

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #16: Dealing with Food Pushers

Hi! How are you? Before I get started today I gotta give shoutouts to two of my awesome clients who I love so much. The first one is Bailee who is just about to finish up with me and we're both very sad about it but also super excited about how much she has changed her eating life and how amazing her life is going to be in the future! Heck yeah! She's so cool. And the second for Lyn. What are you doing Lyn? She's also killin' it and we have so much fun coaching.

I don't care what any other coach says, I have THE BEST clients.

Okay, now let's get down to business and talk about food pushers.

Food pushers are everywhere, all times of year. But if you're listening to this around the time I'm releasing it, then you know they come out in full force this time of year.

During the holidays.

People make their special food and want you to eat it.

People bring treats into your workplace and want you to eat them.

You're out to dinner and you get pressured to order something or eat the thing they ordered for the table.

They can get relentless and aggressive sometimes.

I know for me in the past when I've been in those situations, I've either gotten kind of angry with people for doing this, silently being pissed as I'm thinking they have no idea what I'm going through with my eating and my weight and I'm thinking they're making it all worse. Or I'd just give in to shut them up and then I'd end up feeling guilty for eating it.

Sometimes saying no doesn't feel like it's really an option. Either you think it's going to upset them, or you don't know how else to stop their incessantness, or maybe it's because a big part of you strongly does want to eat that food, and even though you're trying really hard to not want it, the desire is taking

over.

There you are, having your own internal struggle about wanting to eat the food but also wanting to not eat it. You're trying to think thoughts that will cause you to not eat and then here comes someone who starts telling you to just do it. They start implanting in your mind, thoughts that encourage you to eat, or they reinforce your wanting to eat thoughts that you're trying to not focus on. They make it so much harder to say no and so much easier to give in.

It's like that person is turning into an urge in human form.

But then there's the times when you actually don't want to eat something. The desire is minimal to non-existent and you find yourself saying yes anyway because you don't want to hurt their feelings or because you don't want to have to deal with their nonstop pushing.

You don't want them to feel bad or you don't know how else to stop their pushing except to give them what they want.

It can all be very frustrating, especially if you know they don't know what you're struggling with and they have no idea how their actions are affecting you and you don't feel comfortable telling them.

I think in these moments it's helpful to consider where they're coming from. These people are not at all trying to be malicious, they're probably trying to be a good host, friend, or loved one.

They probably think they're being nice, loving, hospitable, and generous. They want you to enjoy the delicious food and get the pleasure from it. They want to share the experience with you.

There are however, people out there who struggle with their own eating and weight and want others to join in with them when it comes to eating at these gatherings so they can feel better about what they're doing. Let's not deny that.

But whether it's a person who means well or a person who wants you to help them feel better about their eating, you have to hear what I'm about to say next.

I'm going to tell you something that's really important for you to know when you're wanting to say no to someone.

You are not responsible for other people's feelings.

I'm going to repeat this.

You are not responsible for other people's feelings.

And other people are not responsible for how you feel.

We are all responsible for our own feelings.

Feelings are caused by thoughts and we are all responsible for our own thoughts.

Circumstances happen, people say no, people say yes, people offer food, and none of those make us

feel anything. Our thoughts about them do.

No matter what you do or say, you have no control over how someone else feels and vice versa.

You create the circumstance, you say “no thank you,” and it's on them how they think and feel about you saying no.

They may say you're making them feel bad, unloved, unwanted, unappreciated, or whatever, but that is in no way true.

You don't have the ability to make them feel any particular emotion.

So stop trying to do it.

Stop trying to control other people's thoughts and feelings.

It really is a waste of time for two reasons.

One, you may be trying to do it and doing things you don't want to be doing when it's completely unnecessary. So much of the time we have this idea of how someone is going to respond to us if we decline their offer and we think it's going to be devastating for them. But really, you have no idea how the person will respond. They may have responded in a certain way in the past, but unless you can see the future, you don't know what's going to happen now.

I had this happen to me not too long ago where I was expecting someone to not take no for an answer because she never used to, and I was all ready with what I was going to say to her, but then she surprised me. I said no thank you and she moved on without argument. It was shocking and awesome.

What could happen is that you say yes to someone to try and make them feel a certain way, and eat the food you didn't want to, and it never would have made a difference had you chosen otherwise.

Maybe they'll be fine with it, maybe not, but when you try to control what happens with them, the outcome you're actually creating is you sacrificing your own feelings for someone else's.

This is the second reason why trying to control other people's thoughts and feelings is not a good idea.

You say yes to them so you can try to make them feel good and in the process you make yourself feel bad. This is not fair to you.

What it says is that their feelings matter more than yours when really, we all matter.

And if you have the option of managing what you think, feel and do or trying to manage something you can't at all manage, which is other people's thoughts, feelings and actions, which do you choose?

Now I'm not saying you should always be selfish and only do what's going to make you feel good regardless of other people.

No way.

But you shouldn't do things that make you feel bad just to try and please someone else. You can consider their feelings, we all want to be considerate, right? But know that you are not in control of them or responsible for them.

And what you can do is, you can tell them how much you appreciate what they did, tell them how good it looks, acknowledge how much effort they put into making it, really praise them for it. Show your appreciation with your words. You don't have to eat to show appreciation.

Now back to you desiring the food they're pushing and them making it harder for you.

This is a great opportunity for you to think about why you don't want it. It's real easy to think about all the reasons why you do – it's only available this time of year, it will taste so good, it looks so good, all that. But why don't you want it? There are reasons, otherwise this wouldn't be an issue.

You gotta really like those reasons not wanting it too. They gotta be good ones. For me, most of the time it's because I know I won't feel good afterward and how I feel is important to me. Or I don't want to be too full and there's other stuff I'd rather be eating.

These thoughts may not work for you right now, I'm in a different place than you with my thinking about food and these thoughts may not have worked for me when I was bingeing too, but I've found what works for me right now.

And you can find what works for you right now too. What are the reasons why you want to say no to that food being pushed on you? Why do you not want to eat it? Why do you want to say no?

When you have a strong, compelling reason for why you're going to do something, it makes it so much easier to follow through on it.

You know exactly why you're saying no and you feel good about it.

And let's also not forget that this will most likely not be the last time you'll ever have the opportunity to eat that food. Let's drop the FOMO. And it won't ruin your experience at the party or where ever you are if you don't eat that food. Have you ever really regretting *not* eating something? And, you will be really proud of yourself if you don't. That's a way better feeling than the fleeting pleasure or a few bites of sugar.

Moral of the story, eat on your own terms. Do what you want and what feels good to you because no matter what you do, you do not have authority to decide how others will think and feel about what you do.

And if you're concerned about what to say when the pushing is happening, keep it simple. No need for a dragged out story, just a simple I'm not hungry, or maybe I'll have some later, or even just no thank you all work surprisingly well. That's what I tell people and 9 times out of 10 it stops right away. Then that 1 out of 10 might need some repetition but hold your ground. Remember why you're doing it.

And as you're there and making your decisions about what you're going to eat, don't lose sight of what you really want and don't want. This is always something for you to be very clear about. Don't be wishy washy because that makes it too easy to go to the eating side.

Alright my people. Just say no! And one last thing – always remember that you're just one decision away...

Have a great week, bye bye.