

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #252: Having Compassion and Excusing After Binges

Hi! Something very exciting is happening in one month from yesterday. Registration for another round of The Stop Binge Eating Program will be opening up on June 29th of 2023!

Originally I wasn't going to open another one until the fall but I don't want to make you wait if you are ready to start before then.

So, are you ready? Is it time for you to go all in on changing your eating habits, which will change you and your life?

If it is, you can get all the most up to date info about the program by going to coachkir.com/group and on that page you can also join the waitlist. Joining the waitlist means that you will be the first to be notified via email once registration opens so you can get started on The Stop Binge Eating coursework ASAP and to make sure you don't miss out on the bonus I'm offering to those who sign up in the first few days.

If you have any questions about the program that aren't answered on that info page, coachkir.com/group then please email your questions to info@coachkir.com.

You can do this and it will be easier when we do it together.

Alright, now today I'm talking about having compassion for yourself and excusing what you did after a binge.

Something that a lot of people need to work on in order to stop binge eating is their self-talk.

It's so important because how you talk to yourself will determine how you feel and how you feel will have a huge impact on how you behave.

So your self-talk can either help you to mentally recover quickly after a binge and get yourself back to how you want to be eating sooner than later or it can bring you down and lead you to binge again.

And this doesn't just go for bingeing. This goes for overeating, or for any kind of mistake.

Mistakes happen, and I'd bet that you'd like to move on from them as soon as possible and your self-talk is going to be a huge factor is how long it takes for you to move on.

So as far as self-talk after binges goes, you've probably heard me say tons of times that you should be kind to yourself.

And recently when I was coaching one of my group members about this, she told me that when she's kind to herself and is compassionate with herself, it seems like she's excusing what she did.

So if this is something that you're concerned about too when it comes to being kind to yourself, and having compassion for yourself, here's what I want you to know.

Being kind and compassionate, and excusing are not the same thing and don't have to go together.

You can be kind and compassionate without excusing.

If anyone knows how hard it can be to not binge, it's you. You have so much understanding for yourself and why you did what you did.

So when you're being kind and compassionate with yourself, you're expressing that understanding to yourself. You get it, and you can empathize with yourself because yes, it was a hard moment to get through and you understand why you did what you did.

But if you don't understand why you did what you did, why you gave in to that urge, why you binged, then it will be really helpful for you to explore what it might have been.

Take a guess. Look back to what what was going on both externally in your world and internally in your mind and body. Try to find what triggered your urge. Also, try to remember that moment when you made the decision to give in to your urge, or made the decision to buy the food, or to go get the food, or to eat the food.

And if you can't remember any of that, if you're completely clueless as to why any of it happened, then that right there is showing you a reason why it happened.

You weren't present with yourself. You weren't listening to your thoughts. You weren't paying attention to how your body felt. You weren't observing yourself going for the food. And if you're going to catch yourself before a binge so you can prevent a binge, you need to be aware of either your thoughts, feelings, or actions.

So you can look back and understand that one reason why it happened was because you weren't aware of what was going on with yourself.

And if that's what it was, or if it was something else that you clearly remember, no matter what it was, it is not going to be useful for you to beat yourself up about it and be hard on yourself because that isn't going to help you. It's just going to make you feel worse.

Now, I do want to be clear here that this moment of self-compassion is just part of the recovery process after a binge.

I like to think of it happening in stages where you start with compassion and forgiveness, then you get curious and again, you may have to flip the compassion and curiosity parts if you're having a hard time understanding, and then you move on to encouraging yourself and that encouraging part might look different for some people.

For some people, they prefer gentle encouragement. For some people, they prefer encouragement that's a little more assertive.

Personally, I find myself doing both with myself. Depends on what happened, what my goals are, how repetitive my mistakes have been, so many different factors.

And when I'm working with my group members, I do my best to gauge which is the best option when I'm coaching them and again, it depends on how they're feeling in that moment when I'm coaching them, what they did, and as I get to know them better, I learn more about what they respond to best and they also get used to hearing encouragement that is more assertive and know that it's coming from a place of love and a strong desire for them to improve.

So you're for sure going to make sure that compassion is part of the equation here so you're not making yourself feel any crappier.

But when you're having compassion, you're not going to excuse what you did.

You're going to acknowledge what you did, and why you did it, and you're going to take responsibility for it.

You're not going to excuse what you did by placing blame either on something outside of you or even blaming yourself and something internal.

Because that's what we usually consider excuses to be – not taking responsibility.

You're not holding yourself accountable and here's the thing.

When you make excuses, and don't take responsibility, and don't hold yourself accountable, you end up missing out on learning how you can do better.

If I feel an urge to binge and I excuse it by saying that there was nothing I could do, not only am I wrong but, I miss out on learning what I could have done and therefore, miss out on an opportunity to become more knowledgeable about myself and work on building useful skills for the future.

Or if I excuse it by saying that it wasn't my fault because so-and-so left all that food in my home then, it kinda puts me in a helpless place and in that place, again, there's nothing I can do. But that's not true so I have to be honest with myself about what part I played in this that created the result of me bingeing on that food.

So in these examples, compassion would be understanding that the urge was strong and I didn't know what to do. It wasn't that I couldn't do anything, I didn't know what to do. I can have understanding about that.

Or maybe I just didn't want to stop myself. I wanted to give in and eat and I think we can all understand that. We've all been there, right? We get it.

And in the second example, compassion could be understanding that I have a hard time not eating those foods when they're around because I never allow myself to eat them and therefore have a strong desire to eat them when they're there. I can take responsibility for how I'm overly restricting myself and how hard it was for me to not give in to that desire I felt.

So it's not excusing, or blaming, it's understanding and taking personal responsibility for what happened.

It might seem like a fine line between the two but there is a line and it matters what side of it you're on.

And you'll likely know what side you're on based on how you feel.

If you're feeling defensive, you're most likely excusing. But if you feel compassion, or are feeling a sense of ownership, you're most likely not excusing.

And again, it can feel good to be in that place of ownership because from that place is where you can make change for yourself and change your course and change what happens in the future when you're in the same circumstances again.

So you can be kind to yourself, and be compassionate, without excusing and without condoning your behavior.

You're not going to let it go or let yourself off the hook or forget about it, you're going to address it, and figure out what happened, figure out where you are responsible in that situation, and not from a place of blaming yourself, just figuring out the series of events and what your decisions were and what you were thinking and maybe what you missed.

And you're going to be kind to yourself as you do. You're not going to belittle yourself or be mean to yourself. You probably already feel bad enough and you don't need to add to it.

You're going to empathize, and be warm and comforting, and get down to the facts about your thoughts, feelings, and actions leading up to the binge and even to the end of the binge.

This is part of a healthy relationship with yourself, which I would say is the most important relationship you have.

How you talk to yourself and treat yourself when you make a mistake will make or break that relationship.

And I will tell you, the people who stop binge eating, are the ones who take their relationship with themselves very seriously.

Be that person.

Have compassion without excusing if you binge, or if you make any mistake.

Then encourage and motivate yourself in whatever way works best for you.

Talk to yourself like you'd want other people to talk to you.

Alright, that's what I've got for today, don't forget to get on the waitlist for the next Stop Binge Eating Program by going to coachkir.com/group, and I'll talk to you next time, bye bye.