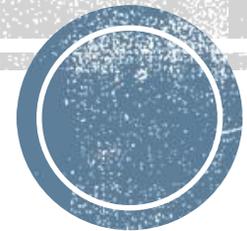


# Using your values to empower healthy change

Jason Lillis, Ph.D.

Brown Medical School

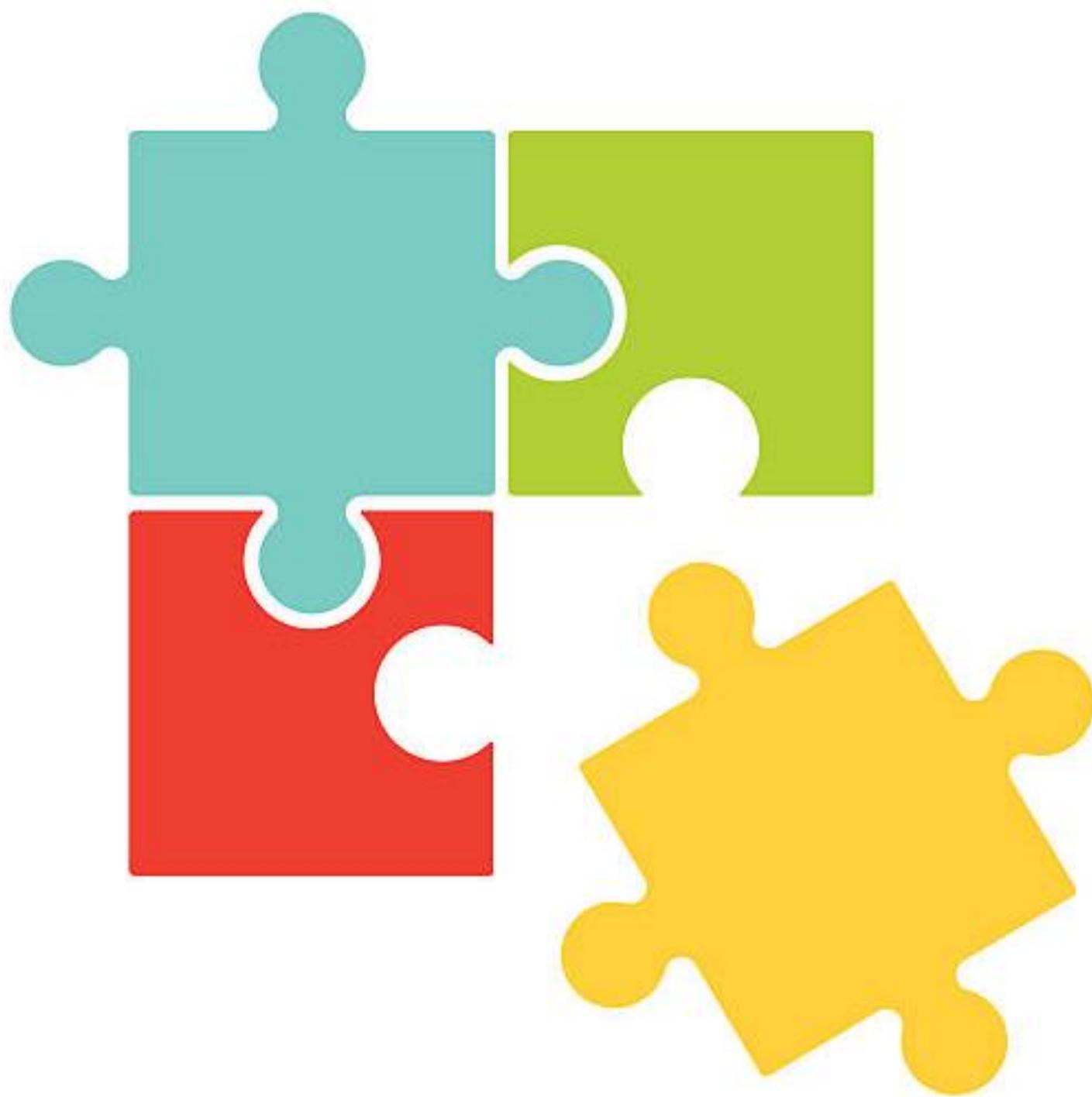
The Miriam Hospital



# Disclosures

- Research discussed in this presentation was funded by the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
- I receive royalties from New Harbinger and APA for books co-written on topics similar to the subject of this presentation





