



Fernando – First Meeting

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Dr. Glenn: So Fernando, thank you so much for agreeing to do this with me.

Fernando: Thank You!

Dr. Glenn: I understood that you recently read *Never Binge Again*.

Fernando: That's right!

Dr. Glenn: Just tell me a little bit about your reaction to it. What was it that intrigued you, what irked you, what do you think?

Fernando: What the book opened my eyes to, that the results of having a diet Dr. Glenn, is go beyond just a weighty loose of your pounds. Right? This year I started a diet and lost almost 15 kilos, almost 30 pounds and let's say everyone congratulated me but one thing I noticed that was disturbing me is that my body did not change by my mentality.

Dr. Glenn: The effects went beyond just losing weight and that you noticed that your weight might have changed but your mentality hadn't?

Fernando: Exactly! Before I even read the book I was intrigued because it was like you were right in that book for me because I noticed that it was like if there were two



Fernandos: One that was physically getting shaped and the other that didn't like it and kept looking for the next binge and resisting but not for long. Actually my diet plan wasn't too much elaborate. When I did it, I left some space for escaping but basically what I did was, "I'm going to control my breakfast. I'm going to exercise and control my dinner. During my lunch I will eat anything that pleases me.

Dr. Glenn: And that worked?

Fernando: That worked! I lost weight by doing that. It was more like I lost that weight but it was like I spoiled at a certain point. Then I was starting to get persuaded again. When I read the book and you put in perspective separating those two personalities or that one personality that just wants to binge and doesn't want to do any good for me, I didn't have that as elaborate as I saw in the book but I had the perception that something like that was happening. I loved the book and I read it from cover to cover really quick in a few days because I really wanted to learn from you on that. It was like you wrote the book for me.

Dr. Glenn: When you did realize that there was a kind of fat thinking alter ego inside of you which we call the Pig, when you realized you had it inside of you, what did that do for you? How was that helpful?

Fernando: I think what was really helpful was to put in perspective that I have to do a tradeoff. It's like I can get immediate pleasure or long lasting health. Right? The good it did to me was I see it very clearly that when I choose to do what the Pig wants, it's like I was postponing in time, it was putting some consequence for me in the future for my health. It was like in exchange for this chocolate right now in a few years from now I will have a punch in the face.

Dr. Glenn: So you realize that the Pig was convincing you to feed it at a price that price might not be immediate but you recognized that down the road you're probably going to pay a bigger price so the Pig became a little less alert.



Fernando: Exactly! And I'm very sensitive to that because I have my family and I want to have a long and healthy life along with them and as much as I can control it.

Dr. Glenn: Did you become aware of any specific things your Pig was telling you that were previously fooling you but now no longer do?

Fernando: It's something that I still need to work on and I will see if I can get your help. But basically I think that the main thing you wrote that is impactful is that any

thought that leads me to eat what is outside my plan comes from the Pig. It provided a clear thought like never before.

Dr. Glenn: The nomenclature we use for that clarity is that Pig's squeal is any thinking which suggests that you will have even one bite or swallow outside of your carefully defined food plan every again between now and the day that you die. That's Pig squeal!

Fernando: That's right!

Dr. Glenn: And Pig's slop is what that bite would actually be and since we never eat Pig's slop then we know it must be the Pig squealing if it points to some slop and says, "Eat that".

Fernando: Exactly, that's very clear and I think that the only thing right now is that I still don't have perfectly well defined plan but I'm working on it. It's really difficult to write that, let me start with Pig squeal. It's really difficult to make that decision. Like "I'm never going to eat this again, I can do it and I want to do it".

Dr. Glenn: Well, usually starts with one clearly defined rule, some people have to have the whole plan outlined but learning the methodology begins with one clearly defined rule, it could be a 'never' rule; it could be an 'always' rule; it could be a conditional rule, but it starts with the willingness to do that and if you wait until it makes perfect logical sense, your Pig will keep it at bay forever because it can't



make perfect logical sense until you've experienced the benefits. We can outline it intellectually but for someone to say, "Well, this is really going to be much better for you". It's difficult to fight the evolutionary and neurophysiological rewards that are associated with hyper palatable foods, the kind of things we are thinking about putting on our Pig's trough instead of our healthy plates.

Fernando: It's like I'm getting back to them, right?

Dr. Glenn: Yeah and so the Pig is always saying, "Are you really going to give that up forever? That's so good! How cannot have that forever?" What I tell people is to just begin with one rule. May be it's not the most difficult rule for you, maybe it's not the delicious type of Pig's slop that you really know you should give up. Let's pick one thing and work on that together today so you get a sense of how this all works.

Fernando: Okay!

Dr. Glenn: That kind of becomes a seed, which grows over time. Is there one thing that you would like to draw a line in the sand about?

Fernando: Yeah there is and that is chocolate.

Dr. Glenn: Chocolate? What type of a line would you like to draw in the sand, about chocolate?

Fernando: Like an 'always' or 'never', or a conditional line right?

Dr. Glenn: Fernando, when you think about your highest goals and aspirations, your family and your health in the long run, I'm asking you this very genuinely; I don't really know what the answer is, what role should chocolate play in your life (speaking strictly from you personally)?



Fernando: I don't know if I understand your question, let me try to answer. Chocolate for me is the most delicious thing I can eat. Normally it's associated with me when I have some anxious moment, I like eating chocolate. It's a source of relief. So, I think that in terms of my aspirations and goals, by eliminating chocolate, I would also have to face those moments differently. The second thing is that in my family we already have history of diabetes, so last year I had high glycemic in my blood. No too high but I don't want to get to the point where I will have to have clinical diagnosis to make that decision. I want to decide before it becomes worse.

Dr. Glenn: Okay! Let me ask a question this way. If you knew that chocolate was going to be out of your life entirely for the rest of your life, we can think about what your Pig would say about that but what do think about that personally, how would you feel?

Fernando: The first feeling is that I can't refuse chocolate if it's offered to me. Let's say if I go to somebody's home and politely offer me chocolate, which almost never happens but it happens sometimes. If I'm put in a social position to have to eat it. The second thing is that I really like it. If it were all-possible, if there were no bad consequences from eating it, I'd certainly prefer not to quit it.

Dr. Glenn: Okay! I'm trying to discern whether this is you talking or your Pig. We are going to make a realistic plan that would protect you from diabetes. Let me give you a couple of possibilities and you can play off of this and decide if you want to adopt any of these rules. If you don't want to adopt them, that's okay Fernando. This has to be entirely up to you. So I don't want you to perceive any judgment for me about whether you should or shouldn't.

Fernando: All right!

Dr. Glenn: Some people might say, "Well, what if my rule were I only eat chocolate in social situations"? Now if you're going to associate this situation every day it's not



going to do you any good. Maybe it's not going to protect you from diabetes and weight gain and all that. If it's the kind of thing where you're in a social situation twice a month or something that would clearly be a rule like that, that would dramatically reduce the amount of chocolate that you had, maybe that will be enough to protect you. Some people might like that, other people might say, "Well, I'm going to allow myself to do this once a week, no matter what." See the distinction is, is that really possible? There is a concept of toxic pleasure and addiction where people lose their better judgment once they've ingested a little bit of pleasure. So even though they say, "Well, I'm just going to do this once a week when that dopamine starts to release into the synapses, the taste is on the tongue and they have a couple of memories about, "Oh my God! How good was this", their better judgment goes out the window

and their Pig hicks over and says, "I'm free, let's just have ourselves a big hairy chocolate binge", right? Do you think that you could only have chocolate in social situations or only once a week or do you think that you are stung by the phenomenon of toxic pleasure and when you do have a few bites your judgment goes out the window?

Fernando: I do think it's possible, even because to do the diet I'm in right now, I had to stop eating it during the evenings, right? At first it was very difficult because I used to have it very night but now I don't feel that urge any more. But I still have to have it every day so I think that it's possible because I would like to take that to the next level.

Dr. Glenn: So then you fall in the category of someone who needs a conditional rule as opposed to a 'never' or 'always'. Then the question is what conditional rule would make the most sense for you? Is it like you have it in social situations? "Maybe I can have it in social situations but no more than 'X' times a month".

