

Balance365 Episode 229 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, we are back with another Q&A. Now we normally only do Q and A's on the podcast monthly. But this question, in particular, came up recently, and it's just too good not to get on the podcast ASAP. Why? Because it is hands down the number one question we are asked over and over and it normally sounds something like this. "I don't get it. I want to lose weight. That means I have to eat less. How is that different from restriction?" Listen, friends, it's very different. And in this episode, we explain why. Enjoy. PS, if you want to dive deeper into understanding and practicing weight loss without restriction, we'd recommend purchasing a copy of our course, Fat Loss Foundations. Click the link in our profile to get started.

ANNIE

Good morning, Jen.

JEN CAMPBELL

Good morning. How are you?

ANNIE

I'm good. How are you?

JEN CAMPBELL

Well, I have a cold. [Laughs] Don't ask Jen how she is when she is sick. You'll get an earful.

ANNIE

I already knew...I already know the answer. But not everyone knew the answer. And I felt like maybe some context would be helpful in case you have a little bit of a coughing fit.

JEN CAMPBELL

Yes, I will mute myself and cough or sneeze to the side.

ANNIE

I'm not worried about me. I'm worried about you, Jen. I'm not worried about -

JEN

[Laughs] Thank you.

ANNIE

- the sound, the sound quality of this live. But that's very considerate of you. Welcome, everyone. This is our Thursday live Q&A where you ask your questions, and we come live and answer them. And we have a really great question. At the heart of this question is truly a question that we have been asked over and over and over again. It's a great question. And that is, how can you tell the difference between finding a sustained caloric deficit and restrictive eating, which, you know, coach brain here. It's like, what's the discrepancy? Or what's the gap in understanding the difference between the two? And like I said, I think at the heart, as we were talking before we went live, Jen, it's like, how do you lose weight without restriction?

JEN

Yes. And that is a question we get once a week or so. Yeah.

ANNIE

Yeah. So what would you say? What are the, how would you know the difference?

JEN

So, I think first we need to kind of zoom out a bit and talk about what restriction is, and we need to understand, everybody needs to understand, that restriction is very individual, every person will have their own definition of what is restrictive, or what feels restrictive for them. And there's, I would say two types of restriction here. There's like physiological restriction when you are actually eating way less than what your body needs. And then there's the kind of mental or emotional or I guess we could call it the psychological restriction, where there's like a psychological need that you are meeting right now with food. And if we just take that food away, that need is not being met anymore. So that feels psychologically restrictive to you.

ANNIE

Yes, that was a really illuminating piece of the puzzle for me, because I spent a lot of years eating in a way that was physically satisfying. But it wasn't psychologically satisfying because I was eating kind of bland foods or foods that I didn't truly enjoy. And I was limiting or restricting foods that I did enjoy. And so I felt restricted psychologically, but physically...

JEN

You were meeting your -

ANNIE

I was nutritionally -

JEN

Nutrition needs.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

And so the physiological restriction side is like of course, we have to meet our nutritional needs and we have many past episodes about that. And often, you know, things go sideways for people because they are, you know, jumping on these 1200 calorie per day diets and they're just creating this enormous calorie deficit that their body rebounds against right? We have systems in place that keep us from starving, your body doesn't care that you want to lose weight, your body's job is to get your needs met, so that you can go on living, and your body doesn't know that if you are trying to lose weight, or if you are lost in the Sahara Desert and are starving. Those systems will fire up and be in high gear and you will be hungry, you will be craving foods, likely high-calorie, dense foods. And that is just not something that we can overcome unless you have a serious mental health disorder. And so we do have to meet our physiological needs. But on the other side, we have our you know, psychological needs and the needs that are being met with food on that side. And that side has some wiggle room. And what we find, you know, coaching women all these years is on that side, it's not just, you know, on the physiological side, it's like, "Okay, here's your body, here's your goals, here's your activity level, you need 2000 calories a day, approximately, end of story. End of story." [Laughs] On the psychological side, it might be, "Here's of all the foods I use to meet my psychological needs in a week." Now that one has the wiggle room, because we can start meeting those psychological needs in other ways.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

There is no replacement for food, for physiological needs. But there is replacements for meeting your psychological needs on the other side.

ANNIE

Yeah. And if you are new here, and you're talking about like, you hear Jen talking about psychological needs, and you're like, "What is she even talking about? I have psychological needs met through food, like what are you talking about?" That shows up a lot of times as entertainment, soothing, comfort, joy, connection. All the things. Right?

