

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #71: Useful Thinking

Hey! What's up? How's it goin' over there? Things are great here and I'm super pumped to talk with you today about useful thinking.

By now, if you've listened to several, or all of the podcast episodes, I hope you know how important your thoughts are when it comes to your eating as well as anything else you do. Everything you do, everything you create, begins with a thought whether you realize it or not. You think about doing it, this causes you to feel a feeling that then drives you to then do it and you create what you create.

What you also may know is that negative thoughts create negative feelings, actions, and results and positive thoughts create positive ones.

We don't think negatively and then go do amazing, wonderful things. We also don't think positively and then do things that sabotage us. Our thoughts are always aligned with what we're doing so if you notice yourself doing things you don't want to be doing or things that aren't serving you, then you can be sure that the thoughts you're thinking are negative.

Most people when they see this, they make it their goal to start thinking more positively.

They want to switch all their negativity to positivity in the hopes that they will start feeling the way they want to feel and living the way they want to live.

But unfortunately, this isn't always an easy switch to make and sometimes it's not even necessary, appropriate, or ideal.

I see people fail at making this change in their thinking all the time.

They find a positive mantra on Instagram or Pinterest that they like that they want to be a part of their life so they write it on a post it or make it the wallpaper on their phone and repeat it day after day.

Something like, “I can eat like a normal person, I love my body, I'm good enough,” things like that.

Or they become aware of what their own negativity sounds like and flip that into something positive. They see they keep thinking they're failure so they now work on thinking they're successful.

They may be able to think more positively for a little bit, maybe a few days, or maybe even a few weeks, but then they're back to where they started.

The problem here is that they don't believe those positive thoughts. They're trying to convince themselves that these thoughts are true. They're trying to fake it til they make it.

But the belief in whatever the negative thoughts are is far stronger than their belief in the positive thoughts and what they really believe is what will win.

Your brain is eventually going to call BS on those positive thoughts and you'll be right back in the negative, right back to believing what you really believe which is what you've been believing.

Those first few days or weeks you're trying really hard to believe what you want to believe, but you're not fully in belief and therefore not being honest with yourself. You can probably feel this dishonesty when you tell it to yourself. That the feeling you're trying to create with that thought isn't actually there. You have some skepticism about it and instead of being fully in, “I can do this” you're really questioning it, “Can I really do this?”

The feeling you're trying to create with “I can do this,” let's say it's confidence, isn't there when you're saying it. You might feel doubt instead because your mind is quickly going into, “I don't really think I can do it.”

Then when the emotion isn't there, neither is the action. You won't be able to act from a confident place, you'll be acting from a doubtful place.

It's not that you won't ever be able to get to the place where you believe you can do it, but again, right now you're just too stuck in your belief that you can't.

The leap from one to the other is just too big for you right now. You're standing at the edge, wanting to take that leap, but it's just too far and so you just stay where you are.

Going all the way to the most positive isn't always the best course of action.

Sometimes it's not even realistic or desirable.

Let's say you binged. Do you want to be thinking super positively about it? Do you want to think that it was so fun and it was a great idea and that you're super happy you did it?

Not likely.

Being negative about it and calling yourself a failure and a loser isn't really a great idea either. That's just going to bring you down and make you feel bad.

It's the same for other things in our lives that we don't want to be feeling positively about. For example,

if someone close to us dies, we don't want to feel super happy about it, we don't want to be happy that they died, and we may want to be sad about it for awhile at first, but eventually, we don't want either of those. We don't want to feel super happy or extremely sad forever.

Thankfully, there's an in between.

Neutral is always an option. Feelings that aren't extreme on either side of the spectrum are an option and sometimes it's the best option. It may be something you choose temporarily or something you choose forever.

Like with the death, you may want to live in acceptance or peace.

With the binge, you may want to be in the same place. Eventually, you may be ready to move in to feeling more optimistic and encouraged but it may be just one step at a time.

The goal is to think thoughts that are useful to you, that drive you to take the desired action you want at that time. It may not be what you ultimately want, but it works for you right now.

This can mean you're thinking in a way that's slightly positive or completely neutral.

It's whatever you believe right now that's better than the extremely negative thing you've been thinking.

What you've been telling yourself most likely isn't the only thing you believe. There might be something else that maybe you don't believe as fully but there still is belief in you.

If you're thinking your body is disgusting, is there something else you even partly believe that feels a little better than that? Maybe even thinking this is my body now and I'm working on changing it.

Or if you're thinking "I can't control myself" do you also believe that you're learning how to control yourself?

Notice how different those thoughts feel. Not all the way positive, but better. That means that the actions taken from the feelings those thoughts cause won't be exactly what you ultimately want, but they're better than what you'd do from the negative thoughts.

When you choose more useful thoughts, no matter where they are on the feelings spectrum, as long as they're producing the result you want right now, which might just be slightly better than what you've been producing, then you're taking a step in the direction you want to go. If that leap to your ultimate destination is too big, this is you bridging that gap.

Neutral is better than negative. Acceptance is better than rejection. Hopeful is better than hopeless. You don't need to be in positive, love, or confidence just yet.

Be patient and take the necessary steps that you need to take.

Maybe positive isn't even the final destination, maybe it's not even what you want.

Don't worry about thinking more positively, think more usefully.

Have a great week, bye bye.