THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #114: What You Have to and Need to Do

Hi! How are you? I'm amazing! I just got back to work after a week of vacation and let me tell you, I really needed that.

I love my job, I love my clients, I love what I do, but it's still work. So it was so awesome to have a week of just fun and relaxation.

We decided to do a stay-cation and we had the best time doing all kinds of stuff such as going to the beach, playing with farm animals, doing a hiking trail we've never done, playing so many games, bowling, pool, mini golf, Mario Kart, air hockey, and my favorite thing we did, which I had never done before, was axe throwing. Who knew it was so fun?! I even got a few bullseyes which I was obviously very proud of.

So many fun activities, along with a lot of relaxing activities, and I couldn't be happier or more satisfied.

And now I'm back, feeling refreshed, and so ready to talk to you about the things you have to do and need to do.

I want you to think about the things in your life right now that you think you have to do or need to do.

There's probably a lot, especially if you have kids.

You probably have a written or mental list of all the things you have to do just for today.

When you think about this, how do you feel?

Probably not super excited. Maybe obligated, dreadful, pressured, or resentful.

Recently, one of my group members was telling me about all the things she has to do for her family and all these things she has to do for herself. The list was long and it exhausted her.

So much of her eating stemmed from it too because eating ended up being in response to her exhaustion and negative feelings about her life.

When you live in a life full of obligation, you wear yourself out.

You start feeling like your life isn't yours, that it gets taken over by other people, or what society tells you, or even just whatever your idea is of what your life should look like.

So when you finally get a chance to do something for you, something you choose to do on your terms, you choose to eat.

You think it's easy, it's pleasurable, it's relaxing, and you enjoy it. That's what you choose to do when you have a choice, when you get to do something for you that you want to do.

But then there's also the idea that you don't even choose that.

I can't tell you how many times I've heard people say they don't feel like there's a choice of whether they binge or not.

They hear me talk about the moment of decision, they intellectually understand that they are the one doing it, but it doesn't feel that way.

They think they have to eat something, that they need to eat something, whether it's something specific or just anything.

Have you ever had that thought?

I have. I would think I needed to binge or else I would explode. I'd feel the urge all over my body and I just couldn't take it anymore. I had to eat and stop this feeling.

My brain would tell me I needed to eat and I believed that.

But when you really think about it, do you ever really need to eat chips, crackers, cakes, or ice cream?

Do you need these things for survival?

No, you don't.

And will you really explode if you don't eat them?

No, you won't.

And when you're at a specific place with a specific food, do you *have* to have it?

People say that stuff all the time, that when they go wherever that they have to have that certain food.

But really, no, you don't. You'll be okay without it.

That way of thinking is just causing you to put a lot of focus and importance on it, when it's simply just a food.

It's a food that you don't have to have or need to have and you'll be okay if you don't.

You know this, yet if you keep telling yourself otherwise then you're going to keep feeling that desire, that craving for it.

Now, there's nothing wrong with wanting a certain food from a certain place. If they have the best whatever wherever you're going, and you want it, and you're totally cool with having it, then go for it.

But if this is a problem for you, and you don't want to be eating it yet you feel a sense of obligation to eat it, then this is where the shift in your thinking needs to be made.

This is where you need to tell yourself the truth about what you need to and what you have to do.

And here's the truth.

It's nothing.

There is nothing you need to do and nothing you have to do.

Literally nothing.

Now, usually when I tell people this, they can come up with a quick rebuttal, telling me something they think they have to do.

They have to eat, they have to drink water, they have to go to work, they have to take care of their kids.

No, no, no, and no. Really, you don't.

Hear me out here.

You don't have to eat and you don't have to drink water. You could just not. You just stop putting them in your mouth.

You could just not go to work. You could just stop going. That is an option that is available to you.

And you really could just stop taking care of your kids. People do it all the time. You could just abandon them.

Really see that these are options. They are. You can just stop doing all of it.

But here's what I'm guessing. You're not going to do. You may tell yourself that it's because you need to do all these things, but you don't. No one is forcing you to. You are your own person, making your

own decisions, choosing your own actions.

You're choosing to do all of these things. You choose to do them because you want to.

You want to do them because you don't want the negative consequences of not doing them.

You don't want to die. You don't want to stop making money. You don't want your children to suffer.

You want to live. You want to make money. You want your kids to be healthy, well taken care of, and to have you in their life.

You want those things and therefore, you want to eat, drink water, work, and take care of them.

I want you to think about how much different your day to day life would be if you made this simple, small shift in your thinking. If you swapped out the words "need' and "have" for "want."

I want to eat, I want to drink water, I want to go to work, I want to take care of my kids.

How does that feel in comparison to thinking you have to or need to do those things?

So much better I bet.

It puts you in the driver's seat of your life. It empowers you. It shows you that everything you do is your choice, no one else's.

Even as you listen to all these podcast episodes, you hear me say that you have to, need to, or must do things. But you really don't. Now, if you want to stop binge eating I highly recommend that you do, but it's still always your choice.

You don't have to go through your urges and experience them, you absolutely can binge every time you feel the urge to binge. That's your choice to make.

But I bet that since you're listening to this podcast that you don't want to binge and that you want to work through your urges.

Don't do it because you think you have to, do it because you want to.

And that goes for everything in your life.

When you get better at seeing your life as a series of decisions you're making based on what you want and don't want to do then it's so much more freeing.

Now, that doesn't mean you're going to become a completely selfish, inconsiderate, and self-centered person.

You're not going to lose all regard for other people, because you don't want to. You want to consider other people and help people.

This may mean you do things for other people that you're not super thrilled about doing but you want to

do it for them.

I lived with my brother and sister-in-law for awhile and when I did, I was working from home while both of them worked full-time jobs outside of the house. They had a dog and everyday on my lunch break, I would take him outside to relieve himself.

Did I love doing that? No. Would I rather not spend my break picking up poop? Yes. Did I have to do it? No. But what about when they asked me to? I still didn't have to. I could have said no. I could have lied and said I didn't have time. I could have done whatever break time activity I wanted to do for myself whether it be watching a quick show on Netflix, playing games on my phone, or scrolling through social media or the news.

But I didn't, because I wanted to help. I wanted that dog to be able to relieve himself in the middle of the day. I wanted to contribute to the household while I was living there. I wanted to help out my brother and sister-in-law.

It was all my choice, it was what I wanted to do, and it was never anything I had to do or needed to do, no matter what anyone else may have thought.

So when it comes to things in your life, whether it be things other people tell you to do, things they ask you to do, things society tells you you have to do or things society tells you that you have to want, or things your brain tells you that you need to do, ask yourself if it's what you want to do.

Be clear with yourself. You can say no. Yes there may be consequences, and that's part of it, so decide if you want those consequences or not. And if you say yes and then do the things, don't blame anyone else for your decision. It's yours, you chose it because you wanted it.

Know and like your reasons for what you choose to do, whether it's yes or no.

And don't forget, you may think you need to binge, that there's no choice, but there always is.

Drop the obligation, the pressure, and the resentment and fill yourself with empowerment instead.

Do what you want and don't do what you don't want.

Have a great week doing just that. Bye bye.