

Balance365 Episode 98 Transcript

ANNIE BREES

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 have coached 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 BREES

Hello my friends, welcome back to another episode. I don't know if you've caught on to this but we are growing incredibly close to our 100th episode. I am just in shock that we have done 100 of these together. I think I've been on for most of them, and let me tell you, we've had some amazing highlights and a lot of learning. If you don't know, if you aren't familiar with podcasting, it's a lot to do with sound quality and acoustics, which has not always been our friend. And if you don't know, I record every episode from my bedroom, because that's where the acoustics are the best. But you'll have to come back in a few weeks because Jen and I have a super special episode that means a lot to us. So I hope you join us back here in a few weeks for that, but I have to also tell you today's episode is equally as special because what we do in today's episode is something we've never done on the podcast before and it's actually interactive. So you have to stick around. And I want to tell you about today's guest that leads us on this interactive practice. Her name is Kelli Weber and I actually know Kelli in real life so she's not just a friend on the internet or social media. I actually know Kelli in real life and she is a mother to two, she is a yoga and meditation teacher and a creative, among many other things, and Kelli looks to find the beauty in everything. And I'm not just saying that because it sounds nice, she actually does. And she honestly has one of the most soothing, calming voices I have ever heard, which makes for a great meditation leader. And what I love about Kelli is, she approaches everything she does with grace, and courage. And she's going to tell you a story in today's episode about how she actually traveled the country for six months in an Airstream van with her family, and any woman that can do that gets a hat tip from me. She's funny, she's kind, she's compassionate. And why I wanted to bring Kelli on was because she actually encouraged me to start meditating, and I had some resistance. I was like Kelli, I don't have time to meditate. I don't have this spirit. My house is constantly loud. It's messy. It's not like a spa. When do you want me to do it? My brain is constantly running full of thoughts. And she encouraged me, and she challenged me to reframe what I thought meditation was, how I needed to practice meditation. And on today's episode, she actually leads us through a two or three minute meditation that you can do with us in your car, in your bathroom, on a walk, while you're cooking dinner. It doesn't need to be this picture of like spas and candles and music and on your bolster cross legged with your hands open. It can be that, but it can also be so much more. And I know I was really limiting my experience of meditation to a very specific context. And Kelli encouraged

me to think of it as so much more opportunity than I ever thought of it. And I think you're going to really enjoy it as we cover the benefits of meditation. How you can incorporate meditation into your life when you're busy, and you've got kids and your house is loud and your mind is loud? How you can start practicing that in your daily routine. I hope you enjoy it. We'll talk soon.

ANNIE

Jen, are you ready for today's meditation episode?

JEN CAMPBELL

I am ready. I got the lights off in my office. I've got a blanket on my lap. I'm ready for this.

ANNIE

Did you sage and have a candle burning?

JEN

Oh no, I actually...this is true story. I ran and grabbed a chai tea. While I was waiting for this to start and that feels very like a meditation-y beverage.

ANNIE

Yeah. It really does. So, how on brand of you. We have we have a guest today, Kelli, welcome to Balance365 podcast. How are you?

KELLI WEBER

I am fantastic. I'm so excited to be here and thank you for having me ladies.

ANNIE BREES

We are so excited to have you and the reason I wanted you on the episode for this topic in particular, was because we met for coffee a while ago. And I was saying to you like, essentially I should meditate. I know I want to meditate, I see the benefits of meditation. But in my head, I have created meditation to be this thing that I do when my house is quiet, when I can like light my candles and turn on some spa-like music and turn down the lights and you're like, No, if you wait for that, because you're a mom, if you wait for that moment, it's not going to happen. And my mind was blown, I was like, What? Okay, so you offered some strategies to meditate essentially anywhere, which we're going to get into later later today. But why don't you first tell us how you got into...because you're not just, you don't just do meditation, you also do a variety of things including yoga instruction. So tell us about your background?

KELLI

Absolutely. I would say, I'm a mom. I have Addison, 14, actually it's her birthday today.

ANNIE

Happy birthday Addison!

KELLI

And then we have a son - oh, I know she'll love to hear that. And I will tell her. And then a son, Max, he's eight and then my husband, Dean. We have just been kind of rolling around having fun as a family. And ever since I was pregnant, actually, with Addison is when I had my first yoga class, and I went to a prenatal yoga class. And what I learned instantly is that it was not about a pose. It was not about doing warrior two, it was not about what it looked like. Because at the time it was teaching me how to breathe. How to notice this body I'm growing inside of me, how to connect with that and so it immediately took me out of my head, into my body, specifically because I was pregnant. And from then I never looked back, I started practicing. And when I say practicing, it really was that sometimes I could get to a class, you know, once a week, twice a week, once a month, but I always kept coming back. So that is my touch on yoga. And then I was introduced to a little more meditation professionally. On that side, I've always been a creative. I was a creative director for, oh gosh, almost 20 years, graphic design trained, fine art based. So all of these things kind of weave in and out of each other. When you start connecting the dots, I feel creative. I love that, but then I was woven into a family and a mom, and health and wellness and you can just see how each little point started to support the next one. And that's really kind of my background. We also traveled as a family around the country about a year and a half ago now and we were all smushed in an Airstream van. [Laughs] It was kind of small.

ANNIE

I remember, I met, I think the time I met you, you were like preparing -

ANNIE

- you had just gotten the van, and you were like, pulling the kids out of school. And, like, I'm doing that Like, wow, we're going to travel the world. Can we just fast forward because the last time I had coffee with you, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but this is what I find...I appreciate it so much about you. You're like, This sounded really great. And it was fun. We had a lot of great experiences, but I just couldn't do it.

KELLI

Yeah!

KELLI

Absolutely. It was this thing that was very, like romanticized and it sounds amazing. And we we got all of our ducks in a row and I was going to work on the road. And Dean actually quit his job and he was the homeschooler, I wasn't the homeschooler, so Dean did pretty much all of the planning and everything. And truly it was going pretty well. But then factors start to come in that you never realize, like weather, like, it started getting cold where we were and we didn't pre-plan our RV parks and different things. And honestly, it was just, I think the, how do I want to say? Like being in a van and those small compartmental spaces was a really great analogy for what we were just like trying to cram into this space. I was trying to work, we were trying to homeschool the kids, we're trying to have the trip of the lifetime we were trying to do all the things, we were having to cook on a one thing burner and it was just a lot, and I think I found for myself...And I will say this, that having the background of yoga and meditation and self

awareness and being able to go, I got to pump the brakes, like, I said no for me first, the kids could have kept rolling on, Dean could have kept rolling on, but it wasn't good for Mama.

[Laughs]

JEN

Good for you!

KELLI

It wasn't good for anybody, and I think it was just the biggest life lesson and the biggest blessing for our family to be able to do that. But then be able to show the kids, because there were no conversations that weren't had. There was no privacy. So they heard everything that we were talking about. And I think it showed them how to use and notice their boundaries. Use and be aware of their space, when to speak up. When to speak up if it was scary and you didn't know the outcome or you didn't really know why you were saying it, so it was a great learning experience. And then I'm happy to be home too because I feel like I did have a little connectionness, with truly like the physicality of people and going to coffee and having a hug from a girlfriend and just the little things that you don't realize are so impactful in our day to day life, and maybe we don't give as much gratitude to that as we should, because it's just part of our life. So it was a great learning experience.

JEN

This is just side note, but we've had a very similar experience. And we used to do quite a bit of traveling, because we lived overseas actually. And we've lived in three different countries and I, when we moved back to Canada, I was like, we are going nowhere for a very long time, until our youngest is over the age of five. Because I just, I don't know, I think it's more me, actually again, but it's just, it's not what it's glamorized to be on Instagram. Like, there's these different Instagram families that are traveling and they gave up everything and they're doing this amazing trip and you see all these pictures of them and these amazing places and landscapes and I'm like, behind the scenes, it's hell.

ALL

[Laugh]

JEN

Like at Machu Picchu, like your kids are still having tantrums. They're still doing, they're still getting up in the night. And then again, the weather thing. One time we were living in a tent in New Zealand, and it was so windy. Me and my youngest were in there napping and the tent pole snapped on this big expensive tent we had just bought for that trip around New Zealand and I'm laying with canvas on my face.

KELLI

[Laughs]

JEN

And my son was in another structure so he was protected from being suffocated. Thank goodness. And I'm like, he was one and a half, and I'm like, what are we doing? Just yeah, so it's not for us. Honestly. It's not for us, and we have done a trip since then, but it's night and day when your kids are a bit older and when you're on vacation versus having to figure out how to live on the road, as you said, we were cooking in camp kitchens and stuff. And I told a girlfriend when we got back, I'm just beyond that in my life. I backpacked when I was younger. I'm done. Like, I will travel when I can afford some amenities. Otherwise, I love my home. I love staying home. I love staycations etc.

