

# Balance365 Episode 79 Transcript

Annie: Welcome to Balance365 Life Radio, a podcast that delivers honest conversations about food, fitness, weight and wellness. I'm your host Annie Brees along with 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.

Annie: Thanks so much for joining us here at 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 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 make changes to her habits in hopes of making a positive impact on her children's lives. Suzie is a seasoned member of our community and this mom of two started dieting when she was just 17 and since spent years losing and regaining the same way over and over. But since being diagnosed with MS Suzie knew that achieving and maintaining a healthy weight was important to her.

Annie: She was also adamant that she didn't want to pass on this cycle of dieting to her two kids. Since joining Balance365 Suzie has not only lost what felt like to her an effortless 40 pounds, but she's also adopted a totally different mindset that's allowed her to embrace the gray areas of life and claims that Balance365 has changed every aspect of her life for the better. I can't wait for you to hear more about Suzie's journey with Balance365. Enjoy. Suzie, welcome to Balance365 Life radio. How are you?

Suzie: I'm fantastic. How are you?

Annie: I am so great. I think it's so fun. You are, tell everyone where you're from. I won't spoil the fun.

Suzie: I'm from Auckland, New Zealand.

Annie: So it's actually, it's four o'clock here on a Tuesday afternoon and it is what, eight or nine o'clock on Wednesday there?

Suzie: Yeah.

Annie: Yes. I think it's so funny because this is one of my biggest skill sets that has probably been developed since starting Balance365 has been my time zone, I'm able to manage time zones because Lauren, Jen and I are all in three different time zones, so, and we have a worldwide community, so I feel like I'm getting pretty good at this stuff. And there's nice time zone converter websites too that I use so I'm like, I always am like, "Okay, what zone are you in? Okay, I'm in central, so you're six hours ahead" or you know, whatever. But, well thank you for getting up early and joining us. We have been, you've been on our list of people to have on our show for a while because you've had quite the experience and Balance365 and I asked you some questions in the outline ahead of time and I would love if you would just take a few moments to tell everyone about your experience growing up. Like, did you, have you been a dieter before? What was your experience when you were younger? What was that like?

Suzie: Oh, well I was first introduced to dieting. My brother was actually doing bodybuilding and I was 17 and just my last year of high school and I said "I joined the gym", thinking "I joined the gym, that's going to be great. Everything's easy, the weight's going to fall off, weight loss is two-thirds nutrition, diet and one third exercise." And I was like, "Okay." And then he said, "You should go see my nutritionist." So I went to the nutritionist and she introduced me and took a great before photo of me when she was, introduced me to Body for Life and the 12 week challenge. And I was very uncomfortable, being put on a bikini to take a photo of myself. And she's like, "Don't worry, I will take a beautiful photo of you afterwards. You'll look great, 12 weeks, you know, you could enter the challenge. It's really cool." And then one other thing she said to me, cause I was, you know, seventeen and wanting to drink with my friends and things like that then she said, "Oh, you can, you can drink when you're skinny." And I was like, "Oh, okay. Yep. That's what we'll do. I'll drink later." So I hadn't drank for a good few years-

Annie: But not until then, you cannot drink until you're skinny was the message you heard.

Suzie: No, you can't drink til your skinny. Like, "You are fat, you're wrong. You must only drink when you're skinny and save it for then and then it's going to be okay for you." And then bad fight so I ended up moving in with my dad which was great cause he's always been, always there in the house. He's always, you know, he's been that rock that's always been there. Never moved or anything. So that was really good. So I moved back in with him and then I started going to uni. And then I started Weight Watchers. Because I'd regained all the weight that I'd lost and probably some more. And then, so I did that at uni and you know, I went down again and lots of praise. Oh my gosh, you look amazing. And then I regained it all back again after I stopped doing Weight Watchers.

Suzie: And I started my first job after uni and I got diagnosed with MS and that really sort of knocked my confidence and then was a really hard time, I think getting through a diagnosis, which is a degenerative disease and you just so many unknowns, you don't know what you're going to be like when you're older. You don't know what's going on, what the future holds kind of thing. So there was a lot of comfort eating in there.

