

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #73: Listening and Talking to Yourself

Hi! Are you ready to listen as I talk to you today? Because that is what this episode is all about, listening and talking.

A coach in my coaching community once shared something that I thought was so insightful. It was a quote made by a man named Dr. James Gills, an ocular surgeon who has completed six double Iron Man Triathlons. I can't even imagine completing one regular one, and this guy has done six doubles. What?!

Anyway, when he was asked how he did it, his answer was, "I talk to myself more than I listen to myself."

So brilliant. This is what mind management is people.

If you are stuck in binge eating then it is highly likely that you are not doing this. You are listening to yourself far more than you're talking to yourself.

So what does that mean and why is it a problem?

We're thinking thoughts all day long. It's estimated that we think about 60,000 thoughts a day both consciously and subconsciously. That's a lot of thoughts.

Most of them are ones you've trained and programmed yourself to think. Your binge eating thoughts are ones you've trained and programmed your brain to think.

All the excuses and justifications you think as well as thoughts about you needing to eat, needing something sweet, wanting more and more and more, I don't care, it doesn't matter, I've already blown it so let's keep going, all those thoughts are ingrained in your mind.

They're going to be thoughts that your brain is going to offer to you because it's part of your brain's collection of thoughts. It's the easily accessible ones that it's really good at thinking.

These are also thoughts that cause you to feel urges, desire, cravings, apathy, justified, and whatever other feelings drive you to then eat.

When you just let these thoughts come in to your mind and you believe them, then you will feel those feelings and drive into the binge.

Instead of hearing them and saying something back, you just hear your brain say, "Eat food" and you're like, "Okay."

Or maybe you do say something back, you try to say no, but you still in the end just listen and go eat as the thoughts are telling you to do.

If you're just listening to yourself all day and not talking back to yourself, then you're not changing anything. You're not putting new ideas into your mind, not creating new neural pathways in your brain, not working on creating new habits.

Listening is passive. It's just hearing and accepting what's being said without any kind of response. Well, except your response to do what the thought drives you to do but no response to counter it or challenge it.

Listening to all your programmed thoughts throughout the years has lead you into binges and kept you bingeing.

If you want to make changes, the changes comes from self-talk, not self-listen.

Now, listening to yourself is very important, but there's a way to do it that's useful and a way that's not.

You don't want to just listen to everything your brain tells you and believe it all and just follow along. Our brains say some crazy stuff.

I vividly remember a time when my brain told me I should give up. I don't remember what it was I was being told to give up on, but my brain went there. Did I listen and do it? Heck no! I heard that and immediately was like, "Um, no!"

Our brains want us to do easy things and stay safe. It's a survival thing. That's how we survived way way back in the day.

If I was wanting to just survive and stay in my comfort zone then sure, listening to my brain all the time and not telling it anything new or different would be fine. But I don't want that. I didn't want to give up even though I'm sure whatever it was I was thinking about doing was hard and maybe scary and maybe I had some doubt in myself, so I said no. I said no to giving up and I didn't.

It's definitely important to listen to yourself and have awareness of what's going on in your mind. Your thoughts are what cause your feelings, actions, and your experience of the world and of your life, so yeah, it's important to know what they are.

But there's a difference between being observational and agreeable.

When you observe your thoughts, you're not emotionally attached to them. You're not in belief with them, you're just seeing them as sentences in your mind that are causing outcomes in your life. You can see where that thought might lead you.

When you observe, you become the watcher of your thoughts, like you're an outsider. It's really quite amazing that we can think about our thoughts and analyze our thoughts.

You can decide if you want to be thinking them or think differently. You get to choose.

When you're just believing all the thoughts you hear and agreeing with all of them, you don't get a choice. You're stuck with those ones.

So when you can truly be a watcher and observer of your thoughts, you can have a rational conversation.

You can speak back to them, just like I did when my brain told me to give up.

I talked about that Double Iron Man triathlete in the beginning of this episode and I'm sure there were many times when his brain told him to stop and give up. His brain must have thought he was crazy to be doing what he was!

But he had to talk back to that and say he was going to keep going, he wasn't going to give up, and even if he was tired, he was going to keep pushing because he knew he had it in him.

He encouraged himself, he didn't give up on himself, and he believed in himself, I'm assuming, I haven't actually spoken with him.

You can wait around for someone else to tell you that you can stop bingeing for good, or tell you not to binge when you feel an urge, or tell you that you don't need to eat anything, or you can tell yourself. You can motivate, encourage, and push yourself. And when you tell yourself these things, it's going to be far more powerful than someone else telling you them.

I can tell you all day long how amazing you are and how much I believe in you, but when you're able to tell yourself that and believe it, that's so much more powerful. Your voice is the most influential voice in your life.

Use it. Talk to yourself.

If you want your brain to be programmed in a way that doesn't lead you into binges, then you need some new thoughts in there.

You have to train your brain to think those thoughts. You have to put them in there.

If you want to do different things than what your brain is telling you to do, you have to think about doing those things, on purpose.

The more you talk, or think to yourself, the more habitual and easy that way of thinking becomes.

It becomes easier for you to think “no” when your hear your brain say, “binge.” It becomes easier to for you to decide to honor your plan when you hear your brain tell you not to.

You build resilience. You get better at being in the driver's seat of your life.

What happens in your mind needs to be a two-sided conversation, not one sided.

You get to decide what thoughts stick around in your mind and which ones you agree with and which ones you take action on. Choose to think the thoughts you want to think.

Also, to bring it back to a couple episodes ago, #71, the thoughts you choose to think don't have to be super positive ones. As long as they're useful in getting you closer to your goal, that's all that matters.

So don't just hear yourself, believe it all, and let all those thoughts drive you into action.

Observe what you hear, and if you know it's going to lead you in a direction you don't want to go, talk back. Lead yourself where you do want to go, train and create new programming, and don't just run on your automatic thinking.

Talk to yourself more than you listen to yourself.

Have a great week, bye bye!