

**Glenn Livingston, Ph.D.  
And Howard Jacobson, Ph.D.  
The Benefits of Community for Eating Healthy**

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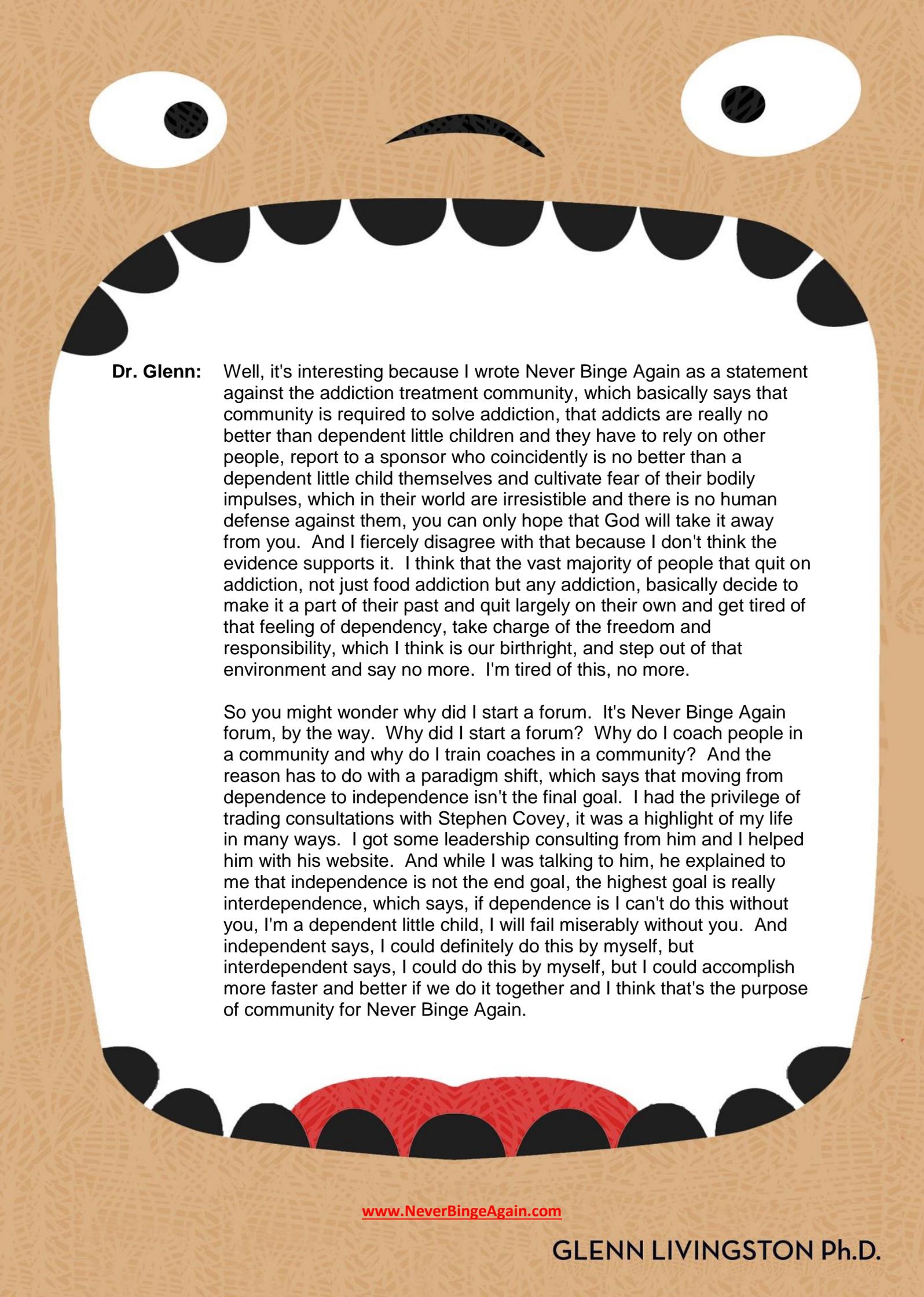
**Howie:** Hey, this is Howard Jacobson with WellStart Health and Plant Yourself and I'm joined by the very good Dr. Glenn Livingston of NeverBingeAgain.com. How is it going, Glenn?

**Dr. Glenn:** It's going really well. How about you?

**Howie:** Very, very well. So I want to talk to you today about something that I don't think you necessarily planned from the beginning but has become huge, which is the creation of community to help people achieve their goals, right? So, you've got a giant Facebook group for Never Binge Again, tell me how you've used community or how community has organically developed around the Never Binge Again methodology and how it's helped people.

[www.NeverBingeAgain.com](http://www.NeverBingeAgain.com)

GLENN LIVINGSTON Ph.D.



**Dr. Glenn:** Well, it's interesting because I wrote Never Binge Again as a statement against the addiction treatment community, which basically says that community is required to solve addiction, that addicts are really no better than dependent little children and they have to rely on other people, report to a sponsor who coincidentally is no better than a dependent little child themselves and cultivate fear of their bodily impulses, which in their world are irresistible and there is no human defense against them, you can only hope that God will take it away from you. And I fiercely disagree with that because I don't think the evidence supports it. I think that the vast majority of people that quit on addiction, not just food addiction but any addiction, basically decide to make it a part of their past and quit largely on their own and get tired of that feeling of dependency, take charge of the freedom and responsibility, which I think is our birthright, and step out of that environment and say no more. I'm tired of this, no more.

So you might wonder why did I start a forum. It's Never Binge Again forum, by the way. Why did I start a forum? Why do I coach people in a community and why do I train coaches in a community? And the reason has to do with a paradigm shift, which says that moving from dependence to independence isn't the final goal. I had the privilege of trading consultations with Stephen Covey, it was a highlight of my life in many ways. I got some leadership consulting from him and I helped him with his website. And while I was talking to him, he explained to me that independence is not the end goal, the highest goal is really interdependence, which says, if dependence is I can't do this without you, I'm a dependent little child, I will fail miserably without you. And independent says, I could definitely do this by myself, but interdependent says, I could do this by myself, but I could accomplish more faster and better if we do it together and I think that's the purpose of community for Never Binge Again.



On a practical level, I find that people can more easily hear other people squeals and they can hear their own sometimes so they can identify the pig and other people faster than they can identify their own squeal. I find that the community will rally hard to pick someone up who's falling down and who's being beaten down by their pig. After you make a mistake or you have a binge, the pig will do its best to tell you that you're pathetic and keep beating you down because it wants you to feel too weak to resist the next one. And the community is very sensitive to that and is very sensitive to the notion that we have to forgive ourselves and pick ourselves back up if we want to make it out of this hard problem.

And I also think that the community is valuable for inoculating people against squeals that they haven't heard yet. Most people have a half a dozen things that their pig tells them. Oh, you've never done it before so you can't do it again. Oh, you're going to forget. Oh, you are genetically doomed to be fat, there's nothing you can do about it. Oh, you might as well start tomorrow. It's not going to make a difference, you'll be the same way tomorrow, you might as well start tomorrow. Let's just go pig out now.

There are half a dozen very common squeals that everybody has heard and various people's pigs rely onto a greater extent or another. But there are probably another hundred squeals that your pig is capable of making, and once you disempower the half dozen that you're used to, the pig will work hard to reorganize and come up with new ones. And if you're exposed to those a priori in the community and you see how the community disputes them, it gives you a level of strength that you don't get working entirely on your own. This is the same thing for coaching also. Our coaches are heavily trained in all



