

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #330: How to Actually Change Yourself

Hello! In two weeks, on December 12th of 2024, registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Group Coaching Program will be opening for anyone who wants to take this work to the next level and who wants to work with me directly on stopping binge eating.

If you're anything like I was when I was binge eating, you couldn't be more ready to eliminate this habit from your life.

For me, I felt so frustrated with myself as it kept happening and I didn't know how to stop it. For so long, no matter what I tried, I kept doing it. And when I would binge, I would have zero energy to do anything, I'd feel so unmotivated, it just completely drained me and ruined the rest of my day...and I'd usually feel the effects into the next day too experiencing what I would call a food hangover.

I just felt so awful physically, emotionally, and mentally.

And that was why I never gave up. I needed to do something to stop it.

And I'm so glad I didn't give up because now that I'm free from it and I haven't binged in years, not only do I not experience those effects of bingeing anymore but, I also feel so much more comfortable and in control around food, I feel more confident in myself, I enjoy my free time more because I'm not ruining it by eating too much, and I'm actually choosing more fulfilling things to do with my time, I'm not consumed by thoughts about food, and I don't have a constant struggle with my body.

Doing the work to stop binge eating was one of the most important and best things I ever did for myself.

And I encourage you to do it too.

You don't have to continue having this in your life.

You can have a binge-free life.

And I am here to help you do it in The Stop Binge Eating Program if you would like to work with me.

All the info about the program can be found at coachkir.com/group and on that page you can also join the waitlist which means you'll be notified via email as soon as registration opens on the 12th and you'll get all the info about the special limited-time bonus I'll be offering for this round only to people who register in the first few days. And it's a good one!

If you have any questions that aren't answered on that webpage, you can email them to info@coachkir.com. And if you don't have any questions and are SO ready to do this, get on that waitlist, register when it opens, and you can get to work on the coursework before the program even officially begins.

You don't need to wait any longer than you already have to create your binge-free life. Let's make it happen together.

Okay?

Now, let's get into today's episode topic, how to actually change yourself.

Changing yourself, in a lasting way can be hard.

Most of us have experienced temporary change, where we're eating better, we're not bingeing, we're doing the things we want to be doing, we might even be thinking about food less, and it's awesome but then, at some point, we're back to how we used to be.

The change doesn't last.

And sometimes many of us have tried so many things to change and we don't even see changes happen at all. Maybe for a day but not much longer.

And we're listening to podcasts, like this one, and we're reading, and we're journaling, and we're doing all these things but nothing changes.

So today I want to talk about why that happens and what you can do to actually create long-lasting change in yourself.

Now, first let's talk about when the changes aren't happening at all.

You're doing all kinds of work but nothing is changing.

This is something that some of my group members sometimes experience and they get so frustrated that they're not making progress.

They tell me that they're doing the daily work I recommend, they're listening to the group coaching calls, they're doing the coursework, they're practicing thinking useful thoughts, they're doing all these things but they're still bingeing.

And here's why it's happening.

They're doing so much preparation. They're learning, they're understanding what they need to do, they're mentally preparing, but, they're not putting it into action.

When it comes time to not restrict too much, or to feel an uncomfortable emotion, or to engage in useful self-talk, or to not give in to an urge, they don't do it.

They don't actually apply what they've learned to do and what they've prepared.

Instead, they tell themselves that they don't feel like it right now, or it's too hard, or it's too uncomfortable, or they'll do it tomorrow, or just this one more time, or they forget, or some other excuse or justification that they come up with.

For some reason, they put off doing the work in the moment when they need to do it.

So nothing changes.

That preparation is so important, it really is.

But what's equally as important is actually doing what you've prepared to do.

If you're going to get a different result, you have to do something differently than you have been doing.

New actions are what create new results.

So if you want the new result of not bingeing, you need to do something different than what you usually do.

And to do something different, you have to choose to do something different than you usually do in the moment.

You don't just think in the morning about what you're going to do later and make decisions in the morning and then expect yourself to just not binge in the evening.

You can't expect different behaviors to "just happen" hours later.

In the evening, you need to recommit and actually do what you said you'd do. You need to use the tools and intentionally think your useful thoughts no matter what.

You need to manage your thinking when you're feeling an urge or an uncomfortable emotion, even if you don't feel like it.

You need to be intentional about your self-talk, even if you're tired.

You need to actually do the hard thing, the uncomfortable thing.

You can't keep putting it off. If you don't actually do it, nothing will change.

And if you don't actually do it, it won't get easier and you won't get more comfortable with doing it.

The excuses and justifications to not do the work, and to not manage your thinking in the moment when you're feeling an urge or are feeling uncomfortable or are thinking negatively or unusefully about yourself or about food need to stop.

Instead, you need to justify *doing* the work.

You need to tell yourself why you're going to do it even if you don't feel like it, or if you're tired, or if it's hard or uncomfortable.

And you need to make sure you don't forget to do it. You're going to remind yourself whether that means you keep repeating what you need to hear all throughout the day or you're going to have a reminder keep popping up on your phone or you're going to post sticky notes where you need to see them, you're going to do whatever will help you to remember.

One main difference between people who are successful at changing and those who are not is what they tell themselves in the hard, uncomfortable moments.

The successful people are more assertive, determined, encouraging, and disciplined with themselves. They commit and live in integrity with themselves and tell themselves that they'll do it no matter what. So they actually try, and actually put in effort.

The ones who aren't successful at changing are more lenient, soft, apathetic, or uncaring with themselves. They let themselves off the hook. But off the hook is not where change will happen.

So if you keep letting yourself off the hook, you'll keep not changing.

You can't just do the preparation without the action.

If you are only preparing, and you don't apply what you've prepared, then really your preparation is useless.

What's the point in knowing all these tools and concepts to help you to stop binge eating if you're not actually going to use them?

It's like reading about how to ride a bike.

If all you're doing is consuming information about how to ride a bike, and you never actually get on the bike and try to ride it, you're never going to change your bike riding skills.

You have to get on it, try to balance, try to move forward, fall over a bunch of times, learn from the falls and apply the lessons you learned if you're going to get better at riding a bike and be able to ride one without falling.

You have to eat the foods you've been afraid of, feel through discomfort, probably even fail at not bingeing a bunch of times, then learn from the fails and apply the lessons you learned if you're going to get better at not bingeing and become a person who never binges again.

And when I say failing at not bingeing a bunch of times, I mean failing after a solid attempt, not failing after not even trying.

Productive fails. Not intentional fails.

So be honest with yourself about whether you're actually doing what you're preparing to do.

Are you actually making solid attempts? Are you putting in the effort when it matters most? Are you managing your thinking and thinking intentionally when you need to the most?

If you're not, know what your reasons are for not doing it, know what your excuses and justifications are, and do not accept those anymore.

Be a person who speaks to themselves in a more assertive, determined, and encouraging way.

And here's a few things I want to say about the times when you've experienced temporary change, where you're eating better, you're not bingeing, you're doing the things you want to be doing, you're thinking about food less, but it doesn't last.

So you were actually applying what you knew to do. You were managing your thinking so you were thinking intentionally and dismissing unuseful thoughts. You were going through discomfort.

You were doing the things.

And then you stopped.

For some reason, you stopped doing what was working and what was helping you.

If this happens, it is so important that you don't give up on yourself.

What I've seen too many people do is if this happens they start thinking, "Well, this was bound to happen eventually. You can't *really* change. Here we go again. I knew this was going to happen." Very defeating thoughts. No faith in yourself thoughts. No belief in yourself thoughts.

So instead of getting back to doing what was working, they just give up.

And giving up for sure doesn't create lasting change.

What does, is resilience.

Things happens.

Priorities change, things change in your life that you don't have control of, you make changes in your life that you are in control of, devastating things happens, stress increases, things happen.

And sometimes when they do, we stop engaging in our good habits.

I bet we've all experienced that before.

Exercising is a great example. It goes to the wayside. We choose other things over it. We do it less.

But, you don't have to make it mean anything about your ability to be consistent with exercising.

You can instead assess what has changed and how you can get back to being more consistent with it in a way that works for you now.

If your eating changes, if you start bingeing again, if you start eating more than you were, you don't have to make it mean anything about your ability to stop binge eating for good.

You just need to recognize what you're doing, assess what's going on, and recommit to what will help you to stop the bingeing.

If I binged today after years of not doing it, that's exactly what I would do.

I wouldn't make it mean that I'm a binge eater again and I'll never stop doing this and I shouldn't even bother trying anymore.

At first, of course be disappointed because that's a normal response. But then I would get super curious about what the heck happened. I'd learn from the experience and I would get to work on what I learned.

I'd practice resilience, not giving up.

And I would get back to how I want to be.

But in all honesty, I really can't imagine that happening because I have practiced, so much, the tools and thoughts that have gotten me to be binge-free for years and they've become a part of me.

Repetition has created new neural pathways in my brain, I genuinely, naturally think differently than I used to years ago, and I really do believe I am a different version of myself than I was before because of consistent repetition of the tools and thoughts.

So it is really unlikely that I would binge like I used to.

I still overeat sometimes because I'm an imperfect human and I sometimes make decisions that I don't fully think through or I choose the easy, pleasurable thing. But bingeing is a thing of the past.

Because, I put in the effort and applied the tools, concepts, and thoughts I'd learned.

So that's something that needs to happen in order for you to actually change. Repetition and consistency of application.

But, there's a caveat.

What you're repeating and being consistent with need to be things that are sustainable and things that aren't really you fighting with yourself, white knuckling, and using willpower.

I was talking with someone recently who was getting down on herself because she has seen herself so many times, do well and then stop doing well over and over.

So now, when she binges after doing well she makes it mean that history is repeating itself and it's going to keep repeating.

But when I asked her why she was doing well when she was doing well in the past, she admitted that she was mostly restricting and white-knuckling. She was forcing herself to not binge. And that's just not sustainable.

So repeating that and being consistent with that isn't going to create real change because she's not working on changing herself, she's just fighting against herself.

So now, she's working on changing her thinking, how she talks to herself, how she handles her discomfort and she's handling it in a productive way so she's *actually* handling it, not just avoiding it.

Real change in behavior starts with your thoughts, what you tell yourself, what you believe.

Your thoughts will create feelings that will drive your actions that will create your results.

So if you want to create sustainable change, your thoughts are what you need to work on, not on controlling the food or amount of calories you eat.

And not on fighting your way through urges and emotional discomfort.

So make sure that what you're doing when you are doing well is changing what goes on in your mind, in your thinking, because that's where all change begins.

And the last thing I want to mention is that when you are doing well, take note of what you're doing that is causing you to do well.

Many of you think that doing well "just happens," and that when you stop doing well, it "just happened." But no. It doesn't just happen.

Your results of bingeing or not bingeing are created by you.

It's what you're doing or not doing that causes that result.

It's what you're thinking or not thinking, what you're telling yourself or not telling yourself that causes that result.

So if you know what it is that you're thinking and doing that causes you to not binge, then if you do binge after awhile, you'll know what you need to get back to to stop the bingeing.

You won't be at a loss for what you can do to get out of it. You'll know.

And you'll also of course look back at this incident and uncover what it was that led to the binge and you'll learn from that.

And watch out for any fear you might feel when you *are* doing well.

Sometimes when people are doing well, they get concerned that it's going to end.

But, it won't if they keep doing the things that are helping them to do well.

So know what they are for you and stay committed to them.

So, put in the effort to apply what you have learned and the tools you know, and with repetitious consistency of application, you will change into a new version of you.

And as you go through the process of changing, binges will likely happen and you're going to practice resiliency, curiosity, encouragement, assertiveness, and determination.

And you're going to get right back to what you know helps you and works for you.

You will change. You will when you put into action what you have prepared over and over and over again.

You got this.

Alright, that is all I have for you today on this topic and if you want my help with this, if you aren't putting into action all that you've learned as much as you'd like to and you're having a hard time doing it more, I will help you directly in The Stop Binge Eating Program.

As with all that I talk about on this podcast, you don't have to do this on your own. I can help you.

So go to coachkir.com/group to learn how the program works and to get all the details about this upcoming round and get on the waitlist so you can register right when it opens on December 12th. If you do, you'll get the pretty awesome limited-time bonus and you'll be able to get started on the coursework right away.

And if you have any questions, email them to info@coachkir.com.

Alright, I can't wait to see you in the group and I'll talk to you again here soon. Bye bye!