

Glenn Livingston, Ph.D. and Yoav Ezer on Mind-Meditation-and-The-Pig

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Dr. Glenn: Hey, it's Glenn Livingston with Never Binge Again. And I am here with one of my best friends, who is also a silent partner in the company, up until now, a silent partner; who is an expert on mindfulness and has been helping me work through the various ways that mindfulness integrates with the very rules-based approach to Never Binge Again, and who is largely responsible for spearheading the mindfulness supplemental sessions in the upcoming intensive, in the upcoming program. And I asked him on today so we could just talk about a little bit about all this. And I got a lot of questions regarding mindfulness and can you actually do that with Never Binge Again, and isn't that the opposite. And I think it's anything but. I think it's very much supportive of mindfulness, but I'll explain to you why. Anyway, Yoav, how are you? Yoav Ezer. Welcome, Yoav Ezer.

Yoav: Hey Glenn. I'm happy to be here, finally.

Dr. Glenn: Finally I got you on.

Yoav: Finally, yeah.



Dr. Glenn: So let me articulate for you for just a moment the way that I have always thought that mindfulness integrates with Never Binge Again. And then I'm hoping that you can amplify that and maybe talk about a couple of techniques or other thoughts about what we should be doing to eat more mindfully in order to support the Never Binge Again approach to life. Do you agree with that? Is that okay?

Yoav: Sure. Let's go.

Dr. Glenn: So, I believe that binging is the enemy of mindfulness. Binging is the enemy of mindful eating. And when you carefully define what healthy food is and isn't to you, when you make that line 100 percent clear, then you're actually freeing yourself up of food obsession because there's not this mental energy that's going to -- well, am I eating well, or am I not eating well? And am I on or am I off my plan? And if I'm off my plan, how am I going to get back on my plan, and if I'm off my plan, what do I want to feed my pig before I decide to pick on the plan and on and on and on and on, and it really leads to a mental obsession. And that mental obsession prevents you from being present. It actually disconnects you from your meaning and purpose in life. It disconnects you from the experience of eating. Most people have reported to me that they feel like when their pig is out and they are binging, that they don't even really enjoy the food, that it's a very unconscious experience. And I fight that a little bit because I want people to know that they're always there, they are always present, and they always have the power to put the pig back. But nevertheless, it really is a serious disconnect from being present with their food, being present with their relationships, being present in nature.

And so I tell them to do the work to define healthy versus unhealthy food so that they can be present. Some people prefer just to define



rules that support mindful eating. So some people will say, "Well, I'm not going to have any rules about food per se, except I never eat standing up. I never eat in front of the TV," or something like that, or, "I always meditate for five minutes before a meal." Anyway, so those are the connections that I see. I see that when people do put the pig in the cage and they keep the pig in the cage, that they begin to report that their experience of food is totally different, that things that nature provided start to seem much more enticing than all the bags, boxes, containers and hyperpalatable poison that industry is producing for them that got them to eat less mindfully. And that's really the extent of my expertise and understanding on the subject. And from there, I really just leave it to you to take it where you want to go.

Yoav: So let me just first be absolutely clear with everyone that's listening. I'm not an expert or a guru in meditation. I'm a practitioner. I've been practicing meditation for three years -- a bit more than three years. And the person who's going to give the lecture, of the intensive, and work with people in the intensive, he's a trained teacher in meditation. So I'm just going to try to do my best to explain what he's going to do and to answer your questions.

So let's begin with what's similar between Never Binge Again and meditation, and what's different. So you're absolutely correct that binge eating is the reverse, is the opposite of mindful eating because you do that not from a clear perspective of what -- why you are eating and what you're eating. It's like, exactly like you said, something takes over you when you binge eat. And first of all, I've been in the path of being patient of the -- or a sufferer of the pig syndrome. And something just takes over you. And in Buddhist meditation -- and what we're going to talk about is not Buddhism at all. It's not religious at all,

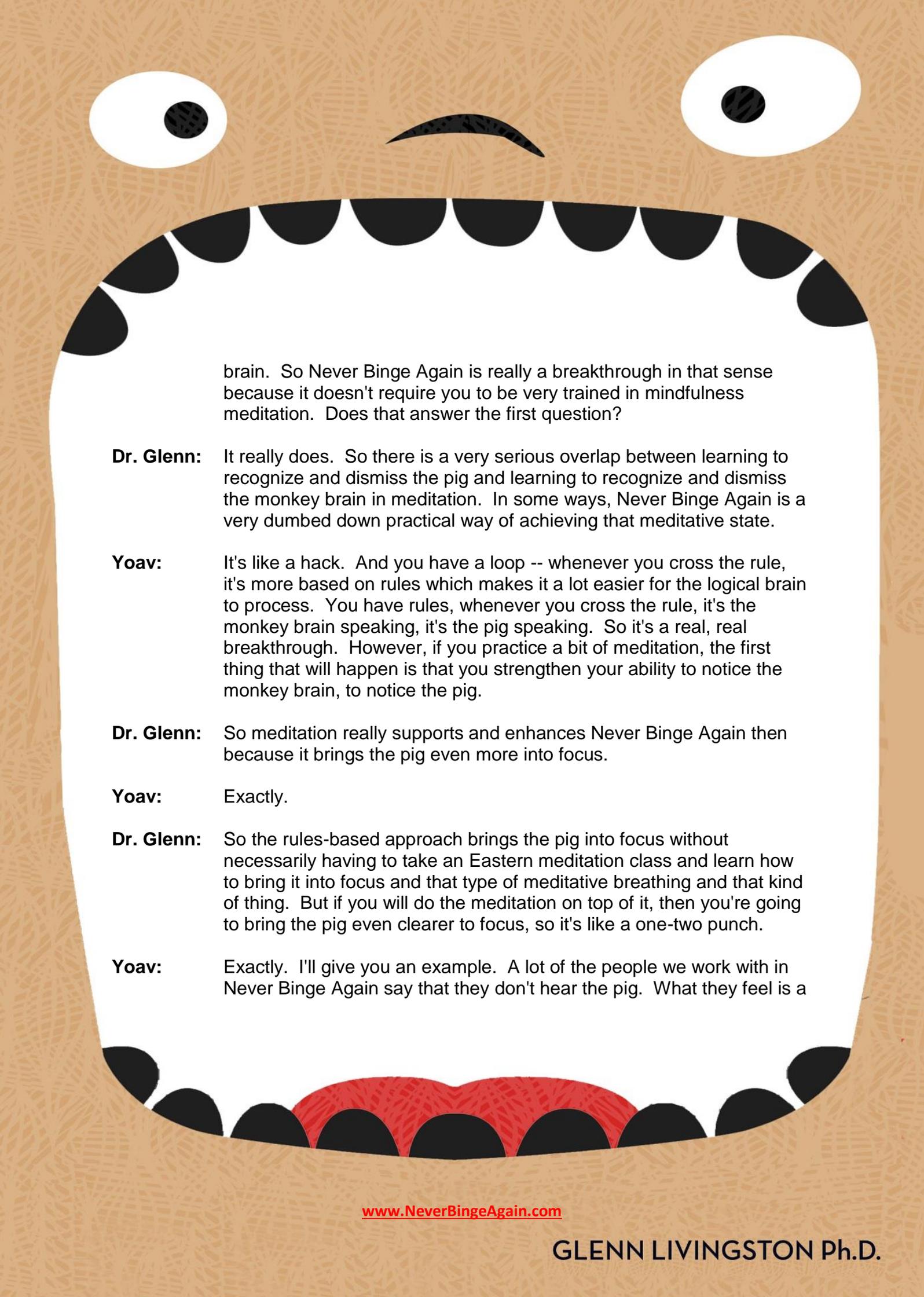


it's just the practical aspect of meditation, but I'm going to take some terms from Buddhism because it's totally linked to meditation.

So in Buddhist meditation, the pig is called the monkey brain. That's actually the name, the monkey brain, which is your thought process that goes wild. It does stuff while you're not noticing it, like all the thoughts you have beneath the layer of attention, beneath the layer of mindfulness, the binge eating thoughts, the doubt, the insecurities, maybe sexual thoughts; all the stuff that goes on beneath the surface, that's the monkey brain. And what mindfulness does is it allows you, in a sense, to notice monkey brain, hear what it's thinking and be able to kind of control it. So it's very, very similar to Never Binge Again. In Never Binge Again, you have a technique that allows you to notice the pig, and then countermand it, like, refuse to act on what the pig wants you to do. And with mindfulness, it's the same thing, but it's the overall kind of under the radar thoughts, not just food related.

Now, that's what's very similar. What's very different between the two techniques, it's that what Never Binge Again does is that it gives you a kind of a framework of rules that whenever you go against the rules, whenever you cross the line, you notice that you cross the line because there's a ruling in place. So it's very reliant on rules and it's very easy to notice when you cross or when you go against the rule. So you hear the pig whenever you go against your food plan, whenever you want to eat something that's not on your food plan.

What mindfulness does, it trains you to always notice what you're thinking. So there's a lot more work to become truly mindful, like a living Buddha when you're always aware of what you're thinking. It's a lot more work to really practice mindfulness to the level where you're always in attention, you're always seeing and hearing the monkey



brain. So Never Binge Again is really a breakthrough in that sense because it doesn't require you to be very trained in mindfulness meditation. Does that answer the first question?

Dr. Glenn: It really does. So there is a very serious overlap between learning to recognize and dismiss the pig and learning to recognize and dismiss the monkey brain in meditation. In some ways, Never Binge Again is a very dumbed down practical way of achieving that meditative state.

