

# **THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST**

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #50 Believing Without Evidence

Hi! It's episode number 50! So fun! I thought a lot about what I wanted to talk about on this milestone episode and I decided it would be something that is one of the most common problems I hear from people. This comes up a lot in the midst of doing work with my clients, very often in the beginning, and with so many people I talk to on mini sessions as well.

It's such an important topic that not enough people know about and it's crucial if you want to achieve any goal in your life, stopping binge eating included.

It's about believing you can do something, believing that something is possible, believing anything you want to believe, before you have evidence to back it up. Before you have proof that it's possible.

People have such a hard time with this because it doesn't make sense to believe something they have no evidence for.

They want the proof that it's possible before they believe it's possible. They want it to exist before they believe in it.

They want to know for sure that they're capable and they want to know how it's going to happen.

In an ideal world, we would be given a GPS route that leads to our goal. It would tell us how long it's going to take to get there, we'd have options of choosing the faster route if one becomes available, it would reroute us in a different direction if something unexpected comes up, and it would show us exactly where we can expect delays and setbacks along the way. We'd be able to see exactly how it's going to go, we'd be able to see that we're going to get there, and this would give us confidence in the belief that we'll get there.

But life doesn't give us GPS routes. You have to work on yourself without evidence of what will happen, without knowing every single detail.

It would of course be helpful to have evidence to prove what you're capable of.

But sometimes the evidence isn't there and when it's not, all your doubt, fear, inadequacy might appear and your confidence might become non-existent.

Those are not the feelings that will lead you to reach a goal.

What most of you do, and I hear this from you all more way than I'd like to, is that you don't believe you can stop binge eating, that you can change your eating habits, that you can feel better, that you can have your ideal body and maintain it, all because you've never done it before. You have no evidence that it's possible.

You've failed so many times in the past that you can't believe that true change is possible.

This is a huge problem.

You think you're just conveying the news about what you've done, but what you're really doing is focusing on your past and using it to predict your future. And that's exactly what will happen when you do.

When you think about your past failures, you will create more of them in your future. Your past will be your future as well. That's how it works and the Thought Model will show you exactly why it does.

I introduced the Model to you way back in episode 8 and I don't talk about it in full very much on here, but I do indirectly talk about the pieces of it in pretty much every episode.

To refresh you on it, we have circumstances and facts of our lives that trigger thoughts in our mind which are our opinions, perceptions, ideas, and interpretations. Then our thoughts cause our feelings, our emotions, those feelings are what drive our actions, and our actions give us our results in our lives.

So when you think about your ability to stop binge eating, and you think that you've failed so many times so it's not possible for you to ever be successful, it makes you feel hopeless, and when you feel hopeless you don't try, and when you don't try, you fail again and are not successful.

You give yourself the result of failure yet again solely because you were thinking about how much you've failed.

Your thoughts create the results of your life, every, single, time. Go ahead and try to fight me on this and I promise you that you will lose.

Your beliefs are thoughts. They are thoughts that you've thought over and over so much that they now seem true to you.

It seems so true to you that you won't be able to stop binge eating. That there isn't a way out for you. That you're destined to deal with this forever. That it's been going on for too long that it can't be undone.

It's all total crap. I don't care how long you've been doing it, or how many times you've failed, you are a human with a human brain that is capable of change, is capable of breaking and creating habits, and

you are not a special unicorn who is the one person who can't do this. You think you're the special case, that you're too messed up or there's something wrong with you but I promise you you're not.

The only problem is that you're thinking thoughts that cause you to binge. That is your problem.

Now I tell you that, and you might understand it, yeah it's your thoughts, but now you don't believe you'll be able to change your thoughts. Why? Because you don't know how and you've never done it before.

But so what??

You can learn how.

This is what we do, with everything. We learn how to do things.

There was a point when you didn't know how to do your job. But you learned.

There was a point when you didn't know how to drive. But you learned.

This is how you get good at things.

You've learned how to do things so many times yet for some reason you think it's all totally different when it comes to binge eating.

It's not.

You have a habit. It's breakable as all habits are. The way you want to eat is a new habit you want to create. Habits are create able.

As you go through this process of breaking and creating, you have to have the belief that you will get where you want to be.

You have to have this belief. This is non-negotiable.

Before you learned how to do your job, you had to believe you would be able to do it. If you didn't believe it, you wouldn't have shown up for your first day. You may not even have interviewed or applied.

Before you learned how to drive, you had to believe you would be able to do it. If you didn't believe it, you wouldn't have gotten behind the wheel or signed up for driver's ed.

Everything you've done, literally everything, there was a time when you'd never done it before. Imagine how many things you wouldn't be able to do if you always used the excuse of, "I've never done it before," to stop you from doing it. Especially the things you weren't good at right away or that didn't come naturally, or that you failed at before succeeding.