## **Weight Management is Multifaceted**

- Many pieces to the puzzle
- This is one piece

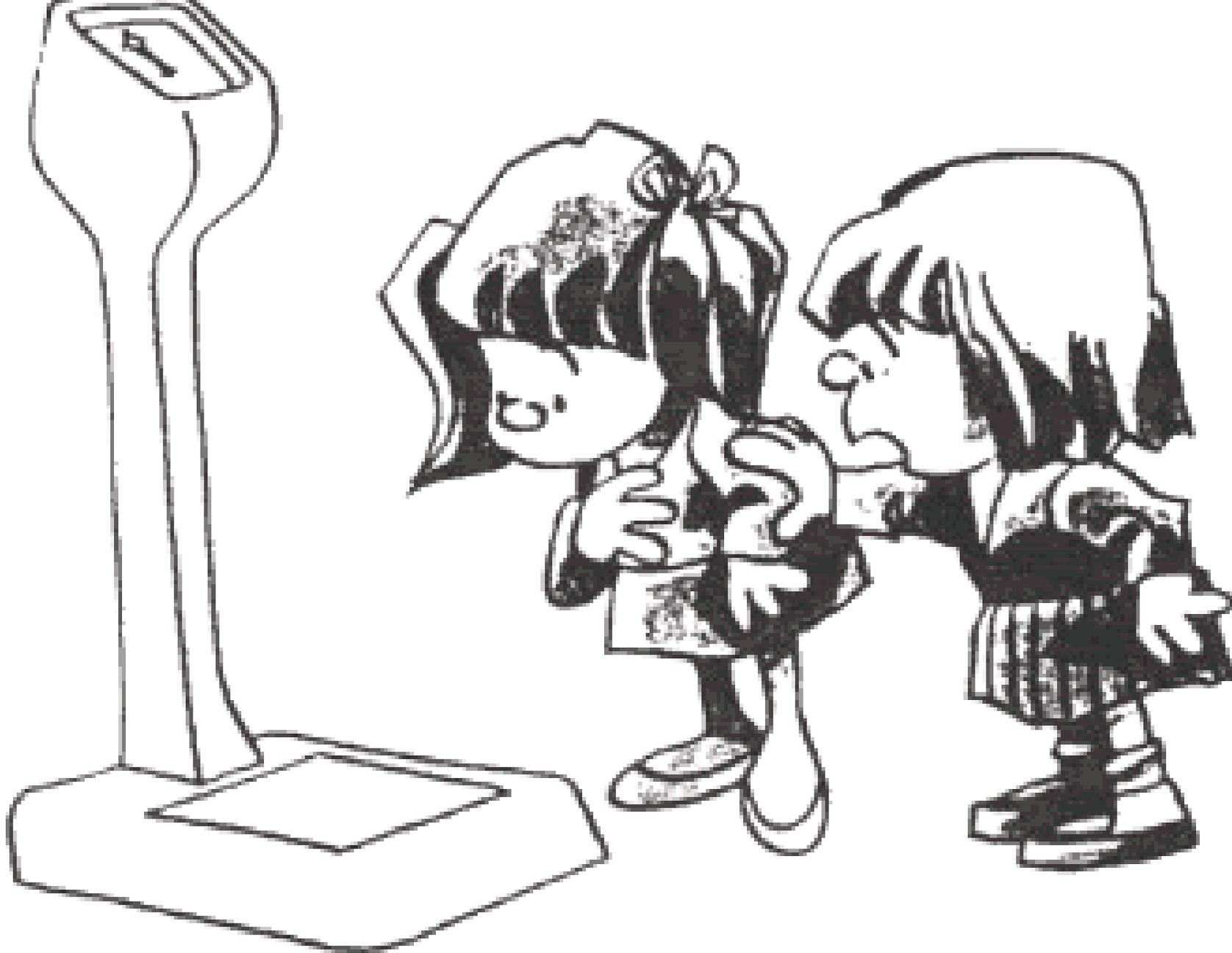


# Here lies Pat...



- ...who finally lost that last 20 pounds
- ...a caring friend and a loving parent





