IRWC WORLD ONLINE Conference

‘Bringing Coaching into Recovery, Wellness and Healthcare’

Reclaim the Food Addicted Brain Coach for Healthy Rewards

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Agenda

- Explore common brain changes and impairment in addiction, and specifically food addiction
- Present Integrative Coaching principles
- Present food addiction-specific coaching principles
What is Food Addiction?

Food consumption habits that lead to a feeling of loss of control, short-term rewards, including relief of negative emotions, in association with self-destructive over eating behavior, followed by feelings of shame, blame and guilt.
Psychobiology of Mastering Food Addiction

- Life is chaotic, demanding, often overwhelming
- Self-soothing with food products stimulates primal reward
- Brain Reward Center addiction vulnerability: genetics, epigenetics, trauma
- Brain PFC impaired by chronic emotional and physical stress
- Gene expression pathways are changed and impaired

Self-coaching Strategy

- Strengthening brain’s PFC health and function
- Reframe addiction cause(s) and retrain the brain’s reward system
- Restore health of gene expression
- Master coaching your brain for sustainable lifelong recovery
Epigenetics: DNA is no longer DESTINY
Key Brain Networks

**Reward Network**  
seek pleasure, relieve pain

**Default Network**  
automatic pilot, creativity

**Affect Network**  
positive & negative emotions

**Control Network**  
focus, goals, self-regulation
Brain Hot-Spots

Control Network

Default Network

Affect Network

Reward Network

Shelley Carson, 2014
Brain Malfunctions

**Control Network:** inadequate self-regulation

**Affect Network:**
Myriad of *Negative Emotions* cause stress
Needs for *Autonomy*, being in control, are not met – *feeling out of control*
Needs for *Self-Worth* not met – *shame, blame, guilt*

*Adverse Childhood Experiences* unhealed

**Reward Network:** seek to get relief by choosing False Fixes

**Default Network:** enablers trigger False Fixes
Unhealed Adverse Childhood Experiences

Wounds to...
attachment: love, compassion
self-worth: criticism, lack of approval
safety – physical and emotional

…lead to Psychic Retreat and become overwhelming

Adverse Childhood Experience test
www.acestudy.org

Refer to therapist
Where am I now?

Negative Emotions:
• I feel anxious, worried, overwhelmed
• I feel out of control
• My inner critic says I should be ashamed of myself, I’m a loser, I’m a failure

Reward Network:
• Seek relief through self-soothing overeating behavior
Where am I now?

Default Network:
Enablers trigger
False Fixes

Identify Triggers:
People, Places, Things
Where will I be in the future?

**Control Network:** pursue Healthy Fixes: Mental, Nutritional, and Physical Wellness

**Affect Network:**
- Calm mindfulness
- Naming of negative emotions
- Acceptance
- Self-compassion
- Access positive emotions and resources
- Meet unmet needs

**Reward Network:** Choose Healthy Fix

**Default Network:**
- Mindful noticing of enablers
- Activate Control Network
- Choose Healthy Fix
How do I get there?
Affect Network
Tame your frenzy

An overdose of negative emotions arising from the limbic system which intrude and impair functioning of the prefrontal cortex

Hammerness, Moore, Organize Your Mind, Organize Your Life, 2012
Five Facet Mindfulness Assessment

1. **Awareness**  Not automatic pilot
2. **Observing**  No interpretation
3. **Describing**  Labeling
4. **Non-judgment**  Acceptance
5. **Non-reactivity**  Not carried away

Positive Emotions Improve Brain Function, Resilience, and Health

Fredrickson, B. Positivity, 2009
Pixar 2015: Inside Out
Positive Emotions – Hardwired Capacities

Mindful Self: I am open, mindful, patient, accepting
Autonomy: I feel in control of my self-determination
Physical Body: I am fit, well fed, healthy, and balanced
Confidence: I am confident and strong
Creative: I am creative and have fun
Curious: I have new experiences and adventures
Executive Manager: I am organized and on top of things
Relational: I am loving and compassionate
Standard-setter: I am good enough, achieving enough, and learning
Spiritual Meaning-maker: I find meaning and the big picture
coaching questions

1. What are you curious about?
2. What do you most want to have happen?
3. What do you treasure most about your health?
4. What goal or outcome would you choose?
5. If your body had a voice, what advice would it give you?
6. What would improve your confidence?
7. How might other people help you?
8. What would be a creative approach?
9. How would you like to organize things to take a first step?
I feel out of control

- Mindful noticing
- Name, describe negative emotions
- Accept, appreciate
- Feel compassion, soothe
- What need isn’t being met?
- What strengths can I access?
- How can an unmet need get met?
Executive Control
Executive Control

Self-regulation for distractions and decision-making
Use capacities to handle challenges

Curiosity
What will happen if I have the apple?

Wisdom
What would my wise self decide to do?

Learning
What can I learn from this situation?

Creativity
What’s a creative solution?

Kindness
How can I help someone else?
Strengthen Control Network

Integrative Blueprint for Lifelong Recovery: Detox, Beginning and Master Recovery

Mental
Checking in: Self Talk
Meditation
Reframing
Deep breathing
Sleep
Reflection time

Nutritional
Dopamine rich, anti-inflammatory foods
Avoid hyperpalatables
Redefine relationship with food, cooking

Physical Activity
Associate mind and body with physical movement
Nurturing and empowering cross training
I am a loser

- Mindful noticing
- Name and describe emotions and needs
- Acknowledge, appreciate, accept
- Feel compassion
- Access resources and strengths
- Explore alternative perspectives
- What is the higher purpose/learning that could emerge?

“I am still learning.”
-Michelangelo, age 87
Inner critic frenzy

You are not good enough
I am not good enough
Accept

Every cell is doing the best it can with the resources it has at hand.

Neff K. Self-Compassion, 2011
Give negative emotions a little compassion…

Neff K. Self-Compassion, 2011
Use your hands to change your brain state
Growth Mindset

*What am I learning?*

- Insights
- Self-awareness
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Actions

Carol Dweck, Growth Mindset
http://mindsetonline.com
I choose Healthy Fixes

- Imagine future vision of best self
- Why do you treasure your future best self? (self-motivation)
- Identify your eye-opening EpiphaME!
  *The bigger the why the easier the how*
- Define a goal that can become a Healthy Fix
- Brainstorm strategies to get there
external motivation

- compliance
- defiance
What do you treasure most about life?

Deci, E. Why we do what we do?, 1995 (Self-determination theory)
self-transcendence

- What am I grateful for?
- What inspires awe?
- What is my purpose, larger than myself?
- In this moment, today, this project, my work, my life?
I choose Healthy Fixes in face of Enablers

- Describe moments of temptation and potential hijacking by Default Network
- Evoke mindful pause
- Dialogue with Head and Heart
- Accept and feel compassion
- Recall EpiphaME - goal/purpose/vision
- Make mindful choice of Healthy Fix
SUMMARY: Coaching to Big Brain, Small Waist

Affect Network
Self compassion/learning for feeling out of control
Self-compassion/learning for inner critic

Reward Network
Develop Healthy Fixes

Control Network
Choose Healthy Fix in face of negative emotions and enablers
Food Addiction Coaching Program

1. Assessment
2. Purpose & Meaning (EphiphaME)
3. Detox
4. Recovery
5. Self-Coaching Mastery
1. Assessments Along the Journey

- Yale Food Addiction Scale
- Body baseline and changes
- Clothes-O-meter
- Video journal
- Evernote journal
2. EpiphaME – Your Hunger to be Healthy

- Purpose & Meaning
- Seriously now, what’s really in it for me?
- The bigger the why, the easier the how
- Complete False Fix food inventory & appreciate the power of a brain on addiction
3. Detox – a Soft Landing

- Say **Yes** to Healthy Fixes and **No** to False Fixes
- Regain lost dopamine receptors
- Detox eating plan
- Mind – breathe, quiet time, meditation, sleep
- Mouth – eat dopamine-building foods, migrate to Healthy Fix foods, avoid restaurants, limit sugars
- Muscle - moderate, steady rhythmic exercise
4. Recovery: Journey to Big Brain, Small Waist

- Boot camp for PFC: choosing Healthy Fixes
- Boost serotonin
- Get close to optimal body composition
- Strengthen PFC function
- Recovery eating plan
- Mind – adapt & adjust, meditation, relax & recover & rest, vigilance, environment
- Mouth – mindful eating, rituals, PFC-supporting foods
- Muscle – exercise is *Miracle-Gro* for brain, experiment, get outside
5. Master Recovery – for as long as you live

- Longer health span with healthy gene pathways
- Maintain Big Brain – big PFC
- Maintain optimal body composition
- Get high the healthy way
- Mastery eating plan
- Mental – live life fully, gratefully, appreciatively, on purpose; help others
- Nutritional – more joy and deeper relationship with food, spice it up
- Physical Activity – your body and life are in motion
A Treasure Hunt

One’s own self is well hidden from one’s own self.
Of all mines of treasure, one’s own is the last to be dug up.

- Friedrich Nietzsche
Appendix – Other Resources

- The Hunger Fix: 3 Stage Detox and Recovery Plan for Food Addiction
- Food Addiction Textbook for Medical Professionals
- Organize Your Mind, Organize Your Life
- Your Brain at Work, HBR, July 2013
- Biological Psychiatry – special issue on Food Addiction, May, 2013
Q&A