

THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

with Kirstin Sarfde

Ep #393: Going Through Breakups with Breakup Coach Dorothy

Hello! I am so excited to share with you, a conversation I had with my very good friend, Breakup Coach Dorothy.

There have been so many times that people in my program have gone through breakups or divorces and just like with any other highly emotional experience, they might be feeling a strong desire to overeat or binge so they can escape the uncomfortable feelings they're feeling.

When this happens, it's important that we talk about how to manage the feelings they're feeling, rather than just eating to avoid them, and how to handle the breakup itself.

And what happens most of the time, is that in addition to the help I give to my clients, I also send them to Dorothy's podcast for additional tools, insights, tips, strategies, and concepts that will help them navigate their breakup. She is just so knowledgeable about how to handle breakups that I cannot not tell them about her!

So, I wanted to bring her on here to share her wisdom with all of you who I haven't had the chance to refer to her.

If you're going through a breakup, or went through one awhile ago but still aren't over your ex, then this episode is for you. And even if you're not or haven't, it could still be helpful for you to listen because you might have a breakup someday and maybe not just with a romantic partner but a friend, or a job, or something else. You can gain some knowledge and prepare yourself for the possibility now. Or, you could just learn something that you can share with a friend who might be going through it or

who will in the future. No matter where you are with breakups, there will be something you can takeaway from this episode to help yourself or someone else.

So, without further ado, let's get into it. Here is my conversation with the amazing Breakup Coach Dorothy!

Kirstin: Hello, Dorothy.

Dorothy: Hello. I'm so excited to be here with you today.

Kirstin: I am so excited to be here with you too. It is about time that I have you on here.

Dorothy: Yeah. So long. I feel like I've already been on, even though I haven't. Does that make sense?

Kirstin: Yes. And I can't tell you how many times I have recommended people to you.

Dorothy: You too with me. And I feel like I talk about you all the time. My podcast already knows about you. My clients already know about you. Everyone around me already knows about you.

Kirstin: Yeah, yeah. So I was thinking, because I'm always inviting-- or I'm always sending people to your podcast and sending them to you anyway, why not just give you to the rest of my audience that hasn't told me that they've had breakups or divorces or whatever, and that they need someone like you. I'm just handing you to them now.

Dorothy: Yay! Welcome, friends. I'm so excited to get to know you. We're going to be besties.

Kirstin: Yes. So let's just start with you telling us who you are, why you do this work, what work you do, where this all started. Just give us the whole story.

Dorothy: So my name is Breakup Coach Dorothy. I help people get over their ex in three months or less and help them build a life that's bigger and better than the one that they had with their ex. Okay, now I got into this work because I went through a rock bottom breakup actually 10 years ago, which is insane. Because I met you like not many years after it. I think two years after my big breakup. So long story short, I went through this really big breakup with this guy that I'd been dating for seven years. I had just moved to Florida with him. I thought we were going to get married and have babies. That was just set in my brain. I was so ready for it. I was so excited. He had just finished school. So we were like really getting ready to settle down. And I left to Chicago to go on a work trip and he broke up with me on the phone when I was on that trip in Chicago. And I was just like so distraught and so upset. And I felt blindsided and just so angry.

I'm a Taurus, so I'm a little bit stubborn. So I was like, fine then. And I got an apartment while I was there, moved in with my suitcase and an air mattress, and then was like, okay, I'm going to have to go get my things from our Florida house. And when I went to go get my things out of the Florida house,

when he was gone taking boards or something, my neighbor had come over and she let me know that he had had a new girl at the house ever since I left. It was so terrible in the fact that I felt like I lost my best friend, the person I thought I was going to spend the rest of my life with. But then I had this added betrayal and anger and resentment about this new girl seemingly having swooped in and taken the life that I had worked so hard for.

So I remember in that moment being like, I cannot go backwards. My ex at the time had given me a lifestyle that I had never been privy to, I had never experienced. I was very excited about that. And it was really hard for me to think like the life that I had dreamt up with him was going to be gone because he chose to be with some other girl. So I kind of made it my mission to figure out, how do I keep this lifestyle? How do I create this? How do I do this in a way where no one can ever take it away from me again? And that commitment looked like googling. We didn't have AI at the time. So I was googling, how do you forgive and let go? How do you get over your ex? How do you move on when your ex moves on quickly? And I just scoured Google and I did all of the things, right? Like I got in the best shape of my life. I traveled. I meditated. I journaled. I did all of the things. I waited for time to heal. I went no contact. And the craziest thing happened. It was like a year and a half later, I was in this new relationship with this amazing amazing man and I was still not over my ex. And it was so annoying. [laughter] I was still so angry and resentful. And I was comparing this amazing new guy to my ex constantly. He had so much patience with me for that. But it was terrible. I was still making decisions in hopes to get my ex's attention. It was just disgusting. [laughter] I'm embarrassed. I'm mortified when I think back to it. But I was like, "Okay, this is so frustrating. Why am I still not over this person? And there's got to be something wrong with me." It was just like this thing that I could not figure out. And that is when I learned that thoughts create feelings. And everything kind of shifted for me when I learned that simple but yet profound and impactful statement that thoughts create feelings of like, "Wow, the only reason I'm still so angry and so resentful isn't because not enough time has passed. I sn't because I've done no-contact perfectly or not perfectly or whatever. It was because my thoughts hadn't changed about the situation, about the breakup, about myself, about my future." And from that point forward, everything shifted, everything changed. I utilized my thoughts to reduce desire and attachment to my ex. I was able to really propel forward in my bigger and better life and start making decisions that were authentic to me. And I was living for myself instead of as an effect of the breakup. So that was kind of where that sparked. And then I think what happened was I was very open about everything that had happened. At the time, I had this fitness YouTube channel [laughter] that I was not very good at, but I was doing it. And I had shared about my breakup on YouTube. And I think from there, people were kind of watching just for funsies, right? I wasn't trying to help anybody at the time. But then all of a sudden, about two years later, friends started reaching out, being like, "I'm going through this divorce, and I'm earth-shattered. How did you get you through yours?" And people started reaching out and asking for the help. And then that's when I was like, well, "I think I'm meant to be a breakup coach. I think I'm meant to go to life coach training. And I think I'm meant to help people with breakups." So that's kind of where the career part of that took off.

