

Balance365 Episode 82 Transcript

Annie Brees

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, nutritionist, 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 well being with amazing guests. Enjoy!

Welcome back to another episode of Balance365 Life radio before we dive into today's topic, I want to share a sweet review from OzarkCG she says "This podcast is so encouraging and uplifting. I'm so thankful I became a Balance365 member. The community is so supportive. This podcast and community are helping me learn how to love myself while making healthy and slow changes. That approach is not just refreshing but crucial in today's diet culture." Thank you so much to her and to everyone else who has left us a review on iTunes. We read them all and we're so thankful.

Okay, today's topic is one of my all time favorites, Gym Intimidation. The gym can be an intimidating place, so intimidating that many women don't dare set foot in it, especially the weight room. So many pieces of equipment. So many questions, so many rules. How do you possibly keep it all straight? Well, we've got you covered in this episode. I asked Balance365 Coach Coordinator Meg to join me for this episode because she's got a ton of gym experience and she's full of great advice. We asked our Balance365 community members what questions they had about the gym, and we cover all of them in this one episode. And none of the fluff you've heard of mainstream fitness publications before it's on Woman to Woman answers about things like how to work around washing your hair when you're working out, what you can do to avoid unwelcome chatter while you're exercising and how to get the most bang for your buck when you're short on time. I think you're gonna love it. Meg, welcome to Balance365 Life radio. How are you?

Meg Ramos

Hi, Annie. I'm great. How are you?

Annie Brees

I'm really good. And I'm really excited for this podcast you, well, why don't you tell our listeners because you're new to our team?

Meg Ramos

I am.

Annie Brees

Who you are and what you do for us?

Meg Ramos

Sure. That's a great question. So hi, guys. My name is Meg Ramos. I am new to the team. Right now I am on board as the coach coordinator for Balance365. So I kind of am the go between between our small group coaches and Jenny and Lauren. But in my outside of my Balance365 life, I'm a coach and a personal trainer. And I've worked in a bunch of different gym settings and talking to people about making the gym setting accessible is one of my favorite things. I love making people as excited about the gym as me. So that's kind of why we're doing this.

Annie Brees

So do you guys see why I like her so much? It's like, she's me.

Meg Ramos

Like, there's so much to talk about. And then Jen and Lauren are like, "Yeah, gym."

Annie Brees

But let's talk about the gym. So you had this idea. And this is something that I think we've kind of talked about in other episodes, like how to make exercise fun, how to exercise when you really don't love to exercise. You and I actually don't have that problem, we enjoy exercise

Meg Ramos

Most of the time.

Annie Brees

Right? Right. Yes, there's always there's always exceptions. But for the most part, going to the gym isn't a struggle for us. We don't feel like we're suffering when we're exercising, as some people do. And I totally understand that there are people out there like that. And it's a real thing. And Jen and Lauren are actually one of those types of people. But we wanted to talk about how the gym can be an intimidating place to be. And it can be an environment that feels like it has a lot of rules, some written, a lot unwritten, and how to make the gym a more comfortable space to be in. And you posted in our Balance365 member group asking for questions.

And when I was thinking about this outline, you brought this topic to me, I was like, "Well, we could talk about like the fluff stuff, like take a tour, like have your gym personnel staff, like, give you a tour, show you the lay of the land, or you could go with a friend who's a gym member or more comfortable in the gym, go with a plan." And like that's all really great advice. But it's all been said before, you know, it's kind of like, what can we offer them that they haven't heard before? Or like this kind of this, like, girlfriends, like, we're going to give you the real scoop on what to do in the gym and maybe some things not to do. Right?

Meg Ramos

Yep. Because I think that, like, it, I kind of equate it to, I don't know, starting at a new school or something and walking into a cafeteria for the first time and you don't know where to go and what to eat and who to sit with. And it's always so much nicer if you have a friend on the first day. And so I want to be that friend, even if I can't actually be there to, like, show people around.

Annie Brees

Right? Because I think it's been our experience is that it's a really great place to be. Obviously we enjoy it. If you can just get over that initial, like, "This is awkward. I'm not really sure if I'm doing things right, how do I know what I'm doing? Am I breaking like these rules? Are people talking about me behind my back? Are they making fun of me? What if this guy that wants to staring at me or

this guy keeps talking to me? Like what do I do? How do I handle those situations? Do I have to wipe down equipment? Like, where does this go? Where does that go?"

So I literally just cut and pasted the exact questions because I'm like this is, we're not going to like wrap this up in a pretty package. These are like the honest questions that women want to know the answers to right?

Meg Ramos

Yep.

Annie Brees

So are you ready? Should we just-

Meg Ramos

I'm ready.

Annie Brees

Should we just dive right in and we'll see how far we can get because there were quite a few questions?

Meg Ramos

I'm also interested to see if you and I have different, like, opinions of some of them.

Annie Brees

Right? We didn't talk about this. I didn't look up any answers. I, like, we just didn't rehearse any of this. YOLO. I feel like this is information we've said so many times before that it's going to be great. Okay, so first question, what is the etiquette with the sweat towels and wiping machines or weights down? Wipe off the machine? Doesn't your towel just smear sweat around if you use it on every machine? Are you supposed to use the wet wipes to wipe every time you move machines? Do you wipe dumbbells? All valid questions.

Meg Ramos

So valid.

Annie Brees

Do you want to take the answer?

Meg Ramos

I would love to so this is a great example of what you'll see what you should do versus what you'll see people doing. As a person that has managed a gym, I beg of you please wipe down after you use it also just even if it's not a quote unquote, I gotta remember, I can't just air quote, because they're listening. I can't see the quote unquote, not a rule. Just, I would say be that person but for me, it's really more, I mean, I love everybody, but it's more for my protection than it is for other people's. Because you know, I mean, let's be real, like, most of the time, I've no, I haven't most of the time, I hope that I know the people that are there. But like anytime that there's sweat being exchanged, things happen. I know this is, not that gyms are disgusting. They're great. I love them. But anytime you've got sweat being exchanged, like, you know, it's good to be as clean as possible.

Annie Brees

Right, there's a lot, there's a lot of fluids. And-

Meg Ramos

Just to start it off in a really real way.

Annie Brees

There just are there's no way around it. So you're saying you wipe it down? And that's what you would recommend?

Meg Ramos

I do? And I would say I think there was a question in there about like, what is the towel even really for? I kind of consider that my towel. I don't really bring one that often. But when I do, it's really, again, more for me to just have a barrier between the thing I'm on and my skin. But more often than not, I am planning to at least rinse off afterwards anyway.

