especially when there's no immediate solution for it, right? And human beings are, we're so discomfort avoidant, we're wired to avoid discomfort, right? So obviously very natural [laughs] if you're emotionally eating. I've done a lot of overwhelm eating, a lot of frustration eating, when my kids are fighting, that's been a big trigger for me in the past to just like, go eat something, because I just need to escape that chaos. And I'm lacking kind of the skills and tools in the moment to help sort out this fighting. And so yeah, I've had a lot of like, these are some big feelings, and I need to go eat to cope with them right now.

ANNIE

And again, eat or not eat. That's not the intention of this question. The intention is to help bring to the surface what's really going on behind the scenes, right?

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

And I would love for people to do this homework, and then attend our workshop and -

JEN

Yes, definitely.

ANNIE

- tell us what they found out. What did you discover?

JEN

Yeah, so emotional eating is again, a huge topic. We can't cover all about emotional eating in one podcast, but we are going to be diving deeper in our workshop, which Annie mentioned at the beginning, and we hope you will sign up for it, we hope you will join us, we hope you will bring some of this to the surface and start understanding yourself a little better. And by the end of the workshop, you should have a very clear path of steps that you need to take to start breaking free of this.

ANNIE

Yep. So if you are struggling with the food is fuel concept, you're in good company. We know that food is way more than fuel. And we're not trying to shame you for emotional eating. We're trying to help you build some skills and strategies to help you manage it if it's problematic for you, which is what we're doing in the workshop. It's gonna be so fun. All right.

JEN

It is!

ANNIE

Well thank you, Jen for your time.

JEN

Thank you.

ANNIE

I love that question. I'm excited to see what our listeners have to say about it.

JEN

Awesome.

ANNIE

All right, talk soon.

JEN

Bye.

ANNIE (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 on over to balance365.co to join coaching.