JEN

Yeah. So, and you know, too, this is kind of around emotional eating. So why? Why do we emotionally eat? I don't know why each individual listening emotionally eats, but I know what I hear. I know why I emotionally, I know what I hear in our community, very common for people to be eating because of an intense emotion, to try and avoid and escape that emotion, like shame, right? Very common to have, you know, a situation where a woman weighs herself. The scale is a couple of pounds up, she's flooded with shame, and she finds herself binge eating a little while

later. People also eat to satisfy you know, less uncomfortable emotions like boredom. The mid-afternoon, "I'm at work for eight hours, I'm bored" time hits, and they just wander into the staff room kitchen. Or if they work from home, they're their own kitchen and they start eating. [Laughs]

ANNIE
Yeah.

JEN
And it's just kind of entertainment. It's stimulating. Right?

ANNIE
Yeah. And back to the restriction point, if you just stop doing that, because you decide, "I'm going to follow this plan. And that's not part of the plan. And I'm just not supposed to do that. And I'm trying to just end emotional eating." You're also then feeling maybe, in this case, restrictive from the joy, the entertainment, the soothing, the comfort. And that can feel like, "I'm missing a piece of the puzzle that I had at one time."

JEN
Right. And you don't, you can't, that's why just taking something away doesn't work. That's why just like willpower through it may not work. And it's because you actually have a need there that you have been meeting with food. And you've created a habit, right? Of meeting that need through that food. So the second you are feeling that type of way. There's kind of a little switch that goes off in your brain. It's like your habit trigger, and you immediately start craving the food. So the work is starting to identify the need that you are trying to meet and swap in something else. And this doesn't happen like that. [Snaps] [Laughs] You've got to practice and most people have gotten really good at meeting that need with food.

ANNIE
Yes.

JEN
So they have gotten a lot of reps in meeting that need with food and they are going to have to get a lot of reps in meeting their needs in other ways.

ANNIE
To, taking it back to the restrictive piece though. If you, as Jen said, take away your food without developing other ways to meet that need, you could end up feeling quite constrained. Quite like

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JEN
Absolutely.

ANNIE

Yeah, there's a, there's a hole here that I'm still looking to fill that can result in feeling restricted.

JEN

Yeah. And there's, of course, there's more to this conversation. There is, I think highest level, it would say, what is like really going up in your life and your goals and the things that you want from your life and realizing that we do make sacrifices in our lives, all of us, to have the things that we want. And what one person may consider restrictive, is not restrictive to you, because you chose it. So I use this example, often when I'm talking to people about this. So people listening may have heard me say this before, but I chose to have three children. And I had those children in a short timeline, in four years, I had had three kids. And that is something that my partner and I chose. And so with that was a whole lot of challenge. And we, I'm not saying that I didn't have days where I was like, "Why, why did I do this?" But ultimately, I overcame those challenges, or I was willing to take on those challenges, because it's what I wanted deeply. Like, it was a deep need. Not just a light need, like, "Meh. Yeah."

ANNIE

"I could deal with another kid." [Laughs]

JEN

It was like, no, this is who I am. Yes. This is who I am. This is what I was meant for. Now, there are plenty of people out there who don't want children. And that's okay. Right? They would see having a child as a way to be, to live a very restrictive life, right? Or even having them in that timeline. And what they look at as my life like, "Why would she do that? What a restrictive life," I'm saying, "Hey, I'm living my best life."

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

So it's important to understand the mindset toward the choice you're making. And if your mindset is, "I'm doing this, but you know, deep down, I really don't want to do this," then it is going to feel restrictive. But if you have really explored the why behind your decisions, and it's not just, "I have to do this," but it's a, "I wholeheartedly want this, this is this is not just a, you know, light decision, this is who I am." Then, it's not that it won't come with challenges, but then it is, it's not really restriction, is it? It's choice. It's living your best life.

ANNIE

One terminology, I guess, that we distinguish in Balance365, often that's come up over and over again, is the difference between restriction and restraint. And restraint says, "I can. I'm choosing not to," or, "I don't want to," and that might be in your case, because I see how this choice fits into a bigger picture. Restraint or restriction is, "I won't. I'm not supposed to. I can't."

JEN

"Never."

ANNIE

Yeah, never. And it -

JEN

"No."

ANNIE

[Laughs]

JEN

"This is bad."

ANNIE

It feels like it takes a lot of the choice, the agency, the autonomy, out of the, out of the decision. Our members, you and I, show restraint often. And not just even just food.

JEN

Not just with food.

ANNIE

No.

JEN

Yeah, I show restraint when I go shopping.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

I don't have an enormous shopping budget. So I have to show restraint. There's clothes that I like, that I can't buy, because I can't afford them.

ANNIE

I did not want to go to the appointment with my accountant this morning, because that doesn't sound fun.

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

I don't enjoy that. But I did it. I practiced restraint and didn't indulge the kind of immature side of me that wanted to just come to work and overlook it and not pay attention to it. I practiced restraint because I see how like, "No, paying taxes fits into my bigger picture. I don't want to

create more problems down the road." Yadda, yadda, yadda, like, and you can do the same with your food. I oftentimes think like, a brownie sounds amazing. But I'm going to choose not to eat the brownie because I already had a brownie earlier in the day, or it doesn't align with my goals, or I plan on having some sweet treats or an alcoholic drink later or whatnot. You know, like, but the point here is that I'm in choice.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

And I can choose to practice restraint or not. Versus restriction, it's like, never. No. You cannot. You should not.

JEN

Yes, exactly, exactly. And think about even, think about this concept outside of food, right? There are plenty of people out there who have impulse issues, not even around food. But for example, around online shopping, right? I've met many people who have, you know, "Oh my gosh, seven boxes arrived today, like, I have an issue here." Like, "I just, I'm up late at night, and I'm scrolling the internet. And I'm just like buying stuff, you know?" So it's not just food, we have this, some people have this in other areas. And so imagine that you are a person that has your online spending under control. And you have a friend whose online spending is out of control, and you're looking at her and going, "I don't get it. It's just easy. Like, it's easy, just don't do it." And she's like, "I don't know how." Well, the same thing could be said for food. So I'm not going to sit here and say to everybody, "What do you mean, you eat at night? Like just stop it. Just stop. Don't do it." The truth of it actually is, I used to be one of those nighttime eaters, and I didn't just stop. I developed awareness, I developed skills, and I developed different habits, which now mean that I rarely eat at night anymore. It's an, it's this is just kind of a way of looking at problems a little differently. It is instead of, "Yes, no, do it, don't do it." It's like, if you are a nighttime eater, or whatever it is, you know, wherever this kind of excess snacking is happening. It's just, I don't yet have the awareness or skills or enough practice to be good at this." Keyword yet. You can.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

Yeah. And I also want to say kind of back to Annie's talking about having, you know, chicken and broccoli all day meeting her physiological needs, but not her psychological needs. We're not trying to push everybody towards chicken and broccoli by any means, or, you know, perfectly nutritious meals. It's okay for food to meet psychological needs. So I have times in my week, day even, where food is meeting also a psychological need. There's no problem if there's no problem. I would say what, you know, is it becoming a problem for you? There have been times in my life where it became a problem for me, where my habitual, every night, ice cream, chocolate, you know, whatever, I could get my hands on binges were becoming a problem for

me. I was using that to meet the need of pleasure, not wanting to feel stress, you know, all of those things. Now, if I do that once in a while, fine, that's, you know, not really a problem. It was the habitual-ness of it, that had become a problem. But I still, you know, I still take my kids for ice cream, I still go out to restaurants and have nice meals with my husband, glass of wine and dessert. Those aren't for me personally, those aren't the problems. It is, it was the patterns that I had with food, it's when the excess became a problem. So each person has to figure that out for themselves.

ANNIE

Yeah. And just to bring that full circle, I still do eat chicken and broccoli from time to time in the same way that at one time a protein shake for breakfast felt super restrictive. Now it's my go to staple.

JEN

Meets your needs.

ANNIE

And that is only because breakfast, in my case, my individual case, breakfast or dinner in that case is not my primary source of joy, excitement, and entertainment.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Connection. Like, I have learned to meet those needs in ways other than food. And in doing so food doesn't have to have this like robust, like experience every time I eat.

JEN

Yes. Yes.

ANNIE

I still, I still enjoy a great dining experience. Don't get me wrong, but I am okay with a little bit blander food.

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

Yeah. Okay.

JEN

So I hope that answers that question. I know it's tricky. I know it's messy. I know, you know, surface-level weight loss without restriction. "What do you mean? If I want to lose weight, I need to eat less food. That's restrictive." I totally understand that viewpoint. And I hope that you can

see ours. I hope that you can see that this is a bigger picture issue. And you get to define what restriction is for you.

ANNIE

Yep. Great question. That was all we had today. Quick and easy. Thank you so much, Jen, for your time. Thanks, everyone, for -

JEN

Thanks, everybody.

ANNIE

- tuning in. And we'll see you next week. 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.