Annie Brees

Right and I will say that, I guess I need to maybe offer disclaimer, when I offer my answer is that I am not, I'm pretty comfortable with sweat and other people's sweat. So I mean, as a trainer, I touch sweaty bodies frequently. So I just it doesn't bug me. With that being said, I know that I have clients and I know that there's other gym members in my gym that are like, "No, no, no, like, Do not touch me when I'm sweating, I don't want to touch your sweat, I don't even want to see your sweat on any of the equipment." And I can totally respect that too. So I don't wipe off equipment before I use it. I, like, I'm just fine with it. But I have I have girlfriends that are like "No, I'm going to just give that a quick once over before I sit down on it. Or before I put my face on the mat to do a super woman or a reverse fly on an incline bench."

Meg Ramos

Especially if there's, like, visible stuff. And the last person was maybe not nice and didn't think about it. And I agree because I think just too, in the kind of workouts we're usually doing where there's lots of back and forth. It's not really practical to do it every single time. But I at least, if it's visible beforehand, I'll give it a wipe down. And then when I'm completely done at the end, I'll wipe it off. And I'll make sure that I wash my hands, like, at the very least.

Annie Brees

Right and if you're like if you're going between a few exercises, so you're using, you know you're doing a lat pull down on a cable machine and then you go over to a set of dumbbells and you're kind of flip flopping, you're doing a superset. I don't think it's necessarily, like you said, to wipe down the lat pulldown machine seats every single time you leave unless you know someone else is working in on that set, then it might be considerate. But they can also take ownership too, like, you know, like and here's the other thing too, it's going to be a little bit gym dependent because I've been at the Y where they have towels for you to use and you can use them and then they also have a towel that goes along with a sprayer to spray things down after you've used the equipment? I've also been at gyms were they use, and I think this question referenced it, the wet wipes.

Meg Ramos

Yes.

Annie Brees

Which is also really handy. So you could use those. Or you could just use your own towel, it's going to depend on what your gym has to offer, and what their protocol is. And if you aren't sure, just ask, like, like, it's no big deal. I don't think, I think that's a really sensible, reasonable question to ask. And as far as wiping off dumbbells, I don't actually think I've ever wiped off a dumbbell handle unless I have like maybe broken a callus and, or a blister.

Meg Ramos

Our rule was just that kind of stuff was if it was like, the season of everyone being sick, we would just do them at least once a day, like after all the classes just to try to get. I mean, I think that, like, the world is the place that it is. And if it's super concerning to you, plan to shower after. Otherwise, you know, it's just the same as any situation we're going to be around people, it just is what it is.

Annie Brees

Yeah. So to answer that, in short, gym dependent, what your comfort level is with, like, what you're sitting on and what you're touching. But you can never, it's always a safe bet just to wipe things down before and after. Like, no one's ever gonna yell at you for wiping things up too often.

Meg Ramos

Yeah.

Annie Brees

Okay, question two, what the heck do you use a Smith machine for? Which, if you're not familiar with what a Smith machine is, you've probably seen it if you belong to a commercial gym, it is, it looks like a barbell attached to uprights that goes up and down, like tracks. Is that how you would describe it?

Meg Ramos

Yeah. And it has like, little like different levels of, like, catcher hooks? To use the real definition so that you don't, so that you can, the bar can stop at different heights.

Annie Brees

Yep, yep. So you can rack and unrack it. Yeah, I know that in, the fitness industry can be kind of elitist, in my opinion, about the Smith machine. And they've pooh poohed it quite a bit because, you know, it's not a true barbell. And it controls the bar path because it's on these tracks for you that it takes out some of the work and everything. But I really actually like a Smith machine for incline push ups, because it's so easy to move that bar up and down a notch without, you know, if you're on a squat rack, you have to like take out the pegs and pull the bar down and put the bar down and adjust the pegs and put the barbell up. On a Smith machine, you can just unhook, adjust, rehook and keep going. I really like it for incline push ups and inverted rows. So, like, as a pulling exercise. What do you think about the Smith machine?

Meg Ramos

And I feel the same I think, just like you were saying, if I had a choice between a Smith machine and a barbell, and I was like, confident with the barbell movement and didn't have any underlying issues that would prevent it, I usually prefer a barbell or a like, externally loaded thing, just for all the reasons you said it just gives you a little more bang for your buck. But again, in terms of like that are all or something attitude, I mean, anything, this is going to like supersede everything we say, anything that gets people doing weight bearing activities makes me real happy.

So yeah, like you were saying if people get, like, very black and white about it, and I think it can be useful, I think it's also useful, I mean, when you're getting deep into the lifting world, and maybe you want to do some stuff that, like, is really hard to do with the barbell or that you need help with because you don't have someone to spot you, it can be helpful there, it's not quite the same. But if it's your only option, it's definitely going to be much better than not doing anything at all.

Annie Brees

Exactly. And there's a lot of ways to use it. And there can be a lot of benefit from it that, as Meg said, is better than doing nothing at all. And again, depending on your gym, I know that I used to have one client with she came from a smaller town gym, this was all she had for a barbell in their gym, they didn't have free weights, they didn't have barbell, they didn't have dumbbells, or heavy enough dumbbells. So, like, this was her option. And if that's it, then, like, use it. But if, like you said, if you could choose to squat with a barbell, and you were confident with a barbell over a Smith machine, I would choose a barbell. But you know, out of the box thinking, I think there's a lot of opportunities for a Smith machine outside of just squatting, you can get creative with it.

Meg Ramos

Totally. And I would say, too, if you are a person who has only used a Smith machine for lifting, and for whatever reason like it, it hasn't always felt great, that might be because like you said earlier, Annie, it does put you on kind of a track that doesn't account for differences in your own body. So if that's kind of been a barrier for you, it might be, that might be a reason to maybe explore other ways of lifting. Because it might be the machine.

Annie Brees

It's not you.

Meg Ramos

It might be the machine.

Annie Brees

Right. And if you've only squatted on a Smith machine and you move to a barbell, it's going to be different.

Meg Ramos

Oh, yeah.

Annie Brees

They're not the same movement. There's quite a few differences for so many reasons, which we could spend a whole podcast episode talking about, I'm sure,

you know, machines versus free weights, but just know that it doesn't carry over quite the same, you know, 100 pound Smith machine squat is going to feel a lot different than 100 pound barbell squat.

Meg Ramos

Totally.

Annie Brees

Okay, how do you know you're doing it right? I love this question, like, is my form right? Am I doing myself more harm than good by using it this way? Or am I just working and not really doing anything because I don't have the right form? So there's a lot of questions in this one question. So in general, Meg, how would you say? How would you answer that? Like, how do you know if you're doing an exercise right in the gym? What are some telltale signs?