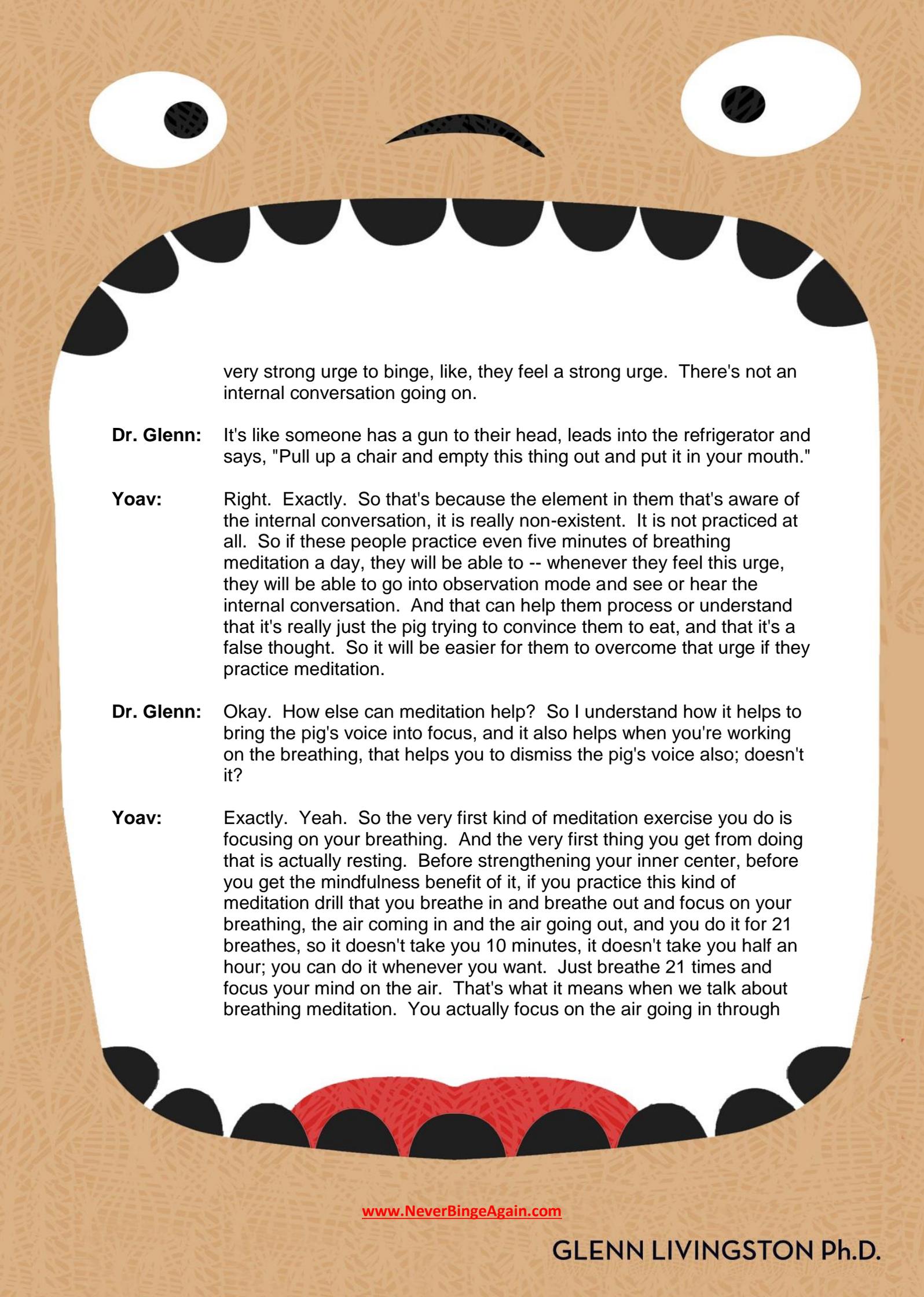
Yoav: It's like a hack. And you have a loop -- whenever you cross the rule, it's more based on rules which makes it a lot easier for the logical brain to process. You have rules, whenever you cross the rule, it's the monkey brain speaking, it's the pig speaking. So it's a real, real breakthrough. However, if you practice a bit of meditation, the first thing that will happen is that you strengthen your ability to notice the monkey brain, to notice the pig.

Dr. Glenn: So meditation really supports and enhances Never Binge Again then because it brings the pig even more into focus.

Yoav: Exactly.

Dr. Glenn: So the rules-based approach brings the pig into focus without necessarily having to take an Eastern meditation class and learn how to bring it into focus and that type of meditative breathing and that kind of thing. But if you will do the meditation on top of it, then you're going to bring the pig even clearer to focus, so it's like a one-two punch.

Yoav: Exactly. I'll give you an example. A lot of the people we work with in Never Binge Again say that they don't hear the pig. What they feel is a



very strong urge to binge, like, they feel a strong urge. There's not an internal conversation going on.

Dr. Glenn: It's like someone has a gun to their head, leads into the refrigerator and says, "Pull up a chair and empty this thing out and put it in your mouth."

Yoav: Right. Exactly. So that's because the element in them that's aware of the internal conversation, it is really non-existent. It is not practiced at all. So if these people practice even five minutes of breathing meditation a day, they will be able to -- whenever they feel this urge, they will be able to go into observation mode and see or hear the internal conversation. And that can help them process or understand that it's really just the pig trying to convince them to eat, and that it's a false thought. So it will be easier for them to overcome that urge if they practice meditation.

Dr. Glenn: Okay. How else can meditation help? So I understand how it helps to bring the pig's voice into focus, and it also helps when you're working on the breathing, that helps you to dismiss the pig's voice also; doesn't it?

Yoav: Exactly. Yeah. So the very first kind of meditation exercise you do is focusing on your breathing. And the very first thing you get from doing that is actually resting. Before strengthening your inner center, before you get the mindfulness benefit of it, if you practice this kind of meditation drill that you breathe in and breathe out and focus on your breathing, the air coming in and the air going out, and you do it for 21 breathes, so it doesn't take you 10 minutes, it doesn't take you half an hour; you can do it whenever you want. Just breathe 21 times and focus your mind on the air. That's what it means when we talk about breathing meditation. You actually focus on the air going in through



your nostrils and then going out through your nostrils. So those are very strict instructions. Those are the simple instructions to doing this.

And when you do that 21 times, what happens is that most of the time, like, 30, 40, 50 percent of the time, a big chunk of the time, you won't think about other stuff. You'll be solely focused on only the air going in and out. And having that singular focus, focusing on one thing and not cooperating with the monkey brain and letting it start conversations within your mind, so you pull back from the monkey brain or the pig trying to talk you into whatever conversation it wants to have and you just focus on your breath, you get an unusual sense of calm. It's like a rest that's better than sleep.

Dr. Glenn: And I've had that on occasion. Confession here is that I have never really been a meditator. I do listen to self-hypnosis CDs that are similar from time to time. But I have had that experience of emptying my mind, being 100 percent on my plan, dismissing all of the pig's thoughts and having that peaceful, natural, almost spiritual feeling that's better than sleep, and in some ways, it's better than sex; right? And maybe I wouldn't go that far.

Yoav: No, it is in some way because you're totally calm, like, there's no worry, there's no anxiety. Even if you're anxious before or you're worried before, for that brief period of time, you're not. And that gives you an immense sense of calm.

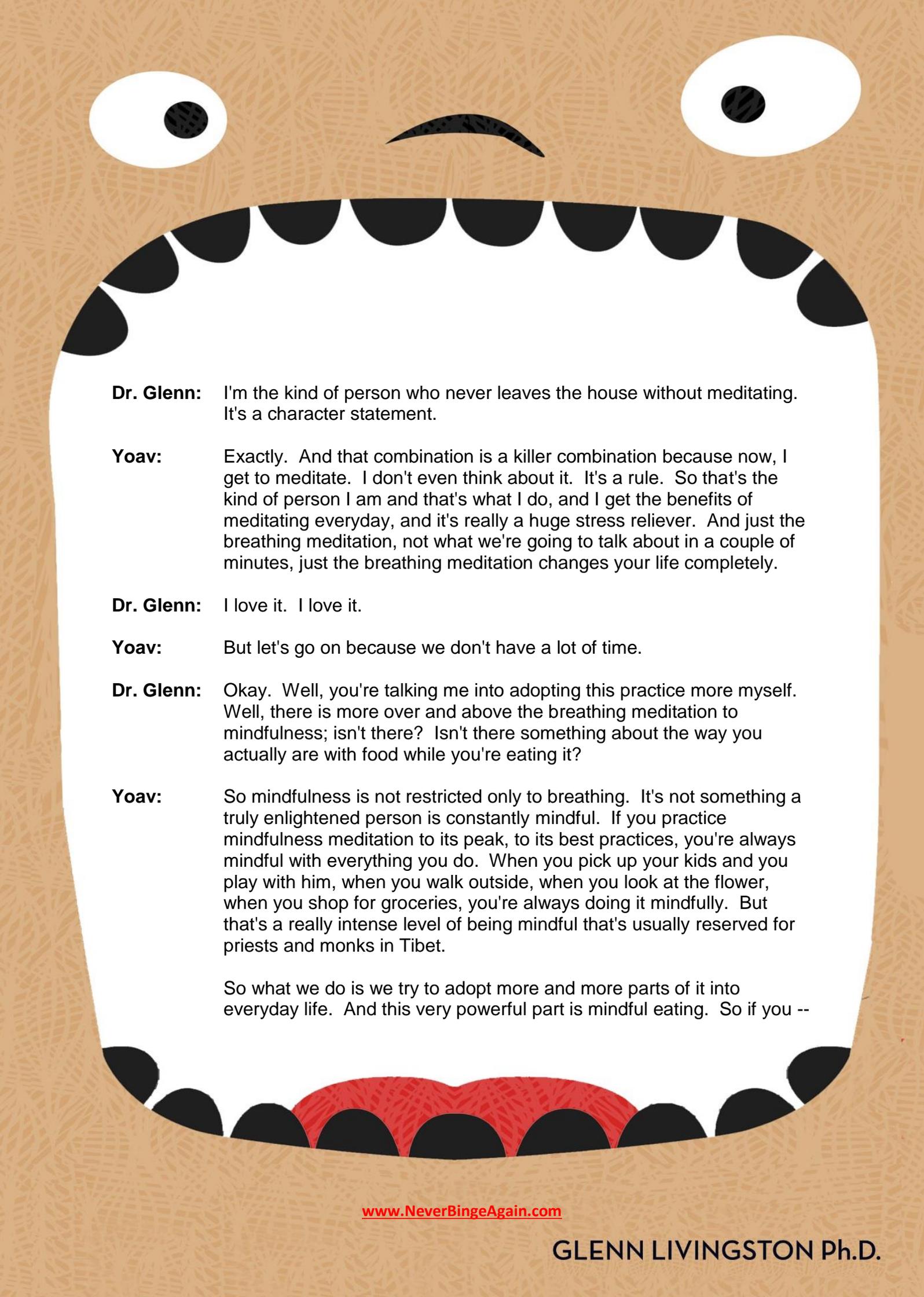
Dr. Glenn: And the other thing about it is that it's under your control and always available to produce for you if you just make the time to do that, whereas finding an intimate partner is not necessarily always under your control; right?