Kirstin: Yes. Oh, my God. I love it. I love how you took a very difficult time in your life and figured it out. And then now you are paying it forward to the other people. So awesome. So as you've been doing this work and helping people to move on after breakups and divorces, what have you found to be the thing that makes it hard for them to move on?

Dorothy: Yeah. There's so many components, and it's very nuanced based on the person. But I think one of the biggest things is we recognize that there is a lot of loss, sadness, and grief in heartbreak. And I think a lot of that is required and necessary. But there is so much undue suffering placed on top of a breakup that is so optional. It almost feels like we're obligated to do these things, but we're not. And so for example, the stories, the things that you make the breakup mean about you and your future, the

things that you make your ex-- what they said about you, about you. You take on so much extra suffering and pain by making the breakup mean something negative about you. "I wasn't good enough. I wasn't lovable enough. I wasn't worthy. He chose her over me." All of these very dramatic stories and they feel real. So I'm saying this with so much compassion and the fact that I understand that it feels real, but that is the part that is totally optional that we take on all of the time. And I see it so much where it's like the ex will even say, this has nothing to do with you, but you're like, "It clearly has something to do with me, though." And we just take it on. And then it kind of snowballs further when we start applying it to our future. And then we start adding these ridiculous stories about like, "I'm never going to find anybody as good as him," even though he didn't want to be with you. Yeah, we start making stuff about our future. We start making everything mean about us. And all of that part is optional. And I think we've been conditioned as a culture and a society to believe that heartbreak has to be hard and bad and negative when in reality there's a completely new way to have a heartbreak and have a breakup and a divorce. And of course, again, there's going to be the required necessary sadness, pain, loss. But sometimes, believe it or not, people feel relieved after a breakup, and they feel complete, and they feel calm, and they're grateful. And that is also an option. So yeah.

Kirstin: Yeah, yeah. So for the person that is thinking, "I'm not worthy. I'm not lovable enough. I'm never going to find someone as good as him," and is telling all of these stories, how do you help this person get from that to relieved and calm and complete?

Dorothy: So I think the very first thing we have to work on is just the experience of I'm sure you talk to all your people about this all the time. We have talked about this a lot. Feeling your feelings. Ew, ick. I know. We're just all repulsed. I can feel it, right? Ew, what? And I don't even like to use the word feel your feelings anymore because it's so cliché. But truly, getting calm in your body about the fact that you feel so shitty about yourself. Like, it's okay that you feel horrible about yourself, and we don't have to rush to change anything. Let's get calm in the fact that we are in a place in our life where I am noticing, I am naturally making things about me when they're not. Period. I know it sounds so simple, and it doesn't feel like you're making all this progress, but you've got to get calm and comfortable with the way that you think about yourself now, without trying to change it, without rushing to fix anything. And just acknowledging and building the awareness of like, "Oh, I did that there. And here's a really great example of this, actually, is I gave up complaining for 2026. So 365 days with no complaining, and like, what is my life going to be like when I don't complain? So that doesn't mean-- I mean, it's January 11th. I have definitely caught myself complaining, but I'm not rushing to fix it. I'm just saying like, "Oh, noticed," right? Noted. Noted, I complained there. Interesting. And I can just calmly witness it. And I don't have to get angry with it or get upset with myself about it, but I can just calmly witness, "Hmm, that was interesting." That's step one. You've got to master step one. And then beyond that, we have an entire pillar inside of Get Over Your EX, where we talk about building the relationship with yourself and how we do that, and the seven steps and all the things. But I think ultimately, if anyone listening is feeling like they've made this about their worth and their enoughness and their lovability, I want you to just get calm and your understanding and awareness of it. And that's really step one.

Kirstin: Yeah. And I love how you're talking about not being perfect with it and saying that, using your example, "Okay, I'm not going to complain." And then if you do complain, you're like, "Oh, well, I ruined it for the year," which is the all-or-nothing thing that a lot of my people experience. They set out this goal of I'm not going to binge or I'm going to feel my feelings or I'm going to allow foods or whatever it is. And then they fail. They do it. And then they blow it up into this huge thing where what you're describing is you complain, you notice it, you don't get angry. And the same thing with the stories that you're telling about your breakup, the thoughts that you're thinking, the emotions that you're

feeling, maybe the things that you're doing, like you go and check their social media, or you text them, or whatever it is, just noticing that you did that and not getting angry about it.