Meg Ramos

That is a good question. Well, I think that, in general, if you are looking at a program or looking at a movement, and the program has been given to you or something or you respect the trainer, or they're a reputable person, they should be able to tell you in general, what you should be feeling by doing the movement. And more importantly, because I think, again, people are built so differently and are stronger in certain parts of their bodies, and maybe have compensations and stuff that it's more like, I tell my clients where you shouldn't be feeling it or you know, where you shouldn't feel is doing all the work.

So I guess it might be easier to just use an example maybe like a deadlift, meaning picking something up off the floor with a neutral spine. Depending on how tall someone is, how long they've been dead lifting, the type of deadlift, they may feel different muscles being emphasized. But what I tell them is that you don't want to feel, you know, for example, your low back doing all the work. You'll feel probably everything in the whole back of your body if you're doing it right. But you don't want to feel that primarily and if they are feeling that and that just takes some cuing for me to tweak a couple things positionally, and then they feel it more where they're supposed to.

Annie Brees

Yeah, I think, what I hear you saying this is my first thought is, if you're doing an exercise, and you have any sort of pain, or I mean, I think women are actually really intuitive with their bodies, if you feel and you're just like "Oh!", like "Oh, I don't think that's right." And I'm not talking about, like, discomfort. Like, because exercise is not always a walk in the park, like, it can be painful, it can be like a little gritty, at times, it can be like, "Oh, guys, this is like, this is burnin, you know, I want to put this weight down, but I have two more reps left. And I gotta find a way to we get through it" sort of thing. I'm not talking about discomfort, I'm talking about pain, like this hurts.

That would be, like, first and foremost, like, for whatever reason, it might not even be that you're not doing it right, it's just, like, that we haven't progressed to that sort of exercise yet, we have to maybe take some baby steps, we have to regress it or modify it a little bit. The other thing I would say about is your form right is are you able to move through a full range of motion pain free, because I, you know, when I say full range of motion, like you can go all the way down and all the way up or whatever full range of motion that movement requires with good form, you can lift the weight, fully without pain, and without losing your alignment with proper breathing techniques. That's really key.

Because when exercises get hard, usually range of motion is the first thing to go. So the squats get shallower, the pushups get shallower, the bicep curls get shorter. You know, like they just start missing that end range of motion, either at the top or the bottom of the movement. And, you know, obviously, this is assuming that there isn't someone you can ask, I should like rewind a few steps.

And I don't know about what your experience in the gym is but when I was at a larger commercial gym, there was always like a training desk, which if the trainers weren't with a client, there were most almost always more than happy to give you a few pointers here and there to say actually, you know, maybe you should try this or, you know, one or two tips for doing an exercise. Just because they just thoroughly, like us, they want to see people enjoy exercise and have success with it.

So feel free to ask staff too. To answer the question is "Am I doing myself more harm than good by using it this way? How would you know that you've gone too far?" I guess is what I hear in that question. How would you know, Meg? What would you say?

Meg Ramos

Well, I would say if you are, let's see, just trying to, like, turn that question, I guess, into something a little more specific. I think that, again, generally speaking, in my opinion, moving is usually better than not moving. I think that if you are feeling like you were saying kind of the ouchies, like a sharp pain or like, you know, just, you know, hitting a wall or just something that doesn't feel awesome to you, then it might not be the right movement for you on that particular day or at this particular stage of your life. And in that case, it might be worth maybe, like, setting that version of that exercise aside to check in on form somehow, and move to a simpler version of it.

But I feel like, I mean, at least the way that I program and kind of my language around movement is there's always a simpler version of a movement that will most likely accomplish the same end, that will let somebody kind of continue to make progress, even if they're not doing quite so much of an advanced movement. So I would rather see somebody, like, simplify everything or kind of regress, for lack of a better word to something a little less advanced so that they can keep going that day, than get discouraged because they're, you know, not feeling their deadlifting the right way and then quitting and going home. Does that make sense? I don't know if that really answers that question.

Annie Brees

Yeah, absolutely. I think back to this kind of this idea that people cannot outgrow the basics, quote, unquote, and I've been lifting for, I don't know, since I was in high school, on and off again, but pretty consistently for almost 11 years. And I still do things like push ups, or a form of push ups, I still squat, I still do body weight work, I do still do lunges, you know, like, I'm not doing these fancy Olympic lifting, or these fancy kettlebell moves that are, you know, impressive. That's not the bulk of my workout. The bulk of my workout is are these like foundational movements, which I know there's a question coming up right after this about getting the most bang for your buck. But the last question, in that series of questions was, am I just working and not really doing anything because I don't have the right form. And what I want to say to that is, there often is no one right way to do an exercise. And I think that really, like, the mainstream fitness has, in trying to provide guidelines and tips and ideas on how to squat, how to do a push up, how to deadlift, they've given rules. And those rules don't work for everyone.

And as you were saying earlier, Meg, based off of, like, how long your arms are in relation to how long your legs are, or where you carry your weight, or where your strength lies, like you might have, or like, how wide your hips are, or the way your hips or the way your pelvis is shaped or the length of your femurs that can affect your squat stance, your deadlift stance, where you put your hands on a barbell to do a bench press. You know, if I have five different women in a class, and I'm teaching them all to squat, I'd be willing to bet I'm going to have five slightly different squat stances.

So one woman might be feet hip with toes pointed forward, and she's golden, the woman next to her might be a little bit wider toilet, toes pointed slightly, slightly outward, you know, like, and that's great. In fact, I have one client who it's very minor, but her left foot is slightly ahead of her right foot. And that's just and it's not problematic. She doesn't have any injuries, she squats pain free, she scored well with good mechanics. And that's what works for her. So don't get too caught up in doing the right way or trying to make your form look like what you saw in a video or a magazine or on a poster on the gym. Like, make it work for you. Would you agree?

Meg Ramos

Yeah, I agree. Totally. I'm also one of those people who has a little bit asymmetric, we're all a little bit asymmetrical. But that's specific to me. And I would also say to that, because I know a lot of the people, the women listening are probably looking a lot of this stuff up online and everything and just to remember that what someone needs to worry about in terms of those little minute details is very different when their goal is to like squat 300 pounds or win a competition, versus somebody that's just trying to squat you know, as part of a workout for health, for longevity, who wants to pick up their kids and you know, be functional day to day, those little things probably they're important, but they're not going to make or break you I don't think. Versus somebody that's, like, powerlifting to win needs to maybe, you know, worry about "Is my foot turned out an inch too far or something?" So yeah.

Annie Brees

Right, or do I have the right equipment or? Yep, yep. Okay, next question. I love this question too. "What exercise gives you the most bang for your buck if I only have a half an hour at the gym? What should I focus on?" I love this question

because I feel like this is how I wrote the bulk of our Everyday Strong Workouts, our YouTube workouts, our Workout Wednesday on Instagram, if you're not following us, @Balance365life on Instagram, we share workouts every Wednesday.

More often than not, the bulk of those exercises are going to be compound movements, which means you're moving two or more joints and the body at one time. So we're talking like squats, lunges, push ups, overhead presses, versus a tricep push down, a bicep curl, a leg extension, a hamstring curl. Those are all really great exercises. But if you're short on time, compound movements generally recruit more muscles to do the work than just an isolation movement so you can get more bang for your buck like she asked. Would you agree?

Meg Ramos

I totally agree. And actually that maybe kind of this segue into a later question that I saw, like, if you only have 30 minutes, or like a very finite amount of time, what should you focus on? So that might get me ahead of myself a little bit. But yes, I would say that, like you said, compound movement, like the more stuff you're doing at the same time, the better. So compound movements that involve also, like, using your core.

So that takes us back to, if I had two hours a day in the gym, then I might be doing like six different squat variations, including one on the Smith machine. But if I only have half an hour, then I want to do a version of a squat that's going to simultaneously challenge not only my leg muscles, but my core muscles, and my upper body muscles, and my stability and my balance. And I'm going to accomplish all that with like a squat holding a kettlebell or a dumbbell. And that is much more efficient, which is kind of where I am right now so I get it.

Annie Brees

Yeah, yeah. And the other thing is, in writing those workouts, I tried to balance each workout and each workout program with equal amounts of squatting, hinging, pushing, pulling, and core work. And you can break those down even further into single leg, vertical pulling, vertical pushing, horizontal pulling, horizontal pushing. But instead of going to the gym and doing all the squats, like you said, and then coming back the next day and doing all the upper body work

or all the bicep work. And then the next day come and do all the back work, you can combine those and get a really great full body workout in a half hour.

In fact, that's pretty much what I do at CrossFit quite often. I come and do the vetcon and then I do some accessory work if I have time, then I'm in and out in an hour. And it's a lot of compound movements. It's very little isolation movements. That's not to say that isolation movements aren't valuable, or they don't have a place in the weight room. It's just if you're short on time, usually compound movements are more efficient.

And she actually followed that question with "Is there really a bonus to rotating workouts like leg day arm day?" And again, I just think that goes back to how much time do you have to be in the gym? I've done workout programs where I've had, like, more of a bodybuilding routine where it's been like this is going to be quads and hamstrings. This is biceps and triceps day, this is chest and back. And that's worked fine for me for that stage in life. Now I'm at a point of my life where I don't have six days a week to, you know, spend an hour and a half, two hours a day in the gym.

Meg Ramos

Or and that might also not be your goal. I think it's goal dependent too, I mean, if you are coming into this thinking, you know, you want to train like a bodybuilder, then that's a totally and have like outcome goals of a bodybuilder, that's a totally different goal set. For someone that's, again, just like, I want to do what I need to do, let's be real here, the minimum effective dose, so that I can feel better, you know, and establish my habit.

Annie Brees

And I will say, I can think of a fair amount of isolation movements with all that we just said about focusing on compound workouts. I also think that there, I want to give a nod to isolation movements as maybe being a little bit easier of a skill to acquire. It's easier to learn how to do a bicep curl than it is a squat for most people. So if you feel like okay, I in fact, when I joined the Y, this is about 10 years ago, I had lifted in high school and college, I was super comfortable in the weight room, because someone was always giving me a plan. And they're like, you're going to go do this thing with the rest of your teammates and I'm going to watch you and it was great. And I enjoyed it. And it was awesome.

But then when you put me in a gym alone by myself, without any plan, I was kind of like, "Oh, this looks familiar, but I'm not really sure what to do." So I spent the first two weeks doing bicep curls, like, I know, I could do that. So I would walk on the treadmill that was just kind of like getting the lay of the land, like getting comfortable, I would walk on the treadmill for, like, 20 or 30 minutes, and then I'd go do, like, three sets of 10 bicep curls.

And, like, day by day I became a little bit more comfortable, you know, and then I'd, like, maybe do, like, bicep curls and then some tricep tips or bicep curls and overhead press or, you know, just kind of layered on and eventually, obviously, regain my confidence. But if you feel comfortable doing an arm day, go do an arm day. Like, that's great.

Meg Ramos

Even if just want one, like, you just, you know, do an arm day.

Annie Brees

Yeah, who doesn't love, like, a good arm pump?

Meg Ramos

It's true. I was also going to say, kind of to speak to that. Yes, the caveat of all of this is that it's just my, like, optimistic desire that one day everyone will have, like, this amazing, accessible trainer who tells them all the right things. And it's, like, so positive and welcoming. And I know that that's not the reality for most of you. That's why you're asking these questions. So if you're like, all I have the capacity for right now is going in walking on the treadmill for 10 minutes, and then, like, going through each machine and doing the thing. And that's kind of where you hang out for a while. I think that's freaking awesome. Like, please do that, like, this is a skill. I think we totally get that.

Annie Brees

And we're professionals, we are fitness professionals, like, giving you permission. That's cool, like, do that. And I think, I would like to think that most fitness professionals would totally be encouraging of that. Like, if that's the step you need to take, great, do that.

Meg Ramos

Yeah.

Annie Brees

Okay, next question. "I'm finding it tough that there's so much lingo and etiquette that I'm just unaware of," and without giving you a glossary, and in fact, I've included glossaries in *Arms Like Annie* and *Everyday Strong* because of this, you know, people are like, what's an amrap? What's a superset? What are all these things? I would just ask, you know, just ask the staff, ask, if there's maybe a friendly, frequent gym goer that you trust. Don't hesitate to ask. You're not alone. I promise you that you're not alone.

Meg Ramos

Yeah, I will say, maybe this is a good time to just point out in terms of asking a friendly gym goer that you trust or maybe one that you don't know? Like, I am, what I'm lifting at, you know, the big box gym situation, I will freely admit, and I know we can't say bad words on this podcast that I have total resting B face when I am working out because usually I just am like focused and that I think comes off as like, scary resting B face.

But I would be so happy if, when I'm in between movements, if someone who was new came up to me and was like, "Hey, you know, I saw you doing dumbbell rows. Do you know, like, can you can I ask this question?" Or like, "Do you know if I should do X, Y, Z or whatever?" I would freaking love that. And I wish more people would and I always think about if I look scary. But I don't know I just I'm also maybe not a person that's, like, smiling. Because I usually want to, you know, lay down.