KELLI

Yeah.

JEN

So that's a side note. Yes.

KELLI

That's very cool. We'll have to have another side conversation about that.

JEN

Yeah, the joys.

KELLI

That could be a whole 'nother podcast in and of itself. Holy moly.

ANNIE

But what I love about your story, Kelli, is that you...it took a lot of preparation to make that idea come to life and I just appreciated the fact that you were like, This is no longer bringing me joy. And I'm going to own that and honor it and tap out. And like, even though you had seemingly put in a lot of work, and maybe it wasn't what your family initially wanted, or you know, whatnot, but that you, as you said, honor your boundaries and advocated for your needs, which I think is really amazing.

JEN

It's a story that can be applied to so many situations in life because I think in a lot of different realms, people get attached to ideas, and then they pursue that idea, or should we call it an ideal, beyond their personal boundaries and limits really are allowing them to do so while still feeling sane and joyful in their lives. And self awareness is so important in any journey, whether it's a journey of packing up your kids and traveling around or any kind of relationship journey or physical transformation journey you're doing, etc, etc.

KELLI

Absolutely.

ANNIE

Speaking of self awareness, let's get back to meditation. [Laughs]

KELLI

[Laughs] I know.

ANNIE

I'm sure we could talk about a lot of things with you, Kelli, but I do want to cover the benefits of meditation because it's not just feel good fluff there. There's a lot of research behind the benefits of meditation. Okay, now I get to have a side note. Have you seen that Netflix series Explained? Is that what it's called?

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

They have one whole episode on meditation and it is amazing.

KELLI

Yeah.

ANNIE

About what it can do in the brain, into the body and emotionally physically. So, can you walk us through some of the benefits of meditation?

KELLI

The benefits are truly endless and all of it is science based, you can google scientific benefits of meditation and have a billion studies. And mostly it can be linked back to stress reduction. It can improve sleep, it can lower anxiety, it can help with Alzheimer's, it helps with self awareness. The list truly goes on and on and on. And a lot of that, we know that stress, we were talking about this before the podcast and it goes directly back to health and wellness. It goes back to your body and being able to feed it on a different level, no pun intended, but with that energy of the breath, because we know that we walk through the day and we're functioning I feel from the chest up, our thoughts are in our head, they're swirling around up there, that's where all of the energy is. And then we literally do short, shallow breath throughout the day and you don't even know, how many times can you even notice during the day that you're breathing because your body does it for you?

ANNIE

Well, now I'm doing it. I'm doing it right now, because I was like -

JEN

Me too. [Laughs]

ANNIE

- totally chest breathing.

KELLI

Absolutely.

JEN

I would say those are the three things you mentioned - anxiety -

KELLI

Yes.

JEN

- sleep deprivation, and stress are three things that are almost a universal daily struggle to manage for women in our audience.

KELLI

Absolutely. And I think that as juggling all the things, like the conversation of Annie and I at coffee or like we can meditate here, right here, right now. Like, you can have a mindful moment by closing your eyes and feeling your feet on the ground and wiggling your toes. You can have a mindful moment by placing your hand on your lower belly, breathing in through your nose and feeling your belly expand and contract, all of those things. So that's what with the moms of doing all the things, we're working, we're raising families. Where can you find - and this is where the self awareness comes in - where can you find those moments? And I think those are kind of universal, too, you can find them in the shower, you can find them in the pantry and close the door for two minutes. You can find them in the car, before you pick the kids up from school, applicable to work, too, just finding all of these little snapshots throughout the day where you can kind of stop, drop and breathe.

JEN

Can I share a time that I found to be very universal and conducive for this kind of thing?

KELLI

Yes.

JEN

After you finish going to the bathroom.

KELLI

100%.

JEN

Because everybody has to go to the bathroom. And it's like, you can't put that off. It's happening. So we all do it and you can take a few minutes after you wash your hands to do something like this, take a moment of mindfulness. And also, as we talked about in our

community, habit stacking. So again this because we're all about habits and behavior, if you're going to commit to a change in behavior, you need to address the whole habit cycle, which is the habit trigger and the reward, right? The reward is obvious here, it's feeling calmer, more connected to your body. But if you want to start a practice like this or anything, you have to find the trigger. So, I actually find going to the bathroom, it's just like a really good trigger to take a moment.

