

Balance365 Episode 281 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. Welcome back to another episode, you know, in the work that we do here at Balance365. It's not uncommon for us to be supporting women as they navigate strong feelings of overwhelm. Now this can come up at any stage in your health and wellness journey. But most commonly, Jen and I see it at the beginning. There is a desire for change, but the thought of starting floods a person with all kinds of thoughts and feelings that ultimately keep them stuck, or even cause them to quit. In today's podcast, we're gonna slow things down and walk you through the process of navigating feeling overwhelmed when you're starting a weight loss journey. We hope you leave this episode with a new perspective and some tools for being able to take continued, consistent action. And while you're at it, you cannot miss our FREE three-part workshop that is now available on demand: Cut the Crap: How to Simplify Weight Loss and Get Out of Your Own Way. Speaking of reducing overwhelm in this short course, it cuts to the chase and shows you how you can stop overcomplicating and start moving towards your goals, visit balance365.com/cutthecrap or click the link in the show notes. Enjoy.

ANNIE

Jen, have you ever felt overwhelmed by weight loss?

JEN CAMPBELL

Yes, absolutely. How about you?

ANNIE

Of course, yeah, I have lost 60 pounds in my lifetime. And I've had weight loss goals a couple of times, because, you know, babies and life changes and your weight fluctuates. And I don't want to say that a larger weight loss goal is any more or less overwhelming than anyone else's goal. But I do think there are some unique obstacles that can come with having a larger weight loss goal. And I think it's easy to get overwhelmed when you feel like you have a big hill to climb, so to speak.

JEN

Totally. Yes. I also want to say that I recently felt overwhelmed by, it wasn't a weight loss goal, it was just getting back into strength training goal. And I went there, you know, it's sort of like this, it was overwhelming at the thought of behavior change.

ANNIE

What in particular, do you think you found overwhelming about behavior change?

JEN

I think I was flooded, which we'll get into this, I was flooded with thoughts and feelings around where I used to be, you know? How much strength I've lost over the course of the last year, how much time it was going to take, that I had to be perfect. Like a lot of old thoughts. I just shared this with our members actually that I experienced this. And I loved sharing that with them. Because there were so many members that were like, you know, thank you, like you're showing me that managing my thoughts and feelings is going to be an ongoing process. You never arrive. Right? So yeah, flooded with a lot of thoughts that our members find themselves flooded with when they are thinking about making changes.

ANNIE

Yeah. So all that to say is, if you're listening to this podcast, it's probably a safe assumption that you either feel overwhelmed about weight loss or have felt overwhelmed about weight loss. And I'm guessing you would prefer not to feel that way. Because overwhelm is not a comfortable state, emotional state.

JEN

Yeah, it's really intense.

ANNIE

It is. And we're going to talk about some of our reactions and our responses and how to manage that. But first, let's talk a little bit about, like what it is and your relationship to it.

JEN

Yeah, I thought it would be great to talk about overwhelm in general just based on my own personal experience of just having this kind of relationship with overwhelm that kept me stuck there. So overwhelm is that "this is too much" feeling like to me, it feels like flooding. It's like a dam broke, and it's just all coming towards me. What's it feel like for you?

ANNIE

Yeah, like I am, just have my lips above the surface line of the water, and if at any point in that experience, someone has a demand on me, they might as well just pour a bucket of water on my head, because I'm like, "I can't. I can't. I can't. I cannot. I cannot do this."

JEN

Yes. So feelings of overwhelm can be caused by external pressures. And I think that's often what people first think of right? "I have too much on my plate." And that, of course, can be

uncontrollable, right? You have different life circumstances that got thrown at you, all these different curveballs at once, and you don't have any control over that that happened. And they can also be controllable. Right? So you may have said yes to a lot of things for a long time, and you are just over-committed, right? You have 17 activities in the next five days, because you said yes to your local parent committee, you said yes to your kids about this. You said yes to a friend, you know, to an employer, etc. You're overcommitted.

ANNIE

Yes, relatable.

JEN

Yes, feelings of overwhelm can also be caused by internal pressures. Okay? So this comes down to a person's ability to manage competing priorities. And an example of this is, you know, woman A, she has five commitments over the next five days, she does have external, these external pressures. And she is feeling completely overwhelmed by them. Woman B has the same five commitments over the next five days, and she feels very busy. But she's not struggling with the dam breaking, like I was describing. She's not being flooded with overwhelm. And so I'm just using this as an example to say, we've got two women in a very similar circumstance. But one responds to those commitments in a different way than the other. So that's an internal process that's creating overwhelm. There's something going, different going on for these two women. And I bring that up, as someone who really struggles with finding myself in the woman one situation, okay? It's like, overwhelm for me, I've had to really examine my relationship with overwhelm, and the contributing factors into just finding myself, they're a little too often for my liking. And, you know, everybody's going to feel overwhelmed from time to time because stuff happens. And we go through busy seasons, and we sleep poorly. But if you're someone like me, who is, who has experienced being chronically overwhelmed, we need to talk, because it's probably not like a nutrition or behavior change issue. It's like a life issue.

ANNIE

I don't know if this is gonna make sense. I think outwardly, I manage my overwhelm, or sense my stress, my sense of overwhelm well, but internally, I do think I struggle with it a lot. And I can recognize an experience of overwhelm in myself often, and I can, like I said, I can manage my outward action. So I'm not maybe necessarily clearing the table or having, you know, like panicking when someone presents another request, or demand, or breaking down, or whatnot. Not that there's anything wrong with that, but I think I'm like that duck, like on the surface, I look calm. But underneath I'm like, "Ugh," [laughs].

JEN

Its feet are going. [Laughs]

ANNIE

Keep going, stay calm, stay calm. Let's go.

JEN

Yeah, totally.

ANNIE

Case in point, I went skydiving, and this is kind of, kind of related, but I went skydiving and there's a video of it. And I'm smiling the whole time. And people watch that video. And they're like, "Oh my gosh, how on earth do you look so calm?" I was like, "I was not calm inside. But, but when the camera's on? I'm like, 'I'm good. I can handle this. Like, that's fine. Yeah, give it, bring it on.'" But internally, I was like, "Oh God, oh, God, oh, God." [Laughs]

JEN

Yeah. I see, and I don't do that well. If I'm flailing underneath, I'm, if I'm the duck, my legs are going, my wings are going, my, I'm, I'm quacking, I'm...[Laughs]

ANNIE

Well, that's not to say like, they both have their pros and cons. Like it is nice to work with someone who outwardly expresses overwhelm, because then I can, you know, manage my requests in honor of your stress levels, right? But you don't have the benefit of that. Because you even said to me, like, "You just always like take this in stride or like, are you even stressed about this?" And I'm like, Oh, yeah. I'm terrified, or I'm like really stressed, or I'm really upset or whatnot, but I just don't outwardly express it,.

JEN

Right. So I want to share what was kind of key for me to start examining my chronic overwhelmingness. And if there was a better way to be going about life, and it was, my husband said to me, years ago, he said, "When things are starting to calm down in our life, do you have to rush to take on something else? Like throwing us back into a state of stress?" And I was like, "Wow, like, good point. Like, I do do that, don't I?" And so -

ANNIE

Okay, did you really take it that well?

JEN

I did. In that moment, I was like, Huh." I just had a moment where I was like, "Why do I do that?" And...

ANNIE

You're a better person than me, I would have gotten, I would be like, "No, I don't do that."

JEN

[Laughs] "You're wrong!"

ANNIE

"That's BS." [Laughs]

JEN

"I'm perfect!"

BOTH

[Laugh]

JEN

"I'm overwhelmed that you just said that to me." [Laughs] It was just an invitation. And, you know, I could do a whole podcast on it, about why, you know, because I did actually talk about it in therapy about why I'm - like, it's almost that I had grown more comfortable with stress and overwhelm than calm.

ANNIE

Yeah, my therapist drew a comparison to me and a trash bag. She said -

JEN

That's nice. [Laughs]

ANNIE

"You're like one of those really -" Yeah, I know. She said I'm like one of those Glad kitchen trash bags that just has this like stretch capacity. And I have a sense that like that stretched beyond comfort is my comfort zone. And when I am not being stretched to the max, I'm like, uncomfortable. I could just sit down and watch TV, like if I have time to sit down and watch TV, maybe I should be doing something else. Maybe I should have said yes. Maybe I should do more.