Annie Brees

That's, I like to think of myself as, like, the person who is, like, always got their eyes up and like trying to make eye contact with other people and smiling. But I've also been told that I'm really intimidating. And I'm like, I feel like I'm like, "Hey, how you doing? Are you new here?" Like I if I see a new girl in class, I'm like, "Hi, my name is Annie. Is this your first class? Have you been somewhere else? Like, I've been doing this for two years. What's your favorite? Do you like lifting? Lifting is my favorite."

Meg Ramos

What's your favorite color?

Annie Brees

Like, what's your Instagram handle? But I also know that, like, sometimes, like you said, you just you get in the zone or you're listening to a song or you're, I'm like, half the time I'm daydreaming in between sets. And my face is at rest. And I'm just not, like, not friendly looking. But anyway, don't hesitate to ask. The worst are going to say is like, "Beat it, kid" and you're gonna be like, "Okay, I guess I'm gonna have to find someone else to ask" and like, you can survive that. So.

Meg Ramos

But yeah, my only, like, caveat is don't ask while they're in the middle of doing something.

Annie Brees

Sure. Yeah.

Meg Ramos

I think when I am, my resting you know what face came out of, like, wanting to not scare away but like, avoid commentary from people who I didn't really want to talk to, which was not any of you guys, like new people who are cool that want to talk lifting, like with a cool chick, I'm all about that. But and I think it's different to if you're in a, you know, class type of setting, you know, if you go to your CrossFit gym, or you know your strength and conditioning gym, or what have you.

That's kind of why I love that atmosphere, to be honest, because it just opens, invites much more of that welcoming environment. I mean, if you're not a chatty person, I don't think you really have to be chatty, but you have a lot more about like question answering time built in versus just walking into the commercial gym. But yeah, I would say if they're not actively lifting a thing, walk up, ask a question, you know, compliment sandwich, they may not be able to help. But you know, if your question is like, "Do I need to wipe off this dumbbell?" They'll tell you.

Annie Brees

Right? And do keep in mind, they may look like they know what they're doing but they might not always provide sound advice. So just take it with a grain of salt. If it doesn't land well with you, like it might not be. You know, there's a lot of people in the gym that maybe have the physique, or they come every day, or they're really nice and you therefore assume that like they know what to tell you or how to answer your question. And you know, so yeah, just keep that in mind. And same for personal trainers, for heaven's sakes, like there's personal trainers handing out poor advice, in my opinion, too. So, like, it's, you know, it's not always a sure thing.

Meg Ramos

Yeah. But I think that, like, you shouldn't be afraid to ask

Annie Brees

Yes, yeah, exactly. How do I become, and this is ironic, "How do I become invisible in the gym?" And what she meant was, like, I don't want to be, I don't want people coming up to me and asking questions, like we just told you to do.

Meg Ramos

Don't do any of those things.

Annie Brees

Put a hat on, wear sunglasses, put the headphones and don't smile at anyone. I think, obviously, headphones are usually a good deterrent. But the best return is just if someone comes to talk to you, you simply say, "I'm in the middle of my workout," you know, like, or you know, whether you want to say "I'd be happy to talk to you later." If that's true. Don't say that. If it's not true. Or, you know, can I catch up with you later after my workout? But there's nothing wrong with saying, like, "I don't have time to chat right now I need to focus on this. I want to focus on this. I'm in the middle of the workout. Yeah, you'll have to ask someone else, you know." And that's totally cool.

Meg Ramos

I think so too. I think also, because I was reading that question as kind of what you were saying like a deterrent to people that are like, "Can I comment upon a

movement you're doing or give you a thought or a suggestion that's not maybe not warranted? Or asked for?" And yes, I do think that there's, you know, certain things that you can do that kind of puts you in a position of "I'm more open to chattiness right now" like making eye contact with people, wandering around. When I mean business, I got like, headphones on, hood up, like, I look like I don't talk to anybody.

But if someone comes up to me in the middle of my workout and has, like, a comment to offer, I am totally comfortable just saying like, you know, "Thanks. I'm good." Right? Or like you said, you know, or I'll even say whether or not it's true, just because I don't feel like getting into it. But like, you know, "Hey, I'm on a timer right now, or I'm timing my rest. So I got to get back to it. But right, I'll talk to you later." If you don't want to talk to them later don't say that. But there's, again, nothing wrong, just like I think in any any instance when someone comes up to you and you don't want to talk to them to just say with confidence, like, "I'm good."

Annie Brees

Yeah, and put the headphones back in and walk away.

Meg Ramos

Even if there's no music on.

Annie Brees

Sorry, phones ringing, got a phone call. Okay, this, I love this one too, because we've talked about this in another podcast. Best strategies for getting ready for work post workout logistics, like how many showers will I need to take a week if I work out regularly? How do I fit those showers into my schedule? How do I, I love this question because these are the honest things that trip women up, like, am I gonna have to wash my hair every day because I don't have time for 45 minutes in the gym, plus an extra you know, 20 minutes to wash my hair, 20 minutes of blow dry either like shower, like all of a sudden the 45 minute workout has turned into like a two hour thing because of all the stuff you need to do before and after it.

Meg Ramos

And you need to bring a suitcase to the gym to carry all your stuff.

Annie Brees

Right and then and then if you forget something, then it's like "Oh my gosh, now I have to go to work with no bra on. Or whatever it is. Right? Yeah.

Meg Ramos

Or wear a sports bra under, like, functional clothing. That's also fun.

Annie Brees

Yeah, so, here's, I'm going to tell you what I do. And obviously, I think you, are you laughing already?

Meg Ramos

I'm laughing because I want to know, because now that I'm back in school for, like, it's more like a job. This is actually something I've been really struggling with because I don't just, like, go from client to client at the gym, or like, have kick it time in between anymore. And I somewhat have to, like, look like human.

Annie Brees

Right.

Meg Ramos

I had to change all this going back to school. It's been really hard.

Annie Brees

I obviously work from home, I have meetings from time to time where I see people and record videos or things for social media or whatever. So I feel like I still have to look human, I might be in spandex all day, but I still look human. And I'm going to tell you what I do. But I like I need you to promise to not be grossed out or judge me. Okay?

Meg Ramos

Your hair looks really good right now. So-

Annie Brees

And I will explain it. So I go to CrossFit. I feel like I need to, like, say, like, I go to CrossFit so I sweat. It's not like I'm doing, like, a low key workout where I'm doing some mild walking or something where I don't maybe like get too hot and sweaty, I get sweaty. But what I do is I actually get up in the morning, I put my makeup on, and this isn't gonna work for everyone, because people are gonna be like, "I could never work out in makeup. I could never do this, like, for skin reasons for comfort reasons, whatever." That's fine. But I know I don't have time. Either I'm gonna have to get up early and go to a workout, which I can't often do because of kids and my husband's schedule, or I'm going to have to get ready, go to the gym. And then right after the gym, I have to start working, like, I don't have time to like, get ready after the gym. Does that make sense? So logistically, I get up, I put on my makeup, I go to the gym, I come home, I change my clothes from my gym clothes, or I'll rinse off real quick. Or I'll use one of those, like, in between shower wipes.

