

The Done Bingeing

PODCAST

EPISODE 54: SPECIAL SERIES—12 KEYS TO END BINGE EATING, KEY #8: PRACTICE EPIC SELF-CARE (II)

What do Zappa and Zeppelin have to do with pasta and pretzels? Keep listening!

Welcome to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. This is the place to hear about how you can pair the emerging brain science about why you binge with powerful life coaching to help you stop. If you want to explore a non-clinical approach to end binge eating, you're in the right place. It's time to free yourself. You have more power than you know. And now, your host, Life and Weight-Loss Coach Martha Ayim.

Welcome to Episode 54 of *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. In the last episode, we started talking about the eighth key in this special series: practice epic self-care. We explored how the stress hormone cortisol affects your blood sugar, food cravings, emotionality, cognitive control, weight, and sleep. And then we looked at the links between insufficient sleep and cravings, weight gain, cognitive impairment, and emotional dysregulation.

Why did we go into this level of detail? Here's why: I often have to convince my clients that self-care is a crucial part of recovering from binge eating, and I wanted to show compelling evidence to make the case. So, the last episode talked about *why* you should take amazing care of yourself. And this episode talks about *how* you can take amazing care of yourself.

Episode 53 mentioned the work of Dr. Matthew Walker, who goes by the handle The Sleep Diplomat. I love that. According to Dr. Walker, sleep is by far the most important part of self-care when it comes to resetting your brain and body.

Why might you want a reset?

Well, at a bare minimum, you need good sleep and good food to get your body and brain on *your* side. As allies, they get an A for amazing. As opponents, they get a D for dreadful.

When your body and brain are able to send you easy-to-read signals about when you're genuinely hungry and full, and when your prefrontal cortex is working at full capacity, and your when brain isn't overly triggered by junk food, it will be so much easier for you to eat the amount and kind of food that allows this healthy cycle to become your new normal. No deprivation or willpower required.

Now, I have clients who come to me trying to reset with bingeing. The binge brings the expected avalanche of physical and emotional chaos followed by the familiar deadening calm from which they try to live again. I know this reset. I pushed the same button for more than 30 years. And it looped me back to more of the same.

If that's you, and if you're ready for a *real* reset, let's dig a little deeper.

The reason I called this key "Practice *Epic* Self-Care" and not just "Practice Self-Care" is because you have to be willing to make yourself your number one priority.

So many people say that they don't have enough time to plan meals, to shop for whole food, to prepare healthy food, to feel feelings, to move their bodies, to relax, or event to have fun. They give so much to everyone else that only scraps remain for themselves—if that.

Part of why it's tempting to stay in this loop is because giving to others at one's own expense is often highly regarded. You're viewed as a generous giver—and you really are—except not to yourself.

Look on the inside and you might see that you're starving for your own attention.

Look on the outside and you might see that you're definitely not starving yourself of food.

If that's you, have you ever wondered whether the excess weight on the outside is a way to try to get your attention on the inside? In other words, could it be your body saying to your mind: "Yo, hello in there, could we have a little more us-time please? I miss that."

An absence of epic self-care is one of the main reasons we overeat and possibly become overweight. If you want to turn your eating around, the most important person to take care of is you. Period. And the funny thing is, if you aren't healthy, you won't be much good to others anyway.

I see this struggle in many of my clients, especially if they have children and partners. They want to take care of their kids and partners first. And so they do, and then at night, when everyone's finally sleeping and it's their time at last, they think, "I survived that day and I deserve an f-ing treat," "No one ever helps me, so I deserve a reward," "Eating is the only thing I ever get to do just for me."

One of the things I like to ask my clients to ponder is the legacy they want to leave for their kids. Do they want their legacy to be an example of a life sacrificed for everyone but them? Or do they want their legacy to be an example of a life lived with intention and an unwavering commitment to self-regard. Kids might hear to what you say, but they for sure see what you do. If you want your kids to learn to take good care of themselves, maybe the best way to make that happen is to show them how it's done. Not a bad message to give your kids, right?

Don't sacrifice your time for you every day. Even five minutes can turn things around. I worked with a corporate executive who came home after work each night exhausted to her young son. From the moment she got home, she started nibbling. Nuts, licorice, marshmallows, cheese, white chocolate chips,

pretzels, popcorn, pasta, you name it. Then there was dinner and the nightly binge after her son fell asleep.

She did this to push through her evening and what seemed to her like an endless struggle with her son, who constantly said he couldn't do his homework on his own and wanted to talk about his unfair teachers and mean friends. Then she couldn't sleep at night because she was so anxious, frustrated, and stuffed. And she started the next day with her body exhausted, her emotions vulnerable, and her brain trigger happy for more Twizzlers.