KELLI

Totally. And that's exactly right. And I think that because they call it a meditation practice, you have to practice over and over to make it form a habit. And the thing that will immediately connect with everybody is the feeling you get after you meditate, after you breathe, and I truly use the word meditate loosely because it is not the perfect image of sitting down, cross legged, hands in "om" position, floating up off the ground. Like that's just not how it rolls. So I think that once people can kind of debunk what it should look like, just with anything else, whether it's new eating patterns, or a new, healthy lifestyle choice or an exercise regimen, to approach it in the way that you both give the tools to stack the habits, find the triggers, and then have that self awareness to say I'm coming back to my breath today, in the bathroom after the shower in the car.

ANNIE

I love that. I also want to circle back to the benefit of stress reduction or stress management because that's something that we talk about about in Balance365 that I see a lot of other programs failing to acknowledge, and it's a huge part of your whole health. And if you are exercising, that's a stress, if you're dieting, that's a huge stress. And it's like, it just seems like people are trying to approach improvements to their health or weight loss from this, like, what can I add? And it's like, you gotta like, you gotta pay attention to what's already happening, as well. And, you know, that's also why we talked about sleep, you know, and people can't make near the money they can off of telling people to sleep more or meditate that they can a meal plan and an exercise program. But we spend a lot of time focusing on sleep behaviors and stress management behaviors because they're super impactful and they have a snowball effect.

JEN

They are, we would call them foundation habits for a lot of people. So Josh Hillis, who's also been on our podcast, he's more of an eating...Well, he's a coach, but he's also like eating therapy would be more his specialty and emotional eating and stress eating. And he and I were chatting one day that if people had a good sleep practice, and had stress management tools in their wellness toolbox, we may not see the over eating tendencies that we do in so many people because overeating is often just a band aid to cope, right? And it's often trying to cope with stress, overwhelm, anxiety. And then on the other side, sleep deprivation, which is just your body is so rundown and tired. It's just looking for energy. And if you're not going to give it sleep, it's going to look elsewhere.

ANNIE

And spoiler alert, Josh Hillis will be on next week's episode talking about stress eating. It's like someone thought about these podcast episodes and put them in order of common sense and sequence. So, if you are like, I might be a stress eater, I have some of those tendencies, then you can start to put into practice what Kelli is suggesting, a meditation practice, six breaths after the bathroom might be...It sounds really like that's going to help, but like I said, because it feels like such a low investment. Like we're asking you to take some time to breathe after you go to the bathroom. But it can be impactful.

JEN

Yeah, and that's the thing, it's like, how we talk about all the time, any small changes can have big results. And we are so conditioned as a society to think everything has to be extreme. So it's like, yeah, you can like, book yourself into one of those hot water pods for an hour or a massage because you're so stressed out, you know, but then how could I possibly have time for something like that? So here's the deal, if you enjoy those things great, like, excellent self care, but what we're also saying is stress management is available to you right now.

KELLI

Absolutely.

ANNIE

For free.

KELLI

Yup, right now.

JEN

For free, in your home.

KELLI

You can touch it, you can feel it, it's yours.

JEN

And so can you tell me like, Okay, so, what is meditation? So you know, you're not just gonna wash your hands and then look in the mirror and close your eyes and just breathe. It's like, what is meditation?

KELLI

Yep. A definition I looked up yesterday, to come at you with a good, just basic sentence, is it is the practice of coming back to a focal point over and over, for example, the breath. It went on and on to say what you could focus on, over and over to be considered meditation. What I consider meditation for myself and I truly believe that you have to find the meaning for yourself. But what I teach is it is simply the willingness and the commitment to come back to your breath over and over and over. And when you forget, you come back to your breath. And that's how you start your practice. So it's no... I like to do contrast a lot, too...Meditation is is not a religion.

It does not have to be attached to all of the visuals. I think that we're conditioned to see, like you're saying, in society, and that's really what I want to bring to the table is the every day, the ability to stop, close your eyes, go inside and shift the energy from your head into your heart, into your breath.

JEN

So it's being, you know, most of us just kind of live out there in the chaos. And we're just trying to manage it all the time. When you're saying it's about coming back in here, getting in touch, your focal point would be your breath.

KELLI

Absolutely.

JEN

Getting getting back in touch with your senses, because you were saying earlier, it's about, you know, feeling your toes on the ground.

KELLI

Connecting with all five senses. A good visual, to give it some context, is thinking about the ocean and waves. If you're standing on the beach, and you're looking at the waves, you see them crashing, they're noisy. There's a lot of movement. But if you dip under the ocean water five feet, there's calm, -

JEN

I love that visual.

KELLI

- there's a little more calm. Yeah. So, if you're thinking about taking, like you said, your energy starting at your head and just bringing it down, bringing it down, bringing it down.

JEN

I like that. I have started using...my husband snores. So I either have to get to sleep faster than him [laughs].

KELLI

Same. I know this story.

JEN

Or, I'm headed to the basement to sleep in the basement bedroom. But what I've actually started doing is I have some headphones that are nice and like soft, so I don't feel them in my ears because I'm kind of a sensory person. And on the Calm app, I put on these sounds, like not even someone talking, just sounds. So last night, I was listening to rain on a window. And I'm telling you, since I started doing that, I fall asleep like that.

KELLI

Absolutely.

JEN

It's just, yeah. And I think I'm...I can't hear anything, can't hear my husband's snoring, but I can hear the rain and I'm thinking about my breath. And then I'm out, and it's just wild how quickly I've been able to fall asleep since I started doing that.

KELLI

Absolutely. And you've been doing it over and over. So that's your practice, right? You're creating this habit, and it becomes easier and easier.

JEN

Yeah, absolutely.

KELLI

Not to shift the conversation, but do you gals want to jump in and try and feel a short little meditation?

JEN

I thought you're gonna say talk about our husbands.

ALL

[Laugh]

JEN

Just kidding.

ANNIE

No.

ALL

[Laugh]

ANNIE

We're keeping it about us. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Hey friends, Annie here, real quick I wanted to sneak into this episode to tell you why it's important for you to love your body right now even if you want to change it, and more importantly how you can do that. You can learn the exact process we use with our clients in our free workshop, the Five Step Process to Overcome Overeating, getting off the diet roller coaster and restoring a healthy relationship with food that you can pass on to your kids, and you can get all of that for free. It is super simple. Just pause the show, open up your browser and type in

balance365workshop.com, or you can click the link in your show notes. Alright, let's get back to this episode.

ANNIE

So yeah, I asked Kelly, if she could offer...Even as you're listening to this episode, what it could look like for you, when you go into the bathroom, or before you pick your kids up from school, to just have a minute for yourself in the car, the bathroom, the kitchen, whatever, because like I said, I keep putting off meditation, because I don't have the right quote-unquote, the right conditions. And you're here, just totally calling bs on that. [Laughs]

KELLI

Right?

JEN

Yeah. The other thing I want to say is that I've like, you know, when I first started thinking about meditating a couple years ago, I would google like meditation practices, like, to listen to something. And well, while that can be okay to have a guide, so to say, lots of them are like 10 minutes, 15 minutes, and I'm like, I can't do this for 10 minutes. Maybe that's something someday I'll be able to build up to. But I have an attention span for meditating that's approximately three minutes. And I am just like ready to move along. And so that's the other thing about knowing when you get on Google and you're looking, you might, if you've tried it before, you may not have enjoyed it, because it was just too long for where you are currently at.

KELLI

Absolutely. And I think using that analogy of pretending that you're, you know, you might be in the bathroom right now. [Laughs]

KELLI

That's my theme where you're listening to the podcast, right? And I think that that is so perfect, because you can do meditation in a chair. It doesn't have to be on a bolster. You can do it standing up for those mindful moments. But for the practice we're going to do today, because we're all three sitting down right now. We can just jump into it if you want, and we'll do a two to three minute -

JEN

[Laughs]

JEN

Let's do it.

ANNIE

Why am I nervous? [Laughs]

KELLI

Oh, don't be.

JEN

Am I gonna do this right?

ANNIE

[Laughs] Well, there's like, I think there's also something about doing it in front of, it feels very personal. Like, are you guys gonna watch me? Like, we all agreed to close our eyes right?
[Laughs]

KELLI

That's exactly it, before we do, because we can all see each other, I'll invite the viewers to do this. Just sit tall in your chair, roll your shoulders, just wiggle it out a little bit. Do a little shimmy shake. Inhale your arms up over your head, wiggle your fingers. Inhale through your nose and just exhale your arms slowly. Sit tall and place your hands on the tops of your thighs. Feel your feet touch the ground. Let your bottom become heavy. Elongate your spine and envision a string coming out the crown of your head.

