

Balance365 Episode 227 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, friends. This week we're sharing another one of our Q&A sessions. We are answering three questions. First, what's with mine and Jen's matching tattoos? Secondly, how can I support a friend on a weight loss journey? And the last one is how long does it take your body to adjust to balanced meals? For those new to us, every week we go live in our free Facebook group Weight Loss Without Restriction, to answer your questions. Find us there, and we will answer your questions too. Just a reminder, we are opening enrollment to our coaching program in September. If you want to grab a spot, make sure you get on our waitlist. We would love to support you in finding a way to eat, move, and live that feels fulfilling and sustainable. Click the link in our show notes or go to balance365.com/waitlist to sign up. Enjoy.

ANNIE

Morning, Jen.

JEN CAMPBELL

Morning.

ANNIE

Here we are, answering your questions. We're going to kick it off with something a little bit more personal.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Normally we talk about, you know, habits, behavior, change mindset, and nutrition-related topics. But we get this question a lot. What do your tattoos mean?

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

So Jen and I have matching tattoos.

JEN

Yes. So they are three symbols. Listen.

ANNIE

[Laughs]

JEN

I don't know where, why, what? Annie brought them to me.

ANNIE

I can tell you. I was actually wondering when I saw this question. I was like does Jen even remember what they now stand for? We didn't think it out all that much. It was probably a 20-minute discussion, full disclosure, but we wanted something that represented what we felt our mission was doing for our communities. And the three symbols stand for create, connect, protect. And I think we've held true to that.

JEN

I think so too.

ANNIE

Does that sound familiar to you? [Laughs]

JEN

I do know what they mean. I just don't know where the symbols originate from. Do you remember?

ANNIE

They're glyphs.

JEN

Oh, they're glyphs.

ANNIE

Yes, yeah, they're like ancient symbols that I think originated and you know, probably some stone cave-type drawings.

JEN

Glad they have so much meaning to [laughs] you and me. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Very historical, historical representation there.

JEN

Yes. So create, connect, protect is what those tattoos mean.

ANNIE

Yeah. Okay. That's fun. We don't normally get questions about us. Okay, next question. "I'm trying to help a friend. She says she's ready to lose weight." And since she has been successful, this friend has been successful. She wants to pay it forward. "What would you tell someone who has a considerable amount of weight to lose to be healthy and balanced about adding more movement in but she feels tired to start?" She's made suggestions like parking further away from stores when running errands, but there are - are there some hints you can give on getting her moving when she doesn't feel like it, aside from telling her to just do it, even though she doesn't feel like it? Which, this is a question that's come up, like how do I help encourage a friend to lose weight, encourage a friend to change their habits? Or it could be a partner, like we've talked about this before. What are, what are your thoughts?

JEN

I think this is very tricky. And I think that people need to tread very carefully. And we've all seen friends, family members or ourselves struggle with weight loss or struggle with habit change. And look, I'll be honest, weight loss journeys are not risk-free. They are not risk-free. And I personally believe they are best done with the support of a professional, whether that's a community, program, and coaches like ours, or, you know, someone else you're connected to that hopefully is evidence-based understands, you know, nutrition, behavior change, and prioritizes your long term wellness. But that said, I have a couple questions about this here. And first of all, I think that the most important thing a friend can provide when somebody is on a weight loss journey is number one, to keep the focus on healthy habits or health-centric behaviors, not the weight or weight centric behaviors. And that is because of this, you know, we live in this very fat phobic, stigmatizing society. And I think there's too much emphasis placed on weight and not enough on health. And women in particular have a lot of their, I guess value and sense of self-worth tied up in their weight. And so I think one of the best things a friend can do is not make it about weight, and make it about health and health behaviors and behavior change and long term sustainability. And when you have a friend who is sharing with you that they have a considerable amount of weight to lose, and they want to do it in a healthy and balanced way, I would think about holding space for them to figure out what's going to work for them. So understanding that your definition of healthy and balanced may not be your friend's definition of healthy and balanced and encouraging them, I think what's more important than the behaviors is to get out of the mindset of all or nothing, get out of the mindset of perfectionism, get out of the mindset of their self worth is tied to what their weight is. And even further to that, that their health is tied to what their weight is. And this is messy, gray, I totally understand that. I want to also hold space for that. But I would just say, proceed with caution. And then another, I know you'll have lots of good stuff here, Annie, as someone who's been had a significant weight loss journey. Another thing coming to mind for me here is just this angle on movement, like slash exercise. And I want to pause here because I think that the impact of exercise on weight loss is so overblown in our society. And this is just more about little granular detail of this person's

