

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #188: Food and Happiness

Hi! Ohhh, I have some good stuff coming for you this week.

This Thursday, March 10th of 2022, at 5pm ET, I'm doing a free training and I'm going to tell you three secrets you need to know to stop binge eating and not only will I tell you them but, I'm going to give you step by step instructions for how you're going to do it.

If you sometimes, or often eat a lot of food until you're very stuffed, in a short amount of time, usually when you're alone, if you sometimes (or always) feel out of control around food, if you've been binge eating for several months or years, if you've tried to stop binge eating many times but nothing has worked long-term, or if you don't know why you keep binge eating, then you must join the training.

You're going to walk away knowing why you binge eat, how you're going to stop binge eating after doing it for so long, how to be in control of what you eat, and how to have food you love in your home and not binge on it.

That's some good stuff to know, right??

This training is going to be PACKED with so much good stuff and I can't wait to share it with you.

And also, on that same day, registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program is opening and for those who sign up by Monday March 14th at 5pm ET, you'll receive special limited time bonuses, things that have been highly requested, that will help you even more as you work on stopping binge eating in the program. And, if you watch the training, I'm going to tell you all about them.

So, you can register for the free training by going to coachkir.com/training and only if you're registered, you'll also be able to access the recording of the training for a limited time.

I can't wait to see you there!

Alright, shifting gears, let's move on to food and happiness.

Have you ever thought to yourself, "Food makes me happy?"

I bet most of you have and this is such an interesting topic.

As I was preparing for this episode, I got sucked into Google after searching, "Food makes me happy" and then "Sugar makes me happy."

I wanted to see what showed up and some of what I read I already knew and some was more in depth explanations for this kind of complicated topic.

Because to answer, does food make me happy? I don't think there is a simple yes or no answer.

How I'd answer it is, "yes and no." It does and it doesn't.

There's a few factors that go into this answer and I want to start by talking about the "yes," answer and get clear on that.

As you've probably heard before, when you eat food, the pleasure centers in your brain light up. Evolutionary this is useful because if we didn't find pleasure in eating food, we wouldn't eat it and we'd die.

So yes, you will experience a change in your brain via neurotransmitters.

But, what I found to be interesting as I Googled was the articles that listed the foods that make use happy.

And they aren't what most of you eat when you're wanting to feel happy.

Most people who binge, who want to feel happier, are going for the highly processed foods, mainly ones that have a lot of sugar. Yes some may go for the savory stuff but, there's research saying that flour acts similarly in our bodies as sugar does. You may think that not just sugar makes you happy but, that carbs do, flour included.

And you're correct. They do make you happy.

You get that sugar rush, you get the energy, increased dopamine, that's all happening. So yes, eating those foods will make you feel happier.

But, not without consequence.

With the high, comes the low.

What can actually happen are things like fatigue, irritability, increased anxiety, weakened ability to deal with stress, imbalanced brain chemicals that can lead to depression, and more. I bet you all have experienced at least one of those things after bingeing, I know I have.

Now, I don't want you to hear that and be afraid of sugar. Sugar is not what creates all of those things, it's excessive intake that does.

You could eat one M&M, which is mostly sugar, and not notice any difference. But eat a huge bag of them, and that's where you'll notice the effects.

So when you think that eating a whole box, whole container, or one serving after another after another will create happiness for you, you're mistaken.

You would be so much happier just having one because from there, your body and brain's reaction will be minimal compared to what you'd experience if you did eat a lot.

So sugar may make you feel happier when you're eating but, if you eat a lot, you may experience the high for longer but that means you'll also feel the low for longer.

If you're looking for lasting happiness, sugar won't provide you with that. Sugar's happiness will be fleeting.

But, there are certain foods that you can eat to help you create lasting happiness.

Now, I do want to preface this by saying that these certain foods are not a happy pill. But, they will help.

And like I said before, the foods I found to make you feel happy are not usually the foods you binge on and just a few that I saw come up in a few different articles are bananas, spinach, walnuts, salmon, and apples.

The compounds in these foods have an effect on your neurotransmitters. Some aid in serotonin production, some GABA production but basically, these foods have an effect on the processes in your brain that create a feeling of happiness.

And it's not a happiness that's going to lead to a crash like sugar. It's not the high with the low, it's a moderate happiness, like I talked about in last week's episode about eating pleasure.

And this is something else you've probably experienced if you've ever eaten mostly whole, minimally processed foods for an extended period of time.

You feel great.

And that's not a coincidence. What you eat affects your mood.

And as a side note here, I want to let you know I'm going to also put a link to the main articles I was researching with in the show notes so if you're wanting to read more or check the sources, you'll be able to.

So yes, food can make you happy, just for the short-term or have a longer lasting affect.

But there's something else that has an effect too.

You can't only rely on food to make you feel happy. It just wouldn't work.

If you feel stressed, miserable, sad, or lonely, eating if you're not hungry isn't going to be a very useful solution.

Think about it. You ate a little bit ago, you're still a little full, for sure not hungry, and you're feeling sad, what do you think would happen if you ate salmon or a banana to feel happy?

You probably wouldn't get the intended effect.

Yes there may be some activity in your brain but, if you want to move away from sadness into happiness the most effective way is to change what you're thinking in your mind.

If you're feeling sad, you're thinking sad thoughts. To stop feeling sad, stop thinking sad thoughts. If you want to feel happy, think happy thoughts.

Now, I'm not saying it's as easy as just stopping thinking sad thoughts and start thinking happy thoughts and you'll feel happy, there's of course a lot more that goes into making that shift.

But what is important to understand is that your thoughts are the creator of your emotions and the kinda of thoughts you're thinking will determine how you are feeling.

Yes the brain's reaction to the compounds in the foods you're eating create feelings in your body but, your thoughts have more of an effect on how you're feeling than the food does.

You know this because you don't feel the same way every time you eat a certain food.

If you're thinking calming thoughts and eating a food, you'll feel different than if you're thinking stressful thoughts and eating that same food.

Food is not the only thing that affects your mood. Your thoughts do too.

When you're eating a food, are you thinking about how amazing it is or are you thinking about something that's overwhelming you? You'll feel different depending on which you're doing.

When you're eating a food, are you thinking of happy memories associated with it or are you thinking about all the times you binged on it? Those thoughts will for sure affect how you're feeling when you're eating it.

And here's why this thought business is good to know.

If you want to feel happy, the way to do it that will be most reliable and will create a long-lasting effect, is working on your thoughts. Thought work will be more reliable than eating food.

Can eating make you feel happy? Yes. Can doing thought work make you feel happy? Yes.

You get to decide which you choose. But make sure as you're deciding that you're considering the whole story.

The story isn't "do the thing and live happily ever after."

Eat sugar to feel happy and depending on how much you eat, there will be differing after-effects.

Eat when you're not hungry and it's the same.

Eat certain foods when you are hungry until you're full, and you'll aid in creating happy feelings in your brain.

Eat anything when you're thinking negatively and you probably won't see a change in how you feel. Maybe for a fleeting moment but probably not.

And lastly, if you're feeling negatively, and you do thought work to bring you to neutral or positive, that's where you'll see the most true happiness, without negative consequences as you naturally descend from happiness.

And that will happen, for all of you. No matter how much happiness you're creating with eating or your thoughts, it's not going to last for ever.

Our feelings ebb and flow and none of you are going to feel an endless stream of happiness.

But do know that you have an effect on how long the happiness lasts and what comes after.

Do what you can with what you're eating and thinking to create the best outcomes you can.

Alrighty, that's what I have for you today with food and happiness.

And don't forget that registration for the next Stop Binge Eating Program opens this Thursday March 10th and if you register before Monday March 14th at 5pm ET you'll get some awesome bonuses.

The link to get the info and to sign up is coachkir.com/group and if you're hearing this before Thursday the 10th, don't forget to also register for the free training I'm doing that day at 5pm ET. It's going to be a real good one! Three Secrets You Need to Know to Stop Binge Eating. You can register for that at coachkir.com/training.

Have a fantastic week and I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye!