

# THE STOP BINGE EATING PODCAST

*with Kirstin Sarfde*

## Ep #397: Getting Through Transitions and Downtime in Your Day Without Eating

Hi! Registration for The Stop Binge Eating Program will be closing in just two days, on March 12<sup>th</sup> of 2026.

If you're hesitant because you're afraid you won't be able to be successful in the program, hear me when I say this.

What you've tried before is not the same as this.

And doing it on your own is not the same as doing it with an experienced coach.

You can't compare your past self to your future self when what you're going to do in the future will be different.

You may have failed in the past but that doesn't mean you will keep failing.

Give yourself the opportunity to do something different, to do this in a different way, and to get a different outcome than you have before.

Don't give up on yourself before you even *try* something different.

Again, registration is closing in just two days, so register now by going to [coachkir.com/group](https://coachkir.com/group).

If you have any questions that aren't answered on that registration page, you can email them to [info@coachkir.com](mailto:info@coachkir.com).

I am so ready to help you. So if you want my help, let's do it.

Alright, now onto today's episode topic – getting through transitions and downtime in your day without eating.

These could be times when you're traveling from one thing to another, when you are trying to decompress or just take a moment before you move on to something else, during time between activities, between obligations, when you get home from work, between work and dinner, between meetings, or when you have extended free time between two planned things with nothing to do.

Basically, it's when you're transitioning from one thing to another or when you have downtime between two things.

It's such a common time for people to be reaching for food and here are the two most common reasons why that I've seen.

They're trying to calm themselves down quickly, or just change their feelings quickly.

Or, they see eating as something to do to pass the time, and maybe they feel uncomfortable waiting and having nothing to do so eating helps them to feel comfortable while the time passes.

So let's talk about these.

If you're feeling stressed from whatever it is you just were doing, let's say it was a busy and demanding work day, and now you're coming home, and you have things to do at home, maybe chores or making dinner or taking care of the kids, in that time between getting home from work and transitioning to the next thing, you might want to have a moment of calm.

You might want to quickly calm yourself down between the things.

And, your go-to way of doing that, is by eating food.

It's quick, it's easy, you get to have a moment to yourself, a moment to relax, it's just you and the food.

Or maybe you don't even get a moment to yourself, and you're transitioning from work stuff to home stuff or kid stuff right away so you're just going to food to calm yourself as you're transitioning right into the next thing.

Eating food is your calming tool. That's why you're eating it.

Maybe because you don't think you have time to calm down.

Maybe because you don't know how else to calm down.

If that's the case, I want to offer you something.

Close your eyes, and take a deep breath. Focus on your breath.

Let what's happening around you happen.

Let your kid talk. Let the chores wait for a moment. Let dinner wait for a moment.

And just take a few seconds to take a nice long deep breath, and be with your breath. Be present with you.

If you can do it for longer, do it for longer.

If you can't, that's okay too.

This is just such a simple way to create a moment of calm, to calm your nervous system even just for a moment, and you don't need any food to do it.

Do not underestimate the power of a deep, focused breath, or the power of many focused deep breaths. It really can help so much.

Now, I'm not saying this will always completely calm you down but, it's better than nothing and it really is better than scarfing down some food real quick.

Any calm you can create in that moment can be helpful as you're transitioning to the next thing because it can stop the build up of stress for that moment, maybe even relieve some of it, rather than just keeping adding to it.

Now, maybe you're not wanting to calm. Maybe you're wanting to pump yourself up a little. Maybe you just finished something kind of boring or are feeling kinda blah after whatever it was you were doing.

And now, you want to feel happier, you want to enjoy whatever it is you're transitioning to next. Maybe you're spending time with your family or friends or your partner or you have a social thing to do to.

If that's what you're wanting, I want to offer two things that could help, that again, are not food-related.

One is physical. It's to move your body. It doesn't matter how, just do it in a way that feels good.

And I'm not talking about doing a whole workout, although do that if you have the time and desire for it.

You could just jump up and down, shake out your whole body, shake your head and necks, dance, walk in place, something to get your heart pumping a little more and release a little tension.

And if you feel silly doing this, that could actually help too.

There's been so many times that I've done this in front of my boyfriend, I just started moving in all kinds of ways to pump myself up a little, and I laugh at myself. And of course laughing is going to feel good.

So that's something physical you could do.

The other thing I want to offer is mental.

It's to think positive thoughts.

Sounds so cheesy, right?

But really. Let's get into a more positive mindset. Or at least, neutral.

How do you want to be thinking about what's next?

Your default might be to mentally complain about whatever it is and think negatively about it.

But what if you intentionally chose to think about it more neutrally, or positively?

For example, you might be thinking how chaotic the kids are being, how irritating it is that you have to cook dinner, how frustrated you are that you can't just sit and relax right now.

But what if instead, you were grateful for this time with your kids, even if it isn't your ideal way of spending time with them? And you're more accepting of cooking dinner and are just seeing it as something you are going to do to nourish yourself and your kids. And you look forward to the time you will have to sit and relax once dinner is done or the kids go to bed.

Or another example, if say you have a social event to go to.

You might be thinking about how you'd rather just stay home and do nothing, or about how uncomfortable it might be, or just thinking that you don't want to go but you have to.

But what if instead, you are thinking about why it could be enjoyable, and that you can relax at home afterward, and why you do want to go?

You have options for how you can tell the story of what's to come. Choose the version that doesn't bring you down but brings you up, at least to neutral.

How we feel, our emotions are caused by our thoughts so if you want to transition into more neutral or positive feelings, you can try intentionally shifting your focus to something neutral or positive.

Now, I'm not saying that in doing this you'll always immediately change how you're feeling right away, especially if you're really strongly feeling negative in the moment, but it can help with the transition. It can help to begin a transition into feeling more uplifted.

