

Balance365 Episode 34 Transcript

Annie: Welcome back to another episode of Balance365Life radio. Today we have a really, really special guest for you. We have on Danica. Danica was one of the earliest members of our free Facebook community Healthy Habits Happy Moms, our first employee and since joining our coaching program Balance365, Danica has established strong habits that support her goals and as a result, she's improved her sleep, cut back on liquid calories that weren't serving her, return to exercise she enjoys, and she's lost fifty pounds.

Danica lives in Las Vegas with her husband Stephen and three children Miriam, Leo and Benji and their elder German Shepherd and fun fact, her and Lauren have two kiddos with the same names and she's patiently waiting for Lauren to have another baby, Miriam. We'll see if that happens though. I can't wait for you to hear more about Danica's journey because as a busy mom to three kiddos she really understands how to make habits work for you when life seems to feel chaotic all the time.

But first, I want to share with you that our flagship behavior change health and wellness coaching program Balance365 is on sale for just a few more days. Balance365 is your complete step-by-step health, wellness and weight loss program that breaks down healthy habits into simple manageable steps.

We specialize in keeping it simple and showing you the habits that really matter when it comes to long lasting change so say goodbye to quick fixes and false promises, this is about more than just food, exercise and weight loss. This is about living the life you're 100% in love with. You can visit balance365.co now to join and if you're listening to this and missed this opportunity, don't worry, we have a couple sales every year and the program is always available at its regular price on our website Balance365.co. Alright, let's get going.

Ladies, welcome to the show. We have a super special guest, Danica. How are you?

Danica: I'm doing well, how are you guys?

Annie: We're great.

Jen: Good.

Annie: Thank you for joining us. I feel like we share this every time but this is the second time we tried to record this. The first time we had some audio difficulties again.

Jen: Somebody help us.

Danica: It's going to be even better this time.

Annie: But yeah, true to Balance365 philosophy, it's a lot of trial and error and sometimes you just have to mess up to get it right.

Jen: Exactly, yeah, no failures, just growing moments.

Annie: Learning experiences.

Jen: Yes and it went wrong on my end this time and I have corrected the problem. Now I know.

Annie: Knock on wood. Jen, how are you doing.

Jen: Good, really good, yeah, we had our first day of school today so I'm feeling really happy and optimistic and it's like mom's New Year's Eve was last night.

Annie: Woohoo! Exciting. That's awesome. OK, so Danica, we asked you to join us because we're certain, I mean, we know your story, but our listeners listening don't know your story. You have had quite the journey with Balance365 and you were kind of a pioneer for us early on, you joined our community really, really early on, you've been with us for a while and you have some really great insights into our community and our program and we just would love to hear your experience. So if you don't mind, let's just jump right in and tell us how did you even find, when you found us we were healthy habits happy moms. We've since transitioned to Balance365 but how did you find us?

Danica: You know, I was trying to think of that today and I am not 100 percent sure I think it might have been through Go Kaleo or something which is not even a thing anymore but yeah, I saw that there was a science based Mom group called Healthy Habits Happy Moms and I remember that I wasn't following you

guys on social media time and so I quick followed you all on social media, on Facebook and Instagram I think and then I asked to be let in and I think you only had like two hundred members, like less than two hundred members, and I remember messaging Jen and being like “I really need this so, can I get in? Can you fast track me in?”

Annie: Can you tell us a little bit about like where you were at when you joined the program? Like what were you doing? What was your experience with health and fitness and food and like what was your mindset like?

Danica: Yeah I had just left basically left the fitness industry because I was injured and I had a really long ongoing foot injury that eventually I got surgery to fix but it was like a mystery for a really long time. Super disheartening, you know, a lot of doctors told me nothing was wrong with me and I had been working a big box gym, a big gym chain as a group fitness instructor and I always like to say that one day I just looked around and I saw The Matrix like I realize that here are these people that, you know, presumably are setting an example of Health and Wellness and I would see them doing things that were just super unhealthy and I would be like “Man, what is the frickin point? We’re killing ourselves working out six or eight hours a day at high intensity. If we’re going to be like scraping the apples off our salad or, you know, sucking on fat burners in our duffel bag at a training”

Or, like, I had a friend who told me “Oh, my weight has been stuck for months and I had given up all my carbohydrates and then, like, I finally was willing to give up my half a cup of oatmeal at breakfast and I lost another two pounds.” And I just remember being like, “Seriously?” Like this is what where we're doing to ourselves, we can't eat a healthy food like oatmeal?

