

6 Coping Skills to Overcome Binge Eating


You *can* overcome binge eating! It's completely possible to be fully recovered and stop bingeing. Here's 6 tips to get you started.

1. **Record:** Record how often binges are happening. You want to record what time of day they occur, what you are eating, who is around, and most importantly: what you are feeling and thinking before/ during the binge.

Information is key to treating binge eating disorder. You may start to notice Sunday afternoons are a pattern, or when you're home alone. You can start to recognize triggers before they lead to a binge.

2. **Make a list Pros/ Cons List:** There are some benefits to binge eating, otherwise you would not be doing it. Think of binge eating as the tip of the iceberg. It's a surface level behavior but there is a lot going on underneath. These exercises help to start figuring out what's beneath the surface. Some example are: Pros to binge eating (*food is reliable, it helps numb my feelings*) ; Cons to binge eating (*I feel sick after, have digestive issue, feel ashamed*).

3. **Stop Restricting Food:** This is the most important key to overcome binge eating disorder. I have worked with many people who have stopped binge eating when they start to implement this alone. It's not easy to implement and takes some work with a professional, but once it's done miracles can happen. Binge eating often occurs because your body is hungry. Make sure you are eating 3 solid, SATISFYING meals a days with snacks in between.



4. Stop Restricting Emotionally: Once you stop restricting food, focus on what you are restricting emotionally. Are you being the food police and judging yourself when you eat specific foods? What are your thoughts when you are eating that cookie? Fully allow yourself to eat whatever food you are eating, without judgement. Are you placing rules around certain foods, for example: I'll only have *this* on the weekend (*PS. Your body does not care or know if it's Saturday. It just knows you don't allow it to have ice cream and it wants some! This can lead to a binge*).

5. Mindfulness: Being mindful takes practice. Be mindful that you are feeling upset. Instead of just feeling anxious say "I am aware I am feeling anxious". Don't fight that feeling. Stay with it, breath into it. Be aware of your body's reactions to certain situations, people and places. You'll learn a lot about yourself when you start to do so.

6. Practice Self-Compassion: You never signed a contract promising to be a flawless, perfect human being (and thank goodness, neither did I!). It's unrealistic to live your life this way, but most of us struggle with perfectionism. Next time you make a mistake, practice being gentle and kind to yourself instead of being harsh and critical.

Books I Recommend to Get You Started:

Self Compassion by Dr. Kristin Neff

Intuitive Eating by Elelyn Tribole and Elsie Resch

8 Keys to Recovery from An Eating Disorder by Carolyn Costin and Gwen Schbert Grabb

Podcasts to Listen To:

Food Psych with Christy Harrison

Nutrition Matters by Paige Smathers

Nourishing Womens Podcast

Next Steps:

Overcoming binge eating is hard. There is no way to minimize the work it takes to recover. I strongly encourage you to reach out to a professional to get help. When you stop using food as a coping mechanism, anxiety can temporarily increase, making it important that you are working with a professional to cope.

Seek out a therapist in your area who specializes in eating disorder treatment, a dietician and/or a virtual eating disorder recovery coach.

Feel free to check out www.collidebehavioralhealth.com to see how we can help. Best of luck in your journey, I'll be cheering you on the whole way!

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