

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #349: Committing to Feeling Your Emotions

Hi! Today I'm talking with you about commitment. Particularly, your commitment to feeling emotions.

Most of you binge because you're not committed to feeling your emotions.

You might start out being committed when you're just thinking about doing it but, when you're feeling an uncomfortable emotion and the time comes to actually feel it through, you break your commitment and you eat to escape your emotion instead.

You don't follow through on what you've committed to.

So essentially, you're not truly committed to it.

Instead, you're committed to escaping your emotions.

What you do is what you're committed to.

So if you want to know what you're actually committed to doing, look at what you've been doing.

If you're committing to escaping emotions, rather than committing to feeling them, then when you feel those uncomfortable emotions, you're going to be searching for food, since that's your means of escape.

And not only can this cause a problem because you're overeating or bingeing when you feel those emotions but, you're also not addressing your emotions, processing them, and working through them and resolving them so, they're going to keep coming back and the cycle will continue.

Feel, escape with food, feel again, escape with food, and so on.

And then there's a bigger issue at play as well.

When you commit to feeling your emotions without eating, and then you don't follow through on that commitment, you're not just breaking the commitment to feel, you're breaking a commitment that you made to yourself.

You're not committing to yourself.

So then, you lose trust in yourself, and a lot of you have.

You stop believing that you'll do what you say you'll do.

You don't believe what you say.

And that's of course going to affect your relationship with yourself and cause you to feel a lot of self-doubt which is going to hinder your attempts at stopping binge eating.

It's going to make it so much harder for you to stop binge eating when you don't trust yourself and when you doubt yourself.

So this lack of follow through on your commitment to feel uncomfortable emotions isn't just affecting you in that moment when you don't do it, it's affecting you and your binge eating and your future.

So why do you do it? Why don't you follow through on your commitment?

Well, the most common reason why is quite simple.

It's easier not to.

When you're much more familiar with escaping emotions, which most people are, then feeling through your emotions is going to take more effort.

And us humans just prefer to not put in effort. We'd rather things be easy. We'd rather do what's easy and pleasurable and avoid discomfort.

So if you just let your humanness take over, and you let yourself do what your human brain encourages you to do, then you're going to be looking for that easy, pleasurable way out of discomfort.

And many of you are just letting yourself take the easy way out.

But, as you know, it doesn't come without consequence and that's why I encourage you to do what's more challenging, what's more unfamiliar, and what's going to take more effort....because it will be

worth it. It's how you're going to make real changes. Otherwise, you'll just keep doing what's familiar....which might be something you don't really want to be doing.

Another reason why you're not following through on your commitment might be because you don't believe you *can* do it.

And, you don't believe you can do it because you haven't been doing it.

But listen, you haven't been doing it not because you can't. Not because you are incapable of following through on your self-commitment. But because you've been choosing the easier thing. And you are capable of choosing the harder thing. You can choose it and you can do it.

There's a difference between not being able to and not being willing to.

You are able to. Now you need to be willing to.

Now, you then need to understand why you haven't been willing to commit to feeling those uncomfortable emotions.

Is it because you're afraid to? Maybe you think those emotions will last forever or they'll feel worse if you let yourself feel them. If that's the case, I recommend you listen to episode #343, Waiting for Emotions and Urges to Pass. Because, they won't last forever, you'll actually help yourself to feel better if you feel your emotions, and there is something you can do to help your emotions to pass sooner than later.

Is it because you don't think it will be worth it to feel the uncomfortable emotions? If that's the case, go listen to a recent episode I did, #347, The Benefits of Feeling Emotional Discomfort.

When you know the reason why you're not willing, you can overcome the reason. You can become more willing.

When you debunk your beliefs about emotions that are stopping you from committing to feeling them, and when you have better reasons to feel than to eat, then you will be more willing to commit.

Now, we also need to talk about what you're committing to.

When you just say that you're going to commit to feeling uncomfortable emotions without eating to escape them, that's actually a pretty big goal with smaller goals that contribute to it.

It's like with binge eating. Stopping binge eating is a big goal with lots of small goals that contribute to it.

I remember saying to myself all the time that I was just going to stop binge eating, as if that was all I had to do.

But I didn't realize that in order to do that, I needed to work on feeling discomfort, and not being so restrictive, and being more neutral about my body, and having better self-talk.

And even *those* goals have smaller goals within them.

So when you commit to feeling through emotional discomfort, without escaping with food, what is the first thing you're going to commit to in order to achieve that goal?

The first thing I recommend that people commit to, if they aren't doing it already, and many of you aren't, is to commit to acknowledging how you feel.

Just naming how you feel.

I feel anxious. I feel lonely. I feel overwhelmed.

Commit to that because if you don't acknowledge how you feel, if you ignore how you feel, then you can't do anything about it.

You can't commit to feeling something that you don't even acknowledge that you're feeling.

Or if you do already do that, you can commit to accepting how you feel.

You tell yourself, "This is how I feel right now." Instead of arguing, resisting, wishing you weren't feeling it, or trying to escape it, you accept what is happening right now.

You can commit to calming self-talk.

You can tell yourself, "I will be okay, this is temporary, I'm just feeling sensations in my body."

Calming yourself when you feel discomfort is going to be so much more useful than panicking or getting frustrated or angry.

There are small goals you can commit to that are part of committing to feeling the discomfort all the way through.

Commit to what feels doable to you.

Commit to some component of feeling feelings, instead of committing to escaping them.

If you're having a hard time committing to feeling the emotions all the way through, commit to a goal that is smaller and more doable for you.

And please remember, you are learning to be a person who is committed to this.

You are not going to be perfect at it right away. Maybe ever.

But please, stay committed to the process.

If you do overeat or binge to escape your emotions, don't quit on yourself and tell yourself you can't be trusted and you clearly aren't committed, and mentally beat yourself up.

Stay committed to learning, to getting curious about what happened and what went wrong, to trying again, to trying things a little differently the next time. Ultimately, stay committed to figuring this out because it is figuroutable.

You can do it and when you stay committed and you keep learning from mistakes and trying things differently, you will do it.

Okay?

So, commit to feeling uncomfortable emotions. Commit to small goals within that big goal, goals that feel doable. And commit to the process of learning and getting better.

You can do this.

Eating to escape may be easier but, you're not going to commit to the easier thing.

Challenge yourself so you can change.

Alright, that is what I have for you today. I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye!