

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #236: Your Thoughts About Your Desires

Hi! Let's talk about your desires.

We all have desires for so many things, including food, and it's totally normal.

But sometimes, people have some thoughts about their food desires, whether it be *what* they're desiring or *when* they're desiring it.

They might judge themselves for desiring and wanting what they want and the "should's" start coming into their mind.

"I shouldn't want this."

"I shouldn't want this right now."

Or then there's the "I don't want to's."

"I don't want to want this," or "I don't want to want this now."

Whether you're thinking you shouldn't or don't want to, both are not going to feel good because you're either judging yourself or upsetting yourself.

And you might also be shaming yourself.

It could be that you think it's wrong to have the desire you have.

All these feelings you might feel because of your thoughts about your desire and what you want, ashamed, judged, or upset, are most likely going to drive you to deny yourself what you desire.

And it's probably not going to be an easy denial, but more like a denial with some struggle because there's this desire driving you toward what you want and then your resistance to the desire. That resistance might cause a back and forth, tug of war, and lots of mental chatter none of which will make it easy to not give yourself what you're desiring.

What's really happening here too is that you're using willpower and are trying to will away your desire.

"Shoulding" yourself and telling yourself you don't want to want this desire isn't going to make it go away.

So I recommend you stop trying to change your desire in that way.

Now, I will tell you how you can change your desire in an effective way but, before you can even do that, the shaming and judgement needs to stop.

The shame and judgement is a layer that's unnecessary and it's stopping you from settling your desire whether that settling is either giving yourself what you desire or changing your desire.

So you're going to drop the shame and judgement here by normalizing the desire you're experiencing.

It's not wrong, you're not abnormal, and we can find how it makes sense that you're desiring what you're desiring.

It makes sense because the food you're desiring is delicious. You like it. Of course you're going to desire it.

Or if the food you're desiring isn't delicious, I think we've all experienced a time when we're desiring something that we know won't even be that good, you can still find a reason why it makes sense. Maybe it makes sense just because it's sweet and you're wanting something sweet, or you're wanting pleasure and that food is good enough, or at least it's something.

Or maybe you're just looking for something to do, a way to procrastinate, or you're wanting to feel better and even though that food's not going to be amazing, it's better than nothing.

And what it comes down to a lot of the time is that you've associated eating food with some kind of reward, whether it be feeling good, feeling better, entertainment, a way to distract yourself, pleasure, and so when you're desiring one of those things, your brain will offer the idea of eating food.

And none of this is wrong.

It's okay to associate food with those things and it's not uncommon to do. Tons of people do this and also, there's lots of people who don't judge or shame themselves for it.

So when they're desiring eating food because they want to accomplish something by eating it, or they want a reward from eating it, they either answer that desire or they don't, without fighting, resisting, or making themselves feel bad about it.

And when you stop doing those things too, then you can actually decide if you really do want to answer your desire or not.

So you're going to normalize the desire you experience. It's not wrong of you to desire, desire is normal. Find why it makes sense for you. Ask yourself why you actually should be desiring it and why you should be desiring it in this moment.

Then, you're going to decide if you want to answer your desire and give yourself what you're desiring or if you're going to leave it unanswered and not give it to yourself.

Now, sometimes once you drop the shaming and judging, it will be easy for you to know which you want to do.

But sometimes, especially when you're so used to denying yourself of what you desire, you don't know. You don't even know how to know if you want it or not.

So I'm going to give you one simple question that you can ask yourself to help you know.

Do you have a good reason to not eat it?

Recently I took notice of something that people who would be considered normal eaters say when they're offered something.

They'll say something like, "Why not?"

And what they're saying when they say this is that for them, there isn't really a good reason to say no.

So when you're desiring something, ask yourself that question and answer it.

Why not?

And really take a moment to consider if you do have good reasons to not eat it.

And I want to emphasize the "good."

You might have reasons to not eat it that are reasons you don't like.

For example, if your reason to not eat it is because that food is "bad," and not bad like rotten but bad like morally bad, then I wouldn't consider that to be a good reason to not eat it.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, probably 1000's of times in my life, that labelling foods that you like as "bad" is not as useful as you might think it is.

