

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #208: Consuming Low or Zero Calorie Food/Drink to Not Binge

Hello!

Are you ready to feel free and relaxed around food, to think about food less, and to stop feeling so crappy after binge eating?

Are you ready to shed your identity of being a binge eater and become a quote, normal eater?

Then come and join me in the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Group Coaching Program!

Registration is opening next week on Thursday August 4th of 2022 and registration will only be open for about one week.

And for those of you who sign up before Monday August 8th at 5pm ET, you're going to get some awesome bonuses, one of which people have called "a game-changer" because it will help you be more engaged in some of the work I recommend you do in the program and help you be more consistent which will help you get results more quickly.

Also, I want to mention, in case I haven't before, a few months ago, I incorporated eating workshops into the program that have been hugely insightful and profound for people and recently, one of my group members said, "These workshops have literally changed my life." And I've seen it for her and it's amazing. I just love watching what people learn about themselves and their relationship with food when we do these and they love experiencing it!

There's just so much good stuff with the workshops, and the new version of the course within the program, and all the coaching you receive and the community of people who are doing the same work you are, I am just doing my best to set my group members up for success and it's happening!

I'm here helping you on this podcast every week but, if you're wanting more personalized help, and if you're wanting to make more progress than you are on your own, then joining me in the program is where I will help you do that. We'll actually talk instead of you just listening to me, we'll dive deep, and we'll be a team.

So if this is something you're interested in, go to coachkir.com/group to get all the info, and make sure you note the new duration and pricing on that page, and if you have any questions that aren't answered there, send an email to info@coachkir.com.

And now, let's talk about consuming low or zero calorie food and drinks in order to not binge.

This is a very common technique that people use where they're feeling an urge to binge, or just an urge to eat something, and instead of just going and eating what they're urging to eat, they consume something else.

Things like gum, sparkling water, tea, diet soda, and vegetables that are low to no calories.

Or, things that are a lower-calorie alternative to what you're actually wanting like diet ice creams, lite popcorn, rice cakes, diet cookies, things like that.

Now, I just want to say upfront that those foods and drinks I mentioned are not inherently bad.

I personally like and consume some of those things and I know most people would say the same.

So consuming them is not a problem and consuming them when you're feeling an urge for something else might not be a problem either.

And if it's not a problem for you and you find it to be helpful then go for it. If it's not a problem for you, it's not a problem.

But sometimes, for some people, it is and I want to talk about two reasons why that is.

The first reason is that it might leave you still feeling the urge and feeling dissatisfied, and could lead to excessive consumption.

One of my group members recently was telling me that she'll sometimes feel an urge for chips but instead of eating chips, she'll eat popcorn because it's lower calorie. But then after she eats the popcorn, she's not satisfied because she really wanted chips so she ends up eating the chips. Then, since she's now eating the chips that she thinks she shouldn't eat, and now she's in the zone of eating foods she doesn't usually allow, she goes to eat more food she doesn't usually allow that she really wants. On top of that, she feels bad about eating both the chips *and* the popcorn and that isn't helping her either.

Had she just given herself permission to eat what she really wanted in the first place, which was the chips, this all may not have happened.

Giving yourself permission is so important here, and for her, it is giving herself permission to eat the chips. So often, people who binge eat are not allowing themselves to eat what they actually want to eat so then they're left feeling dissatisfied when they eat something else.

Dissatisfied is not a feeling we want to be feeling when we've finished eating something. We want to feel satisfied and content, those are feelings that will make it easier to stop.

Like I talked about in episode #199 about when your food is disappointing, you can feel disappointed and dissatisfied *and* stop eating but, it will be so much easier to stop if you're not feeling that way.

So help yourself out and eat what you're wanting to eat.

Now, I get that you might be afraid that even if you do that you'll still overeat, maybe binge.

You'll be enjoying it so much that you won't want to stop eating.

One piece of advice that I'll give you to help you to not do that is to slow down and savor what you're eating so you're actually tasting it.

In the eating workshops I mentioned before, that's one of the things the participants do. They're actually eating a food that they've overeaten, or binged on before, and almost every time in the workshop, they are satisfied having eaten a moderate, or small amount of the food because they ate it mindfully instead of eating fast without really tasting it.

It is much more likely that you will be mentally and emotionally satisfied with a smaller amount of food if you are eating it slowly and mindfully.

You can be satisfied with a moderate amount. It's possible for you. I've seen it happen so many times with people who didn't think it was possible for them.