message. Exercise is by far one of the most significant health behaviors a person can adopt, that improves literally everything about their life, right? Quality of life, health, risk of disease, mortality, all of those things. And so I absolutely love seeing people, you know, adopt sustainable exercise habits. But we have a belief that they have a significant impact on weight loss. And the reality is often exercise does not. And I'm not saying it has zero impact. It's just not as significant as people think. So it's also just being realistic about that, great, get moving for your health, amazing. But the expectations of seeing a cascade of weight loss after you get moving are just, that's just not realistic. So I'm going to let you take it away here, because I know you're going to have a really great insight.

ANNIE

I agree with, of course, everything you said. I do think that this is just a bigger picture that should be considered and it's an important piece of the puzzle, in my opinion, is the dynamic of that friendship and what that friend is looking for from that friend because it sounds like this person mentions, "I've had success I've lost some weight, and now they might be turning to me for like, some guidance or advice." And we see that so often. A person loses 20 pounds, and suddenly they're an expert, right? Like, this is sarcasm, right?

JEN

Very true, I would say when I was at my thinnest, most people just wanted advice from me all the time. I had no credentials, I was doing it in a very disordered way. And yet suddenly, that felt really good for me. People were turning to me asking me questions. And I felt like I must know something, right? [Laughs]

ANNIE

Yes. And so I want to just acknowledge that this happens often. And sometimes, I think the best thing you can do for the friendship is to say like, "I'm not the person, like, I know that I did this, but I'm not the expert. I don't feel comfortable. I don't think I should be the one giving you this advice or making these recommendations," as Jen said, like, "Here's a program with support, with experts in this area that can help you," right? I think the other thing is, this sneaky thing that can happen. I am guilty of it as a coach and I try to be so mindful of it. It's like, I know coaching techniques. And I can see opportunities for a coaching conversation a mile away, outside of coaching calls. It is truly like, I think a boundary violation for me to, without awareness or consent from the other person, start to coach them in a conversation, like this has to be a mutually agreed upon experience, I am a coach, you are getting coaching. Or in this case, it might look like I am a teacher, I want to learn, I am a cheerleader, I want you to encourage me, but like having clarity on like what this friend wants from you is really important, because so often I think we assume that maybe they say something one time or they talk about something, and that they're ready for change. And we know about the stages of behavior change, people can stay in that contemplation stage for a really long time, or even the preparation stage of change for a very long time. And we can be spinning our wheels, and that can really tear down or be harmful to the core of the relationship,

JEN

For sure. Absolutely.

ANNIE

And so I think, you know, if you haven't already, if you're in this situation, or if you ask this question and you're listening, clarifying, like, what does this friend want from you? And can you, can you safely offer that in a healthy way?

JEN

Yeah, I also want to note, as Annie is talking about coaching, coaching and advice are two very different things. So individuals that join our program, they aren't just coming to get advice from us, they are coming for coaching. And why sometimes don't think the average person knows what that means. But when we give each other advice, usually that means we are sharing, here's what's worked for me, here's what I've seen work for other people, and weight loss journeys, or just behavior change in general, whether it's with nutrition, exercise, or other areas of your life, it is so individual. So individual. So it's really important for everybody to remember that if you have had a successful weight loss journey, what worked for you could be completely harmful for another person. And that's why coaching can be so incredibly valuable.