Annie: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Suzie: And then I went back to Weight Watchers again, more praise, more praise. You are looking so good, look, wow. You look so good. You're amazing. And you know, pretty restrictive. And then I got to a point where I was like, "I don't know what my life is going to be like." And so my mom was like, "You should go traveling now, while you still can," kind of thing. So I moved to London and the UK for four years. I was planning to go for two years and I stayed four and I found myfitnesspal, but it was, it was difficult, you know, big life changes, moving overseas, whole new country, whole new people, whole new culture, drinking culture, big drinking culture and for me, you know, with the MS, you're not supposed to really drink anyway. So luckily I was prepared with my "No, I'm okay not drinking."

Annie: Yes.

Suzie: Which was a good thing to come out of MS. That's good. And then back to myfitnesspal. Oh No. I found my fitness pal for the first time and then lost some more weight. You know, I'm talking like 20 kgs. I don't know what that is in pounds.

Annie: It's 40 plus. That's quite a bit of weight.

Suzie: Yeah. Up and down each time. So big swings, like, really, like, obviously noticeable and you know, there was one girl in the UK who was my friend at the time, she was looking at an old photo of me and she's like, "Wow, you just look like a different, this is a smaller photo of, but you know, when I was at a smaller size post diet, you know, or during a diet, gosh, you looked great, you looked like a different person." I was like, "Wow. No, the same person, still me, I'm still here. I just look a little bit different." But it's amazing how it changes, like how people just view it as this massive, big thing when really it's just me, I'm still the same person.

Annie: It's just the exterior that's changed. Yeah.

Suzie: Still me. I'm still here.

Annie: So, Suzie, is that what I'm hearing is, and I have a smile on my face only because I too have joined Weight Watchers multiple times and now I look back at it and I think how many times was I going to join that before I realized like that wasn't working for me. Like it wasn't, it might've worked while I was doing it, but the minute I stopped doing it, the weight came back, which it sounds like it was your experience too. And, so at what point did you realize like, Hey, this isn't working and I need to do something differently?

Suzie: Not for awhile.

Annie: Same. Same.

Suzie: And I came home, I moved home. I'd been four years and I was like, "I can't be five. I can't, I can't get to five years and I want to go home.:" And, you know, cause my, you know, I was only over there to travel the world and experience life and then go home to settle down and whatever. So I came home, which was the best thing ever. Like, I was home, you know, and I just was euphoric, like, completely euphoric being home. And, like, I came home to summer, it was 30 degrees and you know, London can get very dark and very cold, very gray, like, all winter. Winter is gray for six months, you know. Well, you know, it might not have been quite that long but and here it's winter now and we have blue skies. We've had a week of full blue skies and sunshine and it's been, you know, I get vitamin D, you know, to soak up.

Suzie: It's very good. So I came home and catching up with some old friends and my oldest friend in the world, he married, another girl called Suzie, of course. He was like, "Look, I've only got one single friend left and it's Michael." I was like, oh no, sorry. He doesn't call him Michael, he calls him Hawkey, which is my last name by the way. And I was like, "Oh, okay. Really?" Anyway, I met him and who would've thought with our love and got married?

Annie: Awww.

Suzie: Oh, first honeymoon after I'd done no carbs before the honeymoon and lost another 20 kgs. And I met him at my heaviest, you know, almost my heaviest. And so, and he was, he's just the most amazing man and even randomly came up in conversation cause I was very scared about telling him about the MS because MS, you know, illness as a future thing might be a big problem.

Suzie: Who knows? I don't know what it holds for me. Anyway, it random came up in conversation on like our third date and I was like, "Oh, I've got MS." And he was like, "Ah.: And I was like, "Well, what do you think about that?" And he said "That doesn't change anything about you." I was like, "Oh my God!"

Annie: I'm going to kiss you now.

Suzie: You're in here right now. And then post-wedding. And I regained all the weight back and I was like, and I started to hear rumblings about diet stuff and I was like "So right, so right. And I can't do this again. It's not sustainable. It doesn't work. But now what? Like, okay, so I'm not going to diet, but I do want to change my body composition." Because when I was at my lighter weight, I felt really good.

