

The Done Bingeing

PODCAST

EPISODE 58: SPECIAL SERIES—12 KEYS TO END BINGE EATING, KEY #11: MAKE FRIENDS WITH THE ENEMY

What do means and ends and enemies and friends have to do with you and binge eating? 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 an evidence-based, 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. To find out more, go to www.holdingthespace.co and click Programs.

And now, your host, Internal-Family-Systems-Level-3-Trained and Master-Coach-Certified Martha Ayim.

Last week, we talked about key number 10 to end binge eating—appreciate all you find, an opportunity to consider the counterintuitive intention of the part of you that binges.

This week, we're talking about key number 11, which is *befriend* the part of you that binges.

Now, if you're still with me, that is no small feat.

If you're anything like me, when I was bingeing, the last thing I was gonna do was shake hands with the binger in me.

But it turns out that the binger in me is as stubborn as I am.

Why is it so important to befriend the binger?

Because it allows us to heal our relationship with it so that it doesn't *have* to binge anymore, rather than compete with it so that it's too *weak* to binge anymore.

Remember that last week we talked about two ways to address the neural network that keeps you locked in bingeing?

The first way is to construct a competing neural network. The promise is that if you practice new thoughts, you'll break a new trail in your brain and, eventually, pave a six-lane freeway to ride out to freedom.

For *many* people, that works. And, yet, for many, it doesn't.

If you're one of the people this doesn't work for, don't worry—it's not the end of the road.

There is another way because ... with the neural network that's got you bingeing, you can contend or you mend.

Competition sets up something other, other than what is, something to be dug out and then covered over, until black tarmac gleams under yellow seams that divide the way.

But restoration isn't setting up something other, it's tending to what is, something to be known and understood, until clarity ripples out in rings that rise in tides and rush through rivers that move to meet the sea.

Appreciating the last thing you'd ever expect to thank ... may carry you to far shores you'd never expect to bank.

Do you feel *any* curiosity toward the part of you that binges?

Are you wondering what it might take to begin to heal it?

Are you pondering how you might begin to befriend the supposed enemy?

You begin by turning inside and noticing. We talked about this in Episode 56.

You may want to close your eyes or lower your lids or notice your breathing. Anything that works for you and feels safe as a way of tuning in.

Is it feeling okay to focus on the part of you that binges?

If not, and you'd rather focus on another part, that's okay.

Focus on whatever part seems to most want your attention right now.

Where do you notice it in and/or around your body?

Maybe you experience your bingeing part as a rigidity in your jaw and weight in your core. There's no right or wrong here. Whatever you notice is okay.

Turn your attention to the part and see what else you see.

Do you have an image of the part? (It's fine if you don't.)

If you do have an image, what does it look like?

Maybe you see a vice grip in your jaw atop a block of ice, a freezing vapor hanging nearby in the air.

What are this part's beliefs? Maybe it believes, "I have to binge so I can stop the knife of grief that never, ever stops slicing."

What are this part's emotions? Maybe it feels a steadfast vigilance.

What are this part's behaviours? Maybe it circles in unrelenting scanning and whenever it finds the blade, it swallows mouthful after mouthful to stuff under its edge, to wedge some safety between it and you. But it never seems to last for long, as the knife seems to like its seesaw. So the bingeing part will be back to pack around the blade once more.

Are there other ways that you experience this part? If so, what are they?

Do you have a sense of your proximity to the part? Are you up close, far away, or somewhere in-between?

How do you feel toward the part?

Do you feel curious? Compassionate?

If you do, let it know and see how it responds.

But you may not, and that's okay. It just means that there's another part reacting to the part you're trying to get to know.

See if the part that's reacting will give you some space to continue to get to know the part you've been focusing on. It will be more likely to do so if you listen to why it reacted and can validate its reason.

For example, maybe it reacted because it hates the bingeing part and fears that any sort of kind attention paid toward it will be a licence for it to keep bingeing.

If the part's concern makes sense to you, let it know, and, if this feels genuine, let it know that you will be back soon to get to know it more as well.

See again if it will step back. If it won't, see if you can get curious about it instead and start again by tuning in and noticing and seeing if it feels okay to focus on this part instead.

You can let the part that you'd been connecting with know that you'll be back to spend some time with it soon.

Once you're able to feel curious or compassionate toward a part you're able to focus on, see if it's willing to share more about itself.

For example, you might ask it some of these questions:

- How old is it? (Are you surprised by the answer?)
- How old does it think you are? (Did it guess right? Often parts think we're much younger than our actual age. If that's the case, update this part on your age and give it some time to take it in.)

- What role does this part play in your system? What does it try to do for you? What is its job?
- How did this part get its job? How did it come by its role?
- Is this role effectively helping your system? (No judgment here, just curiosity.)
- Does this part like its role? Why or why not?
- If this part has been doing its job for a long time, is it tired?
- Does it even like its job, even if its reluctant to give it up?

Take time to listen for the answers.

- If this part didn't feel it had to do this job, is there something else it would rather do for you?

One of my clients had a part that was fifteen and recalled the sting of rejection. Of being called fat by mom and told to drink only water. Except when she did, she got thin and then there was a different kind of dislike that she couldn't quite per her finger on. But she knew this: she was never enough. It was either too fat to be loved or too thin to win Mom back.

Now we want to ask the part:

- What is it afraid would happen if it stopped doing its job?
- What does this part really want for you? In other words, what is the thing that this part has been trying to help you get?

For my client, the bingeing part feared that if it stopped doing its job, the knife would saw back in, into an unending gnawing of grief. What that bingeing part *really* wanted was relief for her so she could sleep again, think again. The risk of *not* achieving this would be loss of function and then loss of livelihood and then far more pain and far less love and, this time, all without a home. This part's fears went all the way to the end of the road, to the trailer down by the river.

What did *you* notice?

My guess is that you still don't like the bingeing part in you, but that some—possibly even the slightest—tenderness was kindled toward it.

Yes the bingeing part sirens in like the fire brigade.

Yes, it busts down the door.

Yes, it leaves a sodden wooden floor.

But would you fire the fireman?

Neither would I.

So the next time you're tempted to hate the binger in you, remember this:

The damage was a means to an end, and that end was all for you.

That's it for Episode 58. Thank you for listening! If you're ready to invest in healing your bingeing, join me in the Done Bingeing Membership. It's my monthly program with the support you need to end binge eating. Go to www.holdingthespace.co/join to learn more.

Thanks for listening to *The Done Bingeing Podcast*.

Martha has the highest-level training in both the evidence-based Internal Family Systems approach and in life coaching, and she's available to help you stop bingeing. You can learn more about her programs by going to www.holdingthespace.co and clicking Programs.

Stay tuned for the next episode on freeing yourself from binge eating and creating the life you want.