

Balance365 Episode 68 Transcript

Annie: Welcome to Balance 365 life radio, a podcast that delivers honest conversations about food, fitness, weight and wellness. I'm your host Annie Brees along with Jennifer Campbell and Lauren Koski. We are personal trainers, nutritionists and founders of Balance365. Together we coach thousands of women each day and are on a mission to help them feel healthy, happy, and confident in their bodies on their own terms. Join us here every week as we discuss hot topics pertaining to our physical, mental and emotional wellbeing with amazing guests. Enjoy.

Thank you so much for joining us for another episode of Balance365 Life radio. We are back today with our mini series called Member Spotlights. This allows us to introduce you to Balance365 community members who are just killing it inside the program so that you can take their wisdom and stories and learn from them. They're 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 was determined to make changes to her habits in hopes of making a positive impact on her children's lives.

Bethann is a seasoned member of our community who came to us looking for help in healing her postpartum body and has since stopped obsessing about food and exercise, lost 30 pounds, connected with true hunger and fullness cues and become more comfortable with taking up space in the world. I can't wait for you to hear more about this mom of three's experience inside Balance365. enjoy!

Jen. We have a special guest with us today. Are you so excited to have her on?

Jen: I am. She's like an old friend.

Annie: I know. Well, she actually is an old friend of mine because I got to meet her back when I took a trip to Arizona.

Jen: Oh right! When John went to Phoenix.

Annie: About eight months ago?

Jen: You had a little meet up with all the Phoenix-

Annie: And there's was a lot of them too, which was great-

Jen: girls.

Annie: Yeah. So Bethann, welcome to Balance365 Life radio. How are you?

Bethann: Good, thank you. Thanks for having me.

Annie: Oh, thanks for joining us. I'm so excited to have you because we did get to meet in Arizona. And I think you messaged me, I posted an insta story that was like, "I'm in Arizona" and you were like, "Can we have coffee?" And then the next thing I know there was like eight of you and it was great. It was so fun to meet in real life, not just on the Internet.

Bethann: I know. I was so excited and I remember getting ready to come meet you and my husband was like, are you going on a date? I was like, "Oh my gosh, I'm fangirling!" I was just so excited because you guys have literally you, the three of you have changed my life in the best way. So I was so excited just to be able to thank you in person.

Annie: Oh, I remember you picking me up in your minivan. It's just like quintessential-

Jen: Mom date.

Bethann: Yes, that's a mom date. That's exactly it. The first thing you said was, "Is your van always this clean? Do you have children?" It's like, I do, but my husband's very tidy so they are not allowed to eat in our car.

Annie: Yeah, I remember, I was like, "Is this new? Like did you just get this yesterday?"

Jen: When my husband gets in my vehicle, he's like, "It smells like a barn in here." Like yeah, Kinda.

Annie: There's probably a lot of snacks in the back too If you're hungry-

Jen: Open a window. There's some French fries on the ground at your feet there.

Annie: And if you look in the crevices, I bet you can find some goldfish.

Jen: That's exactly what my vehicle is like.

Annie: Oh, Bethann's husband is probably just having an attack right now listening to us.

Bethann: Well, he's at work.

Annie: Oh good. So you have been a longtime member. Do you remember when you joined Balance365.

Bethann: I want to say it was 2015, so that was the year my twins were born and I actually found you because I had a really bad muscle separation from carrying my twins. And I found that out because I had a hernia after they were born and I had a CT scan done to see how bad that was. And my doctor says, "Oh, and you have diastasis recti." And I was like, "Well, what is that?" And he talked about it a little bit and I realized I probably had that after my first son was born and nobody mentioned it. I just had that six week follow up and they said, you can exercise like you normally do, which I did and probably should not have been doing some of the things I was doing and then I started searching because he basically said, don't do planks or situps-

Jen: Right, there's not a lot of instruction from the medical community on what is, like, rehab appropriate and how to scale that back into a regular exercise routine postpartum.

Bethann: Right. And that kind of scared me because I'm like, "Well, I like to exercise." So then I started searching and then I found the Mama Lion Strong website.

Jen: Oh, crazy. That doesn't even exist anymore, that website.

Bethann: And I found a little bit, Brianna Battle's website. And then that of course left led me to the Healthy Habits, Happy Moms' Facebook group. So, which gave me a lot of really great information. And then actually I had just done a couple of cycles of a 21 day program.

Jen: We know what you're talking about.

Annie: We know about that.

Bethann: And then as I kind of dove further into the Healthy Habits group, I was like, "What am I doing?" I had done, like when I was younger, I'd done Weight Watchers, you know, in college and the more I read, I was just like, "I'm newly postpartum. Why am I dieting? Why am I worrying about this stuff right now?" And so the more I read, you know, and the more I got into the healthy habits group, I just kind of just stopped doing all it, stopped doing all that stuff at night. The first thing I did was unfollowing, I think I remember it was a post that Jen did that said stop following these kinds of toxic people and these toxic groups on Facebook and Instagram.

Jen: Yeah, because they become part of your environment, right? Because social media is part of our environment now. Like, let's get real. The amount of time, I think I read a study that says the average woman is on her phone five hours a day, which is crazy. But I don't really want to look at what my phone usage is anyways. But it is part of our environment. And when your social media environment is all about weight loss or different unkind, unempowering messages towards women, that becomes your reality. Right?

Annie: I would offer even a not meaning to have a negative impact on your life. There's some posts that can be really positive in nature, but for whatever reason they just don't make you feel good.

Bethann: Right.

Annie: And those should be unfollowed too. Maybe for now, forever, for temporary.

Bethann: And I was just thinking, I was like, you know, when you're already in that postpartum space with all the hormones and you know, you're dealing with all those body changes. And I'm like, "This is a really good idea. I need to just kind of back off from this stuff and get to a better head space." And the messages in the Healthy Habits group are really positive. And all the women were really positive for the most part. And I was like, "This is really the space I need to be in right now to get to a better place." And-

Jen: I think it's quite, it's just, it's like world shifting for a lot of people.

Bethann: It is.

Jen: It's a perspective that you have never been exposed to for some women. Right?

Bethann: Right.

Jen: It sounds like you shifted from thinking you can fix yourself with weight loss to realizing your body needed healing after having twins. And also what women really need to fix themselves isn't weight loss. It's a better relationship with themselves and food.

Bethann: Yeah, I think a lot of women don't. And for me, just as an aside, I lost my mom at 10 to cancer. So I didn't have a woman in my life that really taught me about what most of what I learned about being a woman is from magazines or, what other women or girls around me were learning from magazines. So like all of those, like, you know, the Cosmo and Young Miss and all of those kind of horrible headlines on magazines were like the things that we're picking up. And, and I was like, it's not about makeup and swimsuits and diets and hair removal and any of those products or any of that stuff they push at you. But it took me to 2015 to get that because I didn't have anybody in my life that was able to be like, "No, no, no, no, no. This is all marketing. This isn't how you person"-

Jen: Totally.

Bethann: "This isn't how you become fully realized or happy with yourself." So to find a group of women who, like, "This is a bunch of BS, there are other things that fulfill you, you know, or even that I've always struggled with that concept that, you know, it's women against women. Like I always, whenever I had girlfriends who were like, "I don't like that girl because of this." And I was always like, "I'm not getting involved."

Jen: Right.

Bethann: Like, why is it like that? Why is it, why, why is it like that? I never quite understood that. And when I found Healthy Habits I was like "All of these women are uplifting each other and cheering each other on." It was like, these are my people. Like I was still happy. I always have trouble really making connections with girlfriends because there would be people, like I'd always meet women like that and I'm like, "I'm not doing this thing." So I'm moving on.

Jen: Yeah. Which is another culturally prescribed behavior, right? That we're sort of pitted against each other. You see it in movies, you see it, you know, in different media that we have to compete for men. And there's just a big scary, you know, we have to be the thinnest. We have to, you know, there's just this big scarcity thing around beauty and -

Bethann: Around everything. I feel like scarcity is a big theme.

Jen: Well, scarcity drives consumerism, right. So-

Bethann: And we don't need any of that stuff, really. We don't.

