

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #261: Thinking You're Out of Control When You Want and Eat More

Hi! Today we're talking about thinking you're out of control when you want more food.

A few weeks ago, this topic came up during one of the group coaching calls in The Stop Binge Eating Program and I decided I wanted to talk about it with you because I know that my group member who brought it up is not the only one who experiences this.

I know I did and I bet that a lot of you do too.

So basically what was happening for her was that she'd eat something, then she'd want more, so she'd eat more, then she'd want more, she'd eat more, she'd think she was out of control, and then she'd keep eating and eating.

Sound familiar?

The same thing would happen to me where I'd feel that desire, that urge for more and as I was going to get more food I'd immediately think I was out of control.

And when we think we're out of control, we feel out of control, and we act out of control.

So we don't even try to stop ourselves.

This perception of being out of control is one of the main indicators of binge eating. Most people who binge eat have experienced this and describe their eating as being out of control or describe themselves as being out of control.

But the truth is, you are not out of control.

There's a difference between actually being out of control and not having control over what your body is doing and what you are doing vs thinking you're out of control.

When you're eating, you are in fact making the decision to eat another bite, whether you realize you're making the decision or not.

No one is forcing you to eat. Nothing outside of you is controlling you. You are.

Again, you might not notice that you're making the decision to eat more but you are. It's like how sometimes you're driving home, and are not really paying attention to where you're going or what you're doing because driving home is so habitual and easy and automatic for you but you are still making decisions to press on the gas pedal, press on the brake pedal, or take a turn. After a few minutes you might be somewhere and not even remember taking those turns but you made the decision to take them.

The same thing can happen with eating food where you're making all these decisions to eat another bite, to go get something salty, to go get something sweet, to open another package and you don't actually hear yourself making the decision.

But it's happening.

It's so important for us to acknowledge that we are the ones in control of what we're doing because if we don't, we'll be stuck in the belief that there is nothing we can do.

If we're not in control, then we can't do anything to stop ourselves.

But we are in control and that's why sometimes we stop before it becomes a full on binge. Ever had what you'd consider to be a mini-binge? You're in control and stopping yourself before it becomes a legit binge.

And it's why we eventually stop when we do even after experiencing a full on binge.

We don't stop just because the food is gone. We could go and buy more food or find something, anything to eat.

We don't stop just because we're too full. I've for sure kept eating, even just a few more bites, even after I've felt extremely, pushed to the limit full.

We stop because we decide to stop. We finally want to stop, we're finally okay with stopping, and we use the control we have to finally stop eating.

So you're not out of control but you may think you are, just like my group member thought she was.

And here's why she thought that.

It's because of what she was making it mean when she felt the desire or urge for more and how she was choosing to respond to that feeling.

So first, let's talk about the feeling.

She felt that desire for more, or an urge for more, and she made that feeling mean that she was out of control.

But she didn't have to make it mean that she's out of control and it honestly doesn't mean that she is.

What the feeling means is that she's feeling sensations in her body.

She's thinking about eating more and how good it would taste and feel and her thoughts are causing her to feel how she's feeling.

She was feeling a feeling.

That feeling was desire or an urge. It was not her being out of control.

And then, that feeling was driving her to eat, to take action.

And when she felt it, she'd do what the feeling was driving her to do. She was deciding to do what the feeling was driving her to do.

Now, doing what your feeling drives you to do isn't required, it's not mandatory.

There are lots of times that we don't do what our feelings are driving us to do.

Sometimes your anger might drive you to yell at someone but you don't.

Sometimes your fear may drive you to not do something but you do do it.

Sometimes your frustration might drive you to quit but you don't.

And sometimes your desire or urge might drive you to eat and you don't.

But if you're feeling that desire to eat more and you make it mean that you're out of control, then you're not even going to try to not eat. You're going to do exactly what the desire is driving you to do.

So it's so important for you to know that just because you're feeling a desire or urge to eat doesn't mean you *have* to eat.

And if you do eat, you're not out of control. You made the decision to eat and you are in control of the decisions you make.

Now, I'm not saying it's easy to make the decision to not eat, I wish it were, otherwise none of us would have ever struggled with our eating. So please don't think I'm downplaying how difficult it can be to decide to not eat more and then follow through on that decision.

But what I am saying is that we all need to acknowledge that we're making the decisions we're making instead of just saying we're out of control. Because we're not.

We're just not aware of the decisions we're making, or don't know how to follow through on a decision to not eat, or simply don't want to decide to not eat.

And when you acknowledge this and take responsibility for this, that's when you can start taking action to use the control that you do have and do the work to not eat more when you truly don't want to eat more.

You have to believe you're in control before you actually take control.

And that feeling you're feeling also doesn't mean that you are out of control.

All it really means is that you're thinking you want more and that thought is causing you to feel desire or an urge.

That's why you're feeling how you're feeling.

And if you're thinking you *really* want more then the feeling will be more intense but that still doesn't mean you're out of control and can't make the decision to not eat more.

You can still make the decision to feel how you're feeling without eating to make the feeling go away.

That's really what this comes down to. Deciding to feel instead of deciding to eat and actually doing what you've decided.

It was really interesting how my group member even described what she experienced.

She said she ate something, wanted more, decided to have more, and was out of control.

Notice what she said.

She *decided* to have more. If she's deciding, which she was, then she was not out of control.

There was a feeling of desire, then she made a decision, and she followed through on that decision.

She was deciding and doing.

That is not being out of control.

Being out of control means it's no longer possible to manage and she was managing.

But she just wasn't managing in the way that she truly wants to and that's why she perceived it as being out of control.

She was just doing what her feeling was driving her to do instead of doing the work to allow herself to feel the feeling without doing what the feeling is driving her to do.

What she really wants to do is manage herself so she doesn't eat, even though she's feeling that desire or urge.

But in order to do that, she has to recognize that she is not out of control when she feels that feeling and does in fact have the ability to not eat.

She can choose to feel the feeling instead and not eat.

She can make a decision to feel instead of making the decision to eat.

So if you feel desire or an urge, you are not out of control.

If you eat in response to your desire or urge, you are not out of control.

You are making the decision to eat.

And this is a good thing because that means you can do something about it and do something different. Again, if you were truly out of control, there would be nothing you could do.

But there is something you can do.

You can do the work and use the control you do have to make the decision to feel instead of eat.

So it's okay and normal to want more and feel a desire or urge for more.

For some people, the desire is stronger and even if it is, they are still not out of control.

You can choose to feel the desire without giving in to it.

Recognize the control you have and use it how you want to.

Alright, I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye.