

# Balance365 Episode 58 Transcript

Annie: Thank you so much for joining us for another episode of Balance365 Life radio. We are back today with our mini series called Members Spotlights. This allows us to introduce you to Balance365 community members who are just killing it inside the program so you can take their wisdom and stories and learn from them. They are busy women and moms just like you who are changing their habits, their mindsets and reaching their goals. Today you're going to hear from one Balance365 member who is determined to find changes she could make that produce results without taking over her life.

Beth is a seasoned member of our community and is a self-proclaimed member of the slow starter team but since deciding to take action she has made great strides towards her goals including more balanced dinners and consistent exercise. I can't wait for you to hear more about Beth's experience. Enjoy! Beth, welcome to Balance365 Life Radio, how are you?

Beth: I'm OK. How are you guys?

Annie: We are golden, we're so happy to have you, we as in me and Jen. Jen's here too. Jen, how are you?

Jen: Hi, good. Yes.

Annie: We woke you up. You are in a beautiful house coat this morning.

Jen: My Instagram audience is quite accustomed to seeing this housecoat so all good, all good. Not ashamed!

Annie: Now it's a signature look and full disclosure, I put one on my wish list.

Jen: You don't have a housecoat.

Annie: I don't have a housecoat. We call them a robe-

Jen: That's bizarre.

Annie: Beth, do you call it a housecoat or a robe?

Beth: So I call it a robe but what I wear is a housedress.

Jen: Oh, I love that.

Annie: That's next level, is that like a nightgown?

Beth: Yep.

Annie: So Jen-

Jen: That's my 1950s dream, like but with rights.

Annie: I don't know how you can not get twisted when you sleep in house coats.

Beth: I don't sleep in it.

Jen: Sometimes I sleep in my housecoat. It depends what's going on in my life.

Beth: I keep it next to my bed so I can throw it on when I have to go deal with things but no, I'm not wearing it to bed, no.

Jen: No, I wear my nighties, they're these silky long things, I don't. I just, you should try it.

Annie: No, I'm good in my tank top and sweats.

Jen: It's like that meme that went around with the spaghetti straps and the boobs out.

Annie: Boobs falling out.

Jen: That is me sleeping in a tank top.

Beth: Remember when we were like "We're going to stay on topic"

Annie: I know that's what I was just going to say, before we started recording we were like, I was talking about how I am pretty good at staying on topic but Jen and Beth are chatty cathies in the most wonderful way possible, they have a lot to say and whereas like, I'm going to keep these ladies on topic and look at us now.

Jen: I heard you going for, I saw you going for the B word there and then your lips changed to ladies.

Beth: I really respect where they were going.

Annie: You know what, the B word in my vocabulary is a term of endearment.

Jen: Yes.

Annie: But we have also labeled this podcast as clean which is very, very challenging for me so I feel like I deserve snaps for that. OK so, Beth, you have a long, long time member of Balance365 and you have actually been one of those women we've kind of consulted on across the years, I've called you personally and said like "Hey, what do you think of this? What's the vibe on this? What's the community feel on this? And you kind of been, I don't know, like a good sounding board because ultimately we're here for you and our community and you've always been really in touch with our community, so thanks for joining us on the show, it's like about time we have you on.

Beth: Yay! I don't know what to say. I'm just happy to be here.

Annie: OK. Well, why don't you tell us the Cliff Notes version of how you found Balance365.

Beth: Sure, so my sister-in-law, who was recently featured on your podcast, Sarah, she added me to the public group without telling me and this is back in the day when you guys added people in like large groups and so one day and just all the stuff was in my feed. And I was a little bit shocked but it was a message that I really felt good about and it was close to what I was already kind of following in my own social media. So I was in the public group probably, well, you know, 6 months or so and then you guys had a, at the time again Balance365 was going all at once, people were going in groups and so I joined in September of 2016. And yeah, that's the Cliff notes version of how I ended up with y'all.

Annie: In hindsight, do you think adding people to the group without telling them is a good start? Because that comes up a lot, like-

Jen: That still happens.

Annie: And then people, sometimes people are like "How did I get in this group and what is this?" Because our message is quite revolutionary and our opinions so to get and it's big, it's active in a really great way but as you said, when you join the group it can be a little bit like "Whoa!" Like.

Beth: Yeah so I think that that strategy can backfire or it can go well, right, so I think for me it was great but I think sometimes for the community it's hard, like people adding, you know, kind of drive by adding their friends to the community, especially if your attitude is "My friend really needs to do the program because she's so crazy and won't stop talking about her bizarre diet, I'm going to add her to this group" like that's horrifying to the community, right, like, because then this person is in there being like "Let me show you my before and after, I lost 100 pounds in 4 months and I never ate any carbs " and you're like "Ahh!"

Jen: Totally and then it kind of disrupts the community and some people feel upset even, because they say "I'm in this group to get away from that kind of stuff"

Annie: And then the individual can often get defensive and-

Jen: Yeah, it's really difficult. I think it's better if people organically find us.

Beth: In general I would agree.

Annie: Or you approach your person, your friend in real life and say "Hey I've got a group I think you'd really like, would you mind if I add you? Or can I send you a link to join?"

Yeah. Well, I'm so happy that Sarah added you and if you haven't listen to Sarah's podcast. Sarah has such a wonderful story too. She's had so many wins in our group and you can find her podcast, we can put that in the show notes too, she's just a gem of a woman.

Jen: I enjoy her.

Beth: She's my fave.

Annie: Is she your only sister?

Beth: She's actually my sister-in-law. We're married to twins so I met my husband in college and then I set her up with his brother. We were high school best friends.

Annie: Oh that's perfect. I see what you did there, you were just trying to curate your family with people you like.

Beth: No new friends.

Annie: I love it and now look at you, you're on a podcast with 40,000 women. OK. So, let's let's get to it. You joined Balance365 in 2016. You purchased it a while ago but honestly, as you have been open and shared with us in our community, that it took you awhile to committing to the process and since fully committing you've experienced quite a few changes including weight loss. Can you tell us more about your experience with that?

Beth: Sure, so when I joined in September 2016 I was just finishing law school. And starting a career at 35 and I really thought, like, now I'll have too much to implement some habits and lose weight and that was crazy. I don't know what I was thinking. I was entering a new field I was going from having not work a full time job in 8 or 9 years to working 50 plus hours a week so like, it really was not a perfect time for me to focus on implementing habits but I just kind of slowly would implement, like, you know, one habit halfway for 4 or 5 months and you know, dabbled, I did a lot of dabbling. "Oh maybe this is the one! Maybe this is the one! Maybe this is the one!"

And there is nothing wrong with that. I actually think that a lot of women when they join program they kind of need a time of doing that. Because they've been relying on programs that project, that portion of my growth. I was stuck there for quite a while, like just about 2 years. And for me that wasn't great, like, I think I was there too long. I needed to kick start something sooner and I think, I see a lot of women in our community who sometimes have that problem, like they get to this point where they're like, "I have to completely address my sleep problem before I can address anything else or I have to completely address this one thing that I'm worried about before I can address something else and for me, I was getting stuck there.

Jen: We, it's sort of like, it's like you're waiting for things to be perfect before you can start or something like "My life must look like this and then I can start" and

Danica addressed this in her podcast with us as well and I mean, she had the same realisation, nothing changes unless something changes and there is never going to be a perfect time.

Beth: Yeah, I, you know, I think it was not the right time, like it was not a good time for me to start when I joined the program. I'm not sad that I did it when I did. I'm happy for the time that I spent allowing myself, because I think that's the other thing is I think some of the women come in and they're, some people who come into a group in any kind of group and they're like, I paid for this and now I have to do it, right? And I think that's relatively unproductive a way to think about things because this is a lifelong experience, right? I can change my habits from now until I die. I don't have to change them all right, you know.

And so I think there was a positive to be had with sitting and being like nothing is really changing and that's OK but if you, for me I was starting to feel frustrated with that, that kind of for me was the moment of being like "OK" but then as Danica said, if I don't change something, nothing will change and so for me, some of it was just identifying what kind of habit I can change that would produce a change in my life but not take over my life. I don't want a program that takes over my life.

I think that's really important to me. I can't think of anything less interesting than thinking about food and exercise all day and so I needed something that I could make small change and for me that was, I just planned my dinners and then I just ate what I planned. And it's so boring and so mundane but it's what I did and it immediately resulted in changes to my body.

Jen: So you were, I guess, that would be your dinner habit which is just one section of Balance365 that we have you address and did it dramatically change what you were eating or how much you were eating or?

Beth: So really it was a matter of just, I think it changed the macro makeup of my-

Jen: Right, the balance of it.

