

# IRWC WORLD ONLINE Conference

‘Bringing Coaching into Recovery, Wellness and Healthcare’

## Reclaim the Food Addicted Brain Coach for Healthy Rewards

*Margaret Moore MBA*

*Founder, CEO Wellcoaches Corporation*

*Pam Peeke MD, MPH, FACP, FACSM*

*Author, THE HUNGER FIX: Food Addiction Recovery*



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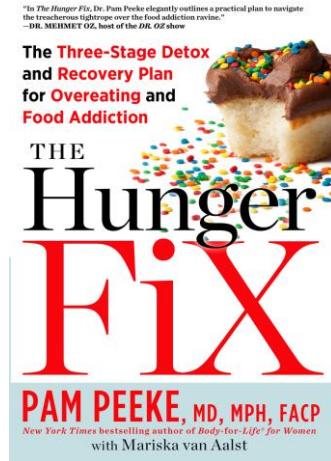
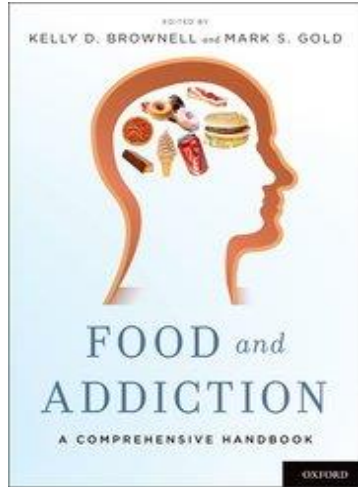
*Pam Peeke MD, MPH, FACP, FACSM  
Author, THE HUNGER FIX: Food Addiction Recovery*

# 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.

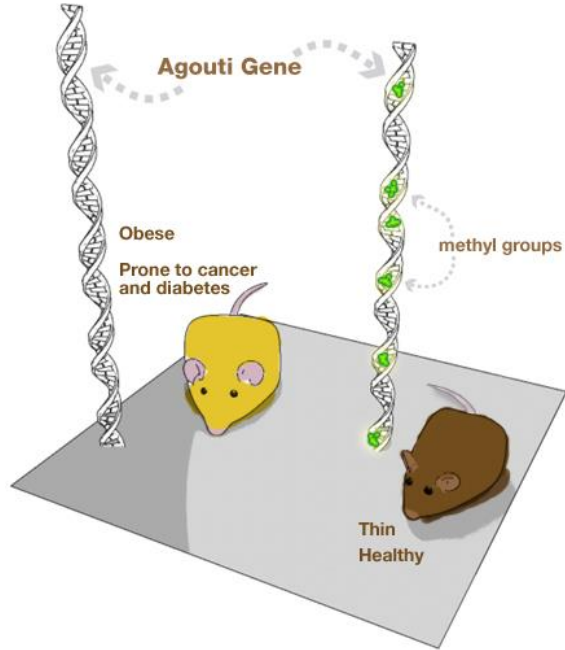
# Psychobiology of Mastering Food Addiction

