

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #166: Unlearning What You Were Taught

Hello! Before we get started today I just wanted to tell you that registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program is closing this Friday, October 8<sup>th</sup> of 2021 at 10am ET. So if you're wanting to join, get on it and go to [coachkir.com/group](https://coachkir.com/group) to sign up. Don't spend any more time in indecision. Make the decision, you're in or you're out and if you're out, make sure you have a plan for what you're going to do for the next few months to stop binge eating. Don't just wing it, be specific about the next steps you're going to take. And if you're in, heck yes I am so excited to work with you!

Let's end 2021 and begin 2022 together, making progress, and finally stopping binge eating!

Okay, now let's talk about the things you were taught, that aren't serving you, and how you're going to unlearn them.

As you were growing up, and even in adulthood, you were taught some things that don't serve you well now.

Most likely it was by well-meaning people who were trying to help you. Or by people who were just passing on what they'd been taught. Or maybe they didn't even intentionally teach you things but, they did.

One of the most common ones that comes up for people around eating is the whole “clean your plate” idea.

If you weren't taught to clean your plate you for sure know someone who was.

This was probably useful for those people who started it teaching it. Food was scarce for them and they had to eat as much as they could when they could.

But then it carried on for people who had abundant food and the reasons behind it weren't as logical.

The big one, “there are starving kids in whatever country” gets tossed around a lot but, you eating that food on your plate isn't going to have any effect on those kids.

Yes, be grateful for the food you have but just because you have it doesn't mean you need to overeat on it. How is you overeating helpful to anyone?

Or you have to finish it all because you or someone else paid for it. Personally, I'd rather waste some money than feel physically uncomfortable and too full for an hour or two. But I actually don't even consider not finishing your plate and throwing away food to be a waste of money but that's a whole other topic for another day. And if you join my program you'll get a whole video on wasting food!

But the point is, you may have been taught to eat all the food on your plate and now you still have that lesson coming through your mind when you're eating and you follow through on it without question.

You may not even know why you do it except that that was what you were taught.

Too often I hear people say things like, “That's just how I was raised” or “It's a habit” as a reason for why they think how they do or why they do what they do.

And yes, those are legit reasons but, don't just settle there.

Sometimes people say it and it's like what they're really saying that this is how it is as if it's not changeable.

But there's so much that is changeable no matter how you were raised, what you were taught, or what habits you have created.

Think about this. There are people who change religions when they enter into adulthood. There are people who change their political views. They were raised to believe one thing and later in life believed something else.

You're an adult now and you are in charge of what you think and believe.

When you notice that something you've been believing isn't serving you well, you can change it. You can learn a new lesson that allows you to discard the old one.

So how do you do that?

When you've been believing something for a long time, it can be challenging to unlearn it.

So here's where you start.

First, you have to not only be aware that you have a belief that isn't useful for you to believe but also know why it's not useful for you.

So using the “clean your plate” example, you can recognize that you believe you must clean your plate

and then you can see that it's not serving you to believe that because then you'll overeat.

Now, sometimes, just having that awareness is enough. You can clearly see that not overeating and not being a member of the clean plate club is better for you than cleaning your plate even though you're full and overeating.

You'll especially be able to let it go if you take a look at your reasons behind why you would choose to clean your plate and see that you don't like the reasons behind it.

Do you like the reason, "Because that's what I was taught?" What about, "Because there are starving children?" What about "Because I'm wasting money?" I'm not going to tell you what are or aren't good reasons to clean your plate and overeat, that's for you to decide based on your own personal beliefs and circumstances. You all have your own opinion and you get to decide that.

And that's the real lesson here. You decide your reasons for believing all that you believe and make sure you like those reasons.

Here's another example.

You may have been taught that eating is always going to be something you'll struggle with.

Maybe this was said to you directly or maybe it was just modeled to you by someone or people.

You saw other people struggling in your family, maybe your parents, siblings, aunts, and you began to believe that that is how it is for your family, like it's in your DNA.

Now, I'm not a scientist and there may be some biological things that can contribute to why certain people have food challenges and I'm not going to get into that debate here.

What I will say is that it may not be true that there is anything biological stopping you from having food be easy.

And if you're thinking food will always be a struggle for you then guess what. It will be.

Because what's going to happen is that when you're thinking it's going to be a struggle, you'll worry and get anxious about and around food, and then you overeat because you were feeling so anxious proving to yourself that it's a struggle for you.

Or maybe you're not anxious but you just feel defeated. You don't want to struggle so instead of struggling and fighting with yourself about whether you'll eat or not, you just give in and eat all the things.

So right there, you can see that thinking it will always be a struggle is creating struggle.

This belief you have isn't serving you well.

So let's take a look at it and challenge it. Let's find the reasons behind why you've been believing it.

The two I hear most often are because it's always been a struggle or because my whole family

struggles.

Do you like those reasons? I can tell you that I don't and here's why.

First there's, "Because it's always been a struggle." So what if it has? That doesn't mean it can't become easier in the future. And let's not forget, if you think something is going to be a struggle, you're going to make it into one. So that's probably why it has been. You haven't yet learned how to not struggle but what if it's possible for you to in the future?

Then there's "Because my whole family struggles." So what if they do? Unless you can show me some concrete evidence that your family has a gene that is creating eating struggles, then them struggling has nothing to do with you. That's their struggle because of all of their thoughts and beliefs about food and themselves and their thoughts and beliefs have nothing to do with yours. Yours are your own. You have your own thoughts and feelings that are leading you to struggle.

You and your family haven't learned how to not struggle. You can learn.

You can figure out why it has been a struggle for you, what has made it into a struggle, and then you can unwind all the things that have created the struggle and learn to make it easy.

And that's what I've been doing in all these episodes on the podcast by the way. I help you see what the problems are behind your eating, what's driving you to eat, and then I give you a new perspective and tools to help you.

That's how we create change people!

With this one, how about instead of simply believing that eating will always be a struggle for you because it always has been or because everyone else struggles, you start believing that maybe it's possible for it to not be a struggle for YOU anymore.

You don't have solid evidence that you will struggle forever so you don't have to believe it.

You can believe it might be possible that you won't because you're a human who can create and break habits, because you can learn new things, because other people have made that shift, myself included and all the success stories you've heard on this podcast and all the other people who you've never heard from who've done it.

You can change and it's going to happen as you change one long-held belief at a time.

You can start by finding all the lessons you've learned as a kid or as an adult and see the effects of believing them.

If you think you're not good enough, that's not going to be useful for you. So take a look at your reasons for why you choose to still believe that and see if you like those reasons.

If you think you have to be thin to be acceptable and loved, that's not going to be useful for you. It's going to make you feel horrible about your body if it's not thin and you're not going to take positive action from that place.

Society may have taught you that you have to be thin to be acceptable and loved but this is not a fact. It may feel true to you because of whatever you've experienced or seen but it's not a fact that we'd all agree on. I accept and love plenty of people who are not thin. I know plenty of people who are not thin who are accepted and loved by a romantic partner. So no, this is not a fact, it's just a belief you've been holding on to that isn't serving you well.

You can notice your unuseful thoughts about anything and see that it's not serving you to think how you're thinking. And you can question all of it.

This is what I do with my group members all the time and it's amazing to watch them shift their perspective as they see what effect their beliefs have on their lives and as I start questioning their beliefs.

They think they're not good enough, I ask them why, and they don't have a good enough reason why. That right there allows them to begin the process of unlearning the belief that they're not good enough and that's a really important one to let go of for all of you.

Just because you were taught something or you believed something for a long time, doesn't mean you have to continue believing it now. You can choose to believe different things and have great reasons for your new beliefs and find evidence to back it up.

No matter what anyone has told you, or what you've told yourself for years, you can believe that you don't have to clean your plate, that it might be possible that you won't struggle with food forever, that you're enough, and that there is a person who loves and accepts you as you are.

This goes for all you've learned about dieting and weight loss too. What if what you're believing is the way to lose weight isn't the only way to do it? What if there's another way to do it all besides what you've learned in your previous weight loss programs, from books, influencers, and your friends that will make it a more enjoyable process? I believe there is.

To begin making shift in your beliefs that are related to your eating, just start noticing what you believe about yourself, your body, your feelings, weight loss, and food that you were taught directly or indirectly at some point in your life.

Then you can work on letting it go and believing something new that will allow you to feel and behave so much better than you used to with that old, unuseful belief.

Now, I will tell you that sometimes the trickiest part of doing this is that first step of recognizing your belief as a belief because a lot of the time we see these are simply just true.

The body one is a great example of this. People hear or read comments that people make about bigger people or they're seeing so much praise for thin people or they've seen first hand how different they've been treated during times in their lives when they've been at different weights. So it's easy to see it as a fact that thin people are acceptable and loved while bigger people aren't.

But it's not a fact. If it were a fact we'd all agree and I sure don't. That's one way you can figure out the difference between a fact and a belief or thought.

Another tip I will give you is that if there is an adjective, a describing word in what you're saying, then

it's a thought or a belief, not a fact. Facts are nouns – people, places, and things. So for example, saying your body is ugly is not a fact. The fact is that you have a body. We can all agree and it's factual without describing words.

Now, there are other ways to distinguish between facts and beliefs but those are the ones that come up the most with beliefs and thoughts vs facts. So look out for those descriptors you're using to describe yourself, food, your feelings, or your body and make sure that every single person would agree.

Alright, let's question all the beliefs and make sure you're working on believing what you want to believe and aren't just believing what you believe just because it's what you were taught.

Believe on purpose.

And if you want help with this, or with any topic I've covered on this podcast, sign up for The Stop Binge Eating Program so we can dive deep into the topics you're having a hard time with and so you can ask endless questions about anything. Again, the deadline to register for this round is this Friday October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 10am ET. And if you have any questions you can email them to [info@coachkir.com](mailto:info@coachkir.com).

Alright, talk to you all next time, bye bye.