Beth: Yeah, the balance. I was already eating all the all the correct things, I just was kind of addressing, you know, how much protein I really needed at dinner. I was looking at my dinner as a whole instead of just like, well, here's the meat and your vegetable or whatever, like, I was kind of looking at it as whole, you know,

like, "OK, what can I change? What will help me stay full? What will be satisfying? What will I be willing to eat?"

I am known, I suppose, in the community I meal plan once for a whole season because I hate meal planning, I hate it, I hate it, I hate it. So I meal plan at the beginning of a season and then we need the same 7 dinners for 13 weeks, which is not for everyone but it works for me and so by picking things that I actually knew I would eat and that were balanced I was less likely to be like "I don't feel like eating that! I'm just going to the drive through?" or I think one big thing for me is they were easy.

I picked easy things, which I will say during the 2 years when I was not actually implementing the program, I for sure would see Lauren and Annie talking about hating cooking and I would be like, "Oh come on, ladies, like, it's just not that hard, like, just, like how hard is it, right? But as I implemented this career that, you know, required, like, I have to lean on my husband a lot more to do a lot of that stuff and so planning things that I knew that at the end of the day it would be, there was chicken in the fridge and I could just take a bagged salad and throw it on top of it, like, it made it so that I would actually do it and so I just did, I just ate the dinner that I planned. I think that's so boring but it's what I did.

Jen: The thing is studies show that one of the biggest contributing factors to our food choices is convenience and so this is not it's not necessarily a flaw of humans, it's something, you know, it's population wide but we are busy people, we are very busy people and that's why meal planning works. The majority of women who work with us are actually working women, like working outside of the home, women and you know and so you know, we get it.

Like, I mean, Annie, Lauren and I work so you, when it comes to supper time, you know, it's just, you know, I don't have time in my day to sit down in the morning and decide what we're having for the day and go to the grocery store and get all those ingredients and you know, I used to do that. I used to really enjoy it, like, I really did enjoy that component of being a stay at home but working, being a working mom is a whole new ballgame and yeah, meal planning can be just such a stress reducer, in a working family, I shouldn't say woman, I should say family. Bring boys in close here.

Annie: You know, circling back to when you're talking about how Lauren I hate cooking.

Beth: Sorry.

Annie: No, no, I can own that because I don't, it's not that I can't, I mean, I can follow directions and probably cook some meals but I just don't want to, like, just like some people don't want to run or don't want to exercise or just like that's just not how I want to spend my time so that's why I really love Balance365 is because I'm not like, if it doesn't work for you, it doesn't work period. And so for me to go out and buy this meal plan that requires all this cooking or all this meal prepping or all this like grocery shopping, like that's just not going to, like it to me it feels like me trying to fit a, what is it?

A square peg into a round hole, like, I could maybe do that for a while, like white knuckling, I could like stick to the plan for a little bit but eventually I'd like, that doesn't sound fun, like, that's just not like something I enjoy. So I can still balance my meals in a way that works for me that doesn't require a lot of cooking or a lot of meal prepping or on the flipside, someone that likes to cook can also do a lot of cooking with it if they want. If that's how they want to spend their time and it's like no judgment or no, neither one is better and worse than the other, it's just what works for you, period, is all we're really concerned with.

Jen: I wanted to circle back to those 2 years where you weren't inactive, that's the thing, it's not like you bought and then you were inactive, you were very active in the group particularly in, we have a spin off group and some spin off groups, I guess, it's the Facebook group that's attached to our strength program Arms like Annie and you were active in Balance365 as well as you were quite active in Arms Like Annie. So it's not that you actually didn't do anything. You implemented an exercise habit.

Beth: That's true, yep, but as, I mean, we've talked about it in the community, many times, like, an exercise habit is wonderful and there's so many positive things you gain from an exercise habit, but you know, if I just change nothing about my dietary habits, my nutrition habits, you know, it may not make a big dent in my fat loss and it didn't but it did produce lots of other positives.

Jen: Absolutely, there's so many, you know, I would say fat loss is the last reason to work out. I mean, that's me personally, I don't know how other people feel but there's just so many health benefits to it that you don't even have to throw fat loss on the list, so but that's so, that's wonderful for you, really, holistically to have an exercise habit nailed and then you moved on to nutrition and-

Annie: You know, that's actually one of my favorite things about Beth is that she is posting her selfies, her gym selfies at ridiculous hours in the morning because sleep is, you know, a love hate thing with you sometimes, so you go to the gym in the morning by yourself and you post your selfie and half the time you're like "Look, I didn't want to do this but I'm here and now and now I feel better or now I know my day is going to like take off in a completely different direction had I hit the snooze alarm or turn off the alarm and not come at all" and I love that you own it, just like I own I don't like cooking. You don't really like exercise but you see the benefits, like, you feel better, your day goes better, the rest of your habits seem to fall in line, which you've said before, it's kind of a snowball habit, like, your day is just different when you exercise, right?

