

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #10: Losing weight while binge eating

Hi! How's it goin'? Before I get started today, I just want to give you a head's up that I only have a limited amount of free mini session spots available each week so if you're wanting to sign up for one, I suggest you get on it so you don't have to wait too long. I have lots of time slots you can choose from but once I hit my maximum amount of free sessions, I block off the rest of the week. I'm loving talking with those of you who've done one already and I look forward to speaking with even more of you! To book yours, just go to coachkir.com/mini and you can pick a time that works for you.

Okay, now let's get down to business.

Let's talk about weight loss.

Now, I'm aware that I have some listeners who are overeaters, emotional overeaters, and don't binge according to my definition at least, so I want to preface this episode by making sure you know where you're at with your eating struggles because this matters when it comes to wanting to lose weight.

In this episode I'm specifically talking about those of you who feel out of control with your eating and when you binge it's large amounts of food. What I'm not referring to is if you overeat at meals or find yourself mindlessly grazing sometimes. Most of what I teach in this podcast can absolutely be applied to both binge and overeating, and I also work with both in my coaching practice, but I want you to know that today's episode is specific to binge eating just so you don't get confused.

I know that not all binge eaters want to lose weight. I've had people come to me who are happy at their weight or just a few pounds over their ideal weight but the binge eating is just an emotional hassle in their lives. Not all binge eaters are overweight.

But I will say that most of my clients and most of the people I talk to have weight they want to lose.

So I want to talk about this because I understand and know the struggle of trying to lose weight for years and battling binge eating at the same time.

My highest weight ever was actually before I started bingeing. That weight I was at was the reason I went on my first diet, which ended up leading me to bingeing. While I was bingeing, I was borderline overweight a lot of the time. I remember I'd get to one pound below what the BMI considers overweight for me and then I'd start restricting.

What I kept seeing happening was that I'd get halfway to my goal and then I'd gain it all back. It was crazy and frustrating. There was this one number on the scale that I just could not get past.

I couldn't figure out what the deal with that was, but as I look back now, I was probably restricting in order to get there and being too strict about my diet and then once I'd get to that point I'd think I could ease up a little bit.

Then of course a little became a lot and I was back to the start.

Then there was this one time when I finally got past it. I ended up getting down to my goal weight and I'll tell you, it did not come off fast. I averaged about a third of a pound a week and I know it's because although I thought I was doing the right thing by counting calories and doing intense exercise, from what I know now about the latest weight loss research, that is not the best way to lose weight. It may have worked well for me when I was 19, but definitely not so well in my thirties. Then of course the intermittent binges weren't helping me at all. I did fairly well with my binge eating during that time but I for sure wasn't out of it.

Anyway, being at my goal was very exciting for me because I'd been trying for *years* to make it happen and I finally did.

But there was a problem.

Because I got to my goal, and because my diet I went on to get there wasn't as strict as the one I went on before the bingeing, I thought I was fixed. I thought the bingeing was gone now and all would be good in my eating and weight world.

But nope, I was wrong.

I did well after hitting my goal, but then my old eating habits and the binges came back.

My brain still wanted to binge.

So since I never got down to the root cause of it and probably spent a lot of time fighting my urges instead of allowing them, I slowly got back into overeating and of course back into binge eating.

So frustrating. I really thought I would stay at that goal weight forever but instead, the weight came back on.

All of it.

So I share my story with you to show you how yes it's possible to fight down to the weight you want to be at, but if you don't deal with the bingeing then the weight is most likely going to come back on.

And I totally get it. You're not happy with your weight and you desperately want to lose it. But we have to be realistic here.

Focusing on weight loss while you're still binge eating will most likely keep you in the binge cycle and here's why.

You're most likely going to want to restrict to make up for the bingeing and we all know where that leads. And if you don't know, make sure you go back and listen to episode 4 where I explain it.

Think about it. If you're bingeing and trying to lose weight, then you're going to want to make up for the bingeing by then eating way less afterwards. You can't overeat and binge and then expect to lose weight, that obviously doesn't work, so the only way you might know how to make the weight come off is by trying to balance out what you did. But I'm telling you, just perpetuates the issue and the struggle.

Also, trying to lose weight while bingeing can be very frustrating. The scale isn't going to go down consistently and you're not going to be able to easily maintain the weight you do lose so watching the scale is not going to be a positive experience for you.

If you've been trying to lose weight while you're bingeing then you've seen this all happen.

You've been frustrated, you've seen the scale move in all kinds of directions and you haven't been successful.

So now you can clearly see what's going on and be realistic about what you can expect.

So now then, what should you do?

Simply put, your main focus should be on gaining control over your eating and less on weight loss. If you can, stop *trying* to lose weight for now.

You can work on losing weight later, and you may even notice some weight loss as you work on your bingeing, but having a weight goal that keeps getting sabotaged by bingeing is not a fun goal to work towards.

Once you don't feel out of control anymore, but you still may be overeating or mindlessly grazing, that's the point where working on your weight loss goal can begin, as you're working through just the emotional eating. This is the timeline I use for my clients - stop the binge eating and then we can focus on the weight.

Until you get to that place, your work is accepting where you're at with your weight currently. This is your body right now, this is your current reality, and this is okay for now.

This doesn't mean you can't lose weight later, you absolutely can.

I hear a lot of binge eating coaches and therapists who kind of shun weight loss if you've struggled with bingeing but I don't think that's fair.

I think everyone deserves to be at their ideal weight and live in their ideal size no matter what their eating history is as long as the goal is a healthy one.

As for the scale during this time, you have two options. You can either just not weigh yourself at all or you can learn to manage your mind around the scale. Managing your mind around it means learning to see the number as a neutral data point and not making it mean something terrible about yourself. Once you start giving that number meaning, then you start feeling awful and doing awful things, like eating

to self-sabotage or to make yourself feel better.

So it's up to you how you want to do it, but if I were you, I'd just step away from that scale for a bit until you no longer feel out of control around food.

So right now, your time and energy should go into your binge eating, not your weight. I can't stress enough how much frustration and discouragement you will save yourself if you just put your energy into managing and allowing your urges and managing your thinking.

Weight loss can wait. You've already been at this weight as long as you have, so what's another few months while you work on your bingeing.

One thing at a time people, that's how you achieve goals.

And speaking of goals, I have one to get 100 reviews of this podcast on iTunes. I know there's a lot of you listening who haven't written one yet, so what are you waiting for? This doesn't just benefit me, it also benefits anyone searching for binge eating help. If they know how much you're loving it, then they'll want to love it too, and then they get to love and learn at the same time just like you are! How awesome does that sound? So awesome. So if you're an iTunes listener, it's really easy to do on your podcast app if you just scroll down below the other reviews and it nice and clearly says, write a review. Just click on it and you're good to go.

Alright, thanks so much for listening, I love you guys, keep doing the work, stay off the scale just for now, and I'll talk to you next week.