



Glenn Livingston, Ph.D. and Howie Jacobson, Ph.D. on One Weird Thinking Shift


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Dr. Glenn: Hey, this is Glenn Livingston with Never Binge Again and I'm here with Howie Jacobson from Plant Yourself. What's going on Howie?

Howie: Not much. I just got lots of kudos on Facebook from people in my world about an interview that you and I did together about Never Binge Again, so people are very appreciative.

Dr. Glenn: Oh, I would love to see that. Well thanks, I'm really glad to hear that. I'm actually getting some traction. We were the number one download in diet and fitness for a couple of weeks. That works really well, the free download in diet and fitness on Amazon. So I'm glad we're spreading the word and I appreciate your help with that and what I was hoping we could talk about today was a subtle change in perspective and we can put it in the nomenclature of the pig versus ourselves and how we look at certain situations. Here's what I mean by this and I think Howie you've said that it was something that you've been thinking about as well.

I got a lot of people who come to me and besides working on the reading they want to get themselves to go to the gym more days than not. What they say is they wake up in the morning and they have the




best of times but then they think, oh my God, do I really have to go to the gym again? And I say, well, that's really your pig talking because you don't have to go to the gym, you get to go to the gym.

Not everybody can work it out to get to a gym and pay for it and take care of their body and feel the blood coursing through their veins and feel the detoxification going on as you're going through the workout and have the benefit of hydrating themselves afterwards and feeling so clean and accomplished and starting the day in such a good note. Not everybody can get to do that but you have an opportunity, you get to do that. If your pig feels that it has to do it, you feel like you get to do it. And that's been working, that shift in perspective, that shift in language is really making a big difference and it made me realize that you could shift language on that for other things like, "I can't believe I have to have a salad for lunch today," as opposed to, "I can't believe that I get to have a salad for lunch today and all the antioxidants coursing through my veins," and all of the delicious tomatoes or apples or nuts or seeds or whatever is going to be in your salad, or for some people maybe it's non-plant-based foods.

But I can't believe that I get to do that, it's your pig that says, "Oh my God, I have to have a salad." I just wanted to introduce that subtle shift between I have to and I get to and I don't think I'm the only one that invented that but it fits very neatly into the pig versus yourself in the Never Binge Again paradigm and since we're all already thinking like that, what if we were to consciously shift our language whenever we heard, I have to understand that that's pig squeal and that we get to the pig has to. What do you think?

Howie:

Yeah, I think that's one of the most globally empowering shift that anyone could ever make, because all of a sudden that turns us from