Meg Ramos

Yeah.

Annie Brees

And I will blow dry the sweat my hair with some dry shampoo. I'll throw a few more curls on it. I'll touch up my makeup, and I'm good to go. And I go to work the rest of the day like that. And then I come home and I shower at night. And that's what works for me. And I know people are like, "No, I don't think you understand." And I'm just like, just give it a try. Okay, just try it. Because I know for a fact one of my girlfriends posted yesterday, on Instagram, she was like, this is how I blow dry my hair after workout. You just blow dry the sweat right into it. Meg, you're giving me a look like you're gonna vomit.

Meg Ramos

No, I'm just thinking about that. See, this is why I'm having this conversation because it's so good because I'm sitting here going "Well, like a lot of times my hair is curly." And that's actually been a stress for me. So if we could arrange a webinar on post gym hair, take a note, that would be great. Like, it's different for me because I can't really blow dry with dry shampoo. But on the flip side, I can

usually, like, diffuse scrunch and go for a specific number of days. It's kind of like a scientific formula at this point, like, well, this is three days then I'm going to work out tomorrow morning. So can I eke it out another day? I feel like the main takeaway is that as long as I, I know this doesn't make it not sound good, like as long as I don't smell like, you know what? It's fine. It's fine. It's totally fine.

Annie Brees

Yeah. And this is honestly why I wear my hair straight. I actually have really curly hair too. And that's why I wear my hair straight because I, like, I can wear it longer in between washes and than I can curly. Like, my curls lose their, like, jazz after a few days. And then I have to shower or I have to wash my hair again. So if I leave it straight, then I can get more length of use out of it, I guess you could say.

Meg Ramos

That's probably what I'm going to have to start doing now that my life has changed. There's so many cascading situations you have to think about with this. The guy at the front desk just isn't going to tell you, Annie, he can't tell you the answers to these questions.

Annie Brees

No, this is what your girlfriends have to tell you. So you can get some of those like baby wipes. Get yourself some good, like, body spray or whatever, a nice smelling dry shampoo. And yeah, like, I shower every day, I shower every night. I just shower at night. I just don't shower, like, right after my workout. And I know some people listening are, like, totally gonna judge me and they're going to be so grossed out and that's okay, if it's not for you. That's okay. Just let me do me. And you can shower whenever you shower. And I won't judge you for showering twice a day if you don't shower, just not showering right after my workout.

Meg Ramos

And I will say I think that if that's something that's a deal breaker for you, then that would be something, obviously, that you would want to look for when you look for a gym, at least one shower because that's not the case, unfortunately, with a lot of CrossFit gyms I've been to or small boutique gyms or whatever. So it was nice, you know, when I switched over to the Y that they have the shower

facilities and then just bring your flip flops. Bring your travel size containers have some wipes for the days where you're, like, running late, have some headbands in case you're, like, just can't do it. And really, I think it ends up being okay.

Annie Brees

Well, and I would also say that if the need to shower after a workout is keeping you from doing any exercise, two things, can you shower on days you're not working like the weekends or shower or sorry, exercise on the days you're not working? Or that's not as big of a conflict? Or can you exercise after work where you don't need to maybe look presentable, or some type of way immediately after a workout? Or could you read reduce the intensity of your workout because as we've said many times already, something is better than nothing, usually when it comes to exercise, so maybe you don't go all in on your HIIT class at the gym, or you know, do everything superset, super intensity, you can, like, dial it back s where you're not like getting quite a sweaty not as huffy, puffy, but you're still getting benefit, or go for a long, slow walk, like, where you don't sweat at all. Just because you're not sweating doesn't mean it's not beneficial. So you know, if that's a roadblock for you, there's ways to work around it. That's-

Meg Ramos

Yeah, I would say walking every single day at lunch, because you can't get sweaty and that's all you can do is going to put you in a much healthier and happier place, than continuing to promise yourself you're going to go to the gym, but never going because you have to make a meeting at one o'clock and then never ever going.

Annie Brees

Yeah, and you can't go until your workout is perfect and you can complete it start to finish and do all the things the right way. And so, like, if you wait for that moment, like, you're probably going to be waiting for a while. So there's very few workouts if any, that I'm over like "Oh, I nailed everything start to finish. I did it all." Today I left 15 minutes early, because I had a meeting at 930. Still, it still counts in my book.

Meg Ramos

You can bring back the, like, power walks at lunch with, like, I remember seeing like my mom in her power suit in the 80s, like, in her stockings and her sneakers, like, power walking at lunch.

Annie Brees

That's still a thing.

Meg Ramos

You can wear, like, athleisure, though, so we don't even have to wear pantyhose, well, I don't know, maybe some people out there to wear pantyhose.

Annie Brees

Yeah.

Meg Ramos

If you do that, please put your sneakers on. And then like take a picture and tell me because-

Annie Brees

There's, we have a nice Skywalk system down in our downtown area. And if you went over lunch, you could see a lot of women walking in their sneakers and business casual clothes. And I remember the first time I saw it, I was like, "That is ridiculous." But then I'm like, "Actually, no, that's genius."

Meg Ramos

Good for them.

Annie Brees

Just get my judgy pants off for a hot minute and like see that like, hey, they're getting in some really good exercise on their lunch hour. So okay, we are approaching the hour almost. So let's can we do you think we can rapid fire these last few questions?

Meg Ramos

Yeah. But I do think maybe we could possibly come back to this conversation sometime in the future? Because there's probably more.

Annie Brees

Yeah. And I think we can absolutely dive into more of these deeper as well. But, okay, do I need a weight training belt?

Meg Ramos

No.

Annie Brees

I was gonna say the same thing. If you are a beginner lifter, no, for sure. If you are a seasoned lifter, and you're, like, looking to get into some competitions, and want to start lifting maximal load, and you've got a good base of strength, like, maybe I'd consider it but I haven't touched my weight belt since I gave, since I got pregnant with Blair, which was, you know, four plus years ago, and I'm still getting stronger. So.

Meg Ramos

And I would say that for our, for our audience, this might not be relevant. But if you're, like, saying to me, "Well, I have to use it or my back hurts," then you shouldn't be lifting the amount of weight you're lifting, probably at this point, right?

