

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #66: Comparing Yourself to Others

Hi! Are you ready for another riveting episode of The Stop Binge Eating Podcast?? Here it is. Today I'm talking about you comparing yourself to others.

I think comparing ourselves to others is something we all do sometimes, some of you more than others.

It can be hard not to living in the world we live in. Scroll through Facebook or Instagram and you see people living their best lives. You see people who look thinner than you, seem to be doing more fun things than you, seem happier than you, seem more successful than you. It can be hard to not compare their lives to yours.

It may happen in your career. It may happen when you go into an online support group. You see other people doing well and you start comparing your accomplishments to theirs.

Comparing isn't always a bad thing. It can be inspiring and motivating and drive you to become better. But the way most of you are doing it, it's actually the opposite.

It's making you feel discouraged, less than, inadequate, resentful, jealous, angry, sad.

Those are not positive change fueling emotions. Not even close. Those are pity-party, self-loathing, wallowing, bingeing emotions.

It doesn't feel good to think other people are better than you. Even more so, it doesn't feel good to think you're not as good as other people.

You start thinking you're not good enough because you're not them or where they are or as good as them or you don't have what they have.

When you allow yourself to think this way, and yes you're allowing it to happen, you begin judging

yourself based on other people.

Are you doing well enough? Depends on how that person is doing. Are you successful enough? Depends on how successful that person is. Do you have a good body? Depends on that person's body. Have you made enough progress? Depends on how much that person has made.

You're determining how you think about yourself based on what you think about other people.

What's interesting is that most of the time, whether someone is better or not is completely subjective and only our opinion. We're not all going to agree on who is the best is, who is doing the best, or who looks the best when it's only based on our opinion.

So what happens is that you create two opinions – your opinion about them and then your opinion about yourself and you're using your opinion about them to create your opinion about yourself. Or, to validate an opinion you already had.

So either you're causing yourself to feel insecure or bringing out your own insecurities about yourself.

So what do you find yourself comparing about yourself with other people? And how do you feel when you do it?

And what is the upside of you doing it?

Why are you doing it? What's the purpose?

Whether you realize it or not, you're probably using it as a way to define yourself, validate yourself, and rank yourself.

Instead of deciding for yourself how you want to define yourself and validating yourself, you're using outside influence to help you decide.

An interesting example is when you're working toward a goal, such as stopping binge eating, and you want to see how you're progressing. You want to know if it's happening fast enough or if you're moving too slowly. Or if you're doing it right or if you're actually going to stop for good.

So say you're in an online binge eating support group and you ask others about their process and progress. I'll tell you, there is most likely going to be at least one person who is progressing faster or stopped more quickly. And then what? You start doubting yourself and when you do that you stop putting in as much effort as you had been and you slow your progress down. It's not useful to compare your progress with others because you are not them. You are different people with different reasons why you binge, different starting points, different thoughts and feelings, you've taken different actions, possibly followed different methods, have different methods that will work for you, and I could go on and on and on about how you are just not comparable to them. People do not all achieve goals in the same amount of time. Maybe there's an average, maybe there is a common time, but overall, we're all different and there's nothing wrong with that. What's wrong is if you use someone else's speed as a reason for you to give up.

Every once in a while when I have a client who is feeling discouraged, they'll ask me about my other clients. And honestly, I don't even answer them because it's not useful. The only thing that's useful is

for them to believe that they are exactly where they are supposed to be. They began where they began, they've put in the work they've put in, and given that, this is where they are.

You are where you're supposed to be, no matter where you are. Here you are, now keep going.

Then there's the people I talk to on mini sessions. They want to know about success rates of my other clients. And why do they want to know? So then can decide whether they will be successful based on that information. But other people's successes have nothing to do with yours! What it comes down to is that people that invest time in themselves and show up every day and believe in themselves and don't give up and do what they know to do, succeed.

And this is not only true in my program, but any program! The people who are successful with Keto do those things. The people who are successful with Weight Watchers and Jenny Craig do those things. The people who are successful with Whole 30 do those things. It's not the program, it's you. That being said, it's also imperative that you find a program that you like and that works with your lifestyle and I will say that if you have been loving my podcast, then you would love working with me too, just saying. And, I never tell you you have to do anything you don't want to do so all the choices you make are your own. I don't believe in one size fits all when it comes to eating.

Anyway, when it comes to your capabilities and your opinions about yourself, other people's capabilities and your opinions about them don't matter.

What matters is your opinions about you and they can be whatever you want them to be.