Beth: Yes, that whole, yeah, there's a lot I guess I'm trying to stay on topic, there's a lot to say about my gym habit and my selfies and all of that. I do find I don't enjoy exercise, it's not, I danced in, like, my youth, when I was pre-college I was a dancer and I loved that but I never really found that same level of enjoyment from any other kind of exercise, including like, people were like "You should take a group fitness class, that's like dance based." No thank you, I don't want to, I'm not interested. It's not the same. You know, and people are like "You should do the barre method." Please, no thank you. I will just not. I will just watch my daughters dance and I will get the same enjoyment from that and my sons. I get enjoyment from that but not with the exercise.

So I am, I did, I don't like cardio at all, and so I bought Arms like Annie and I think when I bought it there might not have been a spinoff group yet and it turned out the Facebook's spinoff group really helped me achieve consistency with my habit and I feel so ridiculous, I will be honest, like, the selfies feel ridiculous to be me most days. But so there's a couple things, I guess, on the selfie thing, one is, I was mentioned in a previous podcast about what if you hate exercise, so I do, I put selfies every day when I'm in the gym, partly to create a sense of accountability to the group that I've said I will do this and I will do it and I show up.

And as weird as it feels to me because I don't think I've done anything inspirational, like, I have women both in our community and women who like follow me on Instagram who are like, they feel that it is inspirational that I get up and I go to the gym.

Jen: It is. I find, sometimes I see them in the morning and I'm like "Oh, just go, Jen, just do it, Beth did it.

Annie: Beth did it, you can do it too.

Beth: It's hard for me to see it as inspirational. I really try and treat my social media like, I try to treat it like a real, when I was coming, when I was having kids, I'm a little older than, my kids are older than y'all's kids and when they were coming up I found it really hard, there wasn't as much social media and I felt really alone in hating being a mom, like I hated it and I felt alone, so when I tried to put myself out on social media in any way, I tried to be really honest about who I am and how it feels. So I do say, I hate cardio, I hate that I'm here in the gym, I say "I had to talk myself into every single set I did today."

And I feel like, I see that there are women who feel the same way and they do see it as inspirational that I went. It's funny because I kind of see it as just me like kvetching into the like universe but I see why people feel it's inspirational but also, I do the selfies for me. So a long time ago in the community, I think it was when I was in the public facing group, Jen had recommended something and I somehow came to to the work of Vivian McMaster, she's a photographer and she focuses on, she has programs focusing on self portraiture as part of, like, self acceptance and Annie said the same thing a number of times in the group, like, just taking pictures of ourselves and just seeing what we look like can get us to body neutrality.

Jen: We have a whole podcast, not a whole podcast but we've mentioned this in a podcast and it's the whole thing of if you don't like the way you look in photos, you shouldn't take less, you should take more and look at yourself more. You need to get used to the way you look.

Beth: Yeah, so I am, I really have tried to, like, so I will say I don't post a lot of unattractive selfies of myself, I'm still extraordinarily vain.

Annie: Yeah, like you're feeling yourself.

Beth: But I take, literally, in a month, probably thousands of selfies, like, I met admit how narcissistic that sounds but whatever, here it is. And they are attractive and unattractive and they are from angle that look good for me and the angles that don't because when I take them and I see myself I become, like,

inoculated against seeing myself. And there was a long time where I was taking a ton of gym selfies and I was feeling good because I was taking a specific angle and I was avoiding all the other angles and I went on a trip with my friends and somebody posted, you know, a picture of a group of us and "Ahhh!" It was like a wake up call that, like, OK, like, I've lost some of the honesty of this practice.

And I needed to get back to taking pictures and seeing myself for what it really is and this is just my body, this is just the body that I live in and it's fine and sometimes I feel really great about it and other times I feel kind of ambivalence about the whole thing and neither of those is the right emotion, they are just how I feel in that moment and so, I, so, yeah, so I take selfies for me as well I don't just take them to be an inspiration to the community.