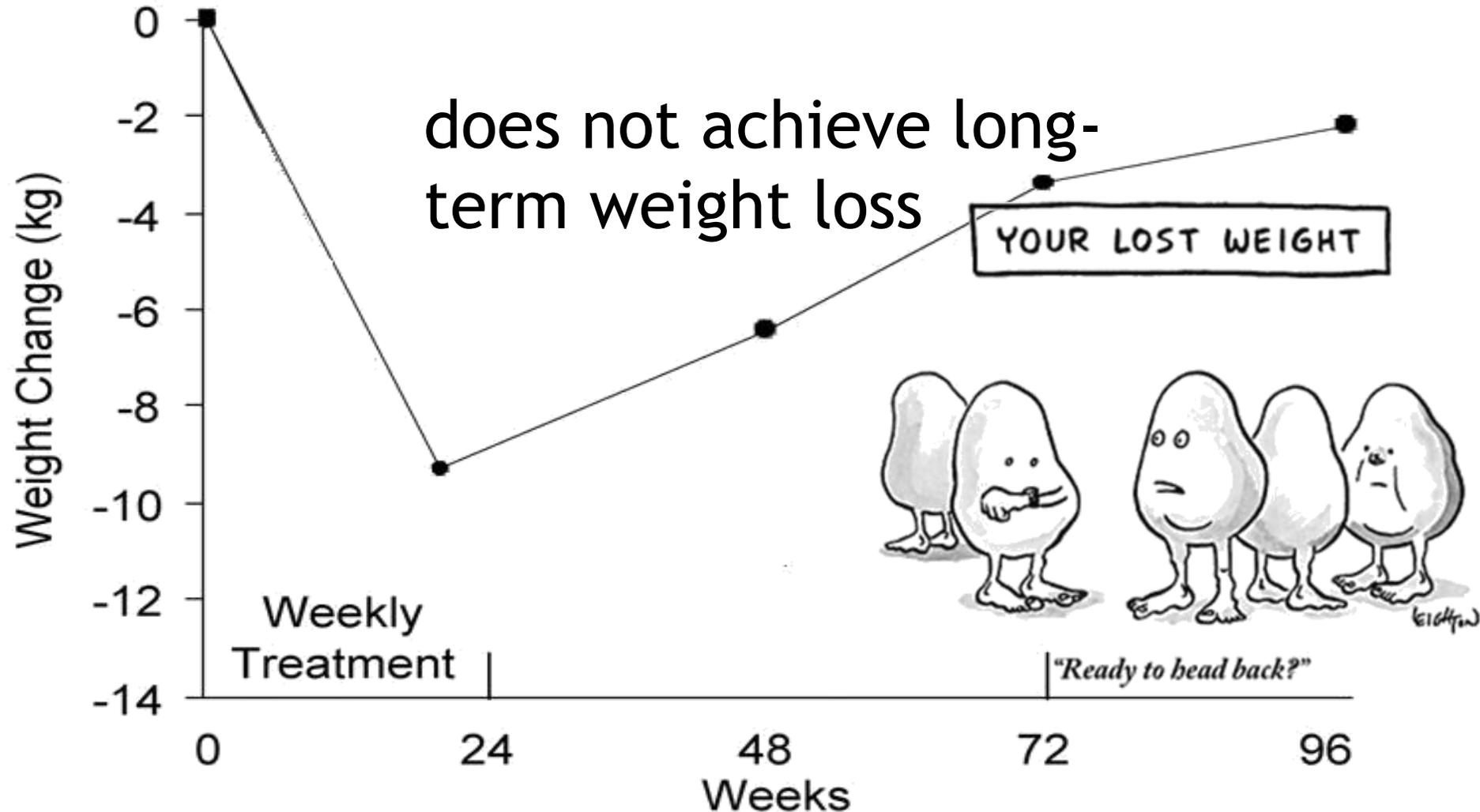
*“Don’t step on it . . . it makes you cry.”*

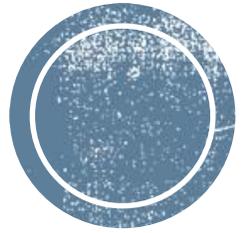
## **The tyranny of the scale**

- *A disservice?*
- *Scale merits...*
- *Fear of the scale...*
- *Numbers trap...*
- *But...what happens when the numbers don't go down?*



# Gold Standard Intervention...





**Weight loss and maintenance  
are not the same thing**

# Comparison

## Weight Loss

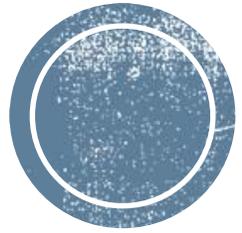
- Motivation typically high initially
- Frequent rewards (weight loss, energy gains, social recognition)
- Mood improvements
- Sense of accomplishment

