

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #173: Binge Eating and Exercise

Hi! When this episode is released it will be the week of American Thanksgiving. So Happy Thanksgiving to all who are celebrating!

Although there is going to probably be a lot of food available to you that day, and at any holiday and through the holiday season, remember to take time to focus on what you love about the holiday besides food.

Take time to intentionally focus on spending time with people you love and doing activities you love because it doesn't just have to be all about the food.

And just know that even if you have a hard time or make mistakes, you are okay and you can still do this.

You can stop binge eating. All of you can.

And if you want my help to do it, if you're struggling on your own or if you're just ready to get this done faster than you have been on your own, you can come work with me in the next round of my Stop Binge Eating Program.

Registration will be opening up in less than a month on December 16th, 2021.

We can work on this together, as a team. I'll give you perspective that you can't see on your own. You'll get answers to your questions and a guided process. I'll help you change how you're thinking about binge eating, food, yourself, your body, all the things.

And one step at a time, you'll begin living the life that binge eating has been stopping you from having.

It's not going to be a perfect life, let's not expect that but, when you think about what binge eating is holding you back from having, that's what you're going to get.

It's going to be amazing.

So to get more info and to register when registration opens, go to coachkir.com/group.

Let's make 2022 the year you do it. It's the year you're going to stop binge eating!

Alright, so speaking of changing how you're thinking about things, let's talk about exercise.

I had someone email me asking if I could do an episode about binge eating after exercising and I of course said yes and I figured I'd also combine it with exercising after binge eating too.

So let's talk about both! Because I see both as a problem for a lot of people.

There is so much that gets wrapped up in eating and exercise almost like they're a team and I think it's time we begin separating them.

For a lot of you, you're using exercise as a way to justify and excuse binge eating or overeating or using it as a way to punish yourself or offset weight gain after a binge. And although it may make sense to you for you to do it, it might not be serving you well to think about it how you're thinking about it.

So let's take a look and first, we'll do exercising before a binge.

Some of you are using exercising as an excuse to binge or even as an excuse to overeat.

You're basically saying that if you workout for x amount of minutes or burn x amount of calories or do whatever form of exercise then you can eat more.

Exercising becomes a determining factor in how much you're going to eat.

Now, exercising of course is going to burn calories and use energy so you may be hungrier than if you didn't exercise and your body may want more food.

But for most of you, the amount of fuel your body is asking for is not the amount you're giving it.

You're overdoing it for one of two reasons, or both.

One, because you're over estimating how much extra fuel your body is actually wanting.

Two, because you're want to keep eating.

You start eating, maybe you're actually hungry or maybe you're justifying your eating because of your exercise and you continue eating because either you're continuing to justify how much you're eating by saying your body needs it after your workout or you're just enjoying eating so much that you don't want to stop.

Anytime you're eating past fullness whether it's preceded by exercise or not, you're doing it because you want something that you think the food is going to provide to you whether it be continued pleasure or avoidance of a feeling.

And the feeling may be hunger, especially if you're very hungry after exercising. You might dislike the feeling of hunger so much that you're desperate to get rid of it ASAP. So you eat fast and then you don't know how to slow yourself down. You're so caught up in the food and making the hunger go away that you don't take any time to pause and check in with how full you feel.

So after you exercise, it's going to be important for you to take note of what's going on in your body rather than just thinking about how exercising means you can eat more.

Sure burning those calories may mean that your body would appreciate more food than if you didn't exercise but, there's some questions you need to be asking yourself.

Are you even hungry or are you just thinking you want to eat? If you are hungry, how hungry, on a scale of 0-5, do you actually feel? How much food do you think would satisfy that hunger? And then as you're eating, pay attention to how full you feel.

Slow down and pay attention.

Check in with your body instead of just justifying and assuming you can eat all the things.

And with all that, I do also want to say that if you are exercising heavily and do feel extra hungry, please fuel your body.

Don't attribute this extra hunger to weight loss and think that if you don't eat you'll lose weight.

Because what's most likely going to happen is that you're going to cause yourself to feel an urge to binge.

If you're someone who is prone to binge urges and you're making yourself not eat when you're really hungry, that's going to be a great way to create more urges.

Your body will start urging you to eat and you'll probably start thinking your typical binge thoughts.

So please, eat if you're hungry after exercising while paying attention to how your body is responding to the food you're eating.

If you want to not binge after exercising, no matter how much you did, pay attention to your body and how you're feeling. As I talked about in episode #169, be in a partnership with your body. Don't just decide how much you're going to eat based on what workout you did. Decide based on what your body is wanting.

Be present with your body and figure out what it actually is wanting not just what you're thinking you want.

Alright, now let's talk about exercising after bingeing.

With both before and after binge exercise, I think it's important for you to look at your motivation behind it.

With the before, you may be exercising to eat more, maybe even full on binge.

With the after, you may be using exercise as a punishment or as a way to not gain weight.

It turns into something you think you must do to make up for what you ate.

I myself exercised after most of my binges for that reason. I wasn't just doing it for the health benefits or to feel better, although sometimes I did think about how much better I'd feel if I got my body moving. But mostly, I was doing it to burn off the calories I ate.

I was so afraid of gaining weight and so badly wanted to lose weight and I saw exercise as a way to help all that.

I binged, there was nothing I could do to change that but, I thought exercising for however long or up to a certain amount of burned calories would help me.

And I'd say the biggest problem with me doing that was that it became a focal point in my life. Instead of doing things I enjoyed, I was at the gym, or running on a trail, or in a class. Not to say I hated doing those things, I didn't, I actually enjoyed my workouts some of the time but, not so much when I was in the mindset of it being something I needed to do to make up for what I ate yesterday. It's way more enjoyable when I am just doing it for me.

It's not enjoyable to spend your time punishing yourself or doing things you feel obligated to do while beating yourself up for something you did.

Especially when it might not really be doing what you think it's doing.

There's been a lot of research done on exercise and weight loss and although there's differing conclusions being talked about out there, there's a lot that says that exercise doesn't affect weight loss as much as we've been led to believe.

But what we do know is that a lot of exercise will make you more hungry and if you don't know how to handle your hunger, especially hunger that's like a 3 or 4 out of 5 on the hunger scale, then you're going to make it harder for yourself to not binge. You might end up creating all this hunger, freak out, and eat as much as possible as quickly as possible to make the hunger go away.

It's time you change your relationship with exercise so you're not seeing it as an excuse to eat more or as a way to make up for a binge.

Instead, it's something that can improve your health, can help you be more agile, build your strength, increase endurance, can help improve your mood, help your sleep, among so many other benefits. Moving your body is so good for you and your health and well-being.

What if you just kept it at that and stopped relating it to what you're eating?

Then, you could do it because you want to and because of how it affects you.

Not so you can binge or counteract a binge.

Any justification you have for bingeing, including exercise, needs to go. No more thinking you'll just exercise it off or thinking you can binge because you exercised. Bingeing isn't something you want to do so stop justifying it. Stop trying to find reasons to binge and instead, focus on all the reasons not to.

And there is no making up for a binge. It happened. Go through the discomfort you created. Sure, you can exercise to feel better but not for so long or so hard that you're not enjoying it at all and are making it feel like a punishment.

The real way to come back from a binge is to figure out one thing that caused it, learn from it, and practice doing better next time you feel an urge to binge. Your thought work and strategizing is what you want your next steps to be. Not beating up your body more.

Exercise and moving your body can be something you love to do or even something you just like because you enjoy the activity you chose and because of how you feel when you're done. And it can be just that.

Let amounts of food eaten be determined by your body, slow down and pay attention, and follow up your binges with introspection.

Alright, that's all I have for you today on binge eating and exercise.

And a quick reminder to mark your calendar for December 16, 2021 when registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program opens. Info is at coachkir.com/group and get ready to change your relationship with food, and with exercise because we can work on that in there too, and of course, your relationship with yourself so you can improve your life in so many ways.

I'll talk to you soon. Bye bye.