So, if you're not eating what you want to be eating and are instead choosing something else only because it's low or zero calories, you might be left dissatisfied which could put you on the path to more eating.

Now let me tell you about another group member of mine. Her go-to was gum. In her mind, chewing gum would stop her from bingeing. If she felt an urge, she'd chew.

It might have worked sometimes, and it may have satisfied her urge to chew something sometimes, but time and time again, she would still binge after chewing the gum because chewing gum did not change how she was feeling. It didn't make the urge go away.

She wasn't urging for gum, she was urging for a binge or urging to eat something and that gum did not satisfy that urge.

Now, let's be clear that if she's urging for a binge I'm not going to tell her to satisfy her binge urge by bingeing. But what I am going to tell her is that chewing gum isn't going to be a reliable solution. And, her obsession with gum, her need for it, the money she would spend on it, the amount she would chew, was not worth it because in the end what she thought the gum would do, it wouldn't do.

She needed to learn to rely on other techniques instead of going back to this one that was just wasting her time, energy, and money.

And I think that's a good lesson for anyone who keeps trying the same things that don't result in the outcome they're wanting.

Work on something else. Try something else.

For me, two of my go to's that I remember using to stop me from bingeing were counting calories and drinking Diet Coke.

Counting calories for all those years didn't stop my bingeing and sometimes I used calories as a reason to binge. If I had calories to spare, I might justify a binge. If I already went over my calories for the day, I might justify a binge.

It didn't really help me yet I kept doing it thinking it would stop me from bingeing.

And Diet Coke, I would try to satisfy my urge to eat by drinking it. And to say I became obsessed with it is an understatement. It became yet another thing that I wouldn't allow myself to buy and keep in my home.

I would buy a 12 pack of cans, because to me, drinking it from a can tasted the best, and there were many occasions that I would have two a day. Maybe three. And when I wouldn't buy the cans, I'd go around the corner to the convenience store and buy a fountain soda, quite often. And I'm not saying that if you do that too it's a problem. Like I said, if it's not a problem for you then it's not a problem. But for me, I did not like that I drank so much of it.

I did not feel good when I drank that much of it.

And, I definitely didn't like that I was so obsessed with it.

And when I look back at how I handled my cravings for it, I almost always I just gave in.

And like with my group member who chewed the gum, I also used it as a way to suppress my urge to eat.

And, this brings me to the second reason why consuming low or zero calorie food and drinks when you're feeling an urge to binge or to eat might be a problem.

You're still giving in to the urge.

You might not be bingeing or consuming a lot of calories but, you're still not learning how to not giving in to an urge.

You're not building the skill of being able to sit through an urge until it passes, which is such an important skill to have if you're going to stop binge eating and decrease your overeating too.

There's going to be so many times when you're going to feel an urge to keep eating and you need to be willing to feel that urge without eating if you want to not overeat or binge.

And sometimes, a low or no calorie option isn't going to be there to help you get through it.

So what do you do then?

Like I said, it can help sometimes, and sometimes even without any consequence but, it's not reliable or available 100% of the time, it might cause you to form an obsession because you think you need it, it might not satisfy you making it harder for you to not consume more, and you don't build the skill of not giving in to urges.

So instead of using low or zero calorie food and drinks to get you through your urge or distract you from it, try this instead.

Feel how you're feeling and let it happen without getting angry, panicked, worried, or impatient.

Allow it to be there and be at peace with the fact that you're feeling uncomfortable.

It will pass but only if you're not fighting or arguing with it which will most likely intensify it.

When you're calm in the midst of feeling an urge, it will pass more quickly.

I can't tell you how long it will take but I can tell you that when you're angry, panicked, worried, or impatient it will for sure exist longer than when you're calm, accepting, and patient.

If you want to be better at not giving in to your urges to binge or to overeat, then don't give in to them even with low or zero calorie food and drinks.

And just know that the more consistent you are with not giving in to urges, the sooner you will be more comfortable with it, the sooner you will get better at it, and the sooner you will feel less of your habitual urges.

It's worth it to just not give in to your urge by not consuming anything.

Practice just feeling it without replacing what you're urging for with something else that you think is better because it's low or zero calories.

What's better is not giving in at all.

Alright, that's all for today, and remember, I'm here to give you more in depth help inside of The Stop Binge Eating Program and you can get all the info and register once registration opens on Thursday August 4th of 2022 at coachkir.com/group.

I'll talk to you next time.

Bye bye.

