

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #185: Self-Love

Hi! There is so much that I want to talk about with you today! Today's episode is titled self-love but I want to talk about a few things involving love so here we go.

First of all, I'm 40!!! My birthday was a couple days ago, as I'm recording this, a few weeks before it's released. I had a great day doing things I love, seeing people I love, and NOT overdoing it on food. I had decided I would eat whatever I wanted, I would have a birthday dessert, but I wasn't going to use my birthday as an excuse to eat like crap. That was the last thing I wanted to do because then, I would feel like crap and wouldn't be able to enjoy myself. And I physically felt good from start to finish.

Emotionally, that was a little different for the first part of the day.

So, plans were made for my 40<sup>th</sup> and long story short, those plans didn't happen and I was very disappointed and kinda mad because I take my birthdays very seriously, especially milestone ones. The night before, after the plans were confirmed cancelled, I was very emotional and I was worried that this was going to ruin my birthday. I worried that I was going to feel upset all day because the day wasn't what I had wanted it to be.

But thankfully, I wasn't, and my day wasn't ruined, and it's all because of the thought work I did.

What we do in the coaching I do is mostly thought work. We do some action strategizing but for the most part, we look into our thoughts and work on them because they are what cause the feelings we feel that drive our actions.

I had some thoughts that were creating all this emotion for me and even though I recognized them as changeable thoughts, I was stuck in them. So I allowed myself to stay there, I felt all the feelings, I cried, and I decided that the next day, this would be done.

Instead continuing to blame and “should” and do all the unuseful things, I decided I would accept what happened and where I was at. I decided that I was going to make a new plan and love it. The day of, it took me a little bit of time for me to wrap my head around acceptance and let go of my disappointment and anger but I took that time, I had some conversations with myself, and I was able to fully embrace and love my new plans for the day and enjoy myself.

It was such a great reminder for me how grateful I am to be able to manage my thinking. I’m not perfect and I’m going to have times of intense negative emotions and I’m going to tell stories to myself that aren’t useful. But being able to move on and create better stories and feelings is such a gift.

I can’t imagine what my day would have been like had I not been introduced to thought work years ago. I imagine I wouldn’t have felt as good as I did. Probably not miserable and I probably still would have chosen to create a new plan rather than giving up but, I think I am so much more skilled now in creating my own experiences that I desire rather than just reacting to circumstances and unknowingly choosing misery.

So here I am, freakin’ 40 and fabulous! And very happy with how my actual birthday day went. And, it doesn’t just end there because I have a whole year of super fun stuff planned for myself to celebrate 40. I’m so excited.

I know so many people get down or complain about getting older and that’s for sure not me. I’m getting older, wiser, more experienced, and evolving myself. I’m getting better with age!

Your age is just a circumstance and you get to decide what it means to you. I’m so happy to be 40. Let’s freakin’ go!!

Now, since this episode is being released the day after Valentine’s Day, I thought this would be the perfect time to talk about love. I just talked with you about loving on purpose, my new birthday plan, and being 40, and I’m going to talk with you in a moment about self-love.

But before I do, I thought this would also be a good time for me to give you an update on my personal love life since I have shared a smidge of it in the past as you’ve probably heard me talk about my boyfriend.

Well, you haven’t heard about him in awhile and I don’t want to leave you guessing as to why.

As you might have assumed, we broke up. It happened back in June of 2021, so several months ago, and it was my decision. I’m not going to share all the details because I want to respect his privacy but I finally concluded that he isn’t my person.

Even though it was my decision and I liked my reasons for my decision, it was still really hard. We’d been together for almost 2 years and lived together for almost a year and it wasn’t all bad. There were lots of good memories and there were things I loved about him and of course my mind kept reminding me of those things after we broke up, which brought on a lot of emotions.

And I went through it. I went through all the feelings and just like with my birthday, I was so grateful to have previously done the work to be comfortable feeling my feelings and to be able to manage my thinking and not believe everything my brain told me.

I remember talking with my parents the day after I moved into my new apartment and I told them, I'm so glad I can just feel my feelings without eating or drinking alcohol to distract me from them or numb them. In a time when I was very sad, I had a moment of pride and gratefulness for the work I'd done leading up to this point.

I've said it for myself and I'd had group members of mine say it time and time again. This work translates outside of eating. It changes how you handle your life. Eating or drinking wasn't going to change how I felt, it would just make me feel worse and so I chose the feelings.

I knew the only way out was through so I allowed myself to feel, all the feelings, and now here I am, months later, not feeling them at all. At least, not feeling them related to our relationship, maybe other things because, feelings happen.

The sadness passed. The grief passed. The thoughts changed.

And I'm better for it. I truly believe that.

I wouldn't trade the experience for anything.

And one of many opportunities it gave me was learning to love myself more.

I know a lot of you have gone through periods of time when you hated yourself, or disliked yourself.

Maybe you're in that space now.

I'm gonna be honest with you and tell you that I don't think I've ever hated myself, even when I was binge eating. I've probably had times when I disliked myself but it was more about what I was doing and not doing rather than me as a person, and had times when I was disappointed in myself or mad at myself.

I think overall I've had a pretty good opinion of myself throughout my life.

But after that break up, I chose to improve it.

There's always room for improvement, right? And I thought it was the perfect opportunity to work on it.

I was going to be spending more time alone. Sure I had friends and family and I made new friends but, they have their own lives and I couldn't rely on them to be there with me all of the time.

So I actively chose to love being with myself, or at times, just like being with myself.

This is a choice you're making every day with yourself.

You choose love, like, dislike, or hate.

