

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #119: Success Expectancy

Hi! Let's get right down to business. Let's talk about your expectations for your success.

You've probably had moments where you think about when you'll stop binge eating. You have ideas about how long it will take, and this is most likely based on what other people have said about their experiences or just from what you've come up with in your head without any data for why.

People all the time think that the amount of time they've been binge eating somehow correlates with how long it will take for them to stop binge eating. If that's you, go back and listen to episode #92 about stopping binge eating after many years.

I don't know where people get this idea from. Is someone telling you all this, or are you just assuming? Because time really has nothing to do with it.

You could literally stop bingeing right now. It doesn't matter how long you've been bingeing for, you just just decide to never give in to another urge and then not do it. That is a possibility. You have that power.

Time is not what matters, what actually matters in how long it's going to take for you to stop binge eating is how many reasons you have for why you binge and how committed you are to the process of stopping binge eating.

Let's start with the reasons why you binge.

To put it in the most simplest of explanations, the reason why you binge is because you feel urges to do it and you give in to those urges.

That's for everyone. We can also say that you feel feelings and emotions that you eat in response to, but even with that, you're probably feeling those feelings and feeling at least a desire, if not a strong urge, to eat food to make those feelings go away.

But then, beneath that, there's all the reasons why you feel urges to binge and the reasons why you give in to them.

You may have just a few reasons, or you may have many.

If you have just a few, you will most likely stop bingeing sooner than a person who has many.

But even with that, that may not be the case. Yes you may have just a few reasons but those reasons might be things that you need a lot of work on. You're really stuck in those reasons and having a hard time working through them, getting away from them, and letting them go.

With my group members, sometimes we're able to work through their reasons really quickly and some take longer because we have to take small steps.

But for the most part, more reasons will equal more time to stop binge eating.

Let's say there's one person who binges simply because they feel urges and don't know the process of how to work through them in a healthy, productive way. They had created those urges through overly restricting their eating and although they're no longer doing that, the urges are still there. Their life, other than the bingeing, is great and they're super happy with their career, their family, their relationships, their friends, and with themselves.

Then, there's someone else who has that same problem, but they also think very negatively about themselves as a person and about their body, they have a really hard time saying no to people when they're offered food, they freak out when they're eating food they're not preparing for themselves, and they are afraid to eat certain foods.

That first person will most likely be able to stop binge eating sooner than the second person. That first person probably has less work to do.

Now, that's probably, but not guaranteed. Quite often people say they're happy with all those aspects of their lives but then we I start asking some questions about them, they realize there's some improvements that can be made and they start seeing that some of it actually is contributing to their eating. This doesn't happen all of the time, but it definitely happens. Sometimes we're just not fully aware of what's happening in our own lives and how much better they can be. We get into complacency when it can be so much better.

But anyway, that first person will be more likely to stop bingeing before the second person.

And this is not a problem. It just is how it is. There's just more work to do for that second person.

It doesn't mean anything about them as a person, it's not like they're more broken or more messed up, they just have more unuseful thoughts that need to be changed.

If you need more work than someone else it doesn't mean anything about you.

And you comparing your progress to someone else's progress in a way that discourages or frustrates you isn't helpful.

Just because someone else stopped more quickly than you doesn't mean you won't be able to do it or that you're not making progress fast enough. By the way, if *that's* you, thinking you're not making progress fast enough, go listen to episode 113 about determining your progress.

People get so down on themselves when other people have success and they don't and that is not going to help you be successful. It's going to stop you in your tracks and you're going to give up.

You don't know the other person's story, their reasons behind their bingeing, and you don't know the work they've done.

Even when people are working together in my coaching groups, I like to think of us as a team, and they're all listening to each other get coached, reading everyone's written coaching, and hearing about their wins, they still may not know the extent of work other people are doing on top of that. I give my group members lots of worksheets, videos, and self-coaching exercises. A person who is still bingeing while another person isn't, isn't necessarily seeing ALL the work that person who isn't bingeing is putting in.

Which brings me to what I said a few minutes ago about commitment.

Like I said earlier, you could just not give in to urges and not binge starting right now. Even if you have a lot of reasons why you binge, you still could.

It's like a person who smokes until they find out they're pregnant or have lung cancer and then they stop immediately, no matter how many reasons they have for why they were smoking.

I know a lot of you want to say, "well, you can just stop smoking but you can't stop eating." I used to say that too. But, here's the thing. You're not going to stop eating, but you're going to stop giving into your urges to binge, you're going to stop eating way past fullness, you're going to stop eating when you're not hungry most of the time, because of course, we want to be able to sometimes eat joy foods which have nothing to do with our hunger and fullness but are purely for enjoyment. That's what you can stop doing right now.

But you may not, most people do not stop that abruptly, and that's okay.

If you want your binge eating to end sooner than later though, you have to be committed. You have to be willing to keep going even when it gets hard, even when you don't feel like it, even when you fail, when you binge, you have to be committed to the process and not give up on yourself.

The more committed you are, the more quickly you'll see progress.