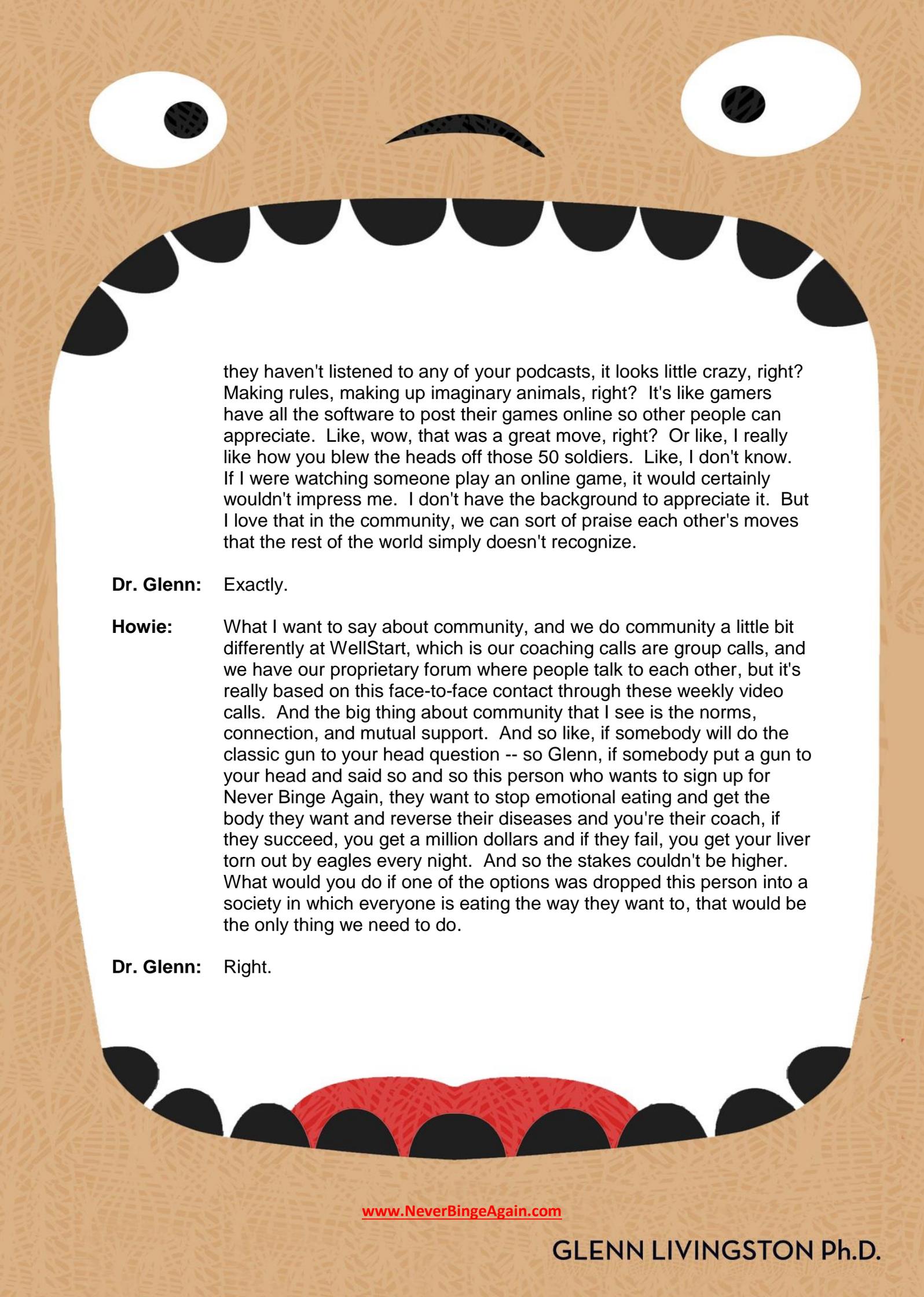
hundred of those squeals and we can see them as they're developing so we can save people the trouble of having to figure out how to fight all the squeals they haven't even thought or they haven't even heard yet.

And the last thing, the community is really good for celebrating. When people accomplish a physical goal, when their blood tests come back better, when they lost a little weight. Sometimes when people had five cupcakes instead of 15, they just like to have a little bit of recognition and support and that pushes them forward or inspires other people and it makes everybody feel like they're not alone. Ultimately, we are all alone in dealing with this. Nobody's going to follow you around and watch what you put in your mouth all day, and at some point, you're going to have to fight that war with a bagel. At some point, it's going to be you versus the bagel and you're going to have to have the strength to do it yourself. But still, it's a fabulous resource for a lot of people. And I've seen a lot of people get better who I don't think would have gotten better without the community, so that's what I have to say about it. What do you think?

**Howie:** I agree with everything you're saying and I love the idea that you're sort of being inoculated against the evolution of your pig as it gets more desperate. I love the idea that people are bolstered by congratulations. You're giving people a game to play that doesn't make a lot of sense to people in our culture, right? 'Cause you're going against the very, very dominant paradigm of addiction.

**Dr. Glenn:** Yes.

**Howie:** And so if people are playing the Never Binge Again game and someone else is watching them and they haven't read your book and



they haven't listened to any of your podcasts, it looks little crazy, right? Making rules, making up imaginary animals, right? It's like gamers have all the software to post their games online so other people can appreciate. Like, wow, that was a great move, right? Or like, I really like how you blew the heads off those 50 soldiers. Like, I don't know. If I were watching someone play an online game, it would certainly wouldn't impress me. I don't have the background to appreciate it. But I love that in the community, we can sort of praise each other's moves that the rest of the world simply doesn't recognize.

**Dr. Glenn:** Exactly.

**Howie:** What I want to say about community, and we do community a little bit differently at WellStart, which is our coaching calls are group calls, and we have our proprietary forum where people talk to each other, but it's really based on this face-to-face contact through these weekly video calls. And the big thing about community that I see is the norms, connection, and mutual support. And so like, if somebody will do the classic gun to your head question -- so Glenn, if somebody put a gun to your head and said so and so this person who wants to sign up for Never Binge Again, they want to stop emotional eating and get the body they want and reverse their diseases and you're their coach, if they succeed, you get a million dollars and if they fail, you get your liver torn out by eagles every night. And so the stakes couldn't be higher. What would you do if one of the options was dropped this person into a society in which everyone is eating the way they want to, that would be the only thing we need to do.

