

Balance365 Episode 31 Transcript

Annie: Welcome back to another episode of Balance 365Life radio. If you are one of those people who dreads walking into the gym, picking up weights or starting that workout D.V.D. the last thing you want to hear is someone who loves exercise go on and on about how awesome it is. In truth, I am one of those people who loves exercise, like to an annoying degree. Of course, I'd love for everyone to love exercise as much as I do, but I realize not everyone does and that's OK.

In fact, Jennifer and Lauren have openly admitted that they're not super in love with the gym but exercise has some serious health benefits and we don't want you missing out on those if at all possible. On today's episode, Jen and I first discuss some possible reasons why you might not enjoy exercise in the first place and then dive into how to work through it so you can find a way to move your body that you enjoy or at least don't dread.

But before we get started, I want to invite you to join our Power Bowl Challenge starting September 10th. Our free 14 day challenge is guaranteed to help you feel nourished, have more energy, and learn health, wellness and fat loss strategies that actually work for busy moms. The Power Bowl Challenge includes power bowl recipes that our members rave about, a meal prep guide, prizes and a private Facebook community of nearly forty thousand busy women who get it to cheer you on. And side note, if you're like me and you don't enjoy cooking, you don't have to actually cook to participate in the Power Bowl challenge. We would love to have you sign up at powerbowlchallenge.com today.

Lauren and Jen, welcome back to the podcast. I have to tell our listeners a little insider info on this particular topic. We have recorded this topic three times now, three time.

Jen: Yes, what a joy.

Annie: You thought we were perfect. Just know that sometimes it takes a little trial and error. The first time, Lauren and I recorded this and we had some audio

problems. The second time Jen and I recorded this topic and we also had some audio problems but I am feeling pretty good that today we're going to nail it. Are you guys on board?

Jen: Yes, this better work.

Lauren: Yes, let's do it.

Annie: We're not doing this a fourth time. We want to talk about this topic. The reason why we chose to re-record it and not just throw in the towel on it is because this topic in particular is something that comes up a lot in our community and that's how to fall in love with exercise even if you hate it right now and I'm so happy to have you both on because I know that I enjoy exercise but Jen would you say you enjoy exercise

Jen: No, I've never been one to jump out of bed to go sweat.

Annie: Or Lauren, what about you? Would you say you enjoy exercise?

Lauren: No. Well, I enjoy like the slow moving types of exercise, like I enjoy my walks and sometimes I'll enjoy like some weightlifting but nothing strenuous.

Jen: Right, I feel the same. I also love how I feel after, whether it's slow like walking or a more intense exercise like running or a workout I always enjoy how I feel afterwards, but it is actually that feeling of dread that, you know, that like having to get started. And also while I'm doing it, I sometimes feel bored or like counting reps has never been overly thrilling for me, I know Annie loves it.

Annie: The look on your face right now it's just kind of disgust, like she's like snarling.

Jen: Right, but as we get into this podcast we'll discuss how Lauren and I make it work even though we have these negative thoughts towards it.

Annie: Yeah, because the truth is you don't need to love exercise in the way that I love exercise. I genuinely do enjoy moving my body but not everyone does and so that's why I'm so happy to have you guys on here because this isn't just your run of the mill podcast where we have personal trainers yelling at you to just go exercise. It's like you guys understand that like, look, not everyone enjoys exercising but they want maybe the benefits of exercise.

Jen: Yes.

Annie: And they see the value in it so we're going to spend our time talking first about why you might not like exercise in the first place and then we're going to dive into how to work around it and then hopefully Lauren and Jen can share some of their tips and suggestions on how they make it work for them.

Jen: Right, and I also say that we did a poll to our community and about sixty percent of people responded that they also struggle with liking exercise so we're not alone. And even if they liked exercise sixty percent said they struggle with enjoying exercise and seventy five percent said they struggle with making exercise a priority. Doing it consistently.

Annie: Right and true to Balance365 form, most people listening probably know that exercise is good for you, we should exercise in some capacity. It's usually not the "what" people struggle with it's the "how" and that's hopefully what we can help you with as like how to actually make exercise a habit when you don't love it.

So, if you guys are ready at let's dive into some reasons why you might not enjoy going to the gym or getting an exercise to begin with, because I think that's kind of where it starts, like why do you why do you not like exercise and then how can we work around that?

And the first one that we run into is that we think that it needs to be extreme. And it's easy to see why we think it needs to be extreme because shows like Biggest Loser or following Instagram celebrities or "fitspo" accounts portray this that the gym or exercise routine needs to be like two hours in the gym and you need to be drenched in sweat and exhausted and fatigued and sore and like every workout has to be like this, all in, you're going hard or going home sort of mindset, would you agree?

Lauren: Yes.

Jen: Yes.

Lauren: Definitely.

Annie: And we're going to talk about why that doesn't need to be that way but, you know, I think about like especially the Biggest Loser where they spend hours a day, I mean, that's their job while they're "on the ranch" is to spend, you know,

six seven hours in the gym and that's not our demographic. Like our demographic, most people in our community don't want to spend that amount of time and I'm probably the outlier.

Jen: And the reason that show doesn't work is because life doesn't exist in a bubble, right? Like that whole show is about calories in calories out, I think they're on like a twelve hundred calorie a day diet as well on that show so, you know, they just exist in this bubble where their whole job is to lose weight, essentially, but it looks awful, you know, and it's done for the entertainment of the viewers. I won't even watch it, I don't know if it's even still on, but I cannot watch it.

Annie: I don't either. I mean once you've seen what we see it's kind of like you cannot watch it, you cannot unsee it.

Jen: Yeah.

Lauren: Yeah I shared with you guys yesterday a status update that I made eight years ago where I was doing this very popular intense workout program that shall remain nameless, but I posted that I was so excited that I did two of the workouts and I thought that that's what it took every day, day in and day out, that extreme and I can guarantee that that's part of the reason I don't enjoy structured exercise.

Jen: Yeah, so just your history of, yeah, that.

Annie: How you used it in the past can absolutely determine how you currently feel about exercise.

Jen: And even Annie, you kind of said earlier I think we all know we should exercise and I'm really careful with shoulds because I find I'm a person that really pushes back against pressure or feeling controlled and anytime I tell myself I should exercise I almost become more resistant to it.

Annie: Defiant.

Jen: So then I'm like, well, wait a sec, you don't have to. You don't have to exercise, nobody does. Nobody has to.

Annie: No, absolutely not. You're right. We don't have to but, you know, I think the benefits of exercise are well enough known that, like, people realize-

Jen: Yeah, like there's major health benefits to exercise and I know too, for me, it's like, well, look, when I'm seventy years old I really want to be throwing my grandkids over my head and running around with them but then it's, but I don't want to exercise, but I want to do this but I don't want to do that. You know what I mean? So it's that whole thing, like we see it all the time, and people think well I really want this, but I don't want to do what it takes to get there.

Annie: Can't always have both. Option or, excuse me, reason number two why you might not like exercise is because sometimes we limit our options for exercising, just like thinking that we have to dedicate multiple hours a week to exercise.

We think that we have to do in our weight training, an hour of cardio, an hour of mobility or flexibility, and we have to like hit all these kind of checkpoints or we have to train all these body parts to quantify or qualify a well-rounded workout and if we can't do it all then we're not going to do anything and I have had some experience with that, like I used to think the exercise needed to be running, like they were one and the same, like exercise was running but that was the only form of exercise that really existed.

But the problem was I didn't really enjoy exercise, I mean, excuse me I didn't enjoy running and I still don't enjoy running, and I'm not trying to poo poo running, it's just not for me and so when I think about exercise as like my only option is to run, like "No, exercise doesn't really sound fun." But when I open it up to exercise can mean strength training, it can mean a group exercise class, it can mean a dance party, it can mean a walk, it can mean some yoga, then it's like, "Oh my gosh, I have so many more options." Lauren, do you have do you have any experience with how you've limited exercise options in the past?

Lauren: Yeah, in the past I think I would limit it to like those home workout videos where you just stand in front of your T.V. and you do like the circuits and whatever and I never really enjoyed that so and running. I I tried to do the Couch to 5K program many, many times and never made it through because I just don't enjoy it.

Annie: For sure.

Lauren: And forcing myself to do one of those things just leads to me just quitting altogether.

Annie: Yeah and there's people that love running and maybe don't like strength training, or maybe that love both and that's OK. You know, the point we really want to just make though is that when you open up the options for exercising and exercising for enjoyment, it becomes so much more full of so many more opportunities than just like hitting checkpoints in a box.

Jen, do you have any experience with how you've limited your options for exercise?

Jen: Well, I was just similar to you. I used to be a runner and I used to run a lot and for me it was, you know, exercise was always had to be intense. So one thing I used to do is I used to drive to the, I was only a couple blocks from the grocery store, but I would drive to the grocery store, get my groceries and drive home. Even if I only needed a couple things because I couldn't see that form of exercise as exercise, like it didn't count.

And so I would do that so I could get home quicker so I could go out for a run and now I just think well it's crazy like there are so many opportunities for me to move my body in there and, yeah.

Annie: Yeah, but if it's not like that expectation-

Jen: Hard and intense and I'm hurting after and yeah and my runs were, you know, a lot of people look at me and say "You have a runner's body" but I really didn't, like, I would get quite a bit of pain, actually, after I ran. So, I would do it anyways because, again, hard, intense and pain. I associated pain with being good when it came to fitness, that means I have done more, worked harder. I'm not talking about muscular pain I'm talking about, like, joint pain. Which is a no.

Annie: I mean that's, I'm not surprised that women think that because when you scroll Pinterest and, I used to be one of them, when you scroll Pinterest for, you know, exercise motivation or workout motivation, you come across these like these fitspo memes that are like "Sore today, sorry tomorrow"

Jen: No pain, no gain, that whole mentality.

Annie: There is and that can be really harmful, and not just physically harmful but harmful and damaging in your relationship with exercise-

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: -Like and how you feel about exercise. The third reason to is that, kind of moving into that arena, is that we often see exercise as a form of punishment and we've been trained by the media and self-proclaimed fitness gurus that exercise is what we do when we're unhappy with our bodies or when we feel guilty about what we've eaten and this negative association with movement and exercise leads us to not want to do it because, even unconsciously, we don't want to do the things that we associate with negative feelings and just moving into the fall, I can already tell you, I anticipate in my news feed every fall is those "Ate It, Negate It."

Those infographics where they have, you know, you had three Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, you have to do one hundred fifty burpees. And the underlying, I know on the surface it seems like OK, it's just math, but the underlying message is kind of, exercise is a way to negate what you ate or to burn off food that you ate or to burn off guilt for eating those.

Jen: Yeah those types of infographics just feed our disordered eating culture, like people with a lot of food anxieties, weight anxieties. That's really what those infographics are for, where I don't put my food and my exercise in the same category anymore doesn't matter what I ate, I can still go exercise for the health benefits of exercising.

Food doesn't cancel out, I mean, if you only look at exercise as "energy expended", so "how many calories can I burn?" if you're only looking at it as calories, then that's can be very disordered too, because it doesn't matter if you overate that day or not, exercise is in a completely different category and there are so many health benefits outside of just expending energy.

Annie: Absolutely, and to add on that, I mean, if we are looking at the numbers of exercise people generally overestimate how much they burn when they exercise. What we burn from a workout is relatively very small compared to what we do the rest of our day with playing our children or housework or just doing our work or yard work or whatever and the other downside is that we're if we're using our workouts, or our frequency of workouts for a barometer for how much we can eat

or not eat, that can lead to really inconsistent exercise and inconsistent eating, versus a mindset like Jen has or Lauren and I have where these two have actually have nothing to do with one another.

Jen: Right.

Annie: Like, the only time actually I find that exercise affects my food is when I exercise more, I'm hungrier. I can do a really great workout and have some chips and salsa and they have nothing to do with one another.

Jen: Right.

Annie: Lauren, anything you want to add about exercise as punishment?

Lauren: No, I think you pretty much covered it. I'll just say that, again, I think that this plays into probably why a lot of women don't like exercise, myself included, so it used to just be to negate what I ate or just as punishment in general.

Jen: Or to change your body, I mean. In that way, it's like, you know, it really depends on where you're coming at that from. So if Annie is exercising to change her body and flexing in the mirror and looking at her big muscles and she likes that, that's one thing.

But she doesn't, you know, actually internalize like, "I am a better person with this strength training shaped body" but where it can come from a place of punishment is that women, they hate their bodies and their self-worth is attached to changing the shape of their body. They think they are more lovable and more worthy of connection when they achieve a certain body shape. So when your exercise decisions come from that place, it's just another form of punishment.

Lauren: Right and I think you lose so much that can be enjoyed with exercise when you look at it that way, right? And that's why I think now I'm finding things that I enjoy more because I'm not strictly looking at it as a way to change my body or punish myself.

Jen: Yeah, or lose weight.

Lauren: Something that I have-

Jen: Yeah, yeah.

Annie: Right, yeah I would completely agree and full disclosure that's kind of what got me into exercise in the first place, like I was there to change my body, and over the course of the last ten years-ish, it's evolved into like "Oh my gosh, look how good exercise makes me feel, look how empowered and confident exercise makes me feel, look how healthy and just physically and emotionally and socially." Not just not just a look, you know, health is not a look.

Exercise has benefited my life in way, way more ways and greater ways than just changing my body. So, you know, we totally get that people might start an exercise program to change their body but just being mindful of like why you're exercising can provide some helpful insight.

Jen: Yeah and I don't think anyone should ever not like the way they look or not like the results of their exercise, like, you know, we all, like the result sometimes of different things that we do and that's OK but it's just about not losing sight of the big picture, right? We're not trying to like throw down some rules here but-

Annie: Yeah.

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: Just like Jen defies the shoulds, we're anti-rules, we're pro what works for you.

Jen: Yes.

Annie: Those are the rules we want so let's start talking about... Oh and the other reason, this was actually not on our list of reasons but this comes up frequently why women may not want to exercise is like as simple as they don't want to get sweaty. They don't have to wash their hair. They don't have to change their clothes. They don't have to have to shower. Or redo their makeup or whatever, like that's just an actual legit obstacle that they have trouble working around, or you know, even things like, if you're trying to get up in the morning.

Finding your workout gear, your shoes, your headphones, your playlist, your water bottle, like these are just kind of, what's the word, like a little bit more physical obstacles.

Jen: Like, yeah, they're all just little barriers.

Annie: Right, like it's not just a mindset.

Jen: Things you have to think about and things you have to do and if you're already a little bit tired or overwhelmed with a life, like that can just feel like, "It's too much!"

Annie: Yeah, because you've talked about decision fatigue.

Jen: Yes, so decision making fatigue is something we talk about in Balance365, and you're just, you know, if you're a parent or you have a demanding career or whatever your life is like, if you are having to make constant decisions every day, all day, you get decision making fatigue and you're just done, you're overwhelmed, you're always going to choose the easy way your motivation will tank.