Fernando: Yeah I think that would work. Let's say, a social situation like a birthday party or something like that, I don't even have to eat it. The only thing I was mostly concerned was that if I could hurt someone's feelings. Let's say a friend offers to me



or if a beloved one buys it for me and I refuse it, so I think that I could even say that mostly once a month is reasonable.

Dr. Glenn: So, are you saying that the only time that you'll ever have chocolate again is in a social situation where the person offering you chocolate would be horribly offended and no more than once in a month in any case, is that what you are saying?

Fernando: Yes!

Dr. Glenn: Are you sure?

Fernando: Yes!

Dr. Glenn: Well then let's try to force your Pig to the surface for a second. So Fernando do you have plans to have chocolate other than in social situations where someone offering it to you would be horribly offended if you didn't take it, ever again for the rest of your natural life?

Fernando: I don't have any plans.

Dr. Glenn: Are you ever going to do that again more than once a month in that exact situation between now and the rest of your life?

Fernando: No I won't.

Dr. Glenn: What does your Pig have to say about it?

Fernando: It's going to be too hard.

Dr. Glenn: Let your Pig argue with the best case.

Fernando: Okay, for instance I see chocolate at home because my family is still eats it so it will be tempting because I see it everywhere.



Dr. Glenn: So your Pig says if you see chocolate, you have to eat it?

Fernando: Yeah!

Dr. Glenn: That's what your Pig wants you to believe?

Fernando: Exactly!

Dr. Glenn: Do you believe that?

Fernando: I don't believe that.

Dr. Glenn: You sure?

Fernando: MmHmmm. Yes.

Dr. Glenn: What if you came home and your children have made a big pile of the most delicious chocolate right on the kitchen table and they left it there during dinner and you watched them eat it and it looked really delicious, what would you do?

Fernando: If they didn't do that for me, let's say, "Daddy, it's your birthday, it's Daddy's day or even not for any special reason, we did it for you". I think that would count as a social situation.

Dr. Glenn: I see.

Fernando: However, if it's not in this circumstance like it would be just a regular day, I think that I would be mostly weak in those situations. If I had a very bad day at work or I'm tired, exhausted or emotionally weak.

Dr. Glenn: So your Pig says that even though you have this rule you're going to be emotionally weak in a certain situation and are you going to do that or is that just Pig squeal?



Fernando: I'm not going to do that. It's just Pig squeal.

Dr. Glenn: [Laughs!]

Fernando: Now another one for you, I would have to find an alternative for chocolate.

Dr. Glenn: What kind of alternative does your Pig want you to have?

Fernando: Not sure about it because what happens is that when I try fruits or some other candy I may eat half a kilo of it and I still want to have that bite of chocolate. It's strange, right?

Dr. Glenn: Well, yes. Now this is the difference between manic pleasure and contented pleasure. There is no substitute that will get you as high as chocolate will. There were no chocolate bars in the Savanna. We didn't evolve with chocolate bars. It's a concentrated form of sugar and neurochemical stimulation that isn't really available in nature. I mean you can make an argument that there are some plants and things that would do something similar but by and large it's really not available in nature. So, when you give that up you really do give that up. You're giving up a man made type of artificial, over stimulation of pleasure; and you're giving up that pleasure on purpose because there are other types of pleasure that you're pursuing. Right? You want the confidence that you're going to live long without diabetes. You want to be there for your kids. You want to be a little trimmer. You're giving up that pleasure for a very particular purpose.

Fernando: And I think that if I'm able to do that with chocolate, I can do it with anything.

Dr. Glenn: Yeah, that's why you want to start with that one rule to see that this is really possible.

Fernando: That's right!



Dr. Glenn: But the point is that fruits or vegetables produce a kind of contentment. I remember struggling with chocolate myself and realizing that if I had a big blender full of greens and maybe a little bit of this natural vegetarian protein drink I used to have and blah blah blah. You don't really want to know what I eat because that's a little crazy. If I would do that the craving would go away. I wouldn't feel, insanely, like I had to have the chocolate but I didn't get the high either. I couldn't keep chasing that feeling; I had to come to the conclusion and tell my Pig that, "We're not going to do that anymore." "You're going to miss that, you're going to die without that, well too bad." Intellectually, with every fiber of my being, I really know that stuff is not available in nature. Some people can handle it and that's okay that but I really know it's not available in nature so the Pig telling me that I needed it in order to survive, that has to be an error, that has to be a misattachment; a biological misdirection of

the survival drive attaching that kind of pleasure to the wrong things. So, Fernando the take away from this is, at some point we have to tell your Pig, if you really want to hold to this rule, we're going to have to tell your Pig that it's too bad. It's not going to have that pleasure but you're going to have all these things instead. Does that make sense?

Fernando: That makes perfect sense. Again, I know that it may not happen, may be just a possibility but if I do get to a stage of pre-diabetes or diabetes, that will be forced upon me and I will have to make that decision and I don't want to get to that stage.

Dr. Glenn: If diabetes develops and you're forced for clinical reasons to give it up, you might as well do this beforehand.

Fernando: Exactly!

Dr. Glenn: And you're not giving it up totally. The way you've described it, you've got a conditional rule and you'll still have chocolate in your life to a certain extent. So your Pig says, "You're going to be emotionally weak. If you see it you have to eat it".



What else does your Pig say? How else is your Pig going to try to squeal and get you to break your rule?

Fernando: If it's too warm and we should have some ice creams and possibly with chocolate and its summer. I don't know, the Pig is not squealing too much right now.

Dr. Glenn: Because there's no way you could possibly enjoy ice cream without chocolate, right?

Fernando: No I think it's not so hard. There are many other flavors. If there are a variety of options I would be able to enjoy if it's not chocolate. But if it's, let's say, just three options like Vanilla, Strawberry and Chocolate then definitely chocolate is the best.

Dr. Glenn: Now your Pig is telling you, if the food is boring you have to have chocolate.

Fernando: Right!

Dr. Glenn: "You might see it in front of you, you might be too weak, you could be too tired, you're emotionally immature, you can't do it". And now it's telling you, "The food might be too boring". Am I right? But you don't have enough traces and then if you don't even know a strawberry or chocolate well, what are you going to do?

Fernando: I'd probably not take the ice cream at all. In this circumstance I would pass the ice cream.

Dr. Glenn: How sure are you about that?

Fernando: It's because I know that if I take any flavor I would still want the chocolate one. I'm quite sure I won't do it.



Dr. Glenn: So Fernando, how sure are you that you'll never have chocolate again apart from social situations once a month, between now and the day that you die?

Fernando: I'm not 100% sure.

Dr. Glenn: How sure are you?

Fernando: If I put any percentage I know that is not 100%. I remember that chapter in your book.

Dr. Glenn: [Laughs]

Fernando: I know that's not a real commitment. So, let's say I would put it in true and not true instead of a 100%. I'm not sure. Also I have to help myself find ways to help myself in making this decision prevail and I think it is one of those situations that

has the dilemma I didn't have earlier. So, I will have to find the solutions in a way as well. I'm not sure.

Dr. Glenn: Well your Pig will not let you be sure.

Fernando: Mm mm.

Dr. Glenn: Well so it's saying that there's some ambiguous situation that we don't know about yet and we're going to have to find an alternative way to deal with. Right?

Fernando: Right!

Dr. Glenn: What we'd do at this point Fernando is that we'd decide that we're going to be a 100% sure and the Pig can just live with that unless you can really tell me that there's some sound reason why you shouldn't make this commitment. We know that while you are of sound mind and constructively motivated enough to articulate



your reasons for wanting to put this type of control over chocolate in your life and how it's going to affect your health, family, confidence and weight and all that. Well, we have this very concentrated time to focus on that, you came to the conclusion that you really wanted that control. So, at this point it becomes kind of like a game. Okay, I'm going to be a 100%. I am a 100% sure Mr. Pig and anything that you can possibly say to make me doubt it, well that's your squeal; any possible doubt is entirely coming from you and that way Fernando you can hear the squeals.

Fernando: I see.

Dr. Glenn: It's by taking that leap of faith almost at that point and making that commitment and we organizing your thinking like that so that any doubt and insecurity is coming from the Pig, that's how you do it.

Fernando: Excellent! I will do it and I'm committing myself a 100% that I'm not going to eat chocolate again except in those social situations with a high emotional or social effect involved, that I mentioned. Not more than once a month.

Dr. Glenn: How sure are you about that?

Fernando: 100% sure.

Dr. Glenn: Between now and the rest of your life?

Fernando: Yes!

Dr. Glenn: That's how you do it man. That's how we do it.

Fernando: Thank You!

Dr. Glenn: Do you have any other thoughts or questions or concerns?



Fernando: No, it's been very useful. Of course I started to hear some big squeals, what if I do it? I remember from our book that it's like that analogy with the traffic lights, right? I don't have to punish myself, I just have to stop it and continue with the plan from that point onwards because I am 100% committed.

Dr. Glenn: Yes, this is the paradox of the *Never Binge Again* approach because as a practical matter you have to hide what you're thinking from your Pig for a second because your Pig is going to get very excited about this. As a practical matter most people make several attempts before they really set in on a set of rules that they can stay with forever. Most people do. Not all people and you actually don't have to but the only way that it works is when you draw that clear line in the sand and you draw that level of 100% confidence so that all the uncertainty and doubt can be assigned to the Pig's squeal and you can concentrate on the goal without the distraction of the possibility of failure. But if you were to make a mistake then all you do is get back up and start pedaling up the hill again. An analogy I like to use is if you had a son, a

small child may be 5 or 6 years old, who wants through the steep hill in the neighborhood and he wants to pedal to the top without stopping. You'd never say to your son, "Oh, don't even try that. That hill is way too steep. You're never going to make that." Progress not perfection; slipping back is just a part of the process, that's what you're going to help them with afterwards. They made a mistake, "Oh well that's okay little gem. Let's get back up and do this again. You don't have to be perfect". But before he starts up the hill you want to send him out there with a 100% enthusiasm saying, "I know you can make it to the top of the hill. Visualize the top of the hill. See yourself there." So it's a paradox because you kind of have to keep a secret from yourself as you're pedaling up that hill. Otherwise the possibility of uncertainty and failure distracts you and otherwise the clarity of the techniques and lines that we draw gets blurred and then the Pig takes advantage of that ambiguity to get you to binge. That's why we do it the way we do it.

Fernando: I see. Okay! Good to know, I like your analogy and I'm father and I totally relate to that.



Dr. Glenn: How old are your kids?

Fernando: 7 years old. They are twins.

Dr. Glenn: You know exactly then. Seven-year-old twins, you would never tell them not to try something that they have their heart set on, right?

Fernando: That's right. Unless it's something dangerous but for everything: to ride a bike or do something challenging, I want them to try. I want them to go out there and get better and better as human beings and to know they can do things.

Dr. Glenn: Well Fernando and that's the thing, we spend some time here coming up with a perfectly reasonable plan for you. I didn't force it on you. It's something you decided was perfectly reasonable way to go about it.

Fernando: Thanks for your help.

Dr. Glenn: You're welcome. What we're saying is that as long as it's reasonable, we didn't make a rule that says "I'm never going to eat again". That would be an analogy to tell your seven year olds that they're going to go and ride over the fence tomorrow. We came up with a very reasonable plan; given your goals and current state of health and the context of your situation and what place you thought was reasonable for chocolate in your life. You can actually see the top of that hill. You're a 100% confident; you can see that hill.

Fernando: Yeah, I am mostly certain that if I have some difficulty, it would be in the beginning but I will get used to it. I don't need it to live.

Dr. Glenn: Well your Pig is certainly squealing about the difficulty you're going to have in the beginning. It's very excited about that.

Fernando: Right!



Dr. Glenn: Well Fernando how sure are you that you'll never have chocolate again part from social situations once a month between now and the day that you die?

Fernando: 100% sure!

Dr. Glenn: Would you like to come back in a month or two and talk about how you did?

Fernando: Yes! That's great. Thanks for offering.

Dr. Glenn: Okay my friend.

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