ANNIE

Yeah, we've said many times that the problems that our members face are super common, but the solutions, those are highly individual and those we have often come up in a very collaborative co-creative process in coaching. So it's not just like, "Oh, you're experiencing this thing. Here's the one answer that 1000s of members are doing." Like that's not what it is.
[Laughs]

JEN

That's not what it is. Yes.

ANNIE

So I think that's really important, first of all, is to establish like, "How can I support you? I know I've heard you say like you're interested in losing weight. I know that you know that I've had success and I want to prioritize our friendship and I want to help you achieve whatever your goals are. What do you need for me? Do you just need like a hype woman, a cheerleader? Do you want me to help, give, share some resources that can provide the expert source? Do you just want some like, 'Hey, this is this is what I did. You can try it.' I'm just sharing my own experience. You can do what you want with it. Like, what are we doing here?" First and foremost. And the second thing I would say is like as someone who has lost significant amounts of weight, it never felt good to be pushed into that situation. And I can think of other ways that I've experienced, I talked about when I came to visit you last fall, how I left and I had bought, by the time I arrived home, I had a whole new set of cookware and a subscription to HelloFresh. And the only reason that was possible was because you exposed me to your lifestyle, I saw you like in your environment, navigating cooking, making amazing meals, experiencing the results and the outcome of that skill. And you left the door open. It was like, "Hey, like, I answer your questions. I can show you what I'm doing here, like, and you can do this too." And we offered

some like encouragement. But it was never like, "Annie, come on, you can do this. Like, this is so easy. Like I don't like how do you not do this?" Like there's, you know, there was just a very honest, like, "You can do this if you want it, and I'm happy to answer questions. And if you don't want to, that's cool, too."

JEN
Yes.

ANNIE
But when we get to this, like, pushing, we're pushing, and we've talked about this in coaching, too. We can't pull people along, we can walk with people, we can hold their hands, we can guide them. But if you're pushing someone or pulling them, like, that's not a great dynamic, especially for a friendship.

JEN
If you have ever tried to push or pull or walk with somebody on a change journey, you'll know this, this will be hitting home for you. I remember my, you know, really wanting my parents to stop smoking when I was younger. And like, guess what? My husband and I still have a set of parents who smoke and we have a set of parents who quit when they were damn well ready to quit. Not because we were in, whether we were advising them, encouraging them anything, they quit when they were ready to quit. And I think what can also happen in these relationships, if a person is too involved, or even like becomes too personally invested, like there's personal boundaries there, you never want to be more invested in somebody's goal than they are. There's a point of shame that can come and impact the relationship when the person fails. And inevitably, people will fail in change journeys, I would argue it is part of a change journey, failing over and over and over again. And I, you know, it's also looking carefully at, do you want to be so invested and involved in this journey that your friend wants to hide from you, when they aren't doing the thing they committed to?

ANNIE
Or they're only doing the thing because they don't want to disappoint you.

JEN
Yeah, like, that is not, that's not going to be conducive to a successful behavior change journey.

ANNIE
Yeah. And I'll just offer, and I think, Jen, you're the same way. We both have friends in our circles that we don't, we just don't talk about these things. Because the boundaries of coaching, teaching, skill development, and friendship can get so murky, you know, are we going out for drinks? Am I coaching you? Are we going out as friends? Like what are we, what are we doing here? And we've opted to prioritize friendships, and in certain situations, and that's not to say that there aren't friendships or relationships that could handle both, but clarity on what that person wants is so important.

JEN

Exactly. So essentially, what we are saying here, proceed with caution. Figure out what your role is, what your friend wants your role to be, and get very clear on boundaries and what you can really can't help with.

ANNIE

Yeah, and it might be just, they just want some tips. Like just, "Can you just show me like how you did that thing? Like you made that work, and you made it seem easy. Can I just," like, that's valid for sure. But again, clarity first.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Okay, last question. This is a great question. "How long does it take for your body to adjust to smaller portion sizes? When I tried to be more balanced, I experience hunger more often and it leads me back to overeating."

JEN

Kind of big picture. It is never wrong to eat when you're hungry. And we would never, ever advocate for somebody to just push through hunger, physical hunger. Now, there is like emotional hunger where you are experiencing, like I'd say a craving and response to an emotion. You know, some people would call this emotional eating. And sometimes delaying, like having a glass of water and just delaying can help you see that, oh, it wasn't hunger, it wasn't physical hunger. But if it's physical hunger, we would never, ever advocate for you to just not eat. Eat. Your body wants you to eat. That means something. And so I'm really curious about this kind of phrase, how long does it take your body to adjust to balanced meals, and there isn't going to come a point where eating you know, super low-calorie is just going to be something you adjust to. So what I see, I'm not sure what's happening exactly with this person. Okay? I would love to coach this person. And we would, we would kind of get into the details a little bit more and suss it out. But what I see happening with people who are struggling with hunger between meals is number one, they may be putting together a balanced meal, but it's also very low calorie. And that can happen, because maybe they just have, you know, so many fruits and vegetables, like very, you know, which are very low in calorie nutrient-dense but low in calorie and feel filling. But don't, it's not going to get you any staying power. Right? So you could be eating what I would call a volume meal, like a really high volume, low-calorie meal. And of course, you're hungry again in three hours.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

Because you just had, you know, a 300-calorie meal. So number one, it's just too low-calorie. Number two, it is just too low protein? And so to look at those two things, is this just like a very low-energy meal? Or number two, is this just a very low-protein meal?

ANNIE

Yeah. I know, we had to discuss this a little bit before we went live. And I want to just share this as my own personal experience with getting more clear on my internal cues. And it's something that I've seen echoed in a lot of our members' experiences as well. I had grown very accustomed to eating, finishing meals, eating in a way that left me overly full, like I was stuffed, filled to the brim. And eating anything less than that, even if I was still satisfied, quote-unquote, felt like hunger, because it was just the sensation of not being stuffed in my body that felt uncomfortable. And therefore I was associating that with, "Well, I still must be hungry, there's still room -

JEN

That's so interesting.

ANNIE

- in the tank, like I can still eat more, I still must be hungry." And when I realized that there's a difference between satisfied, over full, and hungry, then it was like, "Oh, I'm not still hungry. I'm just not uncomfortably full. And that's a new sensation." So when she says, how long does it take to adjust to smaller portion sizes? Like adjust to what? Is it truly like an actual physical hunger? It might be for the reasons Jen listed. It could also be, I would offer, and this would just take some reflection, is that I'm just not stuffed. And that sensation is new to me, and therefore a little uncomfortable. But it's not actually hunger.

JEN

Yes, yes. So look at those things, and try and figure that out. And the other thing is, you know, this person mentioned, they're trying to adjust to smaller portion sizes. So my question, there's also, why, like, why are you trying to adjust to smaller portion sizes? You know, are you trying to, you know, when we talk about, eat when you're hungry and finish when you're satisfied, that is an internal mechanism that adjusts based on what that individual body needs. So if you were to put Annie and I side by side, you would, you would see we are, you know, different weights, but also we have different activity levels, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So Annie's hunger and satiety look different than mine. And that's exactly how it should be. Different genetics, different heights, different weights. Different activity levels, on and on and on. And so when I hear people talk about portion size, I understand that's just a metric. But it's going, are you trying to adhere to a certain portion size over your hunger and satiety? Because if so, it might be kind of clunky there. You may not. You may not be getting in the volume of food that your body actually needs.

ANNIE

Yep. Great point.

JEN

Yes. So how was that?

ANNIE

I think it was great.

JEN

Great.

ANNIE

Okay, Jen, anything else?

JEN

No, I think that's all for today.

ANNIE

Thanks for joining us. Thank you, Jen, for your time, and we'll chat soon.

JEN

Thanks, everybody.

ANNIE

Bye-bye.

JEN

Bye-bye.

ANNIE

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.