Yoav: Or going to the gym or doing anything else that kind of gives you that relief.

Dr. Glenn: And what I want people to understand is that that feeling is better than how you get from emptying a box or a bag or container. I like to say, there's no love at the bottom of a box or a bag or container, but there's love here. There's love here. And the last thing I want to say -- it sounds like you're excited to say something -- is that that feeling will overtake you and draw you away from the pig slop. You won't want to have the pig slop because you know it's going to sacrifice that feeling. And a lot of people get stuck with the Never Binge Again method because they think that it's a running away from method, like, I'm running away from chocolate, I'm running away from pizza, I'm running away from sugar, flour or alcohol and they don't realize what they're running towards. And this is something that pulls you rather than having a wild boar chasing you all the time. So something that you're not running away from something and moving towards. Okay, your turn.

Yoav: Okay. So I am excited about this. I think the combination of the two techniques is extremely powerful. So I'll give you another example. So I've been practicing meditation for three years, but if I'm being honest there, until like, four months ago, five months ago, I didn't practice continuously, like, not everyday. And you get the benefit if you really practice everyday. So what I did was I used the Never Binge Again technique to create a practice of meditation. So I have an always rule, where I always meditate for five minutes just before I leave the house in the morning. That's my rule. So now it's a rule. Now it's a part of who I am. It's going back to Never Binge Again, to what's unique about Never Binge Again. This is who I am. I don't leave the house before I meditate for five minutes. And that's it. That causes to meditate.



Dr. Glenn: I'm the kind of person who never leaves the house without meditating. It's a character statement.

Yoav: Exactly. And that combination is a killer combination because now, I get to meditate. I don't even think about it. It's a rule. So that's the kind of person I am and that's what I do, and I get the benefits of meditating everyday, and it's really a huge stress reliever. And just the breathing meditation, not what we're going to talk about in a couple of minutes, just the breathing meditation changes your life completely.

Dr. Glenn: I love it. I love it.

Yoav: But let's go on because we don't have a lot of time.

Dr. Glenn: Okay. Well, you're talking me into adopting this practice more myself. Well, there is more over and above the breathing meditation to mindfulness; isn't there? Isn't there something about the way you actually are with food while you're eating it?

Yoav: So mindfulness is not restricted only to breathing. It's not something a truly enlightened person is constantly mindful. If you practice mindfulness meditation to its peak, to its best practices, you're always mindful with everything you do. When you pick up your kids and you play with him, when you walk outside, when you look at the flower, when you shop for groceries, you're always doing it mindfully. But that's a really intense level of being mindful that's usually reserved for priests and monks in Tibet.

So what we do is we try to adopt more and more parts of it into everyday life. And this very powerful part is mindful eating. So if you --



in as much as the same way you pay attention going through your nose when you practice breathing meditation, you pay attention to the feel and the taste of the food when you eat. You don't just chew as quickly as you can while watching TV and talking to your friend and checking the phone, no. You only eat and you pay attention to how the food tastes in your mouth, what's the taste, what's the texture of what you're eating right now. Where inside your mouth you feel which taste? Because once you start to pay attention to what you're eating, you'll find that there's a different feeling in the edge of your tongue than in the back of your tongue, and that you're actually tasting the food not only on your tongue. Some foods you can taste them all through your mouth.

So when you do that, when you mindfully eat, a wonderful thing happens. You start to enjoy food in a level that you've never done so before. So an apple suddenly becomes a wonderful thing because it's crunchy and it's got different tastes, and it's a little bit sweet and a little bit bitter in some places and you feel it differently throughout your mouth and it's a wonderful, wonderful thing just eating an apple. And not only is it a lot more tasty, like 10 times more tasty, it also provides you that act of eating an apple provides you with the same sense of calm that the breathing meditation does. So you're only focusing on breathing -- not breathing the apple, that would be a problem -- on eating the apple, and you get the same sense of calm.

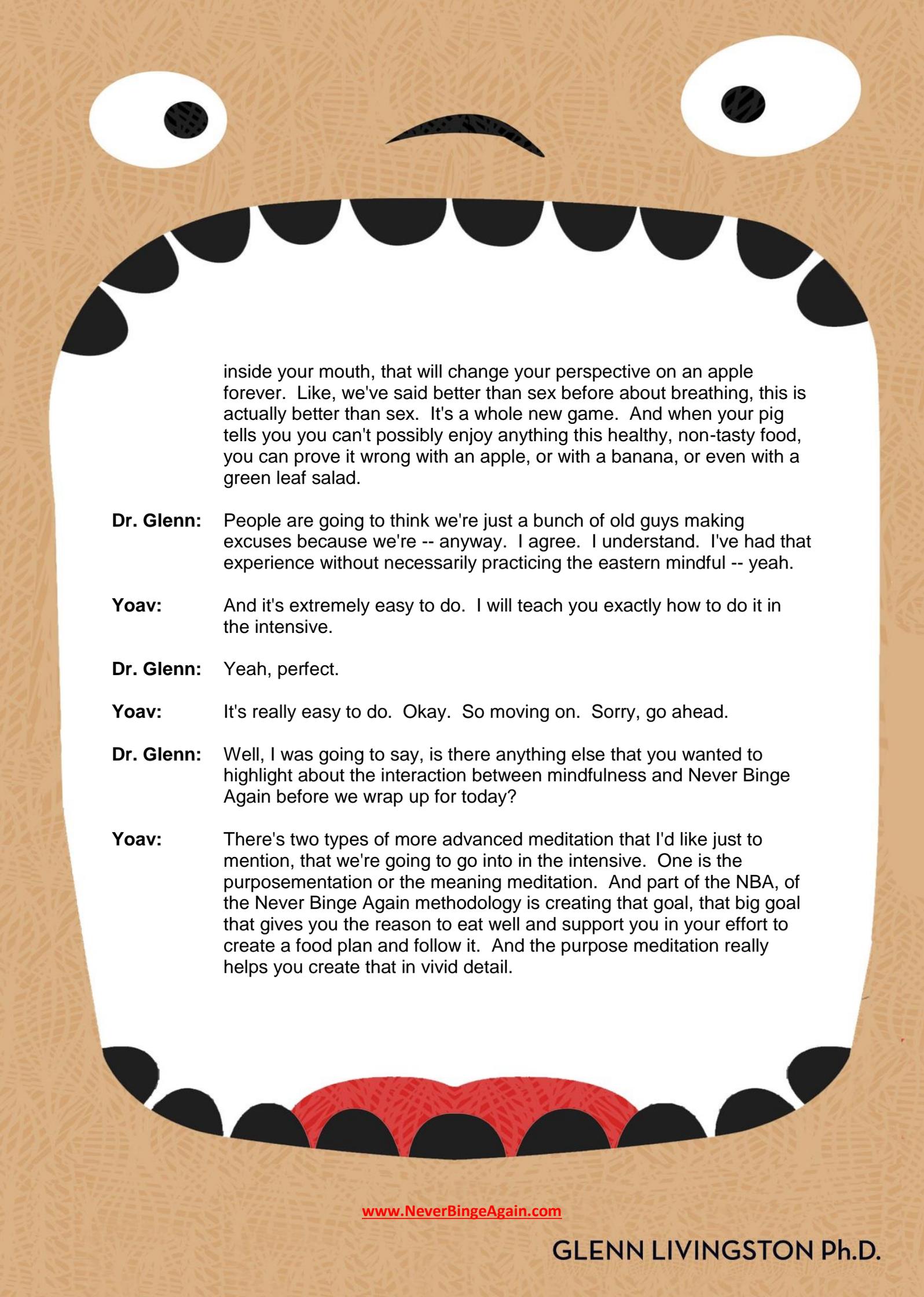
So even if you have a break at work and you go out and you eat an apple, that's your lunch break or your 10:00 a.m. break, you can tremendously enjoy the apple, and at the same time come back relaxed and a lot more calm and happy. So that's a really strong meditation practice you can adopt.



Dr. Glenn: And this all circles together with some of the more recent physiological research on taste that suggests that when you -- the industrial foods which are artificial concentrations of sugar, salt, fat, starch, cytotoxins, spices, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, that because those are artificially stimulating to your taste buds in a way that nature never really intended, your taste buds become less sensitive as a result. And when you start to gravitate more towards the foods that nature has to offer, your ability to taste food is restored. And I think the research suggests, if I'm not mistaken, that it's more than doubled. And it only takes like, three or four weeks for that to happen.

So what most people don't realize is that the diet of the modern world actually suppresses our ability to enjoy the sense of taste; I think also the sense of smell that goes along with the sense of taste. And as you become more mindful, as you put Never Binge Again rules into place, you become more present and you actually can have those physiological experiences. So when your pig tells you, "You can't give this up. You enjoy food too much. It's the only thing you enjoy. You really are not going to be able to taste anything good anymore," it's lying. It's lying. Food is going to taste better and better and better as you go along. And this is a practice that can really help to enhance your presence and experience so that you're drawn towards the healthier foods instead.

Yoav: I have to tell you that I am not familiar with the research you are talking about, but even if you've ate junk food, solely junk food for the last year or two, you can have a blast, like, a feast in your next meal with an apple if you do it mindfully. You don't have to wait. It's right away -- when you focus, you pay attention, you take the bite, you focus on how it tastes in your mouth, you chew it carefully, you feel the juices flowing through your mouth, you focus on the taste, you focus on how it feels



inside your mouth, that will change your perspective on an apple forever. Like, we've said better than sex before about breathing, this is actually better than sex. It's a whole new game. And when your pig tells you you can't possibly enjoy anything this healthy, non-tasty food, you can prove it wrong with an apple, or with a banana, or even with a green leaf salad.

Dr. Glenn: People are going to think we're just a bunch of old guys making excuses because we're -- anyway. I agree. I understand. I've had that experience without necessarily practicing the eastern mindful -- yeah.

Yoav: And it's extremely easy to do. I will teach you exactly how to do it in the intensive.

Dr. Glenn: Yeah, perfect.

Yoav: It's really easy to do. Okay. So moving on. Sorry, go ahead.

Dr. Glenn: Well, I was going to say, is there anything else that you wanted to highlight about the interaction between mindfulness and Never Binge Again before we wrap up for today?

Yoav: There's two types of more advanced meditation that I'd like just to mention, that we're going to go into in the intensive. One is the purposementation or the meaning meditation. And part of the NBA, of the Never Binge Again methodology is creating that goal, that big goal that gives you the reason to eat well and support you in your effort to create a food plan and follow it. And the purpose meditation really helps you create that in vivid detail.



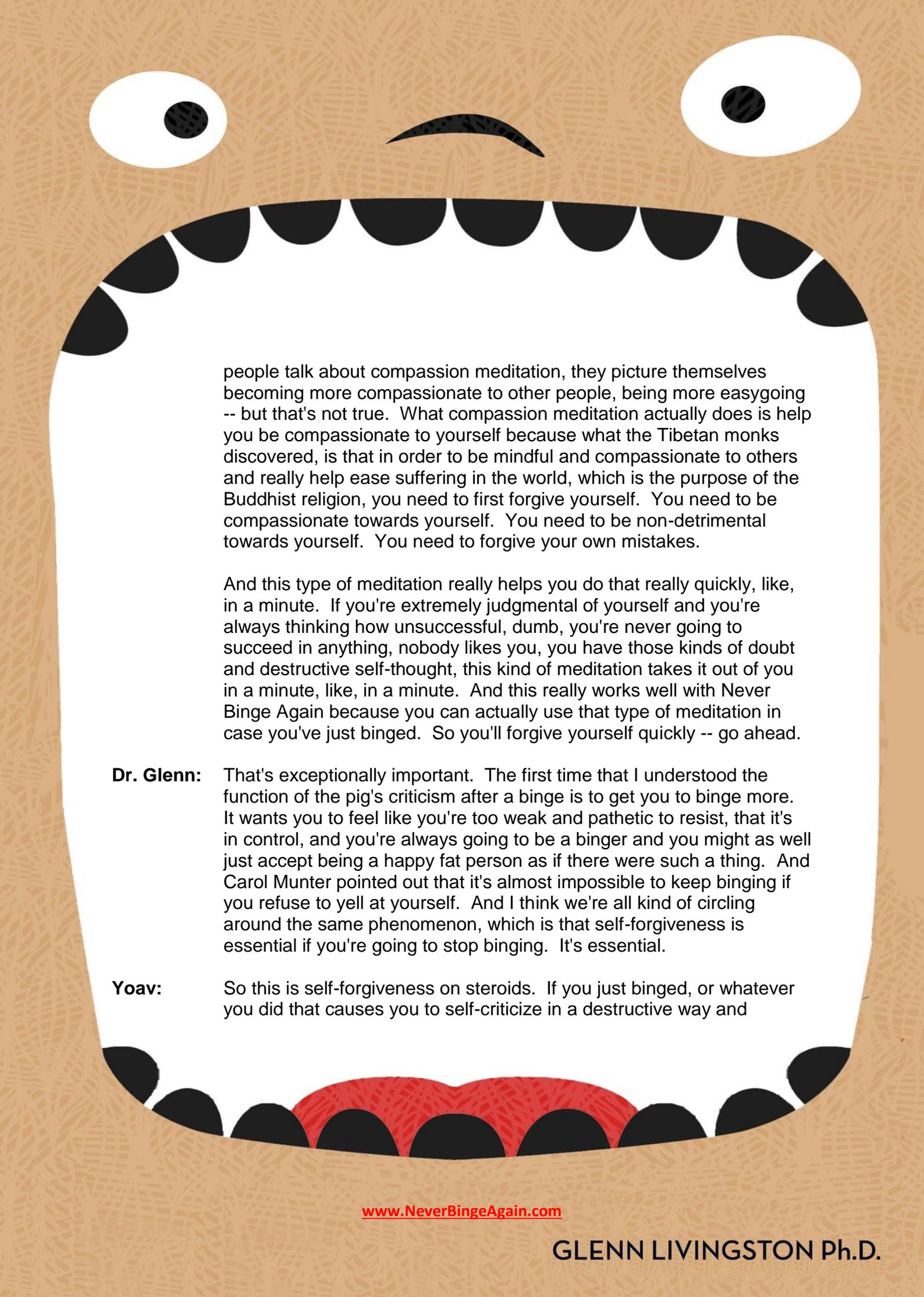
So let's say your overriding goal is to become healthy so you can be there for your kids for years to come and help them and support them physically and financially, so that's a statement; right? It doesn't have an emotional effect unless you really dig into it. And what the purpose meditation allows you to do is to create an image and an emotion around that purpose.

Dr. Glenn: Do you want to give an example or should we save that for the intensive?

Yoav: So the trick is very simple. What you do is you start with a simple meditation, like the breathing meditation to get into a beta state where your mind is more easily influenced by suggestion. And then you use your own mind to suggest the image. So you picture yourself 20 years from now, your hair is all grey or you don't have hair at all, in my case -- it's sad but true -- and you're playing with your grandchildren outside. It's a warm, summer day. You can imagine your grandchildren, you can imagine your son or your daughter sitting on the side of the playground and looking at you and you can actually play with your grandchildren. You imagine yourself playing with them. You're throwing a ball and you're jumping with them. And then you take them out, you go to see a movie together. So you imagine yourself driving everyone in the car. And because you're in that beta state, the image is very strong and it creates a lot of strong emotion.

Dr. Glenn: I see.

Yoav: So it helps you really create that vision you want. And you can use that -- you don't have to do that everyday, but it's a technique to have strength in your purpose. And the second technique that we'll be discussing is the compassion meditation. Compassion meditation,



people talk about compassion meditation, they picture themselves becoming more compassionate to other people, being more easygoing -- but that's not true. What compassion meditation actually does is help you be compassionate to yourself because what the Tibetan monks discovered, is that in order to be mindful and compassionate to others and really help ease suffering in the world, which is the purpose of the Buddhist religion, you need to first forgive yourself. You need to be compassionate towards yourself. You need to be non-detrimental towards yourself. You need to forgive your own mistakes.

And this type of meditation really helps you do that really quickly, like, in a minute. If you're extremely judgmental of yourself and you're always thinking how unsuccessful, dumb, you're never going to succeed in anything, nobody likes you, you have those kinds of doubt and destructive self-thought, this kind of meditation takes it out of you in a minute, like, in a minute. And this really works well with Never Binge Again because you can actually use that type of meditation in case you've just binged. So you'll forgive yourself quickly -- go ahead.

Dr. Glenn: That's exceptionally important. The first time that I understood the function of the pig's criticism after a binge is to get you to binge more. It wants you to feel like you're too weak and pathetic to resist, that it's in control, and you're always going to be a binger and you might as well just accept being a happy fat person as if there were such a thing. And Carol Munter pointed out that it's almost impossible to keep bingeing if you refuse to yell at yourself. And I think we're all kind of circling around the same phenomenon, which is that self-forgiveness is essential if you're going to stop bingeing. It's essential.

Yoav: So this is self-forgiveness on steroids. If you just binged, or whatever you did that causes you to self-criticize in a destructive way and



unhelpful way, and you practice compassion meditation, you'll just be laughing at the pig. It will be funny. Like, those words, "You're pathetic, you can't possibly succeed," you'll be laughing after you do this type of meditation because it is preposterous. You just have to change your perspective to see that, and compassion meditation is -- I think is more powerful than the other types of meditation. I practice that every week.

Dr. Glenn: Can I come to these classes? I want to come to these classes now. We talked about we're not coming.

Yoav: You should.

Dr. Glenn: We talked about we're not coming because I was going to interfere when people are going to be too involved with me as opposed to the meditation expert, but maybe I want to come as a participant. I think that's what I want to do.

Yoav: You should. These are very helpful techniques.

Dr. Glenn: Okay. Anything else, Yoav? What did I miss?

Yoav: No, I think that's enough for now. It's a lot of information. We're going to go into a lot more detail in the intensive, but if you really want to boost your work and your progress with Never Binge Again and get an added sense of relaxation and get rid of a lot of anxiety, I can't recommend meditation enough.

Dr. Glenn: Okay.



Yoav: It's a powerful, powerful technique. And we're not going to be talking about religion at all. There won't be Buddhist stuff there at all.

Dr. Glenn: Okay. Very good. Very good. Well, at the moment as we're recording this, we are offering it as a one-time only free supplement to the Never Binge Again intensive, either for people that are purchasing this month or who have purchased it previously. After that, it will probably be available separately on the website. It will be affordable one way or the other. And at the moment, you can find out about the Never Binge Again intensive where this is being offered as a bonus at NeverBingeAgainCoaching.com. That's NeverBingeAgainCoaching.com. If you happen to be listening to this later on or in six months or a year or something like that and you missed the opportunity for the supplement, then it will be available on the website at NeverBingeAgain.com. Anything else, Yoav?

Yoav: No. thank you for having me.

Dr. Glenn: Okay. Thank you for coming on.

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