And likely will help more than eating food would.

So I want you to take the options I offered here and give them a try.

They don't have to take very long.

And again, you may not get all the way to how you're wanting to feel right in that moment, but it can still help while eating food might help you feel how you want to feel right then in the moment but what about after?

We gotta focus on the long-game here.

Do you want a big change for a moment and then a big dip afterward? Or a slower change that will gradually help you to feel better?

I know which I'd rather choose.

Now let's talk about the other reason why you might be eating during transitions and downtime, which is because you feel uncomfortable with the space.

You feel uncomfortable waiting. You feel uncomfortable with nothing to do.

Either you don't know what you can do or you have ideas but you just don't have enough time to do them.

So, you eat food to pass the time, to entertain yourself, to feel comfortable during this time because it's quick and easy and it works.

And during that time, you could be putting yourself into binge territory as far as the amount you're eating goes and feel very, very full after you're done. Binges don't have to take a long time, you could eat excessively in a very short amount of time.

I know, because I've done it.

So eating food is something you can do to feel okay.

But what if instead you just let yourself be?

Something I think a lot of us would benefit from is getting more comfortable with just being.

With waiting, with nothing to do.

If the idea of just sitting there, being with yourself, sounds awful, I want you to ask yourself why?

Why do you not want to be with yourself?

I actually did an episode about being with yourself, #352 that I recommend you listen to if you have resistance to just being with yourself.

But for now, answer that question. What's so bad about just being with yourself?

Because really, the answer to that question will expose something about your relationship with yourself and what you think about yourself.

Just being with yourself, while you're waiting, can actually be a pleasant experience if you enjoy being with yourself.

But if you don't have a good relationship with yourself, then it won't be so pleasant.

Do you not want to hear your thoughts because they're so negative? Do you think you're boring? Do you pressure yourself?

If you say yes to any of those, you gotta work on it so you're not so eager to get away from yourself when you're waiting for the next thing.

And I do want to touch on the pressure thing, because I know a lot of people pressure themselves to be productive.

So in relation to what I'm talking about in this episode, you might pressure yourself to do something, to be productive, and tell yourself it's not okay to just sit here and wait and just be with yourself.

But it *is* okay. It's okay to just be.

It's okay to not be productive all of the time.

And maybe just being with yourself right now is actually the best thing you can do for yourself.

Maybe it's what you need. Maybe you could really use a break between whatever it is you were doing and will be doing.

And I also did an episode about the importance of rest, #212, and I recommend you listen to that one if you have a hard time allowing yourself to just rest.

So try it.

And I mean *really* try it.

Don't be with your phone, be with you. You'll be okay.

Let it be uncomfortable at first. Be willing to be uncomfortable.

Because the more you do it, the easier it will get.

And the more willing you will become to just let yourself be with yourself while you wait for the next thing and you won't feel that urge to go eat food to make yourself more comfortable because you're comfortable as you are.

Now, I don't want to offer you *just* that.

I do want you to become more comfortable with just waiting by yourself because I really do believe it's such a powerful skill to have but, it's also okay if you do do something.

You can explore options for things you can do in a short amount of time.

For me, I like to play games on my phone.

I play some of the New York Times games which are usually pretty quick. Some can be completed in under a minute.

I also just remembered that I have Tetris on my phone, which I really enjoy. Now that I remembered that, I want to start playing that more.

I like doing these things because I do enjoy them but also because I feel like I'm doing something good for my brain. I'm doing word puzzles and solving problems which is a good thing for our brains.

I also used to color quite a bit in an adult coloring book, and again, I want to get back into that when I have a little bit of time now that I think of it.

But here's the obstacle I see a lot of people fall into.

They don't do something because they think they don't have time to complete it.

But, what if it was okay if you didn't complete it?

Seriously.

Why does it matter if I don't finish coloring the whole page? Or if I don't finish the game I started playing? Or if I do some dishes but don't do them all? Or if I watch part of a show but don't finish it?

You might be freaking out just by hearing that.

You might think it would bother you so much for it to be incomplete.

But, why?

The problem here really is just how you're thinking about it, that you're seeing it as a problem, and thinking that it needs to be completed all in one sitting.

But it doesn't.

It's not that big of a deal.

I can color more on the page another time.

I can finish the game later. And by the way, this does actually happen to me sometimes where I'll start playing and then I get interrupted and have to stop....and I just let it go and finish it another time.

I can finish the dishes later and actually, when I have less dishes to do later I'll be happy I did some now.

And if I can't finish the show, now I have something to look forward to later when I can make time to finish watching.

I want you to take an honest look at what you're making "incomplete tasks" mean. And I bet it doesn't really mean that.

Just like with being with yourself, let's get more comfortable with leaving things undone and incomplete.

It doesn't have to be all or nothing. You can do some now and do some later, or another day.

When you allow yourself to not complete everything in one sitting, it really helps you to be more relaxed, because you're thinking it's not that big of a deal.

Now, I'm not saying that everything should be left undone. Of course there are things that are better done either all at one time or not at all.

But, take an honest assessment to see if what you could do during your transition period or downtime really is one of those things.

So, I hope this episode will help you to get through transitions and downtime without eating.

When you understand why you're going to food during those times and have other options ready to go, it's so much easier to not choose food.

You don't need it.

So now just take one of the several tips I shared with you that you think is the most relevant to you and practice it.

And before I go, don't forget that registration for the next round of Stop Binge Eating will be closing in just two days, on March 12th of 2026. Join now by going to [coachkir.com/group](https://coachkir.com/group), and if you have any questions that aren't answered on that registration page, email them to [info@coachkir.com](mailto:info@coachkir.com).

Alright, until next time, bye bye!