Jen: Yeah. And doing to other people often in that we see. There's a study done on group fitness instructors a couple years ago and I think it polled about eight hundred fitness instructors, men and women, and sixty percent of the females qualified as having disordered eating tendencies and twenty-two percent of the men did and so, in the fitness industry, it is often the blind leading the blind out there and it's scary because the fitness industry and the diet industry has such a hold on people.

Annie: And I think Lauren, if she were able to join us, she would say that she was, you know, one of those people and I think a lot of those, myself included,

enter the fitness industry or the wellness industry kind of seeking their own salvation and it's a way to maybe hold themselves accountable or to kind of stick to their own goals in some twisted way, and so I think it's just really, that's a good point, Danica and Jen, just be cautious when you're taking advice from people in the fitness industry just know that how they grew up, where they came from, their own personal struggles, may all personally affect their bias and the information they're passing on.

Danica: Yeah and as I have gotten older, I've realized that someone's education is a lot more applicable to what kind of a service they can provide for me as a professional than what they look like, so I think as fitness professionals sometimes we can get into a place where we were thinking like our body is our resume and that is just super dangerous because there are a million different factors that can go into what someone's body looks like and, you know, ninety nine percent of them have nothing to do with how well they can teach you to live a whole and healthy lifestyle.

Jen: Right and I think we've said this on the cast before, I mean, our company is called Balance365 but for any fitness professionals listening in, really, what is your job as a fitness professional and is it to not show people how to live healthy, balanced lives? Like really that's the real goal for the general population, right? It's a very small percentage of people that want to you know lean down and be going to like fitness competitions or whatever or are athletes, but for general population how we can best serve them really is by showing them and role modeling a healthy balance with food, fitness, life right?

Annie: Absolutely. So, Danica, you were just leaving the fitness industry, you message Jen and you're like "I need in" and you get in the community and what happens?

Danica: Well, I got super involved right away. I mean, you guys remember. I totally bought in. I love that you guys were evidence-based, that you encouraged mom to be talking about themselves and their own goals and because we totally can get sidetracked by, you know, only talking about our kids and our families and just let ourselves fall by the wayside and so I remember, you know, just a paradigm shift where we're talking about, you know, our own first-person experiences and the goals we have for our own selves and we do talk about our families, of course, it's a huge part of who anyone is, their family, but primarily we focused on ourselves and just the science of living a healthy lifestyle, as opposed

to a lot of groups or systems where you just get bombarded with tons of unnecessary supplements or extreme regimens or whatever and I just remember the early days we were doing a habit of the month and just sticking with that for the whole month and the camaraderie of that just being just fantastic and of course I hung out with you guys so much online that eventually I made you give me a job.

Annie: You didn't make us, you just created value for yourself.

Jen: You were just the boss, you were the boss in that group. You were our first employee.

Danica: I was. The first non Jen, Annie and Lauren employee. Back in the day.

Annie: So if what I'm hearing is correct, it sounds like you kind of realized that what was happening or that maybe the route that was kind of before you wasn't the route you wanted to go on and you had already started on some of your own kind of more balanced, moderate habits. And at the time we did have a program called Balance365 but you didn't join right away, you kind of just hung out, right?

Danica: Well, it wasn't even called Balance365 yet and I didn't join until maybe the third cohort of Balance365 which, again, I don't even think it was called that yet but I just remember-

Annie: It's been an evolution.

Danica: I remember talking to you guys and saying like, "No, I don't want to eat less food." Like, I knew that I couldn't up my physical activity level that much because of my injury and I didn't want to eat less because I, at that point I maintained my weight for about eighteen months and I just remember I had never done that before, I was always either going up or down and constantly monitoring it, but I remember at that point I had started tracking a couple, well not tracking, but I had started adding a couple habits like protein and produce, that's what I've always called it, protein and produce.

