

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #271: Blaming the Food for Our Binges

Hi! Before we get started, I want to give you a head's up that registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program will be opening on November 9th and it will be the last one I'll be offering in 2023.

We'll work together through the holidays so you'll get coaching and support as the year comes to a close and as you're navigating all the holiday things.

We'll also be working together as the new year begins so you can start the year off with a bang and start it having already made so much progress instead of giving up at the end of the year and starting fresh on January first like so many people do, and like I did so many times.

You can get all the info by going to coachkir.com/group and you can also join the waitlist on that page which just means you'll get on a list to be notified as soon as registration opens up so you don't miss it or miss out on any bonuses I'm offering. And if you have any questions that aren't answered on that page, email them to info@coachkir.com.

Let's end this year and start the next year making amazing progress with your eating!

And now, let's talk about blaming food for binges.

If we binge eat, it just makes sense to put the blame on the food.

I know I did it a lot when I was bingeing and I bet most other people have at one time or another too.

We think the food tastes too good.

We think the food makes us eat more and binge.

We think the food has power over us.

We think the food makes us out of control.

We put so much blame on the food and get mad at the food.

And because we're seeing the food as the problem, the solutions we come up with are centered around manipulating the food.

This is why so many people see the solution to be avoiding the foods they binge on.

If the food is the problem, then eliminating the food should be the solution.

That was where my mind went most of the time and it's why I kept making those lists of foods I wouldn't buy and wouldn't bring into my home and made so many food rules.

I thought that controlling the food was the solution.

But clearly it wasn't because after countless lists and rules I would still binge. They didn't stop me.

Because it wasn't the food that was the problem.

I was the problem.

My decisions were the problem.

My thoughts were the problem.

And once I realized what the actual problem was, that was when I was able to find a relevant solution that would actually stop my bingeing.

Now, again, it makes sense that we would blame the food.

Especially if we find ourselves bingeing on the same foods again and again.

Pretty much any time I bought a large container of ice cream, I would binge on it at some point. Maybe right after buying it, maybe a few days after, but it was likely to happen.

So if I kept seeing myself binge when I'm eating ice cream but maybe not so much when I'm eating other foods, then it would make sense for me to blame the ice cream.

I eat other foods without any problem but the ice cream is a problem.

And I would think the same about soft baked cookies, and chips, and donuts, and cakes, my go to's when I was bingeing.

But if they really were the problem, then I wouldn't be able to eat them right now without bingeing, and I can. I do.

And ya know, there were definitely times that I actually did eat them without bingeing. And I bet there have been times when you've eaten certain foods that you binge on often without bingeing, even if it was just once. Even if it was only because other people were with you.

The food tastes good but, you can stop eating food that tastes good after you've started eating it.

You can make the decision to stop and honor that decision. You can allow yourself to feel the discomfort of having a desire for more without giving yourself what you're desiring.

You do it with other things, and you can do it with this.

You're not always giving in to all of your desires that you have in life. You're sometimes doing the thought work to tell yourself why you actually don't want something or don't want to do something like skipping work, yelling at someone, or buying something you don't need. You're sometimes letting the desire pass.

You can also do that with any food that you've previously binged on.

Bingeing doesn't happen just because the food is good. It happens because you're deciding to eat more, because you're only thinking about feeling good now and about wanting more and it being so good.

It happens because of how you're responding to the food tasting so good.

You can enjoy a food and decide to keep eating it so you can get more good feelings and more pleasure or you can decide that you've had enough and decide to stop.

Now, of course what I'm saying here is easier said than done and I actually did an episode on how to follow through on a decision to not eat, it's episode #215 if you want to give it a listen.

But here in this episode, because I'm not going to repeat everything I said in episode 215, I just want you to see what's really happening so you can stop blaming the food and take personal responsibility.

Because when you acknowledge that the work that needs to be done is internal work, work within your mind, then you'll stop trying to control and manipulate your food, which is external. You'll start putting your focus where it needs to be.

And, let's talk a little more about food being good as being the problem.

Do you know how many of us have binged on food that isn't that good?

I do workshops in my group program where my group members eat foods they've previously binged on and so many times people have eaten something they thought was so good but realized it actually wasn't.

They've binged on this food so many times thinking they really liked it and when they ate it mindfully during the workshop, they immediately realized they were wrong and it wasn't that good.

So many times they binged on something that isn't that good and I've had that same experience myself.

Foods I used to be obsessed with I now don't eat at all because when I slowed down and actually tasted it I realized I didn't really like it that much.

And a food doesn't even have to be highly palatable to be binged on. A lot of people have told me they have binged on foods that are considered healthy.

I know I've binged on chickpeas and bell peppers and cucumbers and they weren't the entire binge but they were part of it because I love how they taste. And they were what I had available.

Sometimes we binge on those foods because it's easier for us to justify eating a lot of them because they're "healthy." Or sometimes we binge on them because we're feeling the urge and it's all we have in our home.

It's not the food, or how good the food tastes, or how processed it is, or how much sugar or fat is in it, it's how we respond to our urges, our desires, our cravings to eat them.

It's how we think about them. It's how abundant we are with our thoughts about those foods. It's what we choose to use that food for.

The food does not have power over you. It cannot do anything. It just sits there. It's an inanimate object. It has no power.

You have all the power. You have the power to respond how you want to and to make the decisions you want to make.

The food does not make you out of control. You're not out of control. You might feel an urge, craving, or desire but that doesn't mean you're out of control. You have the ability to not give in to them.

And if you do give in to them and eat, you're still not out of control. You're deciding to give in and eat. You're in control of the decision you make.

And if you want to hear more about that, I talk about it in episode #261, Thinking you're out of control when you want and eat more.

The food doesn't make you do anything.

You do.

You binge not because you ate something and not because you feel an urge to binge.

You binge because you decide to give in to that urge and because you decide to keep eating.

You might not hear yourself decide, you might not notice that you're deciding, but I bet if you listened, you'd hear yourself say something like, "Just one more," or "Screw it I'm eating," or "I'll be good

tomorrow,” or “I already ate that so I might as well keep eating,” thoughts that are you deciding to eat one more, to screw it and eat, to be bad now, or to keep eating.

You’re doing the all or nothing thing.

Or you don’t want to stop.

Or you don’t have anything else to do except eat.

Or you’re procrastinating.

Or you don’t want to feel something.

And please don’t blame yourself for any of this. Don’t be hard on yourself about it.

But it’s so important that you take responsibility and acknowledge what’s really causing the binges because only then can you actually stop them from happening.

And also know that when you do remove those foods that you actually do like from your life because you’re trying to stop yourself from bingeing, and you tell yourself you can’t eat them, you’re most likely going to feel deprived and feel urges for them which could result in you bingeing or at least making it harder for you to not binge.

So please stop blaming the food. It’s not useful and the food really isn’t the problem.

Work on you instead. Work on your responses and your decisions.

Decide to allow yourself to eat the foods you like. Decide to feel through urges, cravings, desires, and emotions. When your brain says to eat more, tell yourself why you don’t want to eat more if you actually do have a good reason for not eating more.

Most importantly, tell yourself you can do it. Because you can, no matter what food you’re eating.

You have the power, the control, and the authority.

Use it, okay? And I’ll talk to you again next time. Bye bye.