

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #342: Relying On Food Too Much

Hello! For those of you who would like to work with me personally on stopping binge eating, I wanted to let you know that registration for the next round of The Stop Binge Eating Group Coaching Program will be opening in one month, on March 19th of 2025.

So get on the waitlist, mark your calendar, and get ready to take what you've been learning on the podcast to the next level.

And for this round, as I did with the previous round, I'll be offering a pretty awesome bonus for anyone who registers within the first few days and if you're on the waitlist, you'll get all the info about that bonus and get notified as soon as registration opens so you don't miss it. Plus, you'll get immediate access to The Stop Binge Eating Course so you can get started on the work and get started with making changes right away.

And then when we're in the program, I'm going to help you to quiet the food noise, stop obsessing about food, feel in control around food, eat your favorite foods in moderation, feel better in your body, trust yourself more, and everything else that goes along with stopping binge eating.

All the info about the program and the link to join the waitlist can be found at coachkir.com/group. And if you have any questions that aren't answered on that webpage, you can email them to info@coachkir.com.

Alright, now onto today's topic, relying on food too much.

Now of course we all rely on food because we need it to keep us alive. We rely on food to fuel us and nourish us and provide our bodies with nutrients.

And most of us also rely on it for some pleasure.

But some of you are relying on food for much more than that.

You're relying on it for a majority of your pleasure.

You're relying on it to make you feel good.

To entertain you.

To calm you.

To stop your thoughts.

To take away discomfort and create comfort.

To take you away from yourself and to escape.

You've used food in this way because it does actually do what you're wanting it to do.

And if you are relying on food for any of these, if you've become dependent on food for these things, it's likely that you don't even know how else to get what you're wanting.

Eating food has become the way.

Eating food is what you know to do.

And you're at a loss for how else you could get what you're wanting.

You might even think there isn't another way to get what you're wanting.

Or, maybe you know of a different way but either you don't know how to do it or don't want to do it.

When I first start working with people in my program, sometimes that's exactly where they are.

They might not know how else to calm and comfort themselves without eating food. Or maybe they know how else to do it but, they'd rather eat because it's easier, faster, and more pleasurable.

They might not know what else to do for pleasure or entertainment or they do but they don't want to do something else because they think that it won't be as pleasurable as eating food.

They might not know what else to do about their thoughts or again, they do, they know that they can work on changing their thoughts but eating will be an easier and faster way to calm their mind.

Or, they have such a strong desire to escape their thoughts and feelings and they don't know what else to do except eat.

So food becomes their go-to, their crutch, their way to get what they're wanting.

And this can end up being a problem for two main reasons.

One, they end up eating way more than what they need to fuel their body and way more than what would be a moderate amount for pleasure.

And two, they end up obsessing about the availability of food and when they'll be able to eat next.

This is a problem that came up for one of my group members where she was constantly thinking about food.

It was because she felt like she needed it to help herself. To help herself to feel comfortable, and to help her to manage her emotions.

So she would get so worried about food being available because in her mind, if she wasn't able to eat, then there wouldn't be a way out of her emotional discomfort whether it was feeling anxious, feeling awkward, feeling lonely, any uncomfortable feeling.

And, because she didn't know what else to do, and didn't have another way to handle her emotions, they would build up, and her thoughts about food would intensify, and it would begin to feel unbearable and that's when she'd feel the desire to escape.

That desire to escape usually is a result of knowing no other way to handle your thoughts and emotions, thinking you're stuck in them, thinking there is no way out, and it usually happens after they've lasted awhile, or are repetitious, or increase in intensity.

So this reliance on food contributed to her obsessive thoughts about food. She kept worrying about how she'd be able to get it if she needed it, or whether she'd be able to get it.

But if she learned how to rely on something else to get what it is she's wanting from the food, then she wouldn't obsess about it so much.

And here's what I recommend that she relies on.

Herself.

Whatever it is that she's wanting from that food, she can give to herself without eating anything.

And the same goes for you.

You can create comfort for yourself.

You can calm yourself.

You can cause yourself to feel better.

You can handle and work through your thoughts and feelings.

You can entertain yourself and create pleasure for yourself.

You can actually handle your own thoughts and feelings so that they don't build up so much that you're urging to escape yourself.

Now, you might be wondering how you do all that.

Well, think about this. If you were wanting to comfort someone else, what would you do?

You'd tell them comforting words. "You'll be okay. You'll get through this," things like that.

That's what you would do for yourself.

Whatever it is that you would do for someone else, you do that for yourself.

What about if you want to calm yourself?

Deep, slow breathing can help, as can telling yourself calming thoughts.

What about if you want to be entertained and you want pleasure?

You have the ability to do that for yourself too.

You can talk with yourself, in your head or out loud, it's up to you, and enjoy your own company.

I bet you have some really interesting, enjoyable things that you could be thinking about if you took the time to be with yourself.

When it comes to pleasure, what you're doing isn't as important as what you're thinking as you're doing it.

So you could just be laying the floor, by yourself, in silence, and entertain yourself in your mind, and experience pleasure.

And what about those swirling thoughts and extended feelings?

Well, the feelings are being caused by those swirling thoughts and yes, you can eat to escape them, or distract yourself from them, but, that isn't really going to stop them. They will come back if they're not resolved.

And you can resolve them. You can figure out solutions.

This happens a lot with anxiety.

Anxiety is typically worst-case scenario thinking, catastrophizing, thinking that something is going to go wrong, or that something bad is going to happen.

And what I recommend is that you go to that catastrophe, that bad thing, in your mind and show yourself how you will prevent it, if in fact you can, or show yourself why you will be okay if it does happen.

Worrying isn't going to help anything and it's going to perpetuate worrisome, anxious thoughts.

But, coming up with a plan for prevention or for how you will be okay if you can't prevent it, can help you to ease those thoughts and feel better.

For anything you're excessively using that food for, for whatever it is that you're excessively depending on and relying on food for, there is another way.

And so many of those other ways are things that you can do, with your mind, with your self-talk, and you can rely only on yourself to get you what you want.

Now, will it take more effort and more time to get what you want than eating food would? Probably.

But, it's worth the time and effort.

Seriously, being able to rely on yourself is so empowering, and it can help you to feel better just knowing that you have most of what you need, in your mind, at all times.

Now, of course we also do need to rely on things outside of us and other people for things. We can't do everything on our own.

If what you're wanting is connection then yeah, you can rely on spending quality time with people to give you that.

Or if you need help with something because you've tried on your own and haven't been able to do it then yes, you can rely on other people to help you.

But I don't think that enough of us give ourselves enough credit for what we can accomplish on our own just by using more useful self-talk.

By talking to ourselves the way we would talk to a friend or by saying to ourselves what we would want someone else to say to us.

We can create emotions we want to feel and change our perspectives and change our internal emotional state and take care of ourselves.

We have that ability. You have that ability.

You don't need food for any of it.

So if you do notice that you rely heavily on food for anything beyond fuel, and beyond moderate pleasure, ask yourself, "What am I wanting this food to do for me?"

Find out what you're relying on the food for.

Find out what you're trying to get away from or trying to get with the food.

If you're wanting to get away from something, which is likely thoughts and feelings that you're wanting to get away from, ask yourself why you're wanting to get away from them, why you're not willing to be in them, and also, how you can help yourself.

And you *can* help yourself, more than you think.

There is always another way, besides eating food. A better way. A way that will actually result in a solution, in a resolution, in truly feeling better.

You don't need to rely on food.

For more than you think, you can rely on yourself.

And if you need help beyond what you can do for yourself, there are still better options besides food. Working with me in The Stop Binge Eating Program is one of those options. Just sayin'.

Don't settle for food when there is so much else you can rely on.

Alright, that is all for today. Also, get on the waitlist for the program at coachkir.com/group if you do want to work with me soon and I will talk to you next time. Bye bye!