## Weight Loss Maintenance

- Weight plateauing/ metabolic changes
- Mental fatigue
- Perceived effort increases
- Hunger increases/ food more rewarding
- Lack of continued rewards

***Result: shift in cost-benefit ratio from positive to negative, motivation erodes***

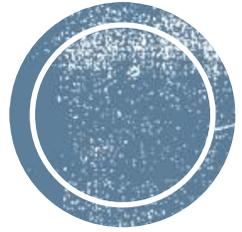




**If it doesn't matter,  
you won't keep doing it**

Goals are typically not met unless there was a reason to meet them that reflected the deep interests and personal values of the individual

*Sheldon & Elliot (1999). J Pers Soc Psyc, 76, 482-497; Sheldon & Elliot (1998). Pers Soc Psyc Bull, 24, 546-557*



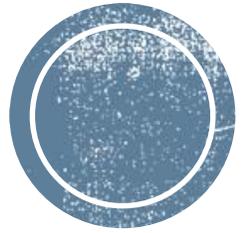
**I don't care...**



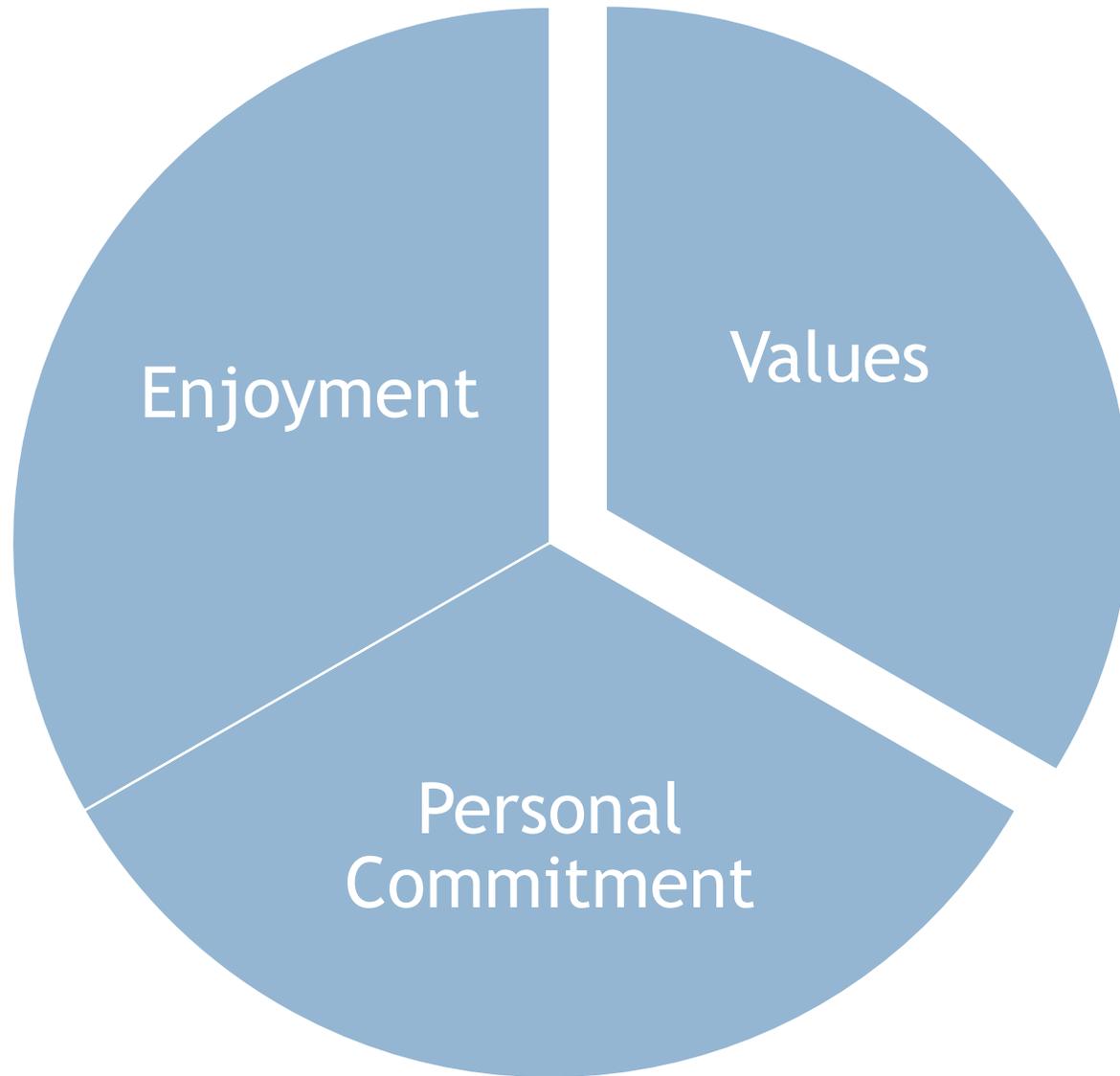
## And then what?