So part of that is eliminating those barriers, right, so in Balance365 we talk about, you know, things like meal prep and meal planning and stuff just figure out how, if you are feeling decision making fatigue through your week, you need to sit down and figure out "Where can I eliminate places in my week where I'm experiencing decision making fatigue, what can I automate about my life?"

And that can come down to like automating your bills, you know like, which has nothing to do with fitness, but is just about what can I automate in my life so that when it comes to being able to make the decisions I want to make, have the motivation I want to have, work on the habits I want to have in my life, like where do I really want to put my mental energy in my week?

Annie: Right so you can free up some space to spend your energy there, instead of.

Jen: But yeah, for me, it's not paying bills. I don't want to have to think about that every single week, and I don't, and when I moved I didn't automate everything and I kept getting warnings things were going to get shut off. And it's like, "OK, I've got to automate that."

Annie: Yes, for sure, and I'll just share this, full disclosure, this tip is not going to be for everyone, but if you're one of those people that are concerned with their hair, like me, and don't want to worry about washing your hair after a workout, I use those invisibobbies, those like they look like the eighties keychains for your

hair tie, so that you don't get that kink in your hair and then I blow dry the sweat in my hair afterwards.

Jen: Right, and you're dry shampoo queen.

Annie: Yes and I love my dry shampoo and that works really well for me.

Lauren: Do you dry shampoo before or after you blow dry?

Annie: After I blow dry I use dry shampoo and then I let it sit for a minute and then I blow dry. OK and, yeah, maybe throw in like one or two more curls but then also they have those like post shower wipes. They're like little baby wipes where you can just like wipe down and, you know, change your clothes or whatever. But there's also forms of exercise that don't require you to sweat so much like when I walk -

Jen: Yes, which on the opposite side was a barrier to exercise for me and that when I thought exercise was all about being intense and sweating, I was missing out on really great forms of exercise that don't make me sweat.

So for me, going to the gym and doing heavier lifting with lower rep and, you know, more slow, more controlled, you know, amazing benefits for your body, but I don't get sweaty when I lift weights and so, for me, in the past, I thought it wasn't enough, I wasn't doing anything, when actually I was doing a lot.

So you can really miss out on and, you know, there are so many benefits to walking, even outside of the physical aspect like, you know, reducing your stress levels, like this has all been researched and there's just so many health benefits to slower exercise, less sweaty exercise. So, yeah, the other side of spectrum.

Annie: Yes, so if you're not in a position to sweat, for whatever reason, like you're trying to exercise over your lunch hour or whatnot, like that might be a way to still get into movement and kind of move around or work around the sweat barrier. But just know, if you want to continue the conversation on this, you're more than welcome to join our Facebook community Healthy Habits Happy Moms on Facebook, because I know our community has a lot of great other tips because there's thousands and thousands of women in there that are like trying to squeeze in exercise at various points in their day.

I even saw a woman doing some elliptical for like ten minutes in like Birkenstocks over her lunch hour in the group the other day because she was like “This is just what it was, like I didn't have my tennis shoes, I forgot my tennis shoes, but I still wanted to get in some movement so this is like my good, better, best.” Yeah, like best would have been to have the full get up, like the tennis shoes and all, and she had thirty minutes, good was Birkenstocks in ten minutes.

Jen: Yeah, totally, well good for her.

Annie: Yes, that's awesome. OK, so let's talk about how to work around this and I want you to like brace yourself and just take a moment to be underwhelmed with our first suggestion because it is not super exciting but I swear it works. The first key to falling in love with exercise, even if you hate it right now, is to get started. Which I know people are listening are like, “Really? Like that's it? Like really, get started, like yeah, no kidding.”

But really much of the dread or anxiety or gloom you have about exercise actually happens before exercise even begins. An interesting study in 2011 from Healthy Psychology, research showed that people severely underestimate how much they would enjoy exercise because of a phenomenon called forecasting myopia, which means we judge the entire event based off of the first few minutes.

Because let's be honest, the first few minutes of the workout are usually the toughest. Like they're the hardest, even for me, getting out of the house, going to the gym, getting your workout clothes on, getting started is actually much harder than doing your workouts. So if you find yourself in that like limbo that like should I stay, should I go, am I going to work out or am I not going to work out? Just get started, just like head out, put your shoes on, head out the door, like put all of your energy into just getting started and then you can re-evaluate if you want.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely, I would say that my biggest issue is I just feel that dread about the getting started.

And you know what I've done? Different things I've done is like, you know I had a Balance365er Dani come over for coffee the other day, she was in town visiting family and asked me if we could get together and I said “Oh, why don't you just come over here” so she came over and we had coffee and I'm not sure if she noticed and I forgot to mention it but right now all my kettlebells and my workout mat are sitting like basically in the middle of my kitchen, like just off my island,

and it's ridiculous and I have to explain it to people every time they come over but I just realized one day that like as far as eliminating barriers I was struggling with also the "Where am I going to work out in my house?"

And I was like, you know, what just makes sense for me to put this stuff right here where it's kind of right here all the time and, you know, also during really busy seasons of my life, or even just a busy day like this morning when I was waiting for my coffee to brew, I went over and did just a couple kettlebell deadlifts and for me that was a great all or something for me this morning, it's more than I would have done had the weights not been sitting there, right?

I did it in my pajamas, no bra on, just did it so. But yeah, it's kind of like those little things of like getting started is just like because as soon as I think about exercise, I think of that getting started process, just you know which includes the decision fatigue and the things I will have to implement to actually just get that first squat in. They feel exhausting.

Annie: Yeah it does and I do this with cleaning. I will debate cleaning my bathroom, which takes me about twenty minutes, I will debate it for two hours and it's like if I would have just started cleaning my bathroom when I first thought of cleaning my bathroom I could have been done in twenty minutes and had another hour and a half or more to like sit and relax and so it can feel daunting to try to work up the energy and the motivation to want to do a full workout right away, but if you can just put all of your effort into getting started like Jen, and do a couple deadlifts or, you know, Lauren really likes to walk.

Can you walk for five minutes and then if you're like five minutes in and you're like, "I still don't want to do this" you know, you're a woman, you know, I can't say it on the podcast, but you're a grown woman that phrase we have in our community and an adult and if you don't want to continue that workout you can say, "I'm done" but getting started can be a really big key to beginning an exercise habit.

Lauren, do you have anything to add about getting started?

Lauren: Yeah, in our Balance365 program, one of the main pieces in our habits 101 section is "Make it so small that you can't say no" and I think that really applies here. If you can't do a full workout, what can you do or what is the least effective dose that you're willing to do, right? Five minutes.

Jen: So yeah, I mean, the goal should be, we should be ninety percent sure that we can attain that goal and that's where most people go wrong in goal setting is their goals are just too lofty, they just, you know, they have the best intentions but it was just, it was too much, it was too big. And we see this all the time.

So I was just talking to a Balance365er the other day inside of our community, our Balance365 community, and she really wanted to add running, she's working on her exercise habit and she wants to add running back in, but you know then listed to me all the reasons why although she really wants to add running back in, here is where her life is at right now and it doesn't feel attainable to her, and so what her and I ended up settling on, a goal that she was absolutely sure she could do was to do ten squats after she was done brushing her teeth at night every day and I know it sounds like nothing, but it's about so much more than the squats.

So first of all, that's more than she was doing had she just given up. And second of all, it's honestly a lot of it is about that mindset and realizing, "Hey I can do this" or "I did it, like I accomplished something" and then you can raise that bar a little higher when you're ready and it's really about feeling accomplished.

Lauren: What tends to happen for me, more times than not, is once I get started I'm like, "Well, I've already gotten started like I'm just going to keep going."

Jen: Yeah, so I can do ten squats and maybe I can just do ten, now I can do ten push ups or whatever you decide to do.

Annie: And let's be honest, it's easy to do things when you like them, like it feels easier to do things. If you're listening to this podcast it's probably safe to assume that you don't enjoy exercise, so finding the motivation to go do a thing you don't enjoy or you feel like you're not good at in the first place, it might be easy the first few days when you like set these new goals you're like "OK I've got this new plan, I'm super stoked!"

Well three, four days, a week, down the road you're probably going to be like "The newness is worn off, this isn't fun anymore" but if you set your goals small enough to where you don't have to rely on motivation, you don't have to rely on willpower or this like Richard Simmons like gusto to go do the thing, like you might be you might be a little bit better off. So, yeah, I think that we kind of got off on a tangent but I think that-

Jen: Yeah, you're definitely more likely to stick to something that you feel competent doing.

Annie: Yes, not like every workout you need to like give yourself a pep talk.

Jen: Right.

Annie: It should be so simple, like Lauren said, that you can't say no.

Jen: Right.

Annie: OK I can do ten squats after I brush my teeth, like that I can do, that's a no brainer, right?

Jen: Right.

Annie: OK, second suggestion is to find your people. If you want to enjoy your exercise more and even get better results, it's important to find your community and this, I know some of you may be listening and be like, "Well, yeah, that might be super easy if you're an extrovert" like me, who enjoys, you know, chatting and meeting people, and spending time in crowds but if you're introverted it can be a little bit more difficult to find your community and the key here is to realize that you don't have to socialize necessarily, you don't have to make small talk, you don't have to go out for pizza or coffee with them afterwards, but just to find a place or a community of people where you feel like you belong, where you feel supported, where you feel encouraged.

And there's a couple ways you can do this, and the first way would be to join an existing community. So, essentially, you just start showing up somewhere regularly and at some point you feel at home and the key here is to research and even test run a few places that you feel like maybe the best fit for you now, and we say now because sometimes your exercise goals and preferences evolve so what you were doing a year ago may not be what you want to do in a year from now, but what comes to mind when we talk about this, to join an existing community, would be like a group exercise class, a Crossfit class, someplace where people are already there, like a walking club, a running club, a boot camp, you know, backyard neighborhood thing. Some place that you can just show up regularly there and you know that they're going to be there. Lauren or Jen, do you have any experiences with this type of community?

Lauren: Well, yes this is the only experience with exercise community that I have. I find it a lot easier to exercise. If I'm going out somewhere where people are already going to be doing it.

Annie: Yes for sure. Jen, what about you?

