

# **THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST**

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #300: My Journal Entries from 2011-2015

Hello! I'm so excited to share more of my past journal entries with you!

I went through my journals from 2011-2015 and looked for anything that talked about eating and bingeing and weight loss and I am going to share with you the most relevant, entertaining, and interesting ones that I found.

There were many times I would just mention things in passing, things like, "I ate well today," or there were many times I'd write, "I've been eating poorly," but without much detail beyond that so I'm not including those. But let me tell you, that "eating poorly" one and ones like it showed up a lot.

Now, yes I'm covering 5 years in this episode but unfortunately, that doesn't mean there will be a ton of entries.

Like I said, some just talked about eating very briefly. And what I wrote about the most in my journals was about crushes and dating. My goodness, I had a lot to say about that haha.

And I also had other goals and things I was working on that I would write about as well but since this is a binge eating podcast, I'm not going to go into detail about those.

So I found what I could as far as eating went and now, I'd love to share them with you and after each one, I'm going to talk about them a little bit and give you my thoughts on what I wrote.

So, let's get started with....

January 1, 2011

*Happy New Year! My New Year's Eve celebration was just what I wanted. I cleaned my apartment, ran errands, and watched the New Year's Eve specials. I also downed a giant bag of peanut M&M's that I knew I shouldn't have bought. Resolution #1 – no bingeing, no matter what. What a dumb thing to allow myself to do. Stop!*

End entry.

This was so typical of me. Pretty much every New Year, I would resolve to not binge anymore, usually after bingeing, and it would be as simple as what I wrote there. I'd just say I'm not going to do it. But clearly with no plan, no idea for how I was going to stop. I was just going to.

And then unsurprisingly, I didn't.

Now, in 2011 I was not consistent with writing in my journal and after scanning through my 2011 entries, this was the only entry I saw that had anything about food in it.

So I'll quickly move on to 2012.

Feb 27<sup>th</sup> 2012

*I ate too much today, too many soft chocolate chip cookies. Guess I'm not buying those anymore.*

End entry.

Well isn't that relatable? You eat too much of something so you're going to stop buying them. This is something I did over and over again, where I'd binge and then not buy whatever I binged on anymore. It was because I thought the food was the problem, as so many of us do. I blamed the soft baked chocolate chip cookies for my binge. I blamed whatever food I'd binge on for the binge. I thought that not buying those cookies would help me to not binge but, that definitely wasn't the case. I still binged and I also probably bought those cookies again because I bet there was a time when it had been awhile, I saw them, wanted them, maybe thought I'd be okay this time, and I'd buy them, and eat them.

But also, I do believe that I didn't entirely put the blame on the food though. I must have also believed that I was responsible as well. But what I do know is that I didn't understand why I was doing what I was doing. I didn't understand any of what was going on. I just knew that when I ate certain delicious foods, I binged. I also knew that sometimes I would get a really strong urge to go buy delicious foods, or to eat what I had in my home.

And that was the biggest problem for me. I didn't understand what was happening. I didn't have the knowledge I needed. And if you're going to stop bingeing, you have to understand why it's happening in the first place.

And it's not because you buy cookies.

Alright, next entry:

March 25<sup>th</sup> 2012

*So since I'm not keeping track, I have no idea how many calories I ate today. Probably a little more than I should have, I just finished off my Cracklin' Oat Bran which I will not be buying again.*

End entry.

Sound familiar? Guess I ate too much Cracklin' Oat Bran so looks like that's going on the "do not buy" list as well.

I'm telling you, I did this so many times.

Alright, next one, and in this one I started off writing about other things and then I got to food stuff.

*April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012*

*I made a lot of bad decisions yesterday too. I ate terribly. My day was all planned out, rehearsal during the day and Jaden's show at night. I got a text from Ashley in the morning telling me Paul's sick so we weren't having rehearsal. No prob, I went to Runyon and made lunch. I got a text from Abby asking if I wanted to work that night and I said no because I wanted to go to the show. I really should have worked though, because I could really use the money and because I now know how my night went. I decided to take Whiskey (my dog) to The Grove because I hadn't in awhile. When I got home, I found out the show was canceled because there was a gas leak at the venue. Dammit, that was when I realized I should have worked. Oh well.*

[then I wrote about some unrelated stuff, and then...]

*Then I got a call from Paul, he and Ash were at the ER, asking me to bring them some stuff. I had told him to let me know if there was anything I could do so I was happy to do it. That was the one good thing that came from me not working. I was able to help my friend. Bad thing, I bought some candy while at the store, and broke my no fast food alone rule on the way home. It had been months and I was craving french fries, which I hadn't had in awhile, so I didn't think it was a big deal. It wasn't, but shit adds up. The biggest mistake I made was when I got home and decided I wanted ice cream. I should have just gone to Rite Aid, but I was just there and didn't want to go back, so I went to Ralph's. While I was there, I got ice cream and delicious, soft, frosted and sprinkled sugar cookies, the kind I really like. So yeah, I ate about 10 cookies and 2 bowls of ice cream. So disgusting. I know it is, and I knew it was at the time, but I kept going. I'm aware of all the reasons why it all happened, yet, I still let myself get there.*

End entry.

So, I'd say this was one kind of typical binge for me. Get some candy, no biggie, then get some fast food, no biggie, but then I crave something else and while I'm getting it, I get other things and then I go way overboard with it all. One thing leads to another.

I just really wish I had written out what I thought all the reason were why it happened.

That's something I wish I could go back and tell my past self – to go more into detail. I'm writing about what I ate and what was going on but, I'm not writing about what was going on in my mind or how I was feeling. Now, even if I did, at the time I probably wouldn't have known what to do with that. At the

time, I had no idea how to properly feel through a feeling or how to work on my thoughts but it would have at least been more helpful than just listing out what and how much I ate.

Also, notice how I broke a rule. As with so many of my rules, I broke them all the time, yet I kept on making them. I made this no fast food alone rule apparently and then told myself it wasn't a big deal if I broke it. If it's not a big deal if I break it, why even have it? It just doesn't make sense to me.

Anyway.

This next one I wrote when I finally hit my goal weight, the lowest weight I'd been at in years. I'd been trying to get there for so long, probably like 8 years or so, and I was so excited that I finally did it. In the beginning of the entry I'm celebrating myself and stuff, and then I wrote this:

October 9, 2014

*I can't give up and let go though, that's what I did in college. I specifically remember having free time one day and thinking, "If this was last year, I'd go to the gym right now." And I should have. I got lazy and stopped being mindful of my choices. The difference this time is that I've been implementing habits that I want to stick with and for them to be part of my lifestyle. I want to be active, to eat well, and to feel good! I've put in so much work and I can't let this slip away. I'm proud of myself for being so patient and for not giving up. I always knew that even if I wasn't losing weight (damn plateaus) that I was doing my body good so whatever I was doing needed to keep happening. And now it has paid off. Dolvett is right – "Hard work and dedication." That was what it took – I made it though 3 weeks of vacation and a sprained ankle while gaining no weight, or maybe a pound. That's huge. When I sprained my ankle I was so upset I was going to lose progress but I didn't. I kept doing my morning routine, at least, what I could, and I did my best to eat well. As soon as I felt ready, I got to the gym and did the stairs cuz that was the only thing that felt ok. When I went to MA, my mom got me a gym pass and I went all 4 days that I was there. NYC was when I let go but because I had been so good in MA it was fine. Plus, I was walking a bunch. I didn't go crazy with my eating and drinking and I didn't even want to. I did what I felt was normal and didn't restrict myself if I wanted something. Lucky for me, I had plenty of things to do besides eat. It was all a great test for me, and I passed. The holidays are coming up and I'm confident I'll be okay. Life is gonna give me obstacles and I have to learn how to deal with them instead of giving up and letting them stop me or cause me to just go back to where I came from. Its a bumpy ride and I feel like I'm ready.*

