

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #291: When You Don't Want to Feel Through Your Urges

Hello! In so many of these podcast episodes, I've talked with you about feeling through your urges to binge.

Instead of eating to make the urge go away, you allow it to be there, you let yourself feel it, and as long as you're keeping as calm as you can while feeling the urge instead of fighting or resisting the urge, then it will pass, it will end, and you will feel better and no longer feel driven to binge once it passes.

But even when you know that can do this to stop yourself from bingeing, even when you understand that you can feel through the urge without eating, you might not want to do it.

I've seen this happen with my group members sometimes.

I've broken down the steps for how to feel through an urge. They understand what the urges are, they understand that they are capable of feeling urges, and they understand that feeling through the urge will mean that they don't binge.

Yet when it comes time to do it, they don't want to.

So they decide not to and instead, they decide to eat.

Then, when they feel awful after eating all that food, they regret not feeling through the urge.

But then when the next one comes, they do the same thing again.

They make the same decisions because they don't want to feel through the urge then either.

So if they want to not binge, and not eat when they feel that urge to binge, or not eat if there is going to be some kind of negative consequence if they eat, they have to make the decision to feel the urge and to not eat.

Truthfully, they have to want to feel the urge.

I know it sounds crazy because like, who would want to feel an urge? It's so uncomfortable.

But when the urge is there, you're faced with two options – feel the urge or binge, and you have to want to feel the urge.

You can't choose neither.

Even if you're distracting yourself, you're still making the decision to not eat and when you first begin distracting yourself, you'll be choosing to feel the urge while you're doing whatever you're doing, or maybe for a little while. So you're still choosing feeling over eating.

So when you're faced with the decision of feel the urge or eat, you have to want to feel the urge because if you don't, you're not going to do it.

You'll instead choose the easier option, which is to eat.

That's one reason why people don't want to feel through the urge, and it might be a reason for you too.

You think it'll be hard.

You think it will take too much effort or use too much energy.

So instead of doing the hard, effortful, energy-using thing, you choose the easy thing.

Maybe you choose this because you're tired, you've had a long or stressful day, and you just don't want to use any of the energy that you do have to feel through this discomfort and not eat when you feel the urge.

Maybe you think you don't actually have the energy to do it.

But here's the thing.

Maybe you do.

So often we tell ourselves that we don't have it in us but we actually do.

We do have the capacity to do it.

So check yourself on that one.

Can you muster up the drive to do it?

And if you've been consistently thinking about all the reasons why you don't want to binge and why you do want to feel through the urge, then it will be easier for you to muster it up.

I know for me there are lots of times when I don't want to do what's harder, what's going to take more effort, or what's going to use my precious energy, and I muster up the drive to do it by telling myself why I really want to and what the consequences of me not doing it will be.

I know I will be better off if I do it, and I remind myself of why, and I know I'll be so happy I did it.

So I use what I have and I put in the effort, and I do it.

Now, when I don't have a good reason to do it, then I don't. We don't have to always try and give ourselves that push to do everything.

But when it's important to us, and we have important, compelling reasons to do it, then we have to remind ourselves of those reasons and give ourselves that push to do it.

And if you consistently find yourself with depleted energy, completely exhausted, and simply cannot create even the littlest bit of motivation, then it would be really helpful for you to do an audit.

Do an audit of the decisions you're making in your life, how you're choosing to use your time, how you're delegating things in your life, how you're taking care of yourself, how you're using your free time, what you're saying yes to that you could say no to, how you're thinking about your circumstances throughout each day, and see how you can make small changes in any of these things to use less mental energy throughout your day.

And that part about how you're thinking about your circumstances is so important because your thoughts throughout the day are going to cause you to feel emotions and those emotions might energize you, keep you neutral, or drain you. Do you spend a lot of your day worrying? Complaining? Stressing? Being overwhelmed? Being annoyed? Beating yourself up mentally and being hard on yourself? If you are, even if you can't change what you're doing with your time and can't change your circumstances, you can work on how you're thinking about what you're doing and what's going on in your life so you don't emotionally drain yourself every day.

You don't even have to change what you're doing, you can feel so differently and have more energy when you manage how you're thinking.

What I mean by that is that you notice when you're feeling an uncomfortable emotion, like stress, you find the thought you're thinking that is causing you to feel stressed, something like, "I have too much to do and not enough time," and then you get to choose a different way of thinking.

Now, this is the basics of managing your thinking, and I do know it's easier said than done, and this is why the coaching I do exists, coaches like myself help people to do this thought work so they can feel better, but just know that this is an option and you can do a lot of this on your own by noticing how you're feeling and thinking and by exploring other ways to think about what's going on with you.

And it's totally worth it, even though doing that work on your thoughts can take focus and energy, it will also save you so much energy in the long run.

So if you find yourself not wanting to feel the urge, and it's because you think it will be hard, or take too much effort, or use too much energy, remind yourself of why you want to do the hard, effortful, energy using thing.

I'm sure you do this with so many things in your life. You probably do it at work, maybe you do it to get out of bed, or you do it before exercising, or to get yourself to go to bed, or to make dinner, or to do things for your kids.

You can do it with bingeing and eating too.

You have really important reasons to do it. Remind yourself of those reasons.

And going along with those reasons, you have to also watch out for those reasons you might have for why you want to binge.

You might not want to feel the urge because you're telling yourself you *want* to binge.

Your desire to binge is stronger than your desire to not binge.

Or maybe you're not even thinking about why you want to feel the urge and not binge. You're only thinking about why you want to binge.

You're thinking it will feel so good, it will taste so good, you're basically making bingeing sound desirable.

When you do that, of course you're going to want to choose eating over feeling an uncomfortable urge.

Of course you're not going to want to feel the urge if the other option is feeling good and getting pleasure.

But, you're not being truthful if you tell yourself that's your other option.

So often when we're feeling that urge and we're thinking about bingeing, we're just thinking about the good stuff.

But if you're going to intentionally eat a lot of food, and I know for me a lot of my binges were intentional, I was buying a few things knowing I'd eat them all, and eat a lot of them, it's not all good. If it were all good and there were no negative consequences for eating it all, then we wouldn't be here talking about this. We'd just go eat all the food, love it, and carry on with our lives feeling good. But that's not how it goes and you have to be honest with yourself about that.

And if it's not an intentional binge, if it's a snowball binge where you just keep going for more and more after you said you'd only have one or would only have one more, then at the point where its becoming excessive you need to do this work of telling yourself why you want to stop. At some point, it turns into a binge and you start to feel awful and you have to be honest with yourself about that.

The story you tell about binge eating matters and one main reason why I don't binge anymore is because I don't glamorize eating that much food anymore. I tell myself the truth about how I'm going

to feel way too full and uncomfortable for hours afterward, will feel terrible going into the next day too, and I really, really don't want to feel that way ever again.

You have to do that with yourself too, tell yourself the truth about bingeing, if you're going to decide to feel through the urge.

You have to remind yourself that the discomfort of bingeing will be way worse than what you feel while feeling the urge.

And it really is.

Bingeing is going to cause you to feel uncomfortable, and probably for so much longer and it will not be worth it.

Feeling through the urge will be uncomfortable but totally worth it.

How you think about bingeing and how you think about the discomfort of the urge matters.

It's what's going to influence the decision you make.

When you see that the benefits of feeling through the urge greatly outweigh the benefits of bingeing, you will want to choose the urge.

When you see that the consequences of feeling through the urge are not as bad as the consequences of bingeing then you will want to choose the urge.

And when you want to feel through the urge, then you will be willing to do it now.

You won't put it off until next time, you'll do it now.

And when you understand that the sooner you get in the habit of feeling instead of eating, the sooner it will become more natural and easier to choose feeling.

And that's important because even when you're not feeling super intense urges to binge anymore, you'll still feel urges to overeat and uncomfortable emotions and you have to build the skill of feeling and if you're going to do that you have to want to do it.

Stop putting it off.

Stop putting off become someone who feels.

Stop putting off stopping binge eating.

Start choosing the discomfort you feel now, that urge discomfort, that emotional discomfort, because even though it is in fact uncomfortable, choosing it will make you grow.

You will become a better version of yourself when you choose to feel the urge and the emotional discomfort over the binge discomfort.

You will become a more disciplined person when you choose that discomfort.

You will do more of what you truly want to do and less of what you don't when you choose it.

And you will have less regrets when you choose it.

I know that in the moment you might think you don't want to feel the urge, and that's just your humanness trying to get you to avoid pain.

But it's up to you to override that and tell yourself why you choose this pain, this discomfort.

It's a much better option than the discomfort you'd feel if you binged.

If you want to change, you have to do less of what's comfortable and get uncomfortable.

And the sooner you do it, the sooner you will see the change you want to see.

And the more you do it, the easier it will get.

So make sure you're telling yourself why you want to feel the urge, why you're going to choose this discomfort.

And make sure you're being honest with yourself about what will happen if you don't choose it and you eat excessively.

When it really comes down to it, you do want to feel the urge because it's going to have a much better outcome than your other option of bingeing.

Tell yourself that if you feel another urge to binge.

Alright, bye bye.