

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #113: Determining Your Progress

Hi! You ready to talk about the progress you're making?

I really hope you're not down on yourself right now, thinking you're not making progress. But if you are, my goal here today is to help you shift your thinking about what making progress consists of when it comes to stopping binge eating.

Too often, I see people get down on themselves if they binge after a stretch of not doing it. Especially if they do it two or three days in a row. I've talked on here before about how I recommend you focus on frequency rather than streaks, but even in doing that, you might be thinking you're doing the right things and applying the tools and then you binge and the discouragement and frustration comes roaring out.

You get down on yourself because you think it's not working, you're not getting better, you're back at square one.

You think you're not making progress because you binged.

Just recently, a member of one of my group coaching programs wrote in our online forum that she feels like she's not making progress. She continues to binge at night after dinner. This is something we've been working on and as we've been doing this work, we've uncovered several reasons why she was bingeing after dinner to begin with.

When she told me she isn't making progress, I told her to tell me all the ways she has made progress.

The list she wrote out was extensive.

Although there is still work to do, after writing this list, she was able to see all that she's already done. And it was a lot!

Like I said, there were several factors leading her into bingeing at night and many of them were no longer contributing because she had stopped doing them.

So much of her day time eating habits had been cleaned up. So much of her thinking had been cleaned up.

Let's also not forget that she used to binge during the day too and she's no longer doing that.

One thing at a time is being worked on and changed that is leading her into having her ideal eating habits all around.

This nighttime eating piece though, it still needs work, and that's okay. We're working on it.

We can't expect to make dozens of changes all at once. It's much more effective for the long-term if we make small changes instead of trying to change everything in our lives all in one day or one week.

You've probably seen this to be true anytime you've tried to change too much at one time.

Because she had several things contributing to her binge eating, there's several things we're going to work on. We're going to take it one step at a time.

But in the meantime, she has to stop telling herself she's not making progress.

I know that you might want to determine your progress based on whether or not you binge. It makes sense. The goal is to not binge so if you do it, you think you're not making progress.

But I think there's so much more to it than that.

Stopping binge eating, not ever binge eating, is the ultimate goal. That's the big one.

But with big goals like that comes smaller ones as well.

If you're really stuck in bingeing and having a hard time getting out, then there's probably many habits and many thoughts and beliefs you have ingrained that are in your way. If that's you, I highly recommend working with me in my group coaching program so I can help you break the habits and change your thoughts and beliefs. That's what we do in there.

If that's you, then that means there are many little goals to work towards. There's many little changes to be made and with those, they'll add up to being a big change, to stopping binge eating completely.

In the most simplest explanation, I will tell you that the way to stop binge eating is to stop giving in to your urges to binge.

It's simple. But executing that is not so easy because there may be several reasons why you are giving in to your urges to binge. And you may not even know what those reasons are! Again, that's what I'm here to help you figure out.

The reasons, each of them, need to be known and worked on.

Let's say for example that one reason why you're giving in to your urges to binge is because you don't even realize you feel an urge until you're already eating.

That moment of decision to give into the urge completely passes by your awareness and you don't even notice it.

So the work to be done here is to practice having awareness of your urges, your thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Even if you still give in to the urge, having that awareness is huge.

A conscious decision can't be made if you don't know there is a decision to be made. Once you have that awareness, then you can work on your decision making in that moment.

So if before you had no awareness of what you were thinking, feeling, or doing before eating, and now you do, that's progress. That's you moving in the right direction because now you can work on the next goal – to make better decisions in that moment when you're feeling an urge to binge.

I want to give you some ideas for how you can take note of progress you've made, some markers for progress. Notice if you've made progress in any of them and be proud of yourself for having gotten this far. Getting to where you are, in a different place than where you began, is progress, even if it's just a few steps.

So here are some:

There's being more aware of yourself than before like I just talked about.

Having the frequency of your binges go down. You're bingeing less than you used to.

The amount of food you're eating in a binge has decreased. That's a good one because it means you're able to stop yourself sooner than you used to and that's amazing.

You're not beating yourself up after binges like you used to. You're kinder to yourself and feeling less guilty. We have to be able to take responsibility, forgive, and productively fail when we make mistakes. Being nice to yourself is a great thing to practice.

You're restricting less. This could mean you're not punishing yourself by eating very little food the day or days after binge, you're not calling foods “bad” or making anything off limits or telling yourself you can't eat certain foods. Those kinds of things can lead to bingeing so doing less of them is awesome.

You're worrying less and stressing less about eating. You're also thinking about food less often. The thoughts about food are becoming more calming and matter of fact, like just thinking about meals or maybe preparing for events with food and not dwelling on anything.

You're following what you plan for yourself. Basically, you're doing what you say you're going to do instead of acting impulsively, making regretful decisions, and not making conscious decisions about what you will eat. You're getting better at honoring your commitment to yourself, whatever that may be.

You're more accepting of your body and yourself. A lot of people who binge also have really negative things to say about themselves and their bodies and all that negativity isn't helping. When you're more

accepting of yourself and your body, you're more likely to treat yourself and your body better. Any step in a more neutral to positive direction is a win.

So there are just some, the most common ones I see and that I've experienced for myself. You may have noticed some changes you've made that I didn't mention and if you did, celebrate them and label them as progress.

When you start getting down on yourself for a mistake you made, for a binge, for overeating, and you want to tell yourself you're a loser who can't change and that you're right back where you started, prove yourself wrong.

Look for the progress you have made.

Be proud of it. Use it as evidence to prove you are capable of making small changes and that's so important because the small ones turn into big ones.

So if you binge, don't make it mean you're not making progress. You are, go figure out how you are.

Have a great week continuing the progress you've made.

Bye bye!