If you commit to working on your binge eating once a week, then you're going to see progress more slowly than if you're committed to working on it every day.

Now, if you're not able to make time to work on it everyday, because you're prioritizing other things, don't blame yourself or beat yourself up. You choose your priorities. I'm going to recommend another episode, I swear this is a record for episode references in an episode, but if you're not prioritizing your binge eating work because you feel like you don't have time because you have too many other obligations, go listen to episode #114 about what you have to and need to do.

You decide what you want to do with your time and if you want to see results sooner, then your commitment to the work needs to be higher.

Make this a priority. 5 minutes a day doing anything you've learned from these 119 episodes I've released on this podcast is better than no time.

Don't fall into an all or nothing mindset. One of my group members and I talked about this the other day where she gets into the zone and can end up spending 30 minutes or more working on her thinking, her planning, her self-coaching, and that's great and all, but sometimes she doesn't have 30 minutes for whatever reason. So she just doesn't do anything. Then guess what, doing nothing stopped her from making progress.

When she realized that anything was better than nothing, she started doing more work, in smaller increments, and made progress.

How long it takes for you to stop binge eating is determined by you. It's determined by how much effort you're putting in, how much effort you're not putting in, how many reasons why you binge that you have to work on, and how much work you're putting into working on them and how often.

It's going to be different for you than it will be for someone else.

Just because it took me a certain amount of time doesn't mean that it will take you that same amount of time.

We're not the same.

Sometimes people ask me about my stopping binge eating story because they're curious to know how quickly one can stop.

But seriously, my story doesn't matter. I stopped when I stopped based on my reasons for bingeing and my commitment to stopping.

You will stop based on yours and I'll say it one more time in case you missed it. It could stop immediately. It could also take months.

Stop comparing yourself to others, it's not useful.

Other people's experiences have nothing to do with yours. You can't determine what your success will be based on someone else's success.

Stay in your own lane. Do your own work.

You can learn from others, my group members do it all the time. They also feel inspired by each other because they're seeing what's possible.

But do not compare and despair. Do not make other people's success mean something's wrong with you. There's not, you just still have work to do.

Take some time to uncover your beliefs about your own success expectancy.

Do you have an idea of how long it's going to take for you to stop binge eating?

Do you think it's going to take so long that you don't even want to bother?

Do you keep coming up with ideas for how long it will take and then when that time comes you're still bingeing and you get discouraged and give up?

Maybe it's not useful to put a timeline on it. Maybe it's better to just think it will just happen when it happens based on the work you're doing and you're better off not giving yourself a deadline.

Have you ever tried to lose weight by a certain day for a vacation or an event and when the day was getting closer you were not even close to your goal weight so you just gave up and stopped trying to lose weight?

Imagine what it would be like instead if you just tried to lose as much weight as you could, healthily of course, before that day. Then there's no all or nothing giving up. There's no giving up on losing any weight because you're not going to lose all of it.

So, what if you just dropped your time expectations and just did the work? Instead of saying you'll stop binge eating by whatever date, you stop putting pressure on yourself and just solve eating problems one at a time until they're all solved.

Doing this work without the pressure of your expectations can make it easier.

You can drop the expectations based on other people's success and the ones you just make up in your mind.

And know that as long as you're committed to the work, then you will reach your goal. You will reach it when you reach it.

Now, I'm not saying we should never set deadlines and never shoot to achieve goals by a certain date, a lot of the time that fuels us and motivates us to stay in the game.

But if you're someone who gets frustrated, discouraged, and hopeless when the date gets closer and you're not where you thought you'd be and you just give up on the whole thing, then this may be a good practice for you, to take that pressure of an end date away from yourself.

It's just that when it comes to binge eating, there is no one size fits all game plan. Sure in my groups I created a program where we follow what I believe to be the best course of action to stop binge eating based on what I've seen work best in all my years working with people to stop binge eating. But with that, my group members always bring up topics that are out of order from what I present to them or that I didn't include in the lessons and we work on them. When we get started, I don't know what all their personal underlying reasons are for bingeing and neither do they. So much of the work is uncovering all of that so we can work on it.

And that's why I can't put a timeline on their success. Currently, what I offer is a 6 month group program and there are people who stop bingeing after just a month or two and some who take the full

six months. It's all based on the person and all that I talked about on this episode today.

Everyone gets the same information, I'm the same, so the determining factor is the person doing the work, how much work they have to do and how committed they are.

So when it comes to your goal of stopping binge eating, remember that it's your goal and you are a unique person. You determine your success, no one else does. And when you see other people do what you want to do more quickly than you are, use them as inspiration and as an example of what's possible.

And if you do set an expectation for when you want to stop bingeing by, and you're not where you want to be as that expectation gets closer, do not stop. Do not give up. Any progress is better than no progress.

Don't give up because you didn't get an A+. Don't give up on the whole course and fail the semester because you aren't on track for an A+, 100%. Go for the B-. Heck, get a C+.

Do not stop. Stay committed and you will eventually get there. And you will get there when you get there.

I'll talk to you next time, bye bye.