Annie Brees

Yeah, then we need to have some visits with a personal trainer and physical therapy. And-

Meg Ramos

Yeah.

Annie Brees

Yeah, for sure. Okay, some of these we already kind of answered. So let me go to this one, "when the machines don't fit your body will free weights and barbells work the same?" And this is actually a problem I've run into because either

people are too tall, too short, too big, too small to fit into the machines, because the machines are really just kind of fit average, like an average size.

Meg Ramos

Actually, an average size man.

Annie Brees

Right? Like, I remember they're based off of, like, who they're based off of. But yeah, I think it is a male and, like, certain height, like they have like this, kinda like a fit model. That's what I was trying to say like a fit model for clothing sizes, like they have like a fit model for the machines. And that's certainly not everyone. It's not me, it's not me. So for whatever reasons, if machines don't fit your body, and I will say that, like, a lot of machines are adjustable.

So if you're using machines, fiddle fart with them for a minute to get the right fit. But free weights and barbells have a lot of advantages as well, like, that's actually that would be my preference, more often than not over machine. So absolutely. Free weights and barbells are good. It might take a little bit more control and stability than a machine because you know, machines are guiding you on a path of movement that isn't there when you pick up a dumbbell or barbell.

But a lot of benefit to free weights and barbell. "I don't sweat as much during weights versus cardio. Is that okay?" Which we kind of just talked about, and they're both valuable, you know, I used to, my pendulum has swung from, like, all cardio and no weights to all weights and no cardio. And here I am like, "Oh, you know what? They both can fit into a balanced routine." Like who knew?

Meg Ramos

It's like you have to be in the messy middle or something? It's crazy.

Annie Brees

I know, like, it's just, it just reverberates throughout my life. But, yeah, I don't sweat a ton when I'm doing weights. But that doesn't mean that I'm not working hard, or that I'm not building muscle or that my workout isn't effective.

Meg Ramos

Yeah.

Annie Brees

How to tell when you need to up your weights? What would what would you say?

Meg Ramos

That's a great question.

Annie Brees

That is a great question.

Meg Ramos

And actually, there was an earlier question where someone says, like, "What's the best weight to start with reps and sets? Which kind of goes hand in hand and I'll try to answer super quickly. Honestly, I feel like beginners are great to start with, like, two or three sets of eight to 12 reps, just for a blanket statement to give you a number to shoot for, that's a really good, like, middle ground to land in, it's going to get you stronger, especially if you're brand new, it's not going to be so much volume that you want to fall over the next day, it's not going to be, you know, it's going to be enough that you see progress. And that's kind of, that's the set rep scheme you kind of use with Everyday Strong so-

Annie Brees

I know and Workout Wednesday's are usually almost always, like, in that rep ranges. That's my favorite rep range.

Meg Ramos

Right!

Annie Brees

Rep range because like, and especially if you're learning a movement, you get a lot of practice in those eight to 12, eight to 15 reps, right, to practice each movement multiple times, without, like, being like, "I'm gonna fall over." Like you said.

Meg Ramos

Yeah, so and then in terms of, like, when you should go up in a weight, I generally tell my clients that, like, you know, when you're learning, it's one thing, like, I want you to feel super confident. Once you're kind of getting a feel for it, I mean, for lack of a better word, it should kind of start to suck by the end, it shouldn't be impossible, you shouldn't be failing, your form shouldn't go all to you know what, but it should feel like you could maybe do two or three more reps at that weight before your form would start to go.

And I'm aware that that's a very kind of intangible thing. So if you're type A that might get on your nerves, but you'll start to notice if you're, like, doing your bicep curls with 10s, and you're like, "I could do 30 of these," then it's probably time to go up to 15. But if you grab 15, and you're like, "Holy crap, I can't even do three of these without, like, flinging my whole body off the ground," then they're too heavy. So yeah, I usually say, like, get through your reps, and maybe leave like, you know, 1-3 extra in the tank. And it should be tough. I mean, like you said earlier, it's not like, not yea party, but-

Annie Brees

Right. And I also want to add to that, we talk about this in Everyday Strong, that I always say that you're not married to the weight. So if you go in for your first or your third set even, and you've picked a weight and you pick it up, and it's either like, "Oh no, I got way more in the tank, I can go up and I've done two reps," or "I've done two reps, and it's like, oh my god, I don't even think I can do five," it's okay to, like, put the weight down and select a different weight.

Like, this is your workout, like, no one's gonna come in, like, penalize you for picking the wrong way. Like and on the flip side, if you pick a weight and you fail it, because you just overshot it. That's okay, too. Like, I don't I don't want that to happen, because you know, you're at a really high risk of injury for some different reasons. But like, it's okay if that happens, it's happened to me multiple times.

Meg Ramos

Well, and I think too, not even so much, like, absolute failure, but like, just some days, you might, especially if you're, like, kind of doing the same, like, repeating workouts and stuff. Some days you're going to go in and a weight that felt like a

piece of cake last week will feel god awful for a lot of reasons. Maybe you didn't sleep, maybe you didn't eat, like, maybe you're just super stressed or whatever. Or your kids were doing things. I don't know. And that's also a situation where it's okay, you know, you're not, you don't need to prove anything to anybody. So if it just doesn't feel, like, as good as you think it should, then it's totally okay to drop, or go heavier. If you're like, "This feels amazing." Do it.

Annie Brees

Yeah. And then this next question is asking about a spotter. "How do I know when I need a spotter?" And if you're even mildly uncertain about safely lifting a weight on your own, I would say ask for a spot, like, and sometimes if you're exploring, increasing your weights, you might want that. You might, whether you actually use the spot or not is irrelevant. It's more just like a, like, this is now just a safety thing.

You know, the thing though is you want to make sure that you communicate with your spotter, like, what you're doing, what you need from him or her, like what you expect, how many sets you're going to do, or how many reps you're going to do, like, what the movement is you're doing, I've seen a lot of just miscommunication happen, like "I had three more reps left, I didn't want you to take the bar" or "Don't touch me like that" sort of thing. So just, you know, feel free to say like, "I need this, this is what, I want your hands here. This is what I need from you, if I start to struggle, do this" sort of thing.

Meg Ramos

And maybe more like, generally, because I do think that's actually a great conversation, maybe for like, discussion, for more, not more advanced. But just like for someone that's been doing a little longer, I think that if you're listening to this, and you're like, "I've never been to the gym before in my entire life," you should be choosing a weight that you feel really confident with that, again, it will be tough by the end, but I wouldn't want you to go in and like pick up dumbbells for the first time be like, "Okay, how do I ask for help?" You know, "What do I have to tell them to do, I don't even know what I should do?" Like, start light, get really comfortable with just the movement pattern. And then as you work your way up, over the weeks and months of doing this, you'll learn what you need, how your lift looks, you know, and then you'll feel comfortable asking and will probably be at a point where you really need that.

