

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #38: Why You Give Up and How to Not

Hi! How are you? I'm awesome. Still loving my new home in case you were wondering. So fun!

Now, how many times have you given up on yourself? How many times have you set out to achieve a goal, whether it to be not give in to your next urge, or follow your eating plan, or the big one, to never binge again, and stopped trying before you reached the goal?

Maybe you try once and it doesn't work out so you think it won't ever work. Or you try a few times, it's hard but you get through it, but then fail a few times and think you'll never be able to keep it up so you stop trying and then just let yourself binge for days.

Why does this happen? Why do you give up? Why can it work for someone else but when you try, it doesn't work out?

I thought a lot about this, looking at what I've done and what I've seen other people do, and here's 5 things I've seen most often.

The first one is that you're not willing to put in the necessary effort. Worthwhile, big goals are hard to achieve. The bigger the goal, the more effort you're going to have to put into it. Ever told yourself something is too hard? That's for sure going to stop you.

I hear that reason all the time. That's it's too hard and they want to do what's easy. I had one client who in the beginning kept telling me she wants to do the easy thing always, if given the choice of doing the hard or easy. It didn't make sense to her why she would do something that's hard. But easy is what will

keep you where you are. Easy will stop you from overcoming obstacles, because overcoming obstacles is hard, and there will always be obstacles.

When you reach a goal you become a different version of yourself. You have different beliefs about yourself and different circumstances and you will only create this difference if you are willing to *do* something different. That different thing is putting in effort until you get there, taking action until you get there, instead of stopping before you get there, like you've usually done.

A second one is that you don't think you're making progress fast enough. This one gets me every time. It slightly amuses me when I have one or two sessions with a client and they're feeling frustrated that they are still bingeing. For most people, stopping engaging in a habit that has been going on for years doesn't usually happen overnight. Maybe for some people they gain clarity quickly and it does happen fast, but for most people, that's not the case. There is more work that needs to be done to clean up their thinking and beliefs and how they deal with things.

So what happens is that you don't think you're progressing fast enough so you give up. Well, that's when you stop making any progress! Now it's going to happen even more slowly because you've stopped trying! Or never happen at all.

A third reason is because you don't believe in yourself. A mistake happens, you fail at something, and now you believe you'll never be able to do it. Especially since you've had so many fails. You believe you aren't capable of change or don't have enough willpower to push through. You don't believe you can get over bingeing forever and if you don't believe it, you're not going to try. Think about it, if you don't believe it, and are instead believing that it's never going to happen, why would you work at something that's never going to happen? You wouldn't! You'd give up.

It's the same for anything. Don't believe you're going to get a better job? You don't try to find one. Don't believe you will make it to the store before it closes? You turn around and go home instead of trying...even though maybe traffic lights and cars would have been in your favor. Don't believe you're going to pass a test? You give up on studying and don't take it. You don't even give yourself the chance to prove yourself wrong.

Believing is so important. It just might be the most important. You gotta do it.

A fourth reason is that you don't know exactly how to do it from start to finish and you let that stop you. So many of us get stuck on the how. We want to know everything we'll need to do before even starting sometimes. You may know one thing, but then you start questioning what comes after that and after that and after that and you don't know yet so instead of working on the thing you do know, you just wait and try to find all the answers. You give up on starting.

It may not look like giving up to you because you're still learning, you're still looking for all the answers, but you've given up on taking action for a bit and that bit will mostly turn into awhile if you don't start doing something now.

And my fifth and final reason is because you let your feelings run the show. You let your fear, doubt, or uncertainty take over and freeze you in your tracks. You are afraid of what will happen if you succeed, or what will happen if you fail. You're doubtful it will work long-term so you stop trying. You're unsure about what to do so your confusion stalls you from moving forward. If you don't manage your feelings, your feelings will manage you and by default, they will most likely keep you exactly

where you are because where you are is familiar and safe and comfortable and that where your brain, which produces your feelings, likes for you to be.

So there's 5 reasons I see most often and ones I've seen show up in my life if I've given up on something.

You don't want to put in the effort. You don't think it's happening fast enough. You don't believe in yourself. You don't know how to do it all. And you let your feelings stop you.

If you want to succeed and not give up then you have to stop doing all of these things and accept them as obstacles that you need to overcome on the path to your goal.

There are always going to be obstacles and doing the work isn't going to be easy and fun. This is why we like to call the area between where you are and where you want to be, "The River of Misery." Don't you want to be in there??

What most people do is, once they dip their toe in that river and feel the misery, they go right back to the land of comfort and familiarity.

Or, and this is the one that is so sad to watch, when people get halfway through and they're tired of being in there so they go back to where they started. They don't know they're halfway there, they are having a hard time seeing the other side, they just know they've done a lot and aren't there yet, and they don't want to try anymore. They're done.

These people do not succeed.

How long you're going to have to be in the river is different for everyone and the people who have little quits over and over are the ones who will take longer....they get halfway, go back to quarter of the way, back to half, and back to quarter over and over because they keep quitting on something that stalls their progress. They give up a little here and there. This could look like someone putting in effort for a few days and then not trying at all for a few days. That doesn't mean they'll never get all the way. They totally can if they start learning from their little quits and do something differently than they've kept trying to do, if they put in effort on all the days.

Any effort is worth the effort, it's what will get you to your goal, but only if you aren't trying the same thing over and over that doesn't work.

In the River of Misery, you're caught between you as someone who binge eats and you as someone who doesn't. There's usually a lot that needs to happen in between and those who believe in themselves and put in more effort and time and practice see the quickest, most long-lasting results.

That in between can be confusing and uncomfortable and can take a toll on you, but you have to experience it. Just know that there's going to be fear and doubt and if you're feeling those, then you're exactly where you're supposed to be.

You have to keep putting in the effort, even though it's hard. You have to stop expecting it to happen faster and just let it happen as it happens. You have to believe you are capable. You have to take it one step at a time and learn as you go instead of waiting to know it all before you start. And you have to manage your feelings and not let them manage you.

That's how you succeed instead of giving up.

You never know when the break though will come, but it will come, so don't let yourself give up. You might be giving up just before it would have happened.

Keep swimming, don't turn around or just dip your toe in and run back. Whether you're in that river working towards making change or you're staying where you are, you're in misery. You get to choose which misery you want to live in - the one that changes you or the one that doesn't.

Stop standing on this side of the river, looking over at the other side, wishing you could be over there instead. Get in there and go! And don't let yourself forget what's on the other side, what it's all for. Give yourself that motive to create your motivation to push through.

Being miserable and uncomfortable can be worth it, but only if you don't give up. Don't let any work you do be for nothing. Go all the way. Go big, don't go home!

Alright, I'll talk to you soon, bye bye!