- 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**

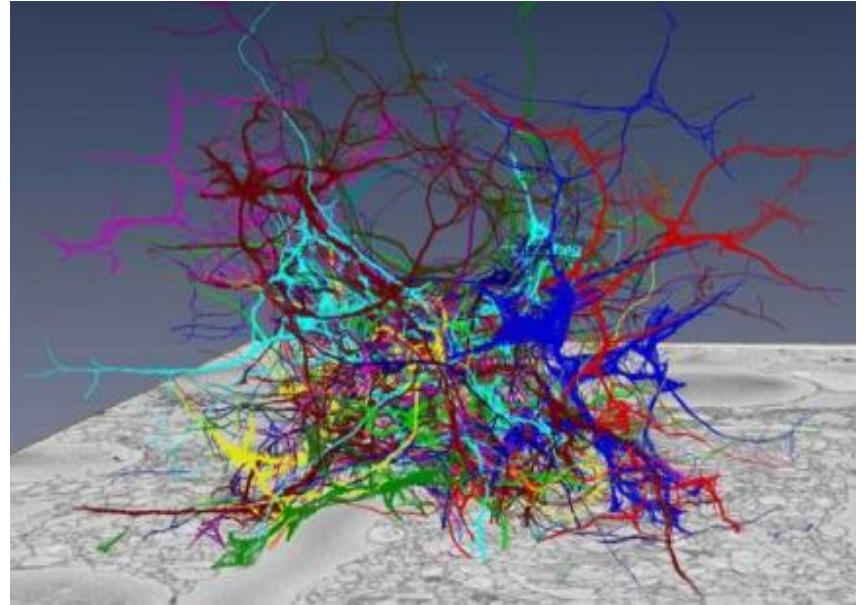
*automatic pilot, creativity*

## **Affect Network**

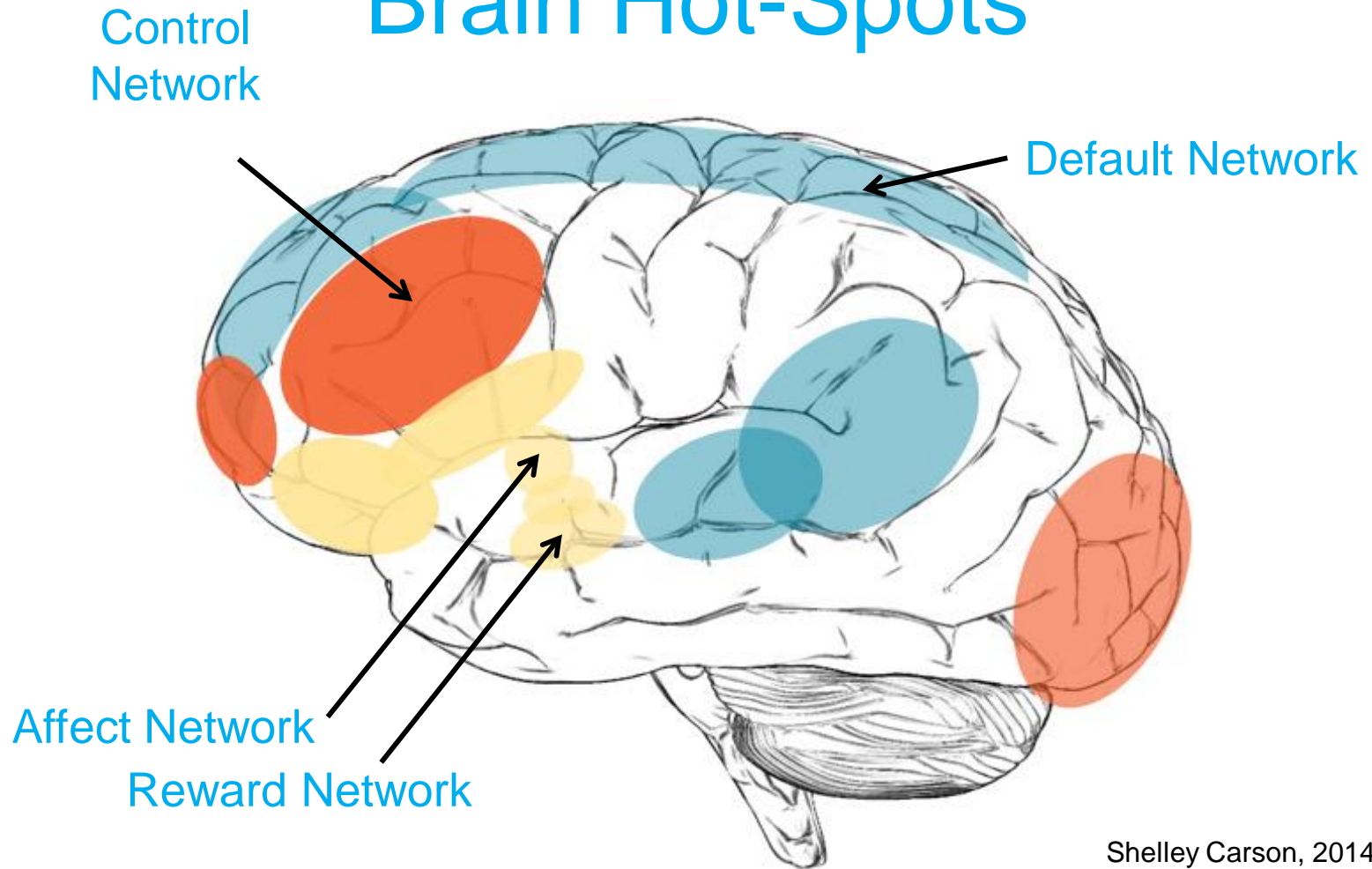
*positive & negative emotions*

## **Control Network**

*focus, goals, self-regulation*



# Brain Hot-Spots



# 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](http://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

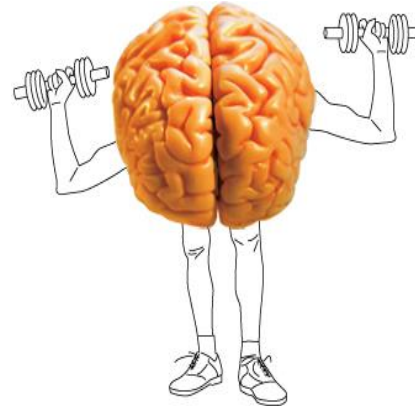
Meet unmet needs

**Reward Network:** Choose Healthy Fix  
**Default Network:**

Mindful noticing of enablers

Activate Control Network

Choose Healthy Fix



How do I get there?