Suzie: I felt really good. When I was at heavy weights I felt really bad and it didn't, you know, all come from eating and you know, using that as a crutch kinda didn't feel good. So I was randomly on Facebook and I was like, you know, I know diets don't work. Okay, now we're forward and on New Balance, when I was doing the no carb, I found, you know, that was quite extreme, but I found when I was doing it, cause I was exercising at the same time, and I thought, I need balance. And then, then all of a sudden there's this post from Healthy Habits Happy Moms. So I'm like, "What's it about?" And then I was like, "Hey, this

is balance." And I was like, "This sounds a bit too good to be true. I'm not sure about that."

Suzie: But I joined the free Facebook group. So I was in the free Facebook group for about a year, but not quite ready to take the leap yet. And I almost signed up and I think, I don't know which one of you was you, Annie, or if it was Jen posted they were going to do 50% off and I got the email and you said we're going to honor it. And then I was like, "Right, 50% off, I'm doing it, I'm doing it," I think. And then, but because of the time zones, I was like, "Have I missed it? I don't know." And it wasn't live on the website at 50% off, so I didn't join then and I was kind of like, "Ah, never mind." And then the next sale came up and for Balance365 and I was like, "I'm doing it."

Suzie: Like I'm doing that. And then I said to my husband "I need this, you know, you know, I think this is gonna work. This thing is, like, what I need." And he was like, "Do it." He's like, "Go for it." Because for us, at the time, especially, it was a lot of money, but was it the best money that I ever spent? Yes.

Annie: And by this time you had a couple of kids too, and that was, that was one of your motivating factors for joining, correct?

Suzie: Yes. So yeah, by this time I think we had, yeah, two, I had both of them by then. Yes. Cause it was 2017 when I joined. So 2015, I had my first child, 2016 I had my second and then, yeah. And then so yeah. So my drivers behind joining were that I still wanted to, I knew what it was like. I knew it was like to feel lighter, have more energy, you know, and feel that confidence in myself that, I don't know. It felt good. Anyway, I saw the habits that I had that were back, that weren't good. And I knew and my mom's overweight and her, you know, we talk about in our group about fat phobia and fat shaming and stuff. And, of course, you know, and she absolutely did the best that she could and her mom probably did the best that she could. But she, my mum was fat shamed, you know, so badly growing up, and she didn't mean to do that to me at all, but you know, a little bit. And I was like, "This has to stop. The cycle has to stop because my mom doesn't feel good. I don't feel good."

Suzie: You know, what we're doing, when I finally got round to doing the self love journal, I realized that I am worthy, and my body is a good body and my body does amazing stuff and I am strong and I can do this. And it doesn't matter what it looked like, you know, that does not define me. You know, my husband, my,

you know, my beautiful darling husband didn't even see it. Like he saw me as a beautiful person and you know, what more could you ask for? And it was a realization and I remember just being shocked that, like, I'm worthy and I'm okay with myself and that's okay and you know, and I'm okay and I don't have nothing to be ashamed of. And all that shame that I was feeling was the media putting this pressure on me to be something that I wasn't and telling me that I should be something that I wasn't. And it turns out I was fine all along.

Annie: Surprise.

Suzie: I didn't know that.

Annie: What I'm hearing is that you realized that you were worthy for spending your time and energy on yourself because you are worthy of eating balanced meals, of moving your body and feeling good, which I'm guessing is not the place you were coming from when you were dieting, when you were 17.

Suzie: Oh gosh, no. No.

Annie: Was there a contrast?

Suzie: I was not, I was overweight. That was a bad thing. And that was, you know, I had to change that because that was, you know, you shouldn't be fat. We shouldn't. No. So, and feeling shame. And I remember my old boss pre-wedding and I was trying, we went, she came wedding dress shopping with me and I tried to one before I was too far into the no carbs, so I was a little bit heavier trying a wedding dresses. And then after, towards the end, she showed me a photo of me in this wedding dress. And I just looked at myself and I just felt absolute shame that that was me and that I could look like that and you know, that that was wrong. And she thought I was going to feel really good about how I looked now, but I didn't feel good. I felt shame that that's how I looked and that I would ever look like that.

Annie: And how, how, if you were to see that same photo today, how do you think you would feel about looking at it? Or what would you think about that girl in the photo?

Suzie: Definitely no shame. That was me, you know? And it's amazing, the journey that I've been on and I can't even really believe that I ever thought that,

you know, because why, you know, why should I feel shame about that? That's just the way I looked.

Annie: Yeah. We're conditioned to have so much, to place so much importance on how we look and what our bodies look like and what size we wear and how much we weigh that that's like the most important thing about us. And it, ironically it gets out of balance really quickly when you let, you know, our culture influence how you feel about ourselves because it will tell you, our culture will say, like, "This is the ideal, this is what you should look like." And if you're not looking like that then you're failing or you're not worthy or you're not lovable.

Suzie: Yeah and also I studied fashion, so I'm in the fashion industry as well, which is, like, extreme. So I forgot to mention that. So I'm surrounded by, you know, beautiful people all the time and you know, Photoshop and, you know, everybody saying this is the way you should look. And even, you know, cause I went into, I stopped from fashion and moved into graphic design and I was airbrushing models and stuff, you know, and I was, like, feeling at the time, it was just a skill for me. I was just getting rid of the dark circles under her eyes and stuff like that. But, and now I think, I look back, you know, I think about that and I think "Why? But that's what she looked like," you know?

Annie: Yeah. Suzie, I didn't know that about you. That's fascinating. Wow. You were airbrushing models.

Suzie: Yeah. And it's crazy to think that that was me. This was before I got married and probably before I even, definitely before I met you, Annie. Being in that horrible place and I guess it was, James Fell was talking about the despised self and it really hit me because I really feel that now that I was in that place of, you know, that despised self, with prior to that I was doing all these things that I didn't really like, but obviously I got a reward from, but I knew, you know, that it wasn't making my life better, it was making it worse and it wasn't making me healthy. It was making me unhappy.

Annie: I think that that's really important because, you know, I can think of a handful of behaviors that I still currently do that are quote unquote bad habits, but they have positive rewards in some aspect for me. And so, you know, when you hear about women dieting, they're like, they have this, like, "I don't want to do this. This is hard. This isn't fun. This doesn't make me feel good." But then every once in a while you get that little reward, that affirmation. Like, "You look great.

You're doing so good," where, you know, they're clapping for you, they're applauding for you, they're praising you. And it reaffirms that like what you're doing, it's like, "Okay, maybe I am doing it right. You know, maybe this is the way I'm supposed to be doing it." And so, okay, so you joined Balanced365. And what would you say are some of the biggest changes you experienced?

Suzie: Ah, it's so hard to narrow it down. The biggest change is having a growth mindset. I was definitely, like, hardline all or nothing, like I'm going hard at this or I'm not doing it all like, and you know, and I accepted that that's just the way it was. And that's just how I am. I'm all or nothing. I'm black or white, there's no gray, there's no messy middle. That's me. I'm black and white. And then, and then I hear these things, you know, people saying in Balance365, you know, "all or something." I was like, "What? All or something? What? Good, better, best." And I was like, "Oh, light bulb. Like, yes, something all or something. I can do something and not, it doesn't have to be all or nothing. And I can, you know, if I don't have time, I can do a little bit of a workout.

If I don't have all the right food in front of me that is going to create the perfect meal. I can do something that's better or something that's good rather than the best, you know," I don't have to be at all. And I'm a perfectionist, so I learned not to be perfect. And the growth mindset definitely has been, once you can kind of roll with things and be flexible, then you know, anything is possible. And I remember I was, I started doing the small small group coaching. By this point I had a treadmill and I'm not going to try this afternoon and use the treadmill. And I was like, "Well, if I can't do that and I've got the kids in the morning, then I can take the kids out for a walk." You know? Cause if I can't do that, then I'll do something else.

Annie: Yes.

Suzie: And that really, that really struck me. And actually my, one of my first ones, I loved consistency trumps intensity. And I was like, cause I can go intensely at something, like, when I'm motivated, like I'm going to go hard out at this and I'm going to do this and I'm going to be the best, until I fall off the bandwagon. And it's all over.

Annie: Like, I'm going to be really good at Weight Watchers until I'm not doing Weight Watchers anymore.

Suzie: The best at Weight Watchers.

Annie: I'm going to be the best at low carb.

Suzie: And I was the best at low carbs.

Annie: I believe you. And this is, so what Suzie's talking about for our listeners that aren't in the program. These are some of the mantras that we use with our community to help, because it's our experience that women are so busy swinging from one end of the pendulum.

They're either all in, they're on the wagon, they're doing all the things, or they're on the opposite side of the pendulum and they're like, got a case of the screw it's, they're not doing anything. They're just like, "Whatever. I'm just going to do whatever I want. I'm going to eat all the foods, I'm going to sit on the couch" and our experiences is if you can sit most of your time in the middle and instead of swinging from restrictive to chaos, to on the wagon, off the wagon, right, wrong, good, bad, black or white that you can have a lot of progress. And that was your experience. You made a crap ton of progress towards your goals using that mindset, didn't you?

Suzie: Yeah, absolutely.

Annie: So you came to us with body composition goals. That was, you knew that you felt better in a little bit of a lighter body because you just, you can move better, especially with your ms that allowed you.

Suzie: Yes. Even when I was first diagnosed, the nutritionist, sorry, not nutritionist, neurologist said to me, you should lose weight. And here's a diet you can go on. And I was like, "Okay, no."

Annie: No, thank you.

Suzie: I'm going to move overseas now and I'm going to gain weight.

Annie: Rebel. You're a rebel.

New Speaker: I'll speak to about it then.

Annie: You gave him the double bird, didn't you?

Suzie: Yeah, yes. You don't tell me what to do.

Annie: Exactly. Strong woman. Yeah.

Suzie: Yeah. Honestly, there's been so many things that have just clicked, like grown ass woman. Oh my God. You know, as soon as I read that I was like, "I am a grown ass woman and I can do this. I'm going to do it." You know, whatever it was.

Annie: Yeah. Yes.

Suzie: And I think about it all the time. Just in, gosh, it's just been such a journey. And so I started in Balanced365 really, really slowly. Or you do your habit and if it's too difficult, you make it easier. And I was like, "That's amazing." And so I started with water and I got a big water bottle and I still to this day have my big water bottle and just drink that and it's water habit down, you know? And that honestly, it's pretty easy. And then I think I moved on to sleep because sleep with the MS especially, is really, really important. So sleep I focused on and then once you get sleep and water so I'm hydrated and I'm sleeping, I think I probably moved on to what were at the time the foundation habits.

I'm not sure what I started next, actually. I probably started protein or I did breakfast, I can't remember. The smoothie for breakfast anyway, cause I started one meal at a time rather than a macro. And you know, I kept going on for about 18 months and maybe I did meal prep and then started balancing my lunch, I think. My husband and I happened to go out for lunch one day and they had like a, it was a place that did like a bowl. I think it was, are they called poke bowls or something? And I was like, this is, I was like, I can totally do this. And then I was like, "Oh wait, this is, like, exactly the same as a power bowl."

Annie: They copied us.

Suzie: So then I've got 2 meal under my belt, you know, I'm sleeping, I'm hydrated, I'm prepping my food and I'm still not seeing the body composition changes that I want. And then when my newsfeed pops up - small group coaching and I was like, "Yes, yes, I'm in!" And then six months of small group coaching. And actually as soon as I signed up, that was it, that was the one action, we talk about action creating motivation. And that one action I took by signing up, it somehow changed things. And my mom's like, "Have you lost

weight?" And I was like, "I don't know," cause at the time I didn't have a scale. I wasn't weighing myself. And I was like "Oh, my clothes are feeling a bit loose." Something is. And I didn't think I was doing anything differently. Like at all.

Suzie: I was like, "I don't really know what's going on. Something's happened that it's just coming off." And I actually, cause I, at this point I had started some medication for my MS and I thought, "Oh, did I read somewhere that it can cause weight loss?" So I'm checking the medication that I take. No, it doesn't. I was like, "So it's not the medication, it is me. So I'm doing this? I'm not too sure about it." So I, just before signing the small group coaching, I buy a scale because so I can do some checking so I can get some information to find out what's going on because I want to know. And then so we started and I remember, Alison, or we had sort of, I read through the material for the small group coaching and one of the things was to try to track some things.