Jen: Yeah. So were, you know, and we need to, you know, I think what we're trying to achieve is getting women to expand their definition of health and happiness.

Bethann: Yeah.

Jen: Past all the superficial stuff we've been sold that bring us happiness. Right?

Bethann: Right, right. And I'm just, I'm so glad I, I'm just so happy to be here and I just feel like so much more of a, like a fuller more well rounded, happy, fulfilled person.

Jen: Awesome. We love that.

Bethann: Than I did before. I mean, so many wonderful things have come into my life since.

Annie: Before we started recording I was just asking you some questions about this episode because having known you for a while I've seen some behavior changes or some non scale victories and even some scale victories that you've celebrated inside the group. And I just kind of blanketly said, "How has your life changed?" And you shared about the diastasis recti healing and you've shared that you have lost some weight, which was maybe a goal of yours at one time. But what I really loved about what you said to me, you said, "I've stopped obsessing about food and exercise and about what my kids eat, but maybe most importantly, I found my clan that helped me find my voice to speak up for myself and to allow myself to take up space in this world." And I think that's like, that's just beautiful. That's really great.

Bethann: I really feel like I can, I used to not really say what I thought about things. Like I definitely had an opinion, but I didn't think my voice mattered all that much on issues. And now I'm not afraid to just say like, "Listen, I don't care if you agree with me or not. I think this is important.

Annie: And I think when you start acting and believing out of this place of self worth and value just innately because you're human and that you should be treated with respect regardless of your body shape or size or how much you weigh or what food you eat and you're a good person because you're living, breathing person, it spills out to everything in your life and it started affecting how you see people and how you treat people and then in turn what you expect in response and sometimes, like, the stuff that was cutting it years ago isn't okay. Like I identify with the, you know, cutting down of other women when I was really insecure and self conscious, I did that to other women a lot because that's kind of how I talked about myself. And then once I increased my self worth and my value and became more at peace with my body as is, that stuff just melted away.

Jen: So such a shift from focusing on the negative of what you saw on other women to focusing on the positive. And as Annie mentioned, that often comes as we build up our own self love, we suddenly feel more loving towards and less judgemental to people around us, which is just such a wonderful headspace to be in.

Bethann: Yeah, it's just really nice to just be able to put that positive energy out into the world. Especially, you know, with so much negative things going on.

Jen: Right. And you can't put that out there if you are existing in a universe where you feel very negative about yourself. But second to that is that you are, you are depleted, you are empty cup, you have nothing to put out in the world when you have an empty cup. So it's just that cycle of loving yourself, caring for yourself, and if everybody in our society did it, you know what that could do.

Annie: Yeah. Good people bring out the good in people. Right? So, Bethann, let's dive into, let's shift gears a little bit and dive into the habits that were game changers for you in the program because I know you had a couple, do you want to share those?

Bethann: For me it was a true hunger and goldilocks, really. I had, because I'd been in the Healthy Habits group for so long, I had, like, daily movement and

neat down really well, hydration was down really well for me and balanced meals cause I'd done the powerball challenges several times before I did Balance365, but the things are really struggled with was I felt like I didn't know when I was hungry or when I was full ever. And I think part of that was doing, I've done several cycles of Weight Watchers and they were big on having, like, always have a snack with you always know when your next meal is a the five to six small meals, you know, make sure you have your points. And I made like doing the points you could eat, literally eat garbage, you know, within your

points range.

And I really had no idea when I was hungry or when I was full. I mean, I had no idea. So I really stopped doing that. And I did, you know, I was pretty good at meal prep already and so I would just wait until I felt hungry for breakfast and then once I did that and I was actually getting enough protein, that was really huge. The true hunger thing was really huge because then I was like, I am not hungry at noon, at lunch. Right. I'm not, I'm not hungry when my kids are hungry for lunch. I'm hungry at one 30. I'm not, I don't have to eat when they eat. And then that actually stopped the, you know, when they wanted snacks. I don't actually like Goldfish. I would always eat snack with them. I didn't like them. They don't taste that great.

Jen: Wait a moment.

Bethann: Or like, or some of the like, I don't really like animal crackers, you know, some of the things that would snack on with them, "I'm like, I don't really enjoy that." I realized I'm not hungry and that doesn't even taste good. So, and then after I got that down, I would actually, I kind of stopped eating breakfast and lunch with the kids and I started doing those two meals separate from them. So when they would like, either go down for a nap or were playing quietly, I would take my time and eat really, really slow. And then I realized, like, I actually can't eat all of this food, like the power bowls, like as you know, the rest of it, the portion sizes are a little bit too big for me and I would actually sometimes eat the, some of the lunch power bowls for the second half for dinner. I didn't realize, you know, I was like, "Oh that is way too much food for me."

I didn't realize before, but then getting to that point and then sometimes I would notice, um, like throughout the month, kind of along with my cycle, like just before my cycle I would be super hungry, I could eat a whole powerball. So it was really,

those two were really taking it very slow and listening to my body and listening to the different times throughout the month too cause my need would change. Sometimes they'd be really hungry and sometimes I wouldn't. Sometimes I'd need more, sometimes it would be less. So it really depended on, it also would depend on how much sleep I got.

Jen: Totally.

Bethann: If I got enough sleep then I wouldn't eat as much. If I wasn't getting enough sleep, my body would need more energy to keep me going. Especially with, you know, when I had like three toddlers running around, there was a lot more to do. So it was really, but it was, that was really, now it's easy, but at first it was really hard work because I really had to like slow down and sit with it for awhile and listen.

Jen: And probably be imperfect. I think a lot of people struggle with this like, "What if I get this wrong?" And it's like "You are going to get it wrong. Guess what? You're going to get it wrong a lot of times before you get it right."

Bethann: I would like, stop. I'd be like, "Okay, I definitely feel full. But then 45 minutes later I'd be like, I'm definitely hungry." So I would go back and eat until I felt full again and then so it was definitely kind of messy.

Jen: Yeah, it always is.

Annie: That's part of balance that's exploring what's too much and what's too little. Like that's how you find balance. And then like you said, Bethann, sometimes it ebbs and it flows. Like you do need a little bit more food for whatever reason or a little bit less food.

Bethann: I felt like, it was just like I didn't stress about it. That was one of the things, like I would always go back to the material and one of the things, so I was like "Don't stress about it" or I would write down, I would take notes and be like, okay, well, you know, I kind of felt, like, I would think about how I felt about it and be like, I just felt more hungry. Like I was trying to be kind of like, "Whatever." I was more hungry. It's just food, right? It's not, I have to pay attention to what I needed. Not, it wasn't a want, it wasn't a, I wasn't having an emotional response to it. I actually physically felt hungry. So I really tried to go "Am I physically hungry or am I emotionally having a problem here that I need to work through?" And it

was, you know, and sometimes it wasn't emotional thing. And I was like, "I really need a nap," or I really need to just, I want to eat this because I really am just stressed out.

Jen: And sometimes that is what you need and that's fine. It's all about frequency, right? Like how often some people don't have any other tools in their toolbox for coping with stress then to eat. And that can become a big problem if, especially if you have a very stressful life., right?

Bethann: And I did use those, the two questions, like what did I do well today? What did I learn? I actually had a reminder on my calendar, on my phone. And so at the end of each day, I would journal that. And then I would say like, "So today I learned I was feeling stressed about this. And my response to that was I either, like, coped pretty well with it by doing, you know, I meditated or I stretched or I went for, I took the kids for a walk because I was feeling anxious and upset about this. Or I talked to my therapist or I did this, or I didn't handle it as well as I would've liked and I ate a sleeve of Oreos but then I would write after it, "That's okay." Like at the time I did something, like, I would prefer I didn't do, I always reminded myself that it was okay. Because it was just one response in the whole of the journey. It was that day's response. It wasn't like I did it for a year. I did it that one situation. That's what I love about the Balance365 thing. Right. it's you doing it right. It's, you working through it. It's not prescribed. There's not meals, there's not points. There's not rules.

Jen: It's not a pass or fail program.

Bethann: Right. .

