

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #125: Forgiving Your Past Self

Hi! Let's jump right in and talk about your past self because you may have some thoughts about her that are causing you to feel angry or resentful now.

Your past self made a lot of mistakes. She chose to binge many times. She may have restricted too much in order to lose weight. She broke promises and broke commitments to herself and others.

My past self did all those things too. Although she felt like she had her life together, and she did in some ways, she would fall apart when it came to food and eating. She would let herself go, stop caring, choose food over people, and do things she'd regret because she didn't know what else to do.

She felt urges and she didn't believe they would go away unless she ate food. She thought counting calories was a solution.

Because she did all these things, there were many wasted moments of my life. There were many missed opportunities for fun and pleasure. There were declined invitations and holding myself back from things.

I hear myself say all of this and you would think I'd be mad at her. You'd think I'd resent her for doing this to my life. You'd think I would be angry that she made all those decisions that led me to spend years struggling with eating, my weight, my social life, my romantic life, and my work life.

But I'm not and I hope you are in a place or can get to a place where you are not too.

Your past self that got you to where you are today didn't do everything she did to purposefully sabotage you.

That wasn't her intention.

She tried and she tried hard.

But what she tried didn't work. She didn't know it wouldn't work, she believed it would. She heard it

would work, someone told her it would, the internet told her it would, it worked for someone else, maybe it had worked for her for a period of time so she tried it again and again.

I kept doing that thing that worked for me before. In college I was able to change my eating habits by counting calories and it worked. I ate less and lost 40 lbs. So when I gained a bunch of the weight back and was bingeing, I was sure counting calories would work because it worked before. But it didn't. Sure there were times where it helped me have some guidelines to follow but when an urge was strong and I felt compelled to eat a lot of food, I didn't give a crap about the calories. They didn't matter to me anymore.

Yet I kept going back to it.

My past self only knew to focus on the food. She only knew to focus on her behaviors and actions. She read about distraction techniques but those didn't work most of the time. She'd try but then keep thinking about food while doing the thing. She read about different ways of eating to stop cravings but even when cutting out those craving causing foods the urges to binge still kept coming.

She did all these things because no one ever told her to focus on herself, her urges, and her thoughts. In all the searching she did it never came up and she searched a lot.

She couldn't see the real obstacles in front of her that needed to be overcome because she was focused on the wrong things.

I can't blame her for not finding the solution that would finally work for her until 10 years after the bingeing began.

It wasn't because of lack of trying.

And I give her a lot of credit for not giving up. She was resilient. She kept resolving to stop, she kept searching, she kept trying what she thought would work.

Even though there were times she lost hope for a moment and times when she gave up, she didn't quit on herself. Had she done that, I wouldn't be where I am today, not bingeing ever and being the coach and teacher that I wish I had when I was binge eating.

She may have created a lot of misery for me but I can't be mad at her for that.

She didn't know what she didn't know. She didn't know any different. She tried what she thought would work.

So I forgive her. I have compassion for her.

And I hope you can have that for your past self too.

She wasn't trying to make your life worse, she really was trying to make it better. She binged because she didn't know what else to do, she did it because she wanted comfort, pleasure, or enjoyment. She wanted to feel good and we can't get mad at her for that.

Don't we all?

That was how she knew to do it and after getting stuck in it she couldn't figure out how to get out of it.

But like my past self, yours is resilient too, that's why you're here listening to this right now.

You searched, you found me, you've been listening, you're learning a new approach, one that makes sense and that will change you, not just change the food, because that's what needs to happen. You need to change, what happens in your mind needs to change.

Your past self didn't know that, but now you do.

So you, as your present self, you can get to work on making sustainable, real changes in yourself that will create changes in your eating and your life.

Mend that relationship with your past self. When you think about her, think of her resilience and have compassion for her lack of information. She didn't know better.

And don't think of it as wasted time either. It really is true that going through hardships causes us to be strong people. Going through the binge eating will have a positive impact on your life. You may not be able to see it now if you're still struggling in it hard but I promise you it will.

For me, it turned into a career that I absolutely love. I get to help others who struggle with the same things I did.

For other people, I've seen them go through coaching and create better lives for themselves because of it. They never would have gone through coaching to begin with if they weren't struggling with binge eating and the byproduct of doing the work was learning how to make every aspect of their life better. Had they not done it, they would have just settled for feeling mediocre and living mediocrely.

And when you go through something like this it makes things that come after it way easier to deal with. If you can stop binge eating, which you can, then you can do anything. It will be so much easier to believe in yourself when you're faced with hard things after going through something hard like this.

It's a confidence builder. It's a growth opportunity. It's a resilience builder.

I know when you're in it it might be hard to think of it that way but take that nugget and have it on standby. There will be moments when you will believe it.

And one final thing before I go. This isn't just about your past self from however many years ago, this goes for you past self that binged yesterday or any day. Getting mad at her for doing what she did isn't going to help anything.

She did it because in that moment she thought it was the right thing to do or she didn't know what else to do or she forgot what to do. It happens. Forgive her. Take a moment to look into why she did what she did. Find understanding. She didn't do it to purposefully hurt you as her future self. She most likely wasn't even thinking of you or was thinking you'd be okay.

She made a mistake. It happens.

Forgive your recent past self and forgive your past self from months and years ago.

It feels so much better to be okay with yourself past and present. Let go of the anger and bring in the forgiveness and compassion.

She made mistakes, you make mistakes, and you will continue to in the future.

Forgive all of them because not forgiving doesn't have an upside here and forgiveness feels so much better than anger and resentment.

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