Annie: I love it because, to me, to me it's an act of self-love and it's an expression of self-love and I think, it's, sometimes women need permission to do the same and when they see other women taking selfies at the gym from good angles, from bad angles, like, this is cute, I don't really like this but I'm going to post it anyway because this is me like it gives women the permission to do the same and in fact, along the same lines of kind of what both you and Jen were talking about is we don't really cultivate self love by just focusing on the stuff we love, it's also exploring the stuff that we maybe don't love or even the stuff we hate and like why do we hate this, what is it about this, where did this start, where did this come from?

Like and how can we move through that or at least like not be so dang uncomfortable with it, like you said when you see that photo, like, "Oh my god, delete, untag, get rid of that, I don't ever want to see it again!" Like maybe just sit with it, which we have a whole another podcast on that we can link in the show notes too but yeah, so I love that about you, Beth, I love that you, you just own it and if you've ever posted a selfie on social media best sees it, she is your top hype woman. She is like, liking that stuff, she's commenting, she's responding to your story, like, "Yes, woman, yes"

Jen: Women should, they should do that for each other, we should be celebrating each other non stop because we are coming out of an era where we shamed, we were shamed and we've shamed each other. We are coming out of that era and it's time we women need to stop hiding, post all the selfies.

Beth: Absolutely.

Annie: Beth will have, I'm just going to, I hope you don't mind me-

Jen: I'm going to post one today now. And I'm going to wait for Beth to comment on it.

Annie: I hope you don't mind me sharing, Beth but Beth, you even posted, because we're friends on Facebook, like, I think you said something like, I've had a glass of wine or something, post your selfies so I can hype you up. You were going to work, you're like "This is like, I'm going to spend, you know, X amount of time hyping up women in my life, like, telling them how awesome they are."

Jen: We're doing a selfie now.

Beth: Okay, sorry, i just needed to take one for the gram, I was doing it for the gram. So yes I, so I have a very boring career as a real estate attorney, it's not anything real super exciting and it's not the work that I, I mean-

Jen: It's not Law and Order?

Beth: No and I love what I do but it is not, it's not lifting up people, you know, the way that I want my life, the way I want my life's work to be and what I have come to realize is like, you can have a career and you can also have a life's work and they don't have to be the same thing and I really truly believe that my life's work is about helping people feel good about themselves and accepting themselves and so it's weird because, like, I'm not, I'm just a girl who has friends on Facebook.

Like, I'm not, I'm not, I don't have a public facing Facebook page and on how that's not what my life is about, I can only touch so many lives because I am a busy mom but I have a community of, especially because I went to law school late in life, I have a community of women who are younger than me who, I'm like, you could do this before you're 35, you could be in love with the life that you are choosing, you could be in love with it now and you can accept yourself radically now, you do not have to wait until you're an old woman, you don't have to wait until you have gray hair to decide to love what you look like and so I do. I will, especially, it's true if I drink I'm especially likely to just troll my friends' Instagrams.

Jen: Loving up on all of them.

Beth: But I will also, like, if I'm having a bad day I will ask people to post selfies in my comment sections so I can tell them how great they are because-

Jen: Oh, that's so lovely.

Beth: It really does make me feel better, like I feel better doing that and as Jen, I do think, I think loving yourself radically as a woman is a feminist act, like, I think it is saying to society that, like, you know, you can kick rocks, like, this is what we're doing now.

Jen: Yeah, we're loving each other, like we are, this is not a woman against woman society anymore..

Beth: No and I saw a meme the other day and it said something along the lines of "Who needs to send scandalous pictures to men when we can just celebrate each other" and that's how I feel, right, like, you don't have to, like I don't know, I don't care, you don't have to think I'm cute. Like, my girlfriends will hype me up and I am, I joke, I'm everybody's auntie on Facebook because if you post a selfie I am going to tell you how great you look. And I just, I, it's part of, I think, it's one of the things I love most about myself and so it matters.

Annie: I love it about you too.

Jen: I know that you have to go, Beth, so here's what I hear. I hear radical self acceptance, really bad A-S-S gym habit. Working out, building the guns every morning and as a byproduct of and you started implementing nutrition habits, balanced nutrition habits make you feel good and as a byproduct you have seen some weight loss that you are, I don't know if pleased is the right word, how do you feel about the weight loss? Because I know you are a very, you are, you've, you strongly identify with the feminist movement, I know that about you and so sometimes in the feminist circles weight loss is a touchy subject, right, because as you know it's been used to abuse women for so many years, so how do you feel as a strong feminist who has changed their nutrition habits and is losing weight?