Sure it may deter you from eating it sometimes but then either you will eat it one day and feel guilty about eating it, which is going to stop you from experiencing the maximum amount of pleasure that you could experience eating that food or you will eat it one day and end up bingeing on it because you're only going to allow yourself to eat this bad food this one time so you're going to get as much "bad" as you can now and then be good later.

So if you desire a food and you're considering not answering that desire because you think the food is bad, come up with a better reason.

If you can't, then just eat the food.

If you don't have a good reason that you like for not eating what you desire, then eat it.

It's that simple.

But you might be wondering what would be a good reason and I'll give you a few examples of what might be good reasons for me that I like. And I just want to preface this by saying that these are *my* reasons and they don't have to be yours too. We all have different reasons and I may care about some things more than you and you might care about other things more than me and that's all okay.

So I might not eat something I'm desiring because I'm full and don't want to feel too full, or because I'll be going to sleep soon and I don't want that food to mess with my sleep, or because that food usually doesn't feel good in my stomach and I don't want to feel that discomfort, or because I already ate a joy food or two that day and don't want to have another because of how it might make me feel later or the next day.

So most of the time my reasons are based on how I'll feel if I eat it. I don't want to feel too full, or feel tired, or feel uncomfortable, or feel sluggish or foggy.

And I also want to say that sometimes, I don't care about these reasons and I just eat the food knowing that this reason is a possibility and I own that decision I made. When I do experience that consequence that I knew would most likely happen, I don't beat myself up for it, I accept my decision.

So when you're feeling desire for something, ask yourself, "Do I have a good reason to not eat it?"

See what comes up and you get to decide if they actually are good reasons for you in that moment and if you like those reasons.

So before I mentioned that you can change your desire in an effective way and that's how you do it if that's in fact what you want to do.

Once you drop the shaming and judging, you might not want to change your desire now that you see there's nothing wrong with desiring what you desire.

But you also might want to and you do that by being honest with yourself about why you don't want it and by telling yourself the reasons why like I mentioned a moment ago.

When you have more reasons, and better reasons to not want something than to want it, your desire is going to decrease.

This is why people so easily say no to food when you're like, "How the heck are you so easily saying no??" It's because of what they're thinking about eating that food.

You're probably struggling because you're only focused on how good it will taste and if that's the only thing on your mind then your desire will be high and saying no will be challenging.

Or you'll struggle if you're thinking you need that food to get a reward like pleasure, or to accomplish something like feeling a better feeling or distracting yourself.

But when you put more focus on the reasons why you don't want it, and again, those reasons have to be good ones that you like, and when you also put your focus on how you can get the reward or accomplish something without eating that food, then your desire will decrease. You won't think you need it like you were thinking you needed it.

So, when you are desiring something, if you notice yourself "shoulding" yourself or getting upset about desiring it or shaming yourself for desiring it, normalize it.

You can find a reason why you desire it that's not wrong at all. There's a reason why that makes sense, even if it's not what you want to be happening.

And it's okay to desire it. Desire in itself is a normal part of being a human. We naturally desire pleasure and good feelings and eating food is something that has provided you with those in the past so it makes sense that your brain would offer that to you.

Then once you've accepted your desire, ask yourself if you have a good reason to not eat what you desire.

See what reasons come up, if any, and see if you like them.

If you find good reasons that you like, don't answer your desire and to help you decrease the desire, repeat telling yourself those reasons.

If you don't find any reasons or if the ones you do find are not reasons you like, then give yourself what you're desiring.

And one last thing before I go.

This is not just for food, you can do this with anything that you may desire that you have judgment about.

If you desire an ex, a job, a home, a lifestyle, a friend, a hobby, a big goal, anything, use this same process.

You are not weak or out of control because you desire something and you're not wrong or abnormal for desiring something.

You're just a person who is thinking desirably about it for a reason that in some way makes sense.

Accept your desires, drop the shaming and judging, and then allow yourself to have what you desire or work on desiring it less.

Alright, that's all for today and I'll talk to you next time.

Bye bye.