THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #123: Thought Judgement

Hi! Before I get started, I want to let you know about something. I'm doing a free 5 day training and you are invited to join me! It's going to be awesome, I'm so excited about it. We're going to spend 5 days together working on stopping binge eating. It's going to begin next week, on Monday December 14, 2020 and you can register to join by going to coachkir.com/training. If you're listening to this way after this episode is released, I suggest you still check out that link in case I have another training scheduled when you hear this.

I cannot wait to work with you in there!

Okay, onto today's topic. Thought judgement.

You have a lot of thoughts. It's been said that we think about 60,000 of them each day. There's so many things you're thinking about each day and some of those thoughts you're totally okay with thinking and some that you're totally not.

There's no problem when you're thinking about the fun thing you have planned for this weekend or how much you love someone or about that funny thing that happened yesterday. These thoughts are all fine to you.

But when it comes to thoughts about food, some of the time, you're not having it.

You get mad that you're thinking about food. You think something's wrong with you and you get upset about it.

But what's interesting is that it doesn't happen all of the time. Sometimes you're okay with it and sometimes you're not.

So how do you decide when it's okay for you to think about food?

You might have some rules for yourself that you've created for this. But those are your rules. They're ones you made up that make it not okay to be thinking about food.

And here's where it gets tough when you have those rules. You're going to think about food several times during the day and you're going to think about it at times when you're not expecting to.

You're going to think about food because it's an essential part of life. We need to eat food to live so it's a good thing that we think about it. If we never thought about it, we'd never eat and then we'd die.

And although we have a lot of power over what we choose to think about, it's a perk of being human, we don't always have control over what thoughts just pop into our heads.

Sometimes thoughts that create good feelings pop in and we love it. Sometimes thoughts pop in that cause us to feel negatively and we may not have purposefully thought that thought in that moment, it wasn't chosen, but now we get to decide what we do with it.

And I'll tell you, getting mad about it and judging yourself for it isn't going to be useful.

I remember getting coached once about a thought that kept coming up for me. I set goals for myself, as I suggest you do as well, and every month my brain would tell me, about my monthly goal, "You're not going to reach your goal this month." Not only did that thought not feel good to think but I would then make it worse. I'd hear it and then get mad that I kept thinking it.

I'd get mad because I didn't want to be thinking it. I saw it as an irrational thought because I didn't have any evidence to prove that would be true. It had been months since I had a month where I didn't reach my goal yet, my brain continued to think it.

So there I was, being the client and getting coached and all I wanted was for my coach to help me to stop thinking that thought. I couldn't figure out why it kept coming up and that's what I wanted the answer to. Why is it there?

But she took it in a different direction, and side note, being a coach myself I started thinking she's not doing it right, which is obviously not a useful thought to think when you're being coached. Coaches see things we don't see ourselves, even us coaches can't see everything in ourselves, and thank goodness I didn't give up on her and I went along with where she was going.

She pointed out that the bigger issue here was not that the thought kept coming but that I was judging myself for thinking it. I was getting annoyed and frustrated, and that wasn't going to let me let go of my thought, it was just going to make me feel worse and spend my time probably going in circles about this. In case you didn't know, annoyance and frustration are not usually feelings that drive productive problem solving. I know I just kinda sit there and fume when I feel that way.

What I needed to do what to stop judging myself for thinking that thought.

It's just a thought. It's just words in a sentence.

I was making it mean so much more and it really wasn't more than that.

Once I was able to see it that way, I was able to hear it, see it as false, and dismiss it away, no drama.

When you get worked up about what you're thinking about there's lots of unnecessary drama.

There you are, thinking this thought, maybe it's about food, and by judging it or getting mad about it, now you're adding more, unnecessary thoughts and feelings to it that you probably also don't want to be thinking and feeling.

So here's the truth. You're going to think thoughts about food and about your body, and about your life, that aren't ideal thoughts. It happens and it may even happen with half of the thoughts you think.

Judging yourself for them and making them mean negative things about you isn't going to help them go away, it's going to perpetuate them. You're going to be putting more attention on them.

Now, giving false and negative thoughts your attention isn't always a bad thing. I think it's important to take time to dig into them and see what's below the surface.

Like with mine, I did dig into why I kept thinking I wouldn't reach my goal and I couldn't really find anything. Sure there were times in the past when I didn't reach it but not recently. I was seeing that it was such a nonsense thought and instead of seeing it as that and letting it go, I dwelled on it being there.

Other times I have a thought, or thoughts that I want to let go of, and I dig into them, I find a reason why it keeps coming up that's lurking beneath the surface. Digging into it and giving it attention helped me understand myself more and that's awesome.

I do this with my group members too. Sometimes they want to just jump to new thoughts. We find a thought that bothers them and they're like, "I need to find a new thought!" or "What else can I think?" and I gotta slow them down.

We have to understand why we're thinking the way we currently are before we can move away from it. Sometimes there's going to be some amazing insight that's gained and sometimes we're going to find out that the thought is just total BS. Either way, we're not going to get to any of those conclusions if we're spending our time being all mad about having the thought in the first place.

It's like when you binge and beat yourself up. That's not useful. If instead you saw a binge for what it factually is, you ate food, then you can calm down and get inquisitive about why it happened, and learn something about yourself.

When you can see thoughts for what they really are, just optional sentences in your mind, then you can calm down and work on letting it go.

You're going to think about food. It doesn't mean anything negative about you no matter how often you think about it. It means nothing until you give it meaning. You're not broken, or screwed up because you think about food a lot. You just think about food a lot. You're a human who eats it, you're exposed to it and you see if often, and you most likely put a lot of importance on it because you use it as a solution and as a way to feel good.

Don't judge yourself for any of that, just inquisitively look into why you're thinking those thoughts. That's going to be much more useful.

And the same goes for any other thoughts you have, even the ones that keep coming back in a short

period of time and swirl around in your mind. Your brain is handing them to you for whatever reason, you're stuck in this story your brain is telling you for whatever reason, and it doesn't feel good. Don't make it worse by getting angry that they keep coming. Allow them to come and when you're calmed down, do your work. Do a Thought Download, a free write, about why you're thinking that thought.

And I'll say it one more time just to drill it in. Your thoughts are just sentences in your mind. They don't mean anything about you until you give them meaning. And getting upset or judgmental about them isn't going to help you to stop thinking them.

Before I go I just want to give you another reminder about my upcoming 5 day training that's starting next Monday December 14, 2020. Go to coachkir.com/training to register.

I can wait to see you there.

Bye bye!