

Balance365 Episode 190 Transcript

ANNIE BREES (INTRO)

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 co-founder Jennifer Campbell. Together we have a team of personal trainers and nutritionists who coach 1000s of women daily and are on a mission to help women feel happy, healthy, 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.

ANNIE

Hello, my friends. Thank you for joining us for another episode. Today we are talking about the three reasons your weight loss may have stalled. My friends, weight loss is never linear, there will be periods where your weight increases slightly, drops slightly, then maybe even stalls for a week or two, rinse and repeat. That is normal, and to be expected. However, there may also come a time where your weight loss comes to a halt. For weeks or months on end, despite feeling like you're still actively pursuing weight loss. In really simple terms, this means your energy and the calories you're eating is matching your energy out. The caloric deficit that you may have had at one time when you were losing is no longer there. That's it. Now you may have also heard this called a weight loss plateau. And it can be confusing and even frustrating, feeling like you're doing all the things but not getting the results you want. Today, we are going to share the top three reasons why we see this happen. But first, before we get started, a lot, I mean, a lot of our listeners struggle with overeating. Many think the solution is more willpower and spoiler alert, not exactly. If this sounds like you, make sure you grab our free guide, "Why You Binge and What to Do About It." The link to that will be in our show notes. Enjoy this episode.

ANNIE

Jen, have you ever had your weight plateau?

JEN CAMPBELL

Yes.

ANNIE

Tell me about it.

JEN

It's been plateaued for the last seven years.

ANNIE

[Laughs] In the best way possible.

JEN
[Laughs]

ANNIE
I think we call that maintenance.

JEN
Yeah.

ANNIE
But that was intentional, right?

JEN
Well, it was, well, I could unpack the whole story with you. But it was like, you know, as our listeners, longtime listeners know, about seven years ago, I lost 20 to 30 pounds, depending on where I lie in my kind of new range. And the goal for me was to find a weight that felt sustainable for me, find a weight that felt healthy, comfortable, and sustainable, where I wasn't yo-yoing and felt, you know, physically and emotionally confident with that healthy weight. Yeah, but I just want to say that I'm not at my leanest weight, I'm actually about 20 pounds heavier than what my most lean weight has ever been. But so you're right, that was the goal.

ANNIE
Yeah. But sometimes, people can experience stalls in their weight loss journey or a weight loss plateau. And it's maybe not the desired outcome. And they're like, what's going on?

JEN
Yeah, they may feel like they have more weight to lose. Which, we could also kind of unpack that a little bit, which I think we will actually. [Laughs]

ANNIE
Don't spoil it. Before you say any more, let's just get into it. [Laughs]

JEN
Let's just get into it.

ANNIE
Okay. So there's three common reasons we see in our experience coaching 1000s of women that are culprits to weight loss plateaus. And the first one, brace yourself. It's because you've lost weight. And what happens when you lose weight is that your BMR, your basal metabolic rate, and your activity also drop. And so we don't need to get too heavy into the science. If you want more info, we can point you to some good resources. But your BMR is essentially the number of calories your body needs to complete its most basic functions. And this doesn't include exercise, right?

JEN

Yeah. So like digestion. And if you're a woman or someone who has a menstrual cycle, carrying that out every month requires energy.

ANNIE

Yes. And there's a couple different formulas but in general, it factors in your age, your height, and your weight. And as you decrease your weight, your BMR, the calories your body needs on a daily basis at rest also drops. So the Cliffs Notes, or the Coles Notes for my Canadian friends, is the more mass you have, the heavier you are, the more calories you require. And the more you burn.

JEN

Yeah, it just takes more energy to move a larger object around the world.

ANNIE

Yes, as I have shared in podcast before, it took me more calories to maintain my body weight at 240 pounds than it does at 185 pounds.

JEN

Right. Exactly.

ANNIE

And there is some nuance there, because muscle mass can influence that as well. But as you lose weight, you don't, you just don't need as many calories, right?

JEN

Yeah, so your weight can plateau because, you're, in order to lose weight, you actually need to be eating slightly less than what your body needs in a day. Right? So it taps into your fat stores, uses that for energy, etc, etc. We do have other podcasts on the science of weight loss here. And so your weight has plateaued because you are eating the exact amount of food that is right for your current body.

ANNIE

Exactly. The other reason is your activity is impacted. And I, and I know you might be thinking, "But Annie, I'm so active. I've developed a consistent exercise routine. I work out all the time." And that's awesome. But that's not exactly what this is referring to. Just living your daily life, walking, climbing stairs, grocery shopping, standing and sitting down at your desk repeatedly or going to the bathroom, like, all have a higher energy expenditure when you are at a higher body weight.