Suzie: So you might choose to check your weight. Or you might choose to track, you know, how your clothes feel, if they feel loose or whatever or, and I decided I want to choose the scales because scales is easy, jump on, jump off kind of thing. And then and I think the first month I tracked using myfitnesspal, but only to get the data and just to say, just to, just to see what nutrition I was actually getting. And that was really helpful for me to actually see what, you know, what I was consuming. And then in the materials, you know, it says you might be looking at something small like 500 grams, well, that's me converting it to kgs per week. And I was like, "Okay, that's good." And then week one of small group coaching, I go to my first or my second weight, not the initial one, the second one, and I've lost 1.6 kgs and I'm like, sorry, I don't know what that's in pounds.

Annie: Yeah, it's one pound is 2.2 kilograms.

Suzie: No, other way. One kg is 2.2 pounds.

Annie: Sorry. Yes. Thank you. Yes. The only reason I know that is because weightlifting.

Suzie: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Annie: I think sometimes lifting kilograms, it's not cause it's like cooking or I just know the metric system.

Suzie: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I was looking at about a half a pound weight, I lost about three pounds.

Annie: Yeah.

Suzie: And all one pound of weight loss was, anyway. And I was like, "Oh my gosh, I've done it wrong. I'm doing it wrong." And I was actually scared to tell Alison, I was like, "Oh, I can't believe that I'm failing already. You know, I've lost too much weight. I've got to add some more food and I must be dieting. I didn't mean to diet, I'm not, you know, I didn't want, I don't want to do this. Like, and I'm like, "Alison, I'm sorry, like I've lost 1.6 kgs." And she's like "Oh good. Like, that's cool. Like, you know, do you feel restricted?" I was like, "No." She was like "Do you feel hungry?" "No." And then she was like "This might be okay then.

And she said, "You know, if that's what your body does, then that's what your body does. And you go on, you know, this way, then, you know, if you start to feel hungry, add some, you might want to add a snack and or something if you're feeling hungry because you know, you are exercising a bit more than usual," so, and she didn't, she said "Sometimes you might not lose weight and some weeks you might gain weight." And I was like, "Okay." And she's like, "It's a graph, you know, as long as you're trending in the direction that you want to go, then you can't go wrong." And I was like, "Ah, okay. I'm not doing it wrong. I'm doing it right."

You know, so, and that, you know, I've got instructions in front of me of, you know, the guidelines, which I'm like, right, I'm doing this to the tee because I'm a good girl and I'm going to do it exactly as you told me to do it, still a perfectionist, it comes back, it comes back. And then, yeah, Gosh we've just, and it was so many changes and so many like light bulb moments, like, so even hard to describe.

Annie: And I want to circle back. I just want to add a note for our listeners, cause you mentioned that you tracked a little bit here and there and if you've been a part of our community, you know, we're not big champions of tracking longterm, we don't think it's a great long term solution but as Suzie shared we do sometimes recommend it for a short term solution just to get some information, just some data just to get you in the ballpark. Like where are you?

And also it's really important that your relationship with tracking, whether it's food, scale, clothing, size, body measurements, is really, really important because if you don't have a healthy relationship with good boundaries and you're letting the scale dictate your habits or upset your self confidence or you're getting obsessive with tracking, then that's not something, that's not an exchange we're willing to make. And you seem to have a really good healthy mindset about tracking. This is just information, it's just for the short term and then I'm going to move on and be done.

Suzie: Absolutely. And, I think it might've been Jen who said, because when I first started using myfitnesspal again I was triggered a little bit, but Jean had said, "You can work through those things. You don't have to, that doesn't have to be a roadblock for you. You could, you know, work through it." So I did. And you know, once I realized that I'm just taking the data away from this and I'm just, this is helping me be able to visualize what a balanced plate looks like, you know, so that I can do this by myself now, which I can, which is awesome. But it was learning. So I'm learning, you know, I had to do this by myself and I'm getting the data that I need so that I can do it by myself later.