So, we instituted the five-minute rule. When she got home, she dropped her briefcase at the door, took her heels off, and padded over to the couch, where she sat, eyes closed, feet up, for five full minutes. Now, it took a full session for her to be convinced that this might possibly be worth a try. She was pretty sure that she didn't have five minutes.

At first, her son hated it. "Are you kidding, Mom? I need you *now*." But he learned the rule very quickly. She told him to give her five minutes without bugging her when she first got home, and she promised that she would then be there for him for the rest of the evening.

What happened? Instead of being short and resentful with her son all night, and then guilty and stuffed after, she was more present and patient with him for more of the night, and then more relieved and comfortable after. Her son noticed too, and soon asked if she'd like 10 minutes of alone time each night.

When you show up for you, you show up for others in the way you really want to. We hear it every time we get on a plane just before takeoff. "In the unlikely event that the oxygen masks drop down, put your own mask on first, then help others get theirs on."

It's counter-intuitive but once you start giving to yourself, you have so much more of yourself for you *and* for others. The time you take for yourself doesn't subtract from your connection with them, it adds to that connection in so many ways. So grab that to do list and make sure you are at the top of it every time.

My clients are usually like, "Yeah, yeah, Martha, I get it," and I know they do, intellectually. And this is where a coach is your best asset to make sure you put it into practice. And that's exactly what my clients did in my last group coaching program. In their own ways, in ways that made sense to them, they learned to prioritize themselves. Andrea committed to giving herself the space to feel her feelings above all else. She never binged again. Lena took the time to figure out what she really needed at night when she binged. When she took care of her real needs, her nighttime bingeing almost vanished and she lost 20 pounds in 12 weeks. Ida decided she was worth talking kindly to herself and worth being compassionate with herself even when she thought she could have done better. Her binges are down almost 80%. And these are just a few of the people who just graduated from my last group. I couldn't be more proud of them. They showed up for them.

Now, I'm wondering if you want to show up for you. My next Done Bingeing Group Experience is starting soon. If you want to be the first to get the juicy details, sign up for updates at <https://www.holdingthespace.co/group-programs/>.

Here's what some of my other clients have decided. The kids will have to give up some of their activities, so Mom can have one of her own. Dinner isn't always ready at 6. There's a new chore chart so that everyone in the house has something to do to help keep the house in order. Friends don't always get the help they ask for right when they ask for it.

What about you?

Will you say "no" to someone else so you can say "yes" to you?

Will you say "not yet" to someone else you can say "right now" to you.

Will you say "stop" to someone else you can say "go" to you.

Will you say "hold on" to someone else you can say "let go" to you.

Will you say "you're not going" to someone else you can say "I'm going for it" to you.

Maybe you will. And maybe you'll get this in return: "Say, what?" "Uh, Mom, did you say *you're* going to dance before you take me to *my* dance class?" "Mom, are you okay?" "Tammy, I just want to make sure I heard that right because I thought I heard you say that dinner wouldn't be until 6:30 tonight." "Frank, are you honestly not coming over like right now to drop off the stereo you're giving away? I'm pretty sure I said it was urgent."

Oh, yeah. They heard you right.

Momma's gonna crank tunes so she can dance in the dining room.

Tammy's making dinner 30 minutes late so she can merengue for 15.

And Frank's putting down the phone, turning on his own brand new stereo, and droppin' it to Zappa, then Zeppelin, then ZZ.

Now, what is one thing that even five minutes of every day—or more if you've got it—would help you tend to you?

Once you know, take five. Take it now. Take it for you. Because, in the end, you ultimately take it for everyone.

Maybe you like punk, funk, or folk.

Maybe you like rumba, samba or salsa.

Maybe it's tango or maybe it's mambo.

Maybe it's moonwalking or Jive Talking.

It could be the quickstep or a slow waltz, swing or tap.

It doesn't matter. Drop what you're doing and drop it on the dance floor. Any floor will do.

That's it for Episode 54. Thank you for listening! If you're ready to apply the concepts that I teach in this podcast at a deeper level, get on the waitlist for the next Done Bingeing group experience. Go to <https://www.holdingthespace.co/group-programs/> and sign up for updates.

Thanks for listening to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*. Martha is a certified life and weight loss coach who's available to help you stop bingeing. Book a free session with her at www.holdingthespace.co/book. And stay tuned for next week's episode on freeing yourself from binge eating and creating the life you want.