JEN

Right. Yeah.

ANNIE

So again, as you decrease your body weight, those movements don't require the same output that they once did. Even as your fitness improves, like, think of it like performing daily activities with a 30-pound kid in your arms. Right? You put down that kid, it's gonna feel a little bit easier.

JEN

Yes, the activity gets easier. Exactly.

ANNIE

Yes. So I guess the solution here, the recommendation, would be to periodically check in. If you are using calories to monitor your intake or hunger, as we often champion for, to like, really assess is where I started where I'm still at, do I need to make adjustments?

JEN

Yeah, our members, you know, we primarily use hunger and satiety. Our members may find that as they lose weight, they need to revisit this skill, right? And hone it in, setting it and forgetting it can work really well until you plateau, right? Until your weight, and then you'll have to revisit it. There's a few things you can revisit, but this is one of them you would revisit. "Okay, am I still eating when I get hungry? And am I still finishing when I'm satisfied?" Because if you've lost 20 or 40 pounds, you actually need less food to feel satisfied. And you might just eat a certain amount of food out of habit, which worked really well for you when you were 20 pounds or 40 pounds heavier. And now you need to relook at that.

ANNIE

Yeah, yeah. Just stay mindful of it.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

Okay, reason number two. And I think you were you were headed this way, Jen, your weight loss goal isn't realistic.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

And it's not uncommon to find women that have visions of unrealistic ideals, like, we've seen it time and time again, women start on a weight loss journey with a goal in mind and zero consideration as to whether or not that goal is realistic or not. It's like, "Oh, this is what I weighed when I graduated high school, or this is what I weighed on my wedding day, or my pre-baby weight or my leanest, lightest weight ever, and therefore, it's now the goal," right?

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

And that maybe sounded like an epic idea a month ago, but now that your weight loss has stalled, you might be finding yourself evaluating, do you want to put more effort into reaching that? Is it reasonable? Is it sustainable? Or maybe you're good. Like you. [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah, exactly. That was a big realization for me right? That I didn't, there was absolutely no reason for me to be my leanest, livable weight. Like, you know, it just took a lot of time, a lot of energy, a lot more than I wanted to spend on something like my weight and my goal, which I think a lot of our Balance365 members also have this goal, is that their habits can be a little bit on autopilot, they take some effort, but they're not taking up all of your life all of your time. And your weight becomes a byproduct of that. And that's kind of, really what we mean by sustainable weight, right? And then that was my goal, you know, seven years ago, was saying, "I actually don't care what it is anymore, I don't need to have a goal weight anymore. My only goal is to be at a healthy weight, where I'm not thinking about food, or fitness or my weight at all anymore." And everybody, when you're starting your journey, you may not know what that is. I didn't. I didn't, because I'd only ever yo-yoed, you know, from a low end, a very, very low, you know, up to a high and then back down to the low. I had never found my kind of middle ground that felt, you know, good for me.

ANNIE

Yeah. And there is, there's so much pressure, it seems like for women, we've talked about this before, that if you aren't at your lightest weight, then you, therefore, should be pursuing, trying to attain that or achieve it. And again, like, when I think about my leanest, lightest weight, I might, the behaviors that I was engaging in weren't the healthiest.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Not for the long term, at least. And I think a lot of women can connect to that. Right? Like, I don't want to go back there, because I wasn't treating myself well.

JEN

Yeah. And my entry into kind of the fitness industry, health and wellness, really, what I was being guided by, as far as, you know, what is healthy? What is, what should I be pursuing? You know, like most of our listeners very much rooted in diet culture and a drive to be thin was, I think, what a lot of people don't realize is, you know, when they're looking at the marketing, the posters, all of that, they're actually looking at photos of women who have dieted down for that photoshoot, right? So they could be on the cover of that supplement or on the front, you know, big photo on the front of the gym, or whatever it is, they have dieted down to an unsustainable level of leanness for that day, they don't even look like that five days later.

ANNIE

Well, and I know, as someone who comes from a very heavy lifting background, a lot of the women I was looking to for inspiration and motivation are also living a lifestyle or even using supplements and drugs that I have no interest in. So it's not even, you know, real apples to apples, like, to say that this is realistic for me to attain.

JEN

Yeah, for sure. So I think that anytime you see your weight plateauing, it's just a really good opportunity to check in to see if you are at your ideal weight, right? So your ideal weight will be where what you want for your health matches what you want for the quality of your life. Where they meet.

ANNIE

Yeah, and you can do that, regardless if you stopped to consider if your goal is realistic before you started, or like midway through, you can do it at any point.