Jen: Well, I'm more introverted, on the introverted side and I didn't love the big group aspect of CrossFit when I was doing CrossFit, I did for a little while start working out, like doing CrossFit workouts with a CrossFit coach, just one on one, we were friends and in Vancouver and so I was training with her and so it's not that I didn't like CrossFit necessarily, but the big group component I just didn't love. So for me, rather than finding like a big community, it's more that I feel very comfortable, motivated and I am more consistent when when I'm with a friend because I do enjoy the smaller social aspect of just like a couple people.

Annie: Sure, this may come as a shocker but I like the big group.

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: But that's my background like my first job in the fitness industry was a group fitness instructor. So I liked just a bunch of people doing the same thing and everyone's like, I mean hopefully, ideally everyone's there cheering each other on, regardless if your new, a veteran or are really great or maybe struggling, like it's just I like that vibe, but again the key is to find what works for you and not everyone's going to be this.

Jen: Yeah, I think I think a lot of people do feel intimidated going into like a new group situation and I definitely did with CrossFit, but and we actually a conversation in Balance365 about this the other day, just people having various different experiences starting group fitness, particularly CrossFit and it really does depend on the culture of the CrossFit box or the gym you go to. But, you know, just try it and you don't have to stick to it if you don't like it, if you really don't feel that the people there are inclusive, that's fine you don't have to continue.

But it's great practice to get out of your comfort zone and also remember that everybody is new at something initially, like everybody. There was day one of Annie picking up a barbell and feeling really awkward with it, you know and so

you see where people are at and you often forget that everybody came from the same place.

Annie: Yes, for sure. That's a good point. Another way to find your community would be to rally your supporters to become your community, provided your friends and family are on board to start some type of exercise. There's likely a lot more people than just you that are interested in exercising or making exercise more of a habit but they struggle with motivation and time and commitment just like you do, so if you can organize a group.

You know what comes to mind is things like everyone at work on their lunch break, not everyone, but those who are interested on their lunch break at work, you know after they eat they may go for a ten minute walk, or right after work we're going to do an exercise video, or your neighborhood girlfriends wake up and you do some strength training in someone's garage in the morning, so you can kind of find your friends and family that have some similar interests and organize them.

Another option would be to join an online community, which sounds kind of familiar.

We happened to have a few. As I mentioned earlier, Healthy Habits Happy Moms is our large group but we have some spinoff groups as well to support our exercise program so we have like a postnatal series program group and we have an Arms Like Annie group and an Everyday Strong group.

But you can find your own online community too, you don't have to just use ours, although we think ours is pretty great but sometimes it's just not possible to join an in-person community or you just don't have people close to you.

Jen: And a lot of our listeners and members of our community live in rural areas so they don't have access to either a gym or a pool or whatever it is that they want to do for movement but they still want to move and it can be great to find an online community and I remember when I had three kids under four and they were all at home one year and just I did try, I had a gym, you know, within five minutes me, they had childcare but I just could not cope with getting all my kids out the door, so I was working out with an online program and an online trainer and I remember craving just a community or an online community.

I remember saying to her like, “Do you have other clients and could we just form like a Facebook group where we check in with our workouts or something?” and she was like, “That's a really good idea” and I found that very motivating to get to know other people doing the same workout program as me, and checking in and discussing different elements of the workout and yeah, I really like that when I was working with her.

Annie: And you know what happens in our online community is, and I hope she doesn't mind me calling her out, but I think of one member, of Beth, who posts a selfie every day she goes to the gym in the morning.

Jen: Yes, she does.

Annie: And a couple things happen as a consequence of Beth posting. The first thing is that if Beth doesn't post people are like “Where's Beth?” Like that just naturally evolved, this like kind of innate accountability, that's like we're used to seeing Beth's face but also Beth has now become an inspiration to other women too.

Jen: Right

Annie: Like, “Oh look at Beth, you know Beth has been honest, like she didn't want to get up this morning and do the workout or Beth got up and like just wasn't feeling it midway through so she cut it short but she still got some movement in” and like that's really, really inspiring.

Jen: Yeah, she's really honest with it.

Annie: Yeah, which I think is great. Hi, Beth.

But I think you know just even even something like that if you want to form your own online community with your girlfriends or just join one that exists already, like, I think you know-

Jen: Yeah, just be aware of like toxic online fitness communities because there are plenty of those out there, for sure.

Annie: Yeah. Absolutely. OK, Our third suggestion is to keep getting better and this is probably one of my favorite suggestions because there's a common myth or common misconception or mindset that if we love something we'll continue to

work at it and will eventually get better, but the truth is almost the opposite is actually true is the more we do something the better we get and in turn we'll love it and I think the reason why this is really, really important is because sometimes we wait until we find something we love right off the bat, a way to exercise.

Like, you know, I tried running, I didn't love it, or I tried lifting, I didn't love it, I tried yoga, I didn't love it and you can try a lot a lot of things and still not love it and if you're waiting to find something that you actually love, a way to exercise that you actually love, you might not ever get started. So the way to work around that is to find something that you can do and then get a little bit better at it, like Jen says, once you get that sense of accomplishment, you see some improvement, you let that snowball and that then creates a sense of love.

Jen: Yeah, think of how this works with our kids, it's the same with us. Like my kids used to hate water, swimming, putting their head under, like they hated it, and it really just took me really pushing and consistently bringing them back to the pool, bringing them to their swimming lessons and as they gained more skills around swimming, well, now I can't get those boys out of the water. They just love it, they love going swimming, so, and that can happen with us too.

Annie: Absolutely and so often we think that "I need to like, I need to feel love toward something and then the actions will follow. I'll love running so then I'll run. I'll love lifting that so then I'll lift, and again, if you're listening to this, you probably don't love any shape of exercise or very few forms of exercise so if that's you, if you're like I've tried a bunch of things, like I would encourage you to just try something, start small and stick with it, and that improvement, that consistency, that skill development can help give you a sense of accomplishment which then cultivates a sense of love or enjoyment for the movement.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: And some of the keys here to getting better, though, are to show up consistently and you know, I as a personal trainer, I would love to be able to like sell you this magic trick or a supplement or workout that like gave you results instantly it just doesn't work that way.

Jen: There's no shortcuts. If there was a shortcut, Lauren and I would be using it. We'd be knocking back our supplement on the daily that just grew our muscles and kept us strong. But it doesn't exist.

Annie: It would be great, though, wouldn't it? But, you know, I say that but then I'm like, you know what, no, it would be great because sometimes it's like that hard work, that effort that you put into it that makes it really rewarding, you know. Sometimes when you don't have.

Jen: For you.

Annie: Okay, yeah. Just give me the shortcuts. But really, though, a key to getting better at anything is to show up and do the work and we could be talking about work, we could be talking about relationships, we could be talking about exercise, we could be talking about cleaning your house, I mean, really, like very few shortcuts exist and you just have to show up.

Jen: Yeah and we could be talking about a Crossfit class or we could be talking about doing ten squats after you brush your teeth every night like you-

Annie: Yes

Jen: you will find a lot of our women in our community, you know, everybody is from different backgrounds, different exercise backgrounds, different levels of fitness, and we have lots of women who are basically just learning to squat right, and which is totally fine and that's what our bodies do, our bodies adapt to stress, that is what they are built to do, so if you squat ten times after you brush your teeth every night, you will get better at squatting, you will become a body that squats consistently.

Annie: Absolutely and kind of to piggyback off of that, another key of getting better or adapting to that stress is to track your progress, because eventually, you are going to get better at those ten shots and ten squats aren't going to have the same effect that they did on day one hundred that they did on day one.

Jen: Yeah, fine print as long as you don't have some disordered relationship with tracking, which I actually did at one point my life and I did take about eighteen months off of tracking any kind of progress because I needed to learn to just like like to exercise for the joy of exercising and so, yeah, so that's just fine print on tracking.

Annie: Yeah and that progress tracking can look like, you know, tracking sets, reps and weights, like a dozen, a traditional sense, it could be just as something as simple as like how you felt.

Jen: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: It doesn't, you know, I mean, this is like, this is again, this is supposed to work for you, but, or you know, like how far you ran, how long you walked, how fast you walked, I mean, you do, you choose the data that matters to you, like that's what's really important here, but just your ability to see that you're actually getting better can be really, really motivating and really encouraging especially when you're like, "Oh my gosh, I'm capable, I can do this, I am doing this, here's the proof that I did this, here's where I started" and sometimes if you don't, like, take note, that's why I like to videotape everything, I can get really discouraged with my skill development in the gym and then I look back five months ago and I'm like, "Wow."

Jen: Yeah, you just shared, if you guys aren't following, if you like exercise, follow Annie Brees on Instagram, she's @anniebrees. And you just posted the other day a video of you trying to do toes to bar five months ago and then where you're at today and it was just such a cool comparison and yeah, you know, I'm not, I've never thought of videotaping myself, really, but then when I saw you do that comparison I thought that is such a cool visual and I'm definitely, I'm starting a new workout program in September and I'm definitely going to start doing videos, for sure.

Annie: Yeah, because sometimes, especially when we're talking about gaining strength or skill development, like you might not necessarily add a lot of weight to a movement but maybe it looks better, it feels better, you're more proficient in it, it comes more naturally to you.

Jen: Yes, your mobility is better, your form is better, your. Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, absolutely and so again, there's a lot of ways to track progress but I think that that can be really valuable, just to see that you, again, to acknowledge that you might not love exercise right off the bat and that's OK, like find a way to move your body, something that you can stick with, hopefully see some improvements and development, and then in turn, that cultivates a love for exercise.

Jen: For sure. Can I read a couple, so we did this poll on social media asking women if they struggle with these things and also, if they don't struggle, what are some of their tips for other women? Do you mind if I read a couple Annie? Many

we've covered, so I won't say them, but a couple women talked about as far as being consistent and sticking to it is to schedule in your exercise time and stick to it the way you would stick to, you know, your children's activities on a calendar, which I think is really cool, like, I think it is a really, it kind of goes with the whole topic of our company and our group is that we're trying to get moms to put themselves back on the To Do List, right? Make themselves a priority, so I really like that idea.

