

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #313: Making Time For Yourself

Hello! Today, let's talk about making time for yourself for relaxing, for pleasure, and for self-improvement.

All of those are important and too many of you aren't making time for all of them, or not enough time.

Now, I want to begin by saying that I totally get that many of you have a lot on your plate. You might work long hours, you might have kids or other family members that need your time and attention, you might have other obligations and commitments.

So of course you're not going to have hours everyday to devote to yourself.

But that doesn't mean you can't do something. That doesn't mean you can't do enough to make a difference.

And if you're prioritizing time for yourself, you will actually have more energy in general for the rest of your life.

I see that as being a big obstacle for a lot of people too – lack of energy.

They don't have the energy to do pleasurable things or to work on self-improvement.

They don't even have the energy to relax in the way that they want to.

And a lot of the time it's because they're prioritizing being productive, checking off their to-do list, and doing things that aren't urgent.

That's something that really needs to be assessed for a lot of you.

Is what you're doing really urgent?

Do you really need to do laundry or can it wait another day or two? Does everyone actually have enough clothes?

Do you really need to clean up the house right now or is it actually okay for now and it can wait?

Do you really need to go grocery shopping or is there actually enough food in your home that you can wait?

And on top of questioning whether things really are urgent, are you also saying yes to things, and filling up your time with things, that you don't want to or don't have the capacity for or really don't have to say yes to? But you're saying yes to please other people or because you think you have to when you really don't?

And, are you taking on things that you don't really need to take on, things that could be delegated to other people?

For so many of you, you're sacrificing time for yourself because you're choosing other things that you don't really need to choose and are prioritizing other things that don't need to be prioritized.

And you are suffering because of it.

Relaxing, doing pleasurable things for yourself, and working on improving yourself, for some of you, might seem like luxuries, non-essentials, or indulgences.

But they're not.

If you want to live the best life you can, be as happy as you can, and enjoy your life, they are essential.

Our bodies and minds need to relax. They're not designed to be on and go, go, go all the time. And sleep isn't enough, and by the way, some of you aren't getting enough sleep for the same reasons I was just talking about, and sleep is also crucial.

It's so important that you're getting conscious relaxation and resting for your mind and body. If you don't, you're going to get burnt out. If you don't do it intentionally, your mind and body will, in a way, force it. You'll get run down, you'll get exhausted, you'll get sick, something will happen that will again, force you to relax. So instead of going from doing too much to not being able to do anything at all, give yourself the relaxation that your mind and body need.

Also, many of you binge when you get to the point of being burnt out or mentally exhausted. You might do it to get energy and perk yourself up, which as you know, will actually do the opposite. Eating all that food might perk you up at first but then you're even more depleted. So be preventative as best you can and help yourself to prevent yourself from getting to that place of exhaustion and being burnt out.

And this happens with not just relaxing but with pleasure too.

This is for sure something a lot of people see as a non-essential but it isn't. Us humans are pleasure seekers. It's innate within all of us. We all want pleasure. And there's nothing wrong with that. It makes us feel good. It lifts our spirits. It helps to balance our mood. We can't just be in neutral to negative most of the time with just a tiny bit of positive emotions with all our productivity and obligations and commitments and adulting stuff. We're not going to feel emotionally balanced if that's how it is, which is not a good thing.

It will affect how we show up in our lives, how we treat people, how we treat ourselves, how we behave, all of our actions.

And, like with relaxation, if you don't give it to yourself intentionally, you're going to eventually get it unintentionally. What I mean by that is if you aren't giving yourself pleasure that's truly pleasurable, pleasure that you want, that fulfills you, your desire for it is going to build and you're just going to go for what's easy and available....which if you're listening to this podcast is likely going to be food for you. And a lot of food because again, you're deprived of pleasure so you're making up for all the deprivation.

This is a big reason for so many people for why they binge. They're urging for pleasure that they haven't been giving themselves.

Whether you make time for pleasure or not, you're going to get it, but if you make time for it, you'll be more likely to get it in way that you actually want to get it.

It's like with eating joy foods and bingeing. If you don't ever allow yourself to eat the joy foods you love, and you keep denying yourself of them, eventually, you're likely going to binge on them. You're going to go from zero to excessive. You're not giving yourself what you want so eventually you break down and give it to yourself and basically make up for all you denied.

And then there's the self-improvement. Now, you're listening to this episode right now, which means that you're making time for self-improvement, which is great. Learning and gaining knowledge for how you can improve your eating, and improve your mind, so you can have a better life is so important. However, for most people, it's not enough. Especially when it comes to stopping binge eating.

It's not enough to just listen. To make real changes, there needs to be introspection, reflection, and self-exploration, and application.

What I mean by that is that you're taking time to actually think about or write about how what you're learning applies to you. You're personalizing it. You're seeing where what I talk about on this podcast shows up for you in your mind, emotions, and actions. You're making time to become aware of your thoughts and aware of yourself.

So you don't just listen and think, "this makes sense," or "this is me," you actually make time to think about how it relates to you and you make time to write down your thoughts as if you're having a conversation with yourself so you can become aware of them. And doing it on paper can be so much more insightful than just doing it in your head.

And then, you don't just become aware, you actually apply it. You actually put in to action what you're learning. You make time for preparation and practice, and make time to apply.

So many people think they don't have time to feel an emotion or urge, or don't have time to think through their eating decisions, or to think of their future self, or whatever, so they don't do it and therefore don't see improvements in themselves.

And when they don't see improvements, they get down on themselves, and stay in a version of themselves that they're not happy with.

If you want a better life, if you want to be a better version of yourself, make time for yourself to do these things. Make time for relaxation, pleasure, and self-improvement.

Now, again, I understand that some of you are hearing all this and you see why it's important but again want to say there isn't time for it.

Even when you acknowledge what isn't urgent and you allow those things to be left undone for now, and you say no to what you can say no to, and you delegate things so you're not responsible for everything, you still think you don't have time or energy.

But I want you to challenge that.

Don't just settle with the answer, "I can't."

Figure out how you can.

Now, if part of your problem is a lack of energy, that can improve if you are making more time for yourself and are doing more of these three things I'm talking about today. But of course, you'll need to be able to make time for them in order for that to happen.

And here's what you can do.

You don't need to devote large, or even medium chunks of time for these things.

You can make time for yourself in small increments.

You can make time for small moments of time for yourself to relax, to experience pleasure, and to work on improving yourself.

It could be a minute, five minutes, ten minutes here and there when you can.

When you really stop and pay attention to how you're using your time, you just might see that you do have these small moments of time, you're just not using it in a useful way. You might be wasting the time you do have on things that don't really fall into any of these categories.

For example, you might be doing something that's a little bit pleasurable but if you were more intentional about how you're using that time, you might be able to choose something that's much more pleasurable and therefore much more fulfilling and beneficial to your mental health and well being.

Like, say I have one minute before a coaching call. I might scan through my personal email, which most of the time is not urgent, not fulfilling, and not beneficial to me in that moment. But what could be better, if I was feeling a little mentally tired, would be to just take a moment to rest my mind, close my eyes, breathe, and be still. Or if I was wanting pleasure, to read, listen to, or watch something entertaining that's just a minute long. Even just listening to a minute of a fun song would be better.

Or say I have 30 minutes available to me and I want pleasure. I might just scroll through social media, which can be kinda enjoyable, depending. But, what would be better would be to go for a walk while listening to music or a podcast. Based on my experience for myself, I know I'll likely feel so much more fulfilled, and happier afterward, if I go for that walk.

Also, sometimes I've been feeling the desire to relax and I go on social media, thinking that will be relaxing but it's not. It's stimulating my brain too much. So what could be better for me would be to lay down and listen to something. I've found that doing that actually give me the result I'm wanting of having a more relaxed mind. Too often I get off social media and don't feel any more relaxed. So I've been being more intentional about that.

Now, I'm obviously not perfect at this. Sometimes I do choose the less useful thing, because I'm an imperfect human and I can't do that best thing for me 100% of the time.

And neither will you.

But we can do our best.

And something I've found to help me to do my best is to schedule in time for myself to do these things I'm talking about today.

Sometimes time does just pop up and I take a moment to think about which of these three would be the most beneficial to me in that moment, and use that time wisely.

But I also don't just wait for time to be available for me, I prioritize it.

And for those of you with a lot on your plate, this is going to be crucial.

It's so easy to fill your time with productive things, chores, obligations, commitments, and things for other people.

It would be so easy to have that take up all of your time.

Then, you're left with no time for yourself.

Don't do that to yourself.

When you're putting things into your calendar and are planning your days, make time in there for yourself. And again, it doesn't have to be a lot of time all at once. You can split it up into small increments.

And don't tell yourself that the time you have isn't enough so it's not worth doing.

It is worth doing. Something is better than nothing.

Anything is better than nothing.

This is something people do with exercise often. If they can't get in a full workout, they do nothing. When they do nothing repeatedly their strength and endurance suffer.

But imagine if you did just one minute of push ups and squats every day. 30 seconds of each. Over time, it would definitely make a difference, a much bigger difference than doing nothing would.

It's the same for moments of relaxation, pleasure, and self-improvement. Anything counts, anything matters.

And along with the idea of thinking it won't be enough before doing it, you might also think it's not enough *while* you're doing it and that's not going to be good either.

If you're doing something and while you're doing it you're thinking, "this isn't enough," you're taking away from your experience. You're taking away from your satisfaction. You're taking away the enjoyment of it. You're taking away from your focus on it.

All of that can make it so you're not getting as much relaxation, pleasure, or self-improvement as you could.

But when you appreciate the time you *do* have, and appreciate what you're doing, you'll get so much more out of it.

It's like if you're on a trip and are telling yourself it's not enough. You're not going to get as much out of it as you would if you were loving on it and appreciating it.

So love on and appreciate the time that you do have. Appreciate what you're able to do.

So, make time for your set obligations for work, family stuff, appointments, and urgent matters.

Then schedule time for yourself.

And then, schedule in to do's that are less urgent with the time you have left.

Make time for mental and physical breaks so you don't get to the point where you're exhausted and can't even enjoy your relaxation, and so you don't end up eating a lot of food to fix your exhaustion. None of us will be perfect at preventing exhaustion, exhaustion will happen to all of us, but if it's a common occurrence for you, do what you can to prevent it.

Make time for pleasure so you're not urging for it, which can drive you to go for quick easy pleasure with a lot of food.

And make time to work on yourself so you can be the person you want to be and so you can stop binge eating.

Make time for you, the things you want to do, and the things that will help you, fulfill you, and benefit you.

Not only do you deserve it but, you need it.

Alright, that's all for today, I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye.