

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #239: Core Principles – Being Present, Allowing, Accepting

Hello! For today's episode, I want to talk with you about a few core principles that come up often when I'm coaching with my group members.

These are some things that are helpful with so many things in life and when it comes to stopping binge eating, they're going to be super helpful too.

So the 3 things I want to focus on in today's episode are being present, allowing, accepting.

The reason why these are so important when you're working on stopping binge eating is because a lot of the time, your lack of them is what will drive you to eat, overeat, or binge.

So when you bring them into your life, the excessive eating will greatly decrease, even stop.

So let's talk about each one, why you might not be incorporating them into your life, and how things will change if you do.

First, being present, and I'm talking about being present with yourself and with your body.

That includes being present with your thoughts, with your emotions, and with physical sensations in your body like hunger and fullness.

What happens for a lot of people who binge eat is that they have become so disconnected with and are ignoring these things.

When they're eating, they're trying to quiet their thoughts, are trying to numb their emotions, are choosing to eat beyond when their body tells them they're full because they don't want the good feelings to end, or are eating when they're not hungry because they're afraid to feel hunger.

Instead of being present with what's happening internally, they're using food to distract themselves from it, or even to try and control it so it's no longer present at all.

And what ultimately ends up happening is this.

The same thoughts and feelings keep coming up because they're not being addressed and handled productively.

Or they get into habits of not eating according to their hunger and fullness cues and might also lose trust in those cues.

And it all just perpetuates excessive eating when they keep ignoring what's happening internally because they're just reacting to the same things in the same way over and over again without even realizing they're doing it.

When you're not present with something and not aware of it when it's happening, then you can't do anything to handle it productively and for sure can't change it.

And that lack of presence and awareness will cause you react without even realizing what you're reacting to and that's when you feel like you're on autopilot.

Being present with yourself is something you choose to do or not do and it might be easier to just check out and not pay attention but when you do choose to be present, you can also be intentional about what you choose to do with what you're present with.

So next, there's accepting.

This means you're receiving what is, welcoming it, and agreeing with it.

What it isn't is rejecting, denying, or arguing with it.

When you're not accepting, you're thinking things like, "I hate this," "I wish this would stop," or "This shouldn't be happening."

Just like with being present, this can happen with your thoughts, feelings, and hunger, and some other things that many people who binge eat aren't accepting of are themselves, their mistakes, their past, and their bodies.

So you might think you shouldn't be thinking what you're thinking, or feeling what you're feeling, or you shouldn't be hungry, or you shouldn't be how you are, you shouldn't have made the mistake you did, shouldn't have done what you did in the past, and shouldn't have the body you have.

Or, you can replace all those should's with "hate." You hate your body, hate yourself, hate how you feel, etc.

When you are thinking that way, when you're rejecting what is true in this moment, you are going to create more discomfort for yourself, you're going to feel more negative uncomfortable emotions, and the more uncomfortable you feel, the harder it will be for you to make rational decisions, to not give up on yourself and eat, and to not try and find the easiest way out of whatever it is you're not accepting.

So often people eat to try and change it to something they are accepting of. This is what happens when you're not accepting of your thoughts and feelings. You eat to try and change them to thoughts and feelings you are accepting of.

Or they eat to avoid thinking about what they're not accepting of, as a way to distract themselves from it, or as a way to not feel how they don't want to feel.

And what happens a lot of the time is that people don't want to be accepting.

They think that if they're accepting of what they ate, then they're just going to continue eating that way.

Or if they're accepting of their body then they'll just continue to live in this body they hate.

But if you're not accepting, then what's the other option? To hate? To beat yourself up about it?

If you've ever tried to hate something into changing, you've probably noticed that it doesn't work, or at least doesn't work long-term.

You can hate your body into changing but think about how you would do that. Hate isn't going to drive positive, healthy behaviors. It's most likely going to drive unhealthy, desperate, unsustainable behaviors.

You can also hate how you feel but all that's going to do is cause you to feel even more feelings you don't want to feel. You're then feeling whatever the feeling is and now adding hate to it so that's not moving you in a positive direction.

And if you're beating yourself up about the thoughts you're thinking or about what you ate or how much you ate, you're going to feel terrible and again, feeling terrible is not going to fuel positive behaviors. That's the kind of thing that leads to drastic changes and overly restricting yourself.

So you can hate the things, you can beat yourself up about the things, or you can be accepting of the things.

Depending on what it is, it might take a few minutes for it to go away or to change, and other things might take longer. Some might never change.

And being unaccepting of what is your reality right now isn't going to stop it from existing. Thoughts, feelings, hunger, food, the body you have are all going to exist in the world whether you personally are allowing them into your life or not.

And you're going to make mistakes and sometimes act how you don't want to be acting. This is just how it is for us imperfect humans.

And you can argue with all of this or agree with it.

It's the Byron Katie quote that says, "When you argue with reality, you lose, but only 100% of the time."

That's what's happening when you're not agreeing with reality.

And this doesn't mean you're condoning it or liking it. It just means you're not wishing it was different, believing it should be different, or are trying to hate it out of existence.

The reality is that you're thinking thoughts, feeling feelings, feeling physical sensations, feeling tempted, feeling urges, made a mistake, are being who you are right now, were being who you were, and have the body you have.

This is true. This is what is. This is where you are and it shouldn't be different because it's not.

That is accepting.

And now the third principle for today is allowing.

Now, if you're someone who isn't being present, then you're most likely not accepting because you have to be present with something in order to accept it and if you're not doing those then you for sure aren't allowing. And I'm talking about allowing the same things I just talked about with being present and accepting along with allowing things we cannot control.

Things like allowing food to exist around you without eating it or allowing other people to do what they choose to do and say what they choose to say.

What people tend to do instead is fight or use force to make it be how they want it to be or eat to try and change it quickly and easily.

For example, if they're feeling feelings they don't want to be feeling, they'll eat to try and feel differently.

Or they'll eat to try and think differently, to clear or ease their mind.

Or they'll eat a lot to avoid feeling hungry.

Or they'll eat food that's around so they don't feel tempted, feel desire, or feel urges because they think that once the food is gone, they won't feel that way anymore.

Or they'll eat to make another person think or feel a certain way, which is an example of people pleasing.

They won't allow their thoughts to be in their mind, for their feelings to be in their body, for hunger to be in their body, for food to be around them, or for other people to think and feel however they do.

But not allowing these things isn't going to change anything and some of the time we think that if we don't allow something then it will just go away.

But the opposite is usually true.

If you're not allowing something internal and you're being forceful with it, or are fighting it, or are trying to will it away, most of the time, that's just going to intensify it or at least cause it to stick around.

And not allowing something like that that intensifies is exhausting. You're going to use so much mental energy doing something that's not going to be truly helpful for you or that won't ultimately create a positive outcome for you.

Because in the end, not much, if anything, is going to change when you're not allowing these things to happen.

And when it comes to things outside of us, like food and people, we simply cannot change them and when we don't allow the food to be there or allow people to be as they are, all we're really doing is causing ourselves to experience so much anger and resentment.

So you can try to make these things not happen, and try to not allow them in your life but you will not be successful.

Instead, you might keep eating to stop them from existing and that will of course stop you from eating how you really want to be eating.

So all that is why I recommend you practice being present, accepting, and allowing.

Be willing to be with what is instead of running from it or trying to change it quickly with food.

Take moments throughout your day to check in with yourself, just like you might check in with your partner or a friend or a family member or your kid to see how they're doing when you're with them.

If you notice you're doing something you don't really want to be doing, take a moment to check in with how you're feeling or what you're thinking. Be present with your thoughts and feelings and with your actions.

When you do notice and acknowledge what's happening or what's happened, be accepting of it. It's happening or happened whether you like it or not. Agree with what is, even if you don't condone it.

And allow what's happening within you to happen without trying to force it to change. Allow food to be what and where it is because you don't have control over what foods do or don't exist in the world and don't have control over what other people do with food and where they bring it and what they offer to you and what they eat and don't eat. You can allow what you can't control instead of trying to change what you don't have the power to change in this moment right now.

If you do have the power to change it, great, go for it, make that change. But if you don't, allow it to be what it is. It'll be so much better for you emotionally and mentally than if you fight with it.

Choose one of these to work on or choose them all depending on what you are and aren't already doing.

Create more peace and less resistance for yourself so you have more energy to do what you really want to be doing and what will be useful for you to do.

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