Beth: You know, I'm pretty ambivalent about weight loss, if I'm being really honest. I, some of that is because of all the things you mentioned, right, like how our bodies look has been such a weapon against us over the centuries. And so

some of it's that and some of it is I have, well, I didn't do a lot of dieting in my life, I did do a lot of binge and restrict, just traditional trying not to eat the bad thing-

Jen: Just the traditional-

Beth: Just the traditional, you know, thing that we all do, I don't eat anything and then I eat all the things. So I have lost tremendous amounts of weight and been congratulated by the world and then have the experience of gaining it back and feeling like there was something wrong with me for having gained it back so I am a little bit ambivalent about weight loss for that reason, like, just that I want to make sure that I don't put too much of my value in it.

Jen: Right.

Beth: But, like, so I actually shared that my mother's in town right now and I shared this story with her the other day and I thought it was really, it's one of the things I gained from Balance 365 that I'm the most thankful for. I was in my doctor's office the other day and I told him I was, like, "Look, you know, I'm doing all this stuff and like the weight, really, like it's just, it's a slow slog. I feel like it's not coming off. I'm doing the things I'm supposed to do and it's not coming off."

And he told me, he said, "You know, you're an attorney who has 4 children. You live a very high stress life and it will be hard for you to lose weight, like it's going to be hard, like the stress is going to make it difficult," and he said, "So, you know, I wouldn't put a lot of weight on that. I wouldn't put a lot of your focus on trying to lose weight because it may not happen, you know" and it felt really, at first, really discouraging.

But there were lots of times in my life where if I had heard that message from a doctor that I would have been like "Well, I'm calling it. It's ice cream sundaes for the rest of the week and I'm staying in bed and I'm not going to the gym" and instead, I mean, this was probably 2 months ago, I have only increased my gym consistency and focused more on my eating because it really turns out weight loss is not my aim doing this, ultimately. I've stopped linking the things that I do for my health to how fat I am. Like I've just stopped linking those two things.

Jen: Good for you. The weight loss is just a byproduct, like, it really, you know, it's and that's what Balance365 is about and that's what a lot of women's journeys have to be is that weight loss is not a driver, it's not like, you know, where for a lot

of women it was, right? It was like wake up in the morning, OK, what do I have to do to lose weight today, right? Instead of going, waking up in the morning, saying "Hey, how am I taking care of me today?" and the byproduct of that, you know, it is what it is and for some people that could be weight loss.

Annie: And one of the kind of philosophies that we preach is that weight loss is not a behavior, it's not a habit, it's a byproduct or it can be a byproduct of our habits and that's not, that's, I mean, we're a habit based behavior change company, so we're focusing on behavior change that you're after, that's important to you, that matters to you, that works for you and if weight loss is a byproduct of that and you're comfortable with it, then we're comfortable with it.

Beth: Yeah, and that was a big plus for me here because I've always been like "What's your goal?" "Well, my goal is to lose 50 pounds or my goal is to lose two pant sizes or my goal is to, you know, whatever" and it was like it was revolutionary for me for my goal to be "I'm just going to show up at the gym," like, I'm just going to show up and I may not have any strength gains and I may not lose any weight and I may not have any result, there may not be a result, I'm just, my goal is something that I can control which is shocking because most of us have been in programs for our whole lives where the goal was something that in reality we have very little control over, right?

Jen: Right.

Beth: You can do all the things right, you can exercise perfectly and you still may not lose weight and you have no control over it so your goal is something you're like, I may never get to, that's the worst, who wants that kind of goal?

Jen: Yeah, I mean, I think you if you know your body well, you know, you can influence your weight, you know, that there are certain behaviors that influence weight loss but having, I mean this is why we have to be very careful with setting goal weights is that what if you, what if you are living a life you feel very healthy and balanced and you're not at that goal weight? Like, what are you willing to do, right and so it's sometimes it's just disappointing to set them, right, like?

Annie: Right, well and even in our experience after coaching thousands of women, you know, the goal weight that many women have for themselves is like so unrealistic. "Where did you get that number?" "Well, that's what I graduated high school at. That's what I got married at 30 years ago."

Jen: And you dieted for 6 months before your wedding day and now-

Annie: Yes and I think, you know, Jen and I talk about this all the time, you know, Jen and I similarly, we're within a year apart with 3 kids, same height but Jen and I have like a 50 pound difference between us and so for me to think that like, "I could be Jen's weight," or for Jen to think "Oh, I could be Annie's weight," like that's just absurd. Like it's just, like, not realistic on either end of the spectrum and so yeah, I think that's just something to consider when, if you're listening and you have a goal weight in mind or if that's, like, in your back pocket it's like maybe give that some thought-

Jen: Maybe focused on your behaviors and as an act of self-love you can let your weight be what it's going to be while you are pursuing behaviors that feel really good and really healthy for you.

Beth: Well and I don't, I guess, I didn't, I don't want to sound like, you know, like, I sound like a Debbie Downer, like, I feel ambivalent about weight loss and you might not lose anything and I should say I have lost 15 pounds since the beginning of September so it's not as if, I'm not trying to say, like, it's impossible to lose weight or you can't lose fat. Absolutely, it's possible but it's just for me, it's been very freeing to have goals that have nothing to do with my weight, that are just goals that I have control over so I don't want to make it sound like "Eh, lose weight"

Annie: Beth, I enjoy you so much. OK, real quickly and then we'll let you get on with your day because, you know, it's a nice Sunday afternoon before the holidays, perfect timing for a podcast. If someone was on the fence and they were listening about joining Balance365 what advice would you give them?

Beth: I think there is never, I don't think there's anyone who couldn't benefit from the program. So I will start by saying, "I think you should do it." And alternatively, as a second thing, if you are in a position where, like, you're worried, like, financially I don't know if I can do it, or you know, if you have reasons that you are holding yourself back that are valid ones that for you, then I do think, my experience is that there is certainly benefit to being in the group before you're ready to make changes but it's OK to wait, it's OK to wait until you're ready.

So if you feel like it's not right then maybe it's not right right now but there's no one who I wouldn't say "Yeah this is a program that you can benefit from." So,

you know do it, you can hang with me in the slow start club. There's a lot of us, there are a lot of us in the slow start club and I think now, kind of my purpose, it's not another life's work but like my goal in the group is to kind of try and help those people who are still hanging back, wanting to start, not knowing how to.

Jen: We have a lot of Balance365ers who are listening and so if you and some of them are like, they're holding back from just getting started, so what would your advice be because I saw you tell somebody the other day in the group, I'm not sure what the post was about but you said "Hey look, I waited two years, I think, you waited two years to get started and that was a big mistake."

Beth: Yeah.

Jen: So what would your advice be to move people out of that zone of like-

Annie: Contemplation.

Jen: I've started but not starting, I've purchased but I'm not starting.

Beth: I think I would say, "OK, so I think, my personal opinion is that starting with the balancing one meal is the right way to go. Now, that was what was right for me, not everybody is going to start the same way and but I'm speaking to people that for whom balancing a meal would be a good way to start and here's what I would say to those people: you have to eat something for dinner tonight anyway.

Jen: Right, you might as well balance it.

Beth: You have to. It's not as if your stress means you don't eat dinner, in fact, most of us are here because our stress means extra dinner, so like, if you are in a red zone and Annie and I, when we tried to record this in the past and I was so sick, we talked a lot about how I have ambivalent feelings about the red zone as well, like it's not, I kind of feel like "Eh, if you don't want to do it, don't do it. For me, that's a big part of what I love about the community is there's not this sense of like "No excuses," like, there aren't really truly, there are no excuses, you just, you know, you either do it or you don't do it, because you want to or because you feel like you can or whatever, it's fine. If you don't do it, you don't do it. Nobody is watching.

Jen: And no one's judging you.

Beth: Like, I don't care. I don't care if eat a balanced dinner, like, you're cool. I have met so many wonderful women in the community and you know what, if they don't eat a balance dinner, I could give two, right?

Jen: Well, some people don't take action because they feel like, especially in this sort of "wellness industry area" they they don't take action because first of all, taking action in the past has been this big thing, overhauling their life, it's not like, "Hey, just balance your dinner. It's just like this one thing." It's like this overhaul, right and number two is you feel like people are watching you and you're going to be judged and you're going to get this right or you're going to get it wrong and it's like, we're not here to judge you, we're not here, you can't pass or fail. This isn't a, you know, we're just working at change, all together.

Beth: Yeah, I guess, so yeah, I guess my advice would be just pick a meal and balance it and it feels, I know it feels like there's 7000 things that are keeping you from doing it, I know it feels that way, because we all feel that way, we all feel like, like you said, it might be the judgment of past diets or it might be fear of failure or it might be actual things, right it might be a sick child or a marriage that's falling apart or it could be any number of things. I have interpersonal problems too. I have and that's not to say, "I have these problems and if I can do it you can do it." I mean, we're all going to live that way forever. I have yet to meet a mom who's like my day is just so smooth and I have nothing to do with my time except meal plan and make perfectly balanced dinners. Like, I've never met that woman. I've never met her.

Jen: Yeah.

Beth: I don't think she exists. I think she's fake and so you're going to make dinner tonight. You are going to. You're going to eat something so choose to eat something that is closer to what you think would help you achieve your goals. So, for me that meant just planning, I'm going to be honest, like I said, I go to Pudova, I buy chicken and I throw it on top of a bag salad, that is what I eat like 3 nights a week when my children are not home because it means I don't have to do anything. It's my favorite and I probably would eat it 7 days a week if my children were not home and I didn't have to feed them.

Jen: Beth, do you feel better? Like, I mean, is there anything, like, can we attach some feelings to this? So because eating balanced meals isn't about, we're not

guiding women into eating more balanced meals for weight loss, that's not our primary driver, do you feel better eating more balanced meal?

Beth: So yes, one, like, digestive health is better, obviously, when you eat vegetables, friends, like that's just true.

Jen: It's just yes.

Beth: It's just a fact about your digestive tract and my digestive health is better when I eat vegetables. I personally have some gall bladder issues and when I'm balancing my fats I feel better in that sense and I think my sleep has improved since I've been implementing more balanced eating, probably some of that is because if I'm not going through the drive through I'm less likely to drink caffeinated beverages late in the day.

Jen: Right.

Annie: Right.

Beth: So there's a number of things that I think are positive and some of it, I won't lie, some of it is that fat loss has been a byproduct has also made me more comfortable in my body in a number of ways and so I think there's lots of positives that have come from eating a balanced dinner.

Jen: Yeah, I mean, I heard from one of our members as far as the fat loss, she said you know it's the little things like bending down to tie my shoes and not having, you know, all this fat in the way, it's like physical comfort that she quite enjoys about losing weight off her body and I think that's OK to talk about, right, like there's only so much we can control each of us individually and as long as we're talking inside the constructs of what you, what is possible and achievable for you I think that's, you know, totally OK.

And the other reality is that in the culture we live in that is so, so guided by diet culture a lot of women, a lot of women the bodies they are in are a result of years, decades of dieting and sometimes implementing these habits and seeing fat loss is about taking back the body you were meant to have before you got into this binge and restrict cycle that the diet industry pushed you into, resulting in actually living in a larger body than what is healthy and just your, what your natural body is, right and I'm here for that, too, right, so we say about Balance365, we're not trying to help women live at a body weight that's leaner

than what's healthy for them, we're trying to get you to reclaim the body you were meant to have.

Annie: I love these conversations with Beth because it's, like, not just about, like, this exterior, like, this has a very deeply rooted, deeply seated meaning of exploring, like, your relationship with yourself, your relationship, how your relationship with the world affects your relationship with your family and your other relationships and like, how, it just changes how you show up in the world on so many levels and so I just always love Beth's perspective.

Jen: Me too.

Annie: Yeah, OK, Beth, I know you have places to go, would you mind sharing your Instagram handle?

Beth: Sure, my instagram handle is bethiclaus, beth like my name, i, claus, like Santa Claus and you can follow me, I think it's set to public right now but I'll probably get a private but if you ask to follow me and you're a woman-

Jen: She'll let you.

Beth: I definitely will let you. If you're a man, who know, maybe not.

Jen: We're going to link to your Instagram account in the show notes.

Beth: Girlfriends only. And so yeah, I mean, yes, if you follow me and then you do an Instagram story, there's like a 90 percent chance if you put a selfie in there you'll get feedback from me.

Jen: Praise emojis and heart eyes.

Beth: Positive affirms only as I like to say.

Annie: Yeah, it's, what a great, you know, it's like dropping a pebble into a pond and watching the ripple, like, expand out. It's wonderful. I think that's such a great way to spend your time. I can't, like how valuable is that, making other women feel good or just encouraging other women to feel good, so thank you both for joining, Jen, this was fun that you were able to join for a member spotlight. It was enjoyable.

Jen: Yes.

Annie: Even in your house coat.

Jen: Yes and now we can all go and enjoy Christmas.

Annie: I know, I know but it's going to be way past Christmas by the time this comes out so-

Beth: Merry Christmas, y'all.

Annie: Merry belated Christmas. Alright, thank you ladies, we'll talk soon.

Beth: Bye.

Jen: Bye.