Dorothy: Yes. So good. Yeah.

Kirstin: Yeah. I love that. I love that. So what would you say are some of the most common emotions that people do feel after a breakup? You did mention the loss and the sadness and the grief. But what about the optional emotions?

Dorothy: One that's common and also commonly overlooked is injustice. Feeling unjust. I always talk about the breakup police. I very much felt like what my ex had done was wrong. And then I remember finding like I saw a photo of them on Facebook together like a month after the breakup of our seven-year relationship. He posts a photo with this girl. Well, not just post a photo, changes his profile photo to this girl and him, right? And people are commenting, thinking it's me. Half the people think it's me. Half the other people are saying congratulations. And I'm like, how can everyone be like okay with this? How is everyone okay with this? This is so wrong. And the breakup police aren't coming to write him a ticket. Why? Where are the breakup police? So it's that unjust feeling, and I think one of the hardest parts of that is feeling like I have to hold on to my hurt and my pain to prove that I was hurt, and I was wronged. And that kind of emotional experience, I think, is one of the most common. Obviously, betrayal, sadness, grief, like a mourning, sometimes like nostalgia, anger, resentment. Another one too. I don't know the one-word emotion for it. But you know when it kind of feels like everything you thought you knew-- unstable, maybe. Everything you thought you knew, you don't know. Wait a second, right? When everyone thought like 9:00 to 5:00 jobs were the most stable thing, and then COVID happened, you think you know. So I would say whatever that emotion is, unstable.

Kirstin: Yeah, yeah. So I think we talked about this a little bit, how you teach them to deal with those emotions. Is it just the just noticing how you're feeling them, letting yourself feel them, and then working on building the better relationship with yourself?

Dorothy: Yes. I mean, yes. And I would say, there's so many tools to actually transmute emotions, right? There's the grief bubble. One of the most common ones we use is inner voice work, where it's like allowing yourself to access that higher, higher knowledge, or maybe you would even say prefrontal cortex, or just I get a little bit woo-woo, and I like to be like my soul-level self or my inner alien, right? Where I'm like, I want to access that deeper knowing, that deeper loving version of myself, and utilizing that to get into your body to bring up and release an emotion of like, "Hey, where is this emotion living in my body?" Because emotions are simply, it's just energy in your body. It's energy in motion. So if you can allow yourself to get out of your head with your emotions and into your body, I think that's always super helpful in the moment and getting clear about like, okay, so where is this in my body? Is it stagnant? Is it moving? What color is it? What does it taste like? What does it smell like? And then we go through this practice of making it bigger and then moving our body to release it. So there's like a whole kind of practice around that to handle the emotions when they are arising. And then I think once we're calm enough to like at the thoughts that created the emotions in the first place, then we get to utilize coaching, the beauty of coaching, and questioning our ideas and our perspectives and finding perspectives and ideas that completely transform our breakup journey.

Kirstin: Yes, yes. And that's exactly what I do with my people, too, is when the emotions are intense, it's not the time to be doing thought work and changing our perspective. We have to calm first, which means that we have to process the emotions, do whatever it is that's going to help. You have some tools. I have some tools. And for anybody that wants more information about some of the things that Dorothy

just talked about, you can find them in her podcast, which we'll talk about a little bit later. But she does go more in depth and also in her program, of course. But we calm the emotions first so then we can take that look at the thoughts. So what would you say for somebody that does feel unjust? What they did was wrong. What is an example of a thought shift that we can make there?

Dorothy: Okay, you guys, just stick with me here, please. If you are in this, just know that I'm saying this from the place of like, I get it and I lived it. But listen, all right? I have the best one for you today because it's just coming up. I watched the Taylor Swift docuseries, and y'all, I'm not a huge Swiftie. I just was interested, okay? But I do want to point out, even when things happen that are quote-unquote, "Unjust." I remember going through this experience of being like, "Who am I to say that him moving on quickly was the wrong thing or a bad thing?" Because him moving on quickly forced me to be like, "We're clearly not getting back together. And I've got to figure my own stuff out. And I've got to figure out how to make this life bigger and better. And I'm going to build a life that he regrets leaving." And I remember being like, "Oh my gosh, what if him moving on was the greatest gift? What if that actually happened for me and not to me?" And I know, I know, I know, I know. I can like hear it. I can hear the eye rolls of how cliché it is. And I get it. But I also want to use Taylor Swift as a beautiful example right now in our pop culture situation that's going on right now. So Taylor Swift, I want you to remember that her albums were sold out from underneath her. They were taken from her. That is, quote unquote, "Unjust, not fair." So many of us would say, "That's stupid. We don't agree with that." Right? But Taylor had multiple ways to navigate that experience.