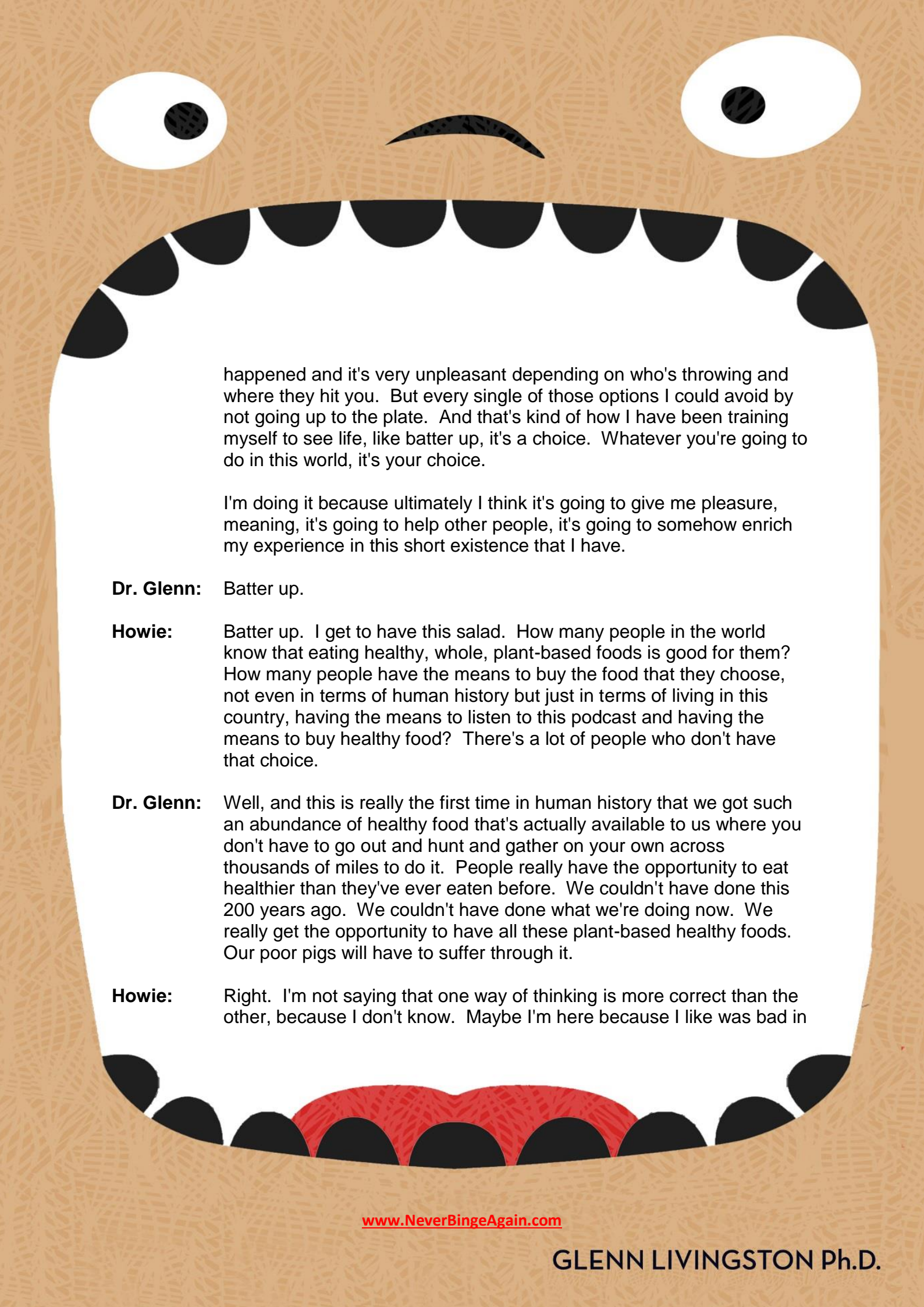
victim to agent in our own lives. I'd come across my Facebook feed, it was a photograph of Susan B. Anthony's gravestone who was a suffragette and then people had posted all these stickers, these round stickers that they get from voting that said, "I voted," or "I voted early," and they posted it on her tombstone. And it's like, "Oh I got to get up and go vote. The polls open at 7:00, can I make it in time?" when you reframe it in terms of all these women who weren't even allowed to have a say.

And all of a sudden voting now becomes this incredible privilege that was denied them, before, this thing that's part of my duty. And you could say that about just about anything, "Oh I have jury duty. I get to serve my community and be a voice for justice."

Dr. Glenn: In a democracy where the king doesn't decide thumbs up or thumbs down, right?

Howie: Yeah. All these things when we reframe them, it's ultimately about being alive. Is this a burden or a privilege? There's an old Jewish joke where the rabbis are arguing, is it better to be born or not to be born, considering all the suffering that we undergo in this world. And after years of debate, they finally come down on the side of it would be better not to be born, but then they say, "But who's that lucky one in a million?"

Everything we do, like this was described to me at a spiritual retreat probably 12 years ago through the metaphor of surfing. I never surfed. I turned it into baseball which I played a lot as a kid, and it's the idea of when I go up to the plate to hit, lots of things could happen. I could strike out. I could hit a grounder. I could get a hit. I could hit a grand slam and win the game. I could also get hit by the pitch, which has



happened and it's very unpleasant depending on who's throwing and where they hit you. But every single of those options I could avoid by not going up to the plate. And that's kind of how I have been training myself to see life, like batter up, it's a choice. Whatever you're going to do in this world, it's your choice.

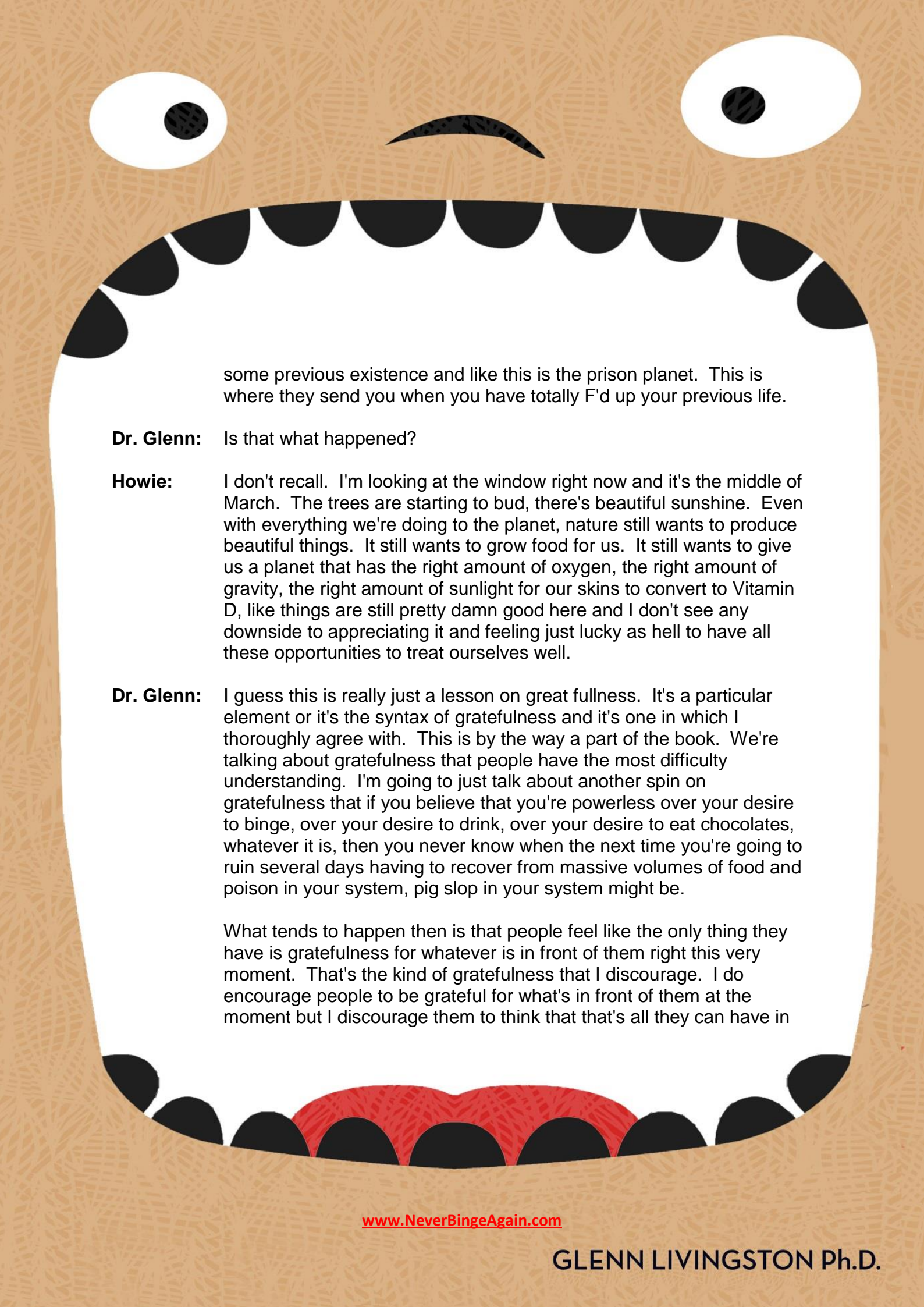
I'm doing it because ultimately I think it's going to give me pleasure, meaning, it's going to help other people, it's going to somehow enrich my experience in this short existence that I have.

Dr. Glenn: Batter up.

Howie: Batter up. I get to have this salad. How many people in the world know that eating healthy, whole, plant-based foods is good for them? How many people have the means to buy the food that they choose, not even in terms of human history but just in terms of living in this country, having the means to listen to this podcast and having the means to buy healthy food? There's a lot of people who don't have that choice.

Dr. Glenn: Well, and this is really the first time in human history that we got such an abundance of healthy food that's actually available to us where you don't have to go out and hunt and gather on your own across thousands of miles to do it. People really have the opportunity to eat healthier than they've ever eaten before. We couldn't have done this 200 years ago. We couldn't have done what we're doing now. We really get the opportunity to have all these plant-based healthy foods. Our poor pigs will have to suffer through it.

Howie: Right. I'm not saying that one way of thinking is more correct than the other, because I don't know. Maybe I'm here because I like was bad in




some previous existence and like this is the prison planet. This is where they send you when you have totally F'd up your previous life.

Dr. Glenn: Is that what happened?

Howie: I don't recall. I'm looking at the window right now and it's the middle of March. The trees are starting to bud, there's beautiful sunshine. Even with everything we're doing to the planet, nature still wants to produce beautiful things. It still wants to grow food for us. It still wants to give us a planet that has the right amount of oxygen, the right amount of gravity, the right amount of sunlight for our skins to convert to Vitamin D, like things are still pretty damn good here and I don't see any downside to appreciating it and feeling just lucky as hell to have all these opportunities to treat ourselves well.

Dr. Glenn: I guess this is really just a lesson on great fullness. It's a particular element or it's the syntax of gratefulness and it's one in which I thoroughly agree with. This is by the way a part of the book. We're talking about gratefulness that people have the most difficulty understanding. I'm going to just talk about another spin on gratefulness that if you believe that you're powerless over your desire to binge, over your desire to drink, over your desire to eat chocolates, whatever it is, then you never know when the next time you're going to ruin several days having to recover from massive volumes of food and poison in your system, pig slop in your system might be.

What tends to happen then is that people feel like the only thing they have is gratefulness for whatever is in front of them right this very moment. That's the kind of gratefulness that I discourage. I do encourage people to be grateful for what's in front of them at the moment but I discourage them to think that that's all they can have in



life. We are beings with the ability to plan for long-term goals and accomplish our dreams and have aspirations that we inch towards little by little and so we can think about the future, we are capable of a lot more than just thinking about the present, that doesn't negate the value of I get to versus I have to, it just says that you're placing it at a whole different context, and the context is a context of power as opposed to powerlessness. Does that make sense?


Howie: Yeah. If we want something from the universe in the future, I'm not particularly religious, I don't have any clear cosmology of like how the universe works but if it does have consciousness, it occurs to me that like being grateful for what you've already given is probably a good recipe for getting more of it.

Dr. Glenn: Yeah.

Howie: The people in my life whom if I've done something nice for them and they're dismissive, I tend not to be motivated to do more nice things for them, but the people who are grateful, it's like, "Oh that was a great feeling, let me do more."

Dr. Glenn: That's a great way to look at it. Well, that's mostly what I had to say about get to versus have to.

Howie: I have one question for you which is how do you tell people to operationalize that, if have to is such a habit of thought. How do you get people to switch to get to without beating themselves up over it or without like forgetting for three years to do it?



Dr. Glenn: That's really just a matter of awareness and what did your pig say that you have to do this week and keep a little journal and just pay attention for that particular syntax and then that's your trigger to switch.

Howie: What do you do when the pig says, "I get to," like it tries to use this against you? |I get to eat this box of Krispy Kremes."

Dr. Glenn: Well, if that's off your plan then you say, "Nope, Krispy Kremes are pig slop and I never eat pig slop and you're a farm animal and I don't listen to farm animals.

Howie: Do the same things you always do. Know that the pig is going to try to turn this against you because the pig is desperate.

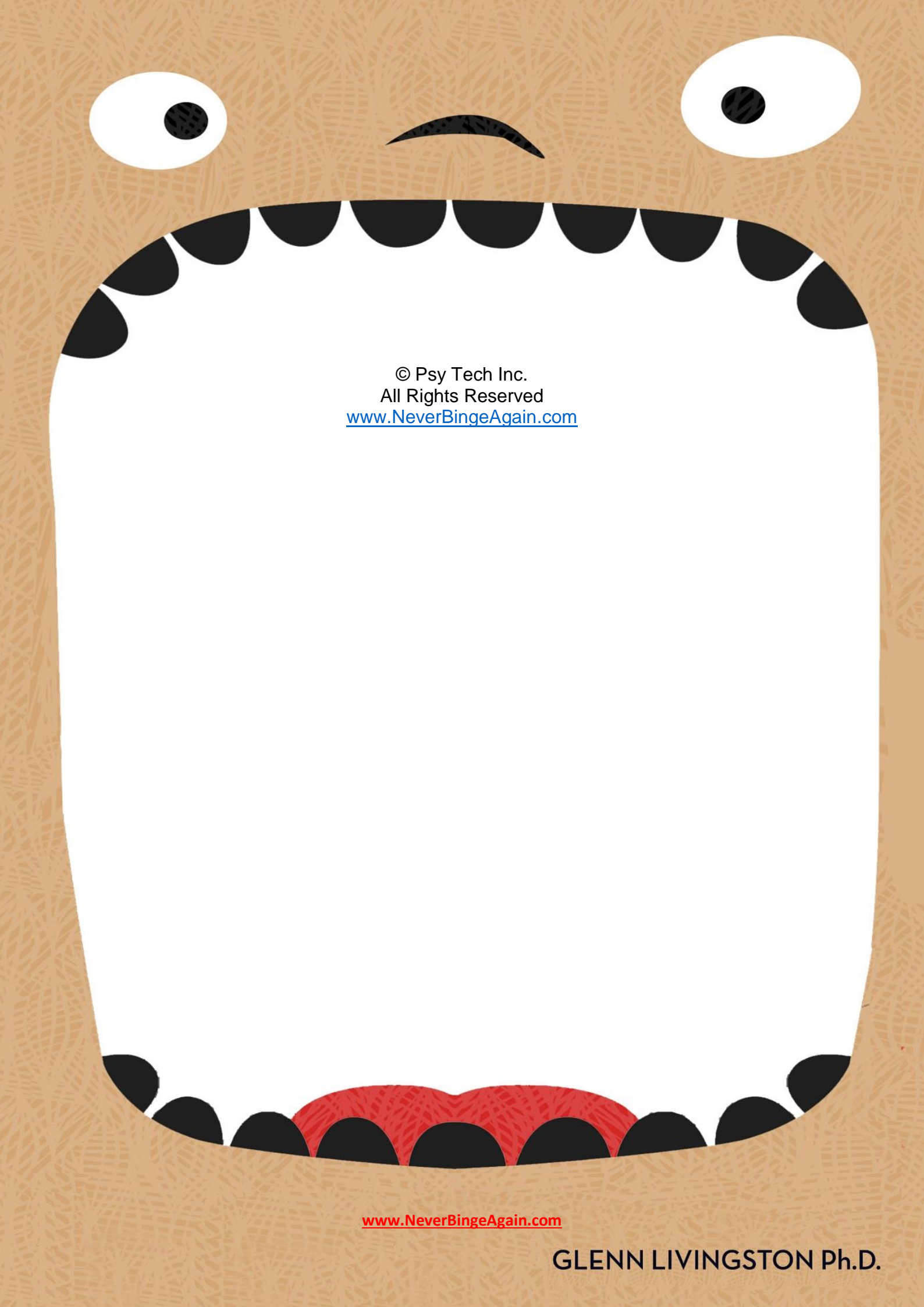
Dr. Glenn: Yes, and that's a good point that the pig will try to use it against you. That is a good point.

Howie: Cool! Well, I get to have this conversation with you every couple weeks and I'm very grateful for it.

Dr. Glenn: Me too. Batter up.

Howie: Right on.

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