Jen: It's a journey of self exploration and you can't fail at learning what works for you.

Bethann: Exactly. So there's no, you're not going to get slapped on the wrist. Right. So I would write that saying "It's okay" was me saying you have permission to figure it out. So that was a big thing for me. Like you have permission to do what you need to do to figure it out. And so now I'm at the point where I can have a package of Oreos and I remember posting, like "I've had this package of Oreos in my pantry with like an Arrow to where it was and I forgot about it for three months."

Jen: Yeah. Like, how does that happen?

Bethann: Unopened for three months. And they're my, like, I am not a big store bought cookie person, but those were my favorite store bought cookies and I forgot I put them in my pantry. I bought them for me and I forgot about them. And I was like, "How did I get to that point?" Because they were kind of like my stress cookie.

Jen: Well, you're not preoccupied with them any more and food preoccupations come from restricting and dieting. And when people approach changing their nutrition, they immediately go to, "Okay, what are all the bad foods I'm eating? What do I have to cut out? What do I not have control around?" But I guess what we have to understand is that it's actually the restricting that is causing those preoccupations and in order to fix this issue, you can't fix it at stopping and restricting. You have to address, you have to stop restricting that is the answer, which is very scary for some people.

Bethann: Yeah. I mean, now I can keep all sorts of things in the house where I'm just like, "Yep, we've got that in the pantry and I don't really care."

Jen: And it's just food. It's always going to be there. It's not, it doesn't have any power over you Yeah, totally. It's a great place to be. I wanted to circle back a bit to calories because you talked about being a point counter and all of that and we have a podcast on calorie counting in which Lauren does a good deep dive into the science behind calorie counting. I think we talk about when it hurts, when it helps, but one of the main issues is if anyone listening has an extensive history of counting calories or points or you know, whatever it is, one of the drawbacks of that is that it can disconnect you from your hunger and satiety cues. And our hunger and satiety cues are, honestly, our best calorie counters. And if you want to punch into a machine and get a rough estimate of what your daily energy expenditure is, that's fine.

That can, but it is just an estimate because as you mentioned, our caloric needs change on a daily basis. If I go for a long run, one day, my caloric needs are different than the days when I'm sitting at my desk working most of the days, most of the day, if I am pmsing my body actually needs 90 to 300 calories extra those days than it does when I'm not premenstrual. And so when you're disconnected from your hunger and satiety, and when you aren't honoring your hunger and satiety, then you're going to be fighting with it. And it's always going

to be this wrestle with your body of "Wow, you know, I feel hungry or I'm having these cravings, but I couldn't possibly, I'm at my point level for the day. " And as we know and have discussed in this podcast that wrestling with your body being at war with your body, you just never win it. I don't know really anyone who's winning that. Right, it inevitably leads to a binge and bad feelings and that cycle that almost every woman is stuck in.

Bethann: I think I remember getting my points range for Weight Watchers and then like anytime I would go over I just felt bad about myself.

Annie: So Bethann, I think, your experience with hunger and Goldilocks is, or I know, I don't think, I know is something that is been life changing for a lot of women in the program, myself included. It was such a game changer habit. And, what would you say are, in addition to the hunger and Goldilocks habits and all the other habits that you mentioned, what would you say, what's been the outcome so far of your effort into the program?

Bethann: So, I've definitely, like, my body composition has changed, and I have lost weight but that, like I said, it wasn't my main focus because I feel like I gained a lot more self confidence and self love and value. But also just for my family, for my boys, I don't really worry about what they eat. I notice too, even like when we go to the donut shop and they'll pick out donuts, they don't eat the whole donut, they eat what they want and then they push it away, which to me really says something like they, that's a sweet treat. And that's not something, we don't get donuts every single day. But even then, you know, I know a lot of adults would be like "Donuts!" And they eat the whole thing.

Jen: And some kids, once they get to a certain age, right? Like this is a skill we all kind of innately have. These are cues. Like when we have to go to the bathroom, we go to the bathroom. When we're tired, we go to sleep, our hunger and satiety are cues that we have and the thing is adults take that away from kids, right? By trying to control and restrict and tell them "This is good and this is bad" and if we didn't take that away from them then we'd probably all be okay today, but we're not.

Bethann: Yeah. And that was another thing that he said, he came back and he said, "Sugar is bad," and I said, "Sugar is not bad. Sugar is in everything." He said, "Well, what do you mean?" I said, "Well, this apple you're eating has sugar, that orange has sugar, the potatoes have sugar, the bread has sugar." I said,

"Sugar is not bad. It's in everything." I said, "It's not the only thing you want to eat. We want to eat some of everything." I said, "It's just part of, it's just food. Everything is just food." So you can't, no, you can't just survive on donuts, but you also can't just survive on carrots. We can't survive on ham. So-

Annie: There's that balance and moderation coming back again.

Bethann: So, you know, I, so I just have to, I kind of feel like, I'm like, okay, "Yep, that's what they said in school. But remember, you know, it's about what your body needs. If you ate just donuts all day you wouldn't feel very good, but if you ate just carrots, you wouldn't feel very good either. It's like, yeah, I know that. So, you know, I just kind of go back to it and it's the same with exercise I said, you know, "You can't run all day. You need to go to bed too or you need to sit and rest or you need to stretch. I mean, you can't just do that." And I exercise in front of the kids. My parents never ever exercised at all. So I was not an athletic kid in the least. An I did not, I did not do team sports in school, anything like that. It took me a really long time to find movement I liked. Arms Like Annie really helped me. I really.

Jen: I'm on week 20 myself, actually, on Arms Like Annie program.

Bethann: I'm doing Everyday Strong right now because I finished Arms like Annie, so I'm doing Everyday Strong then I'm going to go back to Arms Like Annie, but I really like weight lifting and I really like feeling strong. So I do it with the boys. They really love the inchworms and mountain climbers. The four year olds, the twins are like, "Is it an inch worm and Mountain Climber Day?" And they're down on the floor and it's really, really cute. But I love that they go, "Mom, is it time to exercise? Where's your workbook?" Because I printed it out. So then, "Where's the workbook? Let's do the timer for the 30 seconds. Are we dancing? Are we doing jumping jacks?" Like they know the workout and they're asking which day we're doing, "Do we need the resistance band or do you need your dumbbell?" And they know all of the workouts. And then even sometimes we do the videos on Youtube, we'll put it on the TV and, and they go, "Oh, is that Annie or is that Jen?" They know everybody and it's really great because they will come out and they'll come, they'll, you know, do everything with everyone.

Annie: And, well, I even remember when I was in Arizona, I think I ended up like sending you like a FaceTime. Did we facetime?

Bethann: He's like, "Will, Annie say hi to me?"

Annie: Like we're real humans.

Jen: That's adorable.

Bethann: I know, like, you guys are celebrities to my kids so, they're in the living room. They were like, "Are you talking to Annie and Jen?" "Yes. Right now." Oh my gosh, they're so excited.

Annie: Maybe we need to branch out and do a kids exercise programs.

Jen: Yeah, we can get ourselves a Sunday morning special.

Bethann: But they could keep up with the adult stuff you do. I mean, they're like, "Are we doing the Sweaty Betty today?"

Annie: Oh, I love it.

Jen: Oh that's so cute!

Bethann: You know, all of it. What I like is that I can do it in the living room with the kids.

Annie: Yes. Well, Bethann, thank you so much for your time.

Jen: Yes, thank you.

Annie: I appreciate it. This is so good chatting with you, and I know you're going to inspire a lot of our community members to make changes for their kids and for themselves along the way, because yes, let's end those predatory companies.

Bethann: Yes. Thanks so much for having me. You guys have really just, you make the world a better place. Thank you so much.

Annie: Thank you for being a part of it.

Jen: Thank you.

Annie: Okay. We'll chat soon.

Bethann: Okay.

Annie: Okay, thank you

Bethann: Bye.

Jen: Bye.

Annie: This episode is brought to you by the Balance365 program. If you're ready to say goodbye to quick fixes and false promises and yes to building healthy habits and a life you're 100% in love with then check out Balanced365.co to learn more.