She could be bitter and annoyed and angry and feel unjust and go after them and go forward with anger and frustration and resentment. Or she could take the route that she took, which was get curious about like, "How can I make this work in my favor?" And so she started rerecording all of her work. Now, notice how similar this story is to how many of you who are going through breakups and divorce of, "Oh, I have to rebuild everything though. I'm starting from scratch." So did she, right? She's starting from scratch. She's rebuilding everything. Now, the beauty is that actually was happening again for her. So she's rebuilding her album. She's re-recording these albums. And meanwhile, while she's doing that, she's like, "Hmm, these albums are really good. So I kind of want to do a tour where I play all of my albums, and I go through all of these albums." Okay, now Q biggest tour she's ever had that the world has ever seen. And then meanwhile, she's on tour. It leads the two new albums. One being her best album she's ever had, and she found the love of her life, who didn't dim in the light that she was in. So you could say that her albums being sold out from under her was like, unjust, and not right, and it shouldn't have happened. Or, because it did and we can't change it, we can believe it happened for us and not to us. And it created the biggest comeback she's ever had in her whole life. And that is equally as available to anyone listening who feels like the rug has been pulled out from underneath them. That feels like they have to rebuild their entire life. Like, yes, I love you, I'm so sorry that happened. And let's make that the biggest comeback of your entire life.

Kirstin: Oh my God. And I love it so much. And it actually just made me think of two examples in my life. One of them, I don't know if I've ever talked about this on the podcast before. But before I started coaching, I was a fitness instructor, and I worked at three different studios. And in a matter of two days, I was laid off from one of them and fired from another one. And after I got fired from the other one, and I was left with one studio where I had two classes, obviously, not enough money to live. I remember being on my way home and thinking, okay, I guess I'm going to go do that coach training that I've been putting off.

Dorothy: [laughter] Yes, see?

Kirstin: And I would not have done that coach training had I not had this devastating experience. And mind you, before I had that thought, I did have the unfair and all of this stuff, because of the reasons why this happened. But that was really the kickoff to my current career. And what I'm doing now. If it wasn't for that, I probably would've kept putting it off, and who knows if or when I would've ever done it.

Dorothy: Yeah, so good. That's such a great example.

Kirstin: Yeah. And a relationship example, I actually remember it was after my ex and I had broken up, and we were still living together. Because we lived together for like a month after we broke up, and he did something, and I called you, Dorothy. And I was telling you about it, and I was like, "I can't believe he did this." And dah dah dah. It was so wrong, and it was so disrespectful. And you were holding back so hard from being a coach.

Dorothy: [laughter] I can see that.

I have a hard time doing it sometimes. I end up going off, and I just, whoops.

Kirstin: I know, me too. I get it. You were doing a really good job as a friend, though. But I remember at one point, I said something like-- and you know, how this is affecting me. And then you were like, "Well, it's actually not affecting you." And I was like, "Stop it! Don't coach me right now. It is, and it's not my thoughts, okay?"

Yeah, don't coach me, this was wrong. And I was so stuck in what he did was wrong. And I was in that for a while. And then, eventually, I made the transition into, I think it's wrong, but it wasn't wrong for him. Which goes back to what you were saying, who am I to say it was wrong or bad? For him, it was how he was coping. It was what he needed to do for him. And I saw it completely differently. But when I was able to kind of step into his mind and maybe what he's going through, cause I broke up with him. So when I was able to get into what I thought his perspective was, then I was able to calm down about it. And then start telling the story a bit differently.

Dorothy: Yeah, yeah. It reminds me of like, the big rock bottom breakup. Where it's like, "Okay, he moved on very quickly. And he was the one that broke up with me. But at the same time like, again, I think he was doing the best that he could. And his best was not very good. I mean, so is that really what I desire in life? And no.

Kirstin: Yeah. So it's just all these examples of changing our perspective. It's okay if we have that initial reaction. Of course, we're going to. Like you said, there are those emotions that you're going to feel. And yeah, you're probably going to have some unuseful thoughts. But it's creating that calm, regulating the nervous system. And then we can start to change that perspective and tell the story differently, which is going to help us feel better, which is then going to help us to rebuild and create that big comeback, that bigger, better life that you're always talking about.

Dorothy: Yes. Yeah.

Kirstin: I love it. I love it. And I also love how you mentioned, now I have to rebuild. Now I got to start all over. Right? And we can think about it that way. Or we can get excited about the life we're going to build, which I know that's something that you work with people on as well, is getting excited about the bigger and better life.

Dorothy: Yes. So important. I love BBL. We talk about BBL all the time, which also stands for Brazilian Butt Lift. But we're not talking about that. We are talking about your bigger and better life. Yes, because ultimately, you guys, I think one of the most important things is I want as many brave hearts to learn how to heal from heartbreak and build lives that are bigger and better than the one that they had with their ex. Because I want you to build it in a way where it's like, "I've built my entire life and it's this epic, beautiful, amazing Sunday. And my partner just gets to be the cherry on top." You're going to find someone who is naturally gravitated towards this amazing life that you love, that you've built, and you've built everything that you desire and want. And then they get to come be the cherry on top. And then when you're in the relationship, it also feels like a completely different dynamic because you're not terrified of them leaving. And if they do roll off this Sunday, it's like, "Oh, that's a bummer," but there's probably more cherries who want this epic amazing Sunday and your ex didn't take the whole Sunday with them. They just took the cherry. So I think that's really important. And it doesn't mean that you go throughout life not building a life with somebody else, but you do, but you just build it in a way where you know that your capability is always going to be able to create anything that you ever desire, no matter who's in your life.

