

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #154: Why Your Urges Last so Long

Hi! How are you? How is your life? Are you having fun? I hope you are and I hope you're well. If not, let's work on it and make it happen!

For those of you who are considering joining me for my July 2021 Stop Binge Eating group coaching program, the deadline to register is this Friday, July 16, 2021 at 10am ET. The next opening won't be until the fall so if you want to stop binge eating sooner than later, don't wait.

You can finish 2021 on a high note and enter into 2022 a changed person. It's possible for you. And we'll get started on July 28th.

Go to coachkir.com/group to register and get all the info about the program, there's also a link in the show notes, and if you have any questions you can email them to info@coachkir.com.

Let's get you that binge-free life already!

Okay, and now let's talk about why your urges last so long.

You feel urges to binge and the reason why you binge is because you give in to those urges.

If you're going to not binge, you need to not give in to those urges.

You allow them to be there without eating and you experience the discomfort of the urge until it passes and you're not longer feeling it.

Sounds simple but, most of you are not willing to do that and one of the reasons why is because you think they're going to last for too long.

Maybe there's been times where you've felt an urge for hours, or all day, or for days and you're just not willing to go through that.

So instead, you'll just eat and make it go away.

But when you do that, you end up perpetuating the existence of your urges.

You're not becoming a person who doesn't avoid discomfort, you continue being a person who does avoid it.

You never learn how to not avoid so then when any kind of discomfort comes up, you continue to do as you do. You eat to make it go away.

You're also not teaching your brain that you don't binge anymore.

Your brain has learned that bingeing is a thing that you do and each time you do it, you're reinforcing to your brain that this is something you do.

So you gotta be willing to be with your urge for as long as it's there, without eating, so you can teach your brain that you don't do it anymore and so you get in the habit of feeling instead of eating.

But how long do you have to feel the urge for? That's a question I get a lot.

And the answer is, it depends on you.

The length of time that you will feel an urge isn't fixed. There's no set amount of time.

If you've ever made it all the way through an urge you've probably noticed this.

Sometimes they don't last very long. Maybe just minutes.

Sometimes they last longer. But even when you say they last all day, are they the same intensity all day or does the intensity ebb and flow?

There's actually research that shows that emotions only last for 90 seconds.

That's how it usually goes with our feelings and emotions and that includes urges.

Your urges are in the feelings and emotions categories as it's a strong feeling of desire, so strong that you think you must have it.

If you've ever been really sad about something, you've probably gone through that. The tears start and stop. The sadness comes and goes.

The same can happen for anxiety. The intensity might increase and decrease throughout the minutes of you day.

When you really pay attention to how you're feeling, you'll start to notice that it's not just a steady stream of your feelings. The intensity may increase and decrease.

And do you know why that happens?

It's because of what you're thinking.

If your emotions really do only last for 90 seconds, then you're not just feeling one prolonged urge for hours, you're feeling urge after urge over that period of time. And they may even overlap.

Not long ago, I had almost an entire day of sadness. I cried and then I stopped crying and then I cried and I stopped and that went on for a majority of the day.

The tears didn't just happen, I caused them to happen because of what I was thinking about.

When I was thinking really sad thoughts, the tears came. When I was thinking not as sad thoughts, there were no tears.

I kept seeing it happen.

And the same thing happens with your urges.

They don't just gain intensity for no reason.

There's something you're doing, or more specifically something you're thinking that is causing your urge to do what it does.

And it comes down to three things.

One, is that you're thinking about why binge eating might be a good idea.

You're thinking it may be fun. You're thinking it's what you want to do when no one's home. You're thinking about how good the food will taste. You're thinking about how good it will feel to let loose. You're thinking about how you may not have another chance to do it.

Those are just some examples of thoughts you all think that are creating desire for binge eating.

And the more desire you create, the stronger your desire will be and strong desires become urges.

You're building it up in your mind to be this important or pleasurable thing that you have to do.

And as long as you're thinking about it that way, you're going to continue feeling the urge to do it.

You're making the urge continue to exist because you're continuing to create desire with your thoughts about how appealing a binge is.

It's just like an urge to do anything else. Use reaching out to an ex as an example. An ex that you don't want to be reaching out to for whatever reasons you have.

But the urge is there because you keep thinking about why you want to do it. Part of you wants to and you're thinking about what good will come from it. And as long as you keep thinking about doing it

and why you want to do it and why it's okay if you do it, you'll feel the urge to do it.

When you stop thinking about it and stop entertaining the idea that you should, then you'll no longer feel the urge.

So if you allow yourself to think about why you should binge or why you want to binge then you will continue feeling urges for as long as you're thinking about it. You will create an urge with each thought about you acting on your urge and bingeing.

A second thing you're thinking about that causes your urge to exist for longer is how much you don't want to feel the urge.

You're thinking about how annoying it is. You're thinking about how uncomfortable it is. You're thinking about how badly you want it to be gone. You're thinking it shouldn't be there.

Essentially, you're thinking thoughts that are going to create more discomfort on top of the discomfort you're feeling from the urge.

Your thoughts cause feelings and when you think you want that urge gone, now, you're going to feel impatient or desperate or frustrated and those are not comfortable feelings to feel.

So the more you think that, the more you're going to feel discomfort. The longer you feel discomfort, the more you may think about how much you don't want to feel it and you just keep the discomfort going, piling discomfort on discomfort with each new thought.

And then comes the third thing you're thinking about.

Which is actually what you're not thinking.

You're not making a decision.

You're not making a decision to eat and make the urge go away and you're not making the decision to go through the urge.

