

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #72: Fast Eating

Hey! Today I want to talk to you about fast eating.

For most people when they binge, they are not eating slowly, calmly, and relaxed. It's fast and they're eating the food as quickly as they can.

Some of you are eating quickly even when you're not bingeing. A regular meal may go down fast and this becomes a problem for you when it means you end up missing your fullness signal and you overeat.

And there are the times when your joy eats are fast and you miss out on enjoying them. Next thing you know, you ate it so fast you didn't even get the intended pleasure so now you want to have another, hoping you'll slow down and savor it....and you might not if you don't know how to eat more slowly.

I'll of course get into the how shortly, but first let's look at why you might be eating fast to begin with.

I've worked with many clients on this behavior and I myself have done it and it's been interesting to hear the different motivations behind it.

First I'll share with you my most common reason, which surprisingly I don't think I've had a client say it was their reason as well. So maybe I'm the only one, but I doubt it, there's gotta be someone else out there!

My reason was that I wanted to eat as much as I could, and get the pleasure of all the food, before I got full. I wanted to beat the fullness signal. Once I was full, that was it, that was the end point and since we all know that feeling full is delayed, it doesn't happen right as you swallow the bite that makes you officially full, I thought that if I ate faster, I'd be able to eat more.

So that's mine and here are some others I've heard that I will say I think I've also experienced at times.

You want to rush to make the hunger go away. You dislike feeling hungry so much that now that you have the opportunity to eat and make it go away, you're going to do it as quickly as possible.

The more quickly you eat the food, the more quickly the hunger is gone.

Another one, you're rushing to get to the next thing. This may mean you're rushing to get to the next activity or errand or whatever you're wanting to do next. Or it may mean you're rushing to get to the next food. That's usually a big one for people who binge, they have their mind on the next thing they're going to eat as they're eating the food they're eating presently. It's just, "What's next? What's next?"

You're not living in the moment you're in, you're looking ahead to what's next and you want to be there as soon as possible. It's like the food you're eating now is a nuisance and inconvenience and getting in the way of the next thing.

I've also heard the reason, that you want to stop thinking about food. You're so bothered by your food thoughts that you think the only way to get away from them is to be full. Again, it's racing for the fullness to make something go away. The thoughts will end when the fullness begins.

And the last one I want to share is when your eating is driven by excitement. Think about how you act when you're excited. You're not calm and slow, you're more eager and hyped up. You're so excited to be eating whatever you're eating and that feeling is driving you to eat it quickly. It's like if you're feeling so excited to get somewhere that you drive fast or if you're on foot, you run. You don't hold back. The same can happen when you're feeling excited about what you're going to eat or are eating.

So which of these thoughts do you think you think that causes you to eat fast? Is there something else you find yourself thinking?

Whatever the thought, you're thinking something that is causing you to feel rushed, or in that last example, excited.

When you feel rushed, how do you act? Like I said with how you act when you're feeling excited, rushed does not lead to calm and relaxed actions. Rushed means you're doing things too hurriedly or hastily.

You're not eating with care, appreciating and enjoying what you're eating, or eating slowly enough that you give yourself the opportunity to hear and abide by your fullness signal.

So if you're eating fast because you're creating the feeling of rushed, or excited, then the way to eat more slowly is create calm and relaxed.

I'm going to offer you some ways to do this.

First, there's the "wanting to beat the fullness" one. Be okay with the pleasure you've gotten. Sometimes going from hungry to full doesn't take a ton of food. This is something you'll need to learn to be okay with, that there's only so much room in your stomach and therefore only so much pleasure to be experienced. Overeating to get more pleasure may give you more, but you'll also miss out on the pleasure of feeling just sufficiently full, not being weighed down, and feeling energized rather than

more lethargic as now your body is using extra energy to digest all that.

If you're someone who wants to make the hunger go away, your work is in being okay with feeling hungry. If you want to slow down and not be so rushed to make it go away, think about this. You've already felt it for as long as you have, what's another 10 minutes? Can you handle it that much longer? If you're okay with feeling hungry just a little longer, then you can slow down and not feel so rushed to eat. Ending the hunger is no longer an emergency.

Similarly, if you're bothered by your thoughts about food, you can learn to be okay with your thoughts. This one can be more difficult because of the feelings those thoughts are causing for you, so essentially, it's really being okay with feeling the feelings your thoughts are causing, most likely desire and urges, and also not thinking negatively about your thoughts. When you get irritated about your recurring thoughts, you're just adding another level of emotion. Now you have an urge or desire and irritation. If you can just be okay with feeling the urge or desire, then you can let those thoughts happen. And again, if you've had them this long, you can think them another few minutes, just like with the hunger.

The excited one can be a bit tricky, because excited is a feeling we usually want to feel. So you may not want to give that one up. But it will be important to check yourself and allow yourself to feel excited while also making conscious choices to slow down. It's like you're alternating between excited and calm. You're so excited to eat this and you're going to slow down and enjoy.

Lastly, is when you're rushing to the next thing. You are in this moment, eating this food. Enjoy it on purpose. Choose to taste it. Choose to focus on it. Be where you are. Live in the present. You can think about the next thing when it comes time for it, but right now, is not that time. Right now, is the time for what is happening right now.

If find yourself eating fast, and rushing to the next thing, I'd question whether or not you see this showing up in other areas of your life. Are you rushing through other things and not appreciating what you're doing and enjoying yourself?

Are you always thinking that the next thing, the activity, the food, the feeling, will be better than this moment? Are you not living in the present enough?

Rushing isn't going to make it better and what you're doing right now could be as good as the next thing, if you slow down to enjoy it.

And if you take your rushing into the next thing, you're not going to enjoy that either.

So if you want to slow down, the actions begin with your thinking. Think that it's okay to feel hungry, that it's okay to get the amount of pleasure you're getting, that it's okay to feel desire, and that the food you're eating now is delicious and you're enjoying this moment.

Enjoy the moments you're in. Have a wonderful week being where you are and loving it. Bye bye!