Kirstin: Yes. Yeah. So you're in charge of it. You're the one responsible for it, instead of relying on this person to create it for you.

Dorothy: Yeah, yeah.

Kirstin: Yep. So speaking of Sundays and cherries, have you worked with anybody who has resorted to overeating or binge eating after a breakup?

Dorothy: Yes. Yes. Normally, it's one of the two, right? It's either they're having-- and this is normally-- I talk about different heartbreak stages. This is typically in stage one when you're completely debilitated, completely consumed by all of your emotional experiences, right? And the very first thing that we work on is something called biology baseline. And a part of biology baseline is what are you eating? What are you nourishing your body? Is your body well-fed and getting enough food? And typically, you either see one of two things happening. You're either overeating to buffer with emotions, or you just feel sick to your stomach all the time to the point you can't eat. And then occasionally, people will come forward saying that they're really struggling with binge eating. But yeah, absolutely, that is a possibility.

Kirstin: Yeah. Why do you think that happens?

Dorothy: Again, I think it's an emotional experience and also probably control. I would say you'd know more about this, obviously, than I do. But I think it has to do with the emotional experience, not feeling like they're in control of their emotions. A lot of times, the people I'm working with are the people being left. And so they feel like they don't have any control over the experience. And they're like, "This is the one thing I can control."

Kirstin: Yeah. I mean, it's kind like you were talking about when you got in the best shape of your life after your breakup. It's like, "Okay, I don't have control over the emotions I'm feeling. I don't have control over whether he is here or not. But you know what? I can create and control this body. So that's what I'm going to focus on."

Dorothy: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's a good example.

Kirstin: Yeah. Yeah. So what do people think they need to do to get over their ex? And what do they really need to do?

Dorothy: Yeah, that's a good question. So I think a lot of times people turn to these common pieces of advice. Wait for time to heal. Everyone is probably going to tell you, "Oh, it just takes time. Give it time." [laughter] But as we know, thoughts create feelings. So if you don't change-- it doesn't matter how much time passes, if you don't change your thoughts within that time, your feelings won't change. Then we've got, "Go no contact." That is a very common one, but there's so many people who are in contact with their ex that co-parent, maybe they work with their ex, they have mutual friend groups, and they're actually fully over their ex.

And then I see a lot of people who are no contact, who are not over their ex at all. And so, no contact is a tool. If it's working for you, awesome, utilize it. But it is not the solution. And typically, when we're talking about contact or no contact, we're in stage two of heartbreak. And that's where we're really talking about reducing desire for an attachment to. So we want to reduce desire for your ex. We reduce attachment to your ex because - and this is where I've used your example so often, by the way - it's like imagine going to a party and your ex is there. And if you have zero desire for them, zero attachment to them creating the future that you want, you're not concerned if they're there. You're not worried about interacting with them. You simply don't want to contact them. You don't want to be with them.

And so the real solution is reducing desire and attachment, and all your breakup symptoms kind of fade away because they're non-issues because you don't actually desire to be with this person in the first place. And so that's what I love about the work that we do is we're really not addressing breakup symptoms. We're addressing the root cause of the breakup. And so, yeah, the time, the no-contact thing. They think they need-- they think they need to have a closure conversation. I mean, how many times have we heard that? But a lot of times, y'all, you've had the conversation, and you just haven't accepted the words that your ex is saying. [laughter] So it doesn't really matter if you continue to have this conversation. But, yeah, yeah, I'll end there.

Kirstin: Okay. So I think these are such common examples. I mean, I've heard all of them, too. It just takes time. But, like you said, you can take the time. But if you don't work on your thoughts and feelings, then time isn't going to do anything. If you spend that time just thinking about how much you miss them and how your life is going to suck now, or how unlovable you are, and all of these things, nothing is going to change. It's the same thing that I talk about when people are feeling urges to binge. If you just keep thinking about wanting to binge and how great it's going to feel, and how much relief you're going to feel, then sitting there with the urge is not going to make a difference. It really matters what you do with that time, right?

Dorothy: Yeah. Such a good example.

Kirstin: Yeah. Yeah. And I also love that you talk so much about no contact because I think it's kind of the same thing where you can have the no contact. But if you keep thinking about them and how much you miss the relationship and all that stuff, it's like not having contact isn't going to make a difference at all.

Dorothy: Yeah. And I think it's important to show the parallels between your niche and my niche, because I feel like that was one of those examples that we've talked about. So everyone listening, we would get together once a month and hang out and chit chat and love you.

Kirstin: I love you too.

Dorothy: And we would talk about our niches. And I remember you giving the example of someone who might be binge eating and they could just remove the food from their house, but is it reducing the desire for the food or reducing the desire for the binge in itself, and those are two different things. And we want true freedom from food, right? True freedom from binging. True freedom from your ex. And I think that is important to just call out because any of you listening probably can understand that and kind of spread the butter to this other area of your breakup or your divorce.

Kirstin: Yeah because what I talk about a lot is you can remove the food and if that helps, okay. But what happens when all of a sudden you're at a party and that food is there, or you're at the store and you see that food and you just can't stop thinking about that food, or someone brings it to your home, or someone that you live with that brings it into the home, right, all these things. What if you are doing no contact with your ex, and then all of a sudden, you see them, or you see a picture of them, or whatever. Just avoiding it isn't really helping you to move on and heal.

Dorothy: Yes. And that is like,-- isn't it interesting the difference between different modalities of handling this? You can either follow the solutions that help you avoid the triggers completely, and that is one way to do it, and sometimes when you're in fight or flight, that is required or necessary. But what I, ultimately, want for everyone who goes through a divorce or a breakup is learning how to move through the triggers, learning how to work through the triggers to the point where they're no longer triggers anymore, and then what a freeing life to live. You're not manipulating yourself of like, "I can't go to that party because my ex might be there. I can't go to this grocery store. I can't take this walk because who knows if I'll run into this person?" That is just not a way to live, and I would love you, if you're listening, to have real freedom from that.

Kirstin: Yeah. Can you give an example of what it might look like to reduce desire and attachment?

Dorothy: I'm going to use a food example [laughter]. It's just interesting because when normally when people ask me this question, I'm not speaking to someone who works with people who are binge cheating, and the example that I give them-- I'll do this with a real human as well, but the example that I give them is ice cream. Because ice cream used to be my favorite food. I could still technically say it's my favorite food. But long story short, I was really struggling with not eating ice cream right before bed and the sugar high was a problem, and that following summer, I wanted to look different in my swimsuit and so I remember trying to reduce desire for my ice cream. And when I spoke to either my partner or let's say I'm speaking to you and I'm saying, "Ice cream's my favorite food. It's ooey gooey. I love the caramel and it melts in my mouth and it's so delicious." I'm building up a lot of desire for the ice cream. You and I start to think about ice cream, start to build desire together about this ice cream. Another way to talk about ice cream that is equally as true is ice cream is simply sugar and milk. And when I start like, ew, I think of milk just being mixed with sugar, I'm reducing desire for ice cream. Now, we do the same thing with humans. We can do the same thing with your ex, right? So for example, if you were to think like, "Oh my God--" if you start talking to me about your ex and you're saying, "He's just so manly. He's so perfect," and you put him on this pedestal and you're saying all these great things about them and you're ignoring all of the bad things about then of course, we're both going to be building a strong desire together about how great he is. And like yeah, if you're going to talk to me, maybe you should go back to him. I don't know, right? So to reduce desire, we have to look at the whole picture. I work with my clients on zooming out, looking at the whole picture, the whole duration of the relationship. And that doesn't mean we're going to make this person out to be a bad person. We don't have to make them out to like they've done all these wrong things. Perhaps maybe they did, and we could also include that. But if they don't, we're not making them out to be a bad person or thinking poorly of them.

We're just simply looking at the whole picture. And maybe he was manly, but he didn't deep dive into emotions with me and he didn't feel comfortable enough meeting me emotionally. Perhaps he was very attractive, but he wasn't providing for me in the way that I desired. Or perhaps he was really fun to be around, but he couldn't have a serious conversation with me. Or one of the most common things that I deal with is he's everything on my list, except he doesn't want to commit and get married. And that's huge. That should reduce desire if marriage is a priority for you and commitment is a priority for you. Or he's everything on my list, but he doesn't want kids. That's another one, right? So you get to decide, do I want kids? Is that really important to me? And maybe then that does reduce desire because I deeply do desire kids, right? So we've got to zoom out, look at the whole picture, and we work to find that specifically for you. You know what I mean?

Kirstin: Yes. So instead of thinking about how they're so amazing and so perfect, it's actually finding the reasons why maybe they're not the best match for you.

Dorothy: Yes. And can we also emphasize the word "match," right? Because they could be a great person. They could have all these things. But like truly are they a match? And I'll give you an example. I had a great partner. Before I found my now husband, my partner was phenomenal. He was a great guy. He had a great life. We had a great relationship. There was nothing wrong with the relationship. There was nothing wrong with him. However, something that was very important to me was I wanted to move to the beach. I wanted to move to Florida. And I wanted to get married and settled down and start this next chapter. And every time we tried to do that, I felt like I was creating PowerPoint presentations to be like to sell him on the ideas to like why this is a good idea for us, right? And again, nothing wrong with him, nothing wrong with the relationship, but I ultimately had to decide what is more important to me, to move forward in my life in the way that I desire or to stay in this relationship. And so I had to actively work at reducing desire for this person by saying, "These things are more important to me than staying in this partnership."

Kirstin: Yeah, yeah. And what if they can't think of anything?

Dorothy: Yeah. I would expect. I would expect them to not be able to think of anything. Because, right, if you were to tell me, count all the red things in my room, and I spend two minutes going around counting all the red things, and you're like, "How many are yellow?" I'd be like, "Dude, I have no idea." Right? And that's what you've been doing, right? That's what they've been doing on, is just scanning for all the reasons why this is a mistake, why we should be together, we shouldn't have broken up. And so you've got to just start landing and like, I'm open to the idea that this wasn't a match. I'm open to understanding and seeing the ways that perhaps this wasn't ideal. And don't force yourself. Let it be a process and start examining that.

Now, I actively do this with my clients by forcing them to write down a list of all of the thoughts that create desire and attachment. And then we actively question them. But if you're doing this on your own, I would just-- I would zoom out for a second and ask myself, I'm open to seeing this differently. I'm open to exploring why he might not have been the best fit, he or she.

Kirstin: Do you think it could be possible that there are no reasons why?

Dorothy: Oh, I mean, that could totally be a thing. Yeah. Well, no, actually, I say yes and no, because for a couple to be a fit, they both have to want to be in the partnership. And if you're not in the partnership, then that is a reason. That is a reason is I want to be in a partnership with someone who wants to be in a partnership. So I guess, does that make sense?

Kirstin: Yeah. No, that makes sense. As you were talking, I was like, "Yeah, I mean, this all makes perfect sense." And this is such a great way to make that transition from so much desire, so much attachment. But then I was just going in my head to the person that's like, "No, they literally check every single box. They do everything that I want them to do. It's all of the things that my perfect match would be." So then what? How am I supposed to reduce desire and attachment for this person? But I think you did give a really good example.

Dorothy: Yeah. I've been in a relationship with someone who didn't want to be in a relationship with me, and it's miserable. Trying to fight for something and keep it together and morph yourself into the perfect partner for them and do everything correct and walking on eggshells. It's exhausting.

Kirstin: Yes. Yes. Okay. What if somebody doesn't want to get over their ex and they just want them back? Then what?

Dorothy: Okay, so first off, I love this conversation. So first off, this was me. I didn't want to get over my ex for the longest time. I just wanted him back. I was like, "What is the thing that I could do that would bring him back from this other girl?" And I remember she knew how to French braid her hair. And I made it mean she was so much cooler than me. And maybe I could learn to French braid my hair, and he would come back. I don't know. I was a little cry, cry. So first off, I want you to know that wanting your ex back is the most human experience ever. Do not shame yourself or beat yourself up or be mad at yourself because you want your ex back. I don't think that's a problem.

The second thing is, don't make it a reason not to move forward. Don't make it a reason to not get over your ex just because you want your ex back. Because I do believe that if people are meant to be together, they will be. And I believe that if your ex is supposed to come back, they will be. But what I want on the other side of that is for you to be different and not different in a way where it's like we're going to morph ourselves into someone they want. But I want you to create a relationship with yourself where you do have the skill set and the ability to have reduced desire and reduced attachment for this person. Because when they come back, if you get back into the relationship without doing this work, the relationship will feel uneven, unequalled, and you're going to be terrified of them leaving again. Whereas when they come back, I want it to feel like your choice. I want it to feel like you're not desperately getting back together with them because it's like, "Oh, my God, I need them to survive." I want it to come from this pure, authentic place where it's like, "I've done my work. I can see that they've done their work, and I'm ready to try this again in a completely new way." And then you're able to live in that relationship with reduced attachment. You can always increase your desire. That's not a problem. And so you can try the relationship again from this clean place. But then also, if your ex never does come back, I want you to be in that space where you're thriving, where you're living your life that's bigger and better, where you have a life that you're so excited about, that's so much more interesting than your past, that you're not constantly thinking about your ex still while you're living in this life.

Kirstin: Oh.

And I think that is so beautiful. It's do the work, whether they come back or not. Also, because why not? Don't you want to be a person that isn't grasping on so tightly to this other person? Because like you said, if they do get back together, it's likely that that's what they're going to do.

Dorothy: Yes. And I would like to just mention, I'm just going to call it just side note, friends. Do you know what the most attractive thing is? It's when someone is not grasping onto you, desperate to get your attention. The most attractive thing you could do that would be likely to get your ex back is go out and live the life that you said you were going to live with or without them, regardless of what they're

doing. Go out and build it because then they're going to be like, "Wait a second. You said we were going to do this--" I mean, we don't know if that's what they're going to say, but I just think about if we actually are going to try to get your ex back, I'm on board, but you've got to-- we got to go. We got to get this work done. We got to reduce desire and attachment, and you got to go build your bigger and better life. That is so much more attractive to me and I think to other people than wallowing and being upset and being a victim and playing this unjust card. And honestly, by the time you get there, you don't really care what your ex is doing. And again, you're just in such a better headspace for that.

Kirstin: Yeah. I mean, haven't we all heard the term "needy," in such a negative way?

Dorothy: Yeah. [laughter]

Dorothy: They're so needy, that's so unattractive. Right? It's like, let's become the person that isn't that way. Yeah, I love that. I love that idea of just doing it regardless. And also, if we want the relationship to be different, if they do come back, we have to be different.

Kirstin: Yeah.

Dorothy: Right?

Kirstin: Yes. So true.

Oh my gosh. So is there anything that we haven't talked about yet that you are just dying to tell people?

Dorothy: I think the only other thing that we haven't spoken about today that I think I want to address, and it sounds odd, but I want us to just play with the idea, is one of the other concepts that I talk about is revenge as rocket fuel. I think a lot of times we're a little bit concerned, we get overly picky about the reasons why we're doing something. And I want to just tell you that I give you permission to use revenge as some like, what's the word, emotional backing to get your body moving, to get yourself going. I don't think you're going to go the whole-- revenge is short-lived. You won't be able to ride very long on it. But if that is the thing that is getting you started, don't hold yourself back because of that. And by the time that you get to your bigger and better life, revenge won't be the reason that you're still doing it. And it won't be something that continues on. But don't let it hold you back. If you're like, "Well, what if I'm doing it-- what if I'm going to get my revenge body because it's my revenge versus do I truly want to get my healthy body?" And then by the time that I built my revenge body and I did all the things out of revenge, I wasn't like, "Oh, I'm so sad that I got the best body of my life." I wasn't upset about it. The results that he created from it, I was like, "Thank God I did that. Something got me going." Right? So just here is your permission slip to let that be the reason and just your reason, and get going.

Kirstin: Yes. Yeah. It's create the momentum in whatever way is helpful to do that. And I've had people-- as listeners of my podcast know, I don't focus on weight loss on this podcast or in my program. But then I do eventually work with people on weight loss if they want to. And I've had so many people who are in that weight loss phase tell me that their reasons for doing it aren't good enough because they're so superficial. And I tell them to not judge that reason. It's okay if it's superficial. But you're saying, that may not be what keeps you there. What keeps you going, what keeps the maintenance going, you will most likely need something else to continue it on forever.

Dorothy: Yeah, I love that. It reminds me of-- I will often say, a reason for me in my health journey has been to look good naked, right? And so that's, quote unquote, "superficial," whatever. But I like my

reason. I want to look good naked, and I like that reason. But it is not the reason that carries me through when I'm having a hard time. Normally, I want to feel strong and I want to be strong for my child and being able to pick him up and not have a bad back or something like that is what pushes me through. But yeah, I like that example that you gave.

Kirstin: Yeah, yeah. Because when you're feeling down and your brain's like, "But don't you want to look better naked?" You're like, "I don't care about that right now." So that's why it's so good to have that deeper, really personal reason behind it to keep it going.

Dorothy: Yeah. And I think for anyone going through a breakup, I don't know if this is helpful, but maybe. My reason was obviously started with revenge. I mean, I've got a lot of reasons, but one of them that was super helpful when I was in it before I was helping other people with this, was really that it was so important to me to let my ex be the portal of possibility, to be the thing that showed me what I could have, but not the thing that let me have what I wanted. And it was so important to me to create the lifestyle, the family, the freedom, everything that I thought required the ex. I wanted to do it in a way where I did it without him so that, again, I would never be tied to a singular person being in my life to have those things.

Kirstin: So he may have showed you what you want and what's possible. And maybe you didn't know before.

Dorothy: Exactly.

Kirstin: And how great is it that this person showed you that? And we can be so grateful for that. Again, this is going back to changing the story about all of it. I'm so grateful that he showed me these things. Now I know. And now I'm going to go do it, because I can do it without him. So good. Okay. So tell us where we can find you.

Dorothy: So we're listening to this on a podcast. So my thoughts, maybe you like podcasts. But I have a podcast called How to Get Over Your Ex. You are welcome to listen to it. We've got it on iTunes, Spotify, all of your listening places. And then I also love hanging out on Instagram. So if you are an Instagram girly pop, please come hang out with me @BreakupCoachDorothy. Send me a message. Let me know what helped. I would love to get to know you. And we've got a website, dorothyabjohnson.com. If you want to check out anything there. Otherwise, I would just love to have you listening along on the podcast. Or I also want to say if you've got a friend who is also really struggling or just maybe you're not struggling, but you've heard this and so now you know, one of the best gifts that you can give them is like a coffee and a podcast listen. Just forward, just be like, "Hey, I bought you coffee. And there's this amazing podcast that I think would be super helpful for the phase of life that you're in, and I want to forward it along." And it's not just about getting over your ex. So you can be like, "It's also about building your life that's bigger and better." So yeah.

Kirstin: Yes, yes. And I will link all of those in the show notes just to make it easy for them to find you. So thank you so much for being here. This has been so fun.

Dorothy: So fun, right? Thank you. I feel like I kind of wish all of our conversations would have been recorded. They're brilliant.

Kirstin: Well, maybe we'll start. We can just create a Kirstin and Dorothy conversation podcast

What did I tell you? Isn't she amazing?

So much good stuff, so many helpful tips, I could not love her more.

You don't have to have eating food be your way to handle a breakup. You also don't have to just wait to get over your ex, you can get over them without it just taking time, you can do something to make it happen, and you can create a bigger, better life than the one you had with your ex.

How awesome is that?? I love it so much.

So now, go listen to her podcast and check out her Instagram, which I will link in the show notes, so you can learn even more about how you can do all that which will help you to not be overeating or bingeing during your breakup. If you're working on your feelings, are working on your thoughts, and are feeling better and making progress, then you won't feel such a strong need for excessive food.

Alright, I hope you enjoyed this conversation with Breakup Coach Dorothy as much as I did and, I will talk to you next time. Bye bye!