**Dr. Glenn:** Right.



**Howie:** Right. So, like, everything you and I are trying to teach people to do is hard because it's not the default, it's because they have to swim upstream. Everyone else is just sort of floating downstream.

**Dr. Glenn:** Yes.

**Howie:** So I think the power of community is that we give people a little taste of downstream. It's like the whole river is going this way, but there's a little bit of the river that's actually going the other way, and if they find that little rivulet, then all of a sudden they don't have to paddle so hard or they don't have to paddle all the time, they can coast a little bit.

**Dr. Glenn:** It's a really good way to look at it. I love it.

**Howie:** The second thing is kindness. And I know you see this 'cause I see this too in the Never Binge Again forum, people are much kinder to others than they are to themselves.

**Dr. Glenn:** Yeah.

**Howie:** The ratio of kindness to beating people up is like 30 to one 'cause one person will say something and then 30 people will be kind to them. And so not only do you get kindness from other people in the group, but as a coach, I now train people to pretend that they are someone else. What you just said about yourself. I'm such a slob, I'm a failure, I can't believe it, I'll never get this, would you say that to someone else in the group who posted the same results you just achieved?

**Dr. Glenn:** Yeah.

**Howie:** You can get people to start to be kind to themselves.



**Dr. Glenn:** That makes a lot of sense, and they've seen the phenomenon over and over again. They've seen people screw up and how kind everybody is to them and that sinks in sooner or later.

**Howie:** Right. People are unkind to themselves because they're scared that that's the only way they're going to keep themselves accountable.

**Dr. Glenn:** Which turns out to be the opposite.

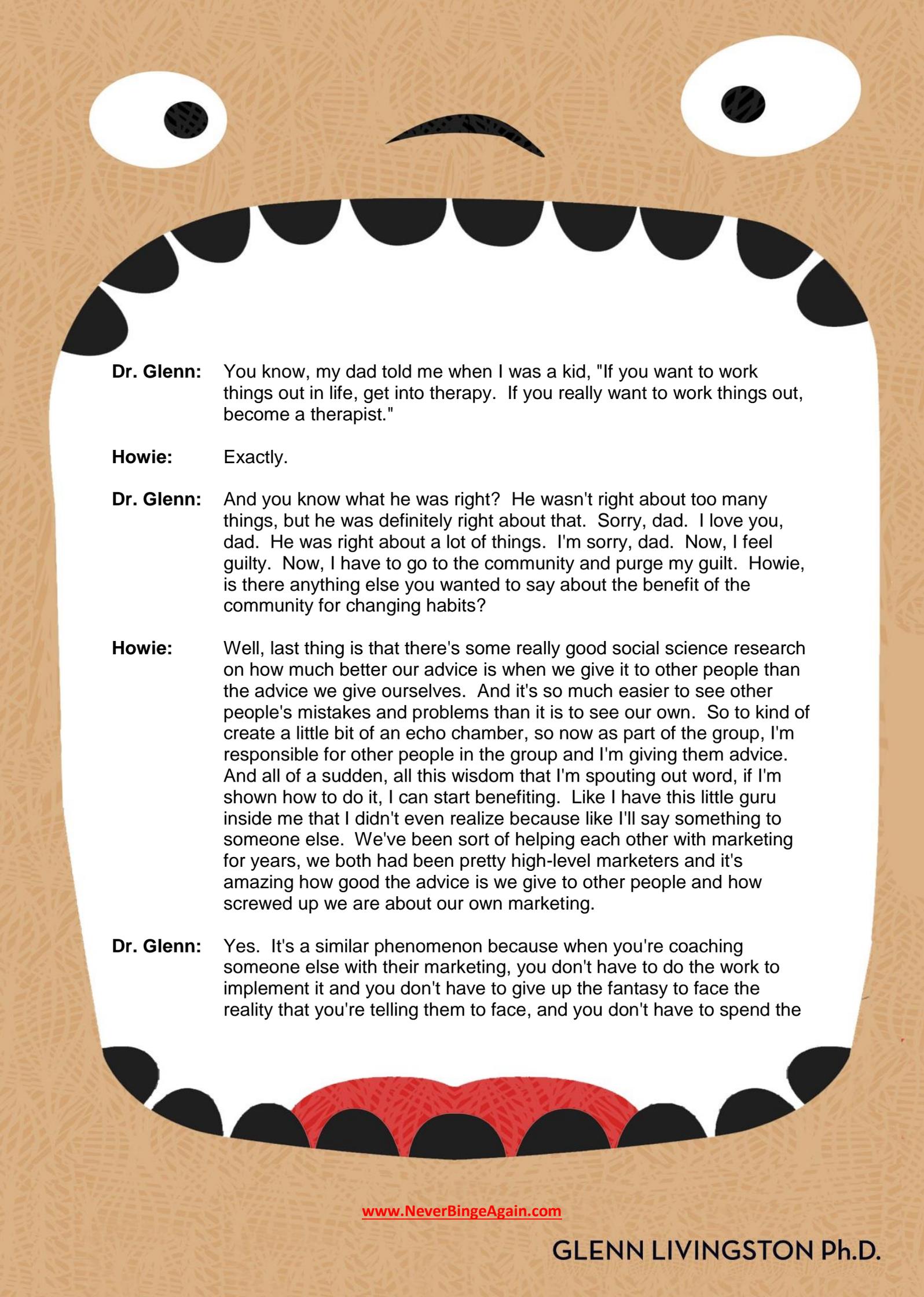
**Howie:** Completely. But it's like if I'm hanging off of a cliff and I've got one hand hold, I can't let go of it until I find another one. And so for people who believe like the only way I'm never going to hold my feet to the fire is by beating myself up is by the threat of hell, whatever that feels like, then we have to show them another way before they're willing to let go even if the thing they're holding onto has never worked in the past.