And you're doing this with the words you're choosing to tell yourself in your own mind.

When you're disliking and hating yourself, the thoughts you're thinking are probably not kind, loving, interesting, or desirable.

They're mean, negative, hateful, insulting, or contemptuous.

This is a problem because you're probably not going to want to be with yourself when you're being that way. I highly doubt you'd want to be around another person who is that way with you.

When you do it with yourself, you're going to feel terrible and if you're not willing to be with those feelings, you're going to look for an escape.

And eating food is your escape.

When you hear those thoughts you're thinking, it might not seem like there is another option, especially if you're believing all the thoughts and you're not seeing other options.

You're full-on believing all the nasty things you're saying to yourself.

And the truth is, none of them are factual and you do have other options.

There's always another option.

And I highly recommend you look for the other options so you can stop feeling so bad about yourself and start loving yourself so you'll be willing to be with yourself.

Wouldn't you rather spend time with someone who is loving, supportive, kind, and content than with someone who puts you down, and is hateful, and is disrespectful?

I know I would and that's why I do my best to intentionally be that way.

Recently there was a group coaching call in one of my groups and this was that main topic of the call and it's what actually inspired this episode because I think it's so important for all of you to work on your self-love.

There was a person being coached and I noticed all this negative thinking going on in their mind.

They beat themselves up for mistakes thinking things like, "I screwed up" or thinking about how angry they are for bingeing after having done so well.

They lost belief in themselves after bingeing. Now they think they can't do it, even though they've proven they can!

They were thinking negatively about their appearance and body, hating what they see in the mirror.

There was so much negativity going on so no wonder they continued to eat and binge. They wanted out of their mind and eating was their way of doing it.

So their work now, and this is the work for so many of you too, is to intentionally like yourself, you don't even have to love but, at least like.

It's intentionally being complimentary toward yourself, encouraging to yourself, accepting of yourself.

When you are, you'll be so much more willing to be with yourself and be with your thoughts.

You're not going to eliminate all the negative thoughts and feelings from your life, those will still happen but, you'll be creating so much less.

Another reason why this is so important, besides giving yourself one less reason to escape with food, is because feeling loved is only created by you.

Other people cannot make you feel. Even if someone tells you they love you, it's not their words that make you feel loved, it's your thoughts about their words.

That's why sometimes a person will say it and you feel very loved and other times you feel nothing, maybe even negative if you don't believe them and you're thinking about why you're not lovable.

You're probably heard the saying that you can't love anyone else until you love yourself.

I personally don't believe that to be true, just my opinion, but, what I do believe is that you're less likely to be able to feel loved if you don't love yourself.

Someone else may say the most loving things to you and compliment you all day long but if you disagree with them because you think you're a weak, lazy, disgusting pig, then you're not going to feel loved.

But agree with them, think you're all the amazing things they're saying about you and watch yourself fill up with the feeling of loved.

Love happens within you. You create it for yourself by believing loving things about yourself and by liking yourself.

Now, you don't have to love everything about yourself. We're all flawed, we're all imperfect, and I think we all have things we don't like about ourselves.

But let's turn up the volume on what we do like rather than drowning out the good by amplifying the bad.

It's a choice you make for yourself every single day.

Do you beat yourself up and tear yourself down? Or do you lift yourself up?

Your words in your mind matter, especially the ones you think about you.

They will be reflected in how you treat yourself.

So this is how I recommend you start doing this now.

And yes, you start now. You don't wait until you've stopped binge eating to love yourself.

Loving yourself helps you to stop binge eating.

You don't hate yourself into eating well. You may have tried that and it doesn't work.

When you love yourself, you treat yourself better and you're more willing to be with yourself, listen to yourself, be there with your feelings, and not use eating food as a way to escape all of it.

Just like you wouldn't eat to escape another person that you love when they're sharing their thoughts and feelings with you. You want to be there with them because you love them.

Love yourself and be there with you and for you.

So, here's how you start.

Make a list, on paper, not just in your mind, of 15 things that you like about yourself.

Anything you can think of, nothing is too insignificant, write it down.

I did this with that group member I was telling you about. We didn't get all the way to 15, because we only had so much time but, we had a good size list going and I'll tell you, it lit her up to think about herself focusing on what she likes rather than what she doesn't like.

And it was all true things that she genuinely believes about herself. She wasn't blowing smoke and pretending to be positive. There really are things she likes about herself, she's just not used to thinking about them.

I want you to start thinking about your things for yourself.

Now, this may be a challenge for some of you. It may take some time to come up with 15 but, commit to it because it will make a world of difference for you.

You can even consider what other people might like about you and see what you agree with them on to get ideas.

Just please start finding the good in you, the likeableness in you, the things for you to love.

And remind yourself of them every single day.

And remember, your goal right now doesn't have to be loving yourself, especially if you feel a lot of hate or self-loathing. That's a big leap.

But at least find what you like, there's some things. Find the qualities that you're proud of. Find what other people admire about you.

Then as time goes on, watch yourself begin to love yourself. Not because you're perfect but, because it feels so much better to love than to hate.

Start deciding to like yourself more and stop being so hateful or negative with yourself because there's no upside to doing that. It just makes you feel horrible and when you feel horrible, you're not going to do productive, useful, goal oriented things for yourself and care for yourself.

It's unlikely that you're going to treat someone well if you hate them. Yourself included.

There's so many upsides to liking yourself and turning up the volume on what you like.

That's where positive action stems from and that's where you begin to create a life you love.

Have a wonderful week, writing down all that you like about yourself and telling yourself those things every day.

Bye bye.