KELLI

And on your next breathe in, inhale through your nose, filling up your lower belly completely, and exhale through your nose, letting it all out. Continue to do this. Inhale through your nose. Exhale through your nose completely. Continue to breathe at this pace. Let your eyeballs sink into their sockets. Loosen the grip of your throat, relax your shoulders again. Come back to your breath.

KELLI

And as you're breathing, if any thoughts pop into your mind, we will just give them permission to float away. They will be here when you are finished. You may even place your hand on your lower belly to continue with breathing and feeling the rise and fall of your breath. On your next inhale in through your nose. Inhale love. Exhale fear. Inhale love. Exhale any fears.

KELLI

Then, your upper chest, you can shift your rib cage back in space about a half of an inch. As you're breathing, continue to let your body be happy. Release any tension from your shoulders. And on your next inhale in, inhale the phrase, I am worthy and exhale the phrase, I am love. And you may blink your eyes open. And roll your shoulders back. And congratulations. You did it!

JEN

That was lovely. Kelli, do you have a YouTube page or something where you...Your voice is very, very soothing.

KELLI

Thank you. I am starting one. Those are on my 2020 goals because I think just like you said, people want to be able to push play now and quickly. And let me ask you this. And I know that was just a short two minutes. Could you have gone longer?

JEN

You know what, I maybe could have gone another minute, but in all honesty that was just right for me.

KELLI

Perfect.

KELLI

Well, and I think too, when you start, can I give a few simple practices that you can take with you? The next time you do this for two minutes. Simply on your fingers, on your thighs, just press down 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and count how many inhales and exhales cycles you've done. And that will give you literally another two minute practice. You may also attach a mantra to your breathing, and it's simply just like we did. Inhale, love. Exhale, fear. Inhale, strength, exhale, busy. Whatever it is that can apply to you in that moment. I like to personally use something that's contracting for inhaling calm, exhaling worry, inhale safety, exhaling doubt, something to that effect. So that's what you call a mantra. And just like in your, when you're going to sleep, you're focusing on something. So if you're focusing on saying that word as you inhale, you're giving your breath something to attach to. And you're focusing on that word, and then you're releasing it with that second word. Knowing that you have to say the next word again. And that keeps you in that repeated cycle of simply focusing on your breath.

JEN

I just thought of inhale abundance, exhale, scarcity,

KELLI

We could make a list of 100 right now.

ANNIE

I found it really interesting, all the places I was holding tension. And I am like, clearly wound up because, this is TMI, but whatever. You said, let your bottom be heavy. Like, even my pelvic, I was clenching my pelvic floor.

JEN

So I was going to share this earlier, but I wasn't sure it was too off topic, but since Annie's -

ANNIE

[Laughs]

JEN

- brought up her pelvic floor. I used to do this sort of similar thing. So, I used to be a personal trainer, just in the women's health sphere. So essentially just with pregnant and postpartum women, or women with pelvic floor issues. And we used to start our sessions like this too, because most women, their pelvic floor issues and their pelvic pain is often related to the tension they have in their pelvic floor muscles because they constantly cling or contract their pelvic floor muscles and that's just becomes a state of being which can lead to pain, incontinence, you know, obviously it can be multi issues going on with a woman which is why she should see a pelvic floor physiotherapist, public service announcement. [Laughs] But anyways, but yeah, so, the clinging of the pelvic floor muscles, so this is something I used to do for women to release their pelvic floor muscles because your pelvic floor muscles aren't supposed to be contracted at all times. They're supposed to be rising and falling like our breath. And I was going to tell you that connecting with your breath, I would tell my clients to try and connect with their breath throughout the day several times, because your breath is actually connected to your pelvic floor muscles, getting them to function the way they're supposed to function, rising and falling. So that was my public service announcement.

KELLI

Great. Well, and I think that noticing your body like you were saying, Annie, this is something that I'll teach in the end of class at shavasana, or if we're doing a meditation, I have people lie down a lot, but I'll do this with my kids at night. And then for myself, because you're laying in bed, you're in a reclined position. And to help them relax, I just start at their toes, and I have them clench their toes and release their toes. Then I ask them to feel the back of their legs connect with the bed. Then I asked them to let their bottom get heavy, pretend your legs are tree trunks and just move that all the way up into the body. Especially pausing in the midsection because I think like you say, once you realize where you're holding tension, you can then be aware to release it. But until you have that contrast of trying and feeling, you might not even feel it, right, because we're just conditioned to hold our bodies in a certain way. So I'll invite everybody to try that tonight when they're laying in bed. Feel the backside of your body connect with the bed. When you inhale, can you feel your ribs expand into the mattress, let your head become heavy, just things to bring you from your front side of your body, to your back side of your body. And just like we are being constantly, all of the stressors and pulls are in front of us, our eyes. You know, three of our five senses are on the front side of our face, right? You're looking at the screen, you're constantly being pulled out of your body. And so how can you bring it back to you. And that's another mindful moment. Before you even get out of your car, let the kids out of the car first and you're sitting in the garage, think of all the stressors from your day as like, pulling strings from your body, and think of everything that you were connected to. And before you come into the house, just cut each string and be able to walk into the house not attached.

JEN

I love that. I love visualizations like that.

KELLI

Because everybody has a creative visual and if you can attach something to that, it gives you something else to do than, Oh crap, I'm only supposed to sit here and breathe. Way intimidating.

ANNIE

I love that you acknowledged that there's going to be other thoughts that come into your brain. And the intention isn't to have a thoughtless brain, it's just to see them and then let them go and like let them move. Because I do find that my mind wanders quite on quite easily and you know, I know Jen's in the same boat, but it felt really peaceful and restful to let go that to do list, the time keep, like okay we're recording a podcast, what needs to be done and you know, just to like let all that go for just even two minutes.

JEN

I'm sure there's studies around this but I was thinking after we did it, if you were taking a chemical measurement of my cortisol levels before we started that meditation to after, they would be different.

KELLI

Absolutely well, and that's a little bit of science. I'll give you a just a little mini science drop. And you both know this, but our strength is our sympathetic nervous system, it's our flight or flight and our parasympathetic nervous system is the calmness. And once that's triggered through breath and safety, then it can tell the rest of the body not to release the stress hormones. So, you know, your body really has that Yin and Yang, that brake system, and you can turn your internal brake system on from the stress when you do connect with that breath.

JEN

Yeah, and I know we talked about stress management earlier and how some people just have so much stress in their lives. So when we are talking about stress management, we're not necessarily saying reduce your stressors. We're also saying you can get better at coping with the current stress in your life, even when nothing can change, right? Because people's circumstances are what they are sometimes and you can't just reduce your stress sometimes, but you can work at coping with it better and reducing the stress you feel as a result of the circumstances you're in.

KELLI

Absolutely. And a question I get asked a lot is, When am I going to see results? How am I going to see results? And what I always say, it's not about what happens. Because when you close your eyes, your first 10th, 100th meditation practice is not going to be visions. It may be, but that's not the point. I say you are going to notice the effects of your practice in your reactions, in what you don't do anymore. I don't react in the way that I used to. I don't yell at my kids this loud. I don't slam the door. Whatever those are, you'll see that things just start to lift off of you in the scope of how you would react to situations. So you'll see your meditation practice show up in ways that you probably wouldn't normally attach it to, because like you said, if you meditate for five minutes, your computer, your workload, your to do list is still there. But maybe when you

look at your to do list the next time, it doesn't bring you as much anxiety. Maybe you cross two things off that you realize don't need to get done didn't matter.

JEN

Yeah, maybe you don't think about suffocating your husband with a pillow when he's snoring next to you.

ALL

[Laugh]

KELLI

Literally, literally just walk down to the basement. Call it good.

ANNIE

Well, we talk about this in Balance365 on the business side, just between Jen and I and our team and also with our members, but responding versus reacting. And I would assume that meditation practice would help with your ability to like, press pause, be mindful, What am I feeling? What am I needing? What's really going on? What would be helpful? And then step into the next step with a response versus like, Oh my gosh, I can't believe, you know, like and you're just reactive, right?

JEN

When it comes to overeating, most people are in a reactive state when they're emotional eating or overeating, and I would say if you're going to overeat, make sure it's a conscious choice. You know, like I consciously choose to overindulge sometimes, because it's a food I don't have very often, you know, something my grandma's cooked for me that I haven't had since I was a kid. It's something that we just don't have very much. And so I will over eat, but I'm going to tell you that back in my old dieting days, I was constantly in a state of, reactive overeating is actually what we call it. And so for those listening who are struggling with overeating, it's about understanding, you know, there's no amount of restrictive diet that can curb your overeating, that is about being less reactive, period. And learning to slow down, be mindful, take that pause, make conscious decisions. And I think a meditation practice like this could really help.

KELLI

Absolutely. And that can be a mindful moment as well. Did you taste your food at lunch? Can you make a conscious decision to not eat at the computer, to not eat with the TV on, making the to do list and having that be a meditation in itself because there are other forms of meditation that are not simply breathing. There's walking meditations, you know, and you really just look to find something in your life that brings you so much joy that you stop thinking about everything else, whether that's painting or running or lifting weights, or whatever it is. Reading. You can find physical things that can aid you in connecting with meditation.

ANNIE BREES

That's really beautiful. I also feel a bit seen because I'm pretty sure yesterday's meeting we were all three eating lunch.

JEN
Yes.

ANNIE
You, me, and Kathryn, we're all chowing down while we're like trying to work through this meeting. And it's you know, here's Keli the next day telling us like, Slow down, taste the food or just the idea of mono tasking, like just do one thing at a time. [Laughs]

JEN
When you can, like, when you can.

KELLI
And there's a time and place for all of it, and I'm sitting here telling you what my daily meditation looks like. I want you to know that every day is so different, right? And today, I think this is important because I made a conscious decision to carve out time before this podcast to do my meditation and centered, I gave myself 20 minutes and by the end of it I showed up a little bit late and I had 10 minutes and that's totally fine. The biggest thing to attach to starting a meditation practice is grace. Give yourself the grace to be flexible. Know it's going to change. Know that you are okay and beautiful and there's nothing wrong with you. Like just to know that you should pat yourself on the back when you show up for yourself within those moments of breath, and that is enough.

JEN
Grace and self acceptance in all things.

KELLI
Yeah, definitely. Definitely.

ANNIE BREES
Kelli, this was beautiful. This was so fun to have that little interactive -

KELLI
That was.

ANNIE
- experience and I'm so anxious to hear what our listeners think, if they did it along with us.

KELLI
Absolutely. Or go back and do it.

ANNIE BREES

I wonder if there's like a record for how many people meditate at one time. [Laughs]

KELLI

Yeah.

ANNIE BREES

[Laughs] Look at me trying to make it a competition. Kelli, we'll have to have you back on. Like, you know if you're down I would love to have like maybe we just have one episode that's just Kelli doing a five minute meditation.

KELLI

I love it.

ANNIE

And that's all it is. So thank you so much for joining us.

JEN

Thank you Kelli.

ANNIE

Oh, real quick, too. I know you're starting...I know you wanted to talk about Soul Smile, you're launching. So tell us about that real quick.

KELLI

I will. It's called Soul Smile Girls. You can find us on Instagram at [@soulsmilegirls](#) and what this is, is right now it's for young teenage girls 11 to 14. And the practices are based around creativity, mindfulness, self awareness, yoga, meditation, body image and giving girls kind of this little peek into all of these tasks that will build up and they will have the tools in their toolkit as a teen to be able to continue to like walk through life with compassion, with confidence in being able to know their selves through all of these practices. So while yoga and movement are a part of this, along with meditation, it's just like this podcast, to show the younger generation how to have these coping skills and tools under their team tool belt to be able to move into their best self. So I'm super excited about that. And that will be launching. And I'm just so excited to see where it's going to go. We're going to have online classes, potentially in person workshops, and even a potential camp coming up.

JEN

That's fantastic.

ANNIE BREES

That will be so fun. I will definitely be looking at that for Sloan when she is in that age range, so, and we'll link to that when when it's ready. We can put that in the show notes. So some people can find you. So thank you so much for your time Kelli this was so fun.

KELLI

You are so welcome. It was so much fun being here and talking about all the things and we could just go off on 100 different tangents. I know it. [Laughs]

ANNIE BREES

Yeah. We could, we'll have to have you back to talk about your your trip in the Airstream. [Laughs]

KELLI

Right?

ANNIE

Thank you Kelli.

JEN

Thanks Kelli.

KELLI

Thank you ladies.

ANNIE

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