*Even my mind has changed. A few months back I realized I didn't have some of the same thoughts I always had. Bad day = french fries. After a bad day at work I realized I didn't want to eat something shitty and that was huge. My mind doesn't automatically go there. I've retrained myself and that's what this is about. Working out and eating well are in the forefront of my mind, where they should be. Now, don't get me wrong, it still happens but not as often and I'm better equipped to deal. I assume I'll have the urge to binge eat for the rest of my life. I'm aware of that. And I may even succumb. But that's ok, I just can't let it take over and cause multiple days of it. My last binge was two weeks ago and the day after, I got back on track and didn't feel as bad about it as I used to. It happens, I made a bad choice, and now I move on. People will look at me now and see how far I've come physically but they have no idea what I've overcome mentally, and to me that's just as important. I think back to those trips to the convenience store where I'd get 3 treats cuz I couldn't decide and then eat them all. Or when I'd stop at 2 or 3 drive thrus back to back. Never again. That's the old, young, sad Kirstin. Now I'm strong, happy, and wise.*

End entry.

First of all, I think it's great how positive and encouraging I was. I was so proud of myself, I had put in so much work to get there, my confidence was super high, and I was encouraging myself to do what I needed in order to maintain what I'd done. I really did believe that I was a changed woman.

I wrote in there that I'd retrained myself. And I probably did somewhat. My thoughts *had* changed, and I wasn't automatically thinking the way I used to, and I probably was better at managing my thoughts that I had previously been. I mean, I don't think I would have been able to lose all that weight had I not been working on and managing my thoughts.

However, I have more to say about this and I'll talk more about this after the next entry I'm gonna read.

But before I do that, I want to acknowledge what I said happened in NYC. I said I didn't even want to go crazy in NYC and I bet that it was partly because I was doing other things besides eating as I said, so eating wasn't my main source of fun so I wasn't so focused on it. I was having so much fun exploring the city because I had never explored it before. And I had so much fun visiting friends of mine who live there. But also, I said I didn't restrict myself if I wanted something and I bet that had a lot to do with it too. I don't remember everything I ate there but I do remember that I ate pizza twice, I went on a food tour that had yummy stuff, I ate fried fish and chips, I ate dessert when I visited a restaurant my friend worked at, and I had really nice meals with friends too. Because I was eating what I wanted, I wasn't urging for anything. If I was getting what I wanted, and I was getting so much pleasure and fun, then there was nothing for me to urge for.

Now, moving on to the next entry that I wrote a couple months later:

*December 27, 2014*

*After I hit my goal, I got a little over excited. I didn't exactly fall off the wagon but I was hanging on for sure. I let myself indulge a little too much and then I got binge, far too often. After I regained control, the holiday season arrived. I consciously decided to be lenient. I did my best to eat well and exercise but I also enjoyed myself at all the holiday parties. But hey, it's the holidays. Parties and food like those don't come around often, and I spent plenty of months being as strict as I could. It was my time to let loose and I was totally ok with it. The culmination was Lisa's party through Christmas. I basically said "Eff it" and ate total shit and didn't work out at all. I ate basically whatever I wanted and binged and didn't feel bad about it. I had to just get it all out of my system. And I did.*

*I've been working on my goals for 2015 and am really excited to enforce and tackle them. After these 5 days of freedom, I was so ready. Now it's over. Now it's staying in calorie budget, certain eating rules, and so much more. What starts off as rules will hopefully become ingrained. It's all about choosing how I want to live my life, figuring out the obstacles, and figuring out how to tackle them in way that works for me. I like my systems. I'm excited for all my rules. I'm excited to not always take the easy way out and waste time. I want to feel good as often as possible. I want to be happy as often as possible. My new year's resolutions started yesterday, the day after Christmas. The day after all the excuses. No more. Sheena even got me a new journal for Christmas. I know I say this every year but dammit I intend to use it! Oh man, I can't wait to see where I'm at a year from now. I hope and imagine my life will be quite different. If not, what the hell am I doing?*

End entry.

What happened to me is something that is *very* common and happens to a lot of people when they lose weight. I got over excited. I thought I had it all figured out. I thought I had changed. And then, I stopped doing what had worked. I stopped managing my thinking, which I previously wrote that I had gotten so good at.

