

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #206: Thoughts About Bigger Bodies

Hi! Welcome back. I'm so glad you're here.

Let's talk about bigger bodies and thoughts about them – my thoughts, your thoughts, and other people's thoughts.

We all have thoughts and what we see most predominantly in our society when it comes to bigger bodies is negative thoughts.

Am I'm of course not talking about bigger bodies like tall people or muscular body builders. I'm talking about what some might label as fat, overweight, or obese.

It's no secret that people who have bigger bodies experience implicit and explicit biases. We also hear or see negative and mean comments about bigger bodies.

It's difficult to see that happen and I can't even imagine what it's like to experience it first hand.

Even when I was at my heaviest, I don't remember hearing any negative comments or getting negative treatment because of my weight. Now, just to be clear, my highest weight was considered overweight by BMI standards which I know, is a poor measuring tool but I say that just so you can get an idea of what my body looked like. I was overweight by about 12 pounds which was just below the mid point of what is considered overweight.

So I will admit that I am privileged to not have first hand experience with that kind of bias or negativity, or even hate.

But, I hear the stories and I empathize.

I think it sucks and it's not right and changes need to be made.

And I think that most people who are bigger would agree.

I have worked with many people who have been considered to be overweight or obese.

They tell me how they worry about what people will think about their body and how they will be treated because of their body.

And given what they've heard and seen, it makes sense that they would be concerned about this.

But unfortunately, we can't change what other people think and do.

They can only change themselves and some might not even want to change.

But that doesn't mean that these biases, stigmas, and negativities need to continue to be as prevalent as they are.

Thoughts about bodies have changed so much over the years.

Back in the 90s, it was all about being stick thin.

Now, it's all about having those curves.

And back a few hundred years ago, bigger bodies were considered to be beautiful and natural.

Who knows what it will be in the future?

And that's just what the majority of people in society as a whole believe.

When you break it down to individuals, people have different preferences and thoughts.

Not everyone thinks the same way and thankfully, more and more people are moving in the direction of appreciating and accepting bigger bodies and they're letting go of the stigmas and biases which is so great to see.

Change is happening!

But negative thoughts about bigger people still exist within a lot of people.

Are you one of them?

I don't know if you are or aren't and I'm not assuming either way.

But I think that is such an important question for you explore for yourself.

Like I said, change is happening and it will continue to happen one person at a time.

So if you want that change to happen, make sure you are being the change.

Make sure you're not holding on to biases, stigmas, and negative thoughts about bigger people.

So many times I've coached with people who are overweight and have their own negative views of bigger people.

They view themselves negatively because they are bigger.

They think they themselves are out of control, disgusting, gross, lazy, unworthy, undeserving, not enough, and so many other things because they have a bigger body.

They want other people to stop viewing themselves that way yet here they are, viewing themselves that way.

And none of those negative views I just listed are true.

Not one.

The only thing that is true is that they are a person with a body.

And other bigger people as also people with bodies.

When you start adding on adjectives like those, you're adding on opinions, not facts.

It's stopping you from being more accepting of bigger people, including yourself if you are a bigger person.

Now, if you do this, please don't judge yourself.

You're not a bad person for thinking this way.

It's most likely that you were just taught to think this way by people you know and the media.

But now it's up to you to change your views.

I personally have put a lot of effort into this.

I do my best to intentionally think how I want to be thinking if I notice a bigger person and I have thoughts about them.

I'm not perfect, I learned to believe things just like everyone else but, after doing so much practice, I'm so much better at either initially thinking how I want to think or redirecting my thoughts if one of those negative thoughts does come up.

And the place I want to go is compassion, or acceptance, or just a space of get it girl. I do that at the beach sometimes when I see a bigger woman rocking a bathing suit. Get it!

I of course don't say this out loud because it's not my place to comment on other people's bodies and as I've learned, sometimes when you think you're complimenting you're actually, what's the word I want to use here, I think disrespecting works.

Like when people praise a bigger person for working out when they wouldn't praise a thinner person.

Just leave it alone. You have no idea what is going on with that person. They may take it as encouragement but maybe not. Ya know?

Anyway, I don't look at bigger people and think they're out of control, unworthy, or not enough, or any other other things because I know that's not true.

I don't want to believe negative assumptions about them so I don't.

I believe what I want to believe.

They're good people, worthy people, deserving people.

I feel better thinking that way and I'm also one less person who is contributing to the negativity around bigger people.

And if you want to be one less person, if you aren't already, check your thoughts and beliefs.

And with that, you can be an example to others and you can speak up when you hear someone disrespecting bigger people.

You don't have to if you don't feel comfortable but, you can be an influencer of other people.

And one more thing about your thoughts about your body if your body is bigger.

When you let go of your negativity about your body and other bigger bodies, you won't spend as much time worrying about what other people are thinking about it.

Most of the time when you think other people are thinking negatively, it's because you do. You're projecting.

But when you have more neutral to positive thoughts, you'll project more of those.

We tend to think people agree with our opinions, and what we think about us we think they think.

So if you think you're just a human with a body and you're a good, worthy, deserving person who is enough, then you'll be more likely to think they think that too.

So much more good can come from you thinking better about bigger bodies than from thinking negatively about them.

Thinking negatively isn't likely to cause you to change your body to be thinner sustainably.

It usually leads to desperate measures, fad diets, and quick fixes to change or, leads to doing nothing at all because you feel so miserable when you think about yourself that way.

And thinking or speaking negatively about other people's bodies isn't likely going to make them change sustainably either.

And if you're a thinner person, the same could happen. You have negative thoughts about who you would be as a bigger person so you may go to drastic measures to avoid it or become overly restrictive with yourself. Neither of which will be helpful when you're working on stopping binge eating by the way.

So again, check your thoughts and beliefs. Be the change. Be an example.

Bye bye.