And I was happy with how it made me feel mentally and how it affected my physical performance because I didn't limit anything so I was eating more calories, I was focused on just nourishing myself. Both physically with food and I guess spiritually and emotionally and just healing from a pretty traumatic experience working in the fitness industry and so I can't say enough, honestly, for

spending time, I mean, eighteen months probably feels like a really long time to somebody that wants to lose thirty, sixty, one hundred pounds but it in actuality set me up for such a successful period of my life where I got to learn what it means to be thinking very little about weight loss and my body and to just be focused on living my life.

And so I just remember talking to you guys at the time and and just saying that I wasn't ready, like I knew I wasn't ready to commit to any changes. I was really happy with my lifestyle the way it was and although, in a perfect world, sure, I would have liked to lose some fat, it wasn't worth it to me to make myself spin out mentally if, just to lose a few pounds or to lose the mental gains that I had made and so it took me, what, eighteen months, close to two years to commit to or to be ready, to be in a place where I felt like I could commit to making some changes with moderation and pursuing, I guess, a fat loss goal.

Jen: I think, too, one thing that people don't talk about enough, but us at Balance365, we consider weight maintenance a win. Like for a lot of women that's a huge deal, if your weight is going up and down and up and down and you go through a long period of just maintaining your weight, what that means is you are eating to your energy needs. So you're probably, you know, we hope, you're getting more in touch with your hunger cues, your satiety, to use in everyday life, you're eating to almost the exact amount of calories that you need without, you know, tracking, without obsessing over it.

And that's a big deal and I would say for a woman who has gone up and down quite a bit throughout her life, fat Loss probably isn't, may not be, a realistic goal as your first step, like a more realistic goal as your first step may just be, "Hey, whoa, pause, let's just see if I can maintain this weight for a while"

Danica: Because your body does not want to lose weight

Jen: Right.

Danica: It is hard. Or fat. Because that's just not how we are wired, you know, biologically. I mean, so it is just so much more reasonable. And you're still ahead if you maintain, you're still ahead if you had gone overboard, real gungho, lost twenty pounds then gained forty and you're worse off than where you started and you have the additional shame of feeling that you failed at something that you set out to do.

Jen: Right.

Danica: Which is just so mentally damaging.

Jen: right. The other thing, Danica, I remember you talking about this, because I remember that period when you were like, “No, I'm in maintenance mode” and you felt good about that, which is great, own your choices, we love it, that's all we want for women, but I remember you saying that you learned in that process the benefits of learning to love your body at a higher body fat percentage than you prefer. Do you want to talk about that at all?

Danica: Oh, oh, totally and not even just my body fat but I was at a point where I was limited to what I could do because I was injured and then I had surgery and then I was recovering and so just getting over some of my, like, I guess, ableism tendencies and propensities. Being able to appreciate the things that my body could do even when it couldn't do, you know, anything I wanted it to do, like would I like to have gone for a run? Sure. But I wasn't able to do that but I still could be thankful for, you know, strong arms to lift up my children or the ability to, I did start lifting heavy during that time, heavier, I guess, like I learned to deadlift during that time.

And just being able to find forms of movement that met me where I was. Like I remember when I was working in the fitness industry I would have told you that I had no upper body strength. But once I started eating an appropriate amount of calories for my activity level and I started really paying attention to what was happening in my body, I realized, like, that was just a limiting belief that I had expressed in myself, there was no “I have no upper body strength”, you know, that was a myth that I had believed about myself and so it was a time when I learned so much about my body, particularly about appreciating and loving my body for what it could do and even just achieving body neutrality and not focusing on aesthetic.

So not focusing so much on what my body looked like, but on what it allowed me to do. I can remember talking about in the group, I can remember our first gratitude journal and talking about, like, this is the body that allows me to hug my child and this is the body that allows me to be with my husband. This is the body that allows me to experience the ocean, that allows me to experience warmth and seasons and temperatures and all the things that I love.

Jen: Right, just getting touch with your senses. It's beautiful. Do we want to move on and talk about your Balance365 journey?

Danica: Sure. So I feel like it's kind of in two components because I first did Balance365 and on the very first habit I had, like, such incredible success it really, it was the only habit that I managed to get to stick for about six months and it was all I needed. I experienced pretty rapid fat loss at a reasonable pace and really only from changing one thing, which is that I went to three to four meals and no snacking.

Jen: Right and I was going to say to anyone listening and to go back to previous podcast, understand that we don't do rules, we do guidelines, and one of our guidelines in Balance365 I think we talk about in Balance365 Secrets and another podcast we have about Four Nutritional Mistakes You Might Be Making and so we do guidelines and what we're trying to do is shift women away from grazing all day because, just like fine print: we're trying to help people get in touch with their hunger and satiety again so when you eat less often but larger meals, you can just get in touch with your internal signals better and be able to self regulate with food and it can be a really big game changer for some women, especially those who are grazing quite a bit or eating between meals.

Danica: So I am remember pushing back on that, it was the very first habit because back then we did them one of the time, we didn't even get them all at the beginning we just got them one at a time and I can remember really being resistant to it and talking to Lauren and her being like "OK just try it before you freak out" and I was like. So I did and it was just enormously successful for me, personally and getting in touch with my hunger cues and then, we, I had experienced secondary infertility and then we had been trying for quite a while to get pregnant and during that time I got pregnant again and then I was super sick for my whole pregnancy. I didn't gain any ground. Sometimes we talk about that, my husband is a marine, and sometimes we talk about periods where we gain ground and periods where we're just like holding the line.

Jen: Which is life.

Danica: Yes, right, and so I didn't gain any ground during my pregnancy or even earlier postpartum. My son was born, my youngest son was born in August of 2017, same as Lauren, and they have the same name.

And I don't even know what I weighed, like I didn't keep track of it, I didn't worry about it, I was just trying to build a healthy baby and keep myself strong as possible. I was in physical therapy.

So he was born in August, I'm pretty sure I started the postpartum program in September and I was still seeing my physical therapist and she helped me so much to adjust the program to my personal needs and so I really recommend anybody to see someone if they can and then use that as a supplement.

And then I just started again in November. I stepped on the scale one day and I thought, "Man, I just feel totally neutral about this number, I feel completely neutral about my body and I'm ready to start experimenting on myself again, like I had such a foundation of maintaining my weight for quite some time and knowing exactly what that took.

Knowing that any changes I would make going forward I knew I wanted them to be completely sustainable and nothing crazy and so I did start making some small changes, mostly just a lot of asking myself like "Is this worth it? Is this donut worth it? Or is this beer worth it? Is that and how does it make me feel?" Just a lot of paying attention to how food made me feel, how drinks made me feel and deciding how I want my life to look.

So I mentioned in the previous recording that one of the things that got kind of pushed out was a lot of my beverages with calories because I live in the desert and I always feel like I can never get enough water and so just in listening to my body and realizing I need probably more water than somebody living in, you know, Des Moines.

Because I live in Las Vegas and so some of my other beverages have just fallen away because I have just realised I feel better drinking quite a bit more water.

Jen: And just back to the donut thing real quick, since we are all about moderation, sometimes the donut is worth it, right, sometimes the beer is worth it and sometimes it isn't. Yeah it's up to you, right?

Danica: Right, yeah, I love that because I mean, I'm a grown up now and when I was in my twenties maybe I wanted somebody to tell me, you know, a list of foods that I could and couldn't eat and now as an adult, a full-fledged thirty-something adult mother three, I just know that I don't need anybody else

exerting that authority over me and my body. That I have the body autonomy to say, "Yeah, that donut is one hundred percent worth it." And so like one of the things that I always say is, "If it's not really good, it's not worth it to me" because I just don't need, there's so many sweets or so many treats out there and most of them are probably mediocre and I really only have time for the ones that are really delicious so.

Jen: That's awesome. And one habit that you got quite serious about and why we really wanted to actually bring you on the podcast was you had sort of a big foundational habit that you finally tackled that ended up affecting all of your other habits that has led you here today, which is basically ten months into a really substantial weight loss journey, right?

Danica: Yes, so in November I started tracking and feeling just super neutral about my body weight and since then.

Jen: Sorry, Danica, tracking your weight.

Danica: My weight, OK, not my food, my weight and since then I've lost fifty pounds. So I think it's, did you say it's been nine months? I'm not even sure.

Jen: Is it ten months? November and then September. Yeah, so it's about, so we're looking at about five pounds a month, which is really quite reasonable and I'm sure you had spurts and stalls and all of that is very normal in any fat loss journey.

But the point being that you did it and you did it over ten month and you feel it sustainable and it's something that belongs to you forever, you don't have to hold onto it real tight and micromanage it and as people often do, who are dieting, you know, there's just so much fear around when am I going to gain this back, right?

Danica: Right, yeah, I mean, the biggest change that I have made is that I completely overhauled and changed my relationship with sleep and there, I mean, a year ago I would have what I would have scoffed at that idea that it can make such a big difference but I have always been a terrible sleeper. My kids have all been good sleepers so it's all one hundred percent me, I can't even blame my children.

But I always feel like I need to be constantly calculating my value based on my productivity and so to me that always means if I can stay up a couple hours after

everybody else is asleep and get a bunch of stuff done then that will make me better and more valuable and so changing my emotional relationship with sleep where I can appreciate the value of it and share sleep when theoretically I could be doing something else and see it as a productive activity and not as a waste of time has just changed, honestly, my entire life.

So, yeah, I think that that is what has enabled me to feel like I am sacrificing very little to lose that five pounds a month or whatever I don't feel like I'm sacrificing anything because, I mean, I can remember, like, back in the day when I was just first starting to learn about all this stuff, I can remember hearing someone say that the best thing that you can do is sleep for your metabolism and for your diet.

And just, I can remember scoffing at that idea and so maybe there is someone who will be less in the contest and just scoff at the idea that well, "You don't know me, I have this much weight to lose." Well, I mean, I lost 50 pounds and I feel that I have sacrificed very little to do that.

Jen: One thing, I think, too, like you know, we're, again, an evidence based company, we strive to be an evidence based company and fat loss is still a calories in calories out equation but it's really how sleep affect your behaviors and your hormones and your energy and that's why it can be such a strong foundational habit. It's really hard for us, so sleep is a habit in Balance365 that we talk about and we really encourage people to work on because it is very, very difficult for me and I do not feel right telling a woman, you know, maybe a sleep deprived postpartum mom that she just needs to do more to lose this weight, right, they actually need to do a bit less, and they're just so burnt out and so what sleep does is provides us with more energy during the day.

There is evidence that shows people who are chronically exhausted have their hunger signals are stronger, their satiety signals don't work as optimally as they should so it really is just a path to eating more and then not moving whether that's you just don't have the energy to exercise, or you just don't have energy period, so it's hard for you to get off the couch and move from the living room to the kitchen.

Annie: I read a study just recently that showed that the cognitive decision making abilities of people that were sleep deprived were comparable to people that have had two alcoholic drinks, so it's like your ability to like, "Should I do this, should I not?" like, I mean, should I exercise after two glasses of wine? I'm guessing that

answer is probably going to be no. You're just exhausted at that point and that's why they're such snowball habits, our cornerstone habits, because they do have this like domino effect on the rest of your day.

Like you have more sleep, you have more energy, your decision making skills become better. I know, personally, when I'm tired, I cannot keep my hand out of the cookie jar, or the cracker box, or the chip bag like I'm constantly searching for, like, food as energy, like, maybe if I eat something, I'll feel better. I'll feel a little bit more energized.

Jen: So most people are going to crave sugar when they are tired and that is normal and we have a blog post about it called Five Reasons You're Craving Sugar and if you're tired and your body needs rest and sleep to restore and you're not giving that to your body, it will search for energy in other places, which, for human beings, is simple carbs, typically, so you will crave all of those high energy, high calorie snacks, usually.

Annie: But what do most people do? They say, "No, I need to cut out sugar" versus "I need to sleep more."

Jen: And then I will crave sugar less.

Annie: Yeah and Danica, I think we probably cut you off before you got to this point.

Jen: Yeah, she's just nodding now, you know, it's just Annie and Je interview. It's about our life.

Annie: But this is not like, a sleep habit is not something you fix in a week or even a month, because after a month you have shared that you were still kind of like, "I'm still kind of tired."

Danica: Oh yeah, I mean so I actually had heard on a podcast that if you go one night where you sleep less than, I think it said six hours, which for me was a good night, like that would be like my maximum that I had, I would never sleep with six hours and they had said it was another science one, not a health one, and they said if you sleep less than six hours that that sleep deficit will continue to affect you cognitively for seventy-two hours and so and so it's not even just like you make it up the next day, it's an ongoing thing where you get into such a sleep deficit.

So I found that my first commitment was to go to bed before midnight, which I knew, like it seemed almost laughable to commit to that and I didn't want to tell anyone because it seems so stupid, but it was really hard for me I never went to bed before midnight, I was always up super super late and

And then up early you know around six probably for my kids and so just committing to trying to get that six hours of sleep minimum every night it was a pretty big undertaking, but doable, which I think is the best kind of, that's one thing that I have always taken away from Balance365 is the best kind of goal is when the only challenges you a little bit, it feels totally doable.

And so, yeah, my first month I committed to going to bed before midnight and I remember at the end of that month just thinking "I am still so frickin tired." If anything, I think I noticed it more, right, because it was on my mind more and so and I remember my husband saying like, "OK but you're still only going to bed at midnight, maybe they're still room for improvement here, like before you throw it out."

And so, since then I've done a lot of things to improve my sleep hygiene like limit screens before bed which, again, I know if anybody is scoffing at that right now, I know what it is to feel that way, I absolutely felt that way and the best thing I can say is just experiment on yourself for a month, just give it a try.

The worst that can happen is that you miss a few emails in the evening or some Facebook updates and they will still be there in the morning and so yeah, I cut way back on caffeine, I increased my just care for myself in the evening. I do more tea and baths and less Facebook and caffeine. I try to wind down.

Jen: It sounds like you actually shifted your definition of self care, which we try and talk to women about this a lot, because we you know you see a lot of posts that are like you know did X.Y.Z. you know, self care for today and certain activities having a law of diminishing returns in that you aren't, it's not always self care. It can often, I mean it might be to start, but then it crosses the line into numbing and you're actually just like numbing and you're going through Facebook and you're not dealing with your life.

Making change from place to self care is hugely important and being able to be self-aware and assess what self care is and when it's just not self care anymore and then it's just distracting you from living your life and actually taking care of

yourself. That is so important. It sounds like you had a real mindset shift there too, which is great.

Danica: Yeah, so I mean I we talk about hunger cues so much in Balance365. I had so much shame around my fatigue cues or my tiredness signals where I would not allow myself to just go to sleep if I was tired. Fatigue was always like and, I mean, to me it's kind of like, sometimes we'll say in Balance365, hunger is not an emergency and for me, fatigue felt like an emergency.

Fatigue, my reaction to it was to have some caffeine, I was on the pot a day program. I always like to joke of coffee where, you know, the second I felt tired it, just when it could have occurred to me to rest my body and give myself that care, even though I would do that for, I would say, for my friend or my child, that if you're tired, you should rest. But I would not have done that for myself.

Jen: And we had talked about this earlier, so we should definitely cover it again because it was so great but for me, personally, I had to start really thinking about how if I was even treating myself even remotely close to the way to treat my kids, like, you know, I try to make sure my kids are outside every single day getting fresh air. I try, I don't let my kids stay up till midnight watching Netflix because they're "stressed".

They have bedtimes and they go to bed. And we work on having good sleep hygiene with them and they have a good breakfast and you know and they get outside during the day and that's something that really clicked for me and it was like, "OK, come on, like, is being a grown up just does that mean just pushing away all those rules or you know what I mean? Or does it mean taking care of yourself?"

Because I think some of us get stuck in this rebellious stage, we just get stuck there our whole adult life and we're not doing that no one's telling me, you know that I'm a grown up." But really, a grown up should be taking care themselves, right, just as well to take care of their kids or at least having some mindfulness around it.

Danica: I think earlier we called it parenting or momming your inner child.

Jen: Yeah, Mom yourself. Yeah, you've got to Mom yourself sometimes. Go to bed.

Annie: Yeah. Well we talk about that when we are building our plates, you know, I wrote one of the first blog post I wrote for our company was essentially about why we kind of have strayed away from meal plans and it's not that we don't want to just tell people what to eat but it's that we want to prove to people that you already have some really good knowledge, you just need to put it into place, and you know, I think mothers are the perfect example because most of us, when we build a meal for our children, I have veggies and fruit and protein and a good source of carbohydrates and some moderate fats and they're not consuming, you know, too many diet sodas or lattes or sweet treats in moderation but yet when we ask we've had to do this for themselves they're like "I don't know what to eat" and it's like "Yeah, you do, you can do this."