JEN

Yeah. And so that comfort, that comfort with being stressed and overwhelmed, led to me saying yes to a lot of things. And it's funny, because over the years, as I addressed, you know, getting to the root of my overwhelm, I've learned that I've done that in big ways, like committing us to big things that were just like our whole family that was just too much for us. But also in little small ways. Like because I'm constantly trying to make every moment of my day efficient. And it just, you know, I'm not a robot. I'm a human. And so, for me, it was learning to say no to things, that has been extremely helpful. And just having, like, some loving boundaries, like, and that takes some honesty. So an example I've been thinking about that's really, like, really addressed my overwhelm was, do you remember, I think it's in the last six months when I said, "I can't start work till nine o'clock. Like we have to push any meetings we had planned like back to nine o'clock," because I am starting every single day in this like reactive place. I rush to get to my desk by eight. Now, I felt a lot of pressure to do that because most of our team is in Central and Eastern time zone. So it's like lunchtime by the time I'm sitting down. It's like lunchtime for all of you. And you know, I have requests and you know, and it's just, so then I just had this story that I had to start earlier. But I don't because now I've pushed back my workday by an hour, we've pushed back a couple of meetings, and guess what, everything's fine. And I'm feeling better.

ANNIE

Yes. But everything truly was fine. But you had a story -

JEN

I had a whole story, yes.

ANNIE

- about what it meant to like, log into work and felt like everyone had been working for two or three hours. And you had to catch up on all this, all these conversations, these tasks. And they were all urgent and priorities. And they...

JEN

And they truly weren't.

ANNIE

They really weren't. It was fine.

JEN

Yeah. And then I also had to learn better time management skills or a better way to put that is I had to learn how to slow down, which we'll get into, and manage priorities and truly, factually, look at what's an emergency and what isn't. Because when you're in that state of overwhelm, or if you're a person who identifies as being chronically overwhelmed, everything felt like an emergency. And I was treating everything like an emergency, and that just feeds back into the cycle.

ANNIE

Yeah, I think commonly, I've done this myself, and I see it in our members. But when they are in a state of overwhelm, the two most common responses or choices seems to be like, I have to do everything right now, they catastrophize, they make problems like huge and big and the effort and the time commitment is like exponentially greater than what it really is. Or, on the flip side, they just quit. They're like, "I can't."

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

"I'm out. I'm not going to do any of it."

JEN

Yeah, yeah. And so to bring it back to the topic of this podcast that's about where to start with the weight loss journey when you feel overwhelmed, I would say in a nutrition coaching space, or outside of that space, right? People who follow us on social media, the different conversations we get to have in the DMS, it's not uncommon to see or hear someone say they feel overwhelmed at the thought of a weight loss journey. Or another example is they have

committed and maybe they've started Balance365. They log into their program, they see the modules and overwhelm. Right? Like, how often would you say that's a common new member, "I'm overwhelmed"?

ANNIE

Oh, my gosh, I just, I just was talking about this on Instagram, people saying, "I just don't. How do I find the time? How do I find it? How do I like -" What are you, what are you trying to do? You're trying to do it all at once, which we're going to talk about. [Laughs]

JEN

"What are you trying to find the time for?" Yes.

ANNIE

Yes, we're gonna talk about that. But it is really common to even before people even try, they just look or they think about weight loss. Or they look at the steps, possible steps that weight loss might include, and they're just, "I'm done. I can't."

JEN

So I want to get that out of the way and fully own that I'm bringing that up just to share my experience and that this kind of like deeper issue of going, "Hey, like, you're not just overwhelmed with thinking about a weight loss journey or, or habit change, you're always overwhelmed." And this, this, like, you need to start examining your relationship with overwhelm.

ANNIE

And also, just, as a community, a collective of humans, to stop encouraging the state of overwhelm like, it kind of goes hand in hand with, you know, the do-it-all mom or whatnot. Like, we really do live in a culture that applauds getting a lot done, being productive, we've got a lot of goals, we've got full schedules and stuff. And I think just for each other, you know, take care of it, do what you can to help you manage overwhelm for yourself, but also, within your relationships, being careful not to encourage a perpetual state of overwhelm.

JEN

Yes, absolutely. Okay. So first, I want to talk about the importance of going upstream from our overwhelm. So if you find yourself in a perpetual state of managing, you know, downstream overwhelmed, like it's important to look at it as a symptom, right, rather than the problem.

ANNIE

And we don't want to doing this in a state of overwhelm. [Laughs]

JEN

Right. But it's, it's the kind of perspective here is that, if there's actually upstream issues causing the overwhelm, then it's never going to be resolved until we go to the source. So the first one is this habitual overwhelm, right? So it's, it's going upstream, and looking at, are you actually over committed? And the thought of taking on something new or trying to make some behavioral

changes is just too much. Or if you are ready for this journey, and you simply need to take a few deep breaths, slow down, and plan the steps forward.

ANNIE

Yeah. So from a calm state, really assessing, what is the problem?

JEN

Yes, absolutely. So there's a great question that I ask myself from time to time, and that is, how are you creating your own suffering in this situation? And in my experience, when I would think about weight loss or behavior change, I would catastrophize, as Annie was talking about, and I would like, I would catastrophize, you know, what I needed to change, when I needed to change it, how much I needed to change, how fast that needed to happen, like I would just get flooded with all the thoughts. And in that way, I was causing my own suffering. And so to change this, for me to change this, I really had to, number one, identify that this was a cycle, like this was a pattern, and that I did have some control over it. And then number two, stopping and pausing before I went into this overwhelm cycle, and choosing to look at the problem instead of avoiding it. So I would say that my overwhelm cycle was just a perpetual cycle of despair and inaction. And inaction leads back to more despair, right? So it's just this, the cycle that never ends, because at the heart of it was, when I would go from, you know, catastrophizing to overwhelm, to despair - right? - into inaction, what I was doing actually was numbing. So instead of taking action towards my goals, or at least even taking action to problem solve how I could reach my goals, I was choosing to dip out on the problem. That's where a lot of numbing behaviors would come up for me, I would, I would like, you know, procrastinate, like do everything but solve the problem. I would scroll my phone, I would, you know, whatever the things we all do to numb, that helps us avoid that uncomfortable feeling. So, this is really the work of going from being like reactive and avoidant to our emotions to becoming responsive and curious of our emotions, and then becoming the problem solvers that we need.

ANNIE

Yeah. I don't know many people who are making great decisions in a state of overwhelm.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

When you are panicked, when you're stressed, when you feel like you're just completely flooded, you're, like, barely keeping your head above water. We're not always using our best problem-solving skills, or making the best decisions. So those taking the time to reflect on like, what are your patterns and tendencies? And what's contributing to that? Can be so helpful for you to get into that state.

JEN

Yeah. So my upstream problem was habitual overwhelm. And acknowledging that I do have some control over that, again, I want to mention that some, you know, some people may not feel

that way, they might have, again, external circumstances that they can't control, but I just owned what I could in those situations. The second upstream problem that can really contribute to overwhelm is a belief that you need to change all the things right now, as fast as possible. Right? Like thanks, diet culture.

ANNIE

Or even a desire.

JEN

Right, or desire.

ANNIE

Maybe not even a belief, but just like a desire, like "I want to change as quickly as possible."

JEN

Right. Yes. And so that's just, that's some big, like, time pressure, right? So if you think of weight loss, and it includes like, quick turnaround times, you know, dropping weight fast, getting to the, you know, a sprint, you know, you think of it as a sprint, not a marathon, you want that right now, that is likely contributing to why you're so flooded. And the reason, you know, maybe you could handle that when you were younger. Like before I had kids when I was really only responsible for myself, thinking about weight loss or behavior change as a sprint, not a marathon, although not helpful, and not really getting any kind of wellness or health in my life, I could handle the stress of it, because my time was all my own. I'm older now, I have kids, I have a full time job, a business. And I legitimately don't have time for my whole life to revolve around some very fast, you know, crash diet.

ANNIE

Yeah, for sure. I think it's really important to tease out what you want, what you think you need, and what you're really capable of. Because there's a lot of times when I want a lot of things. I want to, I'm having a good workout. And I'm feeling really strong. And my program calls for a weight that I'm just not like super excited about. And I'm feeling tempted to add more and add more and add more in a specific workout. Like, that might be what I want. But what I need is to stick to the program. And similarly, like what you want might be to dedicate your life to your health and your wellness, and your weight. So you can, as Jen said, get this over as quick as possible. And you can really just like, go all in and get it done. But that might not be what you need or what you're capable of.

JEN

Yeah, I would say some of our most successful members, you know, the ones that people hear on the podcast, et cetera, they have done work around this because removing time and pressure constraints is really where many people start finding their stride. And they're able to have like a true weight loss journey. Right? Because within weight loss journeys, in particular, the ones we do at Balance365, there's just a lot of personal growth that happens. And it's challenging to learn and grow in high pressure environments. And I say this to my kids all the

time. When you are stressed and panicked, your learning brain is shutting off. When you are calmer, your learning brain can be open. So when we are trying to learn something, we need to back away from the pressure we're putting on ourselves. Now, the second thing I want to mention here, is that another huge contributor to this urgency is intense body shame. Would you agree?

ANNIE

Oh, absolutely. Yeah.

JEN

So [laughs] it's kind of like, when you start asking yourself why, like, "why do I have this intense, you know, time pressure around when I have to lose weight by?" You will often find at the heart of it for many people is just intense body shame, and not knowing how to handle that body shame. Except to like, make your body smaller.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

And so to me, when I see people on this kind of hamster wheel of fad dieting, I just see a lot of people in pain. And they think getting out of pain is just dropping weight as quickly as possible.

ANNIE

Yeah, and then the process of dropping weight as quickly as possible, contributes to overwhelm. [Laughs]

JEN

Yes, and more pain. [Laughs]

ANNIE

And then you're just stuck there until you do something different.

JEN

So another kind of commonality I see in our successful members is they start working through some of this, like negative body image issues that contribute to the urgency. And that's really why they're able to kind of take the pressure off and pursue sustainability.

ANNIE

And also, I'd have to believe somewhat, if not a lot connected is this, what can contribute to body shame over like, the overwhelm that comes as a result of body shame is this belief that when my body is perfect, my life will be perfect. And when maybe you start making changes and haven't addressed shame as it relates to your body or your weight, and you're still experiencing that shame, even though you've made changes, it feels just like proof that you're not actually progressing, because the shame hasn't been eliminated yet, right? Instead of managing the

shame and working with it, you're trying to like, avoid it by changing your body or eliminate by changing your body.

JEN

And if this describes you, stay tuned for next week, because we have just a really incredible podcast coming out about body shame next week.

ANNIE

Mm-hm.

JEN

Yeah. Okay. The third big contributor to weight loss or behavior change overwhelm, that I see in our program with our members, obviously, the newer members, is that they truly have no idea how people lose weight, right? Like they're unaware. It feels like a mystery. They've done so many different approaches, read so many different books, followed so many different people saying different things, that they're just like, overwhelmed with information.

ANNIE

Yes, yep.

JEN

Right? So it's just like, it's unclear. And so thinking about losing weight, it's just like, of like, "Agh! Where do I start? What's true? What approach do I take?" You know, it's just - "What do I believe?" It's just, it feels overwhelming.

ANNIE

There are members, most of them have a long history of dieting. So they're likely even looking at like, "I tried this. That didn't work. I tried this. That didn't work. I tried this that like, what the hell works? I don't get it."

JEN

Yeah, yeah, "I don't get it." And so in my experience coming, starting, my first diet was a two day juice cleanse. Right? So like, literally learning nothing about nutrition, you know, even the mechanism behind it, like, is this magic juice? Or is there [laughs] you know, what is the mechanism leading to the weight loss? There's just a real gap in like physiology, biology, right? Like, knowledge around, you know, why do human beings lose weight? And, you know, we try to clear that up in this podcast. I think we have, I think the title of the podcast is called "Weight Loss Simplified," where we address that actual question. And so I'd recommend going to listen to that. But keeping it simple and not getting too into that topic in this particular podcast, but there is no diet creating weight loss out there for any reason other than it creates a calorie deficit.

ANNIE

Mm-hm.

JEN

Right? So your energy out exceeds your energy in, which creates an energy deficit, which causes you to start losing weight. Now, there's lots of other things we could talk about there, of course, and anyone with a science background probably wishes we would go there, but we're not going to at this very moment. We have, you know, many episodes. But that is it. And so just keeping it high level and keeping things simple, you need to create an energy deficit, a sustainable one, right? Too big, we're in trouble, too small, and we can also get in trouble because we just aren't seeing any results in a time that keeps us engaged. But you have to create that energy deficit.

ANNIE

And in a very simple way, because when it's simple as we always say, it's actionable.

JEN

When it's simple, it's actionable. Exactly. So my solution here is like instead of jumping into the problem, and jumping into like yet another way of losing weight, learning yet another method, would be just to slow down. And like, learn a little bit more here. And that knowledge can be so empowering. And like I said, I chased this diet, that diet, keto, clean eating, like thinking like, "Well, this one must like, you know, there must be a secret here, there must be a secret here." And now I know that I, literally any and all of them, when I was losing weight with them, it's because it had created an energy deficit for me whether I was on keto, or whether I was on clean eating, or whether I was counting macros, or whether you know, like it was that energy deficit.

ANNIE

It wasn't magic juice.

JEN

It wasn't magic juice, no. And so the good news about that is you can go about creating an energy deficit in your life that feels sustainable for you with the foods you like to eat.

ANNIE

Yes.

JEN

You don't have to drink the magic two day juice cleanse juice.

ANNIE

Thank God. [Laughs]

JEN

Yes. And this can also be frustrating. I understand that too. Because, you know, like we see in all weight loss journeys in Balance365, there're spurts and stalls. It's, it can be frustrating to

figure that out. But it's just so freeing to have that little piece of knowledge that you're not running down little rabbit holes of, you know, this food or that food.

ANNIE

Yes, and you have so much more time and money in your pocket. You're not like joining this and buying this book and picking up this magazine. And -

JEN

Yes.

ANNIE

Ask me how I know.

JEN

And I - yes. [Laughs] I had, you know, it's like, you know, I have these different coaching sessions. And, you know, as when we're operating from the same truth, like number one, we need to create an energy deficit. And we do that through behavioral changes. But also number two, if you're not losing weight, you don't have an energy deficit. And it's, you know, whether that's because you are pretty consistent during the week, and then you kind of swing out during the weekend, right? But the thing that I find very freeing is that there's no secret, and I don't have to run around looking for it, there's nothing that I don't know, the reason that I wouldn't be losing weight is in my behaviors. And therefore, I have control of that. And that feels very empowering to me. And sometimes, you don't know yet what the behavior is, but you can find it.

ANNIE

Yeah. Coaching comes in handy, but...[Laughs] Just a little plug for -

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

- it is important, but I think we're gonna get into that in the second part.

JEN

Yeah. So just quick recap to go upstream. Look at some of the factors contributing to your overwhelm and find solutions for those problems. Top three that we see is number one, just habitually overwhelmed, it's a vibe, we have to kind of unpack why that is happening for you. Number two, the time and pressure or the time pressure, and the fast pressure, speed pressure that you put on yourself, take that off, things will start going a lot smoother. And number three, you're overwhelmed with information, and you don't really know how weight loss happens.

ANNIE

Yes.

JEN

Okay. So now, let's talk about what to do when you are actually overwhelmed.

ANNIE

Yeah, let's do it.

JEN

Do you want to kick us off?

ANNIE

Yeah. Step one, don't make any decisions when you are overwhelmed. Like I said earlier, you, no one, no one is making sound, reasonable, rational decisions when they are panicked, stressed, feeling like they have a ton pressure on them. This isn't gonna go well for you. And -

JEN

Yeah, you know what they're choosing to do, I know what they're choosing to do. They're choosing to quit when they're overwhelmed,

ANNIE

Or they are making commitments that are unreasonable, because they just want to choose and get that off of them. Like -

JEN

That's a good one.

ANNIE

You know, it's like when, when, I can't believe this is the first analogy that came to me, but I'm gonna, just gonna roll with it. You know, when you're at dinner, and the server comes, and you've been like chatting away, and you haven't looked at the menu once and everyone else is like, "Yeah, I'm ready to order." And you're like, "Sh**." [Laughs] "I'm not ready."

JEN

You're overwhelmed. Yes.

ANNIE

And then you're like, "Oh, my God, oh my God. Just pick, just pick, just pick, just pick." And then you just pick something like, the first thing that you can pronounce on the menu maybe or whatever. And yeah, the minute it comes out of your mouth, you're like, "I wish I would have known what I wanted. Like, why couldn't I have just said, I need a minute? Can you just come back?" Or, "I'm so sorry, everyone, just give me 30 seconds. Let me look this over." Just don't make decisions when you are flooded. Just slow down. And step one isn't to choose whether to quit or not. It isn't to choose how to, how to like manage all this on your plate, or how to lose weight. Step one has to be to get yourself to a calm, rational, reasonable headspace.

JEN

Yeah, absolutely.

ANNIE

Would you agree?

JEN

Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. That is where you'll be able to access you know, kind of like your wisest self that has your back and is looking out for your long-term health, future, etc. And, which leads, is a great segue into step two. Once you find yourself in that calm place to calmly assess the problem.

ANNIE

You mentioned earlier, kind of teasing out is the problem my thoughts and feelings about the situation because I'm catastrophizing or I am jumping to conclusions. I used to do this all the time. "My kid is sick, I cannot eat well." Like what? [Laughs] What does having a kid home sick from school have to do with my nutrition? Like when I realized, like there's actually no connection, you just have this story in your head about like, "Yeah, there goes, there goes the plan for the day -"

JEN

"There goes my day." Yeah.

ANNIE

- "and everything with it." This might be a little bit of perfectionism wrapped up in there, too, like, I can't execute my plan or my day as I had planned perfectly, so I'm just not going to do it at all. But I'm really assessing like, "Is this my thoughts and feelings that's contributing? Like, that needs adjusting and I need to manage those or am I truly overcommitted?" Because sometimes overwhelm really is valid. We have said yes to too much, we have committed to more than we can reasonably fulfill or follow through on. And I don't want to be dismissive of that. So if you are noticing overwhelm, calm yourself and then discern, like, can I really do this? Or do I need to manage my thoughts and emotions?

JEN

Yeah. I have a story about time, like I catastrophize. the times certain things take me, so often, when I look at my overwhelm in the moment when you know, when I can pause and get to that calm place and ask myself some honest questions, and then answer the things honestly, so a commitment for me, like I try on Sunday to get some kind of meal prep done for the week. And sometimes that's just really simple things like a veggie tray. Like, that's all I'm doing. And I have this the story about time, like how much time it takes me to chop those vegetables and get them in the veggie tray and get it in the fridge. It actually takes me four minutes. Right? So it's like, I just, I just blow it up. Like you were saying, I don't have time and I just - gone, I'm not doing it. When I slow down, I'm like, "It takes you four minutes. You do have four minutes of time. You're

going to scroll social media for 20 minutes if you don't make that veggie tray. That's what you're going to be doing." [Laughs]

ANNIE

Yes, and that takes honesty.

JEN

Yeah, it does take honesty. Yeah. Yeah, so -

ANNIE

I do this...

JEN

For me this assessing the problem is, you know, for me, it's more the story than the actual objective. "What do I have time for?"

ANNIE

I would say a lot of people it is the story that they tell themselves. "This is impossible. I can't do this. I don't have time." I do the same thing with the dishwasher. I tell myself that it takes in my head, it feels like it takes hours to unload the dishwasher. It takes similarly three minutes.

JEN

Right.

ANNIE

You know, or workouts are another one. Like, "Oh my gosh, I have to work out every day for two hours." No you don't. Sometimes, Annie, your workouts take two hours because you fiddle fart in between your sets. And you like play around with music, and then you text Jen. And then you scroll Instagram, and then six minutes later, then you do another set of benchpresses. Like that's why the workouts take two hours.

JEN

[Laughs]

ANNIE

They don't have to take two hours. So this is kind of what we're talking about, like assessing your thoughts like -

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

Wat what's true and what's just unhelpful?

JEN

And if you are truly overcommitted, then maybe it's just not the time for a weight loss journey. Maybe it's just not the time. And it might not just be time, it could be like energetically, it's not the time for you. And that's okay. Because when we move, when we remove those, that pressure that we put on ourselves, when we remove that intense body shame driver, when we do that work, then we can objectively assess it. Like you know, I may have some body composition goals. But this is not a season for me to be pursuing them.

ANNIE

I think that's, I think that's really important, because as I have shared before, I host a call for our members every month called Keeping Commitments, and the members that attend that call often are there because they have historically struggled to keep their commitments. And one of the reasons why I think women struggle to keep their commitments, as I've talked about many, many times, is that they are just flippant with their commitments. And they're not really giving consideration to the process of their commitments. They're just saying yes to the results, like, "Yes, I want weight loss," but they're not considering the process of weight loss. So I would much rather someone sit down and really assess, "Do I have the time, the headspace, the capacity to join Balance365?" That's why we simplify it, we make it manageable, but it does still take effort. Right? You still have to give it, you have to show up. Right? Can I realistically do that now or not? Because what happens when you are in this like fragile space of historically not keeping your commitments, another failure on top of another failure on top of another failure over time just leaves you feeling really hopeless.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

And so I would rather someone just sit down and say, like, "I can't." It's not not ever. It's just not now.

JEN

Now's not the time. Yeah. It's like, why would I create some goal for myself, like, you know, in December when our schedule is nuts, right? Like, it's like, you know, get real. January might be better type thing. It's not never, it's later.

ANNIE

Yeah.

JEN

Yeah. So then that's actually a great segue into sitting down, so you, maybe you've decided, "You know what, this is a story that I'm telling myself. So now I'm going to sit down and methodically work through the changes I want to make," right? And this is kind of the work. This is something I've learned. It's learning to manage my priorities. And as discussed, I could make anything an emergency, anything, and everything. And I could, but it's like, what happens when

you're calm, and you sit down, and you make a list? And then you decide, what is a priority and what can wait? And the reality is, when we're talking about behavior change, not everything can be a priority, at the same time, they might be important to you, and they might be equally as important to you. But there's an order of operations that needs to be followed. Because when human beings pursue too much change too fast, it's going to fall apart, because we just can't cope with change all at once like that.

ANNIE

I also think an important part of this step in, like, methodically working through the changes is getting specific about those changes.

JEN

Yeah

ANNIE

Because some things like I want to lose weight, or I want to improve my health, I think lack of clarity can contribute to overwhelm, too. So I want to improve my health is like, what does that even mean?

JEN

Right, versus what's the actual habit commitment here?

ANNIE

Yeah, and like, how do I start? Like that does feel like an elephant right? Versus I want to start incorporating a serving of fruit at breakfast. Okay, like that, that I can do.

JEN

Yeah. So that is the, that's kind of the work of behavior change, it is committing to the process, not the outcome. And it's so important to any, for anyone approaching a weight loss journey to know that the weight loss you experience, like, I understand that that's your goal, but it truly is just a byproduct of the behaviors you pursue. So the commitment is to the behaviors, right? Not necessarily the result. And, and so, and the other thing, it's like, say, I'm coaching somebody, and she has a list of changes that she wants to make. And if we look at those changes, objectively, we can, you know, again, they're all important to her. Some might, she might even feel a little more urgency behind - an example would be someone who, you know, has a weight loss goal might feel some urgency to address their nutrition habits first, but they're sleeping four hours a night. Then it's understanding order of operations here where I'll say, "Hey, look, like, I understand you want to get there, but like, you're always going to be struggling with these nutrition habit changes until you start getting some better sleep. So like, can we start there?" And then move on. Okay. And then of course, we would recommend starting small.

ANNIE

Mm-hm. And small is relative.

JEN

Yeah, relative to what your capacity is.

ANNIE

Yeah, starting small for Jen on movement is different than starting small on movement for me, because of where we're starting from.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

So making sure that whatever you commit to feels good for you, not anyone else is important.

JEN

Absolutely. Yeah. And the last thing I want to talk about is if starting a weight loss journey feels overwhelming to you, then you should seriously be considering getting support. And, of course, I always want to shout out our company, and our coaches, because I do truly think we are amazing. But I'll just say here that it could be from any person or company that's aligned with your values, and the process that you want to go through. Because that can really be what makes or breaks any kind of behavior change journey is support, is community, is having someone like accompany you on that journey that helps you slow down those thoughts, thinks things through, reminds you of your commitments, right? Holds you in a very, you know, healthy and loving way, like holds you accountable.

ANNIE

Yeah. Someone that you can raise your hand and say, "I'm feeling overwhelmed."

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

"And I know I've got some unhelpful thoughts swirling around in my head, and I need someone who can help me discern like, where am I spending my time and energy?"

JEN

Yeah, I would say one of, when I'm coaching somebody, I would say one of their like, top, like the relief they feel is because when, and you know, my goal for these coaching sessions is people feel clear on the next step. And so like, that's such a relief, right? And it's like, "Do you feel clear?" "Yeah, I feel clear." And then off they go again. Unstoppable.

ANNIE

And even just a community and experts giving you permission, although we fully believe that you can give yourself the permission. But giving you like a stamp of approval, like, yeah, you don't have to work on that all at once. You don't have to go as fast. You can go slower. You can

do things one or two focuses at a time. Having someone on in your corner saying like, "This is fine. It's okay, we're gonna get there. We will do this together." Can be so like, just, it's almost just like a weighted blanket on that overwhelm. Like, sssssh.

JEN

Yes, yes.

ANNIE

[Laughs]

JEN

It's the soothing that you need. [Laughs]

ANNIE

"It's okay, I know you're so excited."

JEN

Balance365 can be your weighted blanket.

ANNIE

"I know you feel like you have to do the, all this right now. You don't. We'll get there. We'll just take all those changes that you want to make. Let's pick a few, put the rest on a shelf. We'll come back later." Yeah.

JEN

Yeah. Okay. That's what I've got for today.

ANNIE

I love it. I think it's great. And hopefully, people after listening to this, are feeling less overwhelmed.

JEN

Yeah.

ANNIE

I'd love to hear how they feel after listening to our suggestions or if they apply any of these, if they find themselves in a, in an overwhelmed state about weight loss, and they're able to apply some of these steps. Give us an update.

JEN

Yeah, we'd love to hear it.

ANNIE

Alright, thanks Jen.

JEN

Okay. Bye, everyone.

ANNIE

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.