**Dr. Glenn:** Totally agree.

**Howie:** And the third thing I would say is that we in groups, people start teaching each other and that's how we learn. You got much better at Never Binge Again from teaching it to people and coaching people on it than you ever got by just practicing it yourself.

**Dr. Glenn:** That is 100 percent true.

**Howie:** Right? And for me, like I'm much healthier and I have much more control over all my habits from having been a coach and from having worked with other people.



**Dr. Glenn:** You know, my dad told me when I was a kid, "If you want to work things out in life, get into therapy. If you really want to work things out, become a therapist."

**Howie:** Exactly.

**Dr. Glenn:** And you know what he was right? He wasn't right about too many things, but he was definitely right about that. Sorry, dad. I love you, dad. He was right about a lot of things. I'm sorry, dad. Now, I feel guilty. Now, I have to go to the community and purge my guilt. Howie, is there anything else you wanted to say about the benefit of the community for changing habits?

**Howie:** Well, last thing is that there's some really good social science research on how much better our advice is when we give it to other people than the advice we give ourselves. And it's so much easier to see other people's mistakes and problems than it is to see our own. So to kind of create a little bit of an echo chamber, so now as part of the group, I'm responsible for other people in the group and I'm giving them advice. And all of a sudden, all this wisdom that I'm spouting out word, if I'm shown how to do it, I can start benefiting. Like I have this little guru inside me that I didn't even realize because like I'll say something to someone else. We've been sort of helping each other with marketing for years, we both had been pretty high-level marketers and it's amazing how good the advice is we give to other people and how screwed up we are about our own marketing.

**Dr. Glenn:** Yes. It's a similar phenomenon because when you're coaching someone else with their marketing, you don't have to do the work to implement it and you don't have to give up the fantasy to face the reality that you're telling them to face, and you don't have to spend the



resources and the money to make that happen, and you don't have to manage the people or hire or fire or do any of the things that are so painful, you're in the privileged position of intellectually piecing it together. And when you're not in that position, when it's your money and your time and your resources that are being spent and the pain that you have to go through, there's a very strong temptation to not do the intellectually correct thing to do and to not even let yourself know what the intellectually correct thing is to do. And it's very much the same with Never Binge Again. When you are coaching other people, it's easy to see what's necessary, but when you're coaching yourself, sometimes what's necessary is painful and your pig doesn't want you to see it and it's harder to see on your own. So, getting into the community is like a mini form of becoming a coach, so agreed.

**Howie:** Cool.

**Dr. Glenn:** Thanks for your time and attention. If you need personal coaching to fix your food problem fast, please visit [FixYourFoodProblem.com](http://FixYourFoodProblem.com). [FixYourFoodProblem.com](http://FixYourFoodProblem.com). If you'd like to become a certified professional Never Binge Again independent coach and turn your passion for Never Binge Again into a lucrative, rewarding and fun career, please visit [BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com](http://BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com). That's [BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com](http://BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com) where you can attract high-paying clients by leveraging my credibility and the Never Binge Again brand and help them stop overeating and obsessing about food so they can achieve their health and fitness goals at [BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com](http://BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com). That's [BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com](http://BecomeAWeightLossCoach.com). Thanks.



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