- Looking in the mirror?
- Magic wand test...what are you **DOING** different than now?
- If can't answer, might find it difficult to sustain





# **Autonomous motivation is key for sustaining healthy habits**



## Autonomous Motivation

- NOT for money, to avoid feeling bad, to appease others, or following rules
- Values: Doing an activity/behavior is in line with a way of living that is deeply meaningful or important to you
- For physical activity: Most robust finding was for consistency with values





# Values and acceptance-based therapies: broadly effective, including healthy behavior change

*Premise: Behavior change is empowered when changes are consistent with what is personally meaningful for the individual - i.e. foster autonomously motivated behavior change*

*Hayes, Luoma, Bond, Masuda, & Lillis (2006). Behav Res Ther, 44, 1-15; Lillis & Kendra (2014). J Contextual Behav Sci, 3, 1-7;  
Zhang, Leeming, Smith, Chung, Hager, & Hayes (2018). Frontiers in Psyc, 8, 2350*

# Values Strategies

- Exploring what deeply matters to you
- Linking everyday behaviors to a broad vision of life well-lived (defined by you)
- Monitoring your behavior in relation to set of chosen, stated values

# Acceptance Strategies

- Being willing to contact difficult experiences, including unwanted thoughts, feelings, memories, and bodily sensations in order to engage in behavior consistent with your values

## **Values and Acceptance**

- E.g. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

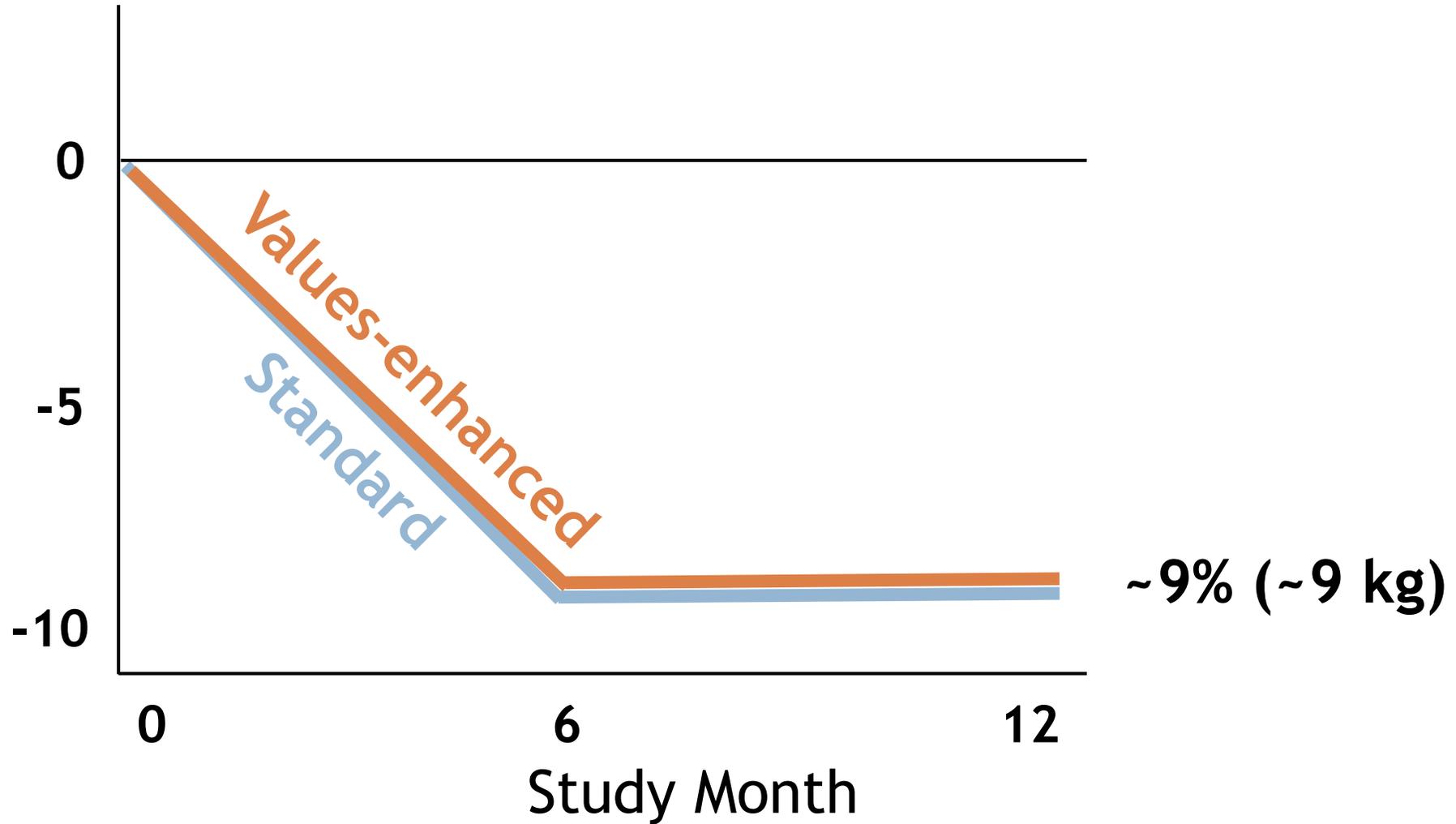


# ACT on Health RCT study

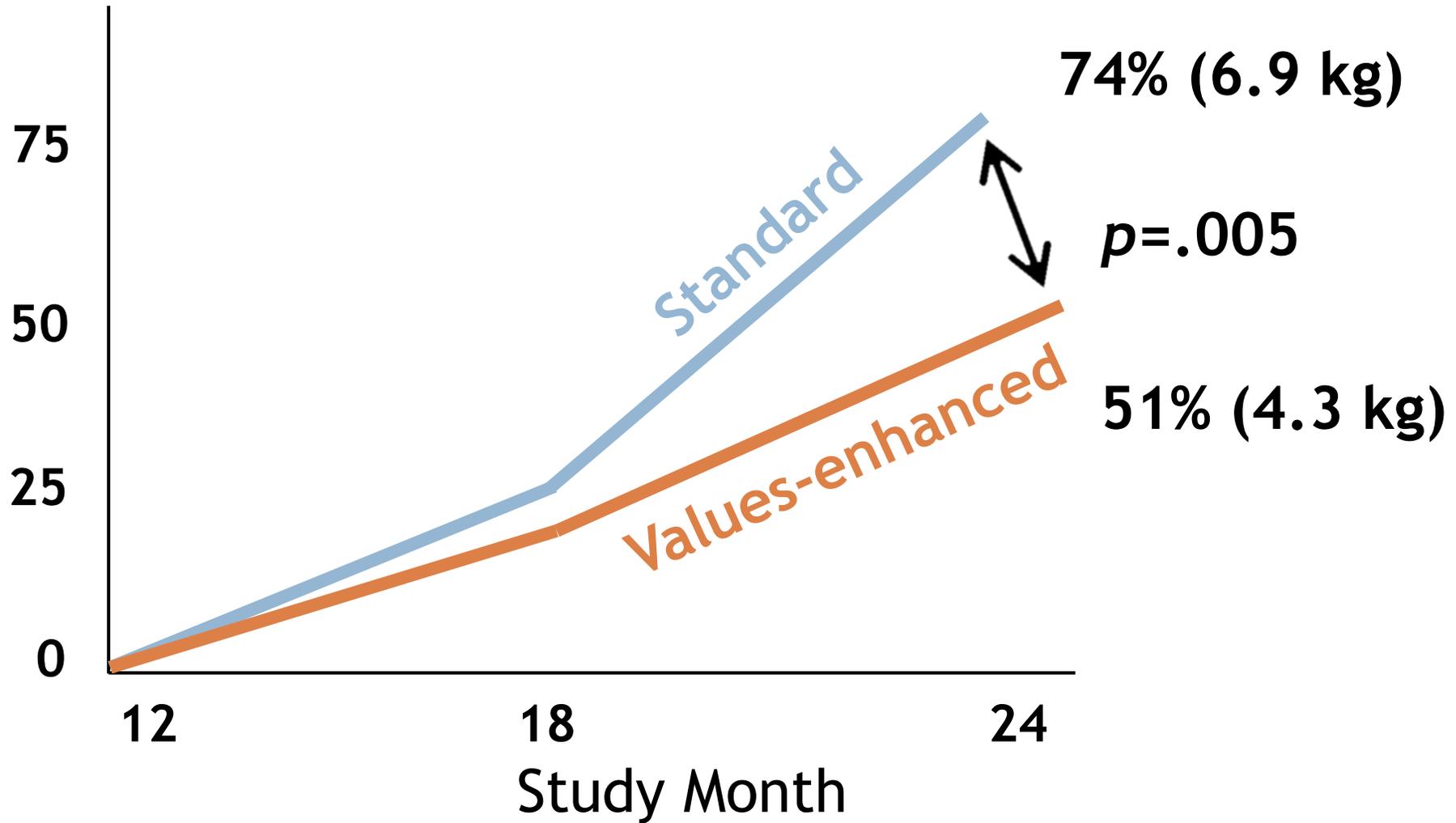
- Adults with clinical levels of disinhibited eating
- Could adding values and acceptance strategies improve weight loss as compared to gold standard?
- 1 year comprehensive lifestyle intervention

