

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #263: Why You Binge For Days and How to Prevent it

Hi! Before we get started I want to give you a head's up that the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program will be opening in one month, on September 14th of 2023.

You can get all the most up to date info about the program, all the details about what's included, the pricing, and duration, by going to coachkir.com/group and if you have any questions that aren't answered there, email them to info@coachkir.com.

In this next round we'll be working together through the end of the year, through the holidays, and into the new year so it's a great time to do this!

But really, any time is a great time because the sooner you do it, the sooner you change your eating habits which can change your life. And the sooner the better, right?

So I hope to see you in there, so much change is going to happen, and it's gonna be awesome, as it always is.

Alright, now let's talk about bingeing for days.

Sometimes we do well and don't binge at all. But then when we do binge, it's not just a one and done thing. We binge, then we binge the next day, and then the next, and maybe more after that.

Or sometimes it's even a binge in the afternoon, then another one that night, and one or two binges the next day and so on.

Today, I want to talk about why this happens so that if you binge, and most people do binge as they're working on stopping binge eating, it doesn't turn into a series of binges.

Now, the obvious reason for a lot of people is that they just have no idea how to not give in to an urge to binge. So if they feel an urge day after day and they have no idea how to not give in then yes, that's a reason why they keep on bingeing.

In many episodes of this podcast I've given lots of tips and tools for not giving in to urges so that's not what I'm going to be covering here today.

In this episode, I want to look at a different reason for why people binge day after day or more than once in a day for those of you who do know how to not give in to urges, who *have* not given in to urges, and who have had success with not giving in to them.

So if that's you, the reason why find yourself sometimes bingeing day after day or more than once in a day is because of how you respond to the first binge.

There's many different responses I've heard people have to their binges, and that I've had myself, and I want to go through some of the most common.

The first one is simply giving up.

The binge happens, you now think you can't do this, that you're a failure, that you're broken, that you'll never be able to change, so you stop trying.

Once you decide that you can't not binge, that you can't stop bingeing, that you'll never stop, then you're not going to put in effort to change, to do anything different, to even try to not binge.

You're feeling hopeless and defeated because of what you're making that binge mean about your capabilities.

So when later that day, or the next day, the thought of bingeing again comes into your mind, or if you're eating and your brain keeps telling you to eat more and eat more, you just do it.

So that's the first response I hear a lot. You stop believing in yourself because you binged.

The second response people have is overly restricting their eating after the binge.

That could mean you're not allowing yourself to eat when you get hungry again or you're deciding that you're not allowing yourself to eat x, y, and z anymore because you just binged.

Not allowing yourself to eat when you're hungry is usually a tactic used to not gain weight after a binge. People think that if they don't eat more then they won't gain, or won't gain as much.

But if that hunger grows as the brain and body are urging for food, then that intense hunger could result in another binge. The stronger your hunger is, the stronger your drive to eat is.

And not allowing yourself to eat x, y, and z after a binge is usually a tactic used to not binge again. We do this when we blame the food for our binges. We think that if we don't eat that food then we won't binge.

But really, if we want to eat those foods and we don't allow ourselves to eat them, we tell ourselves we can't eat them, that they're forbidden, that they're off-limits, then we will feel deprived and our desire will grow.

And that can happen pretty quickly. I've noticed that for myself. As soon as I tell myself I'm not eating that food that I like anymore, my brain immediately wants it.

So you might binge, then tell yourself you're not eating this food or that food anymore, and then later or the next day, you might feel an urge for it. Or maybe you feel an urge for something else as you start to fear that food will be taken away as well.

Overly restricting yourself whether it's not eating at all or not eating something specific can for sure lead you into feeling urges and bingeing.

And the third response. Being all or nothing.

You binged so you then think you might as well do it again before Monday or before the 1st of the month or before whatever day that you've decided is when you're going to start being "good" again.

This could also be related to the restricting where you're deciding that you're not restricting that food now but, you will starting on that future day so you gotta get it all in now while you can.

So you eat a lot of it, along with other foods that will soon be off limits too.

Or maybe the "all or nothing" isn't about that but simply just that you want to binge, you want to eat a lot of food, and you're going to do it now since you've already binged. You decide that bingeing is on the table until whatever day so you're basically choosing to binge, keeping the option open to binge, and deciding to binge.

Like I talked about before with giving up, you're not even trying to not binge, you're not even trying to think about the tools and strategies you could use to not binge and here it's because you don't even want to.

You want to binge. You've decided that now is the time to just give in because you want to.

And the fourth response I want to talk about is not thinking about why you do want to stop bingeing.

Recently one of my group members got into a situation like this where she had binged, and she reached out to me and told me she just doesn't care. Because she wasn't caring, she didn't have any motivation to do the work she knows to do.

And if you're not feeling motivated, then again, you're not going to do it. You're just going to give in to your impulses, urges, and desires and do what's easy.

So I asked her why she did care. She listed all the reasons why, all the reasons why she wants to do the work to not binge and to stop binge eating and all the reasons why she doesn't want to binge.

Immediately, she felt better, more motivated, and more encouraged.

After she'd binged, she was telling herself that she didn't care but that wasn't really true. She just needed a reminder for why she does.

So, those are the 4 most common responses to binges that I see set people up to binge more.

And you don't have to stop believing in yourself and give up, overly restrict yourself, fall into all or nothing, or stop caring.

You can remind yourself of why you *do* care, which is something you should be reminding yourself of daily anyway, even several times daily.

You can decide to get back to how you *want* to be eating and you can include all foods you want to eat, and you can eat when you're hungry after a binge.

And you can start doing the work again, now.

Waiting to start doing the work on a future day isn't going to help you, it's just going to put off for even longer you achieving your goal of stopping binge eating and everything that comes along with it.

And excluding foods from your life isn't going to help, and forcing yourself to be hungry isn't going to help either.

But deciding to and committing to getting back to the work now is going to help, continuing to allow yourself to eat what you want is going to help, and so is eating when you're hungry so you're giving your brain and body what they're asking for.

And most importantly, you can choose to keep believing in yourself.

Bingeing does not make you failure. Bingeing does not mean that you can't stop bingeing.

What it does mean is that there is a lesson you need to learn or a mental obstacle that is in your way that you need to become aware of.

Another group member of mine had a devastating binge after having done so well for awhile and she started questioning whether or not she could do this.

So together we walked through the binge, the circumstances around it, and her thoughts and feelings before the binge and we uncovered why it happened found an obstacle that was in her way. She was able to gain understanding into why her binge, and so many of her previous binges, happened.

It highlighted something for her.

And from there, we were able to come up with useful, relevant strategies and solutions that she's now working on and making progress and changes with.

That binge didn't mean she can't do this. It just meant there was something she needed to become aware of and work on.

It means the same for you.

Even if you keep doing the same thing over and over again, you're not a lost cause. There's just something you're not seeing and that's why I encourage you to get coaching. As an outsider looking in, who has lots of experience with why people binge, I can see so much that you can't see and I can also help you to see what you might not have been able to see before.

It's not that you can't do this, you just need a new perspective, understanding, and new strategies.

So if you binge, here's the ideal response.

You forgive yourself, have compassion for yourself, get curious about why it happened, and encourage yourself to work on it.

See it as a learning experience, not a huge failure.

You don't make it mean anything about you or what you're capable of. You don't make it mean you should take a break from trying. You don't forget about everything you want the most.

You try to understand why you did it, because there was a reason and when you find that reason, you're going to help yourself figure out what you need to work on whether the reason was that you were being too restrictive with yourself and reacted to deprivation and desire or if the reason was that you didn't want to feel how you were feeling or if it was that you weren't paying attention to what you were thinking, feeling, or doing. Whatever the reason is, once you know it, you can figure out a useful next step for yourself.

And as you're getting to work on it, just know that at first, you will probably have to put in extra effort to get through the desire, cravings, and urges for another binge or to eat more, or extra effort to work through thoughts about bingeing again, eating again, or overeating again.

And it's okay, You can do it. You can put in that extra effort and you *will* if you are believing you can do it and are thinking about your important, compelling reasons to do it.

And after you do, it will get easier. The feelings will decrease in intensity and your thoughts will calm down.

You just gotta get over that initial hump and go through the discomfort before you start to feel more centered and normal.

So if you binge, your response to it matters a lot. It will affect how you feel and what you do afterward.

So respond in a useful way that will get you out of bingeing and into where you want to be.

Get focused on what will help, not what will cause more binges.

You can stop after one binge.

Keep telling yourself why you want to, eat when you're hungry, allow all foods, commit to doing the work now, keep believing in yourself, and be willing to go through the hard stuff before it gets easier.

You can do this. I believe in you.

Alright, bye bye.