So often we change but then, we don't maintain the change because *we're* not maintaining it. It's not going to maintain itself, especially when it's something that's fairly new. If I had been thinking a certain way for years then sure, it would be pretty ingrained and I would just think that way. But when it's only been a few months, we usually need more time practicing, more time using the tools, more time consciously doing what works, before it really becomes natural for us. And I didn't do that, and that's part of the reason why I fell back into old habits.

And also, there's a few things that stood out to me as I was reading this.

I wrote: "I spent plenty of months being as strict as I could. It was my time to let loose." I made the same mistake that so many people make when they're trying to lose weight. I was too strict with myself. Now, I don't remember exactly what I was being too strict with, or what I was saying no to, and what I gave myself as reasons to say no but, I just said I was being as strict as I could, and to me, that's a red flag. Because what happens when you're too strict is exactly what happened to me. I went from being as strict as I could to letting loose. Clearly I was holding on too tight during those months I was losing weight and I needed a break. I went from doing what I thought I needed to do in order to lose weight to doing what I really wanted to do. And because I hadn't been allowing myself to do what I wanted to do for too long, once I finally did, I went overboard.

I also wrote, "I had to just get it all out of my system." Get what out? I'm guessing it's all the desire for what I'd been depriving myself of, which doesn't just include food but also, freedom. I wrote, "After these 5 days of freedom," which means that I hadn't been giving myself freedom and I was urging for it. That's what so many of us want when we're urging for a binge – freedom to just eat what we want. And had I been giving myself more of what I wanted during those months while I was losing weight, I probably wouldn't have binged so much after I hit my goal.

I wrote that "I let myself indulge a little too much and then I got binge, far too often," then I wrote that "I regained control," but then I wrote "I basically said "Eff it" and ate total shit and didn't work out at all. I ate basically whatever I wanted and binged." It was this roller coaster that I got myself onto after hitting my goal, because I decided it was finally okay to eat what and how I wanted. And that's when all those binges happened.

And the last thing I want to say about this entry is about how I was excited for all my rules. I was excited for them because I thought they were what I wanted. I thought that following those rules were how I wanted to be. And for some of them, it probably was. But, others, I thought it was just what I needed to do to not binge. I was focused on making rules around my eating because I thought that if I did this or didn't do that then I wouldn't binge. But what the rules never addressed was what was going on in my mind. They never addressed my desire for certain foods and how I would handle that, other than just saying no, which didn't work a lot of the time. Or how I would handle my emotions that I would eat in response to. Or what I would tell myself when I wanted to binge. Or why I was even feeling urges to binge in the first place.

I was excited about my rules because I thought they were the ticket to stopping binge eating. But they weren't. They were really just the ticket to feeling restricted and deprived and rebelling against the rules.

So to summarize on this one, what happened was that I was too strict while losing weight, so then when I finally allowed myself to eat the way I wanted to, I binged a bunch, and I also wasn't continuing to manage my thoughts as I had been while I was losing the weight. I didn't do what I needed to mentally in order to maintain.

Alright, and now the final entry I'm going to share today. I barely wrote in 2015, until the end of the year when I was dating a guy. I really wish I spent as much time writing about my eating as I did about men and crushes and dating. But anyway, this was the only entry that had anything about eating that was worth sharing with you.

*January 18, 2015*

*My biggest goal for this year is to be binge-free for the whole year. Now, that's a lofty goal, I know. However, I feel ready. I've never attempted this before, usually I just didn't want to forever. But for some reason, putting the year mark on it makes it sound easier. I made some rules for myself to help me and I feel like I'm in the best/healthiest mindset I've ever been. Christmas was the last time I binged. I gave myself Christmas and the few days before to just say "eff it" and eat whatever and as much as I wanted. It was gross. I felt disgusting. I never want to do that again. But for now, I'll think about a year.*

[I then talked about some other things I want to work on and cut back on]

[And then I wrote] *Anyway, I then proceeded to eat too much. Now, there is a difference between bingeing and overeating. Overeating is what normal people consider bingeing. I may have eaten too many calories and felt a bit too uncomfortable in the stomach but, I was in control. That feels like the most important factor. It also wasn't with 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> helpings of everything, alternating. I also didn't continue until I felt like I was gonna puke, also a win.*

[then I wrote about some unrelated things again, and then this:]

*I didn't eat super healthy at work today but, also not terrible. I ate too much later in the evening, again, not awful but too much for sure. Not a great idea and I probably won't do it again. Seriously, there are just some things in which 1 serving is enough, or maybe 1 ½. I digress. I topped it all with a gluttonous trip to Menchies. Lots of [frozen] yogurt and lots of candy. Then broke another rule and ate in my room. If eating in my room wasn't an option, I may not have gotten such a large amount because then my roommate may see it. My room gives me the privacy to eat too much. Plus I don't want to eat while I watch tv and movies. I try to be more mindful when I eat instead of getting lost in what I'm watching. I like that rule, I like the kitchen as being the place where I eat. Except treats and candy. Those I allow in here during my "me" time. Hm, well, Menchies is a treat. Nope, never mind, my treat was the giant Reese's I ate earlier.*

*I like my rules. They're set for a reason. They're things I really don't want to be doing and when I do, not great consequences happen. Both yesterday and today I had binge thoughts. Then I would think about my one year. Then I'd start figuring out what would be a binge. Crazy. I did good though. Back to healthy tomorrow!*

There I go again, making a goal to not binge with my rules being my plan for how I'll do it. And they were probably rules like "no eating after this time," or "no buying these foods," or rules around calories or what I would and wouldn't eat at certain times of day, things like that. And of course the rules I actually did mention here which were to not eat in my room and to not eating while watching tv. Again, not rules that will actually help me long-term.

Something I wrote in here was, "I like my rules. They're set for a reason. They're things I really don't want to be doing and when I do, not great consequences happen." Here, I'm saying that doing things like eating while watching tv is going to most likely result in me bingeing. So I think that not watching tv while eating is the answer. But, for me, as I know it is for a lot of other people too, that's just not realistic. It's not realistic to never watch tv while eating. And because it's not realistic, I kept breaking the rule. So the tv, and eating my room, weren't what I needed to work on. It was my mind! If I worked on eating more mindfully while watching tv, which is possible, then I could do both. It's what I do now because I enjoy watching tv while I eat sometimes. But at that time, I didn't think of that as being an option. I just saw myself bingeing while watching tv and assumed that the solution was to take tv out of the equation.

Something I did mentioned very briefly was that I had binge thoughts and then I would think about my year. Now that's helpful! That's something I needed to work on more, and I could do that even if I was watching tv or eating alone in my room. Basically, I was focusing on the wrong things, as I had been for so many years. And I don't fault myself for it. With all that I read online and in magazines, I never read anything that I can remember that was about being too restrictive and food rules, and thoughts or feelings and how they contribute to binge eating. Well, maybe feelings but I don't think I ever got concrete steps for how to feel through feelings without eating and I definitely never learned a better way of thinking about my feelings so I wouldn't just eat to get rid of them. And with the food rules and restriction stuff, maybe I did read some stuff about it but it didn't click for me or maybe wasn't presented in a way that really hit me or made sense to me. I definitely read way more about restricting to lose weight.

So, that is a little bit of me from 2011-2015. As I always say when I go through my journals, I really wish I had written more about my eating and worked through my eating more in these journals. I do know I had other little notebooks, which was where I would write down my rules and lists for eating but those have since been thrown away unfortunately. But, I really didn't know how to properly journal at that time anyway, and what to do with my thoughts and I don't know if I would have really been able to work through anything at that time without the tools that I have now that I learned not too long after this last entry.

But anyway, I hope you enjoyed seeing a little piece of my past mind and hearing my current thoughts. And if you haven't already, you can go back and listen to Episodes 200 and 250 where I also shared journal entries from previous years.

Just like you, I also had lots of unuseful thoughts and did lots of unuseful things to try to stop binge eating. Yet, here I am now, having not binged in years. So if you heard some of yourself in these entries, know that it is possible for you to be where I am now, completely binge-free with a completely changed mindset around food and eating.

I did it, and so can you.



And if you want my help, you can join me in the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program. Registration is opening on May 22<sup>nd</sup> of 2024 and you can get all the info about it by going to [coachkir.com/group](https://coachkir.com/group).

Alright, until next time, bye bye.