

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #332: How to Stop Eating Once You've Started

Hello! On Thursday of this week, registration is opening for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Program on December 12th of 2024 and when you register, you'll get access to the Stop Binge Eating Course right away and if you register before Monday December 16th of 2024 at 12pm ET you will get the extra special, limited-time bonus that I'm offering. Details will be posted on Thursday on the registration page, coachkir.com/group, and if you're on the waitlist, you'll get notified via email.

This year, instead of joining a new weight loss program that isn't going to address binge eating, and instead of doing the same things you always do that don't create lasting success, and instead of learning a bunch of tools and ideas but then not putting them into practice and applying them, come join a structured program where you can get coaching, where we can discuss your personal struggles, where I can give you personalized strategies, and where you can get to the root of why you binge and work on that.

I personally spent far too many years not working on stopping binge eating in a way that would actually help me to stop and I bet many of you have too. So I created a program that will, one that I wish I had when I was binge eating. And this Thursday, you can register and get started working on stopping binge eating right away.

So, go to coachkir.com/group right now and either join the waitlist so you can get notified via email as soon as it opens on Thursday or, if you're listening to this on Thursday or in the next week, you can register on that page.

There is tons of info about the program on that page but, if you have any questions that aren't answered there, you can email them info@coachkir.com.

Let's make 2025 your year that you finally, stop binge eating!

Okay, and now, let's talk about how you're going to stop eating once you've started.

It can be hard to stop eating when the food tastes really good, or when you're eating to avoid emotions, or when you're distracted and are mindlessly eating, or when you feel like you're out of control.

Maybe you're enjoying eating the food, you're getting pleasure from the food, and you don't want that pleasure to stop, so, you don't want to stop eating.

Or maybe you're eating to get away from how you're feeling and you don't want to stop eating because you don't want to go back to feeling how you were feeling before you started eating.

Or maybe you're not really paying attention to the food, you're watching tv, or reading, or talking with people, so at the point when you think you should stop, you don't want to because you don't think you've had enough yet, you don't feel satisfied yet.

Or maybe you think you can't stop. You're eating quickly and you feel like you're out of control.

Which ever reason it is, there are things you can do that are specific to that reason to help you to stop and, there are things you can do that are universal to all of them to help you to stop.

So let's talk about it.

Starting with when the food just tastes really good.

You don't want to stop eating because you don't want the experience to stop. It's too good.

You keep thinking about how good it tastes and you want more and you don't want this to stop.

And why don't you want it to stop? Because when the eating stops, the pleasure stops. The good feelings stop. And now you think you'll have to experience lack of pleasure, or just not as much pleasure, and whatever not as good feelings replace that pleasure.

You're not willing to let the good feelings and pleasure end, so you keep eating.

So how do you stop eating when it tastes so good and you don't really want to stop?

Well, if you don't have a good reason to stop, then don't stop. Just keep eating.

But, if you do have a good reason to stop, such as that you're full, or that you want to be hungry for a meal with other people that's coming later, or you're just not going to feel good physically if you keep eating because of the type of food it is, then you need to tell yourself that.

As long as you're just telling yourself the reasons why you want to keep eating, and how good it is to keep eating, then you're going to keep feeling desire to eat and that desire will drive you to keep eating.

But is that the whole truth? Do you not have any reasons why you want to stop eating? Will it be good for you if you keep eating? Be honest about that.

And if you do have reasons for why you want to stop eating, and if it won't be good for you if you keep eating, you need to tell those reasons to yourself.

If you have a really hard time stopping eating when the food tastes so good, it's likely that it's really hard because you're not telling yourself a good reason to stop. You're only thinking about how good it is. You're increasing, or just continuing your desire to keep eating.

So if you want to make it easier for you to stop eating, stop increasing your desire to eat and instead, increase your desire to stop.

If you tell yourself reasons for stopping that are important to you, and you make stopping sound like a really good, desirable thing, you will increase your desire to stop and it will be easier to do it.

If you think about the negative consequences, if there are any, instead of only thinking about the good stuff, it will be easier to stop.

Now, you might tell yourself your reasons to stop but then, you're in this place of wanting to eat more and not wanting to at the same time.

You have competing desires.

And if you do want to stop when you have those competing desires, if you want your desire to stop to win so you can feel good physically and feel comfortable after eating, you need to be willing to experience that lack of pleasure and, you need to be willing to feel that lingering desire to eat more without eating.

What's really driving that desire to keep eating is a desire to keep feeling good and a desire to not feel uncomfortable.

It may feel uncomfortable to stop, even if you do want to.

It may feel uncomfortable if part of you wants to keep eating.

It may feel uncomfortable when you stop experiencing that pleasure.

But if you are willing to feel that discomfort, you will be willing to stop.

And to get yourself to be willing to do it, it can be helpful to know this.

That discomfort will be strongest right when you stop. But then, it's going to decrease in intensity from that point, especially if you are telling yourself why you do in fact want to stop at this point.

So be willing to go through that discomfort, it will dissipate, and, be willing to stop getting that food pleasure.

And something else that will help you to move on from the food pleasure is knowing that you have more pleasure coming.

Have something else to look forward to.

If it's early in the night, have something enjoyable to do after eating.

If it's the end of the day, have something enjoyable to do tomorrow that you can look forward to.

If it's the middle of the day, have something enjoyable to do later.

And you can also tell yourself that you can eat delicious food, just like this, again. This isn't the last time.

You have to not create pleasure scarcity, telling yourself the pleasure is over as if you're never going to get pleasure again.

You will get it again. Tell yourself when. Tell yourself what it will be. There is more coming so it's okay if this pleasurable experience ends.

And the last piece of this is paying attention to your body. A group member of mine told me that when she noticed how her body felt, instead of just focusing on how good the food tastes, and she noticed that her stomach was starting to feel full, it killed the pleasure for her.

Eating wasn't as enjoyable once she noticed how she was feeling physically in her body.

Now, killing pleasure might not sound like a good thing because who doesn't want more pleasure? Right?

But, it's so much easier to stop when you're experiencing less pleasure.

And what she was doing in this instance was being honest with herself about all that was going on with her internally.

She wasn't just focusing on how the food tasted and how she felt emotionally, she was focusing on her body and how it felt, and that is the whole truth of what was going on.

She wasn't ignoring her body and wasn't ignoring that part of the truth.

So acknowledging how her body felt was a good thing for two reasons.

One, she was being honest about what was really going on with her.

And two, it made it easier for her to stop eating.

When you're actually, truly, wanting to stop, as she put it, "killing the pleasure" will make it easier.

And this is a good thing because you really are wanting to stop because you don't want those consequences I was talking about before.

So if you want to make it easier for you to stop eating when the food tastes so good, tell yourself your important reasons for why you want to stop, be willing to go through the discomfort you feel when you stop, have something else that's pleasurable to look forward to, and, pay attention to how your body is feeling.

Next, let's talk about eating to avoid emotions, which is actually kind of similar to what I just talked about.

You started eating to avoid feeling an uncomfortable emotion, whether it was boredom, sadness, loneliness, stressed, overwhelmed, anxious, any emotion that you think is uncomfortable.

And while you're eating, you feel better, you feel good, and you're not feeling how you felt before you started eating.

And if you stop eating, you think you'll be back to feeling how you were feeling before eating.

So of course you don't want to stop eating. You don't want to feel how you were feeling, that's the whole reason why you started eating in the first place.

You want to keep eating to keep avoiding feeling how you were feeling.

You don't want to stop and be back in the feeling.

But, you have to stop at some point. And when you do stop after you've eaten all that food, you'll still end up feeling how you were feeling, because eating didn't actually resolve the feelings. You just avoided it for a bit while you were eating, and if you end up eating way too much then you'll also be adding in the uncomfortable physical effects.

The feeling will come back regardless, and if you want to stop eating sooner so you don't also experience physical discomfort, you need to be willing to feel that emotional discomfort.

The truth is, if you are willing to feel the emotional discomfort to begin with, then you wouldn't be eating in the first place.

But, if you do choose to eat to avoid how you're feeling for a moment, you need to be willing to feel it sooner than later, before you make things worse.

Don't put it off for too long. Don't procrastinate on feeling your emotional discomfort.

The sooner you feel it, the less physical discomfort you will feel *and*, the sooner you feel it, the sooner you can work through it so it does actually get resolved.

Avoiding and ignoring will not result in resolution. Working through it will.

So be willing to feel your emotional discomfort so you will be willing to stop eating.

Next, is the mindless eating. You're eating but you aren't really paying attention to the food.

You're focusing more on the tv, or your phone, or your book, or on the people you're with, or something else.

And when you do put your focus on the food for a moment, you don't feel satisfied yet. You don't think you've had enough. You haven't gotten what you wanted from that food.

And it's all because you haven't been present with your food.

If you're not present with your food, if you're not paying attention to it, you're not going to get much pleasure from it. You'll get a little bit in those moments when you actually do notice what you're eating, what it tastes like, and what it feels like in your mouth. But not enough.

You're not getting the amount of pleasure you're wanting from that food, you're thinking you haven't eaten enough because you haven't enjoyed what you've eaten.

You haven't given it your attention.

Just eating a certain amount of food isn't going to give us the satisfaction we're wanting.

We have to be present with it.

It's like if you take a trip somewhere for a week.

Just being there for a week isn't going to make you satisfied with your trip.

And you're probably not going to be satisfied with it if you aren't paying attention and aren't being present while you're there. If you're on your phone the whole time you probably won't feel satisfied at the end, even though you have been there for a week. So you probably won't be ready to leave.

But if you take it all in, savor it, and actually enjoy where you are, what you're seeing, and what you're doing, then you will be so much more satisfied at the end. So you'll feel more content and ready to leave.

It's the same for eating food.

If you are present with your food and you give it your attention so you get a lot of pleasure from what you eat, then it will be so much easier to stop and move on. You'll feel so much more satisfied at the end.

Be mindful instead of mindless. Give your food more attention if you want to feel more satisfied at the point when you want to be done.

And if you feel more satisfied, it will be so much easier to stop eating and move on.

Lastly, there are the times when you're feeling out of control when you're eating.

You're eating fast, you think you can't stop eating, and you just keep going and going.

This kind of eating is going to be urge driven. Your desire to eat is strong, and there is an urgency to eat.

That's what an urge is – an urgent, strong desire.

And that urgent, strong desire doesn't only drive eating but, it drives fast, seemingly very necessary eating.

Your focus is only on the food. So it's like the first example I talked about when you're just thinking about how good the food tastes, but the focus is stronger.

And because the focus is strong, because it's hard to break your focus, and because you're feeling that urgent, strong desire, it feels like you are out of control and can't manage yourself.

Now, when you're eating in this state, it can be really hard to stop eating. It's not impossible but, it's really hard.

I've heard many stories from people, and I've experienced it myself, when they've stopped themselves before their physical discomfort was extremely uncomfortable.

And we've done it by first, acknowledging what we're doing. You first become an observer of yourself. Instead of just being in the moment, you notice what you're doing as if you were on the outside of yourself looking in.

I bet many of you have actually experienced that where you shift from just being in it to asking yourself, "What are you doing?" Even just doing that is you noticing and observing what you're doing instead of just reacting and doing.

And then once you do that, it is so important that you then acknowledge that you are not in fact out of control.

I know it feels like you are. I know that feeling very well. It feels so real. But, you are not.

You are capable of stopping eating in that moment. It is possible. And you need to acknowledge that if you are actually going to stop yourself.

If you keep telling yourself that you're out of control then you will feel powerless and keep acting as if you are out of control. You won't even try to stop.

But if you acknowledge that you have the ability to stop, the ability to not put another piece of food in your mouth, which you do, then you will be shifting from feeling powerless and out of control to feeling even just a little more empowered. Probably not fully empowered but, there will be a shift.

And that shift is so important because you'll be shifting from this belief that you can't do anything to stop yourself into a belief that maybe, it might be possible. And that is undoubtedly going to be more helpful.

And you'll be in a mental space that will then be more open to all the other things I've been talking about in this episode – telling yourself why you want to stop, telling yourself the consequences of

continuing to eat, going through the discomfort of stopping, and being present with yourself and what you're eating which will take you out of the mindless bingeing.

Now, again, as I said, this isn't easy. Preventing a binge from even starting is easier than getting yourself to stop in the midst of a binge. But you need to at least know that there is *something* you can do to stop yourself from eating so excessively that you feel like you can't move afterward and your energy and motivation are depleted and your mood is completely changed and more negative.

You can do something but, you first need to be aware of what you're doing and observe yourself, so bringing yourself into awareness and out of zoning out has to come first, and then acknowledge that it is possible for you to stop, even if it's hard to.

Hard doesn't mean impossible. And you are capable of not putting more food in your mouth.

The example I really like to prove this with is if you were bingeing and feeling out of control and a group of people you know walked into the room.

Would you be able to stop? And would you stop?

I bet you would. And it would happen not because they are there but, because you are deciding to stop.

You are aware of what you're doing and that you don't want to be doing this and they helped you to confront that awareness.

You are actually using your ability to not eat more because you are in control of what you do next.

You have reasons for not continuing your binge if they are there and you are thinking of those reasons.

You are willing to feel the discomfort you are in because you don't want them to see you bingeing.

It may be a very different circumstance than when you're all alone but, your ability is still the same.

You can do it whether they are there or not.

So, those are the top reasons why you might not stop eating and what you can do to stop yourself at the point when you truly want to be stopping.

And what ultimately needs to happen with all of these, no matter which circumstance you're in, is that you need to actually decide to stop and then commit to that decision.

The eating ends when you decide to stop and when you commit to that decision.

So often eating continues simply because the decision to stop was never made.

Only the decision to keep eating, to eat more, to not stop gets made.

Or, the decision gets made but you break your commitment to it.

You change your mind and say, "just one more," or, "well, just a little bit of this other food first."

Or, you're thinking about stopping but not deciding.

You're thinking you *should* stop. But, thinking you should isn't a decision. It's just an idea. It's just you thinking about stopping.

A decision needs to be made and you need to commit to it, even if it's uncomfortable like I talked about before.

Not only are you committing to stopping eating but, you're committing to feeling the discomfort of stopping.

When we keep eating, a lot of the time it's because we don't want to feel the discomfort of stopping and that's why we go for more food.

More food will be more comfort. Stopping will be discomfort, somewhere on the spectrum of discomfort whether it just be just a little or a lot. But remember, it will decrease and the point when you stop eating will most likely be the strongest.

So go through it. Commit to feeling it.

Make a firm decision to stop at the point when you know you truly want to stop and to help you do that, make sure you know your reasons why you've chosen that amount.

Having a why behind your decision, a why that is important to you, will make it easier to commit to the decision.

If I have important reasons to leave a party at 9pm it will be so much easier to decide to leave and commit to the decision, even if I'm having fun.

If I'm not thinking about those reasons or if I don't even know why I had wanted to leave at 9 or if my reasons to leave aren't important to me, and I'm having fun, I probably won't stick to my decision to leave.

So decide when you want to stop, based on reasons that are important to you, reasons that you like, and commit to it by committing to feeling the initial discomfort you'll feel when you stop.

Alright, that is what I have for you today and if you want more help with this, if you have questions, if you try any of this and it doesn't work for you and you want my feedback on what you can do differently so it will work for you, I highly encourage you to work with me in The Stop Binge Eating Program.

Again, registration is opening Thursday, December 12th of 2024 and you can register by going to coachkir.com/group or if you're listening to this today or tomorrow, before it opens, join the waitlist so you can get notified as soon as it opens on Thursday. And you'll want to register ASAP so you can get started on the coursework ASAP and so you can get the limited-time bonus I'll be offering for anyone who registers by Monday December 16th at 12pm ET. And you're going to want it.

Alright, I cannot wait to work with those of you who join this round and, I will talk to you again soon.
Bye bye!