You're wavering between eating and feeling. You're going back and forth.

Do I eat or not? Do I just sit with this or do I eat? How long will I sit with this? How much will I eat?

You're basically considering both options , eat or feel, without choosing one.

So therefore you're not committing, and leaving yourself in indecision which that in itself is discomfort.

The longer you stay in indecision the more discomfort you cause and your urges are lasting longer than they need to because you're most likely doing all of these things I'm talking one after the other.

You're thinking about bingeing and why you want to do it and creating more and more desire that is causing your urges to last longer and longer.

You're thinking about how much you don't want to feel the urge which is creating discomfort on top of

the urge and you're most likely doing the other thing along with this where you're thinking about why bingeing will be a good idea. For example, it will make the dang urge go away.

So there you are creating all this discomfort thinking about how much you want that urge to go away and you're creating more desire for the binge because you're thinking it will provide you with exactly what you want.

And then you're just not making the decision. You're toying with the idea of giving in to the urge and bingeing to make it go away and also the idea of not doing that.

So then you're allowing yourself to just continue to thinking about bingeing and thinking about not wanting to feel how you feel which will continue your urge and discomfort existence.

You are the one prolonging your urges.

And this is good news. That means you can do something to shorten them.

Now, I do want to preface by saying that most likely what I'm going to suggest you do isn't going to make your urge turn off like a light switch. But, you will be gradually decreasing the intensity of the urge, maybe quickly, maybe slowly, instead of increasing it.

So first, there's the thoughts that are creating more and more desire and strengthening them into urges.

This is happening because you're thinking about why binge eating is a good idea. You're excusing it and justifying it. So you need to do the opposite.

Tell yourself why you don't want to do it and why it's a terrible idea.

In the example I gave you about reaching out to your ex, you gotta think about why it's a bad idea for you to do it.

When you see that the cons outweigh the pros, your desire will decrease.

And with binge eating, you know the cons outweigh the pros and your supposed pros might not even be true.

You may tell yourself that eating a lot of food will be fun but, you know it won't be.

Tell yourself the truth and tell yourself all the reasons why binge eating will suck for you.

You're not going to feel an urge to do something that's going to harm you. But you have to deliberately be thinking about this way, not deluding yourself that you'll be fine if you binge on all the food.

Then there's the thoughts you're thinking about wanting the urge to go away.

In a recent episode I talked about Resisting vs Allowing Urges, it was episode #151 which I highly recommend you listen to, along with all the episodes I put out actually.

When you're wanting your urge to go away and getting upset about it, you're resisting it. And doing

that isn't going to make it go away.

But allowing it will.

The problem that happens though is some of you think if you allow your urge to be there then it will just stay forever. But it won't because no feelings stay forever.

Earlier in this episode I talked about that day of sadness that happened for me.

I allowed myself to feel sad. I didn't eat to make the sadness go away I only ate my regular meals that day.

And the next day, I felt less sad, and less the next. And now the sadness is gone.

No feelings last forever. Like I said, they don't even exist constantly within us, they ebb and flow.

But when you resist them, it's like you're stopping their flow.

You're actually stopping them from leaving.

When you allow them, you're allowing them to come and go without force.

They will see themselves out and it will happen sooner if you don't try to shove them out.

Imagine trying to shove a person out of your house. They'll probably turn back at you and argue with you.

It starts a conflict.

Don't do that with your urges. They might be slow to leave but they will. Don't create conflict with them and create more discomfort for yourself.

And lastly there's the deciding.

You can stop your urge by making a decision and that decision can be to eat or to not eat.

That's your decision to make and neither is right or wrong.

But if you truly don't want to eat then you make the decision to allow your urge and the decision that binge eating is not what you want.

And you're done with it.

No second guessing, no changing your mind. You make your decision, you dismiss away any thoughts about why you should binge and you allow yourself to feel uncomfortable until you don't feel uncomfortable anymore.

Decision made, you're committed to this plan of action, and you don't consider the other options anymore.

That will allow you to stop doing anything that may cause the urge to continue on for much longer.

You have the power within you to decrease the amount of time you feel urges, which also means you have the power to increase it.

Be intentional about which you are going to do.

Bring awareness to what you are doing if you notice the urge continuing on for longer than a few minutes.

Most of you have no awareness at all and you gotta start paying attention to what's going on with your thinking.

Notice if you're glamorizing binge eating. Notice if you're excusing or justifying it. Notice if you're getting upset about feeling an urge.

And take action to shift your thinking in a more useful direction.

You have that ability, use it.

You can choose to think differently and chose to handle your urges differently.

So do it.

Now, you are capable of doing all this but, you might need some help. Needing help doesn't mean you're not capable it just means you don't have it all figured out yet and that's okay. You don't have to figure it all out on your own. You have me and you can get as much help as you want with anything binge eating related in the Stop Binge Eating program and I encourage you to join me if you haven't gotten the results you're wanting on your own.

We can do this together, along with all the other amazing group members. We're a team and we all want success for each other.

So come get yours.

As I said at the start of the episode, the deadline for the next program is this Friday, July 16, 2021 at 10am ET. And as I said in this episode, don't waste time being in indecision. Make your decision and if your decision is to join me, then go to coachkir.com/group so you can register and get access to the first lesson right away. And then you'll join me and the other group members when it officially starts on July 28, 2021.

Alright for those of you joining, I can't wait to meet you soon! And for everyone, you have more control over how you think and feel than you think you do. Be proactive in what you choose to do.

Bye bye.