

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #272: Missing and Grieving Binge Eating

Hi! Today I'm talking about missing and grieving binge eating.

This isn't something that happens to everyone who stops binge eating but it happens often enough that I wanted to make an episode about it.

Sometimes when people haven't binged in awhile, they start to miss it.

Even though they know they truly don't want to binge, and they are happy that they're not doing it, there's still a little part of them that misses doing it.

And if this has happened to you, or is happening to you now, know that it's normal for this to happen.

In a way, bingeing was something that was useful for you. It helped you in some way. Maybe it made you feel better, or feel different, and you liked that.

And in a way, you enjoyed it. You felt free. You experienced pleasure when you did it. Obviously not the entire time, and sometimes maybe not at all but, there were times when you did.

So even though you know the cons way outweigh the pros, there might still be times that you reminisce about the pros.

This is exactly what happened to me when I broke up with my ex-boyfriend back in 2021 and just like it might be for you with binge eating, I was so confused about why I missed him.

I was the one that ended the relationship. I knew he was not the person for me. I knew I didn't want to be in a relationship with him.

Yet after I moved out, I missed him.

And it was because I was thinking about the things I liked about him and our relationship.

I liked feeling loved. I liked having a companion. I liked how well he treated me so lovingly and thoughtfully.

And when I would think about those things and how much I wanted them and how I had them with my ex, I would miss him.

But let's be clear here. It wasn't him that I was missing. It was feeling loved, having a companion, and having someone be so thoughtful and caring.

When you're missing binge eating, you're not actually missing binge eating, you're missing what you think you got from binge eating – the feelings, the freedom, the pleasure.

Again, you're thinking about the good stuff.

And because you're thinking you've lost this good stuff, you might go through a grieving period.

You might feel sad about not having binge eating in your life anymore.

And it's okay to feel this way. It's okay to feel sad.

Your emotions are valid.

Let yourself feel sad if you feel sad.

Don't try to push it away and definitely don't go and binge to numb it.

You might find yourself wanting to binge to make the feelings go away and to give yourself what you've lost.

Just like I wanted to spend time with my ex to experience what I thought I lost.

But just feel the feelings, feel the sadness instead. Go through it.

And then, you're going to *work* through it and get to the place where you don't miss it anymore.

I don't miss binge eating anymore, I don't miss my ex anymore, and it's because I've changed my perspective about them and, I have given to myself or created for myself everything I thought I'd lost.

Whatever it is that you think you got from binge eating, you can still have.

You haven't really lost it.

When you stop binge eating, you don't really lose freedom, pleasure, and good feelings.

In fact, you're going to get more of those when you stop binge eating and you're going to get them in ways that you actually want to get them.

Those things I thought I had lost when I broke up with my ex, I could still have and, I could have them with a person I love, instead of from someone I didn't love which isn't as good.

Those things you think you lost when you stopped binge eating you can still have and you can get them in way that isn't going to cause so much harm, suffering, frustration, guilt, and anything else binge eating caused for you.

And when you start to get them in other ways, you have no reason to miss binge eating anymore.

You're not missing out on anything by not binge eating.

You're still getting everything you want.

You can still get pleasure from food. When you're bingeing, you're only getting pleasure until a certain point before the pleasure begins to decrease yet you still keep eating into a binge. So instead, you're going to only eat until that point. You're going to get your pleasure and stop before it stops being pleasurable or as soon as you notice it's starting to. You're still going to get as much eating pleasure as you did when you were bingeing and more pleasure actually because you're not going to end the eating with feeling the opposite of pleasure. You're going to end it still feeling good.

And you can still feel free to eat whatever you want. When you're bingeing you're going from not allowing yourself to eat what you want, you're overly restricting yourself, to then eating anything and everything as a reaction to the deprivation you created. Instead, you're going to give yourself freedom all the time, not just when you're bingeing. You're going to give yourself permission to eat whatever you want and allow everything and with that freedom, you'll decide what you want and don't want, which doesn't mean you're going to choose to binge all the time. You're instead going to eat in the way you truly want to eat, without a deprivation binge cycle happening. You'll have the freedom to choose all the time.

And if you're feeling an uncomfortable emotion, you can still feel better without eating all that food. It may take a little longer to get there as you're going to process through your feelings instead of going for the quick fix but, it will be so worth it when you don't end up making yourself feel even worse afterward. You're going to create true, better feelings instead of temporary numbing or temporary good feelings.

And back to the pleasure thing, you're actually going to get even more pleasure when you're not bingeing because not only are you no longer going to totally bring down your energy with binge eating but, you're going to incorporate more pleasure outside of food with more hobbies and activities in your life that are fulfilling and leave you feeling amazing. You're going to fill your free time with things that are relaxing, fun, or engaging that won't leave you feeling like poo afterward. Less feeling awful after binges means more good feelings, more pleasure, and more energy to do more things you want to do.

When you can see that you're really not losing anything by stopping binge eating and are still going to get everything you want and gain so much that you want, then you're not going to miss it anymore.

So if you're missing binge eating, and you're feeling sad, and you're experiencing the grief, it's okay to feel sad. Let yourself feel it.

Then, get clear with yourself about why you think you miss it and whatever it is you think you're missing, go and get it in a better way.

It's all still available to you. You will not lose anything, only gain.

Alright, that's all for today, bye bye.