Annie: Yeah. And you can be really objective about it. Like, okay, this is my weight. Noted. Move on. It doesn't affect the rest of your day. It doesn't change your goal. It doesn't change your, and maybe sometimes, I guess it would influence your habits if it's not trending in the direction that you and Alison had agreed to go. But it doesn't have to be this like beginning of a slippery slope of your worth and your emotional wellbeing and all that stuff. So, okay, so I just wanted to interject that too.

But what I also want to come back to is two things, cause I know Alison was your small group coach and Alison has, she just raved so much about you, about how she adored you. And she said one of, in her opinion, one of the reasons she was so thrilled to coach you and that you had such good success is because you stayed engaged, you showed up consistently, you were accountable to yourself. You asked for the help you needed, and you agreed with that too, that you were in there, like, you were committed.

Suzie: I'm doing it, because I really, I want to change and I wanted this. And so I'm not gonna, I'm not gonna do it by halves. Like I want to get, I've got six months with her and I wanna make the most of it because, you know, I'm all the way up here in little old New Zealand and you know, and I was, you know,

pre-joining, I was like, am I even going to be even going to be able to join any of the, you know, the zoom coachings or anything like that. And, um, it turns out that the timing was actually perfect for me, so I went to most of them and I ended up having one on ones with her quite often. And I was really surprised because the small group coaching, you know, you've got 40 women in there and it was actually an amazing, amazing process.

Suzie: Because if you had a problem, you asked the group and they were so supportive and we were working on the same habits at the same time. So you'd say, "Oh, I'm doing this. You know, what should I do?" And then you've got all the support there of girls trying to, working at the same sort of things and were telling you what's working for them and what's not working for them. And it was that support to me, I guess, that's what I needed. And it was amazing. And but also I wasn't gonna waste it. You know, I've got six months of this and I'm really, really going to lean in and if anything's gonna, you know, if anyone's going to be having a video, I'm going to be there. And if anyone's saying anything, I'm going to be there, you know?

Suzie: And I really, really wanted and I was involved and because I'm more of a lurker in the big group because it's for me, it's so big. And I'll go to post a response and you know, there might be 30 comments already and I'm like, "Oh, okay. It's all been did." But a small group, for me, it was perfect. And I got to know all the girls and they were, you know, all amazing. And we're all going for the same thing and everyone was open and honest and it was such a lovely experience. And Alison was fantastic.

Annie: I think that that's just so important because I think I see that just as a trainer, oftentimes in the gym that people get so worked up about doing all the things correctly right away and "Am I going to do this well? What if I fail?" And they get so wrapped in their head that they just don't even show up. And it's like, if you can just show up, even if you didn't do what you said you were going to do, even if you didn't reach the goal you said you were going to do, even if you didn't comply with your habits, if you could just continue to show up in the group, engage, interact, you know, we have a saying in the small group coaching manual that students that sit closer to the front of the class do better.

You know, and it's like, that's exactly what you did. You put yourself front and center in a classroom. Like, I'm going to take advantage of all these resources while I'm here and it paid off. And the other thing I want to talk about is and

you've already said it a couple of times, is that all of these changes felt easy to you. It didn't feel like you were, like, sacrificing, you weren't restrictive, you weren't starving. They felt effortless. Could you say, would you say, effortless?

Suzie: I would and it's amazing. I think it was right in the middle of small group coaching and I'd had a really, really bad night's sleep, like my little toddler son was crying all night for me. And I was in bed cuddling him and I thought in the middle of the night and I was like, "I'm going to need a back up plan for the morning. That's something that we do in Balance365. And then I woke up and my habits were just there. And I just ate normally when normally after really bad night's sleep, I would be like, "Right. What is all of the food I can eat?" But I did my work up and life just went on as normal and I was just like, "What? Who is this person? What's going on?"

Annie: That's freedom! That's what that is. It's like you don't even realize how much energy and time and effort we spend thinking about our food and fitness until you don't have to anymore. And then you just can be on autopilot when your lack of sleep, you got a sick kid and you're like anticipating to some type of way and it's like you're just naturally making these choices. It's just like you put on your pants in the morning and it's like, "Whoa, this is amazing."

Suzie: Yeah, I was like, "Who is this person?" Yeah. It's me.

Annie: That's a grown ass woman right there. Okay. Suzie, tell me, what would you say if someone was listening and they were on the fence about joining Balance365, what would you say to them?

Suzie: Do it. You won't regret? Well, especially for me, this is like, this has changed my whole entire life and I just can't believe how much stuff I've changed and how much better I feel in myself. And you know, I feel like I'm living my best life and you know, everything is better and I really don't think you're regret it, and remember that you are worthy and you are worth spending money on and you are worth spending time on. And just do it. I can't really recommend it more highly.

Speaker 2: I obviously agree, but it's always nice, you know, Jen, Lauren and I can sit in our chairs and be on our laptops and say, like, "Yeah, of course we think you should do it." But hearing the experiences of the actual women that have gone through the program and come out on the other end and are living

their lives in a way that they feel comfortable with is way more powerful than us being like, "Hey, this works for us too." So, anything else you would want to add? You want our listeners to know?

Suzie: Two other mantras that way we say that really resonated with me was "my body, my business". You know, and I think that's such a powerful thing to think about, especially cause we're so, so judgmental and not, you know, and I definitely am trying to stay away from it cause it's, you know, my body, my business, but also their body, their business, you know?

And so I'm trying my internal dialogue, not be so judgmental towards other people and myself and another one which was so amazing, which I only heard recently, like, honestly if Jen or Lauren say anything or do any video or you know, have a podcast or anything. I'm watching and I'm listening and I'm reading. You can use things as a tool or as a weapon. And so, say myfitnesspal, previously I've used it as a weapon against myself because I was, you know, not what I should be. And this time I used it for short amount of time and I used it as a tool, you know, and it's the same thing. But I used it as a tool rather than a weapon. And I think I've judged other people for doing things that I think they're using it as a weapon but actually using as a tool and I hadn't worked that out and so that as such a good, good thing to realize.

Annie: Yeah. That that goes back to that relationship you have with whatever it is we're talking about is so important. And that's really what matters. It's not necessarily what they're using it. It's how they're using it.

Suzie: Yes. Yes. And I get a lot because obviously, my body has changed quite a lot now. I look quite different and you know, and you know, everyone says, "Oh gosh, she looks so good." And I'm like, "I do. I look amazing." And I'm proud of that, you know.

Annie: Absolutely own it.

Suzie: But also I'm a little bit, and I'm like, "You can just say it." You can just, you know, because people say, "Oh, you're looking well." I'm like, "You can say it, I look amazing." But you know, and then you, and then one person said to me on the pitch in the weekend, she said, "I hope it came from a place of love." I was like, "It so did. Like, absolutely did."

Annie: Oh, that's, that is perfect because that's exactly, that's exactly what we think is one of the biggest differences about Balance365 is that we don't have goals for your body. Our members have their own goals for their body and we're happy to help support those in a healthy way that's rooted in self-love, help our members achieve those goals. And yeah, doing that through self-love is so important because the old narrative has been for so many of us to do that through self-hate and that's not the only option. Yeah. So that's beautiful. Yeah. Suzie, this was so much fun. We're approaching the hour, so I'm gonna, I won't take any more of your morning, but I had so much fun talking to you and I know that our members are just gonna love hearing your story too. So thank you so much.

Suzie: I just want to say that I'm so, so grateful that the three of you started this because I feel like I found the answer like, you know, we're all searching for it, you know, and this is the answer.

Annie: Thank you, Suzie. You know, honestly it's the reason we founded is because we've been there, you know, like this was our experience and we knew that we could do better, like, and we can and we are and, but it takes a community. It takes all of us to, like, create this big wave of change so our kids grow up in a different environment than-

Suzie: Absolutely.

Annie: Than we did. So thank you for being a part of it and thank you for joining us today and I cannot wait to share this with our community. Thank you, Suzie.

Suzie: Thank you.

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 checkout [balance365.co](https://balance365.co) to learn more.