Experimenting with different forms of movement and seeing what you love and what your body craves, which I think is really cool. A friend of mine just shared with me that she has joined a rec women's volleyball class, or team, and she's starting, and it's only Tuesday nights, and she has never played volleyball in her life, and I just thought that she's just looking for different ways to move that are nontraditional, like out of the gym, and get to know a different type of movement and also really cool to see her working out of her comfort zone which, we didn't mention this, but I think a lot of people when you feel uncomfortable exercising, is to really reflect on if that's just because you feel uncomfortable doing something new or if you feel vulnerable not being good at something, and actually that can be a really good thing, a really big growth thing to work through that type of discomfort.

And also, I really like this tip, but make it about something other than weight loss, which I know we covered and said that if it's all about weight loss it can be really really negative.

Yeah and that's everything else, most of the other suggestions we got I believe were covered.

Annie: Awesome, I love that, good tips.

Jen: Oh here's a good one, sorry, choose movement that has a dual purpose, for me, I get to listen to podcasts while I walk. I think that's really cool.

Lauren: Was that from me?

Jen: But another one that I have is "build it into your day", so for me we don't live too far from my children's school so I often walk them to school and walk to pick them up and I had the option with our kindergartners you have to drop them off, pick them up but last year, by the end of the year, we were at a point where the

kids could walk home on their own, we do live quite close to the school, four hundred metres away but I would just make an effort to go and meet them after school just to get my walk in.

But some people do things like they park as far as they can from the grocery store or door and you know like really think outside of the box of just how how you can increase your movement in the day without it feeling like it has to take up, you know, a whole bunch of your time or be scheduled in.

Annie: I think Lauren's really good at that, I know Lauren's really good at that, you find ways to put in squats when you're on loading and unloading the dishwasher or doing laundry or walking around the swing set when you're playing with Elliott.

Lauren: Right, yeah, because I don't like structured, scheduled exercise, so for me finding little ways throughout the day to get it in is really helpful.

Jen: There's also also "Ride the Seasons of Life" so another woman and she said it just looks different for her year round, winter is about the gym, I guess she has the time to go to the gym but summertime is about shorter home workouts and the point is that she's just still moving, right, she still keeping up that habit and actually just taking the time.

Annie: Yes, for sure, that's a good one, too. I feel that way, too. I spend more time in the gym versus my yard when it's nice out.

Jen: Yeah.

Lauren: Totally.

Annie: OK, so let's just recap real quick: how to fall in love with exercise even if you hate it right now. Our first suggestion was to get started, which is super underwhelming and not very sexy and exciting, but we find that a lot of people get tripped up in that limbo, "Should I stay or should I go? Am I going to start? No, I'm not going to start. I'll wait ten minutes." I'll do it too, you know, it's like hitting the snooze alarm and if you can just put all of your effort into getting started you might find that you enjoy your workout way more than you anticipated.

Suggestion number two is to find your community and you can do that a variety of different ways which we already listed: join an existing community, start your own or join an online community, which we think ours is great, again it's Healthy Habits Happy Moms on Facebook, we have nearly forty thousand women across the globe, all ages, moms, non-moms. All exercise abilities and interests can be found in that group so if you want to continue the discussion, if you need some more tips, or if you're listening and you're like "I love exercise and I want to share my tips!" please do. Like, we're here to build off of one another.

And our third suggestion is to keep getting better, so find a way to foster a love by seeing some progress, by cultivating a habit out of it and that can keep you going. Lauren or Jen do you have anything to add before we wrap up?

Jen: No, I think that sums it up.

Lauren: No, I'll say that I use all of these tips in different regards, like if I'm at home, trying to get in a structured workout, it's all about convenience for me, and just getting started and then if it's something that I really don't enjoy is much but I want to do it, I'll go out and find a class because I need that extra accountability to get it done, or finding things around the house, like we've got a push mower because it's a built in way to get some exercise and it's actually enjoyable for me. So use the tips, use them all.

Jen: Yes.

Annie: All of them.

Lauren: Or one of them.

Jen: Yes and if you are looking for just short at home workouts we have free workouts on our on our Youtube page which is Balance 365Life T.V. and we have some of our workouts are ten minutes or less, some are twenty minutes or less, and that's just free workouts that we recognize some women are just using those to get it in, build their habit but they're good workouts.

Annie: Yeah. Well, we think so. And a handful of them are even just body weight workout, so if you don't have equipment, if equipment is another barrier for a home workout for you, you can check those out. We have body weight only workouts.

Jen: Yes, one of the women on our post said what helps her to exercise is actually using our Youtube videos, not just because they're short and effective, but also knowing that Lauren and I are in those videos and we also hate exercise, she says, "So I know that when you two are showing up, I can too."

Lauren; That's hilarious.

Annie: Yeah it's nice to have people on the squad that like can empathize with wherever you're at on the "Do you love exercise? Do you not love exercise?" continuum, like we got you. We got you covered. So thank you for joining us for the third time. Hopefully when we play this back the audio is crystal clear for our listeners. And yeah, thanks ladies, we'll talk soon, OK?

Jen: BYE

Lauren: BYE

Annie: BYE