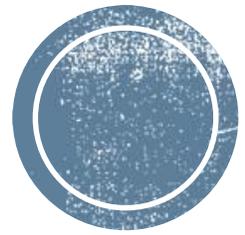


# Weight loss during treatment (%)



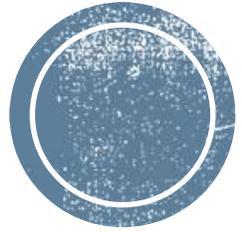
# Weight regain after treatment





**What can you do?**





# **1: Choose your direction**

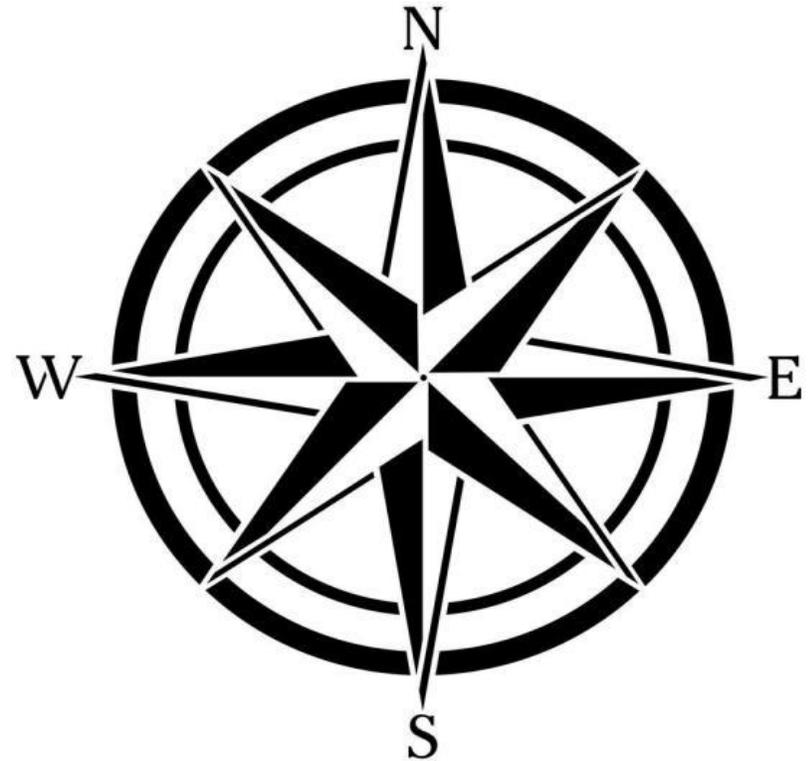
# Find what deeply matters to you

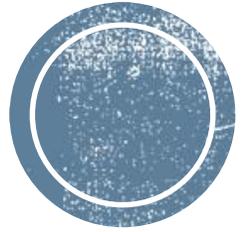
- *Write- 5 mins a day*
- *Domains: Family, relationships, vocation, personal interests*
- *Look back: What done that felt vital, meaningful, satisfying?*
- *Look ahead: 10 years later, how would you like to have acted?*
- *Talk and share*



# Develop values narratives

- Brief, action-focused, infinite, not goals
- Dead person couldn't do better
- Examples
  - Being a loving and caring partner/ friend
  - Being a nurturing and supportive parent/ family member
  - Seeking personal/ spiritual growth
  - Being a reliable and effective co-worker
  - Being active and engaged



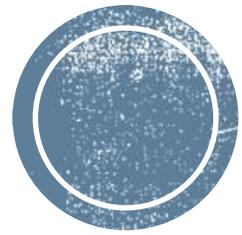


**2: Identify the connection  
between your values and  
your desired healthy habits**

# How can your health habits empower values-consistent living?

- *Energy/stamina = stay more active/engaged with my children*
- *Healthy Habits = positive example, positive influence on family*
- *Fitness = participate in desired activities with friends/ new hobbies*
- *Improved mood = more patience and better listening with partner*
- *Better focus/ concentration = perform at a higher level at work*



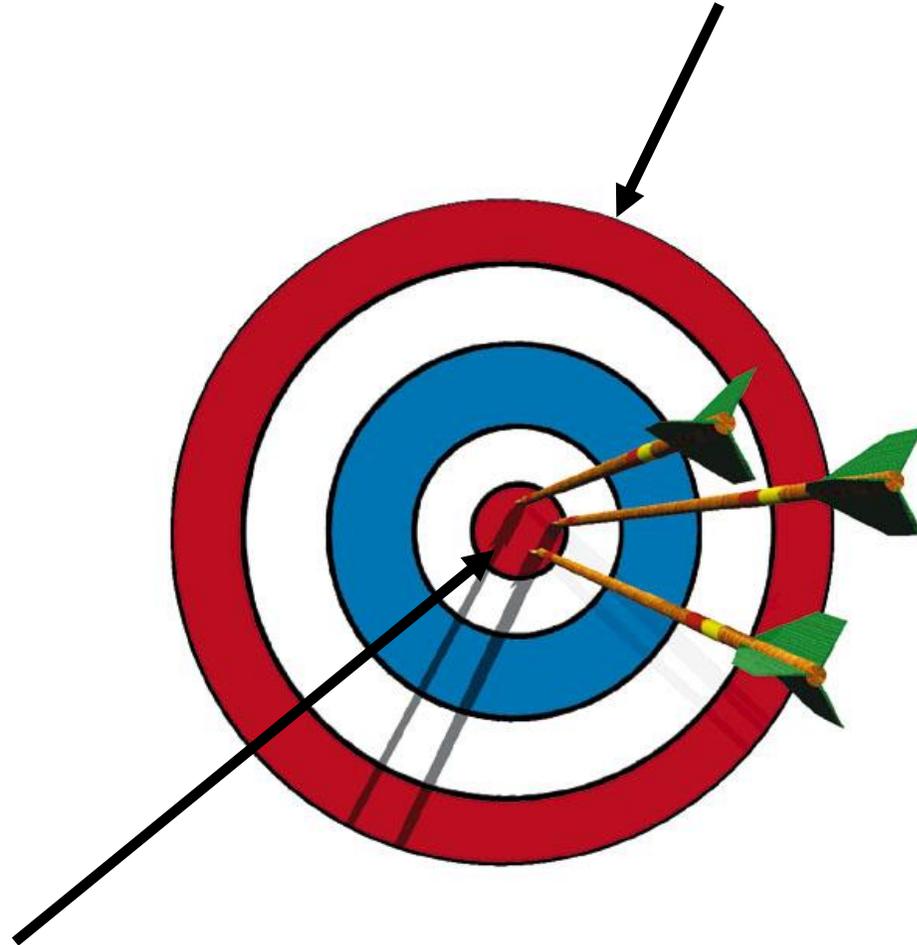


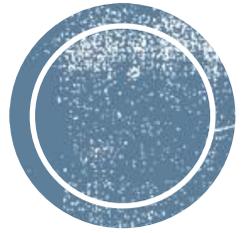
# **3: Monitor values- behavior congruence**



# Tracking

- *Check in once per day to once per week*
- *How consistent am I behaving with my values?*
- *If not, what could I do today, tomorrow, rest of the week?*





# Motivation is an *action*

*Healthy habits suck, but...*

*Recording calories for the hundredth time...but now with awareness*

*Infuse the everyday with satisfaction and vitality*

*Clarify, link, and monitor*

# Thank you for listening!

My meaning



- [vivo.brown.edu/display/jlillis](https://vivo.brown.edu/display/jlillis)
- [twitter.com/DrJasonLillis](https://twitter.com/DrJasonLillis)
- [www.amazon.com/-/e/B0080F1NHG](https://www.amazon.com/-/e/B0080F1NHG)



# ACT for obesity

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