JEN

At any point. And I think for those listening who really struggle with body image issues, really struggle with, you know, maybe previous like, very, like, low levels of body fat, like they've been there. Like, I have been there, so I can empathize. But I do think it's kind of that group of women that probably have a lot to unpack under outside of like, what weight they should be. So we work with a lot of women who have a story similar to Annie's, where Annie really, is that probably more of a leader state. [Laughs] Is that what I'm calling it?

ANNIE

Sure.

JEN

Right? Like you've lost weight and kept it off. And you are now in a smaller body than you spent most of your adult life in. And for me, my story is a little bit different where I have lost some weight, but I'm actually in a heavier body than I spent throughout my 20s. Or was trying to spend, I shouldn't say spent because it wasn't a constant state. It was a constant fight. And so, but there's gonna be women like me out there who probably have to come to terms with, their goal weight is actually just not sustainable in terms of the quality of life they want to live, like there's, it just causes the constant mental tension and taxation.

ANNIE

Yep, absolutely.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

All right. The third and final reason, not, this is certainly not an exhaustive list. This is just the most common reasons, and we say this with nothing but love. Don't get defensive. Just hear us out.

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

So the third and final reason your weight loss has plateaued is your habits aren't what you think they are.

JEN

Yeah. Very common to -

ANNIE

I'm so sorry.

BOTH

[Laugh]

ANNIE

But they probably aren't. [Laughs]

JEN

This is tough news to deliver. Yeah, it's always tough news to deliver. And, you know, kind of further to that note of, when I said earlier, when your weight plateaus, it's a great opportunity to check in, right? Don't judge it, just check in. Are you at, you know, your healthiest, your most ideal weight? Or could you further tweak your habits, right? It's a choice, like, would that lead to, you know, would you be okay with that further, like, further tweaking your habits, but a lot of people think, "You know, I would tweak my habits a bit more, I would like to lose more weight, but I don't know what I would tweak. I'm doing everything perfectly." And one of my big sort of red flags or indicators that I'm sitting with a woman who isn't telling herself the truth is she says, "I'm doing everything perfectly." And I know this, because nobody does everything perfectly. I don't do everything perfectly, our members don't do everything perfectly, and you can get results doing things imperfectly.

ANNIE

So maybe you started out really strong on this journey with your habits, you were consistent, you were focused. And it's possible that since then, you have fallen into a bit of a lull, where you've started down a slippery slope, maybe you're staying up a little bit later, or you're skipping a workout a week here and there, or your serving of peanut butter or coffee creamer is growing just a touch bigger.

JEN

It's not about the one-offs. Like it's not about the one-off workout you missed, it's about, it's about your patterns that develop. Right? And to be honest, Annie and I and our coaches, we see the same patterns in 95% of people we work with, like, we all have the same areas that we neglect, and even the coaches are gonna have their own areas that they neglect and just aren't seeing. And that's why coaching can be so powerful, because you have another person to troubleshoot that with you. But I could tell, you know, I'm working with multiple members right now actually on, like, weekend habits, you know, and the coaching session starts out with like, "I'm doing everything right, I don't understand." And then, like, a couple questions in we learn that person is still gorging themselves on the weekend. Right? A bit of a free for all come Friday.

ANNIE

I also have seen it where people haven't really had to get super focused with their habits. Maybe they've had some quick wins by implementing some smaller changes with minimal effort. Right?

JEN

Yeah. You talk about that in your journey. And we've got a podcast on it, where you talk about, you had some pretty quick wins early on in your weight loss journey before you actually had to get a little nitty gritty about your nutrition.

ANNIE

Yeah. And then it felt like, okay, the low-hanging fruit is gone. I squeezed all the juice I could out of that one.

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

Now, to your point, do I want to get out the ladder and work a little bit harder? Or take a, maybe a different approach? Or try some, try another strategy? Where am I? Or am I good? And you can also, I'll just offer that you could say, "I'm good for now." And revisit it later. You don't have to say like, no, never.

JEN

I might be good now. And you know, in five years, when my kids are way more independent, I might revisit my habits if I feel, you know, if I have any, you know, fat loss goals, or I don't foresee that coming up for me, but it's not off the table. You're right. It is just that. I'm good where I am right now.

ANNIE

Yes, yeah. But the point here that I really want to make with this reason number three, your habits aren't what you think they are, is that humans are good at lying to themselves. We think we're often doing better than we really are. And this could be an opportunity to just get some data, like do an inventory. You know, I know you've talked about it, I've talked about it, like every once in a while, get out the teaspoon, measuring utensil, whatever you call it, a measuring

spoon and see like, is my coffee creamer serving really what I think it is? You don't have to do it all the time, or indefinitely, like forever and ever. Just check, just check yourself.

JEN

Yeah, there's also a messy middle here with tracking macros, right? So I have been on that end of the spectrum that many of our listeners may have as well, where I obsessively tracked macros to the detriment of my quality of life, my emotional health. And now with the work I've done, which, keep listening to this podcast, you too can do all the work. I'm okay with macros, and I'm okay looking at the nutritional information, you know, of my food. And on the back of labels, I'm okay seeing it on menus even. To me, I truly am neutral. And I can see this as information. And so you know, our kind of hardcore macro counters, talking to all you out there, there can be a huge pendulum swing into like, "I hate macros, I can't look at them. Macro tracking is diet culture. It's bad, it's wrong. It's a horrible habit," you know, all of that, but, and I've been there too. But as I've landed in center, I can go, "Hey, it's just information, and I can use it from time to time if I ever feel like I'm off course, and I need to collect some data, I could track my macros for a couple days, and just use that information to course correct." And that's what we would tell our members, if they were really stuck, I would say, "How do you feel about tracking macros for a few days?" Because I think that it is a high level, I think it's a high-level nutrition strategy that probably isn't necessary for the majority of the general public, unless you're really stuck and troubleshooting. So you could track your macros for a couple days, use it to inform your decisions, like, I personally would find my slippery habits there pretty quickly, probably, which is sometimes my fat intake really creeps up and fast. And I would adjust my fat intake, ditch the macro tracker, back on course.

ANNIE

Yeah. And it's just really another tool in the toolbox.

JEN

Just another tool in the toolbox. Not always necessary, but it can be helpful in some circumstances.

ANNIE

And just like a tool in a toolbox, some people might feel more comfortable and confident. And what's the word I'm looking for, like, able to use that well, and efficiently and effectively than others. And that's okay.

JEN

Yeah, totally. And there's other tools besides macro counting, right? Like, as Annie said, I sometimes will, I like to free pour cream in my coffee every morning. And every once in a while, every few months, three, four months, whenever I think about it, I'll bring out a tablespoon, and I will measure out the cream in my coffee. And that's just a little reality check that that was, that cream consumption was creeping up there.

ANNIE

That's how I felt about going to a restaurant for the first time once the restaurants started opening up again here, and they poured me a glass of wine. And I was like, "That is not a serving."

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

What is that? Where's the rest of it? And my friend was like, "No, this is an appropriate serving." I was like, "Right. Yes, yes."

JEN

Yeah, I think I think that just a quick habit check-in can be really great. Acknowledging that humans, we all do it. We are human. We love to tell ourselves little fibs.

ANNIE

Yeah. So if you find yourself with your weight loss stalling, you're not really sure why, you know, that you're not maybe at the end of your weight loss journey just yet. Check in with your weight loss. Is it affecting your BMR and your activity? Right.?

JEN

Do you need to readjust? Yeah.

ANNIE

Yeah. Either your intake somehow. Maybe your weight loss goal isn't realistic in the first place. Or maybe your habits aren't what you think they are. And it really actually could be a combination of all three, truthfully.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

It's not like just one of these. It could be multifactorial.

JEN

Yeah, for sure.

ANNIE

Yeah. Anything else to add, Jen?

JEN

One thing I do want to add is just that, you know, Balance365 has existed for like, almost seven years now. And so Annie and I have coached so many women, we've seen lots of different weight loss journeys, health journeys, and mindset journeys. But what I want to say about

weight loss journeys is, I don't think I've ever seen a weight loss journey that didn't come in spurts and stalls. So I would say there might also be a degree of just, hey, ride it out. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

You know, and what are we talking? Are we talking like a one-week stall? Or are we talking a two-month stall? Right? Like that's a different conversation. But often our members, they, it comes in spurts and stalls, and it could also just be part of the process, part of the journey.

ANNIE

Yeah, and reflective of your capacity for change in any given moment. Maybe you want to just coast for a little bit.

JEN

Yeah, and there's advantages to that, right? So maintaining your weight, and there's physical advantages to that, as far as, no matter how we look at it, weight loss or calorie deficit is a stress on your body, which is why small calorie deficits and losing weight slowly can be quote unquote, like, a healthier choice for your body physically. And then there's a mental cost of it as well. Right? And so sometimes just letting yourself, when you hit a plateau, and being able to coast for a bit, you might find there's restorative benefits there for you. Right? And then until you're ready to like, focus in again.

ANNIE

Absolutely.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

All right. Thank you, Jen.

JEN

Thanks, Annie.

ANNIE

Talk soon.

JEN

Bye-bye.

ANNIE (OUTRO)

Hey, everyone, if your mind has been blown while listening to this podcast, just wait until you work with us. Let us help you level up your health and wellness habits and your life inside Balance365 coaching. Head on over to balance365.co to join coaching.