# Affect Network

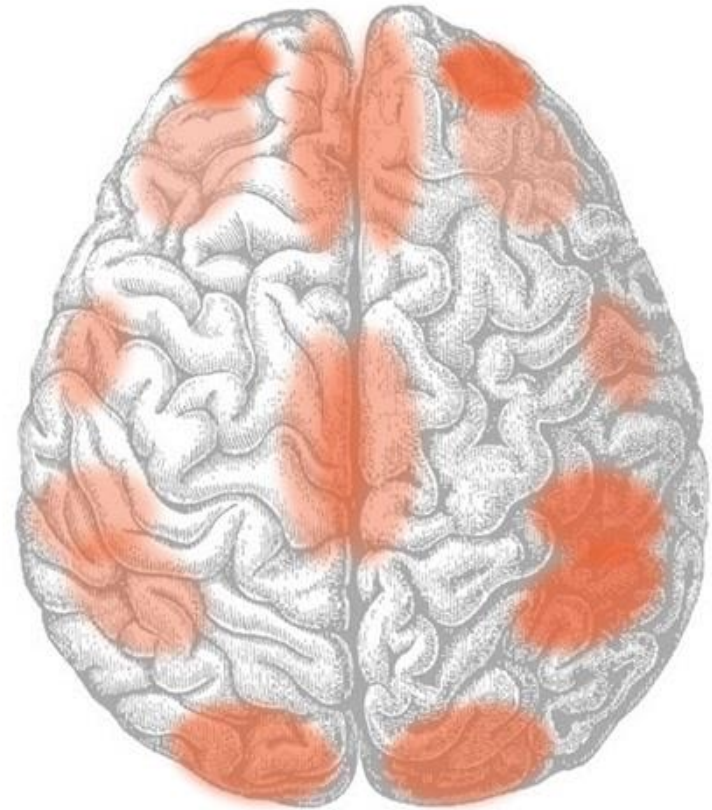
## Tame your frenzy

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



# 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



# Pixar 2015: Inside Out



## Meaning Maker

Transcendence, Benevolence, Peacemaker,  
Harmony, Gratitude, Meaning, Purpose,  
Wholeness, Congruence

## Autonomy

Authenticity, Individuality, Responsibility,  
Self-determination, Choice, Control,  
Freedom, Independence, Space

## Body Regulator

Physical survival, Safety, Sustenance,  
Security, Sleep, Relaxation, Exercise,  
Nutrition, Balance, Familiarity,  
Conservation, Health, Healing

## Confidence

Self-efficacy, Competence, Strength,  
Power, Protect, Competitive

## Creative

Creativity, Beauty, Celebration, Flow, Play,  
Leisure, Humor, Self-expression, Procreation

## Executive Manager

Clarity, Productivity, Reliability, Work,  
Problem-solving, Organization, Order

## Curious Adventurer

Openness, Sensory stimulation,  
Adventure, Wonder, Exploration,  
Discovery, Novelty, Challenge,  
Learning, Consumption, Risk

## Relational

Love, Empathy, Support, Connection,  
Interdependence, Belonging,  
Community, Cooperation, Soothing

## Standard-Setter

Achievement, Contribution  
Respect, To matter, To be valued, To be  
validated, To be heard, Acknowledgement,  
Justice, Fairness, Integrity



# 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

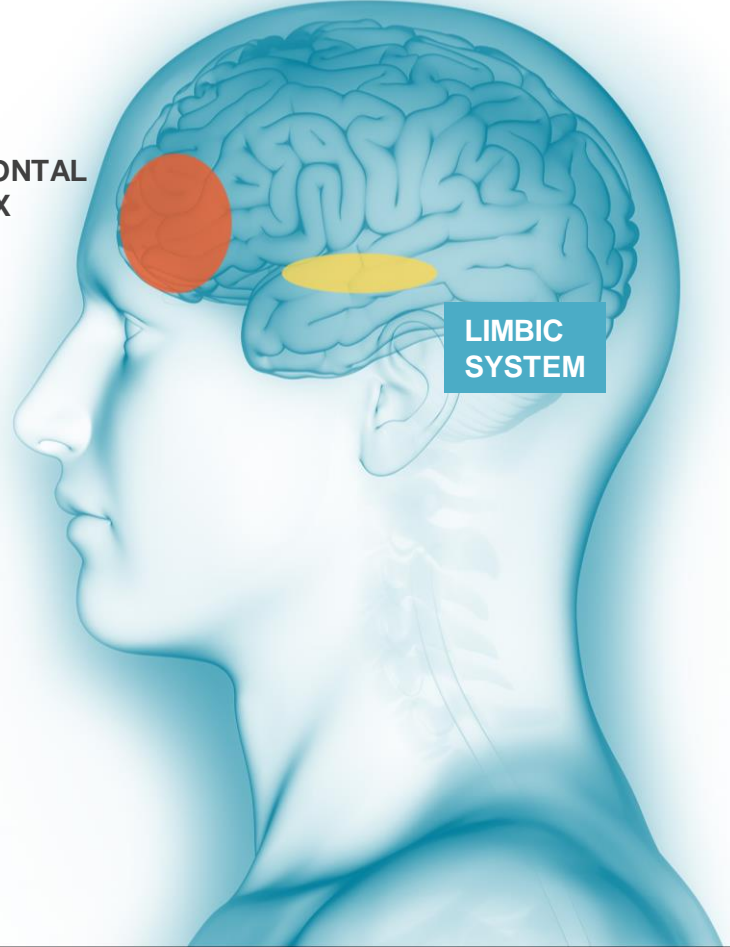
- Mindful noticing
- Name, describe negative emotions
- Accept, appreciate
- Feel compassion, soothe
- What need isn't being met?
- What strengths can I access?
- How can an unmet need get met?



# Executive Control

PREFRONTAL  
CORTEX

LIMBIC  
SYSTEM



# 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



The background features abstract geometric patterns of thin lines. In the top-left and bottom-right corners, there are clusters of blue lines forming a series of overlapping, slightly tilted rectangles. In the top-right and bottom-left corners, there are clusters of orange lines forming a series of parallel, slightly curved lines.

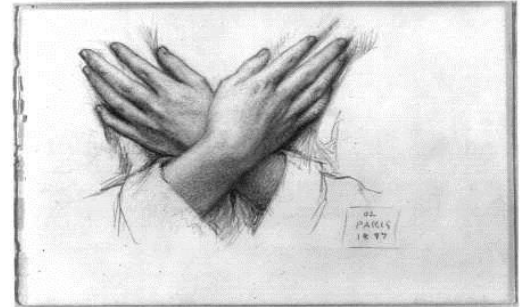
# Accept

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

Give negative  
emotions a little  
compassion...



# 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

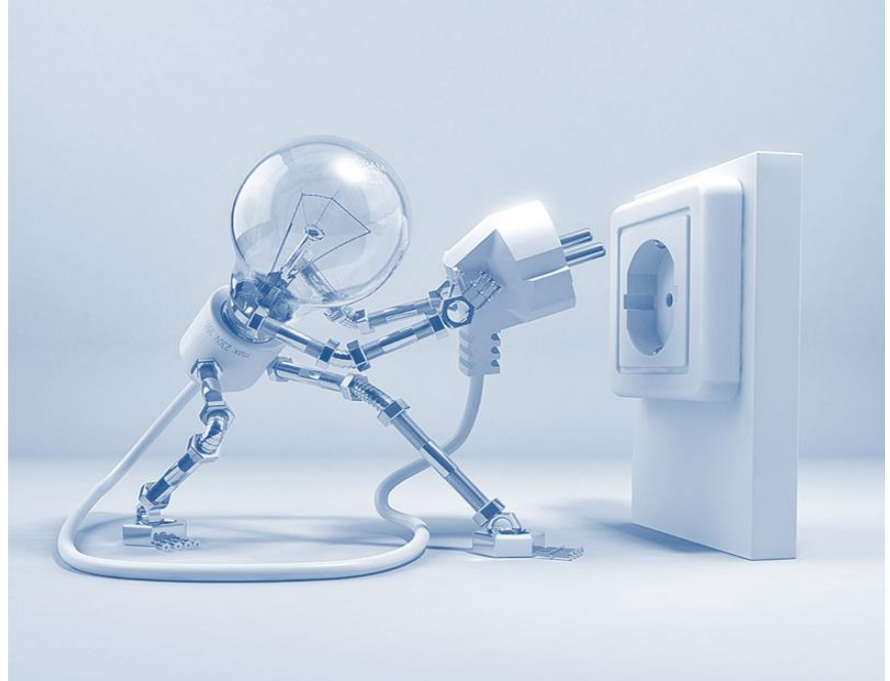


# external motivation

- 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

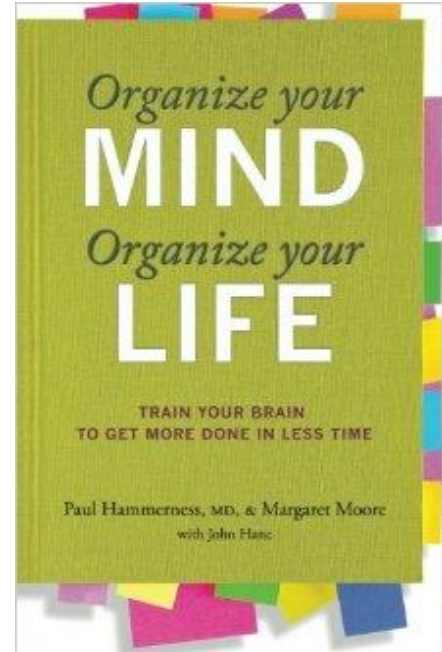
Self-compassion/learning for inner critic

## 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



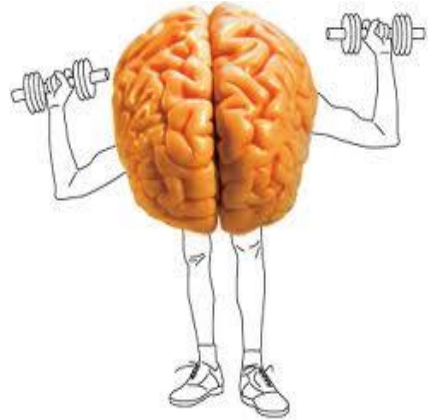
# 3. Detox – a Soft Landing

- 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