Annie Brees

Yeah, I want to end with this one because this is one of my favorite questions, "Is it bad if I do the same things, or the same routine, every time I go to the gym?" We talked about this, I think Lauren and I talked about this, like, how to fall in love with exercise even when you hate it, it can be really overwhelming to feel like you need to come up with a new workout every single time you go to the gym.

And if that's something that's keeping you from going to the gym, then I'm totally cool with you going and doing the same thing or something similar, every single time. But what I want to say is that I want you to start thinking like how balanced of routine is this, like, training the same muscle groups in the same manner every single time can be problematic in some way. It can cause weaknesses in other areas of your body, if they're getting ignored, it can cause injury from overuse.

But also, eventually, you're going to stop getting the same results. If you're picking the same movement, the same reps, the same sets with the same weight, every single time, day after day after day, your body is going to get more efficient, it's going to get stronger, it's going to get better at doing those things, which is the exact response we want from exercise. That's what we want when you go to the gym, we want your body to be like adapt to the exercise, but you're going to have to increase increase the challenge. So this is called something called the SAID principle, the Specific Adaptations of Impose Demands, right, so like you ask your body to do this thing, it gets better at doing the thing. Now you have to move the goalposts just a little bit further.

So that means you might have to add some reps, you might have to add a set, you might have to, the easiest way in weight training is to add weight. So you continually get challenged out of the same movements that you've been doing over and over and over again, which is why things like power lifting are so popular, because you can squat bench and dead for years and years and years and years. And you just keep adding weight, adding weight, adding weight, or you vary the sets and the reps or the intensity or the tempo, the volume, what would you say?

Meg Ramos

I would agree. And I think too, just, it's a good reminder that, like, you can, there's a lot of room for variants within a program or, like, a workout that's so really

simple. So it really depends on the kind of person you are like, if you are like, I don't want to be bored, I need a new thing each time to keep going, awesome. There are really a lot of options out there, like, you know, to vary it up each time. I tend to think, especially for beginners, doing, you know, that progressive overload is going to, you're going to see progress, and you're able to track progress a lot easier.

But remember too if you're like, my brain needs something simple, you don't always need to add, you don't need to add weight. That's not the only way that you'll see progress. You know, if you're like, "Hey, I'm not ready to go from the 20 pound dumbbell to the 30 pound on these squats," you can, like you said, you can do more reps, you can go slower, you can go faster, you can add a jump, you can add dynamic, you can do a different variation.

But you're still coming back to that same basic thing. So it really depends on like the kind of person that you are. And I think that, like, again, for the audience that we're talking to right now, it's, I don't think there's a wrong answer. It's whatever is going to keep you consistent-

Annie Brees

Yeah-

Meg Ramos

give you room to grow.

Annie Brees

And I would add that skill mastery, learning how to do things like a really great squat with good mechanics, or a hinge or some type of pushing or pulling variation. Learning how to do those things isn't always the most exciting, it can be boring, because it's usually a lot of repetition. But once you nail those things, you now have the foundation to do a lot of other things.

So if you if you're new to the gym, and you're just getting started, like investing and learning those foundational movements that we talked about the squat, the hinge, the push, the pull, I think will take you really really far. And so then when you get bored, you can be like, "Okay, I can do a kettlebell swing instead of a deadlift and still train my posterior chain or whatever," we don't need to get into

the lingo of it. That's our job. But then you can have a lot more room for variety after you've nailed the basics.

Meg Ramos

Yeah. And you'll feel confident with that. So when you are like scrolling Instagram, and you see somebody doing something really cool with a kettlebell, you can be like, "Oh, that's just the same movement pattern as this deadlift I've been working on, she's just doing it faster with one hand," and then, "Gosh, I actually really do know what I'm talking about." .

Annie Brees

Yeah, and I mean, cool. And I think there are there are fitness programs, there are philosophies out there, you know, like CrossFit is one of them, that's, you know, constantly varied. And while they might vary the way the workouts are presented and put together, there's still a lot of the basic foundational movement patterns, every single workout. So that's just another, you know, and they have a foundations class, or whatever you call it, where you go, and you learn how to do these basic movements. So then when you get into a workout, you can have more freedom to play around with how what that actually looks like. But even though they say they're varied, there's still a lot of, like, you need to master these basics first to be able to do all that stuff. So, which isn't always fun, but it's worth it.

Meg Ramos

It's true. And I would say just across the board, like, because I know we have to wrap up but just like CrossFit has that, a good CrossFit gym will have a Foundations or an Elements course, I really think, I mean, even knowing, if you have a finite budget for your exercise habit or your movement habit, I really think that it's valuable to at least invest, if you can afford it, in some training for even like one or two sessions, even if you could, okay, me as a trainer, if someone came up to me, and this has happened before, if they're like, "Hey, I've got to work out on my own. I don't have the budget for you all the time." Like I get that.

"But can you show me these five basics so that I know I'm doing them right? Because I have Everyday Strong from Balance365. But I just don't think I'm doing

this hinge correctly. Can you just go over this with me for two sessions?" I'm like, freaking, "That's great. Let's do it." So don't be afraid. Like, if you have the resources, even one or two sessions, so that you feel more confident with the basics is going to be invaluable, I think, would you agree?

Annie Brees

Yeah, I would absolutely agree, I'd be happy to and I have worked with people like that. I think my only hesitation sometimes is that people tend to underestimate the time it can take to get good at something, you know, for a kettlebell swing, for example, it's not uncommon for me to, for various reasons, lead a two hour kettlebell workshop. Two hours teaching the kettlebell swing might sound like a lot of time, like, I just get to the tip of the iceberg. You know, so you can learn a lot of great things in those sessions.

But then there's also a lot of practice that should, can and should follow that so you might have a few takeaways or a handful of takeaways from a session like that but that doesn't mean like "Oh, I'm done now I'm perfect at it." Like, the expectation is that you're, like, going to take these things and then work on them usually. Not that Megan and Annie are going to perfect your squat in an hour.

Meg Ramos

Go forth.

Annie Brees

Yeah, yeah. All right. Well, we're gonna have to finish this conversation because there are some questions we didn't get to and I'm sure there will come up more items that we can dive deeper into, but this was fun. I enjoyed this, obviously because it's about the gym.

Meg Ramos

Thank you for having me on.

Annie Brees

Yes, thank you. We'll talk soon. Okay.

Meg Ramos

Okay, bye.

Annie Brees

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