

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #367: Living As If You Are Binge-Free Now

Hi! Today I'm talking with you about living as if you are binge-free now.

I bet that how you imagine your eating to be, your thoughts about food, yourself, and your body, to be and how you imagine so many other aspects of your life and what you'll be doing when you're no longer bingeing is quite different than how it all is now.

When we think about this, we sometimes have this idea that all of that will happen once we've stopped binge eating.

When we have stopped bingeing, *then* we become a different version of ourselves.

But that's not really how it works.

You actually become a different version of yourself *before* you stop binge eating.

Everything you have after you've stopped binge eating, you actually get before you stop and that's *how* you stop.

You change things in order to stop.

And that includes any skills, thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

You change your thoughts to stop binge eating.

You acquire skills to stop binge eating.

You do things differently to stop binge eating.

Something that sometimes scares people about stopping binge eating is that they're afraid of how they'll cope with emotions or just how they'll get through life without having binge eating as their crutch.

But what they don't see is that they're going to learn all of that along the way.

You don't just get to the point where you stop binge eating and now you have to learn all that.

Like I said, you learn on the way.

And everything else will change on the way too.

But in order for it to change, you'll need to actively change it.

Yes some changes can happen rather naturally but, most changes happen intentionally with intentional effort.

So, start changing by deciding what you want to change.

When you think about your binge-free self, what is different about them?

What are they thinking? What are they feeling? What are they doing? How are they eating?

The more specific you can get the better.

So for example, you're not just saying, "They feel better," what specific feelings do they feel?

And you're not just saying how they *don't* feel, what emotions *do* they feel?

Once you've identified those feelings, you're going to start working on feeling those feelings now.

You don't have to wait because, being binge-free isn't what will make you feel that way anyway.

Having stopped binge eating isn't what will make you feel confident, proud, accomplished, relaxed, in control, or free.

It's changing your thoughts that will.

And the good news is that you can start changing your thoughts now and start changing how you feel now.

You can start thinking differently now. You can start thinking like your binge-free self now.

So, what will they think?

Imagine yourself, 10 years from now, when you are so detached from binge eating that you rarely ever think about you having done it.

The you in 10 years, what do they think about food? About specific foods that they've binged on? About their body? About themselves? About their emotions? About what they're capable of?

And, for all those same things, what do *you* think about them now?

Find your start point and your end point, where you are and where you want to be.

Then, you're going to assess those thoughts you want to be thinking. Are there any you believe right now?

Are there any that you can start practicing thinking now because you believe them now? If so, go for it. Start thinking like your binge-free self in those ways right now, because you can. And it will help you to feel and act more like your binge-free self since your thoughts will create feelings that will drive your actions. You think like a binge-free person, which will cause you to feel like a binge-free person, and will make it easier for you to act like a binge-free person.

And for the thoughts that you don't believe yet, you're going to explore what you *do* believe between where you are now and where you want to be.

You're not going to try and fake it 'til you make it. You're not going to tell yourself something you don't believe because that's not going to be helpful. You're only going to practice thinking what you do believe because only then will you create the emotion you're trying to create with the thought.

So, for the thoughts you don't believe yet, what small shift can you make in how you're thinking now? That small shift in thinking is what's called a bridging thought.

Rather than trying to take a leap that's too big and jumping from where you are to where you want to be, you're building a bridge, and you start building it with this first bridging thought.

Here's an example.

Say that you think your binge-free self would think that the foods they used to binge on are just foods.

But right now, you think they're bad, they're binge foods, they're dangerous, they're a slippery slope, they're foods you can't control yourself around, so you might have lots of negative thoughts about these foods.

Because you have so many negative thoughts, and you have a hard time just seeing those foods as food, or as delicious food that you like, it's not going to be useful for you to try and tell yourself it's just food. It's not going to feel true to you and if it doesn't feel true, then it won't be effective.

In order for you to create the emotion and behavior that would come from thinking that way, you have to believe it.

So the starting point, the bridging thought for you might be something like, "It's not useful to call foods bad, or dangerous, or a slippery slope." Or, "I am going to learn how to control myself around those

foods.” See what I mean? It’s a step away from where you are now, you’re moving closer to where you want to be, even if it’s just a small step.

Here’s another example.

Say that you think your binge-free self would think that their body is a good body, or it’s fine, or something else that’s neutral to positive.

But right now, you think it’s gross, unattractive, fat, disgusting, or some other really negative word.

Because you think so negatively of your body, it might be hard to even fathom thinking positively, or even neutral positive.

So you could start with something like, “I’m just thinking my body is disgusting.” This thought can be useful because it’s shifting you from seeing your body as factually disgusting to seeing that “disgusting” is just a word you’ve been using to describe it. So that means that the word “disgusting” is optional, you don’t have to keep using it. For many people, just acknowledging that can feel better than looking at it like a fact. It can feel more like a word choice, which it is.

You could also think, “My body is a human body,” which can help you to neutralize how you feel about it.

You could also start with thinking more about what your body can do rather than only about how it looks. “My body is resilient. My body allows me to live my life.” Or insert something that your body can do like walk, hug, dance, lift things, etc.

You don’t have to try and take a big leap from negative to positive, you can find a believable place closer to where you are and then practice it until you’re ready for the next bridging thought and you keep doing that until you get there.

All of this is so important because if you don’t start intentionally changing what you think now, it might not happen, and then stopping binge eating might not happen.

You can’t keep thinking and feeling the same way you have and expect yourself to act differently long-term.

You might be able to use willpower to do it for a little bit but it won’t last.

So you’re going to do what you can to start thinking like your future, binge-free self now.

And if anything about your future, binge-free self seems impossible to you, you start with what does seem possible for you now.

It’s like if I’m thinking about running a marathon. Running 26.2 miles might seem impossible, like I could never do that.

But, what if I just thought about running one mile? Well, because I haven’t run in forever it might not sound easy but, I do believe I could do it, even if I do it pretty slowly.

Then, once I practice doing one, and it becomes easier, I'll begin to believe in two. Then when I practice doing two and it becomes easier, I'll begin to believe in three, and so on until I finally get to 26.2.

That's how it could be with you becoming your binge-free self.

What you can start doing now, do now.

What you're not ready to do now, find a smaller goal or a bridging thought that you *are* ready to do now.

Spend time practicing being who you want to be now in whatever capacity you are ready for.

It's kind of like when they say dress for the job you want, not the job you have.

And they say that because it can help you to change how you're thinking, feeling, and behaving, which can help you to get that job you want.

Think for the eating habits you want, not the eating habits you have.

Your binge-free self is thinking they are in control. Think that now.

Your binge-free self is thinking kindly of their body. Think kindly now.

Your binge-free self is thinking that emotions are normal, tolerable, and nothing to be afraid. Think that way now.

Your binge-free self is allowing themselves to eat the foods they like to eat and not telling themselves they shouldn't or it's bad. Do that now.

Your binge-free self is being kind to themselves. Be kind now.

Your binge-free self is doing things they love doing, saying yes when they're invited to parties they want to go to, and aren't hiding themselves. Live your life how you want to now.

Your binge-free self is thinking and doing so many things that you can do now.

Do them.

Or, again, do what you can. Do more than you are. Do differently than you are. And even something a little different is still different.

If you want to become your binge-free self, start right now.

Because you can.

Alright, that's what I have for you today, go practice being your binge-free self and I will talk to you next time, bye bye.