

Hello! And welcome to The Stop Binge Eating podcast.

I am Kirstin Sarfde and I'm so excited to be here creating this podcast for anyone who's struggling with binge eating and is looking for real, long-term solutions for how to stop doing it for good.

If you feel like you're out of control around food, if you think about food and eating way too much, if you find yourself feeling ashamed and embarrassed about how much you eat or about how your body looks, then you are in the right place. If you're not quite sure if you binge eat or just overeat, I do want to say that there's no hard and fast rule about *how much* you have to eat in order for you to consider it a binge, I've had people come to me with all kinds of binge descriptions so I personally don't discriminate. But if you feel out of control while you're eating, experience a plethora of negative emotions afterward, and eat way beyond fullness, then I say you can call it a binge. There is of course diagnostic criteria you can go by as well in the DSM 5 if you'd like to check that out.

Throughout this podcast, I'm going to cover all things binge eating. That means I'm gonna break down why you binge and how to stop doing it, I'm going to also talk about emotional eating, because that's a big piece of it too, and I'm going to touch on tons of topics you didn't even know you wanted to hear about. My mission here is to help you make your life all around better, I want you to live your dream life, and have your ideal eating life. I want you to feel confident, in control, proud of yourself and I'm going to do my best to help you make that happen.

I have so many things I want to teach you and I'm excited to dive in with our first topic today, but first I'd like to share you a little bit about myself so you know who the heck is talking to you right now.

Again, my name is Kirstin and the reason why I care so much about this topic is because I myself struggled with binge eating for over 10 years.

My story in a nutshell of how I got into that mess begins with the terrible eating habits I had growing up which got me to my highest weight by the end of my freshman year in college. I remember seeing a picture of myself at the end of the school year and thinking I desperately needed to do something. So I put myself on a diet and during my sophomore year and I lost 40 lbs. The problem was that the diet I was following, which was one I put together with all the information I was reading in magazines during my long gym cardio sessions, was too restrictive and it did a number on my brain. So not long after I stopped dieting, I started bingeing.

After all that time of eating very carefully to make sure to stay within my calorie goal, I started caring less and less and was overeating more and more. It didn't seem like a big deal at first, stuffing myself to capacity here and there, but it sure ended up turning into a huge deal. At first it seemed like a fun, pleasurable thing to do, but then it became an uncontrollable compulsion.

Throughout my decade or so of bingeing, there were a few times when I did well and I thought the problem was gone, but most of the time, I was stru-ggl-ing. I just could not figure out why this kept happening to me and the emotional impact it had on me totally sucked. I felt frustrated because I knew what I should be eating and I knew that I shouldn't binge, but I just couldn't get myself to do it. I felt embarrassed because my weight was all over the place. Up and down so many times. I spent years trying to get back down to my goal weight that I'd reached in college but I could never get there. Well, not never. There was one time I did get there, but my bingeing ruined it soon after. Any progress I'd ever made, I'd ruin with bingeing and end up right back where I started. I was constantly trying to lose weight and I hated that people could see my losses and gains. No one ever said anything, but I would just imagine what kinds of judgments they had about me.

Needless to say, it was not a fun time for me.

But thankfully there is a happy ending to this story! I stopped the madness and I wasn't even expecting it to happen when it did. I really thought I was going to have to deal with this forever, that it was just a part of me now, but thank goodness I don't and it's not.

I ended up finding my solution through coaching which I hadn't even know was a solution. I went through a life and weight loss coach training and certification program so I could embark a new and exciting career and throughout that time, I learned the most amazing tools and insights that helped me get out of the binge cycle and find my self control. It completely changed my eating life and my relationship with food has changed immensely. Does that mean I eat perfectly all the time? No, of course not! But I don't feel guilty after eating, no matter how much I eat, and food doesn't have power over me like I used to think it did.

So I'm here because I know your struggle and I want to help you. Any story you could tell me I can most likely relate to because I feel like I've done it all when it comes to unhealthy eating habits and I want to teach you everything I've learned that helped me because I want you to have the same success that I had.

Throughout this podcast I'm sure I'll be sharing many more stories from my binge eating days, but that right there is the gist of my story. So now that you know a little about me and what my deal is, lets get into today's topic – why you binge eat.

I wanted to talk about why you binge right up front in episode one because knowing the cause is so important.

You have to know the cause in order to come up with a real solution. You have to know what needs to be fixed before you can fix it.

You can try to just eat differently, which is what most people do, but you've probably already tried that and it didn't work. So instead of working on the eating, let's work on what's causing the eating.

Have you ever finished eating and thought, “Why did I do that?” and then just fall into a big shame spiral without ever answering the question?

I have!

Or if I did come up with an answer, either it wasn't the right one, it wasn't an answer that was going to help me change anything, or I did have the right answer but then I didn't know what to do with that information.

A lot of the time I just thought it was just how I was, that I was a person who binged and there was nothing I could actively do about it. Maybe this behavior would just go away on it's own or maybe something would just click one day and I'd stop doing it.

But waiting and hoping is not the best way to deal with this. There is a solution that can be actively worked towards but not until you find the cause.

So what's the cause? Why do you binge?

You binge because you feel urges to do it. Urges cause bingeing.

What an urge is, is a really strong desire and it makes you feel compelled to binge. It makes eating a lot of food seem very urgent and necessary. They feel like they overcome you and there's no way out.

Does this feeling sound familiar to you?

I remember there were so many times I'd just be sitting there, minding my own business, and this overwhelming urge to binge would come over me and I thought I had to just do it. So the next thing I knew I was eating as if I had no choice. I had to eat and I had to keep going.

Or, sometimes I'd start eating for emotional reasons, I'd eat because I didn't want to feel an emotion I didn't like, like loneliness, boredom, stress, or nervousness, and as I was eating, the urge would just show up and my eating would transform from emotional eating to binge eating. I'd go from eating a little here and a little there just to avoid a feeling, to then feeling out of control, like I couldn't stop.

So it's these urges you feel that are causing you to binge. They might appear while you're eating, maybe before you eat, but whenever they do, they are what drive you to binge.

Now you might want to know why you feel those.

Not everyone feels them, right, so why you?

There's two main reasons.

One is because you're restricting your food intake. I'm going to do a whole episode on this topic in the future, but I'll touch on the basics today. If you're not nourishing your body properly and not giving it enough fuel, your brain is going to get concerned.

Your brain wants to keep you alive, it's main concern is survival, and if it thinks you're going to starve, it's going to urge you to eat as much as you can when you can.

The longer you go without eating what your body requires to function well, the louder your brain is going to scream at you to feed it.

If this is what you're doing, then changing your regular day to day diet may be all you need to stop the urges.

But for most people it's not enough because they're also affected by the other reason, which is that you've created a habit.

You overate many many times because you had a strong desire for food and then this overeating turned into binge eating as the desire became more intense. The urges became more intense.

Binge eating was something you did because it was pleasurable and a temporary relief, so you kept doing it, and you ended up teaching your brain that this is how you avoid pain and seek pleasure which is exactly what your brain wants to do. It wants pleasure, it doesn't want pain, and binge eating became your top solution for making this happen.

So now your brain keeps urging you to do it and each time you give in to this urge, you strengthen the habit, you reinforce the habit.

But I want you to think about this. What if you didn't give into the urge?

If you didn't give in to it, there would be no binge. If the only reason why you binge is because you're reacting to this urging feeling, then if you don't react to the urge then you won't binge.

Then what's so amazing, is that if you continually leave the urge unanswered, if you keep not responding by bingeing, then the urges will stop appearing.

Eventually, you'll stop feeling them entirely.

When you don't give in to your urges, then you weaken your urge habit and eventually, you'll break it.

Habits, can, be, broken. Binge eating is a habit and you can break it.

Right now your habit exists because you keep giving in to your urges. So then the solution to breaking the habit would be to stop giving in to them.

You create a new habit of not giving in to them.

Now, I'm going to be completely honest with you. Not giving in to your urges is not easy, I'm not going to pretend like it is. Learning how to do this is a big piece of the work I do with my clients and I'd also say it's the most valuable skill I personally gained from doing the work myself to stop binge eating. It's something that takes practice, patience, and effort. You may not be able to do it right away, and that's okay, I'm not at all expecting you to, but once you do, it's magical.

For now, all I want you to do is to understand what's going on, to see what's possible for you, to see that there is a way out of this.

You binge because you feel urges to do it and it's possible to make these urges go away.

If the urges go away then the bingeing goes away.

Instead of thinking there is no way out and that you're going to have to deal with this forever, I want you to know that there is a way out and it's conquering those urges that will get you there.

When you find yourself questioning why the heck you did it, you have an answer.

Alright, that's all I have for you today. Make sure you subscribe so you can keep on learning how you can end this binge eating cycle you're stuck in and if you have any questions you can go to the show notes page at coachkir.com/1 and leave a comment.

I look forward to taking to you next time. Bye bye!