Jen: Yeah.

Annie: Yeah, so Danica, as a result of these changes you lost fifty pounds.

Danica: Yeah.

Annie: That's quite a haul.

Danica: Yeah, I mean, I never would have, I mean I'm not the woman who loses weight while breastfeeding or that, you know, the weight just falls off or anything. So, yeah, just moderate changes. I don't know, I feel like sometimes it's hard to say to people, because, I mean, we talked earlier about how sometimes people ask, my husband has also lost a substantial amount of weight, and so sometimes somebody will ask us about it, and then they will argue with us about it and so Steven will say, "Oh yeah, I'm just, you know, eating a little bit less and moving my body a little more." And they'll say, "Oh yeah, but did you give up carbs?" or "Oh yeah, but are you doing keto or whatever, you know, whatever trendy diet they have their-"

Jen: Because they're looking, because honestly, the vast majority of the population is still looking for that lightning bolt, they're still looking for the secret, the answer and-

Danica: I think people want it to be easy but the truth is it may feel fast but it isn't easy to go on a super restrictive diet. It's miserable, I mean everyone I know who has been on a diet in the last year and I always, like, hear them complaining and

they just seem miserable and it's really sad. I feel like, you know, I lost 50 pounds making moderate but very consistent changes.

So, I mean, you can't have both when it's like, you can't make moderate changes but then only do them, you know, less than half the time or something, you know, because that's not really making a change. If nothing changes nothing changes but if you can think honestly about the changes that you're willing to make and the changes that you're not willing to make and then very consistently make those shifts then it just, it doesn't cost that much, like, especially if you're thinking about what makes you feel good in your body.

Jen: I think a lot of people, we know they get tripped up in consistency but we also know, and I mean Balance365 is about habit change, right, so it's, we know you get to that point where your old habits flare back up and you want to follow those old patterns your brain is telling you to, it's innate, like it really is nobody's fault, that's just what's happening, and lately I've been as I'm counseling different Balance365 members about this, I'm trying to say, "Hey, look, like just take the emotion and the judgment out of it and understand that that's your brain trying to follow a very deeply ingrained habit that you have and now we can change that habit."

And for people interested in changing their habits and learning more about this, we have podcasts on it Habits 101 and How to Break a Bad Habit and so and if there is something to say, you have to stick through that hard time when your brain is trying to get you to do the old pattern, you have to stick through that and say "No, this is my new pattern" but just take the judgment and the emotion out of it and "This is going to be my life now."

Like, you know, Danica, you, I'm not saying that you should do that if you're miserable, but Danicaa, you know, you tried three to four meals, it was working really well for you and you were able to say, "You know what? This is going to be my life now. This is going to be the way I eat. This works really well for me and I have seen the weight loss results that I was, you know, looking for, hoping for, whichever it is."

Danica: So If it had made me miserable then that wouldn't have been worth it but it didn't, it was perfectly fine and it worked and that is the key, where you are experimenting on yourself, there's no rule that you have to follow in Blaance365

and so, you know, if you try something and you hate it, like maybe you'll cycle back around to it, maybe you won't.

That is kind of how I felt about sleep is that I had sort of made motions toward it in the past and sort of half-heartedly maybe tried a sleep goal and until I was really ready to commit to it and realized that it was it was probably really holding me back, it didn't work until the time was right it wouldn't work for me right.

Annie: And I think that's just such a great place to be, I mean, to me that feels like freedom and peace, that I'm able to make choices about my body without judgement and shame and, you know, I can have this sort of air that's like, "Yeah I could do that but I don't want to and I'm totally at peace with that" or "Yeah, I want to do that and I'm going to do that and it doesn't affect, you know, how I feel about my body or my goals, you know, or the rest of my life in general, it's not like this moral ethical decision." It's just like running science experiments, like I have a hypothesis this might work and I'm going to test it out and then keep what does, tweak what needs to tweak and then keep it moving. It's just an evolution.