You are not going to be everything, the best at everything, or even good at everything. There will be people who understand things faster than you and accomplish things faster than you. There's going to be people with bodies and faces you admire that don't look like yours.

You are going to stop binge eating when you stop. You're going to get to where you want to be based on how you show up and based on whether or not you're doing your thought work to keep your feelings aligned with what you want to be doing.

You are on your own path. Focus on what you want to do and how you're going to do it.

What matters when you're working on achieving a goal, when you're working on stopping binge eating, is what you think of you, what you can do, and what you want to get better at.

This has nothing to do with other people. It's all about you and your thoughts.

What do you think are your strengths? Use them.

What do you think are your weaknesses? Work on them. Don't make them mean anything negative about yourself as a person. We all have weaknesses. Use them as a guide for your self-work.

Think about what your life would be like if you just compared yourself to yourself. If you were proud of your strengths and accomplishments and strove to strengthen your weaknesses. If the only person you wanted to be better than was yourself.

If your goal was to become a better version of yourself and to grow, evolve, and improve into a better

you.

There would be so much more determination and motivation rather than sadness, inadequacy, and resentment.

Now, all that being said, I do want to mention that sometimes comparing to others can be a good thing as I touched on in the beginning of this episode, if you are in an inspired place.

Here you are, where you're at and someone else is ahead of you, closer to or where you want to be.

They can be an example of what's possible for you. They're not where you can't be, they're where you could be.

There's a good chance they were where you are and just like you, they're a human who is capable of change. So they changed, and you can too.

Sometimes I hear you all getting stuck in a place where you think you're the person who can't change. What is fascinating is that you all give basically the same reason for it too – that you've failed too many times in the past or you've been dealing with this for too long that it's too ingrained.

You think you're the only one and that the people who succeed didn't struggle for a long time or didn't fail many many times.

I can't speak for everyone in this world who has stopped binge eating, but I will tell you about me. I struggled for 10 years. I failed countless times....hence why it lasted for 10 years. Every New Year I resolved to stop and didn't. There was one time in particular that I remember stopping for about 8 weeks, this was about 3 years into my bingeing, and I was ridiculously proud and thinking I was done forever and then I got sucked back in to bingeing again. Fail! I felt so out of control for so long and sometimes resigned to thinking this was how it was going to be for me.

And now I'm out. I don't binge. I overcame it. And I'm not special! I'm just a woman who had a habit that I changed. And it didn't even take me a long time to do it. It wasn't like it was 10 years in bingeing and then it took me 10 years to get out. It doesn't work that way. What gets you out is you thinking about everything binge eating related in a different way and taking the steps to make it happen.

And I'll tell you, sometimes making the necessary changes happens quickly and sometimes it takes some time. Everyone is going to move at different speeds and my experience isn't going to look exactly like yours.

Use people like me and other people who's stories you've heard as examples of what's possible. Then decide it's possible for you too because why the heck wouldn't it be? Seriously, why wouldn't it? You are not a special unicorn that cannot change. You learned to be a binge eater, you can learn to be a normal eater.

I want to leave you with some this.

We are not all supposed to be equal. We are not all the same, we are each unique, so equality in everything is just not going to happen. So stop comparing yourself to those who are the best in everything and just be the best you can be in everything.

You deserve what you have, not what other people have. They have what they have because of what they've done and the effort they put in to get it. If you don't have what you want, it's because you haven't done the things to get you there and haven't put in the effort to get it. Sitting around wishing you had what they have or resenting them for having it isn't getting you any closer to having it.

Thinking you should be better than you are is not a good thing. That word “should” is a clear indicator of it's not-goodness. You are doing exactly as you should given the amount and quality of practice you've put in. If you think you're not where you should be, it's because you're not doing what you should be.

There, I said it. You can dislike it, but it's what I believe and what it really all boils down to is that you are where you are because of what you're doing and what you've done and other people are the same.

Keep your focus on you and on bettering you. You can use others to inspire, but don't use them to bring you down. Stay in your own lane. Be on your path and keep creating that determination and motivation to move yourself forward.

Where other people are has nothing to do with where you are. We aren't all going to be in the same place at the same time. We aren't all going to move at the same pace. Be okay with that. Be okay with not being perfect in your process. Be okay with failing, and fail forward, not backward. Keep going. Don't surrender because it's hard or you're not where you thought you'd be or it's taking longer than you thought.

Believe in yourself, believe you will get there when it's your time to get there.

You are enough, you are capable of change, no matter what anyone else has done or is doing, you are exactly where you're supposed to be.

Have a great week. Bye bye!