You wouldn't be able to walk. Think about how many times you probably fell down before you were able to walk across a room. What if after the 10<sup>th</sup> time you fell, you just gave up forever. Guess you'd just be crawling forever! But no, you believed you could do it and you kept getting back up and trying

again and again until you got it. You had zero proof that you'd be able to walk. Zero. Yet you still kept working toward it.

What really gets me going is when you all tell me about all the times you've failed at stopping binge eating. There's two things that you usually tell me. One is all the diets and food manipulation that you've tried. You failed at stopping binge eating not because you're not capable, but because you were focusing on the wrong solution. It's not about what you're eating, but why you're eating it. You have to fix the cause, not the symptom. Your behavior is driven by your thoughts so it's your thoughts that need to change and the behavior will change as a result of that.

The other thing is that you are working on your thinking, but it's not working. Here's the truth about that. You're not working. You're not truly, deep down, changing your thoughts and beliefs. So then you're allowing your brain to default back to the ones that lead to binge eating. You believe what you want to believe for a little bit but then you stop. You let yourself stop.

So the reason why you haven't done it before is either because you weren't doing what needs to be done or you gave up on doing what needs to be done.

So why do you give up? You stop believing. You stop believing in yourself, or that what you do matters, or that you care, or that it will work, or any other belief that you need to be believing.

You stop believing because you can't see it. You're not seeing the progress you're making or you can't see the end so you stop moving toward it.

It's like if you're at the airport and your flight keeps getting delayed and then hours later it officially gets cancelled. Do you stick around and book another flight knowing that you'll eventually get there even though you have no proof that it will? Or do you give up and go home and forget the whole thing? You don't know if the next flight will actually happen or if it will also be cancelled. But you believe it will happen so you book it and see what happens.

You believe, so you do.

That's how it works.

You have to have the belief in something before you can make it happen.

All of the amazing inventions and things that we have now were all created by people who had to believe they were possible before actually making them.

Someone had to believe the internet was possible before creating it. It didn't exist. No one had done it before, he hadn't done it before, but he believed it was possible, so he went ahead and made it happen.

He probably had so many fails along the way, so many setbacks and technical difficulties. He had to have! But none of it stopped him because he believed this thing that never existed before could exist.

You can believe that your eating habits that have never existed before, can exist.

And I'd even challenge you on that. You most likely had your ideal eating habits in your earliest years. You ate when you were hungry and stopped when you were full. You didn't binge. There was a time in

your life you didn't binge which means, it's not a part of you. It's a behavior you developed and you can undevelop it.

Now, your belief that you won't be able to stop binge eating is probably very strong because of all the evidence you do have to prove this belief true.

So what you can expect to happen, is that sometimes you believe you can, and those are the beautiful moments when you take action to do it, and sometimes you don't believe you can and that's when you give up.

What happens to the people who aren't successful is that they're able to believe in themselves and believe what they want for a few days or weeks, but then their brain defaults back to the stronger beliefs they've strengthened throughout the years. And they let it happen. They stop trying to believe the new things and just go back to what they've been believing that got them stuck in binge eating.

Once your belief starts to diminish, so will your progress.

And beliefs can diminish if you let them. You're really good at believing you can't stop binge eating, that you're out of control around food, that you need to eat a lot of food right now, all these kinds of beliefs, so it's not yet natural for you to believe you can, that you're not, and you don't.

So you have to believe on purpose. You have to put effort into believing what you want to believe so you can get the results you want.

Your brain isn't going to just naturally do it. It's going to naturally do what it's been naturally doing for all these binge eating years.

When you believe you can do something, that's when you take action. Going back to the model – you believe you can do it, you feel motivated, determined, or empowered, so you take action and you do it.

Your action is always going to be based on how you feel and how you feel is always going to be based on what you think and believe.

The only way you're going to take action is if you're creating an action inducing feeling. You're not going to take action from hopelessness or defeat. That's why when you don't believe in your ability, yourself, or that what you do matters, you don't do anything. You give in to urges and eat in response to feelings.

You are going to take action when you're creating the feelings that drive you forward. You do things, work hard, and put in effort when you're feeling motivated, determined, committed, empowered, and confident.

You want to wait until you get to your goal to believe in it. No! You can't. You have to believe now.

I ask people what they will believe about themselves when they stop binge eating and they say the most wonderful things – that they're strong, they can do anything, they're not out of control, they can eat like a normal person, they're proud of themselves.

Amazing beliefs. It would feel so good to believe them.

The best news, no one has to wait to believe them.

They are available right now. We get to believe whatever we want to believe and if that's what you want to believe when you reach your goal, that's what you have to work on believing to get there.

You think as if you're already there. You live in the mind of that version of you who has already achieved it. You become that person in your mind right now and by doing that, your results eventually align with those beliefs.

You think you can eat like a normal person, you think it over and over until you believe it, the stronger your belief becomes, the stronger the feeling it causes becomes. The stronger the feeling, the easier the action of eating the way you want to becomes, and then you get your result of eating like a normal person.

Everything you do stems from your beliefs so if you want to do something, you have to make sure your belief is aligned with what you want to do.

You can't believe you can't eat like a normal person and expect yourself to be able to do it. It makes no sense. You believe you can and then you do.

But don't confuse this with that idea that you just visualize something and it appears. You have to actually take the necessary action to get there.

You don't just sit on your couch eating chips and guac thinking about how you can be a normal eater and expect something to happen. You have to actually take the actions, and eat the way you want to in order to build the eating habits you want to have. It's all driven by your belief and the feeling that comes from that belief so that needs to be there so the actions will happen.

Here's an example from my life, a non-eating example of how belief pushed me to a goal.

Back in my late twenties, I learned how to play the drums. My friend who sings and plays guitar would come over to my apartment every week and we'd play together and I'd practice by myself on the other days. I got pretty good and he told me that now we had to do a show performing the songs we've practiced which were all his original music. We booked the show and about a month before, he told me that since it was just us two, I needed to sing harmonies. For those of you who don't know what harmonies are, basically he sings the melody of the song, which is the regular part, and then I'd have to sing a different note so when we sing together our notes sound harmonious together. I had never done this before and I knew the melodies of his songs really really well. So when I had to sing all the lyrics in a different key, it was so freakin' hard for me! I kept reverting back to his melody and could not get my notes right. It was seriously one of the most frustrating things I've ever had to learn. I cried at home, I cried in rehearsal, it was awful. I failed so many times and the show was coming up and I was going to be playing drums for the first time in front of an audience and singing at the same time and it was really really really freakin' hard for me to believe I was going to be able to do it. And there was really no reason for me to believe I could do it. I had never done it before and I had so much evidence that I wouldn't be able to do it based on how many times I'd failed at getting the notes right.

But that show happened, and I sang some harmonies with him on most of the songs we played. I did it and the only reason why was because I believed I would be able to get it. If I had stopped believing, I

would have stopped trying. Why would I keep trying if I didn't believe it would be possible? I believed in myself and believed that if I kept practicing then I would get it and I did. Was I perfect? No, but I didn't give up. I didn't just scratch the whole idea and say I'm just drumming and that's it. My belief is what kept me going.

Now you may wonder about my binge eating belief. How did that work?

Honestly, after going through my life and weight coach training, and learning all the tools I needed, and talking with one of the coach mentors specifically about binge eating, I believed I was done. I declared to myself that that Sunday would be my last binge, my last hurrah if you will, which I did plan, and I believed it, because I had all the tools I needed and I knew how to apply them and knew that if I needed help I had coaches in my community to help me, and I held on to that belief even when I felt an urge or other uncomfortable feeling, and I made it true.

I labeled myself as someone who no longer binges. I didn't need evidence to prove it, I was going to create it.

When I decided I would never binge again, I had no evidence, just belief.

Now you may wonder what would happen if you decided you were done too, that you were now a normal eater, and you will never binge again, and then you do binge.

What would happen is that you're now faced with two choices. Tell yourself how dumb you were to believe that was true and go back to believing you're doomed, or you can keep believing it and continue to feel feelings that will fuel your non-binge eating actions.

So much of your life is going to be filled with evidence that can prove a belief either way. This is what our entire justice system is all about. The lawyers show evidence and give arguments to get the jury to believe what they want them to believe. Then the jury gets to believe what they want based on the evidence and arguments presented.

Present the arguments and evidence for yourself that align with what you want to believe. There is some, somewhere. Maybe not that you are fully capable of never bingeing again, but that you have it in you to not binge. That time you didn't binge when you felt an urge or uncomfortable feeling. You didn't give in to an urge proving it's possible that you can not give in to one. That time you changed how you thought about a person, or a job, or anything whether it went from positive to negative or negative to positive. You proved you are capable of changing how you think. That big goal you achieved that was so hard to do. You proved you're capable of doing hard things and achieving goals.

Now it's up to you to believe now. There is no downside.

You don't need evidence for you to start believing. It can make it easier when you have a bunch of it, but if you don't have it, it's totally okay. Once you start believing, the evidence will come. That's how it works. You create it beginning with your belief. Belief first, then evidence. It's always going to come from your choice to believe so believe it hard.

If you keep looking to the past to determine what you're capable of, and if that's your determinant, then you'll only be able to do what you've already done.

Believe in your future self who has achieved your goal. Believe in your present self, believe that you can do the work.

If you want to create something, you have to set yourself up to create it. It always begins with a thought and then that thought causes a feeling and that feeling is what will drive your action that will create your life. If your thought is in line with the feeling and action you want then it's going to happen.

If you truly believe in yourself then you will do whatever it takes to make your goal happen. You won't let anything stop you, not money, not time, not any people in your life.

Believe and believe hard and often. Starting right now. Talk to you next time, bye bye!!