Danica: That's what sleep has done for me too is that it has allowed me to stay more mindful and centered in my experiences, more in touch with my senses, like you were saying earlier, Jen, because when I have gotten well rested over the past few months and I know what it's like to wake up and not feel like I got hit by a truck, then I don't feel like I'm just coping through the day and reaching for sugar. I feel like I can have the mindfulness to say, OK, you know like earlier, "Is this donut worth it or is it not worth it?" and just be at peace and not like longing for the donut, you know, it's not the siren call of the donut anymore it just kind of objectively be like "OK, do I want this donut for real or am I just reaching for it because it's here?"

Annie: Absolutely. Danica, you shared so many great insights and takeaways already but just kind of wrapping up here, if there was a listener that was thinking about joining Balance365 or even our free community, those who may be on the fence, do you have any advice, words of wisdom, encouragement that you would want to share with them?

Danica: Yeah, I mean, do it. In all honestly, I mean, I don't think any of us want to, I know you guys don't want to push anybody into trying commit to or make a change that they're not ready for, so I would say the very first step is to just be honest with yourself and think about your life in terms of "Am I ready to make

some changes for real?" It doesn't have to be the perfect time, the perfect time will never come.

And it also, you can't wait for the perfect time but you can't wait forever either, does that make sense? Like-

Jen: We, yes, so this was very profound in our community, we have a member who's a little bit older, she has university-age children and she said "I am the result of neglecting myself for two decades and putting my partner and children first" and I think she's really struggling with her habits now and and I think she had a type two diabetes diagnosis last year which prompted the Balance365 staff and I don't think she wants to alarm anybody, but I think what she was saying is like, "You can pay attention to your health while you're raising children and supporting your partner and, you know, building a career or whatever and in fact it's smart. And you have to, because eventually you could be paying the price later on, right?" And that doesn't mean an overhaul, right, it doesn't mean obsession, it doesn't mean, I mean, in fact, we see obsession takes you the other way, it makes you unhealthier, right, it's just, it really is about balance and moderation and just paying attention.

Annie: Yeah and I was just going to add to that, Jen, exactly what you said, contrary to what the fitness and diet industry want you to think, it doesn't have to be the center of your life. And I think Jen, Lauren and I, I mean if I can toot our own horns, really exemplify that because we have some really good foundational habits that help us lead a lifestyle in a way that we want to lead it and we're not like, you know, bending over backwards to get to the gym multiple hours a day or spending hours a week meal prepping or stressing if we, you know, don't hit a habit here and there it's very, very a lifestyle filled with moderation and balance and compassion and grace and flexibility and that feels really good.

Danica: And knowing the three, I think is a great example, because I know you all have different areas that you focus on more than others and in areas where you guys make different choices, it's not like all three of your lives look exactly the same and that is a great example of what Balance 365 is all about because it's not the type of program where everything is very prescriptive and they're going to tell you, where anybody is going to tell you, exactly what to do and that is part of just being a grown ass woman, right, where you are deciding what you want your life to look like and what's worth it to you and what isn't and so I would say that to anybody who's on the fence, I mean, if that sounds good to you, if you want to

make changes where you are in control and you are ready to be mindful and, I guess, take control of how you want your life to look then go for it, there will never be a perfect time. And maybe now is the time.

Annie: I like that, well said. Now is the time and, really, the truth is the manner in which we present the information, it's very, like, digestible at your own pace, it's not a competition it's not like this sprint.

Jen: Right, it's one habit at a time, addressing one area of your life at a time, and then eventually and another thing is it's a lifetime membership, so I thought that was really great how you included, Danica, in how you started with us and then you kind of took a step back and went into survival mode during your pregnancy and then after you got through that crazy postpartum period you stepped back into Balance365 which you could, because it's a lifetime membership, the program and the community, but that's the thing it is an evolution, right, habits and things and it is a journey, there's no, there's no end goal or destination or that kind of thing so, yeah.

Annie: Well, said. Well, ladies anything you want to add before we wrap up?

Danica: Thank you.

Jen: Thank you.

Annie: Second time today. I think we nailed it this time though. Hopefully no technical difficulties. But like I said at the beginning, like this is exactly how the program works, sometimes it's like, sometimes you try things out and take what doesn't work throw that out, keep what does, make it work for you and keep going, don't quit early, right?

Danica: Right. Experiment on yourself. Population of one.

Annie: I dig it. Well, thank you both so much for joining us, we'll talk soon OK?

Danica: OK.

Jen: Bye bye.